

*Indian Journal of*

# Adult Education

- **Adult Education in the Twenty First Century**
- **Development Sans Literacy : Unsustainable**
- **A Study of Dropouts in the Literacy Campaign**
- **Role and Contribution of Kalajatha Artists in the Literacy Campaign**



**Indian Adult Education Association**

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**INDIAN JOURNAL OF ADULT EDUCATION**

Published every quarter by the Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA), 17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi-110002. Phones : 3319282, 3721336, 3722206.

Fax : 91-11-3355306

Contents of the IJAE are indexed in the Current Index to Journals in Education, New York, Content Pages in Education, Oxfordshire, England and in the Guide to Indian Periodical Literature, Gurgaon (Haryana). Also microfilmed by University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA. **ISSN 0019-5006**

Subscription: Inland Rs. 60.00 p.a.,

Overseas, US\$ 20.00 p.a.

Advertisement rates : full page - Rs. 1500; half page - Rs.800; quarter page - Rs.450

Printed and Published by J.L. Sachdeva for Indian Adult Education Association, 17-B Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi - 110002. Printed at Prabhat Publicity, 2622, Kucha Chelan, Darya Ganj, New Delhi - 110002.

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The Indian Journal of Adult Education, first published as a monthly in 1939, is brought out now as a quarterly by the Indian Adult Education Association. The Journal has special interest in the theory and practice of Non-formal Education with special reference to the relationship between Adult Education and Development. Contributions on a wide range of themes within this broad framework are welcome. The Journal is particularly interested in current experiments in the field.

Contributions should be accompanied by either a stamped, self-addressed envelope or by International Reply Coupons. The average length of a manuscript should normally be between 1500 and 2000 words; in exceptional cases, longer articles can be accepted. Mimeographed, Xeroxed or carbon copies of manuscripts will not be accepted. Manuscript should be typed in double space, on one side, with a 2" margin, on foolscap size paper. Footnotes and references should come at the end and not on every page.

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## Editorial

During the last 50 years Unesco has taken keen interest in adult education. The four world conferences which it has organised has reflected the concerns and the specific trends in the world over the preceding decade. These conferences have specifically focussed on achieving universal literacy; establishing peace and international cooperation; creating a genuine spirit of democracy; increasing learning opportunities for all age groups; promoting gender equality; contributing to sustainable development.

In July 1997 Unesco will hold its fifth international conference on adult education (CONFINTEA V) in Hamburg, Germany. This conference unlike the previous conferences will not be a predominantly governmental meet. The NGOs on selected basis have been invited to participate in this conference as observers. This is good recognition of contribution of NGOs in the development, promotion of ideas and concepts of adult education. For NGOs it is good opportunity to present their concern and views on the state of adult education.

Adult education is passing through crucial stage. The funding of international bodies is by and large for elementary and lower secondary education. It has been seen over the years that stress on elementary education alone does not give the desired results unless the parents are educated. Elementary and adult education are interconnected. Walking on one will be strenuous. The world conference should take note of it and stress the need to support both adult and elementary education to eliminate illiteracy from the globe.

Prof. HS Bhola in the article “Adult Education in the Twenty First Century” published in this issue has rightly emphasised the priorities of the 21st century in these words “Adult Education must democratize both development and economy to serve the excluded, the disadvantaged and the poorest of the poor. Empowering the powerless should be back on the agenda of adult education.”

We hope that the resolutions and declarations of the world conference should not remain pious pledges on the paper but should result in better implementation and organisation of adult education programmes which should ultimately benefit the person at the grassroot level.

HS Bhola

## **Adult Education in the Twenty-First Century : The Evolving Discourse**

There are times when the slow and steady pace of history is quickened and confounded by revolutions of great magnitudes and of far-reaching consequences. The year 1989 marked such a time.

### **The Year of Revolutions, 1989**

The Cold War ended, and with it the dictatorship of the State in several parts of the world. But as the stone-slabs of State's oppression were removed, new terrors sprung: of intolerance, ethnic conflict, and genocide. There was social disorder, economic collapse, and structural unemployment. Social institutions faced crises of legitimacy. Trust flew out from the web of social relations. Individual struggle for survival led to normlessness, violence, and predatory behaviour.

There was no light at the end of the tunnel. The cold war ended but the peace dividend did not appear. National debts incurred by the poor nations of the Third World kept on mounting. Structural Adjustment Programs imposed on developing nations led to the withdrawal of the state from the responsibility of providing education and primary health care to citizens. Free markets without social responsibility made lives of the common people even worse. Privatization turned out to be pretensions under which the property of the state passed on to the favourites of corrupt politicians at throw-away prices.

All this was happening as the real needs for adult education had exploded. To bring Peace among nations and prosperity among peoples the world needed education for all and second socialization of all the world's adults--leaders and the led, workers and peasants and fathers and mothers.

### **Missions Grand and Global for Adult Education**

#### **The Summits of 1990s**

The 1990s will be remembered as the decade of global summits when the world's best minds stood together as the keepers of the world's conscience and engaged in an exercise of social imagination worthy of sages. In so doing, these great leaders were acting as the world's adult educators. They were giving the professional community of adult educators around the world a curriculum for adult education for the twenty-first century.

**The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development** (also called the Earth Summit), held during June 1-12, 1992 in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil [1] placed the issue of sustainable development at the core of the world development agenda and asked that sustainable development should be harmonious with the protection of forests, waters, environment and biological diversity. The conference clearly underlined the link between poverty in the south with high levels of consumption in the North. It also implied that an adult education agenda for all adult citizens of the world should require two things: that adults understand political relations between rich and poor nations and that adults acquire scientific understanding and technological knowledge essential for their participation in the public debate on those issues.

The World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14-25 June 1993 [2] was called to review the progress of Human Rights enshrined some 45 years ago in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). The conference saw clear connections between and among human rights, democracy and development. Human Rights were declared to be the Common Language of Humanity, and with their universality our tool to overcome the divide between identity and alterity (otherness). All human rights should be seen as universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated. Human rights, of course, had to be at the core of projects both of adult education and development.

The International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 [3] made clear connections among demography, environment and poverty as causes for lack of development. It was suggested that population-related policies be seen as integral parts of cultural, economic and social development. The conference asserted that "advancing gender equality and equity and the empowerment of women, and the elimination of all kinds of violence against women, and ensuring women's ability to control their own fertility, are cornerstones of population and development-related programs. "For the practical realization of the "Spirit of Cairo" we needed resources, expert knowledge and technologies. While schooling has a role to play in the dissemination of knowledge and technology, we need a massive program of adult education, particularly directed to adult women-- to underline the relationship that does exist between education and lower fertility, and population and development.

The Copenhagen Declaration and Program of Action adopted at the end of The World Summit for Social Development, March 6-12, 1995 [4], was characterized by United Nations Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali as "a new social contract at the global level." The Social Summit asserted that social development cannot be achieved by relying on economic growth arising within uninhibited market forces. To ensure enabling economic environments, respect for

human rights, and accountability of governments was considered a necessary set of conditions for sustainable development. Of course, all this would not be possible to achieve without the will to "attain universal and equitable access to education and primary health care" and to "formulate and strengthen time-bound national strategies for the eradication of illiteracy and universalization of basic education."

The Beijing Declaration and A Platform for Action adopted on September 15, 1995 at the end of the The Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, September 4-15, 1995, Beijing, China [5] proclaimed that women rights were human rights. Advancement and empowerment of women was to be assured with full opportunities for participation in decision-making process and access to power as fundamentals for the achievement of equality, development and peace. Measures were to be taken to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and the girl child. Demands for equality as "agents and beneficiaries of people-centered sustainable development had to be met. Economic independence had to be guaranteed. The feminization of poverty had to be stemmed. Right to act as fundamental force for leadership, conflict resolution and promotion of lasting peace had to be made possible. Women had to have the right to control all aspects of their health, including sexual and reproductive health, and in particular, their own fertility. The provision of basic education, life-long education, literacy and training, and primary health care for girls and women was considered a necessity.

#### **UNESCO' s Engagement in Adult Education in the 1990s:**

##### **Dialogue, Discussion, and Mobilization**

UNESCO's commitment to adult education from its inception in 1946 has continued into the 1990s in the form of dialogue, discussion and mobilization. However, direct promotion of adult literacy or adult education projects and programs on the ground have not been as energetically promoted during the 1990s.

The International Literacy Year (ILY) in countries with high rates of illiteracy, adult literacy comes to serve as the backbone of adult education. In today's cultures of print, adult literacy has come to be a necessity for both democratization and modernization in countries developed and industrialized. It was in this light that the UNESCO-led, International Literacy Year summoned the world community to action for the achievement of literacy for all by the year 2000 [6]

Dialogue and discussion on adult education and adult literacy UNESCO and its affiliated institutions, continued dialogue and discussion, however [7]. During 3-8 September 1990, the 42nd International Conference on Education that met at the International Bureau of Education, Geneva was primarily devoted to

Literacy. The International Symposium on the Organization and Institutional Aspects of Adult Education that was held in Osaka, Japan during 1-5 July 1991 discussed and clarified important issues in the area. A Workshop on Research in the Field of Adult and Community Education, was held in Wellington, New Zealand.

There was considerable activity at the regional levels in 1992. A Regional Seminar on the Diversification of Post-Literacy Adult Education Programs was held in Damascus Syria during 12-15 April 1992. Literacy, Adult Education, Health and Population interrelationships were discussed in Port Louis, Mauritius, 15-18 April 1992. A UNESCO/UNICEF Regional Consultation to discuss current adult education practice in the regions was held in Bogota (Colombia) from 25-28 May 1992. Finally, Literacy and Cultural Development Strategies in Central Europe, were discussed in Bratislava, Slovakia during 8-10 October 1992.

The World Symposium on Family Literacy held in Paris during 3-5 October 1994 [8] was an important event. The World Conference on Literacy supported by UNESCO and held at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia during March 1996 was easily the most significant event of dialogue and discussion during the 1990s.

### **A Trend Setting Project**

#### **World Conference on Education for All, 1990**

The World Conference on Education for All, sponsored by an Alliance of UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank (and supported by several other multilateral and bilateral agencies was held in Jomtien, Thailand during March 5-9, 1990 [9].

The World Declaration on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs adopted in Jomtien proclaimed to the world that : "Every person--child, youth and adult--shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs. These needs comprise both essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy, and problem solving) and the basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes) required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning."

Both the Declaration as proclaimed and the accompanying Frame of Action promised balanced development in the education of (i) children, (ii) youth and (iii) adults. The educational objectives did include adult literacy, numeracy, and inculcation of attitudes and values. Educational objectives included more than

training in skills and economic productivity, and did indeed include concerns for individual actualization, family life and development of community in the twin perspectives of lifelong learning and sustainable development.

From the manifesto to its manifestations : From EFA objectives and actual actions. Education for All even in its conceptualization had been in fact "Basic Education for All." It later came to be misunderstood as "Schooling for All." UNESCO perhaps for lack of resources seems to have conducted only programs of discussion and dialogue but was not able to launch any practical initiatives in adult education or adult literacy inside or outside the boundaries of EFA. UNICEF used primary education as the cutting edge of their program thrust. Parent education and early child development (ECD) both were weaker legs of UNICEF's programming triangle. The World Bank on the basis of economic analysis had determined that Basic Education (primary and lower secondary grades in school) was the best investment in countries where near universal primary education has not yet been achieved. It has, therefore, focussed its lending policy entirely on primary and lower secondary education [10].

The equating of adult basic education with the professionalization of labor was reinforced by the overall world trend of globalization. With the new international division of labor a lot of semi-skilled workers moved to countries with low labor costs where educational needs were then defined as adult basic education with training [11].

ICAE : Leading the NGO Movement

The contributions of ICAE were continuous with its earlier work as it also took several new and innovative initiatives [12]. It continued to play the advocacy role both in behalf of adult education and the civil society itself. It continued to question existing conservative structures of education and politics by promoting popular causes, liberational pedagogy, and participative evaluation.

ICAE in the 1990s. In the 1990s, with the death of the centralized socialist state and with the failure of the state in several developing world, particularly in Africa, great expectations were invested in the civil society. Representatives of the civil society were invited to come join the councils of power and bodies for policy deliberations. NGO's became the favorites of donor nations who now wanted to channel all or most of their assistance through NGO's. ICAE's role in adult education was highlighted in many colors, and particularly in adding a strong new voice to dialogue and discussion on adult education.

ICAE's fourth World Assembly on Adult Education in Bangkok, Thailand during January 8-18, 1990 raised a strong voice in behalf of adult education. The

First General Assembly of the Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (an important partner of ICAE) was held in Tagaytay City, Philippines during December 8-14, 1991 and talked of literacy and women, literacy and environment and literacy and peace. These were indications of the vibrancy of the NGO movement in the 1990s.

### **Field Actions in Behalf of Adult Literacy and Adult Education**

As indicated earlier, UNESCO was not directly connected with many large-scale adult literacy or adult education initiatives, and there were few extra-UNESCO initiatives on the ground.

In Ghana a "Literacy and Functional Skills Project" was funded by the World Bank for implementation during 1993-95. The National Literacy Program in Namibia may have been inspired by EFA but was funded most energetically by SIDA. In South Africa an Ithuteng (Ready to Learn) Campaign twinned with a Thousand Learners Units project lead by the National Literacy Co-operation was launched on February 11, 1996. The Ithuteng is fully supported by the state though donor support had been expected and remains welcome. The NLC project had been funded by the European Union [13].

### **A Challenge and an Opportunity**

The world's adult educators today find themselves living in a truly historic moment between a serious challenge and a great opportunity.

#### **The Challenge**

The challenge is set by the recent UNESCO Commission report : Learning : The Treasure Within : Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century submitted by Jacques Delors in 1996 [14]. The Delors' Commission Report sees education as fundamental for both individual achievement and social development, and as the principal means to reduce poverty, exclusion, ignorance, oppression and violence. It advocates with deep commitment and great moral passion "LEARNING THROUGHOUT LIFE" if education has to play the fundamental role ascribed to it for harnessing technology for worldwide prosperity and for harmonizing diverse cultures in a culture of peace.

To make this happen, the grand declarations of the Summits of 1990s, from Rio to Beijing, will have to be clothed in words that can be read, discussed and internalized by children in schools. Concomitantly, and perhaps more importantly, the proclamations from the Summits will have to be brought to the grassroots level to be embedded in the oral discourse and in the written texts produced for adults. It is the worlds/ adult men and women who have immediate need and utility for the new ideas, new attitudes and new skills. With increasing life expectancies,

these adults can be expected to have decades of productive, active and transformative life and work ahead of them. In other words, "Learning throughout " will have to be construed as "Learning throughout life" adult live." That in turn, will require a colossal effort to develop infrastructures and institutional arrangements for the delivery of educational services throughout the lives of adults. This challenge for the delivery of adult education will have to be faced both by the developed and developing countries.

#### The Opportunity

To the good fortune of the world's adult educators, the challenge of today just presented is joined by an opportunity just before us. The forthcoming Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (Adult Education : A Key to the 21st Century), Hamburg July, 14-18 '97 [15] provides adult educators of the world with the opportunity to face the challenge squarely and with the promise of success. Indeed, the main task of the Hamburg Conference of July 1997 will be to set an agenda for adult education on the eve of the 21st century and to engage in the visualization of systems and structures for the delivery of education to adults throughout life with flexibility, diversity, and democratic choice.

#### Issues of Adult Education on the Eve of the Twenty-first Century

A review of the world trends and issues in adult education from the mid-1940s through the 1990s, reveals two identifiable ideological streams of adult education flowing side by side in the same river-bed for more than forty years : the socialist stream of adult education and the capitalist stream of adult education.

Understandably, the languages of justification used by the two camps--the socialist, and the capitalist--were different. Each took a different position on the role of the state in the delivery of adult education (and adult literacy), and in regard to the mobilization of the civil society through mass organizations of youth, farmers, workers and women. There were differences on the questions of centralization versus decentralization. The socialists talked of political education, the capitalist of civic education. This having been said, there were many similarities in the calculus of means and ends used by the two competing blocks. In fact, the neo-marxists active within Western democracies to brook the excesses of capitalism on the one hand, and in seeking to put a human face on Marxism on the other hand, were able to bring the two movements to convergence at several points in both ideology and technology in their programs and projects of popular education.

### **Adult Education Issues as Seen by the Forthcoming Fifth International Conference on Adult Education**

The forthcoming Fifth International Conference on Adult Education with the theme "Adult Learning : A Key for the Twenty-First Century" casts the structure of the debate around ten themes and five issues.

#### **Ten Themes, Five Issues**

The ten themes as listed by the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education are : Adult learning and the challenges of the twenty-first century; Improving the conditions and quality of adult learning; Ensuring the universal right to literacy and basic education; promoting the empowerment of women through adult learning; Adult learning in the context of preventive security: environment, health and population; Adult learning, media and culture; Adult Learning and groups with special needs; The economics of adult learning ; and Enhancing international co-operation.

The Five issues. The five transversal issues selected for the forthcoming conference are: equality of opportunity, respect for cultural identities, gender sensitivity, relevance of learning strategies and environments, and promotion of co-operation and partnership.

#### **In a Comprehensive-Systemic Perspective**

The themes and issues defined for the forthcoming Fifth International Conference on Adult Education should be problematized in a futuristic comprehensive-systemic perspective [16]. The adult education movement today is in ideological trouble. While writing on Paulo Freire and his pedagogy has become an industry, the radicalism that Freire taught seems to have lost its punch. Adult education has been captured by the captains of global economic enterprises for the purpose of professionalization of labor. Ideology has been substituted by motivational theory. While education, including adult education, can not neglect the objective of the social reproduction of labor and skills from one generation to another, training should be training for all people and all settings: rural and urban, development and production, employed and unemployed, formal economy and informal economy. More importantly, adult educators must put the democratic mission of adult education back into its ideological core. Adult education must democratize both development and economy to serve the excluded, the disadvantaged and the poorest of the poor. Empowering the powerless should be back on the agenda of adult education.

Policy must retain an honest connection with ideology and must clarify the obligations of the state and the civil society in the delivery of adult education.

National policy must be protected from undue influence of donors. Policy structures need to be built that will give adult educators a voice as strong, if not stronger than that given to educators in the formal sectors of education. There need to be much better policy interfaces between adult education policy on the one hand and development policy, education policy and economic policies for the informal sector of society on the other hand. Advocacy and mobilization must become an important part of adult education. It should be broadly construed to be able to include discussion of the role of national media on the one hand and grassroots mobilization on the other hand. A discussion of mobilization must also include mobilization of local resources through voluntary work and philanthropy.

Institution building and organizational issues must involve the creation of national boards of adult education to bring together all stakeholder under one umbrella and must build strong departments and bureaus of adult education to manage the programs. Managers of adult education, however, must be adult educators first and managers second. Adult education departments must be "learning organizations" and should not externalize or outsource professional functions unless absolutely necessary. At the same time the establishment of genuine Community Based Organization (CBO's) at local levels should be central to the tasks of organizers and providers of adult education.

Curriculum development processes must deal with both the national and the local. There is a core of knowledge and skills that must be shared by everyone in the nation and yet there has to be ample space for learning needs that are unique to groups and localities. Implicated here is also the issue of the languages of literacy and adult education. An other associated issue is that of the availability and costs of the electronic media and new technology of the internet. Does the new technology create opportunities or does it increase disparities? Are the new methodologies of constructivist-participative teaching and learning actually being implemented and are we training our facilitators to enable them to do so. There may indeed be a prior question : Are those recruited to deliver education participatively trainable?

Are we considering questions about continuing learning, transition from learning to work, and about expectations of learning throughout adult life. Building professional networks with institutions of research and development in the field of adult education and related areas is another challenge. Finally, there is the question of evaluation: Are we prepared for internal evaluations so that we are not always subjected to external evaluations by others? Are our evaluations focussed primarily on the 3-R's or are we also evaluating for achievement of life skills, development, reconstruction and reconciliation? Do we make a distinction between assessment for diagnosis of teaching and learning processes, and assessment for certification?

## By Way of Concluding

### Edification of Leadership, Education of Adults

The changes wrought during the decade of 1990s require nothing less than a re-education of world's and nations' leaders and second socialization of all of the adult populations including both men and women. The world summits and commissions of 1990s have given adult education an agenda that would challenge the most imaginative, the most committed, and the most educated of adult educators. The messages from the global Summits must now be taken to the grassroots otherwise all these brave declarations would have been for naught. This is where the challenge for adult education lies. For who else is going to provide this re-education re socialization but the adult educators? Who is going to sustain the processes of education and socialization for all, over their total life-spans? Who other than adult educators are going to teach adults and youth democratic behavior, ways of participation in free market economies, and to be both competition and collaboration at the same time? Who is going to continuously renovate knowledge and skills of citizens for functioning in an ever changing modern economy in this age of obsolescence? How is the civil society to be strengthened and who is going to train people to organize themselves into grassroots organizations within communities? Who is going help people learn and internalize inter -ethnic and interreligious tolerance, and peace?

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**Mridula Seth**

## **Development Sans Literacy; Unsustainable**

Development refers to qualitative and structural changes in the state of an economy. Growth, as compared to development, refers only to quantitative and tangible increase in the GNP. The purpose of development is to enlarge all human choices, not just income, so the human development concept focuses on the entire society, not just the economy. Policy makers are searching not only for development models that are people-centred. They also want development to be more sustainable - to protect the options of future generations. This means that the conventional definition of capital must be broadened beyond the physical capital to include human capital (UNDP, 1993:3).

Entering the 21 century, all nations face the challenge of properly integrating economic growth with human development. Links between economic growth and human development need to be explored. According to the Human Development Report 1995, human development is erected on four essential pillars - productivity, equity, sustainability and power. It regards economic growth as essential but emphasizes the need to pay attention to its quality and distribution and analyses at length its link with human lives (UNDP, 1995:122). Recognition of human development concerns and the global commitment to human development issues emerged prominently at the United Nations Conference on Environment in Rio in 1992, the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993, the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994 and the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995.

Development refers to a relatively stable long range increase in real national income that is accompanied by a change in the attitudes of the people, their motivations, institutional set up, production techniques etc. Development from another angle, may refer to the production and utilisation of material resources or to the enrichment of human resources. The current indicators of development include both the economic and non economic factors (Mishra, 1981).

"Development is for man, by man and of man" (Julius Nyerere). The purpose of development is liberation of Man. The same is true of education. Education provides the instruments for liberation from ignorance and oppression. Education is a very important input in human resource development. Human development is development of the people for the people by the people. Development of the people means investing in human capabilities, whether in education or health or skills, so that they can work productively and creatively. Development for the people means ensuring that the economic growth they generate is distributed

widely and fairly. Development by the people - giving everyone a chance to participate (UNDP, 1993:3).

The human development concept consistently asserts that growth is not the end of development - but that the absence of growth often is. Economic growth is essential for economic development. But to fully exploit the opportunities for improved well being that growth offers, it must be properly managed, for there is no automatic link between economic growth and human progress. Every issue in the traditional growth models must be approached from the vantage point of people. Do people participate in economic growth as well as benefit from it? Do they have full access to the opportunities of expanded trade? Are human choices enlarged or narrowed by new technologies? (UNDP, 1995:123).

Development can be described as a widely participatory process of directed social change in a society, intended to bring about both social and material advancement for the majority. It is well recognised now that the goals of development in any society are: increased productivity; reduction in social differences; peoples' participation; efficiency and capacity utilisation of resources. Improving the quality of life of the people is an endeavour of all government and non governmental interventions. The first Human Development Report (1990) introduced a new way of measuring human development - by combining indicators of life expectancy, educational attainment and income into a composite human development index (HDI). There have been modifications to components of the basic index - specifically the indicators of educational attainment and of income. Educational attainment was originally measured only through the adult literacy rate, but the 1991 Report broadened this measure to incorporate mean years of schooling. The HDI emphasizes sufficiency rather than satiety. One innovative feature of the HDI is the way its components are combined. Each indicator is measured in different units: life expectancy in years of life, schooling in mean years of schooling, income in purchasing-power-adjusted dollars (PPP\$) and adult literacy as a percentage (UNDP, 1994:91).

The slogan of people-centred and people-controlled paradigm of development has acquired new urgency in contemporary context. Renewed and rigorous efforts are needed to promote strategies, as well as capacities, for enhanced citizen participation and governance. More than ever before, the opportunities for local self governance and greater popular participation have to be seized through a determined, sustained and competent effort by the Civil Society itself (Tandon, 1994) "The civil society as an expression of the collective will of the people, their local and communitarian networks etc. has begun to be an important player in influencing strategies and policies for development, not only in the countries of the South but world-wide. Voluntary organizations, citizen groups, consumer associations, NGOs and other actors reside in the civil society and draw their inspiration from that. Thus, a balanced model of development requires a balanced

inter-dynamic and inter-play between the state, the market and the civil society" (Tandon, 1994:333).

The democratization of education is bringing the different peoples of the world together, educational barriers to the sharing of humanity's common scientific and cultural heritage are coming down. Knowledge, know-how, skills, competencies - in sum, human resources - increasingly are determinant for national survival in the global market-place of ideas as much as of goods and services. Education is essential both for the preservation of a people's cultural identity and for understanding and communicating with other peoples. In the emerging global economic, social and cultural environment, it has been agreed, the basic learning needs of all children, youth and adults should be met (UNESCO, 1991:44). According to the World Education Report 1991, with increasing access to, and participation in, formal education, concern about the outcomes of such participation has grown. Literacy continues to be central to that concern, even in countries which have had universal compulsory education. The original literacy threshold of being able to read and write a short simple statement about one's everyday life is now attained in those countries by virtually everybody, yet, it seems that there are higher and more diverse thresholds of literacy competence which substantial proportions of the educated adult population do not attain. Everyday life is constantly changing - in many countries rapidly - and literacy competencies which were considered adequate in an earlier era may no longer be so today. Such findings in a number of industrialized countries during the latter part of the 1980s have caused questions to be raised not only about the effectiveness of education, but also about the nature of literacy itself and its acquisition. Answers to such questions have implications for the design of strategies to ensure that everybody may acquire the literacy skills needed for full participation in modern life.

In India, the Planning Commission was set up in March 1950 to propose "the most effective and balanced utilisation of the country's resources" within the context of the Fundamental Rights and of the Directive Principles of State Policy, and of "the declared objective of the Government to promote a rapid rise in the standard of living of the people by efficient exploitation of the resources of the country, increasing production, and offering opportunities to all for employment in the service of the community". In the First Plan, community development programme was introduced with "social education" which was explained more clearly as literacy, together with instruction regarding the health, recreation and home life of the adults, their economic life and citizenship training. In the Second Plan, key factors of development were identified. The most important single factor in promoting economic development was considered as the community's readiness to develop and apply modern technology to processes of production. Underdevelopment was visualised essentially as a consequence of insufficient

technological progress.

In the Third Plan, Poverty was called a curse, and the cause of social and economic ills. Education was considered a social service on par with health, sanitation, water supply, and housing and its "development" was to assist towards equal opportunities for all. In the Fourth Plan, need for building positive attitudes was highlighted. The Fifth Plan renewed the existing programmes. The Sixth Plan, identified four factors promoting development - growth, modernization, self reliance and social justice. The Seventh Plan, emphasised education, in all its aspects, and people's participation was highlighted as the key to rapid and sustained social and economic development.

The Eighth Plan reiterated emphasis on human development which was considered as the core of all development effort. It was felt that only healthy and educated people could contribute to human well being. Education was considered an investment in the process of development and 100% literacy in the age group 15-35 years was envisaged as the target of this Plan. The Second and Eighth Plans recognised technology as the key to "development". This is an undertone in other Plans too, and 'technologism' is an essential feature of the NLM (Kak, 1993:10) as well as of the paradigm of development (Kak, 1994).

Education is closely associated with purposeful and organised social intervention programmes in the broader spectrum of human resource development. Education is of basic importance in the planned development of a nation. Skills in education include : ability to process information; resources to think clearly; capability to communicate effectively; rational decision making; competencies to understand environment; effective utilization of resources (human and material); personal competence (self esteem); information, technical skills and training for multiplier effect.

Increase in literacy has been associated with a positive impact on knowledge, acceptance and practice of immunization, small family norms, health and family welfare, decline in rate of fertility and decline in mortality rate and other indicators of development (Khan, 1991). Education has to be considered as an investment in people, in an environment where almost all the resources are scarce. It produces high capital assets which can generate a high rate of return. The need for literacy has been emphasised in the World Education Report (UNESCO, 1993): "If the development process continues, if the economy becomes more complex and if basic services improve, in other words, if rural development really begins to happen, then there will come a need for literacy. While it is useless to offer literacy instead of food, housing, water or electricity, it may become uneconomical to offer them without it. Literacy may be a part - but it is still an essential part of the range of basic services which bring direct economic returns as well as direct social benefits".

### **How Does Literacy Accelerate the Pace of Development?**

It is now accepted that progress in development cannot be conceptualised exclusively in terms of economic growth and per capita income. During the latter half of the 1970s, basic needs became a dominant theme. The basic needs approach takes into account physical well being. Among the alternatives to income-based indices measuring development, the three best known and all comprehensive is the Physical Quality of Life Index (PQLI). Three component indicators that make up the PQLI are: infant mortality, life expectancy at age one and literacy. Inclusion of literacy in the component is for the reason that by contributing to productivity, it is a valuable asset in its own right, and may reveal the extent to which social benefits are broadly distributed to women and the poor (Karkal,1991:229).

There seems to be a close relationship between literacy and other indicators of quality of life. The countries where illiteracy is high have low per capita income; infant mortality rate is high; life expectancy is low; mortality and morbidity rates are high; communicable diseases are widespread and number of persons below the poverty line is high. Studies have indicated that there is a strong correlation between several development indicators and level of literacy of the population. Correlation is particularly strong with the level of female education. Increase in literacy has been associated with a positive impact on knowledge, acceptance and practice of immunization, small family norms, health and family welfare, decline in rate of fertility and decline in mortality rate and other indicators of development (Khan,1991).

According to the recommendations of International Commission on Education and Learning for the Twenty-First Century (ICAE, 1994), adult education is not limited to adult literacy nor is it education for the poor. It should not be seen as a compensatory social policy to alleviate poverty, but rather as a tool for human development and self-reliance (human capital). If adults are to learn to participate in development, decision-making at their places of work, or becoming self-reliant and responsible citizens, participatory methods and approaches are essential. If creativity in finding solutions to complex situations is increasingly required in the world of adult life, then this should determine the processes of lifelong learning and education.

Information and communication technologies today have divided people globally into groups based on knowledge irrespective of gender, class and region. While a small section of people in every society are using and developing technology, they are also the main beneficiaries of this advancement. Even though the impact of technology has been felt by all, a large group of people across the world specially in developing countries, are unable to read and write. Government and non government efforts in civilized societies are directed towards ensuring

that the pace of development is accelerated and the benefits accrue to larger numbers in society. Important development indicators are: people's participation; quality of life; utilisation of basic services; equality; trained manpower and quality management. How does literacy promote the process of development?

### **People's participation**

People's participation is becoming an important issue in today's world. The political transition in many countries, the collapse of many socialist regimes, and the worldwide emergence of people's organisations are a part of the process of historic change rather than just isolated events. People are beginning to move to centre stage in national and global dialogues. In view of changing scenario at global, national and regional levels, old concepts and prevalent paradigm of development must now be radically reviewed. Development must be woven around people, not people around development (Jena, 1994). Peter Oakley et al., (1991) have given three interpretations of participation: i) participation as contribution - implies voluntary or other forms of contributions by people to predetermined projects and programmes; ii) participation as organisation - this approach revolves around the origin of the organisational form which would serve as the vehicle of participation. Either such organisations are externally conceived and introduced eg., co-operatives etc. or else they emerge and take structures themselves as a result of the process of participation; iii) participation as a process of empowerment - participation is neither a mere input into a project nor meant to yield certain tangible benefits to the people. It is rather a process which enables the deprived sections to gain control over their own life situation, resources, knowledge and ideology. According to the Human Development Report of UNDP (1993), large number of people in the world are not participating in the process of development. The report identifies the poor, women, minorities, rural people and the disabled as the categories excluded from the framework of participation. The major principles for promoting people's participation are, centrality of people, people's knowledge and institutions and increased access to information. (World Bank, 1992;UNDP,1993).

India is a very vast country of continental proportions with bewildering diversity. Effective democratic decentralization is essential for the efficiency of administration. The passing of 73rd Constitutional amendment in April 1993 is a great landmark in the history of Local Administration in India. The purpose of constituting Panchayati Raj institution is to make the common people participate in the administration of the village. Holding of Panchayat elections every five years becomes a constitutional obligation of the State governments. According to the constitutional amendment, every state having a population of 20 lakhs or above, should have three layers of Panchayats - at the village level, the

intermediate or block level and at the district level. The states having population less than 20 lakhs need to have only village and district level Panchayats.

One of the most important benefits of the constitutional amendment is the formation of Gram Sabhas. Gram Sabha consists of all the voters of a village. Gram Sabha is expected to discuss the development programmes of the village and give guidance to the Panchayats. Panchayat members are accountable to the voters. However, this useful provision will become ineffective unless the people are educated and enlightened. The illiterate lack self confidence and feel a sense of inferiority and so they are likely to remain silent spectators at the Gram Sabhas or they may not even participate in the meetings (Joseph, 1995).

Another very important provision of the constitutional amendment towards the empowerment of the common people is the rules regarding reservation of seats at the Panchayats for the weaker sections of the society. One third of the total seats of the Panchayats at all levels are reserved for women. This is a provision for empowering the weaker sections but illiteracy rate is the highest among women and the people belonging to the scheduled castes and tribes. This is a serious hinderance. In this context, eradication of illiteracy and continuing education become very important and significant for making people responsible citizens.

Reservation of seats for women at all levels in the Panchayati Raj system is a bold step accepted by all the political parties. In a country where the masses are illiterate, what is the impact of this legislation? As a part of a research study of women panchayat leaders, I have recently had the opportunity of interacting with several women panchayat leaders in Madhya Pradesh at all the three levels i.e., as sarpanches, members of block samitis (janpad) and zilla parishads. The women leaders have admitted that if it was not for reservation, they would not have been inducted into the system. It was interesting to find out that through a lottery system, it is decided which village, block or district will have women as the heads of panchayat, block samiti or zilla parishad. Once this decision is made, the search for women, SC/ST candidate begins frantically to fill up the post. In most of the cases where women are nominated/elected as leaders, the husbands play key roles in promoting their wives. I have met several husbands who proudly introduced themselves as "Sarpanch pattis". They actually do all the work because their wives are illiterate. Government officials and NGOs who have faith in the panchayati raj system are making keen and concerted efforts to discourage the Sarpanch pattis and promote the women leaders. It has been realised that literacy is very important for local administration because the constitution amendment envisages the transfer of power under twenty nine heads to Gram Panchayats and the chairperson of the Panchayat will have greater executive powers. However, looking at the ground realities, a sympathetic approach is advocated by many. While the issue of reservation for women is undisputed (at least no one openly disagrees!), there is mixed feeling on whether education should be a

criterion for eligibility. While some people are strongly opposed to illiterate women holding positions of leadership, there is a strong opinion that for a few years, illiteracy should not debar a person from holding office. Many strongly feel that for the next elections, prior notice should be given making literacy an eligibility criterion. This will motivate people to educate girls and have a long term effect. There is no doubt in the minds of all, that literacy is a necessary requirement for effective leadership in local administration and for accelerating the pace of development.

### **Reducing poverty and improving the quality of life**

The last decades have shown that from a qualitative point of view, purely economically oriented development concepts have reduced poverty here and there but reinforced social and regional disparities; the ecological threat has also become an additional crisis area. The central task before the nation is to provide for basic human needs like food, clothing and shelter to make significant improvements in the levels of living of various strata of poverty stricken masses. The objective of national development is not merely adding to economic prosperity, but also to the quality of life.

It has become clear that the poor do not automatically profit from economic growth particularly when their chances to participate in satisfying their basic needs are not improved. The living conditions of the poor also signify lack of participatory opportunities in the economic, social, cultural and political areas. Today, India is free from famine, but Indians are still burdened by want, deprivation, homelessness and lack of opportunity to give themselves through their own efforts, a better standard of living. The motivation and attitudes of the rural people in general, and the weaker sections in particular, towards development have been severely conditioned by the prevailing "culture of poverty" which has primarily been a "culture of silence". The fight against poverty should focus on eliminating the deficits in order to be effective in the long run. This essentially means acquiring relevant social and economic skills (Henner, 1994:206).

Poverty alleviating programmes in the country are the first level of response to overcome the problem. The second level response consists of meeting the needs of the people through supplementing and complementing the large formal educational system through non-formal and open learning systems of education. Government has initiated several income generating programmes with the goal of improving the standard of living of the people. Many of these schemes are for vocational training to develop and upgrade existing skills. Literacy is an essential pre requisite for vocational training. In today's world of advanced technology, vocational skills are essential for employment. Vocational training programmes like TRYSEM cannot be successful with illiterate trainees.

Technological advancement has resulted in improvement in the standard of living of the masses. Technology missions have provided telephones even in remote areas. Many adults are motivated to become literate because they have access to telephones, LPG, electricity and various gadgets which are becoming easily available, creating a demand for people to learn effective use of these items through functional literacy. Some learners are motivated for literacy for reading information in print media and even titles/information on the television. In a report on how literacy has transformed the lives of people in Mizoram, Reghunathan (1996) reports that literacy has facilitated access to messages over radio and television.

#### **Utilization of services and communication strategies**

The United Nations Development Programme 1990 analysis of the last three decades of development focusses on a comprehensive view of human development. Accordingly, national development must focus on mobilising human potential through : access to material resources like good health, education, housing and food; creation of a culture and environment that guarantees freedom, human rights and personal self respect. The latest paradigm on development stresses eco-friendly and sustainability of development.

Development is not merely the provision of opportunities for resource development in the light of appropriate science and technology, but also their actual utilisation and therefore the creation of necessary facilities for such utilisation (Pande, 1989).

Realization of sustainable development in a developing society like India needs forming of a communication strategy which takes into consideration the characteristics of the people in terms of information. Dubey & De (1993:54) have classified a social system in three distinct strata in terms of information. They are: Information holders (scientists, change agents, elites), Information seekers (mostly progressive members) and Aphonic persons who do not have the ability to seek, hold and use information gainfully in their favour. An appropriate strategy for sustainable development should take into account the aphonic people of the social system. The "Demand and Drive" model suggested by Dubey & De (1993:55) caters to the needs of Aphonic persons. The information provided to the people will generate demand which will ultimately drive them to action. For meeting the growing challenges of the Nineties, the information dissemination agencies will be required to develop a set of competencies in their change agents so that the needs of neglected Aphonic people are met. Who are the Aphonic persons unable to communicate their own needs? Most of the nonliterate are aphonic persons lacking communication skills. In the context of the developing world, communication has emerged as an essential ingredient for introducing

planned social change. Of late, human development or human rights development has also become an important component of the development paradigm. The World Bank analysis of Development parameters has included Human Rights as an important ingredient of development. With participation as core of the development process, communication assumes the role of a critical input. Without communication as an effective input, no society can exist, much less develop and survive (Arya, 1994).

Two communication related concepts which have emerged during the past decades are: social marketing and social mobilization. Social marketing is the application of commercial marketing principles to advance a social cause, issue, product or service. Social mobilization is defined by UNICEF as a planned process of enlisting the support and active involvement of all sectors within a society that can play a role in achieving an agreed social objective, conveying the interests and actions of institutions, groups and communities towards the objectives, thereby mobilizing the human resources to reach it and rooting it in society's and the community's conscience to ensure its sustainability. Literacy is a social cause for which social marketing strategies are being used effectively. Social mobilization of the non-literates through need based functional literacy and continuing education programmes can ensure sustained development.

### **Training and Quality management**

Training is essential for achieving quality and replication. Philosophically, a training programme should necessarily address six major objectives, i.e., behaviour, self awareness, technical knowledge base, skills, motivation and orientation. Illiteracy is a handicap in training. In a poor country, where training should have a multiplier effect, illiterate trainees are unable to transfer knowledge and skills effectively. Literacy is an essential pre-requisite for entrepreneurship.

The development process in India is often plagued by time and cost overruns. Faulty planning and implementation lead to delays. Quality is becoming a basic pre-requisite in the global market. The remedy does not lie in merely monitoring and correcting the mistakes which have crept in but in preventing them. This is what the reigning world quality guru, Philip B. Crosby, prescribes to ensure that people as the end users of all the production and development activity get what they have been promised. The mantra of this quality guru is "Do it right the first time". This new quality mantra, which has the concept of zero-defect quality as its basic tenet, is especially relevant to India and other developing countries which can ill afford to waste their resources on re-doing things. The action items necessary to help organisations go on the track of permanent quality will include working on problem-prevention rather than on problem-correction. Literacy is an essential requirement for achieving quality management.

Literacy is a vehicle through which a person can fulfil his/her aspirations, convictions and commitments for self and social development. Literacy enhances communication and organizational skills which are necessary for community mobilization. Literacy strengthens and sustains the process of development. Literacy is both the cause and effect of development. Literacy as a qualitative attribute of the population, is one of the most important indicators of the socio-economic and political development of a society.

Development is the goal of all civilized societies. Development does not come to people. The people move towards development through awareness and assertion. Education is a necessary condition for development. Literacy accelerates the pace of development. Development sans literacy is unsustainable.

World divided  
between  
Information  
rich and poor....  
Knowledge gap  
widens  
every day....

Takers of  
new technology  
move ahead...  
Acquire  
more knowledge  
widening  
the gap  
still further....

LITERACY  
tool  
for development  
Literacy  
fruit  
of development  
Literacy  
backbone  
of education

Education  
pre-requisite  
for development  
DEVELOPMENT  
sans literacy:  
unsustainable

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**INDIAN JOURNAL OF ADULT EDUCATION**

**FORM - IV**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Place of Publication  | Indian Adult Education Association   |
| 2. Periodicity of its Publication  | Quarterly  |
| 3. Printer's Name  | J.L. Sachdeva  |
| Nationality  | Indian   |
| Address  | 17-B, Indraprastha Estate<br>New Delhi - 110 002                                       |
| 4. Publisher's Name  | J.L. Sachdeva  |
| Nationality  | Indian   |
| Address  | 17-B, Indraprastha Estate<br>New Delhi - 110 002                                       |
| 5. Editor's Name   | B.S. Garg, Chairman  |
| Nationality  | Indian   |
| Address  | 17-B, Indraprastha Estate<br>New Delhi - 110 002                                       |
| 6. Name and address of individuals who own the newspaper and partners or shareholders, holding more than one per cent of the total capital | Indian Adult Education Association<br>17-B, Indraprastha Estate<br>New Delhi - 110 002 |

I, J.L. Sachdeva hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

J.L. Sachdeva  
Signature of Publisher

Dated : 28.2.97

N.S. Bonu\*

**'Pada Yatra' a Path Finder  
for  
Literacy Growth in India  
A case study of Banswara district in Rajasthan**

India comes second to China in Population, having 913.6 million in mid 1994 where as it is far behind in its literacy growth. India has about 50% of its adult population as illiterates. Among the adult illiterates, 60% and 36% represent female and male adult population respectively. If one attributes huge population as the cause for such a gigantic illiteracy in India, one should wonder about China's population of 1190.9 million and its illiteracy of about 19% among adults with 27% and 10% female and male population respectively. Foreign rule for many number of years also cannot be taken as a shelter for the cause of India's illiteracy as one can find that countries such as Zimbabwe and Zambia whose adult illiteracy is 22% and 15% respectively (World Bank, 1995: 162). An extract of illiteracy of the above countries is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1  
Comparative Study of Illiteracy of a few countries**

Country	population (million) mid-1994	Adult Illiteracy ( %)	
		female-1995	Total-1995
China	1190.9	27	19
India	913.6	60	48
Zambia	9.2	29	22
Zimbabwe	10.8	20	15

source: world development report 1995

The above statistics reveal that India is almost clouded with illiteracy. Any amount of economic reforms and liberalisation schemes will not help the illiterate population. If the people are to appreciate the government's efforts of welfare schemes, the people should be literate to appreciate them.

\* *The author has the benefit of accompanying twice in Pad Yatra and witnessed the mass literacy movement.*

**History of Adult Literacy Movement in India**

The initiative of adult literacy movement was taken up by Non-Government Agency. The first adult literacy movement in India could be traced out with the 'First All India Adult Education Conference, convened by the Indian Adult Education Society (1937) to confer and explore the possibilities of constituting a central organization responsible to organise the conference in March, 1938. Later on many note worthy non-government sponsored events took place in propagation of adult literacy. The notable among them were National Seminar on Liquidation of Illiteracy, Jabalpur 1950, and All India Conference on University Adult Education, Bhopal 1965 (both organised by Indian Adult Education Association).

**Case Study**

Rajasthan is one of the largest states in India with population of 44 million and a share of 5.25% population of India. As per 1991 Census, Rajasthan lags behind in the literacy growth. Table 5 reveals that Rajasthan's rural literacy and female literacy as lowest in India

**Table 4  
Variation in Literacy Rate % (1991)**

	Highest		Lowest	
	Rate	State	Rate	State
Rural	89.92	Kerala	30.37	Rajasthan
Urban	92.25	Kerala	61.69	Uttar Pradesh
Female	86.17	Kerala	20.44	Rajasthan
Male	93.62	Kerala	51.45	Arunachal Pradesh
<b>Total</b>	<b>89.81</b>	<b>Kerala</b>	<b>38.48</b>	<b>Bihar</b>

**General Trend of Literacy Campaign in Rajasthan**

'Ajmer was the first district in Rajasthan to take up "Total Literacy Campaign" in August 1990. Sincere efforts were made by the district administration to make this awesome assignment a success. (Sekhar : 25) The district administration has taken up the Literacy Campaign as a "People's Movement" . To make the campaign a success innumerable meetings were held at 'Panchayat' level where the senior officers and all other government staff and people's representatives of the 'Panchayat' attended. Cultural programs were

organized to attract the mass and infuse the interest in the rural people. Meetings were well attended and donations from the people received and used for the benefit of the people and to organise the cultural shows. Educated volunteers from the nearby villages were enlisted to propagate literacy and to train the illiterate adults using community centres and Temples as the Centres for assembly and learning. Elected representatives such as 'Panchayat' Presidents, 'Zilla Pramukhs', Members of Legislative Assembly and Members of Parliament were invited to attend these meetings so that a moral boost is given to the volunteer teacher and taught. (Sekhar : 27)

The momentum was gathered and spread like wildfire to other parts of Rajasthan. Banswara district in Rajasthan formed a "Banswara Sampurna Saksharata Samiti" means "Banswara Total Literacy Committee" under the chairmanship of the District Collector.

#### **Banswara District**

It is one of the districts of Rajasthan in India, located in the southern region of the State between latitude 23° 11' and 23° 56' and longitude 74° 47', covering rugged terrain undulated by short ridges, flat-topped hills, plains with black cotton soil. It has a population of 1.155 million, predominantly inhabited by tribals. Of the total population of the district 92.27% live in the rural areas and the rest (negligible) in the urban areas. 51.55% and 48.45% of population relate to male and female respectively. The male literacy consists of 38.16% and female literacy is 8.87% (Table 5)

**Table 5**  
**Comparative Information India, Rajasthan and Banswara**  
**(1991)**

No	Information	India	Rajasthan	Banswara
1	Total Population (millions)	838.50	44.00	1.155
2	Male population (millions)	435.20	23.00	0.587
3	Female population (millions)	403.40	20.90	0.569
4	Urban population as % of total population	23.73	22.88	6.220
5	Total literacy percent	52.21	38.55	26.00
6	Male literacy percent	64.14	54.99	38.16
7	Female literacy percent	39.29	20.44	13.42
8	Rural total literacy percent	44.69	30.37	21.46
9	Rural male literacy percent	57.87	47.64	33.70
10	Rural female literacy percent	30.62	11.59	8.87

Source: B.Sekhar, Project Proposals, Total Literacy Campaign, Banswara District.

### **"Pada Yatra" as a Means of Total Literacy Campaign**

The words 'Pada Yatra' are borrowed from Indian National Language Hindi. 'Pada' means 'Foot' and 'Yatra' means 'Journey'. That is to say journey taken on foot as a path of campaign for achieving the total literacy.

Total Literacy Campaign is a People's Movement for Literacy with the main objectives of 'a massive and total area approach; involvement of the entire community in one form or other; predominantly voluntary in nature; shared joy; clear objectives, sense of excitement on achievement; close cooperation of bureaucracy and voluntary workers; very high commitment and productivity; change in the social outlook of the participants; and shift from cynicism to optimism'. (Sekhar on Project Proposal)

Banswara district has low enrolment rates both among boys and girls. Considering the fact that adult literacy is not total literacy and there is need to address to the age group between 6 to 14, the target group would include between 6 to 35 years for formal and non formal education.

As Banswara district consisting of hilly terrain with non accessibility of mean of communication, 'Pada Yatra' is taken as a means of popularizing the "Saksharata" (literacy) programs and infuse interest in the tribal and down trodden community. The District Collector (head of the district administration) took up active part in leading 'Pada Yatra'. He announces his intention to go on 'Pada Yatra' on a particular route of hilly terrain and requests volunteers to follow him. Musicians and Music, speakers and story tellers, men, women and children including physically handicapped persons follow him. It is observed hundreds and thousands do follow on 'Pada Yatra' to join the main stream to reach a particular spot where musicians perform music on literacy and speakers speak on the importance of literacy. Everything is performed in an easy and understandable local language and approach. This is a novel feature for the hilly tribal to see such a large gathering reaching their hamlets, may be first time in the history of these hamlets. Hither to the district administration used to direct people from the district headquarters to propagate literacy campaign which could not reach the proper place at correct time. As the District head taking lead to reach hamlets by foot, it has awakened the slumber hamlets and all of a sudden activity started everywhere. It is heartening to note that Sekhar, the District Collector has already crossed 1000 kilo meters on his pada yatra. His schedule starts at around 8.00 A.M. and finish at 8.00 P.M. with no break at all except addressing mass at specified points in his 'Pada Yatra'. On certain occasions where a Melas (Mass Village cultural function) conducted in nights, the same occasion was used to propagate his mission and he gathers mass on his way and add to the colour of the Mela. It is a festive occasion, an occasion to infuse interest among masses in the literacy.

'Pada Yatra' is one of the best paths of literacy environment building along with posters, banners, hoarding, wall writing, cinema slides, newspaper articles, village shows such as dramas, dances and exhibitions. 'Pada Yatra' can reach to the nooks and corners of the hilly terrain, hither to no literate stepped in.

#### **Activities taken in 'Pada Yatra'**

As 'Pada Yatra' attracts mass, inculcate and infuse interest on both literate volunteer to teach and illiterate love to be taught. Teacher volunteers and taught are listed at the meetings of 'Pada Yatra' and simple vow is administered by the District Collector to take up the job seriously and sincerely. The volunteer teachers are garlanded and badges of literacy symbol are given. One can see the beam of joy in the faces of volunteers at the time of receiving the badge. They feel it a badge of honour and a badge for dedication, determination and devotion for the literacy movement.

#### **Functions of Teacher Volunteers**

Generally one volunteer is allocated with 10 illiterates who will assemble at a suitable place and at the suitable time, generally in the evening after working hours at a particular hamlet or community centre. The community provides lighting facilities with the local crude lamps. Slates and books are provided by Sakashrta Samiti. 'Learning materials used in the campaign is of a sufficient high level to ensure that learners do not relapse into illiteracy. Such learning materials are based on a new pedagogy Improved Pace and Content of Learning (IPCL). IPCL provides for a reduced duration of learning and an in built mechanism for self assessment by the learner, aimed at enhancing the motivation of learners to further learning. (Sekhar <sup>5</sup> on project proposal)

Banswara being predominantly a tribal district and the influence of extensive use of local 'vagri' dialect was necessary. The IPCL material was modified with the consultancy of State Resource Centre.

The 3-graded primer is provided with space for practice and tests for continuous learner evaluation, the exercises and tests to ensure that the learner achieves the expected levels of literacy. In addition a slate and a lead pencils are provided to the learners. The learning material is also made available to the resource persons, master trainers and volunteers.

It is seen that the elected representatives are also taking active participation in 'Pada Yatras'. 'Panchayat' presidents, Zilla Pramukhs, MLAs and MP address the mass gathering and encourage the literacy campaign.

**Conclusion**

The task of Total Literacy Campaign is overwhelming, but the people of Banswara are equally determined to wipe out the stigma of illiteracy and create forces to generate new momentum for overall development' (Sekhar on Project Proposal).

With no cost basis, tribal mass is involved in the literacy movement and their spare time is used for learning. Learning is not only acquisition of reading and writing skills but also imparting knowledge on health and hygiene, law and order and other matters of day to day life of tribal.

'Pada Yatra' by the District Collector (head of district administration) has infused interest, dedication and determination not only among the learners by also the volunteers, officials and unofficial organisations and persons.

The 'Maha Yagnam' (dedicated attempt with determination) taken up by Sekhar is to be continued and passed on from person to person within the district and elsewhere in Rajasthan other districts and other States of India. If the torch continues to light, one can see the light of literacy everywhere and the darkness of "literary blindness" will be totally wiped out of India. If this procedure is followed elsewhere in the developing nations such as countries in Africa, the literacy specially adult literacy will be geometrically improved.

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**K G Balakrishna Pillai**

## **Income Generating N.F.E. Programme for Fishermen - Some Socio-Psychological Constraints**

It was a Sunday afternoon. Dr.K.S. Pillai and myself reached an area inhabited by Muslim fishermen, in the village 'Koottai' in Tirur Block of Malappuram district of Kerala.

While our friends Sri Gopinath Chennara and Sri Abookottayi were going round the thatched huts collecting some villagers for a group discussion on how to organise some income generating non formal education programmes for them we went straight to the sea shore to have a look at the gentle waves. Some boys were listening to a taperecorded lecture on Holy Quran, lying flat on the ground under the shade of coconut tree.

An old man who was enjoying the cool breeze entered into very friendly conversation with us. He said -"See the motor boat yonder in the west. Several such boats coming from Cochin sweep off the fish available. We the local fishermen who go fishing rowing our boats do not get any good catch. During monsoon when the sea becomes wild we cannot go to the sea. We do not know any work other than fishing. Nor are we prepared to learn any other job for earning livelihood during lean season."

When asked about the earning capacity of women the old man said "Our women are to cook food. That is the only job they know. As per our traditional custom. Our women should not go for any job. They are to remain in home and to manage the home with the money earned by men."

When asked about the development schemes implemented in the area the old man said -"Government have been offering certain loans. But none can avail it here since we believe that it is a great sin to take interest and to give interest."

By this time some sixty villagers had assembled on the sandy ground under the shade of coconut trees in front of an Anganwadi. Majority were women. Some children, more girls and few boys, who were playing nearby joined the group out of great curiosity.

Our discussion started with a silent prayer. "what did you pray for? "I asked. There was no response.

"To relieve us from our poverty, diseases and ignorance?" I asked again. They nodded in the affirmative.

"Have you seen God coming and giving food to some body, giving medicine to anoather and teaching yet another?"

"No" they replied.

Are we not to help ourselves by making use of the brain and hands God has so mercifully given?"

"Yes."

"We are told that your men do not get enough income from fishing. Is it true?"

"Yes."

"We understand they do not know any work other than fishing. Is it true?"

"Yes".

" What can we do to improve your family income?"

" Nothing. We are simply to suffer. It is our fate"

" How many of you have passed matric examination. Hands up."

None could raise their hands.

"Government have made rules reserving so many jobs for the socially and economically backward. But to get a job one should get qualified. Why is it that none of your children could get through matric examination? Is it not because you don't have enough money to send them to good school? If they do not get the minimum level education required how can they earn their livelihood? Should they also suffer as you do? Should you not improve your income for bringing up your children in a better way?"

"Yes, But how? we find no way out."

"You admit that the income of your men is not enough for your family. Why can't you women also do some job so as to augment your family income?"

A lady:- Our work is to prepare food. That is all. another lady:- We, women do not go for any job.

Another lady:- It is not proper for our ladies to go for jobs.

A man:- There is an Achar factory nearby. Some women go to work there. But they are discouraged and ridiculed by others here. Some call them "Achar".

(Murmering and laughter)

A lady:- It is not proper for the women to leave home when their men have gone to the sea for fishing.

"What is the way out? We have to increase our income."

"Give us some work that can be done in our own home-steads."

At this juncture Dr. Pillai intervened. "Years before we had such a discussion with the fishermen of a village in Trivandrum District. They also demanded work. I suggested a dozen jobs that could be done easily by the women at their homesteads. The same jobs I have to suggest here. Can you repair and weave fish nets? Cant you manufacture useful items such as paper cover, plastic bags, soaps, agarbathi, cane-chairs, mats, baskets etc. Book binding is another job. Can't you prepare note books required by the local schools?"

A lady: "We do not know such works."

Another lady: "We have no capital to start such works."

Smt. Bhagya Lakshmi, CNBP coordinator of the Block was also there with us. She stood up and said- "Government has started a scheme for that. Funds are available to be lent to you for such purposes. You will get training in the work you chose. You will get loan at 2% interest to start the work. Only thing you have to do is to apply for a loan. Why don't you apply?"

A lady : We wont apply. It is sin to take interest. It is sin to give interest too.

"Who says so?" I asked

"Our scriptures."

"Have you read it yourselves? How many of you have read your religious books?"

From their facial expression it was clear that none of them have read any religious book. Dr. Pillai could even guess that there were illiterates among them. He asked - "I presume that still some of you do not know how to read. Why cant we start a learning centre where some of you can learn the jobs of your choice along with literacy?"

Abbas, a middle aged man who was keenly following the discussion said - "This discussion was very nice. Such discussions should be held often. Then only we will think of ourselves, we need some jobs that can be done here by men and women. For that we need training, we need money. It is written in our Holy Quran that taking and giving interest is sin. But in the present circumstances we have no other go. There is no impropriety in getting Government loans at low interest rates. We should not take interest. Interest we get from banks should be given to the poor in alms."

This interesting discussion taught us that inspite of the total literacy campaign which is acclaimed to have succeeded in Kerala, there remain certain socio-psychological constraints which have to be tackled by income generating non-formal education programmes so as to accelerate authentic development.

**Manjeet Ahluwalia  
Anuradha Sharma**

## **A Study of Drop-outs in the Literacy Campaign**

### **Introduction**

The phenomenon of drop-outs is one of the most significant factor in the literacy campaign or any programme of adult literacy. It gives the measure of the number of adults successfully completing the programme.

The two most important psychological factors that have been found to influence learning are the achievement motive and self concept of an adult learner. The lack of motivation is more pronounced among learners who are backward culturally, intellectually and economically. This has been a major constraint in the successful implementation of the adult education programme. (Prasad, 1985). Motives are learnt in just a same way as other responses are learnt and reflect the level of development of the society. Dixit and Chaturvedi (1986) have very rightly proposed that the attitude of entire community in general, especially the males needs to be changed if we want our women to be educated and developed.

One of the major problem in successful implementation of the literacy programme for women as reported by Rajyalakshmi (1981) is the negative attitude towards women literacy of the society. Women are still considered, performing secondary role in the society. Self confidence is an outcome of positive self concept (Bhangoo, 1987) and leads to self directing. The lack of self confidence has been found to be an important factor that contributes to dropping out from an adult educational programme in case of rural adult women (Reddy, 1986).

Success of every literacy programme depends on how good the motivators are in the social context. Large inequalities in literacy on gender, between rural and urban areas and among different social groups can be recognized as a socio-political problem. The low value attached to female education in India links with some deep rooted relations with gender or relations like general division of labour and other socio-cultural reasons (Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen, 1996).

From perusal of the above, it can be stressed that the interplay of various factors is responsible for withdrawal behaviour of the drop-outs from the programme.

**Set up of the Study :** The study was planned to investigate the factors responsible for drop-out phenomenon in the Total Literacy Campaign being implemented in Hoshiarpur and Faridkot districts of Punjab and Chandigarh - a Union Territory of India.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study was planned keeping in mind the following objectives :

1. To enlist the various reasons and their relative severity underlying the problem of drop-outs.
2. To study, if there is any relationship of age of the learners with the drop-out behaviour and stage of drop-out.
3. To study the interplay of personality and circumstantial factors causing the problem of drop-out.
4. To make practical suggestions to overcome the difficulties of the drop outs for bringing them into the fold of the programme.
5. To suggest some policy issues in planning adult education programmes for minimising drop-out rate.

### **Methodology**

**Design :** The present study was planned as a cross-sectional survey approach.

In the study, the drop-out criteria was followed with reference to number of months after which the learners discontinue attending the literacy classes.

### **Universe**

The two districts of Punjab namely Hoshiarpur and Faridkot, and Union Territory of Chandigarh were covered for this purpose.

### **Sample**

The study was planned at the end of the 1st stage of literacy phase. The drop outs were identified from the records maintained by the volunteers after thorough probe and verification. Those learners who could not be enrolled at the initial stage were not included in the study. The drop-outs were interviewed for the purpose by both the investigators. Information for this purpose was gathered from 205 learners taking in a random way as per sampling scheme given below:

**Sampling Scheme**

	Districts Village/ Wards/Colonies	No. of drop outs included in the study
District Hoshiarpur	5	70
District Faridkot	5	60
U.T., Chandigarh	3	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>205</b>

**Tools**

A questionnaire was developed for this purpose locally, having two parts, Part-I, dealt with the general characteristics of the drop-outs, Part -II, dealt with the identification and measurement of factors associated with drop-out phenomena. It has content validity.

**Results and Findings**

**Table-I**  
**Age Distribution of Drop-Outs (N-205)**

Age Group (in years)	No.	%
Below - 15	10	4.8
15 - 30	123	60.0
30 - 45	63	30.8
45 +	09	4.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>100.00</b>

From Table - I, it can be observed that 19 (9%) of a total of 205 drop-outs, were less than 15 years or more than 45 years of age. 123 (60% of the total drop-outs were in the age group of 15 to 30 years. 63 (31%) of the drop-outs were in the age group of 30 to 45 years. In a similar study undertaken by Vanja (1989) in Mysore, it was found that 52% of the respondents belonged to the age group of 15-25, 25% belonged to 26-35 and 20% to the age groups of below 15 and above 35. It is difficult to say whether age has anything to do with adult's withdrawal from a class. Further, in our study 40% of the drop-outs belonging to the age group of 15-25 years is quite alarming. This is the age group where learners need to be retained as it has long span of years to participate actively in development of the nation.

**Table-II**  
**Occupational Distribution of Drop-Outs**

Occupational Category	No.	%
Daily Wagers	61	28.8
Agriculture related work/labour	103	50.3
Self Employed	29	14.1
House Wife	10	04.8
Service/Any other	02	01.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Mostly adults enrolling in adult classes have families to support. Work obligations leave them with little time. Table -II shows the distribution of occupational categories of the drop-outs. Majority (50.3) of the drop-outs were employed in agriculture. They are poor and belong to under privileged families who have to work in the field to cope with the needs of the family. They come from the lower strata of the society and have a philosophy that they are living for the family and not for themselves. 61 drop-outs (30%) of the total were working on daily wages or casual workers and have no job security, others were working as agriculture labour in under-paid jobs. 14% of the total drop-outs were self employed in pitcher making, animal husbandry, stitching simple clothes and milk vendors. Their daily tasks prevent them from completing their classes. They cannot leave the work daily for classes.

From the above, it can be concluded that most of the drop-outs are unskilled workers and usually are casual workers without any availability or security of regular work.

**Table-III**  
**Distribution of Drop-outs according to Age & Stage of Drop-out**

Stage of Drop out	< 15		15-30		30-45		45+		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Within a month	-	-	5	4.1	4	6.3	2	22.2	11	5.3
After one month	2	20.0	27	22.0	16	25.4	6	66.7	51	24.9
After two months	3	30.0	45	36.6	15	23.4	-	-	63	30.7
After three months	1	10.0	24	19.5	9	14.3	1	11.1	35	17.1
After four months	2	20.0	9	7.3	8	12.7	-	-	19	9.3
After five months	-	-	10	8.1	9	14.3	-	-	19	9.3
After six months	2	20.0	3	2.4	2	3.2	-	-	7	3.4
<b>Total</b>	10	100.0	123	100.0	63	100.0	9	100.0	205	100.0

Table III shows that majority of 125 (70%) drop-outs withdrew from the programmes within the period of three months. This is a sheer wastage of efforts on the part of learners as well as organisers. The drop-out rate decrease with the passage of time. The present study shows that there is a substantial number of drop-outs in the earlier phase of the classes. It may be attributed to initial non-adjustment to the environment leading to permanent withdrawal. It is suggested that personalised teaching mode I should be followed to minimise drop-outs. The learner should be explained at the onset of the programme that the programme will be of eight to ten months and it will be beneficial only if attended for the complete period. From the above table, it can be further concluded that in the present study the rate of drop-outs is not associated with the age. It can be inferred from the above table that the prevalent belief that advanced age adversely affect learning is largely subjective and has little scientific basis because in the present study there seems to be no significant difference in the rate of drop-outs in the different age groups.

Further it can be suggested that the prospective drop-outs (Learners with acute financial problems, female learners, disadvantage groups), may be identified or be marked at the initial stages and may be followed immediately and persuaded to join. They require individual attention in teaching-learning tasks.

**Table-IV**  
**Rank-wise Distribution of reasons cited by Drop-outs (N-205)**

Sr. No.	Kind of Problem	Yes	%age	No.	%age	Rank
1.	House work/like washing, cooking	113	55.1	92	44.9	I
2.	Family circumstances	84	41.0	121	59.0	II
3.	Financial Problem	80	39.0	125	61.0	III
4.	Reluctant to go to Classes	68	33.2	237	66.8	IV
5.	Out-side work (Agriculture related)	65	31.7	140	68.3	V
6.	Non-interested herself	46	22.4	159	77.6	VI
7.	Repeated Pregnancies	42	20.5	163	79.5	VII
8.	Fatigue after field work	42	20.5	163	79.5	VIII
9.	Careless about going to literacy centre	41	20.0	164	80.0	IX
10.	Nobody was going that is why I have left	35	17.1	170	82.9	X
11.	Ill health	30	14.6	175	85.4	XI
12.	Failure to learn	29	14.2	176	85.8	XII
13.	Migration to other towns	26	12.7	179	87.3	XIII
14.	No benefit from literacy classes	24	11.7	181	88.3	XIV
15.	Irregular classes	23	11.2	182	88.8	XV

16. No Vocational Training provided	22	10.7	18	89.3	XVI
17. Difficulty in learning after Primer -I	21	10.2	184	89.8	XVII
18. Outside work Fuel Collection Labour Fodder Collection	15	07.3	190	92.7	XVIII
19. Going to be married soon	11	05.4	194	94.6	XIX
20. No proper physical facilities in the Centre	09	04.4	196	95.6	XX

The table IV shows the various reasons of withdrawal from the adult education classes as expressed by drop-outs. The reasons were ranked. A drop-out has mentioned one or more reasons. The important reasons of drop-out mentioned were busy in household chores most of the time, Family circumstances (social-cause); non-availability of time for earning livelihood i.e. financial reasons; shyness or reluctance to go to the class, due to various intrapersonality traits and interaction of these with the social problems of the family and locality. Other reasons mentioned for dropping out were, ill-health, repeated pregnancies, going to be married, unattractive classes, inability to learn after primer -I.

The qualitative reasons mentioned by drop-outs were pressure of work, marriage which necessitated leaving village, migration to city in search of living, temporary study, lack of interest due to age, feeling of fatigue due to day long work, excess work in agriculture and timings of class and work coincide.

#### **Field Observations**

It was observed that every time we went to the classes the faces were different. The record kept is poor. People join and leave.

In the training of field functionaries, it should be made clear that the drop-outs are bound to occur and the functionaries should not get discouraged by it rather they should minimise it by adhering to personalized teaching model and interacting with the large number of people of the society.

Urban people, being more exposed to multi-media thus have more desire to learn. This may be developed due to higher-learning environment around. On the other side rural adult learners are more attached to home, animal rearing. They

have larger families. They find reading easy if the content is related with their surroundings. Their achievement motivation level is very low.

Males, drop easily and are not easily accessible. Urban adult learner enrol in large number but are relatively more prone to withdrawal, but they have a desire, tolerance and their general awareness level is quite high. their higher rate of drop-out can be associated with the relatively easily available work in the cities and being economically independent. It has been observed that dropping out is just out of habit of not being successful in any formal schooling and continuity of the same factors.

Conclusion: It was observed that environment building was more successful phase than actual learning. However, the focus of present study primarily pertains to ascertain the reasons for the withdrawal of adults from the literacy classes. The multiple reasons were cited by the drop-outs. There were differential reasons on : gender. The major reason for dropping out of women was the household drudgery which caused tiredness and allowed no time to attend the literacy classes. For males it was unemployment, poverty and casual labour. The coupling factor was general inhibition from the family and discouragement rendered by the family and the society. Other reasons were :

- i) non-individualisation of the programmes according to the need and inner capabilities of the learners;
- ii) non-linkages of the literacy classes with skill development; and
- iii) uninteresting learning materials.

Reasons other than these broad categories, were shyness of coming out of their houses, shyness due to their age or apathetic attitude towards the programme. Non-breaking of the community communication channels by the electronic and folk media was a barrier to progress of social programme.

One the important finding of the study is that age has nothing to do with the adult withdrawal; 41% of the drop-outs came from the age group 15-25 years which seems to be quite high, but nothing can be interpreted at this stage as the data about the denomiantor is not available but study alarms about the withdrawal of a high percentage in the younger age group which has a long span of years to participate in the development of the nation. Another important finding of the study is that the most of the drop-outs are unskilled and casual workers.

Finally it can be concluded that eventually every thing veers around the attitude of the adult learner. It is of course fair to argue that socially and

economically backward are the least interested in learning. The adult education programmes without any monetary benefit to the learners, field workers and without any relatively permanent infrastructure has to be understood to its logical end.

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S. Beena

## **Role and Contribution of Kalajatha Artists in Literacy Campaign : A Case Study**

The National Literacy Mission was established in 1988, with the objective of revitalising and strengthening the existing adult education programmes in the country and to impart functional literacy to 80 million illiterate adults in the age group of 15-35 years by 1995. Under NLM the environment building programme was given great importance so as to create favourable climate for the programme.

Mass mobilisation included rallies, Pad Yatras, Kala Jathas, competitions, discussions, and full utilisation of print and visual media. Kala Jatha is used as a powerful means of communication at the grass root level. In Kala Jatha, various multidimensional subjects are covered within the stipulated time. In Durg district in Madhya Pradesh immunisation, family welfare, leprosy eradication, girls education, co-operative movement, women empowerment etc. were included in the performance. This study reveals the role and contribution of Kala Jathas in the literacy campaign.

### **Meaning**

Kalajatha artists are those potential voluntary artists who use their artistic skills for a specified goal. They are entrusted to communicate messages in local dialect and folk culture.

### **Need and Significance of the Study**

Artists are real grass-root mediators who provide necessary input to villagers and VTs, thus brings out healthy atmosphere for learning process. The impact of Kalajatha is sometimes short-term but they generate continuity and spontaneity to the educational process. This study will provide a fertile ground for further research and development.

### **Objective of the Study**

The study tries to analyse the role of Kalajatha in the total literacy campaign. The specific objectives are as follows:-

- a) to study the socio-economic profile of artists.
- b) to analyse the level of integration and interaction between villagers - artists and vice-versa.

### Research Methodology

Durg district is situated in South-west of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh. Durg Zilla Saksharaata Samiti is located in district headquarter and consists of 13 Kalajatha troupes with a total of 200 artists.

Out of 13 Kalajatha troupes, 9 were randomly selected. This even included remote areas dominated by Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The ratio of sample artist to artist is 1:2.

**Table No. 1.1**  
**Kala Jatha (Sample Size) of Durg District**

S.No.	Name of Kalajatha Area	Total Artists	Sample size
1.	Dondi	13	6
2.	Gunderdehi	13	9
3.	Patan	13	5
4.	Damdha	13	5
5.	Gurur	13	7
6.	Bemstara	13	5
7.	Dandilahara	13	5
8.	Rajhara	13	8
9.	Saja	13	5
Total :		117	55

A case study method was used to provide an indepth knowledge about participation, status and profile of artists. An interview schedule was administered to enhance the exploratory research. Primary and Secondary sources of data were used to extensively cover all aspects.

### Findings and Discussion

The Kalajatha respondents of rural and tribal areas belong to lower and middle income groups. 79.79% of the artists were of 15-35 years of age group and were active youth participants within the community.

**Table No. 1.2**  
**Level of Education of Artists**

S.No.	Level of Education	Frequency	%
1.	Primary Education	2	3.63
2.	Middle School	15	27.27
3.	Higher Secondary	25	45.45
4.	Graduate	8	14.54
5.	Post Graduate	3	5.45

The above data clearly depicts strong inclination of artist towards education. The occupational pattern show wide variety. Farmer (25.45%), service in public and private sector (12.72%), Teacher (7.27%), Kotwar (3.63%) Tailor (1.81%), unemployed (14.54%) and 16.36% students. This clearly shows that people with artistic temperament joined literacy mission irrespective of their profession. Most of the artists joined Saksharata during the Total Literacy Campaign. 58.18% of the artists were motivated by other literacy volunteers while other were school teachers (5.45%), neighbours (9.09%) and 29.09% joined the programme on their own.

The themes of Kalajatha ranges from education, girls education, women empowerment, health, hygiene, family planning, emergency relief measures and precaution, scientific innovation, upgradation of technology etc. 100% of the respondent felt that small group approach was most effective for jatha performance.

All the artists prefer to communicate in Chhattisgarhi (local dialect). 90.90% artists stated that they contacted villagers before any performance to discuss the venue while 9.09% gave no response.

**Table No. 1.3**  
**Evaluation of Performance by Artists**

S.No.	Evaluation	Frequency	%
1.	Interaction with Spectators	20	36.36
2.	Publication through Paper/print media	71	60.60
3.	Others	12	21.81
4.	No Response	2	3.63

Kalajatha artist evaluate their performance by various methods. 60.60% judge after seeing captions in newspaper about the public participation. 36.36% judge only after interacting with the spectators.

**Table No.1.4**  
**Role of Kala Jatha Artists**

S.No.	Statements	Opinion		
		Yes	No	Total
1.	Knowledge about health and hygiene	80 (68.37)	37 (31.62)	117 (99.99)
2.	Helps to know about organising people	46 (39.31)	69 (58.97)	117 (98.28)
3.	Knowledge about significance of learning	84 (71.79)	33 (28.21)	117 (100)
4.	To identify social evils of society	62 (52.99)	55 (47.01)	117 (100)
5.	Knowledge about vaccination	63 (53.85)	54 (46.15)	117 (100)
6.	Help in developing congenial atmosphere for learning	95 (81.19)	22 (18.81)	117 (100)
7.	Knowledge about voting age	40 (34.18)	77 (65.82)	117 (100)
8.	Knowledge about public distribution system etc.	45 (38.46)	70 (59.82)	117 (98.28)

*NOTE : Figures in paranthesis indicate percentages.*

41.81% of artists received suggestions from spectators at different venues of performance. 50.90% of the motivated spectators contacted artists after the show. They were enthusiastic and elevated after seeing the play and even 49% joined in some form of social welfare activities. These activities involves sanitation, community health, literacy work. Most of the artists considered themselves as social workers. Trends showed that most of the artists got mental satisfaction after an enactment, 15.56% financial satisfaction, 21.80% received prestige and social recognition in community.

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L.A. Okukpon

## **Mobilising Women in Nigeria for Literacy in the 21st Century**

### **Introduction**

Illiteracy amongst women in Nigeria is a great hinderance in their social, economic, educational and political advancement. It is also an obstacle to progress and self fulfilment. Majority of women remain unaware of happenings around them. Some are just contented being wives and mothers without lifting a hand to help themselves out of their awkward situation in order to redeem their self image and live a self-actualized life. It is only when women are prepared to help themselves by realising that they too have potentials and can contribute their mite in development of the country that the issue of illiteracy can be properly addressed.

Illiteracy amongst women in Nigeria is still very high. 61% of women are illiterate as compared to 37.7% men. (1994 Blue Print on Family Support Programme). This figure is on the increase because of the erroneous impression already created in the minds of malefolks that the place of a woman is in the kitchen. Hence emphasis is not placed on literacy programmes for women. As a result the illiterate women remain the helpless casualties arising from the imposition of male dominance over female literacy programmes in the country.

Ahmed (1992) stressed that 35% of our school age children are not in school and this could swell the number of female illiterates sooner or later. Moreover, Ampene (1980) revealed that however well endowed a country may be in rich natural resources, as long as the majority of its people remain illiterate, the quality of life of that country will forever remain low. In addition Omolewa (1990) lamented the situation when he opined that, it is sad to observe that up to date, we do not have reliable figures on our state of illiteracy and the division according to age, sex, location, occupation and religion.

In our bid to mobilise women for literacy in the 21st century, what should be uppermost in our minds is the plans put in place for continuing literacy for women in Nigeria. It is not just enough teaching them the skills of reading, writing and computation but rather, to enable them improve upon these acquired skills by putting them into use regularly for the rest of their lives.

### **Mobilising Women for Participation in Literacy Programmes**

The term mobilisation is referred to as to make or become ready for use or action. It could be regarded as a way of organising women to act together so as to find ways of fighting their own fears and feelings of inferiority as it relates

to literacy programmes. It also entails working towards women having equal rights with their male counterparts.

Mobilising women for literacy also enables them to take action and to enable them understand their place in society.

The general aim of mobilising women is to:

- i) Stimulate action to advance equality for them;
- ii) eliminate all forms of discrimination against them;
- iii) integrate them in the development process; and
- iv) increase their participation in public life and in literacy programmes.

Mobilising women for co-operative action in literacy programmes therefore, enables them reject some aspects of their culture which failed to encourage their education and active participation in the programme.

Participation with respect to literacy programmes is a process of cooperative action in which groups of women willingly share the responsibilities and consequences of a common undertaking or the achievement of a particular task. Uwakah (1981). Participation is therefore one of the pressing concerns of mobilising women, and it is the crucial factor which determines the impact and final success of any literacy programme. The kind of literacy programmes in which the women would participate, is one that would enable them overcome the immediate problems plaguing them presently in Nigeria. That kind of literacy programme according to Ramdas (1990) must mean the capacity to empower them in ways which will meet their fundamental needs.

Oduaran (1996) emphasized that there are private individuals who are interested in providing literacy education services for a token amount. This should be utilised for broader participation of women. However, the problem envisaged is that most of the educational programmes mounted for women, which would have increased their participation, have not made considerable impacts. Consequently, the search for ways to make the programmes have the desired effect have given rise to new trends for mobilising women for literacy in the 21st century.

### **New Trends for Mobilising Women for Literacy in the 21st Century**

Nigeria has been rated the 9th illiterate country in the world. Based on this rating, the illiterate women in Nigeria must be made aware of their inadequacies. This can only be achieved through diligent and sustained enlightenment campaign against illiteracy, which will be brought to their door steps. Video films of literate women in Nigeria and that of other countries in the world, as well as their contribution to national development should be shown to these illiterate women. This gesture will motivate and sustain their interest in literacy programmes

earmarked for them. Slogans and messages that touch the heart of the people using leaflets, posters and billboards should be used to reach the women in order to achieve the goals of literacy. The following are some of the messages:

- a) Illiteracy is nauseating and should be eliminated
- b) Help to wipe out illiteracy from our society
- c) Illiteracy is a problem of developing countries
- d) With illiteracy, we shall remain backward
- e) Literacy is the key to the outside world
- f) Literacy helps to build self-confidence in people

Various researches have shown that women, mostly in northern Nigeria and some parts of southern Nigeria, must seek their husband's permission before they can join the literacy programmes planned for them. How can this trend be checked?

This can be checked by carrying the campaign for the eradication of illiteracy amongst women to our malefolks, and also plead with them to encourage and motivate their wives, sisters, mothers and daughters who are illiterate to join the literacy classes already in existence in their localities. This will enable them acquire the basic skills of literacy.

The print and electronic media should join in the crusade and mobilisation of women by helping to fund or organise literacy programmes, since their own survival and popularity depends solely on literacy. On the other hand, companies and private philanthropists should consider it necessary to fund the cost of making more women literate.

The Nigerian prisons should not be left out in mobilising women for literacy in the country. Literacy classes should be organised for female inmates so as to make them literate in order to prepare them for useful and active life in the society. In addition, each literate Nigerian woman should endeavour to teach one illiterate Nigerian woman to become literate so that the country can move forward and not remain static in both scientific and technological development.

### **Planning Literacy Programmes for Women**

The eradication of illiteracy amongst women involves the use of human and material resources so as to be able to plan, take important decisions and transform such decisions into action. The success or failure of any literacy programme depends on how effectively the human and material resources are mobilised to achieve desired results.

The planning of an effective literacy programme for women must consider the objectives and the content of the programme. The content of the curriculum

must reflect the needs and problems of women in the country. The content should include the following:

- i) Basic/functional/post literacy education;
- ii) Family life and health education;
- iii) Political awareness education;
- iv) Agricultural education including animal husbandry; and
- v) Population education. This includes family planning and population stabilisation.

Asiedu and Oyedeji (1985) emphasized that the content of literacy programmes can contribute immensely towards motivating illiterates to enrol in literacy programmes. Be that as it may, a critical look at the above content of the literacy programme shows that it goes beyond the shallow, traditional curriculum reserved for women. The outlined curriculum content emphasizes the development of women in all its ramifications. When this is achieved, it will help the women develop their capabilities and extend their happiness within their local conditions and systems in which they live.

Another important factor to be determined while planning literacy programmes for women is the political will or commitment of the government. If the government is interested in eradicating illiteracy amongst women, it would do its best to find resources available within local communities and help in funding the programme to ensure sustainability and attain results within a very short period of time.

The acquisition of literacy education will equip the women to participate in the handling of their own affairs as it relates to them. Literacy directed towards increased productivity enables the women become aware of the need for social and economic improvements which will enhance their standard of living and communication patterns.

After the Beijing World Conference a Federal Ministry of Women Affairs with a State-wide network has been established in Nigeria. The women had built on the Better Life Programme (BLP) initiated by the former first lady Dr. (Mrs) Maryam Babangida and now the Family Support Programme (FSP) put in place by the incumbent First Lady of Nigeria Mrs. Maryam Abacha. These programmes served a focal point for the women and a concrete monument of their effort towards literacy programmes and nation building. Literacy education has thus become one of the ways of broadening the capabilities of women to enable them contribute their energy towards national development.

Akinpelu (1990) opined that literacy education makes women favourably disposed to welcome and accommodate change or even direct the course of change so as to contribute towards the development of the country.

Ramdas (1990) emphasized that through literacy programmes women become aware of their social and legal rights, learn and improve income generating skills, acquire a voice in the affairs of the family and move towards equal participation in the process of development and change.

Literacy education enables women to be engaged in productive activities that will allow them some degree of financial independence. It also enables them to take their rightful place in society and by so doing attain the goal of achievement in their chosen career. Moreover, literacy creates the right atmosphere which allows women to realise their full human potentials, as individuals and members of the society.

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## **Farmers Opinion about "Chaupal" - The Farm Telecast**

Television has been widely accepted as a powerful audio-visual medium. It was formally introduced in India in 1959 primarily to impart education and to promote rural development. Since then it has travelled a long way. During the past few years there has been a vast expansion in the television coverage as well as in the number of television sets both in the urban and rural areas. Launching of INSAT-2B in 1993 gave a boost to the already expanding television network. The television programme could now be transmitted to remotest part of the country through this satellite. Regional telecast also started with the launching of the satellite.

At present, television is the most popular and effective means of information, communication, entertainment and instruction. Keeping in view its enormous potentiality to disseminate information to the rural, remote and inaccessible audiences, Doordarshan Kendra, Lucknow started a farm telecasts-"CHAUPAL" from Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup> 1993 as a programme of 30 minutes duration for the telecast of talks related to agriculture, animal husbandry and allied areas. It is telecast five days a week from Monday to Friday.

The programme is fairly new and there were no research studies to know the opinion of farmers about this programme. Keeping this in view the present study was undertaken to know the opinion of the farmers about the "CHAUPAL" with a view to suggest suitable measures to increase the effectiveness of the farm telecast.

### **Methodology**

The study was conducted in Bareilly district of Uttar Pradesh. Two villages Mudia and Rithora of Bithrichainpur block were selected purposively owing to their nearness to the research institute. A total of 55 viewers/respondents were selected randomly, out of which 22 were from Mudia and 33 from Rithora village.

Opinion in the present study was conceptualised as the image held by the respondents regarding the Chaupal telecast i.e. what farmers perceive Chaupal telecast to be and how do they look upon its uses and impact on society and individuals. Past researches on "opinion about farm telecast" indicated that certain background variables effect people's opinion about a programme. Among these, two important ones viz., socio-economic status (SES) and viewing frequency were

selected for the present study to see their association with the opinion of the respondents about Chaupal telecast. Opinion of respondents was measured on the following aspects.

- (i) Liking of Chaupal.
- (ii) Suitability of timing.
- (iii) Adequacy of duration.
- (iv) Suitability of content.
- (v) Extent of usefulness.
- (vi) Utilization of information provided
- (vii) Preference of days.
- (viii) Desired mode of presentation.

## **Results and Discussions**

### **Liking of Chaupal Telecast**

The study revealed that majority of the respondents (72%) found the programme good. On the basis of socio-economic status (SES) there was not much difference in the liking of the Chaupal telecast. But on the basis of viewing frequency there was a difference. The regular, 4 days viewers, frequent or occasional viewers found the programme better than others.

### **Suitability of Timing of Chaupal**

There was not much difference in the opinion of the respondents about suitability of timing of Chaupal on the basis of socio-economic status or viewing frequency. Majority of the respondents found the timing (6.30PM) suitable, except a few who did not consider the present timings very suitable and suggested that it should be adjusted according to season. More specifically, they stated that during summer they work in their field till sunset and therefore, proposed to have the Chaupal telecast after sunset, at around 7.30 PM. For winter season they found the present timing of the programme perfectly suitable.

### **Adequacy of Duration**

The Chaupal is telecast for half an hour from 6.30 PM. for five days in a week. An overwhelming majority (81%) felt that the present duration was adequate for telecasting the Chaupal. They did not differ in this aspect on the basis of their viewing frequency. However, the percentage of respondents considering the present duration inadequate was slightly more in case of high SES than those belonging to low and medium SES categories.

Those, who did not feel the present duration adequate suggested that it should be of 45 minutes or one hour duration. They felt that half an hour duration is too short to have good entertaining items as well as effective talks or groups discussions on any agricultural topic.

### **Suitability of Content**

96% respondents found the content of the programme suitable and according to needs. It was also seen that there was not much difference in the opinion of respondents about the suitability of contents in the three SES categories except that a few respondents from the high SES category found the content of programme unsuitable. On the basis of viewing frequency, not much difference was found in the opinion of respondent about the suitability of content of Chaupal telecast. Only a few respondents from the regular viewers and frequent viewers category found the content unsuitable and suggested that women's and children's programme should also be included in Chaupal. They further suggested that very few programmes were telecast on animal husbandary, health and hygiene, setting up of small scale industries etc. The frequency of such type of programmes needs to be increased because Chaupal is basically oriented towards the upliftment of rural people.

### **Extent of Usefulness**

Majority of respondents (60%) found the programme highly useful. On the basis of SES it was seen that more number of respondent in the high SES category found the programme highly useful than the respondent in other SES category. Greater percentage of regular, 4- days viewers, and frequent viewers found the programme highly useful than the respondents belonging to other categories formed on the basis of viewing frequency.

The result suggests that the perception of usefulness increases with the increase in one's periodicity of viewing the programme. Hence, the extension workers should motivate the casual and occasional viewers of Chaupal to watch it regularly.

### **Utilization of Information**

The study reveals that majority of the respondents (67%) utilized the information provided in Chaupal telecast. It can be concluded that there was no significant difference among the respondents on the basis of SES on this aspect. However, viewing frequency did affect the information utilization. More number of occasional and casual viewers were found to utilize the information than the other categories formed on the basis of viewing frequency.

**Preferences of Days**

Majority of the respondents (60%) desired that Chaupal should be telecast daily, or at least 6 times a week. There was no significant difference among the respondents on this aspect on the basis of their SES. However, majority of regular viewers and 4 days viewers desired to have the programme daily while about half of the frequent viewers and occasional viewers expressed similar views. The observation is logical also as the regular and 4 days viewers are supposed to be more interested in Chaupal in comparison to other categories of viewers.

**Mode of Presentation**

The Chaupal telecast is usually in the form of talk, interview, reply to letter etc. It was found that interview mode of presentation was preferred the most, followed by talk and reply to letters. Further it was found that there was no difference among the respondents on this aspect on the basis of their SES. It was also found that majority of regular viewers and only 4- days viewers preferred interview than any other mode of presentation.

**Conclusion**

The findings of the study indicate that the respondents liked the Chaupal telecast and felt that it provided new information to them. Majority of the respondents opined that the present timing and duration of the programme were suitable for them while a few wanted, the timing of the programme to be adjusted according to season and the duration to be increased to 45 minutes or one hour. It may be difficult for the Doordarshan authorities to telecast the programme for one hour, daily so they could atleast increase the timing of two telecast per week to 45 minutes. Further, the respondents suggested that the programme should be telecast daily or atleast 6 times a week, and more number of programmes should be in the form of interview.

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## **Adult Education News**

### **Fifth Research Methodology Course**

A two-week Research Methodology Course was organised by the Indian Adult Education Association in New Delhi on December 10-20, 1996. 21 participants from different parts of the country attended.

Dr. GD Sharma, Secretary, University Grants Commission inaugurated the course. He emphasised the need to make research people-oriented. He said researcher should study the social status, the paradigm, psyche, culture and the like. The research should be of benefit to the people.

Dr. Sharma said "Research is painful but rewarding". It is painful because youthful years are spent in libraries but if something worthwhile comes out, it is a great achievement.

Problem-solving, he said should not be at a superficial level as it might not be of any benefit to the people. Dr. Sharma emphasised problem setting before attempting to solve a problem. Research should be a team work, he emphasised.

A good researcher should not trust any one in the world, he said, not even his own inferences. Research should speak for itself. It should generate knowledge and give specific answers.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Shri JL Sachdeva, Director, IAEA said that adult education research studies should come out of the portals of the universities and make their way into the grassroot level. He said that in-depth studies were needed to make literacy campaigns a people's movement. Meaningful research studies would go a long way in strengthening the programme, he added.

Smt. Kamala Rana, Vice-President, IAEA in her presidential remarks said participatory research has to be done intensely with depth and commitment.

Shri NC Pant, Joint Secretary, IAEA proposed a vote of thanks.

During the Course, Shri BS Garg, President, IAEA also addressed the participants. He said that there was not much demand for literacy. If research could find the causes, it would be beneficial for the programme, he said.

The subjects covered in the course were (a) Research in Adult Education, Continuing Education and Population Education - the efforts made so far; (b) Guidelines for Preparation of Research Design with special reference to Adult and Population Education; (c) Identification of Research Topics in Non-Formal, Adult and Continuing Education; (d) Tools and Techniques used in Research;

(e) Sampling Techniques; (f) Methods of Research : Historical and Survey Methods; (g) Action and Applied Researches in Adult Education : Case Studies; (h) Experience and Problems of Conducting Research at Grass Root Level; (i) Linking Population Education with Literacy Programme: Processes and Problems; (j) TLC Evaluation : Processes and Problems; (k) Perspectives in Adult Education Research; (l) Research in Adult Education - Priorities and Issues; (m) Statistical Analysis of Data; (n) Dialogical and Participatory Researches; (o) Research in Population Education; and (p) Computer Analysis of Data.

In addition to IAEA own faculty the resource support was provided by Dr. NK Ambasht, Prof. & Head, Department of Non-Formal Education, NCERT; Dr. JP Gupta, Additional Director, DAE; Dr. Mona Jabi and Dr. Rajyalakshmi, Council for Social Development (CSD); Dr. MM Ansari, former Director (Research), AIU; Dr. SY Shah, Director Incharge, Adult Education Unit, JNU; Dr. Pramila Menon, NIEPA; Dr. Mridula Seth, Reader, Lady Irwin College; Shri Mushtaq Ahmad, Chairman, National Institute of Adult Education (NIAE); Dr. PK Bhargava, NIAE; Prof. MR Saluja, former Professor, Indian Statistical Institute; Shri Chandan Datta, PRIA; and Dr. YP Aggarwal, NIEPA.

#### **Valedictory address**

Prof. Kuldeep Mathur, Director, National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) was the guest of honour at the valedictory function. He said that dropouts has been a constant problem in educational programme. But at the same time there are many who continue inspite of difficulties. The researcher should not only study the problems of dropouts but also of persisters. The reasons which encourage people to continue in the centre should be studied, he stressed.

The main focus of adult education research should be to empower people and for their active participation in decision-making, Prof. Mathur emphasised.

Smt. Kamala Rana presided.

Study visits to Directorate of Adult Education(DAE), Council for Social Development(CSD), and National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration(NIEPA) were arranged.

#### **Central Zone Conference on Adult Education**

The Indian Adult Education Association in collaboration with Asha Kala Kendra, Mhow organised the Central Zone Conference on Adult Education in Mhow, Indore on March 8-9, 1997.

Inaugurating it, Shri BL Patidar, Deputy Speaker, Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly said that commitment of society was necessary to wipe out illiteracy from the country. If society comes forward for a cause, political support would also be available. He said that if all educated people undertake literacy work, it could be eradicated in a very short time.

Shri Patidar said that literacy is an entry to the world of knowledge and development and should not stop only at that point. He said illiteracy eradication programme should be accelerated so that it is wiped out within the next three years. India in no case should enter 21st century with illiterate people, he stressed. He also emphasised the need to provide free and compulsory education for the children in the age-group 9-14.

Shri BS Garg, President, IAEA in his address emphasised the need to involve voluntary organisations in the literacy programme. He said that these organisations could effectively motivate the non-literates and the volunteers. Shri Garg said 'to get desired results the religious organisations and elderly people should be actively involved in the programme'. He said that in some Asian countries compulsions have been introduced to make people literate. We should also think of some compulsions, if people were not coming forward on their own, he opined.

Shri Bhai Bhagwan, Vice-President, IAEA and Zonal Chairman in his address said that adult education should enable the people to become good citizens. He said people themselves will have to come forward to demand literacy as politicians at many a times might not be interested in the programme. The adult education programme, he said, should develop nationalism in the people.

Shri KC Choudhary, General Secretary, IAEA in his introductory remarks said that education of migrant labour, tribals should be given priority in the literacy programme in the central zone. He said that the main aim of literacy education should be to bring neo-literates in the national mainstream.

Earlier, Shri SC Khandelwal, General Secretary, Asha Kala Kendra welcomed the chief guest and the participants.

#### **Dube Honoured**

Shri SD Dubey, Secretary, Indore Adult Education Association was honoured for his life time contribution to adult education during the inaugural

function of the conference. Shri Dubey born in 1908 has devoted his entire life in the promotion of adult education. He has worked closely with Dr. Frank Labauch and Dr. HB Richardson in the late 30's.

Shri AL Bhargava, Associate Secretary, IAEA and Secretary, Central Zone proposed a vote of thanks.

### **Plenary Session**

In the plenary session, Shri NC Pant, Joint Secretary, IAEA presented the Working Paper. In his paper he emphasised the need to involve Panchayati Raj and Cooperative Institutions in promotion of literacy and continuing education.

Stressing the need to promote literacy among women, Shri Pant said that active participation of women organisations was essential for giving a boost to the programme of literacy education for women.

### **Discussion**

In the discussion after the presentation of working paper the following suggestions were made:

- a) rewards and awards should be given to the volunteers
- b) the training of volunteers should be strengthened
- c) The approach of each one teach one or two should be stressed as the organisation of a centre for 10 non-literates by a volunteer is a difficult task
- d) Panchayat should be given responsibility to achieve time bound literacy in the area
- e) Campaigns should be of short duration and single focussed.

### **Group Discussion**

The delegates were divided into two groups to discuss the following sub themes:

- a) What should be the strategy to achieve 75% literacy in the central zone?
- b) The problems of the economically weaker sections like SC/ST and women and the efforts made to overcome the problems
- c) Strategies for Continuing Education

About 100 delegates attended the conference.

**Recommendations**

After two days of deliberations the zonal conference made the following recommendations:

1. The Central Zone Conference comprising the states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh appreciates the efforts made by NLM to spread literacy through the literacy campaigns in the zone.
2. But it feels that literacy campaigns which were meant for a short period have gone for about eight years. It is the right time to have a fresh look at the campaign approach so that the goal of total literacy is achieved by the end of the century.
3. The Conference feels that training of functionaries is quite weak in the campaign approach particularly of the volunteers. Unless the training is strengthened, the desired results would not be achieved. The daily allowance in the training of volunteer should also be suitably increased.
4. The Conference notes that the approach of imparting literacy thru<sup>m</sup> three IPCL Primers has not worked well. At many places the three primers are not completed. It, therefore, feels that there should be only one Primer which should be completed before taking the district to the PL/CE stage.
5. The Conference feels that enrolment of learners per centre is rarely achieved. It therefore recommends that one volunteer should be asked to teach one or two learners only. This will help to get correct picture of learners made literate.
6. The Conference strongly recommends that adequate incentives, rewards, awards must be announced by the NLM at the earliest so that volunteers take active interest in the programme. To get continued support of teachers it is also essential to provide some incentives to them also.
7. It recommends that eradication of illiteracy in a village should be entrusted to the Panchayat. It should be given time-bound programme and provided funds and facilities for the purpose.

8. The Conference recommends that the uncertainty regarding continuation of University Departments of Adult and Continuing Education beyond 31st March 1997 should be removed immediately so that continuity in their programme is maintained.
9. Monitoring and concurrent evaluation should be rigorously undertaken for every project so that deficiencies are corrected at the implementation stage.
10. The Conference feels that literacy could be effectively linked with skill development if it is made part of development schemes. This it feels will also inspire the learners to demand literacy.
11. The Conference recommends that Continuing Education Centre must have a permanent place. It feels that the recommendation of Arun Ghosh Committee for adding two rooms to the existing public building should be speedily implemented.
12. It feels that a Continuing Education Centre (CEC) will become a Community Education Centre only when the Prerak is made a full-time person and his/her wages should not be less than the minimum wages prevalent in a state.
13. It recommends that CEC should be established at the start of the project as it will be helpful in motivating the non-literates to join literacy programme.
14. It recommends that literacy programme will get a boost if political parties agree to remove symbol from the ballot paper. It stressed the need to start a dialogue with the political parties in this regard.

### **Seminar on Adult Education and National Integration**

The Bombay Council of Adult Education and Social Development recently organised a Seminar on Adult Education and National Integration in Bombay. Shri Suresh Prabhu, MP and former Union Minister of Industries presided over the Seminar.

The key-note address was delivered by Shri Arvind Deshpande, Hony. Secretary, Leslie Sawhny Programme of Training for Democracy. In his address, Shri Deshpande stressed that adult education should not only deal with literacy but teach an individual to maintain one's integrity against internal and external pressures.

Shri Prabhu in his remarks said broader perspectives should be developed in individual to achieve the goals of national integration.

Dr.(Mrs) SN Gayatonde presented the working paper. Others who spoke on the occasion were Prof. S Bapat, Dr. Kandekar, Dr. JM Gadekar and Dr. Padgaonkar.

55 participants representing universities, colleges, schools and voluntary agencies attended.

### **UNESCO World Conferences Highlights and Recommendations**

UNESCO has organised four international conferences on Adult Education so far. The major highlights and recommendations of the Conferences are given below:

#### **The Elisionore Conference (1949)**

The First Conference, which came soon after the second world war, was marked by an awareness of the urgency of the task of reconstruction and by an awareness of the moral need to re-establish peace in the world. The following extract from the summary report of the conference indicates the major tasks assigned to adult education by the Conference:

*"...to aid and foster movements which aim at creating a common culture to end the opposition between the so-called elite; to stimulate a genuine spirit of democracy and a genuine spirit of tolerance; to give youth the hope and confidence in life, that have been shaken by the present world disorganization; to restore the sense of community to people who live in an age of specialization and isolation; to cultivate an enlightened sense of belonging to a world community."*

The Conference issued a series of recommendations to promote international cooperation. The recommendations were prefaced by a declaration of principle stating the objectives of adult education at the international level.

The Conference was attended by 79 delegates and observers from 25 countries; more than 80% belonged to industrialized countries.

**The Montreal Conference (1960)**

The Second Conference was held in Montreal (Canada) in 1960. It was attended by 225 delegates from 51 countries: Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Arab States, Eastern Europe, Western Europe and North America.

The Montreal Conference stressed the need to give absolute priority in adult education to the elimination of illiteracy and to undertake international action to assist those countries that lacked sufficient resources to deal with that problem. It highlighted the link between the maintenance of peace and adult education, recommending the inclusion of reflection both on aesthetic and moral values and on the role of science and technology in social progress and stressing the importance of creative activities, the need for gender equality, for linking adult education with youth education and for support to NGOs.

Adult education at the Montreal Conference emerged as an essential component of any nation's policy for coping with the pressures of change and improving the quality of life. It was also recognized as a normal and necessary part of the overall educational provision of every country, within which its particular role was to improve opportunities of access to education offered by the school system or to raise the level of knowledge already acquired within the context of lifelong learning. It recognized the major role of NGOs in adult education.

**The Tokyo Conference (1972)**

The Third Conference was held in Tokyo (Japan) in 1972. It brought together 85 delegations from Asia, Africa, the Arab States, Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as Europe and North America. The developing countries constituted a majority of the 400 delegates.

The Conference reconfirmed the priority given by the Montreal Conference to the struggle against illiteracy. It also drew attention to the need to concentrate efforts on satisfying the specific needs of women and of the most underprivileged population groups.

It emphasized the complementary roles of formal and non-formal education, the need to link them more closely and the need for increased co-operation

between governmental and non-governmental organizations. For the first time, the role of adult education as a factor in the democratization of education, economic and social progress and cultural development was analyzed by the participants.

## The Paris Conference (1985)

The Fourth Conference was held in Paris at UNESCO HQ (1985). The Conference examined the evolution of adult education since 1972, the contribution that adult education could make to help people face the world major challenges, the needed priorities in terms of activities and the required forms of international and regional co-operation.

The total number of participants was 841 including 40 ministers or persons of ministerial rank from 122 countries plus NGOs and two UN agencies. The Conference discussed the role of adult education as a means for social and occupational stability, its role in the democratization of education and in the consolidation of peace, the principles of freedom, justice and international co-operation.

The Conference took note of the changes that had taken place in the world since the Tokyo Conference including the 1976 Recommendation on Adult Education. The Conference considered the elimination of illiteracy as the first priority for adult education and it stressed the need for sustaining the literacy gains through varied efforts to promote post-literacy training.

The Conference assigned to adult education, the role of helping to make lifelong education available to all. It reiterated the stand of previous conference on the need for ensuring equal opportunities for women and disadvantaged groups. On the question of the link between formal and non-formal education, the Conference considered it important to apply the concept of lifelong learning as an overall governing concept in education because of the varied forms of learning, and because the learning process may involve the alternation of both of these forms of education.

It was recognized that the mass media are exerting a decisive impact on the extension and improvement of adult education through distance learning; specific emphasis was put on the role of low-cost community radio and TV, mobile

low-power transmission units, rural cinema and rural theatre to be exploited as significant media for adult education. Regional and international cooperation was considered by the Conference to be crucial for the future development of adult education. **The role of NGOs was considered indispensable for creating an effective grassroots adult education movement.** In addition, the Paris Conference issued a strong declaration on the "**right to learn**".

## Common Issues

During these 45 years, each of the four Conferences reflected the concerns and the specific trends in the world over the preceding decade. They addressed the following issues as high priorities for adult education:

- to eliminate illiteracy
- to establish peace and international co-operation
- to create a genuine spirit of democracy
- to increase learning opportunities for all age groups
- to promote gender equality

The fifth international conference will be held in **Hamburg (Germany) on July 14-18, 1997.** **The subject is "Adult Learning : A Key for Twenty First Century".**

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The Indian Adult Education Association founded in 1939, aims at improving the quality of life through education visualized as a continuous and lifelong process. It directs its efforts towards accelerating adult education as a process, a programme and a movement.

The Association co-ordinates the activities of various agencies--Governmental and voluntary, national and international--engaged in similar pursuits. It organises conferences and seminars and undertakes surveys and research projects; it endeavours to up-date and sharpen the awareness of its members by bringing to them from all over the world expert views on, and experiences in, adult education. In pursuit of the policy, the Association has instituted the Nehru Literacy Award and Tagore Literacy Award for Women's Literacy, for outstanding contribution to the promotion of adult education in the country. It has also instituted the Dr. Zakir Husain Memorial Lecture, which is delivered every year by an educationist of eminence.

The Association has brought out many publications on themes relating to adult education, including the Hindi editions of several UNESCO publications. It brings out the Indian Journal of Adult Education, Proud Shiksha, Jago aur Jagao and IAEA Newsletter.

The Association acts as the Indian arm of the International Council for Adult Education, International Federation of Workers' Education Associations and the Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education. Its membership is open to all individuals and institutions who believe in the aims and objectives of the Association.

Its headquarters are located in the Shafiq Memorial at 17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi-110002.

*Indian Journal of*

# Adult Education

- **Non-formal Education : A Deceptive Prop of EFA**
- **Literacy Campaign : Assessing Impact on Women's Literacy**
- **Coastal Literacy Programme in Kerala**
- **Motivation of Rural Female Adults**
- **Field Testing of Material**



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**INDIAN JOURNAL OF ADULT EDUCATION**

Published every quarter by the Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA), 17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi-110002. Phones : 3319282, 3721336, 3722206.

Fax : 91-11-3355306

Contents of the IJAE are indexed in the Current Index to Journals in Education, New York, Content Pages in Education, Oxfordshire, England and in the Guide to Indian Periodical Literature, Gurgaon (Haryana). Also microfilmed by University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA. **ISSN 0019-5006**

Subscription: Inland Rs. 60.00 p.a.,

Overseas, US\$ 20.00 p.a.

Advertisement rates : full page - Rs. 1500; half page - Rs.800; quarter page - Rs.450

Printed and Published by J.L. Sachdeva for IAEA, 17-B IP, Estate, New Delhi - 110002. Printed at Prabhat Publicity, New Delhi - 110002.

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The Indian Journal of Adult Education, first published as a monthly in 1939, is brought out now as a quarterly by the Indian Adult Education Association. The Journal has special interest in the theory and practice of Non-formal Education with special reference to the relationship between Adult Education and Development. Contributions on a wide range of themes within this broad framework are welcome. The Journal is particularly interested in current experiments in the field.

Contributions should be accompanied by either a stamped, self-addressed envelope or by International Reply Coupons. The average length of a manuscript should normally be between 1500 and 2000 words; in exceptional cases, longer articles can be accepted. Mimeographed, Xeroxed or carbon copies of manuscripts will not be accepted. Manuscript should be typed in double space, on one side, with a 2" margin, on foolscap size paper. Footnotes and references should come at the end and not on every page.

Contributions from next issue onwards should be sent to Prof. BB Mohanty Editor, Indian Journal of Adult Education, Bajiraut Chhatravas, P.O. Box 35, Angul - 759 122, Orissa. Tele : (06764) 30533, 32462, Fax : (06764) 32463. Correspondence regarding advertisements, subscription rates etc. should be addressed to the Director, Indian Adult Education Association, 17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi- 110002. India .

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**Editorial**

After 50 years of Independence the concept of Adult Education is still under discussion and debate. Most people in society and Government use the term adult education to mean adult literacy and post literacy. To many the two terms are synonymous and coterminus. This has caused setback to the expansion of other adult education programmes in the country. Even the National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) and the National Literacy Mission (NLM) have not succeeded to dispel this misconception.

Adult education in its broader connotation extends to all people in all walks of life from non-literate to semi-literate men and women at the end of scale to people who have highly specialised and sophisticated education at the other. The adult literacy programme in India has been given great emphasis because of high illiteracy rate in the country at the cost of other programmes of adult education. In the twenty-first century educational programmes should not be only for the non literates but also for the literates and the educated.

Adult Education has to play a wider role in view of the economic restructuring and global market economy. It should meet the emerging demand for education and training of the retrenched and the new entrants to the competitive labour market. It should also provide opportunities for training and retraining of vast masses of unemployed and underemployed persons in rural and urban areas. But the large labour force in the unorganised sector should receive priority in education, training and upgrading the technical and vocational skills because they are the most deprived ones.

This could be possible if adult education is planned and conceptualised as a system with institutionalised structure. It should not work on ad hoc basis. The financing pattern should also change. It should not only rely on plan outlays. Non-plan budget for adult education should be given primacy to sustain it. It is at present primarily financed by the Central Government. The support of State Governments is also needed. They should provide finance for it like other systems of formal education.

Adult Education should make an active effort to study poverty and action to remedy it, develop economic opportunities and group action to reduce unemployment; organise public opinion to promote human rights and social justice. Varied schemes of adult education nation-wide are thus needed.

**Tushar Mukherjee**

## **Non-Formal Education : A Deceptive Prop of EFA**

### **Introduction**

As we are approaching the year 2000 A.D., declared to be the final year for ensuring 'Education for All' at the international conclaves held in 1990 and 1993 at Jomtien and New Delhi, we are becoming more and more sceptical about the capacity of the formal education system to deliver the goods. This apprehension is nagging among all keen observers of Indian education scenario inspite of the fact that large resources are being spent on formal primary education system which is expected to play a major role in fulfilling our international commitment. The schemes like 'Operation Black Board' and District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) have become only another ploy to spend unprecedented funds in the name of universalisation of elementary education. The formal system has already claimed 102% Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), one primary school within one kilometer of a village, atleast two teachers in each school (courtesy, OBB) who are reasonably remunerated and trained and plethora of incentives like mid-day meals, school text books and uniforms. All these provisions have made primary education of our country one of the most expensive educational systems of the third world and decidedly of the Indian Sub-continent. But the Indian Government still fears tht it may not be possible for the country to achieve the EFA goals by the deadline and a large number of children (nearly 25%) in the 6-14 age group would still remain out of the formal primary education system.

### **Universalisation of Elementary Education - the status and the prospects**

That the coverage of 102.7% is a myth has been admitted by official documents presented before the International Conference of EFA held at Delhi in 1993. The document says that "Gross enrolment ratio of more than 100% does not mean that primary education is actually universalised. According to earlier estimates, gross enrolment ratios are about 25 per cent higher than net enrolment ratios that are adjusted for over and under aged children at primary level. Hence it may be legitimately argued that the actual enrolment ratios in elementary education may presently be only about 70-80 and that the out of school children in the age group 6-14 can be as high as 24 million". The situation becomes grimmer

if we take into account the rate of dropout from the formal system. The same document declares that the dropout rates for 6-11 age group was 47.9% and for 11-14 it was 65.4% in 1988-89. The situation has marginally improved since then. The actual attendance in a primary school is still lower although no official estimate has ever been made.

Hence, the official apprehension about the system's inability to ensure universalisation and to fulfil one of the goals of EFA is not misplaced.

It has also been admitted that a significant section of our society would never participate in the formal educational set up in view of a number of social, economic and political problems. The reasons for their unwillingness are well known and besides the findings of the NSSO's 42nd round, eminent researchers like P. Acharya, Vergese, and Tilak have conclusively shown that the educational agenda provided by the state sponsored elementary education system do not fit in either with the lifestyle or with the requirement of a section of children viz. child workers, girl child, children of minority community in particular and children of the rural poor belonging to the scheduled castes and tribes, the so-called deprived sections, in general.

The worried Government of India agrees that much when it reports that "Thus in observance, universal participation is still elusive. The additional participation in elementary education has to come from girls as well as social strata and regions which are more difficult to reach".

#### **Non-Formal Education**

Given the problems as described above, there has been a continuous search for an alternative system of basic education which can attract children from above groups atleast in the sphere of primary education in 6-9 age-group if not for the larger group of 6-14 whom we are duty bound to cover as per command of our own constitution. This search since early seventies actually yielded the concept of Non-formal Education. In the words of Dr. JP Naik, the founding father of the concept and of the system as well, "The monopoly of school as the sole transmitter of education is uneconomic and discriminatory. It should be broken up by promoting non-formal arrangements for education at various levels of individual and social requirements. Curriculum and learning systems should be so developed as to become instruments of improving the life of the people and

reducing the gap between the elite and the masses". It appears that Dr. Naik improvised the system from the western concept of non-formal education which according to Coombs and Ahmed (1974), "Any organised systematic educational activity, carried on outside the frame of formal system, to provide selected types of learning to particular sub-groups in the population, adults as well as children. Thus defined, non-formal education includes for example, agriculture extension and farmers' training programmes, adult literacy programmes, occupational skill training given outside the formal system, youth clubs with substantial educational purposes, and various community programmes of instructions in health, nutrition, family planning, cooperatives and the like".

Whatever its origin the Non-formal Education (NFE) has become another Indian innovation in the field of elementary education just as its counterpart "Total Literacy Campaign" has been in the field of literacy. In the annals of popular education these two innovations are formidable landmarks in the management of two equally daunting educational problems of India that the Indian Government has placed much faith on NFE has been amply demonstrated in its National Education Policy (NPE) formulated in 1986. The policy envisaged that "NFE shall strive to reach school dropout children from habitations without schools, working children and girls who can not attend whole day Schools". The programme of Action (POA) which followed the NPE made further stipulations like,

- a) It should have flexibility to adjust curriculum and textual materials to the needs and interests of learners.
- b) The total duration should generally be shorter than in formal schools.
- c) The programme should be organised at the time convenient for the learners generally in the afternoon for girls and in the evenings for working children.

The refrain has continued in the document for EFA which tells that "It was for the first time that an education policy had admitted that the (Primary) School would not reach all children particularly millions of girls and working children whose participation in formal school system was thwarted by the socio-economic parameters. The policy calls for a systematic programme of Non-formal Education (NFE) as an integral component of the approach to achieve UEE. NFE

should have enough flexibility to enable the learners to learn at their own pace and at the same time would have quality comparable with formal education". The NFE has travelled upto Beijing at the 4th World Conference on Women. The Indian presentation has impressed upon the fact that through NFE system the nation is trying to promote equality and equity for the girl child through education. While analysing various constraints and appropriate interventions, the document points out the efficacy of NFE as one of the supply side interventions which is being made available with sufficient monetary incentives to NGOs and state governments implementing the NFE programmes.

#### **An Outline of the NFE Scheme**

The NFE scheme visualised by the Ministry of Human Resource Development is described below:

The NFE programme seeks to provide out of school children with opportunities for primary education which are decentralised, flexible and permit them to study at a convenient place and time.

The programme is operationalised by setting up NFE centres in rural areas and urban slums with average enrolment of 20 learners under the charge of a local instructor with modest academic qualifications who is paid an honorarium of Rs.200/- per month. The village community is expected to provide for space and make other arrangements for running these centres. NFE centres are expected to run for 1.5 to 2 hours for six days a week. As a majority of the centres are being run at night, lighting arrangements are generally made by kerosene lanterns.

The NFE course is condensed into four semesters of six months each for which specially developed teaching learning materials and stationery is provided to children free of cost. There is a provision for testing and certification of children of NFE centres to facilitate their entry into formal schools".

#### **The Current Health of Non-Formal Education**

Dependence of the Government of India of NFE in bailing it out of its international commitments on EFA notwithstanding, the present health of the system does not testify to the Government's seriousness in building up this alternative system of elementary education.

The scheme has run for nearly two decades with many mid-course corrections and plenty of debates and discussions on its possible impact and outreach. The picture of NFE now perceived by most people engaged in education for children is that it is a poor alternative to formal education in terms of quality of learning provided and on top of it, it has largely failed to zero in on the target groups for which it was primarily meant. By 1992-93, the Central Government has already established 237911 non-formal education centres of which 79071 are exclusively meant for girls and has been spending about Rs.553.63 millions for their upkeep. 80% of these centres are run by the State Governments and the rest by the non-governmental organisations (NGOs). By November 1995 the number has increased to 2.77 lakhs with an approximate outreach of 6.8 million children.

Now, the amount of money involved is not peanuts in the background of our financial resources; nor the number of children covered insignificant.

The present perception about the system gets attested when we compare the facilities offered by the formal and the non-formal system currently run in the country. A formal primary school besides being a traditional and locally accepted educational edifice, has at least two teachers getting living wages and in many areas a permanent infrastructure. There is public spending of about Rs.70,000/- per annum per school, a well defined learning curriculum, a strong supervision network, adequate availability of free learning materials and bunch of incentives like free midday meal, school uniform etc. A non-formal school, on the other hand, is run by a part time teacher who gets a pocket allowance of Rs.200/- (it was only Rs.100/- a few years back) and has to look for alternative source of income. There is no provision for infrastructure nor any recognition from the community it serves. System of supervision is tentative and teachers training perfunctory. Although said to follow minimum learning level (MLL), the learning materials provided do seldom match the level mentioned in the MLL document. No body for certain knows how far 2.77 lakh NFE centres reached the target groups nor is there a reliable MIS to vouch safe for their proper functioning. Except for providing broad guidelines neither the central nor the state governments has ever expressed their concern for the target groups to be covered under the scheme. As a result, NFE centres are established in places where they are least required and are admitting children who would have profitably attended

a formal school or are in a position to pay for their learning. In actual practice the NFE centres have become competing centres for primary schools and naturally, have been losing out in the competition against a more resourceful competitor. Had they remained in their exclusive domain and have had necessary facilities they could have provided an alternative system.

We would not be far from reality if we conjure up a vision of NFE centres in the following contour:

- i) An ill-paid, ill-educated and ill-motivated teacher huddled up with 5 to 10 children in a dimly lit place which may be under a tree or in someone's courtyard - doling out lessons from materials of doubtful value which do not infuse any pleasure or joy in learning to children.
- ii) No one around to guide the teacher about completing the course of studies and then to take an evaluation so that the successful learners may move forward and thus has a specific learning outcome.
- iii) The teacher who has least stake in the job and more busy in finding a more paying occupation elsewhere is never particular about opening or closing of the centre and runs it according to his own convenience than those of his learners.
- iv) The community being aware of the poor compensation the teacher gets has a latent sympathy for him and always report favourably whenever the rare occasion of a visit of the supervisor takes place.

A primary school teacher on the other hand has more stake in his job and is under constant surveillance of the community. Since the pressure of community matters most in our present day system of prioritisation, upgrading of the formal system along with the status of teachers has been taking place constantly and a career in primary education has become quite attractive.

Given this wide difference between the status of non-formal and formal systems, only a naive could expect the non-formal system in its present incarnation to take on the 'unfinished task' of the formal elementary education system and provide a viable alternative.

**Issues and Prospects**

Although being operationalized for last two decades, this governmental effort to bridge the gap between enrolled and unenrolled has seldom attracted the attention of educationists and researchers who appear to be more interested in formal education. It has largely remained in the exclusive domain of enlightened bureaucrats of the HRD Ministry and under the benign surveillance of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), New Delhi who provides the ideological and operational guidance and generally act as the exclusive think-tank of the Government.

The present paper intends to break through this almost hegemonic hold of the triumvirate and introduce this novel educational experiment to educational scholars and researchers of the country and to take up certain issues for nationwide discourse. Some of such critical issues are adumbrated below:

**The need for the alternative system**

The findings of many studies on elementary education have conclusively indicated that the present elementary education system can not reach a sizeable section of the rural poor. In a recent article, JBG Tilak has demolished the myth of 'Free' primary education in India. According to him "households spends large sums of money on acquiring primary education", "a sizeable number of students do not receive primary education free, in contrast to the claim made by the Government" and that "a large number of students pay tuition fee, examination fee and other fees even in government primary schools in India. "Tuition fee per reporting student is .... more than Rs.1000/- in Government primary schools in rural and urban areas".

Above findings even if partially true have restricted the participation of the rural poor still further over and above the inhibitive factors like opportunity costs already present in the rural communities. NSSO's same findings have put "economic factors" responsible for 39.6% children not seeking enrolment ever in formal primary schools. This factor alone makes the search for an alternative system which is totally free imperative.

**Essential Features**

The second issue requiring further enquiring and debate is what might be

the possible feature of an alternative system which can adequately take care of the children who had never enrolled themselves in formal primary schools. The present non-formal system has more or less eliminated the opportunity costs by providing flexible school hours and slow pace curriculum shedding much of the rigidity of the formal system. But there is no concrete evidence that by abridging the five year primary education course to two years, the system could provide comparable educational skill. Available evidence rather points to the contrary. It is nowhere near the MLL despite the fact that the Dave Committee which prescribed the MLL told us that "Another important concern for the primary stage is the need for comparability of standards between the formal and non-formal systems of education".

"This assumes importance not only because of expectations of the National Policy on Education in this regard, but more so because unless we can ensure achievability of minimum levels of learning (MLLs) by the disadvantaged sections of the society - the dropouts, working children and girls - the majority of whom find scope for education only in the non-formal system, the goals of equity and reduction in disparities will not be fully served. These pious exhortations as it were coming from the then Director of the NCERT in his foreword to the report notwithstanding, the report has callously disregarded any special dispensation for the non-formal system and has equated it with the formal primary education system throughout as if no distinction exists between the two. The current status is that MLL could not even permeate the formal Schools let alone the non-formal school and that students of primary schools in Kerala and Madhya Pradesh could achieve only 40 to 50% of MLL. Hence, if the status of MLL in the highly rated state of Kerala after 5 years of schooling is so poor, the MLL status of 2 year NFE course can be easily imagined. The possible feature of the NFE system should not only be based upon its much flaunted flexibility but should also revise its curriculum to minimise the existing mismatch between its curriculum and the MLL.

### **The concept**

The third issue addresses itself to the theoretical standing of Non-formal education. In the parlance of MHRD, NCERT and Pune, the triumvirate running the show, there is enough equivocality in describing the system. Some say that it is complementary to the formal system intended to cover the un-schooled and dropped out children dispensing the same quality and quantity of learning skills

as are available to students of formal primary schools. The NFE is only a variation of primary education the variants being the concise 2 year curriculum, flexible hours of working and learner-friendly location. In all these three areas efforts have been made to make the system much cheaper than its formal counterpart, thus earning for itself a universal nickname of "poor children's education centre". Some other, notably the NCERT, says that NFE is a distinct form of educational system independent of the formal system. It is an alternative system with its own mode of functioning. The basic difference between these two systems is that while formal primary education has a universal curriculum to which the learners have to fit themselves, the non-formal system is purely learner-based and curriculum is diverse fulfilling the unique educational needs of the learners who have opted to join it. This concept is indeed the global concept of non-formal education referred to earlier but has nothing to do with the extant system operationalised in India to make our system really non-formal, there must be hierarchical, systems of non-formal education up to the higher education levels by integrating non-formal centres with the National Open School (NOS) and distant learning institutions like IGNOU. To achieve this, however we need lot of planning, imagination and finesse.

We should, however, have no objection to the limited role of our own non-formal education system since the country genuinely needs an alternative elementary educational system which can take care of the children who would never be able to enter the portals of a formal primary school for various reasons. But to achieve this, the NFE centres should not mimic primary schools. Rather, they should shed most of the basic features of formal schools and provide a highly flexible and resilient educational agenda which can meet the aspirations and requirements of the children hitherto unreached. Only then the system might attract the huge gap left by the formal system reported to be as high as 25% of eligible children.

#### **Autonomous Vs. Ideological Models**

The fourth issue relates to educational goals offered by the NFE system. Some independent observers say that the present 'autonomous' model of the NFE system like its TLC counterpart could hardly motivate the communities with its fare of reading, writing and arithmetic. To be viable and responsive, the system must have some social or 'ideological' goals which would add teeth to the entire

system thus transforming it into a national campaign. Two issues already well-known as campaign themes viz. Right of the girl child and Weaning away the working children from work to education can profitably be added to the 'ideological' goals of the non-formal education system. Dovetailed with the curriculum followed in about three lakh centres all over the country, the issues would spread quickly.

**Focus**

The sixth issue requiring further discussion is the focus of the programme. The scheme prepared by the Government of India has the required focus as would be evident from the objectives mentioned earlier. But the matter ended there. There are no conscious efforts by the Government to ensure that the declared focus is adhered to during operationalisation of the programme. The statements on objectives and focus on the target groups are restricted to the printed scheme guidelines and exhortations in various seminars and conferences. In the field the entire responsibility is left on the teacher who gather whosoever is available to keep his part-time job intact. A survey conducted by the Lokasiksha Parishad, Narendrapur, a premier NGO of West Bengal found out that in most cases there were common students in primary and NFE centres and the local people had been utilising the NFE centres as coaching centres for primary school students than as exclusive educational centres for first generation learners of the unreachable children. Reports from Orissa, collected by the author during participation in seminars confirm this hypothesis. Since 80% of the NFE centres are run by the state governments and 20% by the NGOs and since there are no structured channels of monitoring and supervision of the programme by the central Government, the implementing agencies at the grass root level enjoy unprecedented autonomy in running the programme. The poor financial provisions of the scheme have ensured that this autonomy is misused. Crass perfunctoriness pervaded everywhere and the need and occasion for fulfilling the objectives or keeping the right focus have never occurred. Thus, nearly Rs.600 million of scarce national resource meant for particular section of the society has been unwittingly diverted to other channels while we still hope to reach the EFA goals on its shoulders. To regain the focus efforts should be made by the donor agencies i.e. the MHRD and the State Govt. to

- (i) Learner/target group mapping and to establish NFE centres amidst the identified target groups even if they are scattered in a given area. This makes projectisation redundant.
- (ii) Strengthening of the MIS and supervision with the help of committed people, and
- (iii) Selection of implementing agencies with utmost care keeping in view the overall commitment and ground level organisation and experience of the agency. The state Government as the implementing agency is therefore precluded.

#### **The Implementing Agencies**

This takes us to seventh issue regarding the nature of implementing agencies to be selected for implementing NFE programmes.

As indicated earlier, the major brunt of the programme is borne by the State Governments which is already overburdened with the formal primary education. The 20% burden borne by the NGOs is dissipated over a large number of voluntary agencies (more than 500) some of which do not even have grassroot experiences. Let us look at an evaluative study conducted by the Lokasiksha Parishad, Narendrapur. The study jointly undertaken with the State Council of Educational Research and Training, West Bengal was commissioned by the NCERT and the MHRD. It revealed that NGOs implementing the NFE had fared better than their more resourceful governmental counterpart.

It was only to be expected, for the Government machinery implementing and monitoring the NFE programme is the same which implements and oversees formal education system as well. They have an inherent bias for the formal system and against the non-formal system. Moreover, since the overseeing of the formal system is their statutory obligation and the job is quite large enough to consume most of their available time, they can hardly find any space left for non-formal education. Additionally, being 'working-hour' bound during their daily work-schedule, government officials abhor the idea of monitoring a system which is expected to operate outside their scheduled 'working-hours' or exist in such areas where they find it difficult to reach easily. This recalcitrance on the part of Government officials has led to establishment of separate directorate of non-

formal education in some states. But that did not alleviate the situation because it was only a rearrangement of officials between the formal and non-formal chains of command without impinging on the quality of the functionaries. On the other hand, the NGOs dealing with NFE have greater stake in making the programme successful. Some of them like Lok Jumbish, Siksha Karmi projects of Rajasthan, Experimental projects run by the National Institute of Education in Pune, by the Loksiksha Parishad at Narendrapur, West Bengal and by Biswas at Kalahandi in Orissa are illustrious examples of implementation of NFE by the voluntary agencies. All of them have real commitments and hence could achieve excellent results although many other non-descript NGOs have failed to achieve anything.

Considering above indisputable facts and keeping in view the present trend in encouraging private enterprise, it is advisable to leave non-formal education in private hands with minimum interference from the government which should mean that funding, monitoring and supervision should be handed over to autonomous organisations like the National Institute of Adult Education which is also a part of broader discipline of non-formal education.

Moreover, an organisation like the National Literacy Mission may also be constituted for NFE with less if bureaucrats and more of academicians and NFE activists. This would give a campaign status to the programme which it undoubtedly deserves.

#### **Financial Pattern**

Our financial issue would be the financial parameters of the programme. Although taken up last, this issue is the most crucial of all since all we have discussed and suggested earlier depend wholly on the financial status of the NFE programme. The MHRD have been providing financial grants in the revised scale since 1993 in the following pattern:

Sl. No.	Item	Amount per annum (Rs.)
1.	Honorarium to instructors @ Rs.200/- per month	2400
2.	Lighting @ Rs.100/- per month	1200
3.	Teaching - Learning materials @ Rs.75/- per learner	1875
4.	Training of Instructors @ Rs.700/- per instructor	700
5.	Cost of supervision @ One Supervisor per 12 Centres	400 (per supervisor)
6.	Petromax (Non-recurring)	150
7.	Equipments (Non-recurring)	720
	Total (Recurring)	6575
	Total (Non-recurring)	870

The pattern of Grant-in-aid emanating from the MHRD differs among implementing agencies and is as follows:

Sl. No.	Types of Centre	Types of Implementing Agency	MHRD Share (%)
1.	Co-educational	States/UTs	60
2.	Girls' only	- do -	90
3.	Centres by Voluntary Agencies	NGOs	100
4.	Innovative and Experimental Programme	Any type	100

Compared to the petty sum of about Rs.7000/- spent on NFE centres, a formal primary school spends about Rs.70,000/- per annum and still the latter could not reach out to a large section of most deserving children. And in addition each child is required to pay about Rs.1000/- per annum on primary education. In the case of NFE, only the opportunity cost is minimised and that too theoretically, for most of the NFE centres operate like formal schools creating the same opportunity cost for the household. Secondly, 80% of the centres are run by the States/UTs who are required to share 40% of costs for Non-girls centres and 10% for Girls' centres. During various seminars and conferences convened by the NCERT, the common refrain from State/UT representatives were that the state governments did not release funds at all due to their own financial problems or release grants in fits and starts causing periodical disruptions in the programme. They suggested that the MHRD gives 100% assistance to all concerned and that too directly to the implementing agencies. This the MHRD can not do by bypassing the state government in cases of state handled centres. But MHRD has been sending grants directly to the NGOs once their applications are vetted by the state governments/uts. This dichotomy has been eating into the vitality of the fledgling NFE experiment of government and voluntary agencies vitiating purposeful debates in many forums. It is better that this new endeavour is wholly privatised and opportunities be given to NGOs to initiate a healthy competition between the official and the NGOs.

### **Level Playing Fields**

Analysis of the financial pattern and the curriculum of NFE reveal that the Government has not been seriously pursuing the programme to make it one of the vehicles of attaining EFA. Since the need for continuation of a programme which provides an alternative access to the 25% of the eligible children in the 6-14 years age group exists NFE should be allowed to continue. But to make the programme successful, it must be given a level playing field both in stature and in financial terms. Common sense suggests that NFE must have better financial provisions to attract right kind of professional personnel who should replace all amateurish and cavalier organisers from the NFE edifice. The MHRD has already accepted the position when it presented its report before the Combined Working Group for Ninth Five Year Plan held on May 1, 1996. Let us end this paper by quoting from this report.

"The NFE programme has not emerged as a credible alternative to the primary school system mainly because of insufficient funding, inappropriate organisational structures, inefficient operationalisation, inadequate involvement of the local community and unrealistic expectation of completion of primary schooling by working children through part-time instruction imparted by under-equipped teachers in only two years. Development of appropriate curricula as well as suitable teaching learning materials for the NFE clientele and recurring training of instructors/supervisor deserves serious attention."

The admissions are candid and recommendations appear to be sweeping. Let us hope NFE would emerge in a better shape in the Ninth Five Year Plan and justify its role in the EFA agenda.

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Tarlok Singh

## Total Literacy Campaign : Assessing Impact on Women's Literacy

Three recent documents published by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Education, provide essential information to serve as a background for the discussion of the theme of the paper.

1. Towards a Literate India
2. Status of Literacy Campaigns and Post Literacy Projects
3. Report of the Working Group on Adult Education for the Ninth Plan

The overall literacy picture for the country as a whole over the period 1951-1991 will be seen from the following summary tables:

**Table 1**  
**Literacy Rates : India : 1951-1991**

Year	Persons	Male	Female
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86
1961	28.30	40.39	15.33
1971	34.45	45.95	21.97
1981	43.57	56.38	29.76
	(41.43)	(53.46)	(28.47)
1991	52.21	64.13	39.23

**Table 2**  
**Number of Literates and Illiterates India : 1951-1991**

Year	Total Population	Age Group	Illiterates (in millions)	Literates
1951	361.09	--	300.09	60.19
1961	439.23	5+	267.32	105.52
1971	548.16	5+	307.19	161.41
1981	683.30	7+	305.31	235.73
1991	846.30	7+	328.88	359.28

**Table 3**  
**Gender Disparity in Literacy Rates, India : 1961-1991**

Year	Age Groups	Literacy Male	Rates Female	Male/Female difference in literacy rate (% age points)
1961	5 & over	40.39	15.33	25.06
1971	5 & over	45.95	21.97	23.98
1981*	7 & over	56.38	29.76	26.62
1991	7 & over	64.13	39.29	24.84

\*Excludes Assam and Jammu & Kashmir

**Table 4**  
**Urban-Rural Difference in Literacy Rates : India - 1961-1981**

Year	Age Groups	Literacy Urban Areas	Rates Rural Areas	Difference in Urban/Rural (% age points)
1961	5 & over	54.43	22.46	31.97
1971	5 & over	60.22	27.89	32.33
1981*	5 & over	64.85	34.04	30.81
1981*	7 & over	67.20	36.00	31.20
1981*	7 & over	73.08	44.69	28.39

\* Excludes Assam and Jammu & Kashmir

The approach of Literacy Campaigns was adopted in 1989 as the main thrust of the National Literacy Mission.

In terms of sanctions on behalf of the National Literacy Mission steps taken over the period 1988-89 and 1996-97 are shown in table 5 below in relation to literacy and post-literacy projects:

**Table 5**  
**Literacy and Post-Literacy Projects sanctioned year by year**

Year	No. of Literacy Campaigns sanctioned	No. of Post Literacy Projects sanctioned
1988-89	01	--
1989-90	02	--
1990-91	41	--
1991-92	37	08
1992-93	57	33
1993-94	107	20
1994-95	76	51
1995-96	61	31
1996-97	37	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>168</b>

The impact stated to have been achieved is summarised in Tables 6 & 7 below:

**Table 6**  
**Total Literacy Projects**

		( in lakhs )	
		Upto	Upto
		March 96	March 97
1.	Target after survey	1001.63	1184.36
2.	Enrolment	731.74	884.88
3.	Achievement	373.14	447.83

**Table 7**  
**Post-Literacy Projects**

1. No. of projects sanctioned	168
2. No. of projects	150
3. Proposed no. of neo-literate (in lacs)	355.55
4. Enrolment (%)	73.62
5. Participation in PL Centre (%)	43.14

Statistics on the lines of Tables 6 & 7 are available for all states based on statistics provided for individual districts.

It is not clear what outlays have been actually incurred on adult education, but the indications are that for one reason or another, the amounts actually spent fell considerably short of these sanctioned on paper.

It is claimed that 61 percent of those surveyed in TLC districts are female, 22.6 belong to Scheduled Castes and 12.67 percent to Scheduled Tribes. But breakdowns of such figures are not available. There is no evidence that in preparing plans for TLC districts beyond a superficial count of the number of potential learners in the age group 15-35, sufficient work done is in detailed planning. Conditions in each district differ from area to area and from group to group. The operational scheme should be adopted to take due care of different needs. There is no evidence that such variations in conditions are structured in depth in the stage of planning and allowed for in the action plans which are actually implemented. Literacy campaigns bear evidence of what may be called a 'Steam-rolling' approach marked by hasty and slipshod planning anxiety to fulfil targets in terms of numbers with unbelievable speed so that declarations about full or near full literacy results can be made at the earliest possible dates. Such declarations may well turn out to be erroneous by wide margins. It is almost certain that even where IPCL primers are completed, soon after there is a sizeable lapse into illiteracy.

The National Literacy Mission Council does not seem to have met for a considerable period to look at the working of the programmes in terms of basic policies and approaches. In practice, a small group of persons have tended to

function as the NML Authority. Doubtless, while doing their best there is evidence of excessive centralization. The entire approach of sanctions from a single source and reports submitted to the 'Authority' from large numbers of districts which can be statistically tabulated but not reviewed in depth and leave much to be desired. Supervision and planning in the States by State Level functionaries has been casual. The need for such planning and supervision within the states in an area which belongs to them has been increasingly felt, but the indications are that in most states, such responsibility has still to be established in responsible terms. The system of Centre's share of budgeted amounts being passed to District Committees headed by Collectors runs counter to establishment of such responsibility within the system of planning and administration at the State level and below.

The Ninth Plan Approach paper of the Planning Commission has made recommendations about 'Co-operative Federalism' including transfer of 'Centrally sponsored' Schemes to the states, but the broad prepositions which have been stated have still to become 'Operational' and planning from below has yet to become real or effective.

With the passing of the 73rd and 74th Amendment of the Constitution, respectively in several areas, including adult education responsibility has to be exercised by the Panchayats at different levels and by Nagarpalikas. Within a framework of general guidance and suggestions agreed to in broad terms between the centre and the states and substantial resources transferred the entire plan of adult education in the next phase of development has to be reworked. It has also to be accompanied by wide-ranging training programmes for functionaries of Panchayats and Nagar Palikas. These tasks have yet to be taken seriously in hand.

The lesson has been repeatedly stressed that Women's Literacy Programmes should have an inbuilt component of income-generating action plans. This involves various forms of inbuilt Departmental co-ordination with other programmes bearing on women and children with ICDS, DWCRA, Health and Family Planning, Poverty Allevation and Rural and Urban Employment Programmes. This recommendation was made many years ago by the Committee headed by Prof. DS Kothari, but has yet to become operational. The result is that Adult Education

Programmes are still being pursued in an isolated manner. It falls to the Planning Commission and the State Planning Authorities to give proper shape to the concept of integration and coordination at different levels between adult education and other programmes which form part of the Five Year Plan.

The close link between the Scheme of Adult Education and Universal Elementary Education is understood, but has to be given detailed shape and substance at the ground level. To attain Universal Elementary Education, elimination of child labour in all its forms is essential and must be undertaken as an urgent programme. The Panchayat, the School, the Cooperative at the village level and Voluntary Organisations at the grass roots form one inter-connected system for the scheme of development to reach one and all and specially women and the weaker sections.

Despite lip sympathy about involving Voluntary Organisations in its actual functioning, the Total Literacy Programmes headed by Collectors and their Committees have been highly selective in their approach and large numbers of voluntary organisations which have been engaged in adult education and like activities have had to fend for themselves and to continue with their activities in the midst of obstacles from the Government. This is true for the great majority of voluntary organisations. Fundamental rethinking is now needed in this respect, both on the side of Government and leading and experienced voluntary organisations. In the past, many Voluntary Organisations working in the villages have functioned from above as external to the village panchayats. Their more important role in the future has to be to help the growth of voluntary organisations at the grass roots, training of their workers and helping them to integrate with elected Panchayats. This is the key to the generation of local resources to the emergence of local leaders who will work for the community as a whole and specially for the weaker groups, and to reducing the role of factions at village level.

The earlier scheme of Jana Shikshan Nilayam for Post-Literacy and Continuing Education have been withdrawn, the new schemes now in view are still not very clear and even 'fuzzy' shape. As conceived at present, they do not provide for serious follow-up at the ground level with the support of local institutions and on the basis of local responsibility.

More has been achieved during the last few years in terms of adult education than at any time in the past and credit should be given to those who have been looking after NLM activities. More recently, they have become more responsive to the need for substantial changes in the scheme of execution and planning. But these changes go beyond 'Course-correction'. They involve more basic concepts part of planning agencies. New lines of thought are called for at the higher levels, Policy, Planning and Administration. The single point reliance on Collectors of districts and these nominated committees and even the modes of creating greater awareness among the people have now become outdated.

This is being recognised, but serious policies and planning for action have yet to be undertaken. This is not to underestimate the pioneering work done in the name of the National Literacy Mission, but the challenge before the country is deeper and has to be met with new ideas, and concepts and a far more widely spread determination to achieve results. It should be added that the cut-off point of 15-35 years is by no means apt. It is no more than a statistical attempt to limit the dimensions of the total task which the nation has to be prepared and equipped to complete within a measurable and reasonable period largely through the people and their leadership at various levels and working through all available institutions of democracy. Only under these conditions will women's literacy as the foundation of women's empowerment will be substantially achieved.

**Ramlal Parikh**

## **LITERACY IN GUJARAT**

Mahatma Gandhi was most outspoken when in 1937, he stated that mass illiteracy of India was shame and it must be liquidated. He particularly stressed the urgency of removing illiteracy from women, because he felt that educating a woman was educating generations to come.

The Indian tradition of educating our masses through numerous forms of direct mass communication by our spiritual leaders of all religions, is evident in our history. This has been particularly prevalent since last five centuries.

In the colonial era, we lost this illustrious tradition and allowed wide-spread illiteracy to grow. As a consequence, our poverty-stricken masses became victim to illiteracy in all parts of our country.

On the advent of Swarajya in 1947, only 14 per cent of our population was literate. The concern of leaders for education of masses was reflected in the Directive Principles of our constitution in article 45 by unequivocally stating that "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". Despite astronomical increase in ever rising enrolment of numbers of students in primary schools, we barely reached to the national literacy rate of 52 per cent only according to 1991 Census. Thus the number of literate persons in our country for the first time marginally surpassed the number of illiterates.

Drastic reduction in illiteracy, in the 9 to 35 age group, for bringing the literacy level of this age group to atleast 80 per cent in both genders of every disadvantaged group is a task of top-most priority in our national reconstruction process. It is not only a question of raising merely literacy rate but of making content of minimum education relevant to the working life of the entire mass of our people.

Gujarat had the privilege and advantage of direct guidance of Gandhiji during the days of freedom struggle beginning from 1920. He established the Gujarat Vidyapeeth as a non-government people's University for the task of national reconstruction through education, including higher education. Several leaders of Gujarat initiated local programmes for improving literacy through adult education classes. This laid a strong tradition of large number of voluntary agencies undertaking the work of establishing and running educational institutions. This is evident from the fact that over 90% of high schools in Gujarat are run by the voluntary agencies of this State.

Gujarat Vidyapeeth ever-since its founding has been working for social elevation of the rural and tribal people. It has been spearheading the task of eradication of illiteracy among the masses, in the light of Mahatma Gandhi's call to the nation in 1937 to liquidate illiteracy.

Adult Education Resource Centre for Gujarat was started on October 1st, 1977. Since then, it has undertaken various programmes to combat illiteracy.

On Gandhiji's Birthday on 2nd October, 1987 while addressing a prayer meeting at the Kocharab Ashram, we pledged to work for total eradication of illiteracy from Gujarat through mass campaign for literacy. In the same prayer meeting, the decision to launch Saksharta Abhiyan was taken by over 300 workers of the voluntary agencies who were present. Thus the Saksharta Abhiyan in Gujarat was initiated by a few but devoted public workers, who have a life-long commitment for eradication of illiteracy through mass campaigns. The campaign was launched on 1st May, 1988 at the village Sadra, five days before NLM which was launched on 5th May, 1988. The National Literacy Mission extended the necessary support to this campaign in 1989. Over 30 lakh primers for illiterates were printed. The campaign aimed at imparting literacy at the door-step of every illiterate person, through 680 voluntary agencies of the State spread over in 19 districts. Each one of these voluntary agencies adopted 3 to 5 villages for Literacy Campaign. Consequently, 1547 villages were covered under total literacy programmes, before the TLC was launched in three districts of Gandhinagar, Bhavnagar and Dangs (a tribal district).

In 1988, Gujarat had about 50 lakh adult illiterates in the age group of 15 to 35. In about 7 rounds of 45 days to 60 days each, nearly 1 lakh student-volunteers worked in each round with the active involvement of about 1000 voluntary agencies. Each voluntary agencies set up its own Literacy brigade of 100 Literacy Volunteers for promoting rapid literacy in each round of 90 hours.

After the first literacy cycle was over, the follow-up programmes were taken up through 620 Janshikshan Nilayams established by the Voluntary Agencies as a part of Literacy Campaign. Every Janshikshan Nilayam was expected to ensure total literacy for the village in which it was located and ensure its sustenance through post-literacy programmes. Thousands of publications of the Adult Education Resource Centre and other institutions were made available for neo-literates. A fortnightly wall-paper was regularly published and sent to all institutions every fortnight.

The Saksharta Abhiyan which stressed grass-root planning, made it possible to achieve the target of bringing Gujarat to the threshold point of 72% male literacy although the female literacy rate lagged behind at 49 per cent according to 1991 census. Voluntary Organisation in 100 talukas at the rate of 10 voluntary agencies per taluka were involved. Each voluntary agencies adopted five villages with a pledge to liberate them from illiteracy.

33 State-level Conferences and 70 district-level conferences of representatives of voluntary agencies were organised during the period of 1987 to 1995. Over 9000 volunteers participated in these awareness conferences.

In addition 621 rallies and yatras were organised by the Gujarat Vidyapeeth for spreading message of literacy to every home in about 3300 villages. About 40,000 volunteers participated in these yatras and rallies organised in most parts of Gujarat State. The rallies were of different nature ranging from Pad Yatras, Cycle Yatra, Train-brigades, Flame-light yatras and Bus-yatras. For conducive and sustainable atmosphere over 72 types of motivational materials were published and distributed in lakhs of copies. Among these, Gandhiji's appeal for liquidation of illiteracy attracted widest attention. Posters on awareness for population planning were also distributed extensively. Messages of several spiritual leaders

including Magsaysay Awardee Shri Athavleji as well as Shri Pramukh Swamiji were distributed widely. Literacy Songs stickers and post-cards were also widely distributed. Over 60 wall-papers were also issued for displaying them at the entry point of a village. 60 reading books for neo-literates were simultaneously prepared and widely disseminated. Over 50,000 copies of such material were published.

Gujarat State spread in 19 districts has a population of 41.81 million as per 1991 census, out of which 21.36 millions are males and 19.95 millions are females. The rural and urban population is 27.06 million and 14.25 million respectively. The total population is 34.48 millions with 17.71 males and 16.67 millions females. Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes population constitutes 7.44% and 13.90 respectively.

Gujarat is one of the leading States in the country having a literacy rate above the national average. As per 1991 census, the literacy rate is 61.29%. In the order of literacy rate Gujarat figures 5th among the larger States while literacy rate in Kerala is highest and literacy rate in Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh and Maharashtra States are higher than Gujarat, the decade literacy growth-rate of Gujarat has been continuously rising at nearly 10%. There is a rise of literacy rate of atleast about one percent every year. So after five years of 1991 census, Gujarat has cumulatively increased its literacy by over six percent raising its 1991 census literacy rate from 52% to about 57% and coming close to 60%. So by the end of twentieth century a combined rate of about 65% can be legitimately projected. Atleast six districts had above 55% literacy rate in 1991. Thus Gujarat is poised to become one of the States entering 21st century with threshold literacy rate of over 80%. However, the literacy scenario is very uneven in different districts. This is largely attributable to the fact that level of literacy in the district which formed part of native States before 1947 were by and large below the level of districts ruled by the British directly. While some States like Vadodara and Bhavnagar were highly enlightened, many small native States in Saurashtra, Kutch and North Gujarat had no proper educational system at all till 1947. The district-wise position for 1981-1991 as observed in 1991 census shows literacy rate of 87.8% and 74.6% in Gandhinagar and Ahmedabad districts respectively, but as low as 37.9% in Banaskantha district in North Gujarat.

Another important feature of the literacy scene in Gujarat is the wide disparity in the literacy rate of males and females. The literacy rate for women is as low as 22% in Banaskantha and 26.7% in Panchmahals whereas in the same districts the male literacy rate is 52.6% and 57.9% respectively.

In this connection, the Adult Education Resource Centre for Gujarat was set up by the Gujarat Vidyapeeth from October 1977. Since then, it has been crusading for eradication of illiteracy from entire Gujarat. Large number of women have actively participated as volunteers as well as learners. Posters and processions contributed to creating encouraging and conducive environment for mass literacy campaign.

The Saksharta Abhiyan became a stimulant recipe before forging a state-wide Total Literacy Campaign by the Zilla Saksharta Samitis of elected District Panchayats. Several success stories of Saksharta Abhiyan in remote rural and even in tribal areas started coming in. This created a good confidence in the development of administration of district Panchayats and particularly thousands of Primary School teachers who enthusiastically joined Saksharta Abhiyan in the beginning and later enmass participated in Total Literacy Campaigns under district panchayats. All the districts are now covered under the Total Literacy Programmes. 12 districts are already under NLM approved post-literacy campaigns.

Pradeep Kumar K.G.

## **Coastal Literacy Programme in Kerala - A Sociological Analysis**

### **Introduction**

Kerala has been in international attention for successful performance in the social sectors, particularly health, education and social welfare, even though it is one of the relatively economically backward states in India with per capita domestic product below the national average, conditions of life of people is comparable to the developed countries. This paradoxical development experience which has given rise to the concept of 'Kerala model of development', shows that conditions of life of people can be improved even at a low level of economic growth through different forms of public action and government intervention.

This general picture of Kerala model of development hide the experience of communities that have been left out of the development process, such as fisherman, the tribes and Tamil migrants. The coastal fishing communities are substantially behind the rest of the state in respect of living standards (Kurien 1993a, 1993b, 1993c, 1994). In the case of literacy also, they are behind the rest of the population. According to 1981 census fish workers have a literacy rate of 66 per cent when compared to other worker's 85 percent in the state. The disparity between female fish workers and other workers are very high, 44 percent and 70 percent respectively (GOI, 1981).

In 1989 National Literacy Mission (NLM) started a total literacy campaign in Ernakulam district of Kerala with active support of the district collector and with active support of Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP), a people's Science Organisation (Mohan Kumar, 1993, Tharakan, P.K.M. 1990) and this programme extended to all over Kerala in 1990. Even after the completion of the first phase of total literacy campaign a large number of marine fishermen remained illiterate. So Kerala Saksharatha Samithi decided to start a special project called Aksharatheeram (Coastal Literacy Project) along with the post-literacy/continuing education programme in nine coastal districts of Kerala. The purpose of this study is sociological analysis of Aksharatheeram project. The study is based on secondary sources and field based study of the researcher in Kollam and Thiruvananthapuram districts during November-December, 1995.

### Literacy Level of Fisherfolk

Fisherfolk population in Kerala consists of 9.75 lakh, which is 3.36 percent of the total population. They are one of the most deprived sections of the society, which is reflected in the level of literacy also.

**Table 1**  
**Districtwise Distribution of Literacy Rate of the Total Population**  
**and Fishing Population**

Districts	Literate	
	Total %	Fishing Population %
Trivandrum	71	39
Quilon	74	68
Aleppey	79	72
Ernakulam	77	80
Trichur	74	66
Malappuram	61	35
Kozhikkode	70	67
Kannur	66	65
State Total	70	62

Source : (a) Census of India 1981  
(b) Census of Fisherfolk 1979, Deptt. of Fisheries 1982

The table shows that state level literacy rate of fisherfolk is less than that of total population. In every districts except Ernakulam, literacy rate of fishing population showing the same trend. This difference is acute in two districts, Thiruvananthapuram and Malappuram of which Thiruvananthapuram has second largest fishing population in the state (GOI, 1992).

Regional variations in literacy level is very much evident from the table. There is a predominant argument that religion influences the literacy rate of the fish workers. A number of studies showed that Christian religious institutions played an important role in promoting education among fisherfolk (Nair 1983,

Tharakan 1984) and religious leaders played an important role in promoting education among them by providing various physical facilities by using their personal influence. As the coastal belt of southern, central and northern Kerala has the population of three different religion, this argument may prove its validity. Thiruvananthapuram district with second largest fisher folk population and majority of them are Christians, have only 39 percent literacy in 1979. The study shows that Hindu religion or its religious leaders are not influencing the educational activities of the fisher folks (Thomas, 1989). On the other hand Muslim religious leaders were very much in favour of promoting secular education among the fisher folk and restricted girls education beyond a certain level (Thomas, 1989). In spite of non-cooperation of the religious leaders Hindu fisher folk dominant Ernakulam district and Muslim fisher folk dominant Kozhikkode and Kannur districts shows comparable literacy rate with total literacy of Kerala.

It is thus clear that it is not the religion but socio-economic and cultural conditions of the fisher folk that is affecting the literacy rate. In the central Kerala where Hindu fishermen were in majority and in the north Kerala where the production relations among Muslim fishermen were capitalistic in nature, the progressive democratic political process has influences (Kurien, 1995). In other parts of the state, it is only in early 1980, fish workers began to organise (Kurien, 1992). The progressive democratic political process among the fishermen, created a demand for better living conditions, which in turn helped them to improve their social conditions including literacy rate. This argument may be substantiated by the northern district Malappuram and Southern district of Thiruvananthapuram where the progressive democratic political process is very weak. Literacy rate among fisherfolk in these districts is less than 40 percent.

#### **Aksharatheeram - Coastal Literacy Programme**

Aksharatheeram project was specially designed to implement literacy programme among fisherfolk. After the first phase of total literacy campaign, which started in 1990, there were 89235 illiterate/neo-literate fisherfolk in nine coastal districts of Kerala. Thiruvananthapuram district which has one of the largest fisherfolk population in Kerala has 24,043 illiterates/neo-literates. Other district with large concentration of illiterate/neo-literate fisherfolks are Alappuzha, Malappuram and Kozhikkode. Aksharatheerm is a special project started along with the post-literacy programme and tribal literacy project, which is another special project in 1992.

**Table 2**  
**Kerala Saksharatha Samithi - Aksharatheeram Project Progress Report**  
**as on 31.07.94**

District	Illiterates/ Neo-literate		Primer I		Primer II		Primer III		Primer IV	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Thiruvantha- puram	10249	13794	2319	5555	1233	3026	1332	2198	556	1567
Kollam	2031	4463	287	1027	332	1665	324	1250	273	874
Alapuzha	3655	7033	707	1653	1215	1585	1552	1834	1850	1171
Ernakulam	1020	2324	68	199	180	337	264	636	257	849
Thrissur	3303	6604	52	323	75	196	39	228	206	625
Malappuram	3909	9013	511	1545	527	1394	511	1365	652	3139
Kozhikode	4137	9677	493	1090	233	906	52	905	36	413
Kannur	1215	1475	85	225	265	394	218	358	145	274
Kasargode	1463	3670	134	900	194	424	231	427	181	347
<b>Total</b>	<b>31182</b>	<b>58053</b>	<b>4656</b>	<b>12517</b>	<b>4254</b>	<b>9927</b>	<b>4573</b>	<b>9201</b>	<b>4156</b>	<b>8259</b>

According to NLM (National Literacy Mission) norms, three literacy primers (Primer I, Primer II, and Primer III) have to be completed for achieving basic literacy. After the successful completion of these primers evaluation is conducted and those who achieves a required standard, fixed by NLM are declared neo-literates. Another primer is to be completed in the post-literacy phase. According to the progress report published by Kerala Saksharatha Samithi in 1994, only 15.43 percent of the learners in Aksharatheeram project completed the primer III. Only 13.91 percent of the learners completed PL-4 (see table 3). This data means that only 29.34 percent of the learners are declared neo-literate even after the two years programme, if we are considering that all those completed primer-III as neo-literate. But in many places of Kollam and Thiruvananthapuram districts neither literacy classes are functioning smoothly nor evaluation ws conducted.

**Table 3**  
**Aksharatheeram Project Progress Report as on 31.07.94**

Districts	Percentage of learners completed											
	Primer I			Primer II			Primer III			Primer IV		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Thiruvananthapuram	22.63	40.27	32.75	12.03	21.94	17.71	12.99	15.93	14.68	5.42	11.36	8.83
Kollam	14.13	23.01	20.23	16.35	37.31	30.75	15.95	28.00	24.24	13.44	19.58	17.66
Alappuzha	18.34	23.5	21.68	31.52	22.54	25.73	40.25	26.7	31.1	47.98	16.65	28.26
Ernakulam	6.67	8.56	7.99	7.84	18.80	15.46	24.90	27.37	26.91	25.19	36.53	33.07
Thrissur	1.57	4.89	3.78	2.27	2.97	2.74	2.69	3.45	3.2	6.24	9.46	8.39
Malappuram	13.07	28.23	23.65	13.48	15.46	14.86	13.07	15.14	14.52	16.68	7.69	21.59
Kozhikode	11.92	11.26	11.45	5.63	9.36	8.25	1.26	9.4	6.93	0.08	4.26	3.25
Kannur	7.0	15.25	11.52	21.81	26.71	24.50	17.94	24.27	21.41	11.93	18.58	15.58
Kasargode	9.16	24.52	20.14	13.26	11.55	12.04	15.78	11.63	12.82	12.37	9.45	10.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>14.93</b>	<b>21.56</b>	<b>19.24</b>	<b>13.64</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>15.89</b>	<b>14.67</b>	<b>15.85</b>	<b>15.43</b>	<b>13.33</b>	<b>14.23</b>	<b>13.91</b>

Source : Compiled from data of Kerala Saksharatha Samithi

In Thiruvanthapuram, Thrissur and Kozhikode districts where a large proportion of illiterate fishermen concentrated, Aksharatheeram project is a failure (see table). The other two districts with large number of illiterates, Alappuzha and Malappuram, made comparably good achievements.

The districts with small number of illiterates also shows poor response to Aksharatheeram project. In Kannur, Kasargode and Kollam districts learners who have completed Primer-III is less than 25 percent. Learners who have completed Primer-III and PL-4 is less than 50 percent of the total illiterates. Only in Ernakulam and Alappuzha districts, learners completed Primer-III and PL-4, together constitute more than 50 percent of the illiterates.

#### Organisational Structure

In order to ensure the successful conduct of the programme, a three level implementation mechanism was resorted to. This first level comprised project

staff including State Saksharatha Samithi, district Saksharatha Samithi, project officers and sub project officers. For the Aksharatheeram project a special sub project officer known as Assistant Project Officer (APO) was appointed. Thus in the coastal sub projects there would be two APO, one for general literacy programme and the other for coastal literacy programme.

At the second level, various people's committees from the sub project level to literacy centre were formed along coastal belt. At the third level, district collectors assigned government officials to supervise and assist literacy programme. The third level of the structure, which is assistance of government officials, would be successful only if the second level of the structure, people's committees function well.

The major weakness of the Aksharathaeeram project was in organisational structure. Soon after the declaration of the first phase of total literacy campaign, elections to the state assembly was held and United Democratic Front led by Congress (I) came to power. They ordered to stop work connected with literacy and ordered a vigilance enquiry against Kerala Saksharatha Samithi (Mohan Kumar, 1993). Also the government withdrew officials deputed under the programme. Post-literacy programme and special projects of tribal and coastal literacy started after a gap of six months. Contrary to first phase of the total literacy campaign, in second phase and in special projects inter district transfer was permissible. So motivation of most of the project officials was to get transferred to their own district (Kaladharan, 1995). Lack of commitment on the part of these officials lead to the absence of literacy centres along coastal areas and that is why in many of the places of Kollam and Thiruvananthapuram districts, the literacy centres are only on the government records not on the grass root level.

#### **Mobilisation of Instructors, Learners and People**

In the coastal belt of Kerala, the number of literates capable of teaching the illiterates are unlikely to be available among the fisherfolk. The art of fishing could only be picked up through a process of learning by doing from very young age. Reproduction of this skill is not getting through the formal education system and this prevent them from attending school, and ultimately low level of education among fisherfolk (Kurien, 1995). Thus in places of low educational level, the need for instructors from outside their own settings arises.

For mobilising instructors as well as learners, committed project officials and people's committees are necessary. But in the case of Aksharatheeram project, these two factors were absent, except in some pockets with organised progressive democratic forces and voluntary organisations.

Illiterate fisherfolk in coastal area is depending only on sea and they have no other employment options other than fishing. The greater degree of penetration of market in every aspect of their daily life (Kurien, 1995) subjected them to the exploitation by religion and various other agencies. Also reluctance of the government servants to serve in schools, health centres and other such social service facilities (Kurien, 1995) also contributed to the poor conditions of fisherfolk. Institutional initiatives like co-operative societies have hardly benefitted the fishermen, and sometimes they are unaware of their existence (Kurien, 1980). These peculiar circumstances coupled with the unpredictable nature of sea, made the fisherman engaged in fishing without any pattern of timing. . . . it is impossible to organise the literacy classes in regular timings. Also the absence of felt need of literacy in many parts of the Kerala's fishermen community also contributed to the failure of Aksharatheeram project.

People's committees consists of Panchayat/municipal chairman as its head. In the ward level, ward member is the chairman. These committees consists of representatives from voluntary organisations, political parties, youth clubs and eminent personalities, which is formed to arrange facilities for the smooth functioning of the literacy programme. But in coastal literacy project, people's committees were absent except in some pockets where progressive democratic movement and voluntary organisations are active. In the absence of these forces it is impossible to form the peoples committees, except in some places where christian churches are taking initiatives. The experience of the total literacy campaign in Kerala shows that, the initiative for the people committees came from voluntary organisations and political parties which have a root in the people. But this initiative in a large scale was absent in Aksharatheeram project.

Also the experience of total literacy campaign in Kerala stresses the need for the environment building activities for motivating and mobilising people. Environment building activity is to generate a positive demand for literacy as a tool for social change (GOI, 1995). Songs, street plays, skits, folk songs etc. were used for this purpose. In Aksharatheeram project, the environment building

activity was very weak. In the coastal areas of Kollam and Thiruvanthapuram district, this activity was limited to some places. Neither the artists for this activity came forward from within the fisherfolk nor this programme could motivate artists from outside the community to conduct these programmes. As a result, environment building activity, which is essential for the mobilisation of people did not take place in the coastal areas.

### **Conclusions**

Eradication of illiteracy among the fisherfolk is one of the important tasks before Kerala. Aksharatheeram coastal literacy project was one of the major steps in this direction. But even after the completion of this project illiteracy among them is still prevalent. This project became a failure in most of the coastal areas. Many factors including non committed project officials, lack of mobilisation of people and the prevailing socio-economic conditions which prevent the fisherfolk from attending literacy classes. Absence of progressive democratic organisations in the coastal areas is another major reason for the failure of this project. The mobilisation of people has not occurred due to the absence of these organisations. Literacy programme itself has a greater mobilisational value. If the literacy programme had facilitated a space for the fisherfolk to come together and discuss their views it would have been a major step towards social change along with coastal areas of Kerala. Unfortunately, coastal literacy programme failed to mobilise the people.

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## **Motivation of Rural Female Adults to Participate in the Adult Education Programme - Personal, Economic, Social, Political and Educational Factors**

### **Introduction**

In the recent years adult educationists all over the world have started taking keen interest in identifying the factors which impede growth of literacy. Their search for these factors has revealed that lack of motivation among the learners before as well as after enrolment in the adult literacy class is among the main factors which impede the spread of literacy.

In India as early as 1972 in the seminar organised by the Indian Adult Education Association on "Time Bound Programme" for the Liquidation of Illiteracy in India Mr. SN Maitra in his keynote address emphasized that lack of motivation among the adults to become literate was one of the main factors contributing to the higher incidence of illiteracy in India (Maitra, 1972).

More recently the role of adult motivation has been fully realized in the New Policy of Education (Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India, 1992). This Policy insists on the preparation of teaching material based on the motivation centred technique of improved pace and content of learning.

In view of the important role of motivation in adult literacy a large number of investigators have tried to identify the factors which motivate them to participate in the adult education programme. All over India, researchers have taken interest in exploring the factors of motivation. Attempts have been made to study the factors of motivation among learners of Andhra Pradesh (Khajapeer and Reddy, 1981; Prasad, 1985; Vanka, 1995), Bihar (Prasad, 1985), Gujarat (Directorate of Adult Education, Govt. of India, 1995), Haryana (Rani, 1980), Kerala (Pillai, 1986); Maharashtra (Prasad, 1985), Punjab (Singh, 1971; Kaur, 1982; Multani, 1986; Goyal and Bhangoo, 1988; Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development, 1989; Chahal and Kaur, 1991; Grewal, 1991; Grewal and Kaur, 1992) and Rajasthan (Prasad, 1985).

Some attempts have been made to examine the causes of drop-outs in the literacy programme (Ahluwalia and Sharma, 1997). But very insignificant work has been done to systematically explore the factors of motivation in relation to age. In view of this the present study was designed to explore the personal, economic, social, political and educational factors of motivation in relation to age. Keeping in view the low rate of literacy among female adults, especially rural the study was restricted to rural female adults.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Sample**

The sample included 500 rural female adults who were participating in the adult education programme being conducted by Chandigarh Literacy Council under the Total Literacy Campaign. Their age ranged from 16 to 45 years. Half of the respondents were in the 16 to 30 years age-group and the remaining half in the 31-45 years age-group. The former were designated as younger and the latter as older adults.

### **Tool**

To identify the factors of motivation "Questionnaire for Rural Female Adults" was prepared. The first part of the questionnaire sought biographical information and the second part included 50 items, 10 times each pertaining to personal, economic, social, political and educational factors of motivation.

### **Statistical Analysis**

To compare the responses of younger and older adults percentage test was used.

## **RESULTS**

### **Personal Factors of Motivation**

On an average each adult indicated about six personal factors of motivation. Among the ten personal factors of motivation the most common factor which motivated rural female adults to participate in the adult education programme was to know the importance of giving education to children (92%) which in descending order was followed by (i) to learn embroidery and sewing (74%), (ii) to acquire knowledge about taking care of health of the family (72%), (iii) to obtain

knowledge about keeping house clean (66%), (iv) to get information about good health (65%), (v) to learn to prepare balanced diet (63%), (vi) to gain knowledge about interior decoration (55%), (vii) to learn to discharge the family responsibilities (51%), (viii) to obtain knowledge about animal husbandry (31%) and (ix) to gain knowledge about domestic matters (25%).

### **In Relation to Age**

- (a) Three factors motivated the younger more than the older rural female adults to participate in the adult education programme - (i) to learn embroidery and sewing (CR = 4.20,  $p < .01$ ), (ii) to obtain knowledge about keeping house clean (CR = 8.00,  $p < .01$ ) and (iii) to learn to prepare balanced diet (CR = 8.40,  $p < .01$ ).
- (b) No significant difference was found between younger and older adults regarding the following seven factors - (i) to know the importance of giving education to children (CR = 1.58), (ii) to acquire knowledge about taking care of the health of the family (CR = 1.05), (iii) to get information about good health (CR = 1.09), (iv) to gain knowledge about interior decoration (CR = 0.33), (v) to learn to discharge the family responsibilities, (CR = 0.95), (vi) to obtain knowledge about animal husbandry (CR = 1.71) and (vii) to gain knowledge about domestic matters (CR = 1.25).

### **Economic Factors of Motivation**

On an average each adult indicated about six economic factors. The most commonly mentioned economic factor of motivation was to acquire knowledge about household accounts (86%) which was followed by (i) to learn to shop in an appropriate way (84%), (ii) to learn ways and means for enhancing income (75%), (iii) to learn about money saving devices (72%), (iv) to learn to use leisure time for economic profits (62%), (v) to learn to make proper use of money (65%), (vi) to enhance efficiency in the job (60%), (vii) to facilitate participation in joint development activities (53%), (viii) to gain knowledge about agricultural development (50%) and (ix) to gain knowledge about schemes of self employment (40%).

**In Relation to Age**

- (a) The following seven factors motivated the younger more than the older female adults to participate in the adult education programme - (i) to acquire knowledge about household accounts (CR = 3.58,  $p < .01$ ), (ii) to learn to shop in an appropriate way (CR = 5.69,  $p < .01$ ), (iii) to learn ways and means for enhancing income (CR = 6.88,  $p < .01$ ), (iv) to learn about money saving devices (CR = 6.92,  $p < .01$ ), (v) to learn to make proper use of money (CR = 5.63,  $p < .01$ ), (vi) to gain knowledge about agricultural development (CR = 3.10,  $p < .01$ ), and (vii) to gain knowledge about schemes of self-employment (CR = 2.77,  $p < .01$ ).
- (b) Only one factor, i.e. to learn to use leisure time for economic profits (CR = 3.53,  $p < .01$ ) was mentioned more by older than the younger adults.
- (c) For two factors namely - (i) to enhance efficiency in the job (CR = 0.00) and (ii) to facilitate participation in joint development activities (CR = 1.66) no significant difference was found between older and younger adults.

**Social Factors of Motivation**

On an average each adult mentioned six social factors of motivation where the most frequently mentioned social factor was to learn to communicate with people without hesitation (86%) which in descending order was followed by (i) to learn to live in harmony with family members (79%), (ii) to increase social consciousness (75%), (iii) to be able to solve the village problems jointly (70%), (iv) to become able to solve domestic problems (65%), (v) to acquire information about social institutions (59%), (vi) to live in harmony with members of the community (55%), (vii) to develop good habits (50%), (viii) to avoid social evils (45%) and (ix) to know more about civilization (43%).

**In Relation to the Age**

- (a) The following five social factors motivated younger more than the older rural female adults - (i) to learn to live in harmony with the family members (CR = 3.46,  $p < .01$ ), (ii) to increase social consciousness (CR = 2.23,  $p < .01$ ), (iii) to acquire information about social institutions (CR = 3.12,  $p < .01$ ), (iv) to live in harmony with members of the community (CR = 4.87,  $p < .01$ ) and (v) to develop good habits (CR = 3.10,  $p < .01$ ).

- (b) More older than younger adults mentioned that they were motivated to participate in the adult education programme because of the following reasons - (i) to be able to solve the village problems jointly (CR = 4.08,  $p < .01$ ) and (ii) to avoid social evils (CR = 4.24,  $p < .01$ ).
- (c) Concerning the following three factors no significant difference was found between younger and older adults - (i) to learn to communicate with people without hesitation (CR = 1.19), (ii) to become able to solve domestic problems (CR = 1.88) and (iii) to know more about civilization (CR = 0.88).

#### **Political Factors of Motivation**

On an average each rural female adult indicated about five political factors of motivation where the two most frequently mentioned factors were - (i) to have exact information about Panchayat elections (60%) and (ii) to acquire knowledge about functions of Panchayat (60%). These were followed by (i) to be able to elect good political leaders (55%), (ii) to learn about one's rights and duties (50%), (iii) to learn about the development of the village (50%), (iv) to escape from exploitation by the political leaders (47%), (v) to learn to make proper use of right to vote (45%), (vi) to know about the political conditions prevailing in the country (35%), (vii) to know about the political condition prevailing in the state (35%), and (viii) to become a good citizen (30%).

#### **In Relation to the Age**

- (a) Seven political factors motivated younger more than the older rural female adults to participate in the adult education programme which included - (i) to have exact information about Panchayat elections (CR = 6.89,  $p < .01$ ), (ii) to acquire knowledge about functions of Panchayat (CR = 3.50,  $p < .01$ ), (iii) to learn about one's rights and duties (CR = 3.10,  $p < .01$ ), (iv) to learn about the development of the village (CR = 3.10,  $p < .01$ ), (v) to escape from exploitation by the political leaders (CR = 2.12,  $p < .05$ ), (vi) to learn to make proper use of right to vote (CR = 4.24,  $p < .01$ ) and (vii) to become a good citizen (CR = 2.45,  $p < .05$ ).
- (b) No significant difference was found between younger and older adults regarding the following three factors - (i) to be able to elect good political leaders (CR = 1.66), (ii) to know about the political conditions prevailing in the country (CR = 1.37), and (iii) to know about the political conditions prevailing in the state (CR = 1.37).

**Educational Factors of Motivation**

On an average the rural female adults indicated six educational factors of motivation. Learning of signatures was the most frequently mentioned educational factor (85%) which had motivated rural female adults to participate in the adult education programme and this was followed by (i) to learn counting (70%), (ii) to be able to read the price written on goods (70%), (iii) to be able to study religious books (65%), (iv) to learn to read (60%), (v) to learn to write (60%), (vi) to become able to read and write letters (55%), (vii) to be able to read the number and routes of buses (50%), (viii) to be able to read newspapers (45%) and (ix) to increase general knowledge (40%).

**In Relation to Age**

- (a) Eight out of the ten educational factors motivated younger more than the older rural female adults to participate in adult education programme. These were - (i) to learn signatures (CR = 2.88,  $p < .01$ ), (ii) to learn counting (CR = 4.08,  $p < .01$ ), (iii) to be able to read the price written on goods (CR = 4.08,  $p < .01$ ), (iv) to learn to read (CR = 6.89,  $p < .01$ ), (v) to learn to write (CR = 6.09,  $p < .01$ ), (vi) to become able to read and write letters (CR = 3.10,  $p < .01$ ), and (viii) to be able to read newspapers (CR = 4.24,  $p < .01$ ).
- (b) With regard to the following two factors - the ability to study religious books (CR = 1.88) and to increase general knowledge (CR = 0.00) no significant difference was found between older and younger adults.

**Conclusion**

The results lead to the conclusion that (i) the personal, social, economic, political as well as educational factors which motivate rural female adults are related to the age of the learners, (ii) the effect of age on motivation is more prominent in the case of economic, social, political and educational factors than the personal factors.

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**Rameshwari Handa**

## **The Learning Kejar Packet A of Indonesia**

I attended the First Asia Literacy Regional Forum at Manila, Philippines recently and would like to share with readers information regarding the educational programme called 'The Learning Kejar Packet A (LKPA) introduced in Indonesia in 1977.

To appreciate the model it is important to know that Indonesia consists of more than 17,000 islands with more than 300 languages and different traditional customs and five religions, Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism.

The 'Packet A' consists of a series of basic learning materials on all aspects of life (Packet A-1 to A-100) needed by the illiterates and primary school drop-outs. The Indonesian illiteracy eradication programme has been perceived and conceived as pre-literacy, literacy and post-literacy programmes and one continuous process. Learners are, therefore, first motivated under the pre-literacy programme and then learning packet A-1 is introduced until the learners master upto A-20: the literacy programme. The materials from A-21 to A-100 come under the post-literacy programme.

The Indonesian word 'Kejar' means to 'catch up' and the illiterates or primary school drop-outs studying LKPA, have not only to catch up in what they are lagging behind but should also form a learning group and learn together, and earn a living while utilizing their leisure time to learn i.e. they learn by doing.

Packet 'A' consists of 100 booklets structured into 22 levels of difficulties: in Packet A-1 to A-20 and the rest two in Packets A-21 to A-60 and Packet A-61 to A-100 respectively.

The contents, knowledge, skills and attitudes are very closely linked to real life situation while reading, writing and arithmetic are integrated starting with Packet A-1 written in the form of self-instructional modules to facilitate self learning process, the material also contains inbuilt motivational factors and song to break monotony.

The knowledge, attitude and skills introduced in Packet A are there not just to know and understand but to be utilised and practised for quality of life improvement - (viz. skills like dress making, vegetable growing, fish breeding, chicken-raising etc.)

The delivery system is not formalised neither are special literacy teachers trained for the programme. Most of the learners are farmers and small traders who as a custom get out of their houses to chat with neighbours in the evening after dinner. The learners are motivated to form learning groups who after learning Packet 'A' for one to two hours continue chatting. The LKPA programme is thus tuned into their daily habits and situation.

The tutors and facilitators of LKPA are volunteers recruited from available educated villagers including the village primary school teachers and religious leaders. As the Indonesian economy improves, the tutors are now given as a token of appreciation small amount of cash.

A unique feature of the programme is its openness to new ideas such as motivating the members of the armed forces to participate both as tutors as well as facilitators of LKPA. The mobilization of military for enhancing LKPA is called Operasi Bhakti ABRI Manunggal, Aksara (OBAMA=literally translated; Literacy United Service Operation of the Armed Forces). A Separate Learning Packets for children age 6-12; i.e. LKPA equivalent to primary school of 6 years and LKPB the learning 'Kejar packet B' equivalent to lower secondary schools have been developed while learning 'Kejar Packet 'C' (LKPC) for upper secondary education participants will be provided once Indonesia introduces a 12 years compulsory education for all.

The programme is supported by supplementary reading materials produced by the provincial/local offices of education and culture.

The LKPA programme has been successful and flourishing in Indonesia since twenty years now and the secrets of its longevity according to Dr. Washington P. Napitupulu, Executive Chairman of Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO are:

1. Integration of knowledge, skills and attitude in content
2. Graded Material
3. Learning by doing
4. Delivery system tuned to daily habits and situation of learners
5. Openness and flexibility, and
6. Mutual Assistance Social System - or the spirit of volunteerism

The LKPA has been integrated with income-generation through a 'learning fund' started with World Bank loans. This aspect of LKPA is expected to promote the growth of entrepreneurship and managerial skills enabling a group of learners to market the skills they possess in accordance with the changing needs of the community.

## **Field Testing of Material**

### **Introduction**

Development of literacy material is quite a technical job. In preparation of material various steps are followed e.g. first step in field survey is to identify the problems and needs of the target group and based on the findings of survey themes are selected, contents are decided and manuscripts are developed. To reinforce the learning and amplify the content complimentary illustrations are added.

Following these steps, materials may be developed to the satisfaction of material producers. However, it may not necessarily be a manuscript to the satisfaction of our readers. Therefore, the material should be tried out in the field with the potential learners before printing. This is to get an idea whether the material is being understood and enjoyed by the learners. The producers who are concerned about the readability and acceptability of their material by the learner and want that neo-literate should become self-reliant, always field test their material.

Objective of field testing is to find out the shortcomings of the material which may restrain learners from accepting these e.g. difficulties in reading due to language, unfamiliar and irrelevant content and the format which may create psychological problems in reading.

### **Types of Material**

Literacy material could be broadly divided in the following categories:

1. Print material - e.g. books, flash cards, posters, newsletter etc.
2. Non-print material - e.g. audio-video cassette, radio drama and street corner play etc.

During field testing different arrangements have to be made according to format and category of material.

**Preparation for Field Testing****Print Material**

1. In case of print material prepare a model material using paper size and number of pages, etc. corresponding to the final product. This is to get an idea of the image and effect the complete material will present. If it is a book make several copies and take it to the potential learner. In case of poster, flash card etc. single copy will be enough for testing purpose.
2. Material should be field tested in such a form that it should give image and effect of the complete material. Produce as many model booklets as there are target readers.
3. Leave space in model booklet to add and change in accordance with suggestions of experts and field test results.
4. Prepare an Instructors Manual which should have information about target group, objective, method of application, anticipated effect etc.
5. Make contact with prepective instructors for field test and train them in advance.

**Non-Print Material (Electronic Media)**

1. Prepare an instructor manual with simple explanation on how to handle slide projector, cassette tape recorder etc.
2. Prepare a simple outline, pamphlet and other supplementary materials.
3. Selected important copies of slides may be shown on the pamphlet.
4. Arrange for the place for the field test in advance. Prepare slide projector, cassette tape player, projector screen etc. and make sure that equipments and electricity points are in order. In case of slide kit make sure ther is facility to make the room dark.

Before going for field testing get information about local conditions and understand living condition of the target group. Test the material with the help of local facilitator/instructor. Also target group should be genuine because pretesting is done on sample basis to understand and factify the language difficulty, comprehension problem, acceptability of material according to their standard of the target group.

#### **Method of Field Testing**

1. For field testing of booklet any of the following methods may be adopted:
  - a) Assemble all readers in one place and have each of them read there.
  - b) Have readers take booklet home and some hours later or after one or two days investigate results. A sufficient time for each reader to leisurely read the model booklet is necessary. Allow ample time for field testing.
2. For field testing of poster adopt following method:
  - a) Unstructured - hang poster in a place passed by many people and note down their reactions. No instructor needed.
  - b) Structured - Hang the poster in a place and assemble people there with poster content explained by an instructor.
3. Solicit readers/viewers/audience responses with the help of questionnaire.
4. Mark down difficult words, idioms, phrases etc. and get their responses about them. Find out from them what will be the most suitable word, idioms, phrase etc. and get their responses about them. Find out from them what will be the most suitable word, phrase etc. to replace the difficult ones.

#### **Information needed during pre-testing**

Following information about learners may be needed:

1. Name
2. Sex
3. Age
4. Educational Background
5. Occupation

Responses of readers for following aspects should be recorded. In case of play and song etc. responses about effectiveness and appeal of music and clarity of narration should also be recorded.

#### **Revision of Draft Material**

After analysing and interpreting the respondents reactions the material should be revised. Take help of writers and illustrators to improve the material. Organise a meeting of writers, editor and illustrator for this purpose. It will be better if these people are involved in field testing of material from the very beginning.

**Uma G Joshi**

## **LITERACY - VITAL FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

The Declaration of Persepolis (1965) identified literacy not just as the process of learning the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, but as a contribution to the liberation of man and to his full development. This declaration set forth the proposition that literacy is inseparable from participation, hence, the illiterate should not be the object but the subject of the process where he becomes the literate.

Thus, conceived, the primary aim of literacy programme is not simply to provide people with the skills to cope with the written word in everyday life, but to enable them to gain greater freedom to make choices, to have a better grasp of real life, to enhance personal dignity and to have other sources of knowledge. What is fundamental in the literacy process is to invite people 'to discover that the importance for them is not to read alienated histories but to make history'

Literacy has been defined in many different ways, from reading the word to reading the world. It can be defined in instrumental terms as the ability to read and write in the mother tongue or in a national language where this is required by cultural and political realities. Numeracy - the ability to deal with numbers at a primary level is considered part of literacy.

UNESCO estimates that there are around 1,000 million adults (aged over 15 years) illiterates in the world and that over 95% of these are in the developing world. In Indian situation, the paradox is that while percentage of literacy has been increasing every decade, the total number of illiterates has also been increasing. The percentage of illiterate women is 61.1 per cent as against 36.6 per cent men. The situation is much worse in rural India where literacy rate is 29.95 per cent in contrast to the urban literacy rate of 51.40 per cent, though it is here that 76.69 per cent of total population lives. A UNESCO survey of 20 countries of the Asia and the Pacific region shows that India with an illiterate population of 56.5 per cent in the 15 plus age group is better off than only four others - Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. It is also interesting to

note from this survey that India does not figure even in the list of 12 countries which are expected to achieve full literacy latest by 1995.

Up until the mid 1960s, adult literacy in developing country was usually seen as part of a wide range of small scale community development activities designed to have a practical outcome according to the 'felt needs' of the people concerned. It was certainly the forerunner of the idea of literacy as part of the basic education necessary for meeting basic human needs. However, it was the failure of this small scale effort that led to the new 'functional literacy' approach sponsored by UNESCO.

"Literacy instruction must enable illiterates, left behind by the course of events and producing too little, to become socially and economically integrated in a new world order where scientific and technology progress calls for ever more knowledge and specialization".

At the world conference on Adult Education at Montreal in 1960, UNESCO was asked to promote action that would lead to the organisation of a vast literacy campaign, and the concept of functional literacy was born at the World Conference of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy in Tehran five years later. This new concept implied, 'More than the rudimentary knowledge of reading and writing. Literacy instruction must enable illiterates, left behind by the course of events and producing too little, to become socially and economically integrated in a new world order where scientific and technological progress calls for ever more knowledge and specialization. Functional literacy was at that stage firmly linked to the dominant development ideology of the period, whereby all education, including adult literacy was seen mainly as an investment in human capital; it was thought that this would have a direct effect on productivity and, less directly, on human welfare.

UNESCO then extended its concept of functionality 'to include all its dimensions; political, economic, social and cultural. Just as development is not only economic growth, so literacy. It must aim above all to arouse in the individual a critical awareness of social reality, and to enable him or her to understand, master and transform his or her destiny. Literacy is now seen as a strategy for individual and community liberation.

With this new concept, a massive national campaign to eradicate illiteracy from the country was launched under National Literacy Mission (NLM) on 5th May, 1988. The total literacy campaign has changed the programme of adult education from the intensive selective activity to a mass programme with a definite objective of eradication of illiteracy from the country by 2005. It has rightly stressed that to promote equality, it would be necessary to provide equal opportunities for all not only in terms of access but also conditions for success and the single most critical element for realizing this goal in mass education. The policy has asked the whole nation to pledge itself to the eradication of illiteracy.

Development means change, a change for the betterment in the social and economic conditions of the people. This required people to acquire new knowledge, information and skills, which provides an impetus for development. Development is not merely growth in the economic sense but is closely related to the notion of quality of life which essentially ought to ensure fulfillment of basic needs properly and with dignity. Development is possible only when every citizen of the country is able to make his contribution towards it. In any country, the understanding and consensus regarding social, cultural and economical issues is developed by educated classes and intellectuals. These people play key role in media, policy matters, politics and many other areas. Illiterate population, however big it may be, hardly gets its place in these matters.

Literacy integrated with development programmes can promote life styles that are less consumption oriented, less acquisitive, and more humane which can help us achieve sustainable development. The utility of literacy should not be limited to 3 R's only but it should incorporate the relevant aspects from indigenous situation and developmental efforts by the government.

Development is however, a value enterprise and definitions of development, therefore, have to include about both means and ends. For instance, development must, almost always means more production, but improved production must be accompanied by just distribution. The health of the State must be balanced by a concern for the health of its people. Citizens must be taught critical consciousness so that they can engage in the creation and renewal of social and political structures through genuine participation. Illiteracy, need not, of course,

be equated with ignorance, yet it is an unsatisfactory condition. The need for a reorientation in values and the importance of fostering the political, economic and social skills of citizens have to be accepted as part of the development agenda. Literacy is fundamental in this process of development. It is one of the main indicators of development and also a pre-requisite for initiation of development programmes. To accelerate the process of development, aspects relating to agriculture, irrigation, health, housing, industry, law, labour, rural development schemes like IRDP and TRYSEM, agricultural market, land reforms, nutrition, co-operatives must become the integral part of the literacy programme. Literacy can only be effective when it is combined with such factors of life which create intrinsic motivation among the learners. Learners should not view literacy as means of meeting society's expectations. It should have immediate benefits to himself in his life situations. To accelerate the pace of development literacy programme should become people's movement. The world map of poverty is also the world map of illiteracy. The illiterates are desperately poor, hungry, sick, abused and powerless. Fortunately, development planners have now realized that illiteracy is the bottleneck to development. Illiteracy is not an independent phenomenon, but is intimately associated with socio-economic deprivation and exploitation.

Persistence of illiteracy constitutes a major obstacle to the participation of large sections of society in civic affairs and in all aspects of development. It is therefore not surprising that illiteracy is most widespread among women, among the most destitute and among countries, regions and groups suffering from serious inadequacies as regards food, health, housing and employment. Such recognition of illiteracy as a symptom as well as a cause of underdevelopment has necessitated a renewed examination of the various aspects of illiteracy in the context of development. The approach to development has to be understood as a global process of societal change in which a whole complex of inter-related forces - social and political no less than economic interact upon each other.

The ultimate action of development is the constant improvement of the well being of the entire population on the basis of the full participation in the process of development and a fair distribution of the benefits therefrom (UN General Assembly, 1980).

**Illiteracy and Development of an Individual**

It brings the individual out of a sense of personal inferiority. It releases him from the relationship of dependency and subservience and allocates a new status and potential. The new illiterate's modes of perceiving and thinking about the world change as he acquires and organizes knowledge of the surrounding reality.

In Tanzania, in-depth interviews with new illiterates showed that new illiterates felt that they had become new persons.

Development planners and theorists have asserted that literacy does often mean higher income for the new literate both in urban and rural settings. In the rural setting, the new literate is able to make use of such economic institutions as extension activities, rural banks and marketing co-operatives. In the urban setting, literacy contributes to higher income, to safety on the job, and to the possibility of unionization to protect economic interests.

Acquisition of literacy contributes to the resocialization of the individual and the acquisition of overall individual modernity with the characteristics, such as, keeping informed about the world and taking an active role as a citizen, valuing education and technical skill, aspiring to advance oneself economically, stressing individual responsibility and seeing the virtues of planning, including family planning, approving social change and being open to new experience of urban living and industrial employment, manifesting a sense of personal efficacy.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1967) recognises ignorance as an obstacle to the self-fulfilment of the individual. Adult illiterates who are engaged in lower level jobs such as gardener, messenger, carpenter, driver and so on, can improve on their existing jobs as a result of literacy and thus become more productive. The driver who has just become literate can read road signs and reduce accidents, the literate carpenter or mason can now measure and become more accurate, a literate person can be given literature on hygiene of the body and surroundings and can thus improve his health as that of his neighbours, thereby helping to ensure continuous production by citizens who would otherwise be incapacitated by ill-health.

Apart from these general benefits, there are individual economic benefits to new literates. They are likely to increase their income either through paid

employment or self employment. Also literate persons are likely to save more than illiterate persons by economically utilising their scarce resources. The employer, family and society at large derive benefit from the increased productivity of the literate worker. It is needless to say that we derive so much benefit from the education of other people, e.g. a medical doctor, a carpenter, a mason.

It is often claimed that in an electronic age literacy is only marginally important, and therefore educators ought to be more concerned with media literacy than with reading and writing, because young people spend more time with television and other non-print media than they do with written forms of expression. Many people leaving school today will seldom need to read or write except in the simplest forms that will enable them to cope with everyday tasks. Most of their communication will be done by word of mouth. Even if these contentions were true, literacy makes possible the modes of thinking that cannot be acquired in any other way. Once the literacy is acquired the way the individual perceives reality undergoes radical restructuring. It enables individuals to conceptualize, to generalize, to draw inferences, and to work out logical relationship among ideas in ways that would otherwise be impossible.

A family of the literate members might enjoy individualization and diversity of interests, access to greater information and to the functional processing of such information, and, generally a higher level of discourses. This might mean economic survival or at least a greater economic outreach. Literate family commands better communication and living skills. Study of the effects of literacy on the family has not attracted as much attention from researchers and policy makers as it deserves. Literate parents are better able to socialise their children.

Illiteracy is seen as a danger to the principle of the equality of man. It not only violates the individual's right to education, it is one of the major obstacles to the effective enjoyment of other human rights.

Literacy is a categorical skill and thus has built in social certification. Literacy releases the individual from a sense of personal inferiority, from the position of dependency and subservience and allocates to the new literate, new status and potential, scientific culture and rational social organization which are impossible without literacy.

**Literacy and Development of Nation**

One major objective of developing countries like India, is to eradicate illiteracy and to be able to utilize enlightened and skilled labour to exploit their natural resources.

Studies have shown that there is correlation between illiteracy and poverty. Rich countries have literacy rates of 90 per cent or better while poor countries have literacy rates of 30 per cent or worse.

Illiteracy and poverty go together everywhere in the world. The poor and exploited are illiterate as well. For illiterates in developing countries, the achievement motive needs to be activated and strengthened. The illiterates can be coerced into learning to read and write by the sense of acquiring status, power or material welfare.

We know that economic power stabilizes a nation. Literacy contributes positively to the economic stability and overall well being of a nation. There is positive relationship between the level of literacy in a society and the economic, social and political development of that society.

The relationship between education and material wealth, in a society was pointed out early by the English economist Alfred Marshall. Later in 1950s, Theodore W. Schultz of the University of Chicago renowned economist's interest in the role of education in productivity, in his Noble lecture on 10 December, 1979, he stressed the importance of quality human capital in breaking the cycle of poverty.

Many studies have pointed to the significant effects of illiteracy on economic development. The connection between literacy and economic development remains strong and constitute persuasive evidence of a cause and effect relationship. Literacy contributes to economic development in different ways.

Literate communities will demand and get educational institutions such as schools, libraries, reading rooms, economic institutions such as rural credit banks, co-operatives and political institutions of self government. Literate communities may also experience significant demographic transformations through changes in fertility and mortality rates and the shifts of some age groups to the cities.

As far as modernization of societies is concerned, literacy is a basic personal skill. In a study of Fijian society, a relationship was found between literacy and social change, that included the decline of traditional customs changes in social status, agricultural and domestic innovation, population change and disease, travel and knowledge of the world, evolution of new occupations, games and past-times, dress and attitudinal changes. Modernization by all means is good.

In India, Kottayam, a small district town in India's Southern State of Kerala has managed to do what many thought impossible : stamp out illiteracy among its population. In a country where one out of two adults can not read or write, Kottayam has shown that it is possible to give every citizen the right to master the written word, despite reluctant political leaders, initial suspicion among learners and overriding differences of caste, religion, language and political affiliation. It brought enormous pride to the town people. The community became more cohesive and concerned with the well-being and behaviour of its members. The indications of progress were numerous, including reduced liquor consumption and domestic violence, and triumph of womanhood. The campaign of literacy included themes such as : read more books, green the city, consumer guidance, physical fitness, saving, traffic sense, immunization, anti-smoking, drug and alcohol, cancer education, etc.

Whatever happened in Andhra Pradesh testifies how literacy can bring social change and accelerate the pace of development. Here, anti-alcohol agitation did not start due to any policy decisions or religious 'Fatwah'. It was started by the women of a village in Nellore district. They learnt a lesson in literacy primer that women should unite to become stronger and to make themselves felt. The lesson brought such a tremendous change in women that they united to start anti-liquor agitation. In spite of removing the lesson from the primer, it spreaded not only in the village but in the whole State. All the political parties had to declare prohibition of alcohol in their agenda. This brings proud to the literacy campaign.

We know that economic power stabilizes a nation. Literacy contributes positively to the economic stability and overall well being of a nation. In today's world, there are very few jobs which do not require the ability to use language fully. Literacy, along with its conventional advantage of improved economic opportunity, provides a favourable environment for the germination and growth

**TABLE 3**  
**Correlation between knowledge and adoption of nutrition and health information of rural and urban women of different level of media participation**

	Respon- dents (N)	Mean media score	Mean knowledge score	'r' value
Rural	120	7.9	10.85	.739*
Urban	120	11.69	14.43	.54*
		Mean knowledge score	Mean practice score	
Rural	120	10.85	8.75	.693*
Urban	120	14.43	11.23	.59*

\* Significant at .01 level

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## Adult Education News

### ASPBAE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

#### *Darwin Declaration*

*The Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE) organised its Second General Assembly in Darwin, Australia on December 1 to 8, 1996. Representatives from thirty countries came together to reflect critically on adult education in the region and to plan for the future.*

*After a week long deliberations a Declaration was adopted. Excerpts from the Declaration are given below:*

1. ASPBAE seeks to build a global order which empowers people, promotes sustainable development and peace, and is committed to the transformative function of adult education, especially to promote the learning and interests of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

2. ASPBAE works to develop and promote a form of adult learning which addresses the historical, socio-economic, cultural and political factors which have acted to deprive large sections of society of access to education. In so doing, ASPBAE strives to build partnerships with all those movements that share similar values and objectives.

3. ASPBAE supports the endeavours of its members to promote self-esteem, self-confidence, and a belief in their capacity to do the following in the communities with whom they work:

- to strengthen the creation and transmission of values
- to build a critical consciousness, analytic ability and problem solving skills
- to formulate a "peoples' vision" for the future
- to enable people to question, re-examine, and analyse those aspects of 'tradition' and 'culture' which have led to unequal power relationships, and to arrive at interpretations of 'tradition' and 'culture', which would strengthen and empower the community, and serve their interests.

4. ASPBAE expresses its serious concern with regard to Globalisation - the process in which corporations and other private institutions extend their influence and power - which pervades our everyday lives. We question its fundamental values, assumptions and institutions.

5. Globalisation tends to concentrate economic power and information in the hands of a few, disempowering in particular workers, indigenous people and women. It weakens the Trade Union Movement, increases unemployment, lower wages, thus contributing to a widening gap between the haves and the have nots.

6. We will use the tool of adult education to challenge the domination of global corporations, and the political and economic elite whose policies and practices threaten to consume our lives and lead to more exclusion, oppression, social disintegration and environmental degradation.

7. We will seek to understand and help change this process so that all people may benefit from it and learn the knowledge, skills and values which will assist in building institutions appropriate for a twenty first century social order.

8. ASPBAE reaffirms its commitment to an empowering and transformative education for women in keeping with the resolutions and Declarations of the Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing World Conferences.

9. We call upon all Governments to ratify CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women).

10. We further call upon UN Bodies, Multi and bi-lateral agencies and Donors to provide adequate resources and other mechanisms necessary to meet the objectives of building a world where equity and justice are guaranteed to women and the girl child.

11. ASPBAE asserts that environmental education is a life-long learning process, recognising that ecological problems should be seen and addressed within a socio-economic and cultural context.

12. Thus, ASPBAE commits itself to upholding the principles and practices identified in the Treaty on Environmental Education for Sustainable Societies and Global Responsibility adopted at the 'Earth Summit' in Rio in 1992.

13. ASPBAE reaffirms its belief that Literacy is a Human Right.

14. We recognise that countries of our region contain two-thirds of the world's illiterate population and millions of out of school children.

15. We therefore resolve that: we will pursue the goals established in 1990 by the World Conference on Education for All, to meet the basic learning needs of all our people, especially those of women and girls who suffer most from lack of access to education, and achieve a fully literate society.

16. We strongly urge Governments, United Nations bodies and all other financial and donor institutions to give utmost priority to achieving these goals within a specific time frame.

17. Illiteracy takes on a different dimension in the period of rapid technological change. Many who have been denied access to the new information technologies have been rendered illiterate and face the continuing threat of unemployment and underemployment especially in the highly computerised societies of the Asia-Pacific.

We are committed to ensuring wide-scale access of people and communities to the new information systems and will combat attempts by which information access and control are used to sustain existing unequal power interests.

18. The economic disparities in the region have led to the massive migration of workers, within and between countries. This necessitates the immediate attention of both governments and non-government organizations for the protection of their human rights. ASPBAE will promote education for migrant workers (including illegal migrants) and immigrants, and advocate with governments in sender and receiver countries to ensure the protection of their rights and the promotion of their well-being.

19. Adult Education has the potential for being a powerful tool in the empowerment of peoples and the transformation of societies. It is our task and challenge to wield this tool effectively and responsibly.

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The Indian Adult Education Association founded in 1939, aims at improving the quality of life through education visualized as a continuous and lifelong process. It directs its efforts towards accelerating adult education as a process, a programme and a movement.

The Association co-ordinates the activities of various agencies--Governmental and voluntary, national and international--engaged in similar pursuits. It organises conferences and seminars and undertakes surveys and research projects; it endeavours to up-date and sharpen the awareness of its members by bringing to them from all over the world expert views on, and experiences in, adult education. In pursuit of the policy, the Association has instituted the Nehru Literacy Award and Tagore Literacy Award for Women's Literacy, for outstanding contribution to the promotion of adult education in the country. It has also instituted the Dr. Zakir Husain Memorial Lecture, which is delivered every year by an educationist of eminence.

The Association has brought out many publications on themes relating to adult education, including the Hindi editions of several UNESCO publications. It brings out the Indian Journal of Adult Education, Proudh Shiksha, Jago aur Jagao and IAEA Newsletter.

The Association acts as the Indian arm of the International Council for Adult Education, International Federation of Workers' Education Associations and the Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education. Its membership is open to all individuals and institutions who believe in the aims and objectives of the Association.

Its headquarters are located in the Shafiq Memorial at 17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi-110002.

*Indian Journal of*

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**Adult Learning : A Key for the 21st Century**

**Fifth International Conference on  
Adult Education, Hamburg**

**Special Issue**



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Published every quarter by the Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA), 17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi-110002. Phones : 3319282, 3721336, 3722206.

Fax : 91-11-3355306

Contents of the IJAE are indexed in the Current Index to Journals in Education, New York, Content Pages in Education, Oxfordshire, England and in the Guide to Indian Periodical Literature, Gurgaon (Haryana). Also microfilmed by University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA. **ISSN 0019-5006**

Subscription: Inland Rs. 60.00 p.a.,

Overseas, US\$ 20.00 p.a.

Advertisement rates : full page - Rs. 1500; half page - Rs.800; quarter page - Rs.450

Printed and Published by J.L. Sachdeva for Indian Adult Education Association, 17-B Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi - 110002. Printed at Prabhat Publicity, 2622, Kucha Chelan, Darya Ganj, New Delhi - 110002.

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The Indian Journal of Adult Education, first published as a monthly in 1939, is brought out now as a quarterly by the Indian Adult Education Association. The Journal has special interest in the theory and practice of Non-formal Education with special reference to the relationship between Adult Education and Development. Contributions on a wide range of themes within this broad framework are welcome. The Journal is particularly interested in current experiments in the field.

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## **Editorial**

“Only human-centered development and a participatory society based on the full respect of human rights will lead to sustainable and equitable development - Adult Education, thus, becomes more than a right; it is a key to the 21st century. It is both a consequence of active citizenship and a condition for full participation in society.” This is the essence of the Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning proclaimed in the fifth International Conference on Adult Education held at Hamburg during July 14-18, 1997.

The Hamburg Declaration echoes the fundamental principles and concept of Adult Education developed in India. Mahatma Gandhi had said that illiteracy should neither begin nor end with the 3Rs. According to him, mere literacy is not the end of education, nor even the beginning. Mere literacy, in his opinion, “can never be the be-all and end-all of education.” Therefore, adult literacy acquiring a new dimension, developed into adult education.

The concept of social education emerged soon after independence. The Mohan Lal Saxena Sub-Committee on Adult Education, had recommended in 1948 “that although both literacy and general education form part of Adult Education, yet greater emphasis should be laid on general education to enable every Indian to participate effectively in this new social order.” It was however, gradually realised that even this concept of adult education was not enough, as it lacked dynamic motivation and failed to raise the level of thought and activity of our people. Adult Education underwent a conceptual transformation into Social Education. Its scope was much wider than that of Adult Education. Again, Social Education passed through a metamorphosis and reverted back to Adult Education over the past five decades.

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of India’s independence, it is sad to note that the commitment to extend universal education to all our citizens remains unfulfilled. However, it is the most commemorative measure of 50 years of our independence that the Government of India has recently decided to make, by constitutional amendments, the right to education a fundamental right.

**'Learning : the treasure within', the report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, popularly known as the Delors Report, while wishing to reposition our thinking on education, has based it on four pillars: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together. A careful study of the Report reveals that while it places formal education as central, it has rendered adult education peripheral. The text of the Report does not contain policy positions on adult literacy, adult education and non-formal education, although these are more often implied therein. Moreover, the Commission wants to establish the importance of formal education, and give a secondary position to non-formal education and informal education.**

**The UNESCO Round Table on the Primary Synthesis of the Delors Report, organised in 1995, in Paris, "sensed several problems with the Commission's choice of a vantage point - for instance, it did not seem to take the developing world into its range of sight or knowledge - and with its ideological position - it did not show genuine moral fervour for the uplifting of the less-privileged sector of the 'global village'." The Round Table was most unhappy to observe that in the Delors Report are reflected excessive materialism, exaggerated role of the school as the only place to educate, and exclusion of the community-generated learning needs and community-based learning arrangements. It further pointed out that the Commission seemed to have misconstrued the conditions of living and learning which exist in the developing societies and which influence how adult men and women learn.**

**A careful reading of the Delors Report from the perspective of adult education in the context of the Third World makes one disappointed, because of its ambiguity about its commitments to adult literacy and adult education and its hostility towards non-formal and informal education.**

**Besides India's numerous contributions to the world in regard to the concept, principles, methods and techniques of adult education, its unique gift to the world is the concept of resource development for adult education. Indian experts on UN/ UNESCO missions have influenced the policy decisions on adult education in many parts of the world. The time has come for India to take a lead and show the way by designing innovative and pragmatic strategies on adult education.**

## THE HAMBURG DECLARATION

1. We, the representatives of governments and non-governmental organisations and institutions concerned with adult learning, meeting in the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg at the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education, reaffirm that only human-centred development and a participatory society based on the full respect of human rights will lead to sustainable and equitable development. The informed and effective participation of men and women in every sphere of life is needed if humanity is to survive and to meet the challenges of the future.

2. Adult education thus becomes more than a right; it is a key to the twenty-first century. It is both a consequence of active citizenship and a condition for full participation in society. It is a powerful concept for fostering ecologically sustainable development, for promoting democracy, justice, gender equity, and scientific, social and economic development, and for building a world in which violent conflict is replaced by dialogue and a culture of peace based on justice. Adult learning can shape identity and give meaning to life. Learning throughout life implies a rethinking of content reflecting such factors as age, gender equality, disability, language, culture and economic disparities.

3. Adult education denotes the entire body of learning processes taking place, formal or otherwise, whereby people regarded as adults by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, and improve their technical or professional qualifications or turn them in a new direction to meet their own needs and those of their society. Adult learning encompasses both formal and continuing education, non-formal learning and the spectrum of informal and incidental learning available in a multicultural learning society, where theory- and practice-based approaches are recognised.

4. Though the content of adult learning and of education for children and adolescents will vary according to the economic, social, environmental and cultural contexts, and the needs of the people in the societies in which they take place, both are necessary elements of a new vision of education where learning becomes truly lifelong. The perspective of learning throughout life commands such complementarity and continuity. The potential contribution of adult and continuing education to the creation of an informed and tolerant citizenry, economic and social development, the eradication of illiteracy, the alleviation of poverty and the preservation of

the environment is enormous and should, therefore, be built upon.

5. The objectives of youth and adult education, viewed as a lifelong process, are to develop the autonomy and the sense of responsibility of people and communities, to reinforce the capacity to deal with the transformations taking place in the economy, in culture and in society as a whole, and to promote coexistence, tolerance and the informed and creative participation of citizens in their communities, in short to enable people and communities to take control of their destiny and society to face the challenges ahead. It is essential that approaches to adult learning be based on their heritage, culture, values and prior experiences and that the diverse ways in which they are implemented facilitate and stimulate the citizens' active involvement and expression.

6. This Conference recognises the diversity of political, economic and social systems and governmental structures among member countries. In accordance with that diversity and ensuring full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, this Conference acknowledges that the particular circumstances of member countries will determine the measures governments may introduce to further the spirit of our objectives.

7. The representatives of governments and organisations participating in the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education have decided together to explore the potential and the future of adult learning, broadly and dynamically conceived within a framework of lifelong learning.

8. During this decade, adult learning has undergone substantial transformations and experienced enormous growth in scope and scale. In the knowledge-based societies that are emerging around the world, adult and continuing education have become an imperative in the community and at the workplace. New demands 'from society and working life raise expectations requiring each and every individual to continue renewing knowledge and skills throughout the whole of his or her life. At the heart of this transformation is a new role for the state and the emergence of expanded partnerships devoted to adult learning within civil society. The state remains the essential vehicle for ensuring the right to education for all, particularly for the most vulnerable groups of society, e.g. minorities and indigenous peoples, and in providing an overall policy framework. Within the new partnership emerging between the public, the private and the community sectors, the role of the state is shifting. It is not only a provider of adult education services but also an adviser, a funder and a monitoring and evaluation agency. Governments and social partners must take the necessary measures to support individuals in expressing their educational needs and aspirations, and in gaining access to educational opportunities throughout their life. Within governments, adult education is not confined to ministries of education; all ministries are engaged in promoting adult learning, and

interministerial co-operation is essential. Moreover, employers, unions, nongovernmental and community organisations, and indigenous people's and women's groups are involved and have a responsibility to interact and create opportunities for lifelong learning with provision for recognition and accreditation.

9. Basic education for all means that people, whatever their age, have an opportunity, individually and collectively, to realise their potential. It is not only a right, it is also a duty and a responsibility both to others and to society as a whole. It is essential that the recognition of the right to education throughout life should be accompanied by measures to create the conditions required to exercise this right. The challenges of the twenty-first century cannot be met by governments, organisations or institutions alone; the energy, imagination and genius of people and their full, free and vigorous participation in every aspect of life are also needed. Youth and adult learning is one of the principal means of significantly increasing creativity and productivity, in the widest sense of those terms, thereby converting it into an indispensable condition for meeting the complex and interrelated problems of a world beset by accelerating change and growing complexity and risk.

10. The new concept of youth and adult education presents a challenge to existing practices because it calls for effective networking within the formal and non-formal systems, and for innovation and more creativity and flexibility. Such challenges should be met by new approaches to adult education within the concept of learning throughout life. Promoting learning, using mass media and local publicity, and offering impartial guidance are responsibilities for governments, social partners and providers. The ultimate goal should be the creation of a learning society committed to social justice and general well-being.

11. *Adult Literacy.* Literacy, conceived broadly as the basic knowledge and skills needed by all in a rapidly changing world, is a fundamental human right. In every society, literacy is a necessary skill in itself and one of the foundations of other life skills. There are millions, the majority of whom are women, who lack opportunities to learn or who have insufficient skills to be able to assert this right. The challenge is to enable them to do so. This will often imply the creation of preconditions for learning through awareness-raising and empowerment. Literacy is also a catalyst for participation in social, cultural, political and economic activities, and for learning throughout life. We therefore commit ourselves to ensuring opportunities for all to acquire and maintain literacy skills, and to create, in all Member States, a literate environment to support the oral culture. The provision of learning opportunities for all, including the unreached and the excluded, is the most urgent concern.

12. The recognition of the *Right to Education and the Right to Learn*  
*Indian Journal of Adult Education* 7 *July-Sept. 1997*

throughout life is more than ever a necessity; it is the right to read and write, the right to question and analyse, the right to have access to resources, and to develop and practise individual and collective skills and competences.

13. *Women's integration and empowerment.* Women have a right to equal opportunities; society, in turn, depends on their full contribution in all fields of work and aspects of life. Youth and adult learning policies should be responsive to culture, give priority to expanding educational opportunities for all women, respecting their diversity and eliminating prejudices and stereotypes that both limit their access to youth and adult education and restrict the benefits they derive from it. Wherever attempts are made to restrict women's right to literacy, education and training, it should be considered as unacceptable. Practices and measures should be taken to remedy them.

14. *Culture of peace and education for citizenship and democracy.* One of the foremost challenges of our age is to eliminate the culture of violence and to construct a culture of peace based on justice and tolerance within which dialogue, mutual recognition and negotiation will replace violence, in homes and communities, within nations and between countries.

15. *Diversity and equality.* Adult learning must reflect the richness of cultural diversity and respect traditional and indigenous peoples' knowledge and systems of learning; the right to learn in the mother tongue should be respected and implemented. Adult education faces an acute challenge in preserving and documenting oral wisdom of minority groups and indigenous and nomadic peoples. In turn, intercultural education should encourage learning between and about different cultures in support of peace, human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy, justice, liberty, coexistence and diversity.

16. *Health.* Health is a basic human right. Investments in education are investments in health. Lifelong learning can significantly contribute to the promotion of health and the prevention of disease. Adult education offers significant opportunities to provide relevant, equitable and sustainable access to health knowledge.

17. *Environmental Sustainability.* Education for environmental sustainability should be a lifelong learning process which recognises that ecological problems exist within a socio-economic, political and cultural context. A sustainable future cannot be achieved without addressing the relationship between environmental problems and current development paradigms. Adult environmental education can play an important role in; sensitizing and mobilizing communities and decision-makers towards sustained environmental action.

18. *Indigenous and nomadic education and culture.* Indigenous and nomadic peoples have the right to have access to all levels and forms of education

provided by the state. They shall not be denied the right to enjoy their own culture, or to use their own languages. Education for indigenous and nomadic peoples should be linguistically and culturally appropriate to their needs and should facilitate access to further education and training.

19. *Transformation of the economy.* Globalisation, changes in production patterns, rising unemployment and the difficulty of ensuring secure livelihoods call for more active labour policies and increased investment in developing the necessary skills to enable men and women to participate in the labour market and income-generating activities.

20. *Access to information.* The development of the new information and communication technologies brings with it new risks of social and occupational exclusion for groups of individuals and even businesses which are unable to adapt to this context. One of the roles of adult education in the future should therefore be to limit these risks of exclusion so that the human dimension of the information society becomes meaningful.

21. *The aging population.* There are now more older people in the world and the proportion is still rising. These older adults have much to contribute to the development of society. Therefore it is important that they have the opportunity to learn on equal terms and in appropriate ways. Their skills and abilities should be recognised, valued and made use of.

22. We must act with the utmost urgency to increase and guarantee national and international investment in and the commitment of private and community resources to youth and adult learning. The Agenda for the Future which we have adopted here is designed to achieve this end.

23. We call upon UNESCO as the United Nations lead agency in the field of education to play the leading role in promoting adult education as an integral part of a system of learning and to mobilise the support of all partners, particularly those within the United Nations system, in order to give priority to implementing the Agenda for the Future and facilitating provision of the services needed for reinforcing international co-ordination and co-operation.

24. We urge UNESCO to encourage Member States to adopt policies and legislation that are favourable to and accommodate people with disabilities in educational programmes, as well as being sensitive to cultural, linguistic, gender and economic diversity.

25. We solemnly declare that all the parties will closely follow up the implementation of this Declaration and the Agenda for the Future, clearly distinguishing their respective responsibilities and complementing and co-operating with one another. We are determined to ensure that lifelong learning will become a more significant reality in the early twenty-first century.

26. We, gathered together in Hamburg, convinced of the necessity of

adult learning, pledge that all men and women will be provided with the opportunity to learn throughout their lives. To that end, we will forge extended alliances to mobilise and share resources in order to make adult learning a joy, a tool, a right and a shared responsibility.

**IJAE RATES REVISED**

The annual subscription rate of Indian Journal of Adult Education has been revised w.e.f. Vol. 59 (January 1998). The revised rates will be as follows:

Inland	Rs.100/- p.a.
Overseas	US\$ 30/- p.a.

## AGENDA FOR THE FUTURE OF ADULT LEARNING

1. *This Agenda for the Future of Adult Learning* sets out in detail the new commitment to the development of adult learning called for by the Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning.

2. The *Agenda* focuses on common concerns facing humanity on the eve of the twenty-first century and on the vital role that adult learning has to play in enabling women and men to face these most urgent challenges with knowledge, courage and creativity.

3. The development of adult learning requires partnership between government departments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations, employers and trade unions, universities and research centres, the media, civil - and community-level associations, facilitators of adult learning and the adult learners themselves.

4. Profound changes are taking place both globally and locally. They can be seen in a globalisation of economic systems, in the rapid development of science and technology, in the mobility of populations, and in the emergence of an information- and knowledge-based society. The world is also experiencing major changes in patterns of work and unemployment, and tensions between social groups based on culture, ethnicity, gender roles, religion and income. There is a growing ecological crisis. These trends are reflected in education, where those responsible for complex education systems are struggling to cope with new opportunities and demands, often with declining resources at their disposal.

5. Since this decade began, a series of conferences has focused world attention on key international problems. Beginning with the World Conference on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs (Jomtien, Thailand, 1990) they have included the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992) the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993), the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994), the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995), the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II, Istanbul, 1996) and the most recent, the World Food Summit (Rome, 1996). At all these conferences world leaders looked to education to release the competence and creativity of citizens. Education was seen as a vital element in a strategy to nurture the sustainable development processes.

6. There have been parallel changes in education as well. From the time

of its foundation, UNESCO has played a pioneering role in the conception of adult education as an essential part of any education system and of human-centred development. There are now numerous agencies active in the field, many of which have taken part in the Hamburg conference.

7. The First International Conference on Adult Education (Elsinore, Denmark, 1949) was followed by conferences in Montreal (1960), Tokyo (1972) and Paris (1985). Other important milestones include the 1972 Report of the International Commission on the Development of Education chaired by Edgar Faure, *Learning to Be. The World of Education Today and Tomorrow*, the influential 1976 UNESCO Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education which set out the vital role of adult education 'as forming part of lifelong education and learning'.

8. A quarter of century after *Learning to Be*, the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, chaired by Jacques Delors, said that, 'The concept of learning throughout life is the key that gives access to the twenty-first century. It goes beyond the traditional distinctions between initial and continuing education. It links up with another concept [...] that of the learning society, in which everything affords an opportunity of learning and fulfilling one's potential'. The Commission's report, *Learning : The Treasure Within*, emphasised the importance of the four pillars of education: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be. As indicated in the Hamburg Declaration, adult learning has grown in depth and scale, and has become an imperative at the workplace, in the home and in the community, as men and women struggle to create new realities at every stage of life.

9. In Hamburg the broad and complex spectrum of adult learning was considered under ten thematic headings :

- *Adult learning and democracy*
- *Improving the conditions and quality of adult learning*
- *Ensuring the universal right to literacy and basic education*
- *Promoting the empowerment of women through adult learning*
- *Adult learning and the changing world of work*
- *Adult learning in relation to the environment, health and population*
- *Adult learning, culture, media and new information technologies*
- *Adult learning for all. the potential of different groups*
- *The economics of adult learning*
- *Enhancing international co-operation and solidarity.*

Theme 1: Adult learning and democracy : the challenges of the twenty-first century

10. *The challenges of the twenty-first century require the creativity and competence of citizens in alleviating poverty, consolidating democratic processes,*  
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*strengthening and protecting human rights, promoting a culture of peace, encouraging active citizenship, strengthening the role of civil society, ensuring the equality and empowerment of women, recognising cultural diversity (including the use of language, and promoting justice and equality for minorities and indigenous peoples), and a new partnership between state and civil society. Indeed, to reinforce democracy, it is essential to strengthen learning environments, to reinforce the participation of citizens, and to create contexts where the productivity of people will be enhanced and where a culture of equity and peace can take root.*

**We commit ourselves to :**

- 11. Creating greater community participation: a) By promoting active citizenship and improving participatory democracy, in order to create learning communities;**
  - b) By encouraging and developing leadership capabilities among the adult population and especially among women, enabling them to participate in institutions of the state, the market, civil society and the family.
- 12. Raising awareness about prejudice and discrimination in society:**
  - a) By including the issues of prejudice and discrimination (whether on the grounds of racism, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical disability, nationality, caste or age), tolerance and understanding in all adult education activities and programmes;
  - b) By developing education programmes that enable people to understand gender relations and human sexuality in all their dimensions and in relation to discrimination and intolerance;
  - c) By recognising and affirming the cultures and rights to education of women, of indigenous people and of minorities by ensuring equitable representation in decision-making processes and provision, and by supporting the publication of local and indigenous learning materials.
- 13. Encouraging greater recognition, participation and accountability of nongovernmental organisations:**

By recognising and financing appropriately the growing role of non-governmental organisations in providing educational opportunities for adults in all sectors in reaching the most needy and in contributing to an active civil society.

**14. Promoting a culture of peace, cultural dialogue and human rights:**

- a) By enabling citizens to approach conflicts in an empathic, non-violent and creative manner with peace education for all, peace journalism and peace culture as important components,
- b) By strengthening the educational dimensions of human rights activities in formal and nonformal adult learning provisions at community, national, regional and global levels.

**Theme 2 : Improving the conditions and quality of adult learning**

*15. While there is growing demand for adult education and an explosion of information, the disparities between those who have access and those who do not is also growing. There is therefore a need to counter this polarity which reinforces existing inequalities by creating adult learning institutions and lifelong learning environments that can help counter the prevalent trend. How can the conditions of adult learning be improved ? How can we overcome inadequacies of its provision? What kind of measures and reforms should be undertaken in order to achieve greater accessibility, relevance, quality, respect for diversity and recognition of prior learning?*

**We commit ourselves to :**

**16. Creating conditions for the expression of people's demand for learning :**

- a) By adopting legislation recognising the right to learn of all adults, proposing an enlarged vision of adult learning and facilitating co-ordination between agencies;
- b) By facilitating the expression of the learning demand of people within their own culture and language;
- c) By creating public information and counselling services and developing methods for the recognition of experiential and prior learning.

**17. Ensuring accessibility and quality :**

- a) By adopting legislation, policies and co-operation mechanisms with all partners, facilitating the participation of adults in education at the work place and in the community, supporting and extending programmes to rural and remote areas;
- b) By developing a comprehensive policy taking into account the critical role of the learning environments;
- c) By improving the quality and ensuring relevance of adult

education and promoting the plurality of provision and approaches;

- d) By facilitating co-operation among adult learning initiatives related to different institutions and sectors of activity.

**18. Opening schools, colleges and universities to adult learners :**

- a) By requiring institutions of formal education from primary level onwards to be prepared to open their doors to adult learners, adapting their programmes and learning conditions to meet the needs of adults;
- b) By calling upon the World Conference on Higher Education (Paris, 1998) to promote the transformation of the post-secondary institutions into lifelong learning institutions.

**19. Improving the conditions for the professional development of adult educators and facilitators:**

- a) By elaborating policies and taking measures for better recruitment, training, in-service training, working conditions and remuneration of the personnel engaged in youth and adult education programmes and activities in order to ensure their quality and sustainability;
- b) By promoting information and documentation services, ensuring general access and reflecting cultural diversity.

**20. Improving the relevance of initial education within a lifelong learning perspective:**

By eliminating barriers between non-formal and formal education, and ensuring that young adults have opportunities to pursue their education beyond their initial formal schooling.

**21. Promoting policy-driven and action-oriented research on adult learning:**

By promoting national and cross-national studies on learners, programmes and institutions of adult education, and supporting the evaluation of adult education provision and participation, especially in relation to the needs of all groups of society.

**22. Recognising the new role of the state and social partners:**

- a) By all partners recognising their mutual responsibility for establishing supportive statutory frameworks, for ensuring equity, for setting up monitoring and co-ordination mechanisms, and for providing professional backup;

- b) By creating the necessary financial, administrative and management support, and reinforcing mechanisms for inter-sectoral and interdepartmental linkages.

**Theme 3 : Ensuring the universal right to literacy and basic education**

*23. Today, there are nearly 1,000 million people who have not acquired literacy skills and there are millions who have been unable to sustain them, even within the most prosperous countries. Everywhere in the world, literacy is a gateway to fuller participation in social, cultural, political and economic life. Literacy must be linked to people's socio-economic and cultural contexts. Literacy not only enables individuals to function effectively in their societies but also promotes individual growth and social transformations. It must address the needs of both women and men, to enable them to understand the interconnections between personal, local and global realities.*

**We commit ourselves to**

**24. Linking literacy to the social, cultural and economic development aspirations of learners**

- a) By promoting the importance of literacy to: human rights; participatory citizenship; social, political and economic equity; and cultural identity;
- b) By integrating literacy and basic skills into all development projects, particularly those related to health and the environment, and by encouraging grassroots organisations and social movements to promote their own learning and development initiatives.

**25. Building links with traditional and minority knowledge and culture:**

- a) By improving the learning process through: learner-centred strategies; a sensitivity to diversity of languages and cultures; the involvement of learners in materials development; intergenerational learning processes; the use of local languages, indigenous knowledge and appropriate technologies;
- b) By transforming, in each developing region, one existing resource centre into a regional institute for literacy and post-literacy activities and traditional knowledge with the tasks of launching transdisciplinary research projects with universities and grassroots groups, of establishing bridges and equivalences with formal education, and of accrediting experiential learning;

- c) By improving the status of literacy personnel, and providing and accrediting a career structure.
- d) By designing an international programme for developing systems of monitoring and evaluating literacy and continuing education at the international, regional and national levels, and by establishing a worldwide information base for promoting policies and management as well as improving the quality, efficiency and sustainability of such efforts.
- e) By increasing public awareness and support for literacy, and an understanding of both the efforts to date and the obstacles faced in achieving literacy for all.
- f) By mobilising sufficient financial and human resources through a strong financial commitment to the advancement of literacy by national, regional and local governments, as well as partnerships involving formal and non-formal education, volunteers, non-governmental organisations and the private sector.
- g) By making a serious effort to ensure the use of technology for literacy in both industrialised and developing countries.

**26. Enriching the literacy environment:**

By enhancing the use of literacy with the production and the dissemination of locally relevant and learner-generated print materials.

**Theme 4: Women, gender and adult learning**

*27. Equal opportunity in all aspects of education is essential to enable women to make their full contribution to society and to the resolution of the multiple problems confronting humanity. When women are caught in a situation of social isolation and lack of access to knowledge and information, they are alienated from decision-making processes within the family, community and society in general, and have little control over their bodies and lives. For poor women, the sheer business of survival becomes an obstacle to education. Educational processes should therefore address the constraints that prevent women's access to intellectual resources and empower women to become fully active as partners in social transformation. The message of equality and equal access must not be limited to programmes intended for women. Education should ensure that women become aware of the need to organise as women to change the situation and to build their capacities to enable them to gain access to formal structures of power and to decision-making processes in both private and public spheres.*

**We commit ourselves to:**

**28. Promoting empowerment of women and gender equity through adult learning:**

- a) By recognising and correcting the continued marginalisation and denial of access and of equal opportunities for quality education that girls and women are still facing at all levels;
- b) By raising the consciousness of girls, boys, women and men concerning gender inequalities and the need to change these unequal relations;
- c) By promoting gender-sensitive participatory pedagogy which acknowledges the daily life experience of women and recognises cognitive as well as affective outcomes;
- d) By educating men and women to acknowledge the serious and adverse impacts of globalisation and structural adjustment policies in all parts of the world, especially upon women;
- e) By taking adequate financial/economical measures and by implementing social policies to ensure women's successful participation in adult education through removing obstacles and providing supportive learning environments;
- f) By educating women and men so as to promote sharing of the multiple workloads and responsibilities;
- g) By encouraging women to organise as women to promote a collective identity and to create women's organisations to bring about change;
- h) By promoting women's participation in decision-making processes and in formal structures.

**Theme 5: Adult learning and the changing world of work**

*29. The changing world of work is a multifaceted issue of enormous concern and relevance to adult learning. Globalisation and new technologies are having a powerful and growing impact on all dimensions of individual and collective lives of women and men. There is increasing concern about the precariousness of employment and the rise of unemployment. In developing countries, the concern is not simply one of employment but also of ensuring secure livelihoods for all. The improvement needed in productivity and distribution in industry, agriculture and services requires increased competencies and the development of new skills. The right to work, the opportunity for employment and the responsibility to contribute to the development and well-being of one's society are issues which adult learning must address.*

**We commit ourselves to :**

- 30. Promoting the right to work and the right to work-related adult learning:**
  - a) By recognising the right to work and to sustainable livelihood for all people and fostering, through new solidarities, the diversification of models of employment and recognised productive activities;
  - b) By ensuring that work-related adult education provides both the foundation of basic generic competencies and specific skills, thus consolidating employment, facilitating occupational mobility and improving income-generating activities;
  - c) By promoting partnerships between employers and employees;
  - d) By ensuring that knowledge and skills acquired informally are fully recognised.
  
- 31. Ensuring access to work-related adult learning for different target groups:**
  - a) By ensuring that work-related adult education policies address the needs of self employed workers and workers in the informal economy and facilitate access for women to training in non-traditional jobs and sectors;
  - b) By making sure that work-related adult education programmes consider gender and cultural differences, safety in the workplace and concerns for workers' health and protection of workers against multinational corporations, as well as the preservation of the environment and the proper management of natural resources;
  - c) By enriching the learning environment at the workplace and offering flexible individual learning activities and counselling services for workers.
  
- 32. Diversifying work-related adult learning:**
  - a) By including agricultural extension services, citizens' rights, organisation-building, natural resource management, food security and reproductive health education;
  - b) By promoting gender-sensitive approaches within extension services, answering the needs of women in agriculture and enhancing their capacity to disseminate knowledge on agricultural issues.

**Theme 6 : Adult learning in relation to environment, health and population**

*33. Environment, health, population, nutrition and food security are intricately linked to one another in the role they play in sustaining development. Each constitutes a complex issue. Caring for the environment by controlling pollution, preventing soil erosion and prudently managing natural resources have a direct impact on the population's health, nutrition and wellbeing which, in turn, have implications for population growth and the availability of food. These issues are part of the wider quest for sustainable development which cannot be attained without a strong education emphasis in family issues, the reproductive life cycle and population issues-such as ageing, migration, urbanisation, and inter-generational and family relations.*

**We commit ourselves to :**

**34. Promoting the competence and involvement of civil society in dealing with environment and development problems:**

- a) By making use of non-formal adult education activities in order to increase the capacity of citizens from different sectors of society to take innovative initiatives and to develop programmes on ecologically and socially sustainable development;
- b) By supporting and implementing adult education programmes to give people chances to learn and interact with decision-makers on environment and development issues, in particular on the need for changes in production and consumption patterns in developed countries;
- c) By integrating indigenous/traditional knowledge on the interaction between human beings and nature into adult learning programmes, and by recognising that minority and indigenous communities have a special authority and competence in protecting their own environment.

**35. Raising the consciousness level of adults on population and family life issues:**

By enabling people to realise their human rights, including reproductive and sexual health rights, and to develop responsible and caring attitudes.

**36. Recognising the critical role of population education and health promotion in preserving and improving the health of communities and individuals:**

- a) By developing and reinforcing participatory health education and

promotion programmes aiming at empowering people to create healthier environments and to engage in advocacy for improved and accessible health services;

- b) By providing access to education which enables reproductive choices which empower women to overcome barriers that prevent them from full and equal participation in personal, social and economic development opportunities;
- c) By developing learning opportunities for all aspects of health, including AIDS and other disease prevention, nutrition, sanitation and mental health;
- d) By using adult learning approaches to enrich education-information-communication strategies and to provide opportunities to people to apply their own experience and knowledge as regards diagnosis and possible choices of action.

**37. Ensuring cultural and gender-specific learning programmes:**

By extending health education for women and men in order to share responsibilities and to broaden concerns related to reproductive health and child care.

**Theme 7 : Adult learning, culture, media and new information technologies**

*38. The challenge of adult learning is to use all cultural institutions, the mass media and new information technologies to establish effective interactive communication, to support adult education and to build understanding between peoples and cultures. Respect for individuals, their cultures and their communities are essential conditions and a basis for dialogue and confidence-building as well as for relevant and sustainable learning and training. Efforts need to be made to ensure greater access to the means of communication for all cultures so all may share their special visions and ways of life and not merely receive messages of other cultures.*

**We commit ourselves to :**

**39. Developing a better synergy between the media, the new information technologies and adult learning:**

- a) By making media more accessible for adult learning;
- b) By reviewing the development and dissemination of new technologies from regional, local, cultural and gender perspectives, taking into account the uneven development of infrastructures and of the availability of equipment;
- c) By ensuring equal access to open learning systems, media, and

the new information and communication technologies of all citizens and by using new technologies to explore alternative ways of learning;

- d) By promoting media education that will help users to develop critical and discerning attitudes toward the media.

**40. Promoting fair use of intellectual property:**

By revising copyright and patenting regulations to promote the distribution of learning materials while preserving the right of authors.

**41. Strengthening libraries and cultural institutions:**

- a) By continuing to fund museums, libraries, theaters, ecological parks and other cultural institutions, and to recognise these cultural institutions as adult learning centres and resources;
- b) By promoting the use of the natural, social and cultural environment as a lifelong learning resource and developing a pedagogy of the cultural environments.

**Theme 8 : Adult learning for all : the potential of different groups**

*42. The right to education is a universal right of all people. While there is an agreement that adult learning must be accessible to all, the reality is that many groups are still excluded such as the aged, migrants, refugees, disabled people and prison inmates. These groups should have access to education programmes that accommodate them within an individual-centred pedagogy capable of meeting their needs, and facilitate their full participation in society, All members of community should be invited and, where needed, assisted to participate in adult learning. This implies a diversity of learning needs to be met.*

**We therefore commit ourselves to:**

**43. Creating an educational environment supporting all forms of learning for older people:**

- a) By ensuring access for older people to all the services and provisions that sustain adult learning and training and thereby facilitate their active participation in society;
- b) By using the 1999 United Nations Year of Older People to plan activities which illustrate how adult education can support the role of older people in building our societies.

**44. Ensuring the right of migrants, displaced populations and refugees to participate in adult education:**

- a) By providing comprehensive education and training

opportunities to migrants and refugees that promote their political, economic and social participation as well as enhance their competence and their cultural base;

- b) By developing and implementing programmes for the host population to promote understanding, especially among politicians, media experts, law enforcement agent educators and social service agents, concerning the rights and conditions of migrants and refugees.

**45. Creating continuing opportunities for persons with disabilities and promoting their integration:**

- a) By making accessible all forms of learning and training to disabled people and ensuring that the learning and training provided respond to their educational needs and goals;
- b) By fostering institutional policies that assure equal access, service and vocational and employment opportunities for differently abled persons where their special learning needs are matched with appropriate learning technology.

**46. Recognising the right to learn of all inmates:**

- a) By providing prison inmates with information on and access to different levels of education and training;
- b) By developing and implementing comprehensive education programmes in prisons with the participation of inmates to meet their needs and learning aspirations;
- c) By making it easier for non-governmental organisations, teachers and other provider of educational activities to work in prisons, thereby providing prisoners with access to educational institutions and encouraging initiatives to link courses carried out in prison and outside of it.

**Theme 9: The economics of adult learning**

*47. A history of inadequate financing, growing recognition of the long-term benefits of investing in adult learning, the diversification of financial patterns and the number of contributors, the role of multilateral organisations, the impact of structural adjustment programmes and the commercialisation of adult learning provision are some of the crucial aspects of the economics of adult learning. The costs of adult learning must be seen in relationship to the benefits that derive from reinforcing the competence of adults. Methods used in cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analysis should reflect the multiple impact of adult learning on society. For example, the education of adults contributes not just to their productivity or*

*personal confidence, but to a considerable extent to the education and educability of children. Adult education, a productive investment, should not be subject to the constraints of structural adjustment.*

**We commit ourselves to:**

**48. Improving the financing of adult education :**

- a) By contributing to the financing of adult education within the framework of partnership, between the different ministries and other governmental organisations, non-governmental organisations, the private sector, the community and the learners;
- b) By investing, as proposed by UNESCO, at least 6 per cent of Member States' gross national product (GNP) in education and by allocating an equitable share of the education budget to adult and continuing education;
- c) By requiring that each development sector (e.g., agriculture, health and economic assign a share of its budget to adult learning, that every development programme in agriculture, health and environment include an adult learning component and that the cost of adult education and training in every enterprise be incorporated as an investment in productivity;
- d) By promoting the ratification and application of the International Labour Organisation Convention 140 (1974) concerning paid educational leave;
- e) By establishing, with the social partners, a special fund for adult education in enterprises financed through allocating a proportion of their total budget to this aim;
- f) By supporting adult education through a variety of creative community initiatives;
- g) By exploring the possibilities of a reinvestment of taxes imposed on international trade to be used for adult education in the countries where the products originate;
- h) By converting the current debts of the least developed and developing countries, based on the debt swaps proposals, into investment in human development;
- i) By implementing the recommendations of the United Nations organisations requesting that an increased share of GNP be allocated to education and adult education;

- j) By studying the proposal to establish an 'Entitlement to Lifelong Learning' as suggested in Learning: The Treasure Within.

**Theme 10 : Enhancing international co-operation and solidarity**

*49. International co-operation and solidarity must strengthen a new vision of adult learning which is both holistic, to embrace all aspects of life, and cross-sectoral, to include all areas of cultural, social and economic activity. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights must be the principal source of guidance in the promotion of international co-operation and solidarity, and the culture of peace. Dialogue, sharing, consultation and the willingness to learn from one another are the basis of this co-operation. This should include respect for diversity.*

**We commit ourselves to :**

**50. Making adult learning a tool for development and mobilise resources to that end:**

By assessing all co-operation projects in terms of both their contributions to adult learning and human development and the priority they give to the strengthening of local expertise.

**51. Strengthening regional and global co-operation and networks on adult learning:**

- a) By supporting existing national, regional and global networks of adult education through sharing information, skills and capacities, and through promoting dialogue at all levels;
- b) By recognising the importance of donor agencies as active partners of local, regional and global networks in adult education;
- c) By taking steps to avoid any negative impact of structural adjustment programmes on education through shared and democratic decision-making in policy and in practice.

**52. Creating a conducive environment for international co-operation:**

- a) By providing greater opportunities for grass-roots workers and learners to meet another in groups composed on a South-South and North-South basis : and by strengthening training networks across the regions to serve as mechanisms for upgrading adult education.
- b) By reinforcing international networks representing different actors and social partners with the mandate to carry out evaluation/ monitoring of main education policies and by supporting the

creation of a mechanism through which individual and collective rights concerning adult education could be promoted and protected;

- c) By underlining the importance of observing International Literacy Day (8 September and of using the International Literacy Prizes for the promotion of adult learning.

## **FOLLOW-UP**

### **Strategy**

53. Given the highly decentralised nature of adult learning, its growing diversity, and the large and increasing number of partners of many types involved, the strategies and mechanism used to follow up the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education must be highly flexible. For reasons both of economy and efficiency, they should also be based, to the maximum extent possible, on existing institutions, structures and networks. The aim must be to make existing machinery for action, co-ordination and monitoring more effective, not to duplicate it.

54. It is essential that all partners participating in the Fifth Conference play an active role within their particular areas of competence, working through their normal channels to ensure that the potential of adult learning is developed and that programmes are conceived and conducted in ways that contribute to the promotion of democracy, peace and mutual understanding.

55. At the international level, UNESCO should play a leading role both within its relevant fields of action and together with other organisations and agencies to advance adult learning. Within UNESCO, the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE) in Hamburg should be strengthened in order to become an international reference centre for adult and continuing education. UNESCO should also take the appropriate steps to update the 1976 *Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education*. Other international and regional intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations could provide similar leadership within their respective sphere of competence.

56. Structures and networks already exist at both the international and regional levels for the promotion of adult learning. In certain cases, particularly in the developing regions, it would, however, be important to reinforce these existing structures and networks, including UNESCO's regional programmes for basic education, and to provide additional resources to enable them to play their roles more effectively and on a larger scale. In no region, however, is it necessary to 'start from scratch'.

### **Promoting closer consultation among partners**

57. The Conference considers that while the establishment of costly new permanent structures is to be avoided, it would be useful to provide a means or mechanism for regular consultation among major partners in the Fifth International Conference and other organisations actively engaged in the promotion of adult learning. The purpose of such a mechanism would be to develop closer consultation and co-ordination among key partners and a setting for periodic discussion of progress and problems in adult learning and to serve as a means for monitoring the implementation of the policy and recommendations set forth in this *Agenda*.

58. There should be a forum and a consultation mechanism to secure the implementation of the recommendations and outcomes of this conference. UNESCO as the United Nations lead agency in education with its relevant units, institutes and field offices, should play the leading role in taking the initiative and responsibility to promote adult education as an integral part of a system of learning throughout life and to mobilise the support of all partners, particularly those within the United Nations system to give priority to implementing the *Agenda* and to facilitate provision of services needed for re-inforcing international co-ordination and cooperation.

59. Lastly, the Conference requests UNESCO to ensure the wide distribution of the *Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning and this Agenda for the Future* in as many languages as possible. UNESCO should explore the possibility of an inter-agency review of the *Agenda*, on mid-route before the next international conference on adult education.

**(Courtesy : UNESCO)**

## **ADULT LEARNING : EMPOWERMENT FOR LOCAL AND GLOBAL CHANGE IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

**(Some issues before the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education)**

### **Role of Adult Education in Lifelong Learning**

The concept of lifelong learning, in the development of which UNESCO has played a leading role, is now widely accepted as providing a useful framework for the organisation of education within society. Yet, with a few noteworthy exceptions, countries have not undertaken comprehensive efforts to re-conceive and restructure their education systems into frameworks for lifelong learning. The Conference may thus wish to examine the results achieved in those countries that have made serious efforts to construct systems of lifelong learning. It may also wish to reflect on the implications of policies of lifelong learning in promoting equity and access to quality provision, and in creating environments supportive of individual and collective learning initiatives :

- *What are essential elements in policies aimed at promoting life long learning ?*
- *What, in particular, does the implementation of lifelong learning imply for legislation, planning, co-ordination, staffing, financing and evaluation of adult education?*
- *What measures are required to build greater synergy between the education of children and that of adults?*

### **The State of Adult Education**

During the regional consultation meetings leading up to CONFINTEA V, the situation of adult education was heatedly debated. In some countries, especially a number of industrialised countries, it was asserted that the number of adult learners and the array of adult learning activities was expanding rapidly. By contrast, in many other countries and particularly in the developing regions of the world, the situation described by many participants was one of crisis: of lack of legitimacy and declining interest in adult education on the part of both decision makers and funding agencies.

These views, while sharply contradictory, may both reflect an element of truth. There is, indeed, an enormous and growing volume and variety of adult learning financed, mainly, by employers and directed at upgrading the skills and competencies of their employees. This is the case especially in technologically advanced industries, located mainly in developed countries. Certain developing countries have also managed to provide a wide range of training opportunities for youth and adults. There also appears to be a growing variety and volume of adult learning taking place beyond the traditional boundaries of adult education: *e.g.*, in health, agriculture and other fields.

Yet, there is also a large and growing part of humanity, numbered in the billions, without any effective access to adult education. These include the nearly 1,000 million adult illiterates, the hundreds of millions of individuals with less than a primary education who have an urgent need to develop their vocational and life skills, as well as countless women and men, in both industrialised and developing countries, who live in constant danger of being left behind in a rapidly changing world, but have no access to the training that could ensure their continued productivity, employability and intellectual satisfaction. Thus, in adult education as in other realms of life, there is a growing polarisation of the population: a division into **haves and have-nots**, those with abundant access to education and training and those with little, if any, access to such opportunities. This is an issue of fundamental concern to which the Conference may wish to give careful attention. If adult education is to play an effective role in poverty reduction, it is essential that it more effectively serve the poor and excluded as well as those who have access to education and employment. Adult education must not only provide the poor and disadvantaged with knowledge and skills, it must also be a means for their empowerment and for facilitating their active participation in all aspects of the life of their society.

Striking disparities—which exist both between countries and within them—are emerging in all regions of the world. Yet, while adult education is often seen as an essential element in correcting growing disparities, in many countries it appears, instead, to have become a factor that contributes to them :

- *What examples are there of experiences that have succeeded in reaching those in greatest need and providing them with the education and training they require to live and work in societies undergoing rapid change?*
- *What action can Member States take to remedy disparity in access to adult education? What is required, for example, of governments, employers, unions, non-governmental and community organisations?*
- *What are the barriers that prevent the participation of certain groups in adult education and how might these be reduced or overcome?*

In most societies, the majority of those who are excluded are women. While progress has been made during the past decade in providing more equal educational opportunities for women, this problem is far from being fully resolved and demands continuing alertness and persevering efforts to promote gender sensitivity and make adult education more available, convenient and attractive to women :

- *What measures have proven effective in overcoming gender bias in adult education and offering equal opportunities to women and men?*
- *To what extent and in what ways can adult education contribute to overcoming gender bias and discrimination in other aspects of society?*

### **Broadening the Scope of Adult Education**

The report of the Delors Commission, *Learning: The treasure within*, calls for education conceived in the framework of learning throughout life and constructed upon four fundamental pillars of learning: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together. Yet, most adult education focuses on learning to do — particularly how to earn a living — and, to a lesser extent, learning to know. Yet, even here, the need to train people for employment and increased productivity is far from being fully satisfied. Relatively little adult education is directed to teaching us to live together by developing the capacities for democratic participation and the skills for conflict resolution. Even less provision is devoted to learning to be : to developing the human personality in all its richness and complexity, learning to embrace our responsibilities as individuals, as members of a family and of a community, as citizens and producers and as creative and moral beings.

The Conference may wish to make recommendations on the content and balance of available opportunities for adult learning. Provision for vocational and occupational education, provided mainly by private employers, is increasing rapidly in technologically advanced industries and countries :

- *But how can more adequate provision be ensured for civic, cultural and humanistic education?*
- *What is being done to broaden the scope of adult education in order to meet the changing learning needs of individuals in dealing with family situations, in participating in community affairs and in becoming better parents, neighbours and citizens?*

### **The Changing Role of the State**

The role played by the government in adult education has considerably evolved over the last decade, becoming more strategic and indirect in many

societies. In general, the State continues to play a more direct role in the organisation of adult education in developing countries, but even here it often acts in co-operation with other partners. In the industrialised countries, the State increasingly works behind the scene: enlisting and supporting other partners, providing financial support to programme participants or providers, and policing the market for the commercial provision of adult education in order to ensure honesty and, in some cases, quality. Yet, in the final analysis, adult education is a responsibility of the society as a whole and, thus, a matter in which government has an essential role to play, especially as concerns the provision of learning opportunities for the most vulnerable members of society and the promotion of learning aimed at civic and social ends. The Conference may wish to explore the changing role of the State in adult education and possibly formulate recommendations concerning the role of government in monitoring and coordinating the provision of adult learning by different government services and social partners.

### **Building Partnerships**

One of the most positive developments of the past decade has been the growing number of organisations and entities that have become involved in adult education and the vastly expanded array of adult learning opportunities that they are providing. Non-governmental organisations, professional and community associations, employers, unions, interest groups and many other entities that have not traditionally been involved in adult education have begun to play an important and growing role. Often, their motivations are simple and straight forward: for commercial firms, continuing education and training of employees has become an issue of survival in a competitive world. For others - health authorities, for example adult education is the most effective and economic solution available : an ounce of prevention being worth a pound of cure. Even traditional educational institutions, such as libraries, have sought to reach out and make better known and more available the learning resources and services they offer. In most societies, particularly in the industrialised countries, the growth of non-public provision has been far more rapid than that of public provision and, in certain cases, has served to off-set declines in government support :

- *What measures could encourage the private sector - including both employers and representatives of employees -, NGOs and community organisations to become even more actively involved in the planning and implementation of adult education programmes?*
- *What measures are needed to support the efforts of various partners,*

*especially NGOs and community organisations, to assume a growing role in the provision of adult learning opportunities?*

Increasingly, people who do not classify themselves as adult educators are actively involved in contributing to the education of adults : e.g., agricultural extensions officers, doctors and nurses, environment protection agents, etc.:

- *To what extent do such individuals require training in adult education? To what extent are they receiving such training?*
- *How can the involvement of different development sectors in adult education be encouraged, co-ordinated and supported?*

### **Developing Adult Education**

While the Conference will deal mainly with the actual and potential impact of adult education upon society, it is also important to review the requirements of adult education as a field of professional activity in order to ensure that it will be capable of playing the new roles and bearing the new burdens that it is being asked to assume in an age marked by an explosion of knowledge and dramatic changes in the way individuals work and live. In order to confront the changes of the coming century, people will need to learn to continuously adapt their skills, change their habits and attitudes and acquire a better understanding of the milieu in which they live. Successful change requires continuous learning: this fact will underscore the growing need for adult learning in the 21st century. These developments raise many far-reaching issues :

- *What measures — e.g., increase in public and private investments in adult learning, policy reforms, institutional changes, etc. - would be most effective in enabling adult education to adapt to the challenges of tomorrow? How can the needed level of commitment be engendered and sustained ?*
- *What steps are required today to ensure that trained staff will be available for future programmes ? What steps must be taken to establish efficient mechanisms for co-ordinating, monitoring and evaluating adult learning programmes and outcomes?*
- *How can adult learning, formal and non-formal, be certified and thereby legitimised and encouraged?*

Increasingly, adult learning is influenced by the mass media, especially television. In the future, information technologies, in many forms, can be expected to play a growing role and have an increasing impact on adult education and learning. These developments raise numerous questions, opportunities and concerns :

- *What is the impact of the mass media and new information technologies on the views, attitudes and values of adults ? What steps might be taken to enhance the positive educational impact of the media and reduce its negative implications?*
- *What are some examples of the successful use of information technologies in adult education? What do they suggest about the use of such technologies in the future? How can adult educators be trained to make better and more effective use of these technologies? To what extent is such training already being provided ?*

University programmes and centres of adult education have traditionally provided the professional support required by adult educators, including the training of specialists, expert advice on problems, and research into key issues such as the motivation of adult learners, methods of instruction, ways of evaluating outcomes, etc. The Conference may wish to assess the situation, needs and prospects of such centres in different countries :

- *What is the status of such programmes? What trends are affecting their role and work?*
- *Are existing centres able to meet the growing need for expertise?*
- *What are the most fruitful forms of relationship between university centres and practitioners engaged in adult education activities in various fields?*

### **Promoting International Co-operation**

One of UNESCO's primary goals in sponsoring the International Conference on Adult Education is to promote co-operation among countries, organisations and practitioners of different nationalities. The Conference may wish not only to look forward to the coming century, but also to re-examine the progress made and problems encountered in past efforts to promote international co-operation. Given UNESCO's constitutional mission to build '*the defenses of peace*' in the minds of education is playing - or might play -- in building dialogue and understanding between nations, cultures and peoples :

- *Why are the numerous commitments repeatedly made by governments and international bodies to support adult education often not met?*
- *Are there significant gaps in existing arrangements for co-operation that need to be filled? How, for example, can more effective co operation between international organisations be achieved?*
- *Why does adult education, given its recognised and enormous potential, not enjoy a higher position on the agenda of international co-operation?*

- *What concrete steps might be taken to ensure that adult education receives higher priority in the future?*
- *What approaches or innovations in bi-lateral and multi-lateral co-operation would most effectively contribute to building national and local capacities for adult learning, especially in the Least Developed Countries?*
- *What concrete measures are being taken at national, regional and international levels to secure funding for adult education and to protect it against the negative impacts of structural adjustment and debt burdens?*
- *What can we learn from the examples of adult education programmes geared to building a culture of peace and to developing relations of mutual respect and harmony among peoples and cultures? In particular, how can adult education enhance the capacity of societies to peacefully resolve conflicts and confront the problems of economic transition?*

### **Conclusion**

The questions and issues set forth in this document were raised in the regional consultation meetings convened to prepare CONFINTEA V. They are intended to launch - but certainly not to limit - Conference discussions and debates. As already noted, the situation regarding adult education varies enormously from country to country and region to region. It also differs sharply between social and cultural groups within societies. The challenge confronting CONFINTEA V is that of finding common ground and formulating proposals that highlight the crucial importance of adult learning and forge a worldwide commitment to the promotion of adult and continuing education as an essential part of lifelong learning.

(Courtesy : UNESCO)

## TWELVE EVENTFUL YEARS

The first UNESCO international conference on adult education took place at Elsinore almost half a century ago, in 1949. Subsequent conferences (Montreal, 1960; Tokyo, 1972; Paris 1985) have been held at intervals of twelve years or so.

### A World in Flux

The brief period since 1985 has been one of extraordinary change in the world with challenging implications for the aims, practice and status of adult education. Most notable have been the economic, social and psychological consequences of globalisation. The coming of a global economic market obliges each country to maintain a competitive position and this puts a premium on the quality of human resources and the urgency of raising the overall education and training standards of the adult population. However, national policies driven by economic priorities can lead to erosion of the principle of social justice and a reduction of social services, including adult education programmes.

Developing countries are particularly vulnerable to upheavals in the global market that inhibit their efforts to achieve durable economic growth and stability which in turn, constrains the quality of their education systems, participants at the Asia Pacific Regional Consultations at Jomtien, Thailand, in 1996 stated that "globalisation, privatisation, structural adjustments to economies and debt-serving liabilities have forced cutbacks in investment in the education and other social sectors by most governments, resulting in even greater hardships to those at the lower end of the socioeconomic scale."

Globalisation is not only having macroeconomic effects but deeply affecting the everyday lives of individuals. According to the report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty First Century, chaired by Jacques Delors : "People today have a dizzying feeling of being torn between a globalisation whose manifestations they can see and sometimes have to endure, and their search for roots, reference points and a sense of belonging' (Learning: The Treasure Within. UNESCO, 1996; hereinafter Delors Report).

One thing is certain : the combined macro and micro effects of globalisation are dramatising the need for universal adult learning as never before. An outstanding event of the last decade has been the peaceful transition of a number of totalitarian and autocratic states into political and

freemarket democracies. This has been parallel led by the international trend to reduce "big government" by devolving decision making, control and management functions to regions, local communities and institutions by seeking democratic participation and accountability at all levels. Devolution presupposes the existence not only of a welleducated and responsible citizenry but of a critical mass of leaders, administrators, managers, and volunteers with appropriate knowledge and skills.

The knowledge base has "exploded" and adults are being made acutely aware of what it means to live in "information societies" in which choice can seem limitless. A flood of data is potentially available anywhere in the world. The digital technology revolution, integrating text graphics, video, voice and music, is providing powerful new tools for the representation and communication of knowledge and tools for learning ( UNESCO: Second International Congress on Education and Informatics Education". Main working document, page 1). How to select, interpret and apply information is becoming an indispensable human skill. This Congress held in Moscow in July 1996 reviewed the rapid development of new information technologies (NITS) and highlighted the great potential in the service of education, but at the same time expressed the concern about the unequal access to these technologies both between developing and industrialised countries and within countries.

Fears for the environment have intensified since 1985. To help adults and young people appreciate the necessity for a rational balance between socioeconomic needs and nature conservation while inculcating awareness of the risks of environmental damage is now an important task for adult education providers and the responsible media.

Both developing and industrialised countries are experiencing population imbalances, but for different reasons. In 1995, the developing countries' share of the annual growth of the world's population was no less than 98 per cent, and 38 per cent of their aggregate population was under 15. This imbalance puts enormous financial pressure on education systems still under construction and leaves precious few resources for investment in nonformal and adult education, including the kind of programmes for parents that could help improve their children's education.

Birthrates in nearly all the industrialised countries are declining while the percentage of older people is increasing. Dwindling workforces risk being required to pay ever rising taxes in order to support those who are too young or too old to work. No doubt many young adults will be encouraged to join the work force sooner under more flexible alternative education and training arrangements while older adults with valuable experience will be discouraged from retiring early, contrary to the recent

trend. That will necessitate more and better initial training for young adults and extensive retraining opportunities for older adults.

A worrying worldwide phenomenon is the increase in family instability. The number of single parent families, which are usually among the poorest in every society, is rising fast. Attending to the learning and other social needs of single parents is a high social priority.

This last decade has witnessed a rapid spread of multicultural and multilingual societies brought on by large scale and changing patterns of migration. For policy makers, the question arises of how best to meet the learning requirements of adults belonging to minority groups so as to enable them both to live decently themselves and ensure that their children obtain a good education. Above all, it is essential to promote intercultural understanding and tolerance among majorities given the re-emergence of racism and xenophobia in some developed countries.

Overtaken by the speed and intensity of change since 1985, societies throughout the world have become more reflective and less optimistic, despite the end of the cold war and the significant extension of civil societies. Social progress is no longer taken for granted. In this more uncertain and questioning world, the case for better learning opportunities for adults is irrefutable. Adults must have the knowledge, skills and qualifications that will equip them to earn a living and participate actively in community affairs. They also want to understand the causes and consequences of incessant change and how to manage their own lives accordingly, whether they live in a traditional village or a great metropolis.

### **UNESCO and International Priorities**

At the international level the period since 1985 has been rich in events and initiatives. Two of these merit special mention. The first was the mammoth world conference on Education for All, "Meeting Basic Learning Needs, A Vision for the 1990s" (EFA), held in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990, and jointly sponsored by UNICEF, the World Bank, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UNESCO. The second event was the signing of the New Delhi Declaration by the heads of States of the nine most populous developing countries (E-9) in 1996, made to dramatically increase support for basic education in these countries. The third was the publication in 1996 of the Delors report, which provided a powerful conceptual and operational framework for implementing systems of lifelong education. The four foundations that it proposes —learning to be, learning to know, learning to do, and learning to live together offer inspiration to all adult education providers and practitioners.

UNESCO's own priority has continued to be that of serving the learning needs of adults in the less developed countries for socioeconomic

polarisation is the outstanding world problem. To escape from poverty these countries must achieve sustainable economic growth. Above all, they require financial investment in order to create viable infrastructures and enhance the skills of their people. Yet, despite the proliferation of national and regional campaigns and grassroots programmes, high rates of illiteracy prevail and inhibit development through self help. Overcoming their skills deficiency is the critical requirement.

Since 1990, the United Nations has organised a series of international conferences on key development issues that depart from a comprehensive and integrated approach and stress the pivotal role of education in empowering people to act for themselves, in helping raise living standards and in promoting human rights : Rio de Janeiro (1992) : Environment and Development; Vienna (1993) : Human Rights; Cairo (1994): Population and Development; Beijing (1995) : the Fourth World Conference on Women; Copenhagen (1995) : Social Development; Istanbul(1996) : Human Settlement; Rome (1996).

There has been a series of major events designed to intensify efforts to combat illiteracy. The outstanding landmark was International Literacy Year 1990, initiated by UNESCO and formally proclaimed in 1989 by the General Assembly of the United Nations. In the mid 1980s, UNESCO launched regional cooperative programmes to promote literacy in Africa, the Arab region, Asia and the Pacific, and in Latin America and the Caribbean. Their objectives were to enable all children of school age to enrol in primary education, to expand literacy, basic education and skills training programmes for youths and adults, and to improve the overall quality of both formal and nonformal education, especially for Street children and out-of-school girls in rural areas. The programmes were reinforced when the General Conference of UNESCO, at its twenty fifth session in 1989, adopted an action plan to eliminate illiteracy by the year 2000.

Since 1985, UNESCO has continued to keep the ideal of universal literacy in the forefront of international and national concern by the award of five annual prizes to individuals, groups or providers who have inspired and conducted exemplary programmes. 1994 witnessed the inauguration of the International Literacy Institute (ILI), jointly sponsored by UNESCO and the Graduate School of Education of the University of Pennsylvania.

Since its inception 50 years ago, UNESCO has worked to provide education for refugees. In 1992, UNESCO launched a programme on the Culture of Peace designed to help consolidate peace in the aftermath of wars. Since then it has broadened the aim to comprise "prevention" of conflicts throughout the world. In creating a culture of peace and democracy, adult education and extensive skills training for demobilised soldiers and marginalized youth complemented by public information campaigns have

had a central role to play in UNESCO action before, during and after conflicts in countries such as Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia, Cambodia, Haiti, El Salvador, Mozambique, Rwanda and Sierra Leone.

### **NEW CONCEPTS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

Since 1985, the field of adult education has expanded quantitatively—participants, programmes and services—and can lay claim to some conspicuous achievements and new strengths. The most welcome achievement is that the absolute rate of world literacy has sharply increased and the prospects for universal literacy are that much brighter.

A new strength is that adult education is generally recognised to be an essential public service with comprehensive aims. Developing countries continue to equate it with national goals and getting the best out of their human resources in order to escape from under development and create viable economies. They still rarely distinguish between vocational and nonvocational education. It does not follow, however, that they are all able to accord adult education the same status as initial formal education or endow it with substantial resources.

Industrialised countries have dropped the conception of adult education as primarily a leisuretime and individual pursuit and adopted the holistic definition that academic specialists and practitioners have been advocating for more than three decades, and that is consistent with the concept of a “learning society” designed to confront the challenges of the 21st Century. As a rule, it is now assumed to encompass all the organised learning activities of adults whether they be formal, nonformal, informal or independent. It subsumes vocational and general education, training and re-training. Collectively, education, labour and other ministries, public agencies, employers, trade unions, and a multiplicity of private and voluntary agencies provide a more or less limitless range of programmes. In many countries, the isolation of adult education from the mainstream of education has been reduced or terminated; it is increasingly treated, if only in principle, as a subsystem within national or regional education structures.

A second strength is that the delivery and effectiveness of programmes have been improved thanks above all to the growing influence of the concepts of “adult learning” and “adult learner.” This reflects the international trend to abandon the traditional notion of education as the transmission of a body of knowledge by means of a prescribed curriculum and didactic teaching methods and to focus instead on diagnosing and serving the learning needs of each individual and group. The change necessitates learner centred methods and techniques of instruction and can particularly benefit those with learning difficulties and special needs.

“Adult learning” is invaluable in having a broad, creative and active

connotation. It applies to formal, nonformal or informal, experiential, selfdirected or work oriented settings. It postulates a wide definition of skills and has led to growing acceptance of the liberating and pragmatic idea of core skills or competences. It calls for more flexible forms of assessment and certification. It implies a broad and openended interpretation of basic education and literacy, viewed not as end products but as highways to continuing learning and the key to leading a full life.

Thus, the "right to literacy" now encapsulates the consolidation of initial earning gains and periodic up skilling. Policymakers and specialists generally agree that functional literacy implies a continuum from basic to higher order skills and that it should be measured at several levels. The idea of a continuum explains the trend in most developing countries to increase the supply of "post literacy" programmes and the recent concern in some industrialised countries to stimulate regular reading habits throughout the adult population as recommended by Finland and Germany(Q). It also accounts for the increasing reference in industrialised countries to the term "computer literacy"

The focus on learning and the learner obviously has far reaching implications for programme planning. For one thing, providers cannot assume they know what is best for learners but must rather identify the felt needs of individuals and groups, negotiate the curriculum with them, and select the most appropriate methods of instruction.

The new emphasis on "learning" and expansion of training programmes highlight the issue of how to assess and accredit the achievements of adult learners. The mobility and career development of individuals are more at stake than ever. To this day, qualifications tend to be judged by reference to a person's level of initial education rather than to the skills and practical experience acquired thereafter. For this reason, some countries are developing novel means of assessing and validating the performance of adult learners. Already the question is being raised of how to ensure consistency of accreditation both within and among countries.

The third strength concerns an inspirational rather than as yet concrete development. Since 1985, governments and educationists have more or less universally approved the principle of lifelong learning that was conceived by UNESCO and enthusiastically adopted by the leaders of the international adult education movement almost four decades ago. Lifelong learning is the principle that permeates the Delors report as encapsulated in the motto "Learning throughout life." Ministers of Education of the OECD group of countries devoted their most recent conference (1995) to the theme of "Making Lifelong Learning a Reality for All." The European Union declared 1996 to be the "Year of Lifelong Learning." New-Zealand envisages "a seamless education system in which barriers no longer exist between schools

and post education and training, in which all courses of study can lead to national qualifications regardless of the place of study." Bolivia speaks of redressing the balance between formal and nonformal education. All this is stimulating for adult education providers and practitioners and valuable for that reason alone. However, it remains to be seen whether models of lifelong learning will be put in place in a large number of countries and, if so what the practical consequences will be for the field of adult education. There is a danger that front loaded education will remain dominant and absorb any new resources.

The introduction to a 1994 "Policy Report for Literacy and Continuing Education," prepared by the UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, reports that "... in many countries the main focus of educational policy statements continues to be on the formal system of education with only oblique references being made to nonformal education activities. This has generally led the national planners to view literacy and continuing education programmes as ad hoc, temporary and unstable activities." The Regional Latin American and the Caribbean Consultation in preparation for the CONFINTEA insisted on the need to include adult education in plans for overall educational reforms.

In general, post school learning opportunities are very largely taken up by those who are already educationally well qualified. Access to learning opportunities is correlated more than ever with the levels of initial educational attainment, with where adults happen to live and work, with how much money they can afford to spend, and with whether national, regional and local authorities do or do not invest importantly in public and private programmes targeted on such disadvantaged groups as the long term unemployed. The necessary conclusion is that the process of implementing models of lifelong learning should take into account the need to underpin the legal, structural and financial status of adult education .

## **PARTICIPATION AND UNMET NEEDS**

The quantitative increase in participation rates since 1985 is impressive. In addition, the collection of data has become more comprehensive and sophisticated so that the evidence is more abundant and informative. In industrialised countries, participation rates by gender, age and level of education have changed in predictable ways, that is there are more women, fewer older people and many more people with secondary education. By sector, there has been a spectacular increase in the number of adults engaged in work related programmes.

The absolute global rate of participation has increased sharply since 1985 for three reasons. The first is the continuing expansion of initial education, nonformal as well as formal and the trend to prolong the period

of attendance. It is a truism that the greater the share of formally educated people in a population the higher will be the participation rate in adult education. The second has been the striking expansion of work oriented programmes both on and off the job. The third has been the increase in most developing countries of basic literacy programmes, and the upturn in post literacy programmes.

It is also worth noting that in industrialised countries the enrolment in higher education of adults, frequently referred to as "mature students", has sharply increased thanks to the innovations in post secondary education described below. At the same time, enrolments in non degree courses, whether for career development or personal enrichment, have continued to rise.

Five comments about participation rates are called for: three on the data and two on the concept itself. First, the percentage of participating adults varies greatly from one country to another and sometimes from one region or community to another within a country. The rate of participation may also rise and fall: in a few Eastern and Central European countries, for example, the rate declined in the 1980s before picking up again after 1989. Secondly, a large segment of the population in many countries never participates. Thirdly the above mentioned correlation between the level of educational attainment and the propensity to continue studies is stronger than ever.

Fourthly, as regards the concept, participation in statistical terms is not synonymous with democratic involvement or social mobilisation. In only four countries are participants consulted about the aims and content of programmes, and in only nine countries are they able to negotiate convenient class hours. This suggests that in most countries, unlike in Japan or Sweden, for example, there is as yet no culture of participation, though this is an obvious precondition for creating a learning society.

It is the fifth comment that is the most important since it has to do with the issue of equity and ordering of policy priorities. Twenty five years ago the Tokyo Conference declared that the first duty of adult education should be to serve the needs of "the forgotten people," that is, all those who are socially, economically and educationally deprived. Today, they are still grossly under represented in participation figures, particularly in industrialised countries.

Indeed, in the latter, the more adult education and training expand to satisfy the demand for well trained work forces, the more acute becomes the issue of equity. Many public authorities are allocating funds primarily to those programmes and individuals that appear likely to produce an economic return. For their part, enterprises, usually and not unreasonably, provide programmes intended to enhance efficiency, even if an increasing

number are visionary enough to adopt a broad conception of personnel development.

The consequence of giving the highest priority to "training" is that many people are excluded from learning opportunities for lack of suitable alternative programmes or adequate incomes. In turn, the proportion of people without employable qualifications living at the margin of society is expanding, so much so that the term "underclass" has become current.

The number of adults in developing countries with unmet learning needs is quantitatively many times greater than in industrialised countries but the imbalance in learning opportunities between haves and havenots is somewhat less significant simply because the limited resources available are usually concentrated on basic education programmes for unschooled adults.

## **PUBLIC POLICIES, PRIORITIES, STRUCTURES AND ADMINISTRATION**

The nature of the public role in adult education continues to vary considerably among countries and within many countries from one jurisdiction to another.

In general, there is a trend to move from top down decision making, control and management towards more or less local and institutional autonomy. The Dominican Republic looks forward to the "deschooling" of adult education, greater use of nonformal approaches, and the devolution of control and management to local communities. Latvia foresees acceleration of the decentralisation process and a pivotal function for regional adult education centres, especially in combatting unemployment.

Important differences exist in the way decentralisation policies are implemented, ranging from devolution of responsibilities and powers and deconcentration of administration to restructuring entire systems. For education in general, this implies decentralising responsibility and decision making in matters of institutional organisation, curriculum and personnel selection and placement, while formulating clear national guidelines, setting performance standards and improving the machinery for monitoring and evaluating the whole system.

In theory, the trend should favour adult education since it is already decentralised to a large extent. Not only do autonomous NGOs play a leading role in many countries but most publicly provided programmes are locally managed and controlled. It is also scarcely news to experienced organisers and teachers that adults are most likely to commit themselves to organised learning when they can see for themselves that a programme is relevant to their daily lives and that they can have a say in how it is planned and conducted. A few selfgoverning grassroots programmes are always

likely to go wrong because of the inexperience or wrongheadedness of local committees and managers or, indeed, participants, but this is a small price to pay for the overall creativity and diversity of provision engendered by community and institutional initiatives.

Whether learning opportunities for adults are provided within a centralised or decentralised political system, two key questions remain unalterable : how absolute and how broad should be the public commitment to adult education? The implicit plea of the declarations of the Montreal, Tokyo and Paris Conferences was that national and regional governments should treat adult education, conceived in its widest sense, not only as an individual right but as a statutory responsibility. That responsibility should comprise both the direct provision of a variety of programmes and regulated financial or other support for nongovernmental providers in accordance with precedent and the resources available. Governments should create an environment in which adult education would flourish by assuming leadership, setting national goals and priorities, permanently thinking through policies and strategies for improving the field, commissioning research designed to promote development, planning, monitoring, implementation, and installing and maintaining suitable instruments and procedures for financing the field as a whole.

In practice, most governments today intervene in the offer of learning opportunities considerably more than in the past but not necessarily in the comprehensive, constitutional and impartial way called for in conference declarations. Those countries adhering to the centralist principle of decision making, planning and implementation continue to use adult education selectively as an instrument of policy, sometimes in pursuit of an ideological goal. Others pick and choose where to intervene in light of their changing priorities. Either way, the result since 1985 is that adult education, like most national education systems, has been more politicised.

Many practitioners, providers and other interest groups are dismayed by this politicisation and deplore what they perceive as the dominance of instrumentalist values. They argue that the field should not be at the mercy of arbitrary shifts in priorities, especially in the general absence of consultative machinery. The problem is how to strike a just balance between the necessary degree of government intervention in adult education and freedom of action for providers and practitioners.

### **Nonsystematised**

Despite the signs of politicisation, the field of adult education continues to be essentially unsystematised. In some countries, governments supervise or empower coordinating agencies of one kind or another. In others, national associations play an influential role in fostering consultation and coordination. In others again, there is a plethora of activities but no

coordination. In France, for example, where no fewer than 50000 associations provide learning opportunities, there is no perception of a 'system' nor any sustained attempt at coordination whether at the national or local level. The trend towards decentralisation may well work against better coordination except at the local level.

The ambition to create viable systems of learning throughout life presupposes structural articulation between "adult" and "formal" education and integration of adult education with all the government agencies concerned with social, economic and cultural development. However if, in theory, most countries now recognise the necessity for a certain amount of structural fusion and cross sectoral integration, very few have taken realistic enabling measures. Japan is one country that has initiated an operational framework. And in several developing countries, the linking of adult education with other social sectors, such as health, in the pursuit of integrated rural development programmes has increased.

Direct responsibility for the control and administration of adult education remains for the most part within the jurisdiction of ministries or departments of education. In developing countries, however, other ministries such as Family and Social Welfare or national agencies often also exercise a major responsibility. In Thailand, most ministries have responsibility for at least one component of adult education.

In a number of industrialised countries ministries or departments of Labour (employment) have come to play a more direct role, largely because of the high unemployment phenomenon and the necessity of expanding the supply of training and improving its quality. There is also a tendency for new ministries or subministries to be charged with such briefs as the environment, urban affairs or regional development that necessarily include a stake in educational and other social and economic policies.

Since 1985, there has been a significant increase in legislation, directly or indirectly helping sustain or create a favourable environment for adult education. In Germany, for instance, most of the sixteen Lander have passed laws and issued regulations. Critical practitioners allege that the legislation is usually not mandatory. However, it is to be noted that there has been an increase in mandatory legislation in favour of paid educational leave.

## **PRIVATE SECTOR AND NGOS**

One of the most striking developments since 1985 has been the increase in the role of the private sector, notably enterprises, the mass media and, in certain countries, profit making institutions. The huge increase in enterprise training and in "training markets" in industrialised countries has contributed significantly to the overall boom in participation rates.

The Paris Conference gave NGOs a testimonial in honour of their

contribution to the advancement of adult education. NGOs have continued to play an indispensable role both in complementing and reinforcing public programmes. At the community level, they often perform a particularly valuable service by identifying the learning needs of small target groups and mounting purpose designed projects such as that for pregnant teenagers in Tanzania, run by UMATI (Family Planning Association) and that for young adults in Calcutta run by Lareto School. Some also conduct nationwide or regional programmes that, apart from their intrinsic value, significantly ease the financial burden of the State. In Brazil for example, which along with India, another very big country, contains a vast number of NGOs, the Basic Education Movement, set up by the National Conference of Bishops, has been active nationwide for over three decades. It is noteworthy that religious communities are conspicuous providers of programmes in many developing countries.

### **ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES**

Universities in general have ceased to be ivory towers in response both to governmental and social pressure and to internal recognition of the need to open their facilities to the wider community. New institutions with democratic admission policies have proliferated. Open universities are flourishing. Most universities now provide more flexible study courses for all their students whatever their age. At the same time, there is a universal trend to widen access for adults by relaxing admission requirements, for instance by permitting part time attendance at the first degree and postgraduate levels, organising courses in modules, and introducing assessment by means of credits for assignments as they are accomplished.

Universities are increasingly assuming responsibility for the continuing education of graduates, particularly in such professional fields as accountancy, engineering, law and medicine. Many are also offering short cycle courses for employees in enterprises and public services.

However the commitment of universities to adult education programmes unrelated to degree and professional courses remains variable. Some ignore them as belonging to the province of initial schooling. On the other hand, many now recognise an obligation to have a liberal extension function both as a service to the community and as a way of enabling at least some of their academic staff to maintain close relations with local communities. Extension programmes are offered in such forms as general interest courses for all comers, regardless of their level of education, and training courses for community leaders.

University researchers are also inquiring into adult learning needs and problems in general as well as into the specific organisation and problems of part time education, including the behavioural characteristics of mature

students. Some universities collaborate with other educational institutions in order to ensure that in the surrounding community there is adequate provision of adult education at all levels.

Above all, universities are playing a major role in the training and continuing development of adult educators and professionals working in cognate professions. Their programmes, which may be offered on or off campus take two main forms: i) postgraduate or certificate courses; ii) short cycle courses.

In several developing countries, university students are a valuable teaching and occasional organising resource particularly in remote rural areas.

### **SOURCES AND METHODS OF FINANCING**

There continues to be a general lack of hard evidence about the financing or economics of adult education, although in a few countries academic researchers including economists, are now making it a specific study. Significantly, however, details of expenditures in the training sector are frequently available.

A few economists have studied not only the financial benefits of investing in the education of adults but also the negative costs of failing to do so. In Australia, one such study enabled John Dawkins, Minister for Employment, Education and Training to declare: "Adult illiteracy in Australia is costing the nation at least \$3.2 billion a year in lost productivity and is promoting and cementing social and economic inequity."

Despite the often important financial outlays of NGOs and the ability of the great majority of public and private providers to manage with small resources, it is obvious that to increase the coverage and raise the quality of adult education ultimately depend on adequate public financing. Yet perfunctory levels of capital investment and minimum recurrent allocations in many countries contrast with rhetorical declarations of commitment. This is particularly manifest when the distribution of resources to regions and communities is inequitable.

Inadequate financing is sometimes explained by the fact that a government is genuinely powerless to deliver. In numerous countries, public expenditure on education has been stabilised at around zero growth for a decade or more and both the "treasury" and public demand are for stringency and value for money. Penny pinching and cutbacks are frequent, often to the particular detriment of adult education since its allocations, unlike those of schools and universities, are generally considered discretionary.

Cutbacks affect adult education with more severity than any other sector of education since it is nearly always a low cost and under resourced field to start with. Most providers, whether in the public or nongovernment sector,

are conditioned to be cost conscious. Many voluntary associations are serviced by unpaid or low paid organisers, teachers and other staff. Outside the area of training, a high proportion of programmes is staffed by part timers, many of whom already have a full time job and are simply seeking a marginal supplement to their main income.

In comparative terms, there are a few examples of satisfactory financing. In Sweden, the level of expenditure is exceptional in that 10 per cent of the education budget is devoted to direct provision, subventions to non government providers and grants to individuals. The level of public financing increased fivefold in Chile between 1991 and 1994, and in the Dominican Republic by 126 per cent over the decade between 1985 and 1995. The Czech Republic reports an increase but does not specify the amount.

On the other hand, several countries report cuts and there is evidence of successful programmes being truncated or terminated following the withdrawal of public funds. Public financing has lowered in five African countries, one country in the Arab region, one in Asia, three in Europe, seven in Latin America and the Caribbean. In Cambodia, there is no public financing of adult education.

Few countries earmark annual allocations for the maintenance of adult education. Recommendations made in international declarations that it should be guaranteed a fixed percentage of national education budgets or of GNP have gone largely unheeded. On the contrary, the slender evidence suggests that its share of GNP has fallen overall. Needless to say, precarious financing hampers the efforts of many adult education agencies to maintain quality and plan for the long term.

There is no proof of cause and effect but it is perhaps significant that fund raising by agencies has increased in developing and industrialised countries alike. Agencies in developing countries also rely on international funding to a greater or lesser degree according to their circumstances.

As a rule, adult learners are not eligible for direct grants. However, a few countries provide financial support for adults in higher education on the same terms as for young adults.

Those in secure employment are more likely to benefit from assistance than in the past. The scale of paid educational leave has increased even though the pace of its expansion seems to have slackened. Training within enterprises is virtually always free. Time off for training does not usually incur any loss of earnings. Creche facilities for the children of working mothers are free in most countries.

Learners in programmes of all kinds, notably literacy classes, are often supplied with textbooks and other essential learning materials.

On the financing of NGOs, roughly half the countries responding can

offer no evidence. However, thirty one out of thirty three respondents report that their revenues have improved, including ten European and ten Latin American countries.

In developing countries, some governments are too insolvent to give any kind of public subvention to NGOs. However, nearly all countries can exercise the valuable option of entrusting the provision of programmes to NGOs rather than to the public service, not only on democratic grounds but because substantial savings can often be made. Belgium spends little directly on adult education but finances a great number of NGOs.

Many NGOs depend on grants or material support such as training, equipment and material assistance from bilateral or international donors. Nigeria reports great reliance on external assistance, and Namibia has received a grant in aid of salaries.

### **COORDINATION, PARTNERSHIP AND NETWORKS**

Today, it is assumed in all countries that "integrated" policies and strategies are essential in the field of social and community action. The documentation on adult education itself abounds with references to the importance of coordinating programmes and activities at all levels, establishing partnerships among providers and between providers and all the interested agencies and services, and creating networks among all the individuals working towards a common purpose. In practice, however, there is often very little coordination of any kind. Evaluations of projects in developing countries sometimes refer to sectoral rivalries and divisive behaviour.

The crucial importance of networking among providers is now generally recognised, particularly in the delivery of programmes for the rural areas of developing countries. Networking among individuals appears to be flourishing to judge from the large number of formal and informal meetings that are taking place.

### **ORGANISERS AND TEACHERS**

Adult education providers continue to rely very largely on part time teachers and organisers, many of whom are volunteers. Some countries report the use of university students and senior school pupils. Bahrain uses the unemployed and Mauritius mentions the contribution of retired people. Several countries make a point of relying, as far as possible, on teachers from the same cultural background as their students. Thus, New Zealand cites the example of Maoris teaching Maoris.

Nevertheless, the professionalisation of adult education has intensified. In some countries, the number of full time staff has increased. Germany reports the continuing expansion of full time adult educators even as the

number of teachers in the formal system has declined.

But the status of those working in the field of adult education remains ambivalent. Only a minority of countries has a regulatory code. In most countries the regulations are silent on the conditions of employment of adult educators. One exception is Finland where full time staff are employed under the same conditions as all employees of the national education service.

The responses to the UNESCO questionnaire show that adult educators receive an initial training— usually six weeks or so in about a third of countries and on the job training in about half. Training is usually of short duration and part time. Niger is exceptional among developing countries in offering long term courses.

The training of part time staff is the exception rather than the rule. Yet its importance for all those concerned is amply demonstrated by the evaluations of successful programmes which almost invariably cite training as a critical factor. Training for a specific task or programme is particularly beneficial.

### **PROGRAMMES, CURRICULUM AND OUTREACH**

The replies to the UNESCO questionnaire fall into four main programme areas :

i) Literacy; ii) Post literacy and continuing education; iii) Training for work. iv) General education.

Priorities differ from South to North and from country to country. If “general education” is less singled out than in the past it is significant that the categorisation of literacy or post literacy or training is now almost always accompanied by the rider that the content of programmes should be broadly based, that is, general.

### **Literacy programmes expand**

The goal of universal literacy pursued by UNESCO since its foundation. has drawn closer. By 1995, the adult literacy rate in the world had risen to an estimated 77.4 per cent from 69.5 per cent in 1980. The achievement is all the more impressive when it is noted that the number of adult literates increased from 2 billions in 1980 to an estimated 3 billions in 1995. This has happened thanks to the continuation, expansion and iprovement of existing programmes and the impetus given to new activities since 1990. The strategy advocated by EFA is to enable all young people to become literate before becoming adult while ensuring that existing adult literacy projects are sustained and new projects launched wherever possible. As a consequence, it is expected that 80 per cent of the world’s population will he literate by the year 2000.

Meanwhile, the total of illiterate adults continues to rise as the world’s population leaps upwards. In 1995, there were still approximately 885

million illiterate adults, aged 15 or over. Thus, in Egypt, a country that has provided free public elementary education for half a century, adult illiteracy is today estimated at 50 per cent. It is also noteworthy that the rate of illiteracy in certain countries varies greatly from one region or district to another, variations being most extreme, of course, in large countries. Everything depends on whether the cultural ethos of a given locality is supportive, whether regional and local authorities are rigorous and efficient, whether the programmes on offer are truly learner centred and whether the available resources are sufficient.

### **Programmes for Women**

In the national and international discourse on education the duty of societies to offer women equal learning opportunities as a human right and economic and social imperative is a constant refrain. Yet, the facts and figures are unforgiving: in most parts of the world women remain underprivileged. Although the deficiencies of education systems are by no means solely responsible for the disadvantages faced by so many women there has been growing awareness that the way education is distributed, organised, delivered and assessed, can contribute to and perpetuate the social and economic disadvantages faced by women in their daily lives. For this reason, there has been a marked increase in programmes expressly designed for women. Many countries point out that they had not waited for the Beijing Conference before giving priority to the learning needs of women and, where necessary, offering ad hoc programme.

All developing countries recognise, in declarations at least, that literacy for women is a national priority both on economic, health and social grounds, and literacy programmes are indeed increasingly targeted on women, especially those inhabiting rural areas. This reflects the fact that in many villages they outnumber men by a wide margin and that the female rate of illiteracy is much higher than that of males. Of the total number of illiterates in the world in 1996, over 60 per cent were women. In the least developed countries, one in five women is illiterate. The evidence shows that most of these women wish to become literate but that they encounter several barriers, including the heavy demands of their daily existence and negative social and cultural pressures. It would seem that it is one thing to proclaim their basic learning needs as a national priority and another to take the appropriate steps to address them.

Costa Rica has offered a programme entitled "Alfamujer." Tanzania has launched a project to promote the role of women in national development. Congo has created centres for women's literacy in several districts as well as in the premises of religious communities. In Saudi Arabia, a novel curriculum has been designed to meet the needs and aspirations of women

within the framework of Islamic teaching. Niger is organising literacy programmes. Guinea has appointed an equity committee to promote schooling for girls, launched an integrated development project in favour of women living in rural areas, and offered specially created groups of women programmes which aim to help them increase their incomes and contain a functional literacy component.

Many of these programmes for women are designed to help increase their earnings potential and introduce them to family planning. They also usually link content to the customary tasks and duties of women. This satisfies the important criterion of curricular relevance but, as some critics point out, may well be discriminatory if it does not confer some form of certification for subsequent access to general education programmes.

### **Other Target Groups**

Literacy programmes aimed at other target groups include a distance learning project for blind people serving the whole of Latin America, organised by the Braille Foundation in Uruguay, and a project designed to rehabilitate prisoners on their release, organised by the governor and staff of a prison in Skagen, Indonesia, with considerable assistance in curriculum design and material support from the National Directorate for Community Development.

The number of nationwide literacy campaigns in developing countries has declined even as the number of decentralised or micro programmes has notably increased. This is not because all the "mass campaigns" proved unsuccessful. On the contrary, some enjoyed conspicuous success, as in Ecuador, and others had made a significant impact. But it is now generally recognised that campaigns were often flawed by inadequate planning, shortage of resources, poor coordination or too brief a life. The dominant strategy today is to rely on locally based initiatives to identify and serve the needs of those overlooked by means of mass campaigns.

If the number of mass campaigns has diminished there have been some high intensity projects in subregions. A striking example was the Ernakulam project in the State of Kerala, India, in 1989. Ernakulam is a district which, at the beginning of the project, had a population of about 3 million, including 118387 illiterate adults. The Total Literacy Programme, conceived and masterminded by an NGO, was designed to eradicate illiteracy in the district, in one go and once for all, by means of "a massive approach no member of the society, literate and non literate, could escape from the impact of the environmentalist-building campaign". In general, it is difficult to replicate a successful programme but, in this case, fifty other districts in India adopted the Ernakulam model of a "Total Literacy Campaign"(TLC).

Many countries have financed one off micro programmes in pursuit of a national policy.

### **Functional illiteracy in industrialised areas**

Functional illiteracy on a disturbing scale became a policy issue in a significant number of industrialised countries from the late 1980s, and has since been systematically diagnosed and quantified in the Report published jointly by Statistics Canada and OECD, *Literacy, Economy and Society: Results of the First International Survey (1996)*. This phenomenon is equally being observed in the industrialised areas of developing countries and in places where there is residual illiteracy.

Concern about the issue is compounded by the long established evidence that many young people leave school unable to read and write up to a basic level of competence and that others who do reach that level subsequently slip back into illiteracy. In other words, the massive expansion of secondary education since the late 1950s, which was supposed to signal the death of illiteracy, has not fulfilled expectations and the issue of equity remains. For, if some functionally illiterate adults attain relative economic prosperity, often displaying extraordinary inventiveness to disguise their handicap, the great majority are doomed to a sequence of dead-end jobs, interspersed with periods of unemployment, and no access to training. To be illiterate in an industrialised society is disempowering and stressful for individuals and on that account alone calls for action by the public authorities and social agencies. Action is no less required for the common good since the social and economic costs of illiteracy impose a heavy burden on the State. It is against this background that functional literacy programmes have multiplied in a number of countries. The United Kingdom is one country that has been making a sustained effort since as long ago as 1973 when an "Adult Literacy Resource Agency" was created.

### **Ethnic minorities**

These programmes are on the increase, as for nomads in Nigeria, hill tribes in Thailand, fishermen in China, and the Antioch minority in Canada. An exemplary programme was organised for Gypsies encamped in seven outlying areas of the municipality of Zaragoza in Spain. It was conceived and worked out by means of a detailed inquiry and close study of needs that took an integrated view of community and individual needs. It designed a pragmatic curriculum, used a wide variety of methods and techniques, employed teachers trained for the specific task, prepared purpose designed manuals and other reading materials, and fully evaluated and recorded the project so that its lessons could be replicated elsewhere.

### **Parent and parenting education**

"Educate the mother and you educate the child and 'Educate a Woman

and you Educate a Nation" are well known slogans that have more appeal than ever. They are seen to be especially pertinent to developing countries where so many women are "de facto" the heads of families. In those industrialised countries where the number of single parent families headed by women has increased remarkably, it is no less pertinent. This is yet another reason for treating women the primary target group. But, increasingly, men also are heading single parent households so that the slogan should perhaps be amended to "educate the parent," especially as policy makers, influenced by research findings, have come to regard "parent and parenting education" as one of the preconditions for raising the educational standards in schools and nonformal programmes to satisfactory levels.

Programmes usually focus on parental roles and responsibilities and are often particularly designed for disadvantaged groups. Thus, childrearing is a common theme in programmes intended for groups of women in the rural areas of developing countries. Programmes usually centre on how parents can become involved in the teaching and learning of their children, in giving voluntary support in schools, and in playing a constructive part in the governance and management of schools.

### **Learning at work**

There is much evidence to show that in industrialised countries the workplace is today the main location for adult learning and the main source of information, guidance and counselling. Many workers are performing well below their potential, which is unrewarding for themselves and a loss of productivity for their employers. In order to be competitive firms must ensure that their personnel are capable of adopting to frequently changing requirements, undertaking a variety of tasks, crossing occupational boundaries, understanding the wider purpose of their enterprises, and acquiring new knowledge and skills. This calls for high level and broadly based education and training.

New technologies require fundamental and frequent changes in both processes and production methods. It is no longer sufficient, therefore, to provide training for only a few employees in senior positions. Sometimes, it is even necessary to retrain the entire work force of a given firm. Many enterprises like Bayer, IBM, Mercedes, Rover have been transformed in learning organisations.

Governments are particularly keen to see the expansion of training opportunities for workers in small and medium sized firms. Large firms have the capacity to meet their own training needs but many smaller firms, especially in the service sector, are in no position to do so and therefore require special attention in terms of programming.

Governments in both developing and industrialised countries have also

a particular interest in promoting learning opportunities in regions that are economically disadvantaged whether for geographical reasons or because traditional jobs, such as mining, have run down or dried up.

### **The Unemployed and the Informal Labour Market**

Unemployment has remained at a high level in most countries. And longterm unemployment has greatly increased. In most developing countries the informal economy produced between 40 and 70% of the national wealth and is de facto a parallel job markets. In the formal economy, many adults are obliged to take part time or casual jobs. Young adults have difficulty in finding a first job and older workers who are laid off frequently cannot get back into the labour market. Against this background it is not surprising that education and training for employability is a high national priority.

Some employers now recognise that they have a duty to help employees at risk of being laid off prepare for new jobs. So they provide appropriate training on the job or subsidise off the job training.

### **Foreign languages**

Several countries, notably in Western Europe, cite the teaching of foreign languages as a priority, as evidenced by the European Union Lingua Pax and the other related language learning programmes. The two reasons commonly given have international significance. One is to encourage multilingualism in support of multicultural policies. The second is that competition in the global market requires that there be a critical mass of employees with proficiency in two or more languages.

### **Civic and social issues**

Few countries mention special programmes on such civic and social issues as education for citizenship, racism, health, family planning, population growth, environmental change and world peace. It appears, however, that these and other issues are taken up in programmes with generic titles. Chile is one country that does emphasise the importance of the role of adult education in consolidating a just and democratic society where mutual respect prevails. In this connection, Bulgaria and the Czech Republic stress the educative role of the media.

### **Community outreach**

Community outreach can serve several purposes, including the encouragement of self help, fund-raising, the development of independent study and the regeneration of depressed areas. A national literacy project in Jamaica JAMAL (Jamaican Movement for the Advancement of Literacy)

ran an outreach programme on radio and television, a nationalised televised quiz competition, and an annual JAMAL week, during the course of which International Literacy Day was observed.

A major function of many local authorities is to provide support services for targeted programmes in the form of advisers, premises, equipments, and teaching and learning aids. In some countries such support is confined to the public sector. In others, however, it is available to all accredited providers.

In Denmark, three types of experiment have been undertaken in order to motivate educationally underprivileged adults to take up learning opportunities: i) voluntary associations plan education for employees in individual firms; ii) adult education agencies in a small sized town coordinate existing programmes with those provided by the social services and libraries, and seek by means of active marketing and guidance to reach those who have never participated in any programme; iii) adult education agencies in cooperation with the mass media in a region provide second chance opportunities for adults with incomplete initial education.

### **Role of the media**

The media in general are not playing a positive role in the provision of adult education. Yet there are examples of good practice, particularly in Latin America. Three valuable functions can be discerned: to offer programmes with a direct educational purpose; to help create an ethos in which the value of learning is taken for granted; to advertise the learning opportunities available and incite individuals to take advantage of them. Some local radio stations perform all three functions.

### **Advice, guidance and counselling**

Few direct references are made in the replies to the UNESCO questionnaire to the use of advice, guidance and counselling by the public or other providers. However, there are signs that advisory facilities are on the increase and that sophisticated services including upto date marketing techniques are being offered. Free phone help lines have multiplied and mail shots are now in extensive use in many urban centres.

The annual International Literacy Day, celebrated in many countries, has proved an effective way of recruiting learners. "Adult learners' weeks," which seek to generate maximum national publicity for priority learning needs and what programmes are available, have become a feature in South Africa, and in several European countries, including the United Kingdom. They appear to be a signal success.

## **METHODS AND TECHNIQUES OF LEARNING AND INSTRUCTION**

Seeing at the discourse on adult education today emphasises the individual learners needs and priorities it should follow that learner centred methods and techniques are all the rage and indeed this turns out to be the case. The replies to the UNESCO questionnaire frequently refer to the abandonment of authoritarian teaching and the use of dialogue and discussion groups. Ecuador describes active learning groups in which a sequential process operates consisting of experience reflection conceptualisation application. There is also a general trend to organise programmes in more flexible ways and to refer to "new routes," "bridges" and "modules."

### **New instructional and learning technology**

The introduction of new technologies has been spectacular since 1985, so much so that media specialists talk confidently of the arrival of the age of computers and telecommunications. In some countries, the everyday use of electronic mail and access to Internet are taken for granted by a growing segment of the population. Nor does any adult education specialist question that computers and other electronic devices can help improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning and the organisation of programmes, provided that they are introduced with circumspection.

But for two main reasons instructional technology has not yet made the impact on adult education that has consistently been predicted for it over the last three decades. First, the well known difficulties of using it to good effect have persisted. Thus, the sophistication of the hardware continues to be far in advance of the poor quality of much of the software and producers and users are frequently driven by different interests and priorities.

The second reason, which applies particularly to some developing countries is that the new technology is often introduced without careful preplanning, prior consultation with those who are intended to be responsible for its security and maintenance, adequate pretraining of teachers, and proper arrangements for storing and maintaining it in good condition.

In general, instructional technology is still little used in developing countries for instance, few video tapes are said to be available—not because its potential value is unappreciated but because there are either no funds to pay for it or providers are well aware that the preconditions for using it to good effect cannot be met.

### **Distance learning**

Twenty four countries provide distance learning, though in developing countries the delivery is usually restricted to correspondence courses. Many countries now have well established open universities, including, Japan.

The Republic of Korea, Pakistan, and Spain, which also runs a national centre for correspondence courses at the secondary level. The Open University in the United Kingdom, which has acquired a worldwide reputation and influence as a model to be replicated, introduced in 1995 a postgraduate degree course in adult and continuing education. A television channel in the Czech Republic is entirely devoted to transmitting education programmes.

Brazil makes, extensive use of radio and television. with nationwide, regional and local coverage. Radio and television continue to play an essential role in rural education. Small listening groups, especially those in which participants discuss and then act, are particularly valuable.

Village reading and learning resource centres, which exist in only small numbers, have proved to be invaluable, especially for independent learners.

### **New concerns**

“New” Instructional technology brings with it not only advantages but “new” concerns. Thus, the Republic of Korea fears that as regards the use of computers, the gap between “haves” and havenots” will widen unless positive precautions are taken to close it. Venezuela comments that cultural and geographical barriers prevent the generalisation of new techniques. Ecuador fears that, in the absence of an indigenous capacity to produce programmes having an appropriate content, the country risks invasion by alien and aggressive messages that do not correspond to national realities. While acknowledging that the new technologies can certainly aid learning, Salvador observes that they also pose the challenge of how to adapt the curriculum and methods of instruction, modify teacher training, acquire suitable equipment and restructure budgets.

The International Catholic Girls’ Society (ACISJF) notes that the boom in new information and communication technologies is unstoppable. Developing countries should not resist but seek to acquire them and prepare without delay for their application by offering relevant training to facilitators and others . At the same time, everyone must be aware of the risk of destroying values and cultures that may be fragile. The International Federation of Rural Adult Catholic Movements (FIMARC) also insists that new technologies can only be applied to advantage if people really know how to use them and can approach them with inquiring minds: otherwise, new forms of cultural and political as well as economic dependency are likely to emerge.

The International Federation of Training Centres for the Promotion of Progressive Education (FICEMEA) calls for research into the relationship between the new technologies and the human dimension of all training. In similar vein, the International Federation for Parents Education (FIEP) cautions that their introduction raises the problem not only of how to provide adequate

teaching support but also of what is ethically acceptable. Like FICEMEA, several countries demand research into the comparative effectiveness of the various methods and techniques now actually or potentially available, and, in doing so, draw attention to the whole question of relevant research needs, a question which will be considered in the next section.

With the above concerns in mind, the Delors report recommends: "the widespread introduction of the new 'information society' technologies in all countries to prevent yet another gap opening up between rich and poor."

### **RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

In some countries, there has been an extraordinary expansion of research activity both as regards quantity and the diversity and breadth of the topics covered. This is demonstrated by the countless sources cited in the "International Encyclopaedia of Adult Education" and by the fact that, of the 67 countries responding to the UNESCO questionnaire only three reported a total absence of research. There is, however, a lack of information about the amount of research commissioned by government and virtually none about investment levels.

The specialist literature and documentation have proliferated and the study of adult education as a discipline or at least, interdisciplinary area, has increased enormously. In some countries there has been a significant amount of original research and sophisticated analyses of conceptual and other issues.

Research into adult education is now highly developed in the universities of many countries. Much of it is designed to help promote the provision of adult education at all levels and in all its forms. Thus, several African universities, including the Institutes of Adult Education of the University of Ghana and the University of Ibadan, have inquired into the most effective ways of delivering literacy programmes. Some universities undertake evaluations of particular projects and offer advice on the design of systems and procedures for evaluation.

However, half or so of the institutions cited in the replies to the UNESCO questionnaire are administrative units located in the public services and it is not always clear what is meant to be comprehended under the rubric of "research." Other evidence does confirm, however, that many professional researchers specialising in educational studies, the social sciences in general, and in other fields, are undertaking inquiries directly focussed on or indirectly concerned with adult education. Some research projects are also being carried out within enterprises.

Denmark has set up a nonuniversity Development Centre for Adult Education which is required, among other functions, to undertake research and development projects, to collect and disseminate information and to

stimulate action research at the grassroots level. In several countries there are national or regional documentation centres specialising in adult education, some of which also have an explicit research function.

There is little empirical evidence on the impact of research activity. However, information about research findings is now widely disseminated, nationally and internationally, by means of newsletters and professional journals.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

In the present age of close scrutiny of government actions and increasing insistence on public accountability the monitoring and evaluation of public systems and institutions in general have emerged as components of policy and practice. Effective programmes are known to depend on continuing surveillance and early detection of any weaknesses so that they can be immediately remedied.

Yet monitoring the progress of adult education programmes is rare and the small amount of systematic evaluation under way appears to be used largely for summative and audit purposes, although there are some signs that it is also on the increase for formative purposes. Thirteen countries report that adult education provision or, at least, specific sectors of it is evaluated on a regular basis and twenty nine report occasional evaluation, mostly of special programmes. Sometimes aid donors require that a sponsored project be evaluated.

### **INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

The replies to the UNESCO questionnaire convey an impression of ambivalence on the topic of international cooperation, which tends to be construed almost exclusively in terms of financial aid and technical assistance from North to South rather than close collaboration in search of solutions to common problems. At the same time, there has been a notable increase in bilateral cooperation, which countries cite more often than international cooperation, and in the frequency of subregional exchanges.

Thirty three countries cite examples of bilateral cooperation, overwhelmingly between industrialised and developing countries. There are also several examples of a northern country providing assistance to subregional groups in the south. For example, Germany financed a project on training and the production of learning materials in six SAHEL countries. Twenty two countries mention examples of South to South cooperation.

In descending order of priority, countries list the following modes of cooperation: i) exchanges of information, experiences and staff; ii) training of trainers and of staff responsible for the design of programmes; iii) design and production of learning materials; iv) supply of equipment;

v) identification of needs and development of projects; vi) financial support; vii) joint projects on research and/or training. Some Member States want to widen cooperative inquiries into the use of new information and communication technologies and into learning at a distance, self directed learning and multimedia instruction.

World Education stresses the need to rethink the functioning of the consultative machinery for literacy and adult education. The Association for World Education recommends publication of a guide to good practice and use of resource personnel.

The Czech Republic pleads that the special needs of the Eastern and Central European countries in transition to civil societies should not be neglected in international deliberations on aid and cooperation. They are short of resources for building national systems of adult education and would welcome assistance.

Some of the educationists dedicated to promoting the ideal of internationalism are pleading in favour of "global learning," that is, enabling people to understand that they are not citizens of a universe that is infinite and necessarily safe for all time but one in which all individuals and societies are interdependent and must have a care for one another or risk common destruction. Their hope is that global learning will become a regular topic in adult education programmes.

### **International standards and indicators**

The Recommendation on Adult Education proposed that international standards should be developed for the field. This was a bold ambition and until recently it seemed destined to be unfulfilled. However, the annual OECD publication, *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators*, now provides information on adult education in respect of levels of instruction and learning outcomes in the labour market and more indicators are likely to emerge. Similarly there is continuous effort to update the work on International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED).

### **EXPECTATIONS OF UNESCO**

Member countries "expect UNESCO to continue to play the leading role in the development of adult education in six express ways: i) exchanges of experience and materials, and dissemination of information on programmes and methods; ii) research into policies, sources of finance and support for specialised institutions; iii) networking among institutions and all the professionals and associations working in the field; iv) technical support in identifying needs and in evaluation; v) training of trainers; vi) monitoring of the implementation of lifelong learning programmes.

**FUTURE TRENDS**

Despite the only partial fulfilment of the expectations of the Paris Conference, it is not unreasonable to forecast that national and regional authorities will be driven increasingly to encourage and invest in adult learning. This is so for three main reasons. First, in order to be able to compete successfully in the highly competitive arena of world trade, it will be essential to make the maximum use of all available human resources and to sustain strong and flexible labour markets. Secondly, it will be necessary to fill recurrent labour shortages. Thirdly, the redistribution of age groups especially in the industrialised countries, will intensify the demand for retraining older adults or upgrading their knowledge and skills.

At the same time, the individual demand for adult education is bound to go on increasing as the general level of educational attainment continues to rise in nearly all countries and people seek more learning opportunities in order to safeguard their jobs or enhance their career prospects or enrich the intellectual and cultural quality of their lives.

The fusion of education and training, in theory and in practice, is taking place so rapidly and is already so widespread that the inequitable and dysfunctional historic division between the two in many countries should disappear sooner than could have been foreseen in 1985.

**(Courtesy : UNESCO)**

## **ADULT EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

### **A Note for the 5th International Conference on Adult Education**

**(Hamburg, Germany, July 14-18, 1997)**

**Presented by**

**Professor B.S. Garg, President, Indian Adult Education Association**

"Adult Learning : A Key to the 21st Century" is the challenging theme of the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education, which is held in Hamburg, Germany, during 14-18 July 1997 under the auspices of the Unesco Institute for Education (UIE), in cooperation with UNESCO Headquarters, and in collaboration with other international partners, with a promise for having renewed vision of adult learning. The 20th century comes to a close marked by deep traumas in the disturbing geo-political situation all over the world. Yet, the Conference sounds a note of buoyant optimism with the belief that the "learning capacity of human beings will be central to the task of shaping a new country and the new millenium."

In "A Tale of Three Cities," James Robbins Kidd writes : "On the face of it, there seem to be few similarities that mark Elsinore, Montreal and Tokyo. Yet these three cities share in common one event—they were the scenes successively in 1949, 1960 and 1972 of three World Conferences on Adult Education under UNESCO sponsorship. The conferences left no distinguishable marks on the cities, but adult education has been changed. As a special field and a unique member of the educational family, adult education has progressed in less than forty years from the wings to the forestage; these three conferences represent prologue and overture to a dramatic advance in education."

In the Faure Commission's Report entitled "Learning to be : The World of Education Today and Tomorrow," the first principle envisaged as a fundamental alternative to the very concepts and structures of education is stated to be : "Every individual must be in a position to keep learning throughout his life. The idea of lifelong education is the keystone of the learning society." This principle gives rise to the Commission's recommendation as follows : "We propose lifelong education as the master concept for educational policies in the years to come for both developed and developing countries." Whatever be the nomenclature used for adult

education, *i.e.*, fundamental education, education permanente, *etc.*, the central idea has remain unchanged. It is an educational process in which people play an active part for their own learning to take place. "If the key to survival and to sustainable development is the creativity of the citizen, then adult learning becomes one of the critical issues of the coming century."

In India, the concept of Social Education emerged soon after independence. The Mohan Lal Saxena Sub-Committee on Adult Education, constituted by the Central Advisory Board of Education in 1948, said in its report "that although both literacy and general education form part of Adult Education, yet greater emphasis should be laid on general education to enable every Indian to participate effectively in the new social order." This concept was further developed by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the then Education Minister, who called it Social Education.

The concept of resource development for adult education is unique in the sense that it provides the much needed support to adult education. This is India's contribution to the world.

Another notable feature in India is the involvement of NGOs in adult education. The Indian Adult Education Association, an apex voluntary organisation of very long standing, devoted to the cause of adult education, and its member organisations are becoming more and more responsive to the needs of a dynamic adult education programme, and are accelerating the growth of voluntary efforts in adult education throughout the length and breadth of the country. The expanding programme of involving the students through the university system is a positive sign of support for adult education.

The expanding network of Radio and TV are going to revolutionise communication in India, thus bringing a new dimension to adult education. The folk and traditional media of communication are being used for the cause of adult education in a much better way.

"Learning is a joy, a tool, a right and a shared responsibility" says the Conference Document. It further states: "A true learning democracy is one in which all women and men participate actively in the building of their communities and are able to pursue their individual and collective projects and visions."

The 21st Century presents a technological paradox. There will be evidence of high-tech or state-of-the-art technology operating in many parts of the world. In many other areas of our globe, there will be the unwanted presence and manifestation of illiteracy, hunger and under development. The gap between the haves and have-nots is there, and it may increase unless there is an intervention—educational and developmental. We are in a crucial juncture.

Let the Conference take cognizance of it and find ways and means of tackling the problem.

**R. Gomez**

## **ADULT LEARNING, A KEY FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

IT was on September 8, 1965, that the World Congress of Ministers of Education met in Teheran. It met to discuss the problems of illiteracy for the first time at the international level and took a number of important decisions. This historic date is being observed every year as the International Literacy Day and this year we shall be celebrating this for the thirty first time.

The thirty first International Literacy Day has a special significance for all of us in India for three reasons. First of all we are celebrating the Golden Jubilee of Independence of our motherland. In this context, the whole nation is talking of a second freedom struggle to liberate the country from corruption, criminalised politics, hunger and illiteracy." Secondly our country involves itself at present in a big way in the Total Literacy Campaign throughout the nation.

The National Literacy Mission Authority declares district after district as totally literate. Thirdly this historic day comes immediately after the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (Confinte V) that the UNESCO held In Hamburg, Germany from 14-18 July 1997.

### **Confinte V**

The *leitmotif* of the above mentioned conference was Adult Learning : A Key for the twenty-first century. UNESCO has since its inception, shown serious interest in adult learning. The General Conference at its second and third sessions held in Mexico City (1947) and Beirut (1948) decided to call an international conference to find solutions to the problem of adult education.

UNESCO held this special conference in Elsinore in Denmark (1949) followed by three such conferences in Montreal (1960) Tokyo (1972) and Paris (1985).

The last conference took place in 1985 in which the author of this paper took part as a delegate sent by the Government of India. It stressed the intensity of the struggle against illiteracy under a renewed alliance between governmental and non-governmental institutions. It accorded high priority to women's education and to the linking of formal and non-formal education in the perspective of lifelong learning. It also stressed other key factors such

as the decisive impact of the modern media on learning and the need for creativity and innovation in adult learning. It also showed a great concern for functional literacy in the industrialised countries.

UNESCO situates its conferences on adult education always in the context of ongoing long term United Nations initiatives. The present context of such initiatives are the following : (1) the Jomtien Declaration on Education for All and the Framework of Action (1990) (2) the UNESCO World Decade of Cultural Development (1988-1997) the UNDP World Development Decade (1991-2000) the Rio Conference on the Environment (1992) the Cairo International Conference on Population (1994) the Social Development Summit (1995) the Beijing International Conference on Women (1995) and the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century.

The Fifth International Conference on Adult Education developed its Central theme—"Adult Learning: a Key for the Twenty-first century from contemporary viewpoints under ten sub-themes.

These ten sub-themes were (1) Adult Learning and the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century (2) Improving the Economic Conditions and Quality of Adult Learning (3) Ensuring the Universal Right to Literacy and Basic Education (4) Promoting the Empowerment of Women through Adult Learning, (5) Adult Learning and the Changing World of Work, (6) Adult Learning in the Context of Preventive Security : Environment, Health and Population, (7) Adult Learning, Media and Culture, (8) Adult Learning and Groups with Special Needs, (9) The Economics of Adult Learning and (10) Enhancing International Cooperation and Solidarity.

The above themes were discussed with a view to developing a document on the central theme of the conference and proposing changes in the present policies and practices of adult learning : discussing and proposing future policies and priorities; creating new exchange networks; building commitment; proposing initiatives for co-operation and follow-up: adopting a Declaration on Adult Learning and designing an Agenda for the future that will be prepared at national and regional levels.

### **Agenda setting**

The last objective of the Conference is designing an agenda for future. We have to do this at the national and regional levels. Let us start thinking of it now in the light of the two events that we have mentioned above. They are the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) and the Second Freedom Struggle (SFS).

The team that suggested to the National Literacy Mission Authority (NLMA), the philosophy for and the methodology of implementing the TLC was the Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti (BGVS).

Even at the time of the launching of the TLC itself BGVS called it the

SFS. Therefore, as literacy workers and experts, let us take the TLC itself as the SFS to liberate the country "from corruption, criminalised politics, hunger and illiteracy. Let us set the agenda for this SFS in the light of the ten sub-themes discussed in the conference.

The challenges for the 21st century of our country come from the four quarters of corruption, criminalised politics, hunger and illiteracy. To eradicate these is the first task of the TLC. One of the three objectives of TLC in our country at present is building people's awareness.

It is our duty and obligation to do this awareness-building around the twin topics of corruption and criminalised politics. Criminalised politics has infected terror into our people. Let us free our people from this terror. Let us make them aware that to give bribe as well as to receive it is a criminal offence.

Improving the economic conditions of adult learning is in the hands of the governments—as well as the State. If they want awakened and productive citizens, they should not be sparing and stingy with the allocation of finance for adult learning.

The NLMA has already introduced various methods for improving the quality of adult learning. One such method is the preparation of a primer in three parts for adult learning using the principle of Improved Pace and Content of Learning (IPCL).

The State Resource Centres for Non-formal and Adult Education in the various States are doing a good job preparing these primers.

Literacy and basic education are the universal rights of the human beings. I am afraid that we have not ensured this right to the citizen of India even after 50 years of Independence. For "India accounts for one-third of the world's unlettered and 22 per cent of out-of-school children. Close to 55 million children in the age group of 6 to 14 years are still uncovered by a series of educational schemes!" Therefore we must work to ensure this universal right to literacy and basic education. About 50 years ago we pledged to provide free and compulsory education to all children up to 14 years of age within a short span of 10 years. It is good to remind ourselves of this at this juncture.

Educated women in the urban areas have already started competing with men in everything. Our girls in the schools and colleges have started doing better than our boys. These are all good and encouraging signs that we are already on the way to the empowerment of our women. Yet thousands of pregnancies are terminated the moment people come to know that the foetus is a female one.

There is no dearth of harassments and deaths due to dowry. There is no dearth of discrimination against women in the families and work places.

Hence the need for promoting the empowerment of women through

adult learning. Therefore the TLC must also aim at removing obstacles to women's participation in private and public life. It should prepare the learners to take action against gender discrimination.

The TLC should have specific programmes for women following an affirmative approach. Hence it becomes necessary for the social and women's movements to play an active role in the implementation of TLC.

The Father of our nation said "Education for the poor must mean food for them." To buy food, one should have money. To earn money one should work. In spite of this fact about 30 per cent of our country's population is unemployed and underemployed. It is a stark reality. This reality forces them to live below the poverty line! In order to bring about a change in this reality we talk of functional upgradation in our literacy work. It is one of the objectives of the literacy programme today.

Hence we relate adult learning today to economic development of the learner. We try to impart new skills to the learners and upgrade their old skills with a view to help them generate or enhance their incomes.

We must situate the adult learning in TLC in the present context of preventive security. We must make every effort to protect the physical and moral environment of the learners from pollution and to help them live a healthy life physically and mentally. They must have easy and ready access to basic health services. Health education must form an integral part of the TLC.

In fact health education and services are very good entry points to a community. One thing that threatens our country at present is the population growth.

Population experts expect that by the turn of the century the population of our country will reach the one billion mark! Without reducing the population, improvement of the economic conditions and quality of life of the people will only be tall talk!

BGVS has used media and culture to give publicity to the programme and to provide a favourable learning environment to the learners. It has also stressed the need for making the learning and teaching process culture-specific. It produces all its learning and teaching materials having this objective in view.

The new formation technologies are making a great impact on the people. People use these new information technologies just to entertain the audiences, sex, violence and crime forming its main content.

It is our duty and obligation to protect people from losing their cultural identity through a well-conceived and well-planned media education. It is our duty and obligation again to educate people to take a meaningful part in the country's media systems.

The universal right of literacy and basic education applies also to groups

with special needs. Ageing population, migrants, nomadic people, persons with disabilities and prisoners need our help and support most.

TLC must pay special attention to the needs of these people. We can recruit the educated among them as literacy volunteers. They will be able to work better and with more understanding among other disadvantaged people like them.

TLC is not progressing as fast as it should ! In many districts, TLC activities have come to a grinding halt due to want of funds. Actually this should not be the case in a country in which cultural revolution has not taken place even after 50 years after its political revolution.

The politicians and those who are responsible for allocating funds to developmental activities must fully realise this fact.

All our developmental programmes will be futile exercises if we try to implement them keeping a bulk of our population steeped in illiteracy and ignorance. Our country has spent crores of rupees on adult education programmes after its Independence ! What has happened to them? What is the net result of all the adult education programmes implemented so far? At least in the case of TLC we must undertake a strict cost-benefit analysis at the end of the implementation of a programme.

One good thing with the TLC is that it is looked upon as a societal mission. People are encouraged to take part in it fully. People are encouraged to bear part of the cost of the programme either in kind, or in cash or through services.

Many countries in the third world have successfully implemented adult education programmes immediately after winning political freedom from foreign rulers.

Some of the countries that have completed their total literacy programme in the recent past are Cuba, Nicaragua, Vietnam, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Tanzania.

We could learn from the experiences of these countries. We can seek their collaboration and cooperation in the implementation of the literacy programme in our country, in research and development with regard to adult learning. Enhancing international cooperation and solidarity in the implementation of the adult learning programmes will definitely enhance the quality of our own programmes.

This will be our agenda for the future action in the field of adult learning. In the above agenda not all the items are equally important. We do not bring home from a departmental store all the items just because they are available there. We pick and choose from them what we need.

We as literacy workers and experts pledge to pursue the Total Literacy Campaign itself as our Second Freedom Struggle with a view to eliminating corruption, criminalised politics, hunger and illiteracy. For we have realised

fully well that literacy means adult learning, adult learning with the three pronged approach of literacy, functionality and awareness-building.

Such an adult learning is a key and a tool for personal as well as for social, economic and cultural development. It is also a right that has obtained universal legitimacy.

Participation and learning are however manifestations of quality of life, a social experience (an experience of joy) and a shared responsibility.

(Courtesy : The Hindu, Chennai)

K.Sivadasan Pillai

## FROM 3 Rs TO EMPOWERMENT

During the pre-independence period, leaders of the freedom movement concentrated on mobilising people to fight against the British through peaceful means. Along with this, attempts were also made to make people literate—to provide the skill to read and write one's mother tongue. Numeracy was also attempted. The motive was that in the independent India, people will have to rule themselves on the basis of adult franchise. Night schools were started to provide literacy to the needy people. Significant efforts were made in Kerala, Maharashtra, Baroda etc.

'Illiteracy is a sin and a shame,' wrote Gandhiji in the 'Harijan.' People were called upon to liberate themselves from the shackles of illiteracy and consequent ignorance, poverty etc. In Kerala the library movement had its start in 1945 with 47 rural libraries forming the Travancore Library Association, in the erstwhile princely state of Travancore. Most of these libraries started night classes. 'Read and grow' was a slogan put forth to spread reading habits, because a pre-condition was the ability to read and write. Thus, even at the time of the first census in India in 1951, Kerala had about 50 per cent of literate population against national average of 16.

### Early Years of Independence

Immediately after independence, the concept of adult education was radically changed adding citizenship to the 3 Rs. The new concept was social education. This became a part and parcel of the Five Year Plans and Community Development programmes through the N.E.S. Blocks. Social Education Organisers (SEOs) and District Social Education Organisers were provided in each Block and District respectively. State level officers in charge for Social Education were also appointed and attached either to the Development Department, or Education Department. During the first three Five Year Plans this programme was in operation.

Consequent on the emergence of functional literacy in September 1965, at Tehran, as a measure to overcome the defects of adult education movement all over the world, India opted for FFLP (Farmer's Functional Literacy Programme). As agriculture was the major occupation in those days and as most people lived in villages, this was an appropriate decision. Experimental projects were sanctioned which resulted in arriving at strategies for training of functionaries, preparation of materials, monitoring and evaluation,

follow-up activities etc. To begin with, there was no primer, no syllabus as such, no particular approach (methodology) and no systems approach so to say. Evaluation results showed that results were not up to the expectations. This was not only the case of India. In most countries, Experimental World Literacy Programme (EWLP) was not a great success. Modifications were suggested by the evaluation teams. Asher Deleon, who was UNESCO Adviser in India at that time, visited many states in India with DAE (Directorate of Adult Education) representatives, and final external evaluation was attempted in collaboration with the representatives of implementing agencies. The EWLP report was an eye opener to many, and consequent changes were effected to make the programme country specific and situation specific, so that it suited to the needs and aspirations of the clientele and availability of human and material resources. This was the scenario in adult literacy in India during the Seventies.

### **National Adult Education Programme**

Towards the fag end of the Seventies, the Janata Government, under the Prime Ministership of Morarji Desai, launched the National Adult Education Programme on October 2, 1978. The NAEP aimed at making 5 crores illiterate adults literate in 5 years, giving the 15 to 35-year age group top priority. However, special care was given to women and depressed sections of the society (SC/ST) wherein age limit also was discarded.

Along with literacy and numeracy, oracy and techniracy were also emphasised in addition to functionality. Creating awareness among people on their rights and duties as well as how they are subjected to exploitations of various kinds was a novel feature of this programme. Besides the Government departments and institutions of higher learning, voluntary agencies (VAs) or non-governmental organisations (NGOs) were also given the opportunity of participation in the implementation of the programme. NGOs sprang up in large numbers in most parts of India, to be actively involved in the programme. Centre based approach was a special feature of NAEP, wherein college and university students participated actively, consequent on the call given by the Education Ministry to the Universities through the University Grants Commission (UGC). In addition to supplying teaching-learning materials free of cost to all learners and providing kerosene or electricity charges for running the adult literacy centres, honoraria for instructors and supervisors were also offered. Nearly Rs. 26,900 was offered to a unit of 10 centres allotted to a college/NGO. Pre-service and inservice training for instructors and supervisors were also made compulsory. Machinery for monitoring and evaluation were also evolved. Norms were prescribed for declaring a person neo-literate on the basis of external evaluation carried out towards the end of a project period. In some

states like Kerala, mobile convocations were also arranged to award certificates to the neo-literates and to present them with neo-literate book kits. Workshops for writing books for neo-literates were organised in local languages and books were developed and printed for free supply to the neo-literates. In many places periodicals were also published. All these emerged as follow-up measures. However, the life of NAEP was limited to less than 2 years, because of political changes at the Centre.

At the time of 1981 census, literacy percentage in India rose to 36.17 while Kerala had 70 per cent with the top rank among Indian states, both for the male and female population.

The Eighties saw rapid changes in the field of adult literacy. While NAEP had an untimely death, item No. 16 of the New 20 Point programmes came up as a substitute. A three pronged approach was envisaged in this : (i) ensuring 100 per cent enrolment at the age of entry, *i.e.*, 5 + yrs. (ii) preventing dropping out at least from primary classes and (iii) providing nonformal education for the 15 + age group. The minimum needs programme was planned seriously but was not found that effective at the implementation level especially at the hands of NGOs. It was at this juncture that sporadic attempts at eradicating illiteracy were looked down upon by many people. Centres were opened and programmes organised, but changes or results were not visible and transparent enough. Search was on for an alternate strategy.

### **Mass Programme for Functional Literacy**

Each one teach one was not a new strategy in India, but during the Eighties, it was emphasised under MPFL (Mass programme for Functional Literacy). Every educated person was called upon to take part in the programme and help at least one illiterate to become literate. The National Service Scheme (NSS) volunteers were directed to be in the fore front with a slight modification in the slogan—which read thus : 'Each one teach up to five.' Literacy kits prepared by the State Resource Centres were supplied free of cost to the learners and the instructors. This programme fumbled due to the lack of a monitoring mechanism. Measures to identify the learners were inadequate and fictitious names and numbers crept in to the Monitoring Information System (MIS).

### **Area Development Approach**

In the case of educational institutions, neighbourhood approach (of the institution or the instructors) was prevalent. Hence, the programme was scattered here and there. A suggestion came to concentrate in identified pockets or areas. Thus, Area Development Approach (ADA) was brought in. According to this, all illiterates in an area were to be identified through a comprehensive survey, motivate them if not already properly motivated

and organise programmes through (i) centre based approach if sufficient numbers were available, (ii) small group approach in clusters of 5 to 10 and (iii) each one teach one approach wherein the instructor-learner rapport was the major input. The Ministry of Human Resource Development and the University Grants Commission came forward with 'seed money' for introducing this approach which enabled people to eradicate illiteracy from compact areas. This paved the way for the idea of total literacy. Through a novel experiment by the Kerala Association for Non formal Education and Development (KANFED), a village Ezhome in one of the northern districts of Kerala, called Kannur, was made fully literate. This was during the first half of the Eighties, when the idea of 'total literacy' was not even dreamt of at the national level.

### **National Literacy Mission**

The New Education Policy (NEP) of 1986 gave a fillip to the literacy programme by making it one of the National Missions. It was called the National Literacy Mission (NLM). Swami Vivekananda was quoted frequently for motivating the youth to join the illiteracy eradication scheme on a mission or spirit. "If those who became literate or educated at the cost of the masses, are not indulging in making others literate, they will be called traitors." This call boosted the number of volunteers who came forward to join the NLM, which envisaged making 8 crore illiterates of the 15-35 age group literate during 1988 and 1995.

A National Literacy Mission Authority (NLMA) was formed at the Centre and SLMAs were formed in most states. Kerala and Gujarat were identified to launch total literacy campaigns in their respective areas. In Kerala the People's Education and Literacy Campaign, Kottayam (PELCK) was launched in 1988 to attain total literacy in the Kottayam Municipal area, where 2209 persons were identified as illiterates and were mostly made literate in 100 days. The slogan here was '100 per cent literacy in 100 days.' Government machinery, educational institutions and NGOs joined hands and the programme became successful and Kottayam became the first Municipal area or township in India to attain total literacy. Consequent on the success of PELCK, Ernakulam district came forward and attempted a total literacy project with financial support from the Government of India. The then Prime Minister, V.P. Singh, declared Ernakulam to be totally literate. Thus, Ernakulam became the first totally literate district in India. The unique features of the Ernakulam project were that it covered a population of 6 to 60 years and beyond and it had the bipolar approach of mobilising the government machinery, and voluntary agencies. The creation of a conducive climate through multimedia approach, *i.e.*, organisation of Jathas (rallies on foot) and street corner meetings, among other things,

resulted in motivating the learners and instructors alike. Here again the literacy percentage crossed the 90 per cent mark, according to UNESCO guidelines resulting in the total literacy declaration. For this massive programme separate primers were prepared and volunteers were trained in large numbers. Nearly 20,000 educated youth were involved in this campaign on a voluntary basis. Thus, the Ernakulam experiment became famous as the 'lead kindly light' district and accelerated Kerala's total literacy campaign, as well as campaign in other parts of India. UNSECO came forward to recognise this unique achievement with one of its coveted prizes/awarded on the occasion of the International Literacy Day. The Ernakulam model can be adopted in other parts of the country with necessary modifications.

### **Total Literacy Campaign**

In the 1991 Census, only those above 7 years of age were considered to calculate the literacy percentage. Accordingly the all-India figure for literacy is 52.11 per cent, while Kerala has the top rank having 89.81 per cent. When Kerala was declared as totally literate, on 18 April 1991, it claimed 93.64 per cent as per MLM norms. Only those who could read with comprehensive 30 words per minute if read aloud and 33 words per minute if read silently, write up to 6 to 10 words per minute, do daily life operations involving currency, measures of height, weight, length, area, time etc. and answer orally questions of contemporary importance alone are certified as neo-literates. The evaluation process is rather tough and hence got diluted in many cases. However, in more than 300 districts, total literacy campaigns are in progress, out of which in about 100, Operation Restoration Literacy has become a necessity.

### **Prevent Relapse into Illiteracy**

Neo-literacy is becoming a one time process for many, as follow-up measures like post-literacy and continuing education programmes are either not built into the project or are delayed inordinately. Even in the educationally advanced state of Kerala, which can boast of being totally literate, has the problem of relapsing into illiteracy among a sizable number of neo-literates. Unless regularly brushed up, due to law of disuse, neo-literates are likely to relapse and become unreachables once again. People have to be told that 'literacy is a right and not a privilege.' Even after 50 years of independence, nearly 50 per cent of our population is still illiterate. Education for all by 2000 AD is still a dream. Even the constitutional provision of free and compulsory elementary education to all children of 6-14 age group, remains a distant goal. We are thinking of effecting a constitutional amendment to make education a fundamental right for all.

### **Need of the Hour**

However, the concept of literacy has changed in recent years. It is not only the ability to decipher the alphabet, but leading a better life than the present one. Literacy alone can not ensure development and progress. Kerala which has the highest Physical Quality of Life Index (PQLI) has not scored that high in the National Development Index (NDI). States like Haryana and Punjab are good at NDI but not in PQLI. Herein comes the need for conscientising people on living conditions, values of life, India's heritage etc. Oral culture is enough for acquiring and propagating these values. What is more significant for us is empowerment of the masses. As in the case of Iran, Brazil or Chile, there can be an upsurge in any nation where people are made fully literate, to create a learning society, when social upheavals are sure to take place. Political will can not then stand in its way. 'Education for all and for ever' is the need of the hour.

S.Y. Shah

## **ADULT EDUCATION IN INDIAN UNIVERSITIES A Case Study of Jawaharlal Nehru University**

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has played a key role in shaping the character of University Adult Education in India since the launching of the National Adult Education Programme in 1978. During the last two decades, the UGC has not only formulated a number of guidelines on adult continuing education programmes, but has also provided hundred per cent funding support to universities to implement the programmes. Today as many as 93 universities have set up Adult Education Departments and they have implemented a variety of programmes in this area. Yet, University Adult Education in India continues to be plagued by a number of academic and administrative problems. Although some of these issues have been identified by academicians, administrators and policy planners from time to time, no attempt has been made so far to trace their origins. On the contrary, it is not uncommon to come across very critical remarks about the role of Indian universities in Adult Education.

The observation of the Working Group on Adult Education for the Ninth Plan that "the involvement of higher educational institutions in literacy activities in this country appears to have gradually diminished,"<sup>1</sup> raises a number of questions. Did the role of universities in adult education decline over the years? If so, why? Are the universities well equipped to undertake adult education activities? Although the role of universities in adult education have been reviewed by several Committees and Commissions set up by the University Grants Commission,<sup>2</sup> Government of India<sup>3</sup> and researchers,<sup>4</sup> these attempts have *prima facie* focussed on the implementation of UGC guidelines by different universities and have evaluated their performance in terms of the number of programmes organised, targets achieved and funds utilised, and accordingly categorised them as A,B,C, etc. In the absence of qualitative data,<sup>5</sup> our understanding of University Adult Education remains lopsided. It seems that most of the evaluators start with the assumption that the UGC guidelines are perfectly designed and Indian universities are homogeneous organisations having ideal structures, staff and work culture conducive for the implementation of adult education programmes. They have hardly questioned why certain universities succeed or fail in the implementation of adult education programmes and to what extent the UGC guideline are responsible for the

same. What are the limitations of the UGC guidelines? Do they need any modification? These evaluations do not provide any information on the role of intra-university factors, such as the organisational characters of universities, background of students and their leadership, Vice Chancellors and Directors in the development of University Adult Education. Since these aspects can best be studied through the case study approach, this paper focusses on the experiences of implementation of the UGC guidelines in a Central University like the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, during the past two decades (1978-1997). Based on this study, this paper highlights the need for encouraging each university to evolve its own programme in the light of its strengths and weaknesses and argues that if UGC adopts such a decentralised approach to the development of University Adult Education during the Ninth Plan, it may possibly pave the way for the emergence of innovative models of University Adult Education which can play an effective role in the Indian context.

### **Models of University Adult Education**

The involvement of institutions of higher learning—colleges and universities—in adult education has been a slow but steady process brought about by individual initiatives and policy interventions. While a small number of colleges were already associated with a variety of community development programmes, including adult literacy, even during the colonial period,<sup>7</sup> the universities in India remained aloof till the 1960's when Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta made the first systematic attempt in this direction by setting up the Department of Adult Education at the University of Rajasthan (1962) mainly based on the model of Canadian University Adult Education.<sup>7</sup> He strongly believed that a university should not confine itself to offering degrees and research programmes, but provide a variety of continuing education programmes suited to the needs of local community by taking the "campus to community." Though he vigorously promoted the cause of University Adult Education during the 1960s through all possible means—conferences of Vice Chancellors,<sup>9</sup> meetings at UGC and professional bodies like Indian Adult Education Association, only a few universities, responded. It was partly due to the shortage of resources and partly because of differences among prominent adult educators on the concept of University Adult Education.

Some of the contemporaries of Dr. Mehta, particularly Dr. Malcolm Adiseshiah subscribed to the view that the main responsibility of a university should be to promote adult education as a discipline of study by developing innovative courses and generating knowledge through research. This view paved the way for the emergence of a second model of University Adult Education during 1977-78, when the Universities of Madras and Sri

Venkateshwara set up departments of Adult Education to offer Master's and Doctoral programmes in the field.

With the launching of the National Adult Education Programme in 1978 and the recognition of extension as the third dimension of higher education by the UGC,<sup>10</sup> a major decision was taken to involve universities in adult education through students and teachers. Subsequently when the role of universities in adult education was spelt out in detail, and the functions of Adult Education Departments were identified as teaching, research and extension, a third model of University Adult Education emerged in India during the 1980s.<sup>11</sup> Since this model was conceived by UGC, which not only provided hundred per cent funding support to universities but also strong leadership, under the late Dr. Madhuri R. Shah, the then Chairperson of UGC, there was a tremendous response from Indian universities. Of the 93 universities which are currently involved in adult education programmes, the majority belong to the third model. However, there are not many Departments of Adult Education which can claim equal excellence in teaching, research, extension and massive participation of their students. The reasons may be traced to the limitations of the UGC guidelines, and the organisational characters of Indian universities and their leadership.

Consequent upon the policy decision of UGC to provide hundred per cent funding support to the universities to initiate adult education programmes in 1978, there has been a spate of communications from UGC to Vice-Chancellors, Registrars and Directors of Adult Education, regarding programmes and personnel. Besides these, UGC also formulated a number of programme guidelines at regular intervals.<sup>12</sup> From the programme point of view, these guidelines have emphasised the need for sensitizing and involving the university community—students, teachers and staff in adult education programmes, developing innovative and relevant models of extension and undertaking research besides bringing university and community closer to each other. The UGC provided programme packages and funds to the interested universities which tried to implement the programme in the best possible manner. Since UGC proformas demanded quantitative data regarding the number of programmes organised, personnel trained, people made literate and funds utilised, there has been a dearth of qualitative data on the experiences and problems encountered in the implementation of adult education programmes at the university level.<sup>13</sup>

### **The Case of JNU**

In this brief paper it may be rather difficult to review twenty years of varied experiences and challenges of development of University Adult Education in JNU which is selected mainly due to the first hand experience

of this writer and his access to data. The present case-study is confined to the following two dimensions :

1. Organisational character of the university vis-a-vis the participation of students in adult education programme.
2. Role of leadership at the university level—that of Vice-Chancellor and Director of Adult Education vis-a-vis the thrust of programmes.

Established in 1969 as a residential central university, the main objective of JNU is to promote the ideals of Jawaharlal Nehru by fostering the study of the principles for which he worked during his life time. These were national integration, social justice, secularism, democratic way of life, international understanding and scientific approach to the problems of society.<sup>14</sup> With this in view, the university offers mainly post-graduate teaching and research programmes in different disciplines. The student strength in JNU has always been relatively small. Currently about 4000 students are on its rolls. During the 1980s a large section of JNU students were leftist oriented and tended to be critical of state sponsored development programmes, while others remained either engrossed in the preparation for competitive examinations or other engagements. Against this background, it would be futile to expect student participation in adult education programmes, specially when the university did not provide any incentives to them either in the way of marks or weightage for admission. During 1984-86, when there was a provision for providing honorarium to student volunteers, the Adult Education Unit succeeded in motivating six students (out of 1500 students) to work as instructors. While three of them dropped out after 10 days of initial training programmes, the remaining three discontinued within two months when their first semester examinations began.<sup>15</sup> Motivational programmes did not yield much result. In the case of a widely publicised film show and talk by the Director-General of National Literacy Mission and the Vice-Chancellor, only a few students turned up for the programme. The JNU experience during the 1980s shows that voluntary participation of students in adult education is closely linked to their academic, social and political background.

The efforts to involve students in adult education activities succeeded during the 1990s, when a number of students, who had participated in literacy work in schools and colleges or in Total Literacy Campaigns, joined JNU. Being exposed to literacy work and not critical of state sponsored development programmes, these students were keen to pursue their interest in adult education in JNU. When some of them approached the Adult Education Unit, it was decided to convene a meeting of all the students interested in adult education. During the course of discussion, it became clear that students were more interested in knowing about the theoretical aspects of adult education (since most of them had practical experience),

specially about adult education policies and programmes in India and abroad, and different organisations, institutions and specialists working in the field. They were also interested in viewing relevant films on adult education and reading current literature on the subject which were not easily available in the JNU library. If such programmes could be arranged, they assured that not only they would sign up irrespective of credits, but also rope in their friends as well.

### **New Academic Initiative**

Keeping in view the background and interest of JNU students, the Adult Education Unit designed an experimental non-credit course of sixty four hours duration giving equal weightage to theory and practice. The theoretical part included ten thematic lectures by specialists covering the following topics : 1. Indian society, structural constraints, nexus between illiteracy and poverty, gender and regional disparities in literacy; 2. Concept of adult education and its role in the development of individuals, society and nation; 3. An overview of planning and policy making in Indian adult education. 4. Brief survey of selected adult education programmes implemented in India since the 1950s with special reference to Gram Shikshan Mohim, Farmers Functional Literacy Programme, National Adult Education Programme, Mahila Samakhya and Total Literacy Campaigns; 5. Present implementation strategies and structures in adult education; role of different agencies—Government departments, NGOs and educational institutions; 6. International linkages of Indian adult education—contributions and cooperation of overseas adult educators and international organisations; 7. Adult Psychology, teaching strategies and learning styles of adults; 8. Methods, materials and media in adult education; 9. Identifying and tackling developmental issues, setting up a NGO, drafting project proposals, sources of funding, liaising with officials, working with people and managing NGOs; 10. Scope and significance of documentation, research and evaluation in adult education with special reference to participatory methodology. Eight short films on adult education and development were screened for familiarising them with the successful TLC programmes of Ernakulam, Burdwan etc., and for organising group discussions on some of the issues of implementation. As an integral part of theory, students were also given a chance to attend two specialist seminars by experts who were involved in the evaluation of Total Literacy Campaigns launched in different districts of India. Each session was of two hours duration and was held once a week between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. While the theory part was completed during the first semester, the field placement was done during the second semester.

The field placement was meant for those who did not have and aimed at familiarising them with the functioning and programmes of some selected

Delhi based adult education organisations—both Governmental and NGOs, and introducing them to some of the specialists in the field of adult education and development. It also aimed at providing them an opportunity to take up one developmental activity, either individually or as a team, thereby enabling them to gain first hand field experience.

With limited publicity through a few posters, as many as 30 students enrolled within a week. This shows that if relevant and interesting programmes are offered, students might respond. Twenty four students who regularly attended this non-credit course evaluated it to be “very vibrant” and of “immense practical relevance.” Six of them continued their association with the Adult Education Unit by participating in field work. While the theory part was a great success, the field placement had certain limitations. The majority of students, being young girls, felt unsafe to visit slums or travel to distant places in DTC buses and incur expenditure for field work. Out of ten students who did not have any previous experience and had opted for field placement, only four students completed the work, and, that too, when they were placed in a nearby slum and provided conveyance.

The introduction of the non-credit course was welcomed by the teachers of JNU who joined the programme by giving lectures on a voluntary basis. Subsequently, some of them also collaborated with the Adult Education Unit in a research project on “The impact of continuing education.” They have also expressed a keen desire to continue their association with the course and explore the possibilities of introducing it as a credit course in future. These academic activities initiated the process of bringing the teachers and students into the fold of adult education. When adult education programmes are planned in accordance with the interest of students and teachers, their participation will be forthcoming, as is found in the case of JNU.

### **Leadership and Thrust of Programme**

During the last two decades there were frequent changes in JNU’s leadership at the level of Vice-Chancellor and Director of Adult Education Unit; there were five Vice-chancellors and six Directors of Adult Education. Vice-Chancellors and Directors of Adult Education may be categorised as academicians, bureaucrats, or activists depending on their individual professional background. The experiences of JNU show how the thrust of adult education programmes shifts with the changes in leadership notwithstanding the UGC guidelines.

During 1978 When the UGC requested the universities to initiate adult education programmes by involving students, the leadership in JNU, specially the Director of Adult Education took a broader view of developing

adult education not only as a field of practice but also a discipline of study. Both the Director and the Vice-Chancellor being distinguished academicians, it was not surprising that their focus was on academic activities viz. documentation, organisation of seminars, course development, research and publication. Keeping in view the emphasis of JNU on research and teaching, they declined to implement the UGC sanction for setting up sixty adult education centres and decided to set up only one or two centres on an experimental basis. Though taken aback initially, the UGC, in fact, supported the decision of JNU.

Within a year, there was a change in the leadership when the Director of Adult Education went abroad. His successor a retired bureaucrat opted to follow the UGC guidelines and planned to set up one hundred adult education centres, thereby shifting the focus of the programme from academic to field. By the time the Vice-Chancellor could intervene, the Director's term came to an end, and soon the Vice-Chancellor also left. Thus, during the first three crucial years, adult education programme in JNU could not strike roots or chalk out long term strategies.

Adult education programme in JNU, however, continued under the leadership of the new Vice-chancellor who was a bureaucrat by temperament. The new Director, though an activist, was keenly interested in developing teaching, research and extension programmes. But, the Vice-chancellor felt that the focus should be only on extension, notwithstanding the guidelines of UGC and the strong plea of the Advisory Committee to develop adult education programme into a full fledged Department for offering teaching, research and extension programmes,<sup>17</sup> thereby frustrating the sincere efforts of the Director. To a certain extent, he was influenced by the traditional professors of JNU, who were against the expansion of adult education programmes and creation of a separate centre for adult education. They argued that since provisions for Ph.D in Adult Education exist in several centres of the School of Social Sciences, creation of a new Centre for Adult Education may not be a viable proposition. Besides, it was noted that some amount of extension activities are undertaken by different Schools of JNU and extension seems to be permeating the entire university system.

It has been observed in JNU that when the Vice-Chancellor and the Director belong to academic category, the thrust of programme remains teaching and/or research. If they belong to a non-academic category of bureaucrat or activist, the main programmes revolve around extension. In the university set-up, the Vice-Chancellor's leadership becomes the most decisive factor. On one occasion, a particular Vice-Chancellor did not hesitate to curb adult education activities when it clashed with the wider interest of university administration. The following incidence illustrates the point :

During the 1980s, an effort was made by the staff of the Adult Education

Unit, to organise literacy centres for the illiterate construction workers on the campus. As per the prevailing practice, the university contractor had recruited them from a distant village and provided them accommodation (along with their families) near the construction site. Since the workers were illiterate and unaware of their rights and privileges, and were at the mercy of the contractor, they were forced to accept the partial wage and remain deprived of medical care, drinking water and creche for their children as entitled by law. Even when some of the workers were aware of the minimum wages, they did not dare to raise their demands, lest they be sacked. Since the contractor was not complying with the legal provision, the Adult Education Unit decided to mobilise and motivate the workers to organise and fight for their rights. After a series of informal discussions with the workers, the Adult Education Unit succeeded in identifying the potential leaders among them and encouraged them to work as volunteers in the literacy centres started on the construction site. However, the frequent visits by the staff of the Adult Education Unit to the construction site and the assembly of the workers, aroused suspicion in the mind of the contractor who anticipated that the workers might become aware of their rights and demand right wages and other privileges. Because of this fear, the contractor warned the workers to keep away from the adult education activities and threatened the staff of the Adult Education Unit to stop visiting the workers. At this juncture, it was decided that the Adult Education Unit should seek the cooperation of the university administration to continue to work among the construction workers on the campus and at the same time draw the attention of the Labour Department to take steps to ameliorate the condition of the workers. When the contractor came to know of these developments, he threatened to stop the construction work with the allegation that the staff of Adult Education Unit were turning his peaceful workers into agitators and thereby disrupting the work. The university administration was keen to avoid any type of problems on the campus and at the same time was primarily interested in the early completion of the buildings. Since adult education was not considered as a top priority programme in the university set up, the administration turned a deaf ear to the cause and hence the staff of the Adult Education Unit did not get the expected support from their own university which ultimately led to the stoppage of adult education work on the campus. In fact, the Vice-Chancellor requested the Director "to keep away from the construction workers."<sup>18</sup>

### **Issues and Implications**

This case study has demonstrated how the organisational characters of universities, background of students and changes in leadership impinge on the development of University Adult Education in India. It suggests the

need for working out different strategies, keeping in view the specific character of Indian universities. While there may be certain inherent limitations in seeking student participation in adult education programmes in unitary or smaller universities, it may not be so in affiliating universities having a massive strength of undergraduate students who may have more leisure time and some interest in developmental activities. Home Science and Social Work Colleges, Gandhian and Rural Development institutions have also succeeded in involving students in adult education programme since such activities form an integral part of their curricula.<sup>19</sup> The recent experience of enrolling 30 students for a non-credit course on Adult Education in JNU, reveals that certain students would participate even on a voluntary basis, if the course contents/interest them. Such students may be found in all universities and their participation can be ensured if similar programmes are introduced.

The case study of JNU also suggests the need for formulating university-specific adult education programmes during the Ninth Plan. The varied experiences of the past two decades of implementation of UGC guidelines by different universities might have provided them valuable insights and hence they would be in a better position to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses and decide programme priorities, operational strategies and funding requirements.<sup>20</sup> As a first step in enabling them to formulate university-specific adult education programmes during the next Plan, each university needs to undertake an internal evaluation of its performance (ever since the inception of their programmes) focussing on their significant achievements so that they may strengthen their strengths by undertaking those programmes for which they may have the requisite expertise and co-operation of the university community and which may cater to the specific requirements of students. If the UGC takes cognizance of the experiences of different universities and their specific characters and accordingly adopts a decentralised approach to the development of University Adult Education during the next five years, it may encourage innovation. This may be possible only if the UGC moves away from the previous practice of formulating new guidelines by a few members with limited experience and subsequently getting it ratified at a conference of some selected Directors of Adult Education Departments and then circulating them to all universities for compliance.<sup>21</sup> This approach may not only cripple the initiative of universities but also down grade them as mere implementation agencies of UGC. Should university Departments of Adult Education become yet another agency of NLM?

While the main ideas and initiatives for University Adult Education originated during the 60s and 70s from universities and university based adult educators like Dr. M.S. Mehta, Dr. M.S. Adiseshiah and Dr. D.S. Kothari

after the NAEP, the UGC seems to have merely adopted or adapted the broad adult education policy and programmes formulated by the Government of India.<sup>22</sup> Since the Government of India (National Literacy Mission) provides funds to UGC to implement the programme, UGC tends to adopt or adapt the programme package designed by the National Literacy Mission. When such a program is implemented by the universities not only the unit cost increases (since salary of university staff is higher than NGOs and Government Officials), but also the impact of the programme differs in comparison to the projects implemented by NGOs and Government Departments. There is no study which shows that the adult education programmes implemented by the universities are cost effective and of higher quality when compared to those other agencies. The quality of University Adult Education in the country can be enhanced only if UGC asserts its autonomy and moves away from the Government designed programme packages. To begin with, UGC needs to define the concept of University Adult Education in India and subsequently, encourage the universities to design university specific programmes. Then, perhaps, the involvement of higher education institutions in literacy and adult education work would be more distinct and effective.

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Published every quarter by the Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA), 17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi-110002. Phones : 3319282, 3721336, 3722206.

Fax : 91-11-3355306

Contents of the IJAE are indexed in the Current Index to Journals in Education, New York, Content Pages in Education, Oxfordshire, England and in the Guide to Indian Periodical Literature, Gurgaon (Haryana). Also microfilmed by University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA. **ISSN 0019-5006**

Subscription: Inland Rs. 60.00 p.a.,  
Overseas, US\$ 20.00 p.a.

Advertisement rates : full page - Rs. 1500; half page - Rs.800; quarter page - Rs.450

Printed and Published by J.L. Sachdeva for Indian Adult Education Association, 17-B Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi - 110002. Printed at Prabhat Publicity, 2622, Kucha Chelan, Darya Ganj, New Delhi - 110002.

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**Editorial**

The Unesco General Conference, at its twenty-third session, held at Sofia in 1985, realized the special urgency of eradication of illiteracy by 2000 AD, and declared that the task should be a priority objective of the international community and of Unesco. It issued an appeal "to proclaim an International Year, the observance of which would contribute to greater understanding by world public opinion of the various aspects of the problem of illiteracy and to intensify efforts to spread literacy and education." The United Nations General Assembly, in December 1987, adopted a resolution (42/104) proclaiming 1990 as the International Year and invited Unesco to play the role of the lead organisation for its preparation and observance.

Where do we stand today? According to recent Unesco estimates, there are nine countries in the world having adult illiterates over one crore each. India heads this list with 26.4 crores of illiterates. Women comprise 57 per cent of the illiterate population, and the situation among the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes is still worse. According to available figures, 243 districts are below the national literacy rate, and these districts are mostly in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh.

Despite this dismal picture, adult education, throughout its uneven growth in India, has influenced, and has been influenced by, the international developments in this field. Paulo Freire's 'conscientization' and David Werner's 'empowerment' had their genesis in Gandhi's principles and methods of Basic Education, which say that adult education should neither begin nor end with the 3Rs. The concept of functional literacy was also contained in those principles enunciated in the late thirties, and thanks to the World Conference of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy, held in Tehran in 1965, it was seen in the operational context and came as an important recommendation, which was incorporated as one of the three components of our National Adult Education Programme (NAEP), launched on the Gandhi Jayanti Day of 1978.

Many Commissions, Committees and Working Groups have gone into the problems relating to adult education, and have recommended various remedial steps. Has the National Literacy Mission (NLM) been implemented according to the expectations of Shastri Bhavan? No doubt, there have been isolated pockets where excellent work has been done. But at the current rate of progress, it would take another three decades or so for the country to make all its illiterate people literate. Whatever progress we make in this direction is neutralised by the increasing population and the high drop-out rates from schools. Therefore, our future strategy should be directed at both children and adults.

Some thinkers and Gandhian scholars are of the view that perhaps the Education Departments in the States are least suitable for organising mass programmes like adult education having close links with development; and the Departments' formal and rigid classroom orientation, their lack of communication with other development departments and their insensitivity towards rural problems come in the way of organising and sustaining a vigorous adult education programme. Could we not have an autonomous body with the Prime Minister as its Chairman to plan, direct, organise and oversee adult education programme in the country? The normal routine of administering a massive adult education programme through a Central Ministry and the State Governments very often slows down its tempo.

Therefore, for the coming decade, we in India would need a different educational strategy. Education should be provided in many ways, and the artificial barriers between the different phases and stages of education, and between formal and nonformal education should be abolished. The school of the future will have to create the community of the future. A new kind of school teacher would be necessary, who would also promote rural development and social change, and accelerate the process of Education for All in a learning society.

## **47th All India Adult Education Conference A Report**

The 47th All India Adult Education Conference which concluded in Hardwar (UP) on November 30, 1997 has recommended that the scope of adult education should be broadened so that it covers all the sectors in the field and activities touching the lives of people and reducing the dichotomy between formal and non-formal education. It further recommended that the methods, techniques and materials for adult education should be suitably designed in the context of the challenges to be faced in the coming century.

The conference recommended that the strategies for adult education in the 21st century have to be designed in such a way that formal educational institutions would have to play a significant role in strengthening literacy, adult education and non-formal educational programmes. It stressed that appropriate local media and electronic media should be used and necessary structural changes be made to make the adult education programme need-based.

It recommended that adult education should include components of citizenship education and political education including legal literacy. It emphasised that the scientific temper should be inculcated in the people so as to break the culture of silence.

The conference was convened by the Indian Adult Education Association in collaboration with Gurukul Kangri Vishwavidyalaya in Hardwar on November 27-30, 1997. It was attended by over 220 delegates from 18 States. They represented the Government Departments, UGC, TLC Districts, Universities, Shramik Vidyapeeths, and voluntary organisations.

Prof. Dharm Pal, Vice-Chancellor, Gurukul Kangri Vishwavidyalaya in his guest of honour address said that non literates were being exploited by some educated people in the society. To save the situation, it was necessary to provide them education. The adult education programme, he said, should enable them to participate effectively in the affairs of the country and become an active partner in the development process.

Prof. BS Garg, President, Indian Adult Education Association and Chancellor, Rajasthan Vidyapeeth, Udaipur in his presidential address said that literacy, post literacy and continuing education programme during the next century should be a coordinated effort of all the development agencies, Government structure, voluntary agencies, corporate sectors and above all a sense of commitment of all individuals. He said that the Hindi heartland was lagging behind in the literacy programme particularly the literacy among women was very low. He stressed the need to devote more energy to spread literacy in the Hindi belt.

Prof. Garg stressed that the life long learning had to be institutionalized in the system of education specially for adults. The work force need to be updated in their knowledge and skills for meeting out the demands of industry. He said that opportunities for distance learning should be provided to adults for getting education. Population and development education was a priority area and innovative and creative programmes should be designed for the purpose, he emphasised.

Earlier, Prof. Ved Prakash Shastri, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Gurukul Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Hardwar welcomed the Chief Guest and the participants.

Shri KC Choudhary, General Secretary, Indian Adult Education Association proposed a vote of thanks.

#### **Nehru and Tagore Literacy Awards Presented**

The Nehru and Tagore Literacy Awards for the years 1996 and 1997 were presented during the inaugural function. The recipients for the Nehru Literacy Awards were Shri Tarlok Singh, former Member, Planning Commission (1996) in absentia and Prof. CL Kundu, Vice-Chancellor, Himachal Pradesh University (1997).

The Tagore Literacy Awards were presented to Prof.(Mrs.) Kamalini H Bhansali, former Vice-Chancellor, SNDT Women's University, Mumbai (1996) in absentia and Smt. Kamala Rana, President, Optimum Resource Development Agency, New Delhi (1997).

Each award carries a citation, a plaque, a shawl and a cheque of Rs.11,000/-.

Shri Tarlok Singh in his acceptance speech said that the focus of adult education should be on rural areas, on scheduled castes and tribes and other backward classes and women and girls. He said that link between Universal Elementary Education (UEE) and Total Literacy was now being stressed but this, he felt, could be achieved if adequate resources were allocated for achieving both these goals.

Prof. CL Kundu in his reply said that universities must involve deeply in adult education programmes and should take into consideration particular and peculiar circumstances of the region, its clientele, its resources and means of support. This he said, places heavy emphasis on tying adult education to action programmes. He stressed that total welfare of society through appropriate training programme should be undertaken.

In her acceptance speech, Prof. Kamalini Bhansali said that empowerment was the need of the day, not only for women but for people who have no voice - dalit, common man on the street and the like. Education, she said, helped in raising these voices.

Conventional and modern technology if used wisely in the process of learning makes a difference in the lives of human beings, she said. The ultimate aim, she said, should be towards fulfilment of a learning society where continuous opportunities were provided for satisfying the potentials of an individual for diverse needs, beginning from literacy and quality of life improvement, to awareness thrusts leading to higher levels of professionalism.

Smt. Kamala Rana in her reply said that 21st century would create many new challenges for adult learners in India and the ability and skills to face these complexities could be handled if the post literates of today become middle and high school graduates in the next five years. Systematic coverage of all illiterates by volunteers, voluntary organisations and educational institutions until they were fully literate was very necessary and needs special attention at all levels. For women's literacy, Smt. Rana said that special support should be developed through health education, skill training programme and services to sustain interest in self development through education.

**Plenary Session**

In the first Plenary Session the Working Paper was presented by Shri JL Sachdeva, Director, Indian Adult Education Association. In the Working Paper the following priorities were highlighted:

The education of the semi literates, educated and the elite should receive priority in the 21st century; the programme has to be diversified and should be comprehensive in nature; the literacy education should be decentralised and Panchayat should be given complete responsibility to liquidate illiteracy; Education of the elderly have to be formulated to make life-long education a reality; Women should be empowered psychologically, economically and politically; Adult education should promote human rights and should create scientific temper; Adult education should provide education, training and retraining of workers because of the structural adjustments and globalisation of the economy.

**Suggestions**

In the discussion which followed the following suggestions were made:

- 1) Legal literacy should be an important part of the adult education programme
- 2) The age-group for adult education should be changed from 15-35 to 15-80
- 3) Research should be conducted to find out why illiteracy has not become a felt need so far
- 4) Adult education should be linked with population education
- 5) Education for self-employment should be given to adults
- 6) Real coordination is needed between governmental organisations, NGOs and universities
- 7) The adult education programme should be conducted in cooperation with ICDS
- 8) Adult education should develop self-reliance and self-confidence

The delegates were divided into six groups to discuss the following sub-themes:

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The delegates were divided into six groups to discuss the following sub-themes:

- 1) Strategies for Adult Literacy in the 21st Century
- 2) Broadening the Scope of Adult Education in the 21st Century
- 3) Adult Education for Democracy and Human Rights
- 4) Role of Adult Education in New Economic Policy
- 5) Adult Education and Empowerment of Women
- 6) Research in Adult Education - Needs and Priorities

The following six thematic workshops were also held during the conference:

- 1) Adult Learning in relation to Environment, Health and Population
- 2) Education of Senior Citizens
- 3) Education of Migrants and Tribals
- 4) Adult Education and International Cooperation
- 5) Adult Education and New Information Technologies
- 6) Continuing Education of Professionals : Role of Universities

#### **Zakir Husain Memorial Lecture**

The Zakir Husain Memorial Lecture was delivered by Prof. Siddheshwar Prasad, Governor of Tripura during the Conference. In his address he said that teachers and students should play meaningful role in imparting literacy and awareness among the masses. To check relapse into illiteracy, the provision of mobile libraries should be made.

Prof. Prasad said that oral literacy should also be promoted because it would help in promoting culture and national integration.

He said that illiteracy should be wiped at the earliest otherwise the difference between the haves and havenots, the traditional and the modern would be further widened. He emphasised the need to use television for imparting adult and non-formal education. This, he felt, would also unite the people in the progress and development of the country. Adult Education programme, he said, should promote culture as there was a big invasion from the satellite television.

Prof. BS Garg in his guest of honour address said that adult education should be relevant to the needs and aspirations of the people.

Prof. Dharm Pal in his speech said that educational institutions have to play an important role in imparting education to the people who were not coming to their portals.

Earlier, Shri KC Choudhary welcomed the chief guest.

A visit to Rishikesh and nearby places was arranged during the Conference.

A very lively cultural programme was presented by delegates on November 27 and 28. Prof. BB Mohanty anchored the programme.

**B.S. Garg**

## Towards a Learning Society\*

It is my privilege to welcome all of you on this important event of 47th All India Adult Education Conference. This welcome is all the more important as during this year we are celebrating our 50th Anniversary of Indian Independence and are standing on the gateway of 21st century. This is the time when we should take stock of what we have gained and what still remains to be done. What strategies we adopted and where we succeeded and where we could not achieve the expected results? We have purposefully selected the theme of the Conference entitled "Adult Education : Challenges for the 21st Century" so that adult educators throughout the country could think, do brainstorming and contribute to the national objective of fully literate India and a 'Learning Society'. Many of you might have gone through the proposals of the working group of the Planning Commission on Adult Education for the Ninth Five Year Plan 1997 - 2002 and the coming years will be mainly revolving around these proposals on adult education. Rapid changes are taking place demographically, sociologically, technologically and economically and new structure based on people's participation (specially the Panchayati Raj) are being built which need serious thought and consideration on the part of Adult Educators. Some of the thoughts on the important issues, I would like to share with you.

It has been fully recognised that literacy facilitates development specially in Social Sector, Health, Primary Education, Women's Development, Labour and Industry, Rural Development, Poverty Eradication and other critical areas of development. But at the same time grinding poverty is also an important factor in the success or failure of a literacy programme. Only by relating to the literacy programmes to the removal of poverty can adults be involved as their interest in literacy can be aroused by ensuring that literacy will enable them to lead a better life. Two important questions are raised in this regard - what do people want to do with their gains of literacy and social awareness? How can they be helped

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\* *Presidential Address of the Conference*

to help themselves as individuals and as groups? Satisfactory answers could be given to these questions only when adequate and meaningful opportunities are offered to them to use their gains in Literacy and Awareness. Adult educators have to initiate action in this area.

Moreover 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution has enabled the State Legislatures to endow the Panchayats with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self-government. Adult and non-formal education has been specified as one of the matters in relation to which responsibilities can be entrusted upon Panchayat for implementation of the programmes and schemes. Panchayat Raj functionaries have major role to play for mobilisation of people and effective implementation of literacy programmes in the country. Orientation and training of Panchayat Raj functionaries are under planning and implementation phase. The task before the nation is quite challenging and we all need to contribute our mite.

Social awakening and women's empowerment is an important agenda before the nation. Sex ratio decline in our country is a cause of concern and this imbalance has to be checked. Our experiences on literacy have been quite encouraging in this area. The impact of literacy on women's lives has often been dramatic. Experiences of Pudukkottai in Tamil Nadu and of Nellore in Andhra Pradesh have shown how women have been empowered at individual and collective levels as a result of their participation. In the case of Pudukkottai, rural women who participated felt a new sense of freedom as they learnt how to bicycle and this acquired physical mobility. They also acquired a new sense of ownership as many women workers in stone quarries acquired ownership rights through new constituted women's cooperatives. The implementation of 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments in Rajasthan have legitimised the status of Panchayat and urban local bodies and the overwhelming participation of women in decision-making process in these bodies has also empowered the women. Instances are not lacking when literacy programmes have activated, articulated and led the women to participate effectively. Women who attended the literacy classes have become in many cases villages Sarpanch, Block Pradhan, Zilla Parishad Pramakuh and conversation with them reveal that credit goes to literacy. However these are very few instances where literacy has worked as a vehicle for empowerment in the wider struggle against inequality and injustice in society. Through adult

education programmes in the coming years it should become a movement of social awakening and empowerment which needs active involvement, commitment and full participation. This is an enormous task before the nation and adult educators.

It is heartening to note that success of literacy campaigns in our country has been greatly due to voluntary efforts and as many as 10 million volunteers are engaged in teaching-learning process of whom 62% are women and girls. But unfortunately there has been very limited role of voluntary agencies. There has been reluctance on the part of ZSS's to involve voluntary organisations and give them a significant role. Partially this has been due to the traditional lack of confidence between the bureaucracy and the NGOs. Now under the present leadership, the working group report makes a genuine attempt by proposing a greater and larger role for voluntary agencies. The scheme of assistance to voluntary agencies is proposed to be modified and I quote from the report :-

“Major modifications proposed for the 9th Plan include the extended role of the VAs to undertake continuing education programmes for the large number of neo-literates emerging out of the TLC/PLC programmes and other targeted beneficiaries. Adequate emphasis will be given to cover primitive tribal groups and SC/ST women from the identified scheduled areas of launching the literacy related activities.

Special attention and incentives would be given to such voluntary agencies which undertake a literacy programme in the scheduled areas, financial assistance for DRU Projects, evaluation study projects and other innovative projects would be enhanced in terms of financial assistance”.

This is very encouraging development and we should accept this with greater sense of responsibility and fully complement the Government efforts. Rather I would say that Literacy, Post-Literacy and Continuing Education Programme during the next century should be a coordinated effort of all the development agencies, government structure, voluntary agencies, corporate sectors and above all a sense of commitment of all individuals.

I should also remind all that our Universities have been the temple of learning but the University Departments of Adult & Continuing Education in most cases have not been assigned the proper and dignified role which they deserve in Literacy Campaigns.

These departments in many cases also face uncertainties of continuation and I therefore plead with full determination that these departments should be further strengthened by Ministry of Human Resource Development and UGC and their expertise fully utilised in the academic pursuits as well as in implementation of the programme. At the same time I will advise the University Departments also not to sit in their own ivory towers, conducting their own researches and remaining aloof from the community but play a useful and practical role. Fortunately working group on Adult Education has recognised that most of the departments have not been able to contribute meaningfully in the literacy programme. In the 9th plan this lacuna is sought to be redressed and it is proposed to involve universities much more significantly in Continuing Education specially in providing resource support, evaluation, research and documentation on TL/PL and CE programme etc. I am happy with this positive development.

If we review the recent past we see that National Literacy Mission was established in 1988 and in 1989 unique experiment in Ernakulam District of Kerala gave us a new insight of campaign approach which was characterised by large-scale mobilisation of persons through a multifaceted communication and motivation strategy. The Ernakulam experiment, with its new multi-pronged approach came as a breath of fresh air and what began in a small, unassuming way in a few districts in Southern India has today spread into country wide campaign in 429 of India's 520 districts. Post-Literacy campaigns have been launched in 175 Districts and Continuing Education programmes in about 30 districts. When we see across our vast country, we see a hopeful sign and this is because of the flexibility of approach. The gains have been remarkable in most cases and two out of three learners are invariably women. Literacy promotion has been greatly successful among scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population.

I genuinely believe the efforts made under National Literacy Mission have been commendable at certain places. The Campaigns, as reported, have yielded certain social spin-offs and have promoted the cause of women's equality; have led to higher enrolment and retention of children in primary schools; enhanced participation in family welfare programme; greater acceptance of the message of immunization and decline in infant mortality rate; promoted social, cultural and linguistic integration and communal harmony; increased awareness on social

issues; helped to operationalise grass-root level structures like VEC's; and have resulted in a cultural revival of folk traditions.

But there are grey areas and Hindi Heartland has been lagging behind and it was found that it was difficult to make headway as the rate of literacy especially among women was very low and there was absence of voluntary efforts in these states. I am very much concerned on this issue as bulk of illiterates are in the Hindi Heartland and we all will have to devote more energy and make efforts in this direction.

As I mentioned earlier we are on the door steps of 21st century and it was a moment of soul searching when we have to resolve to strive harder for achieving the goal of learning society. I think in this direction our effort has to be that the concept of literacy adopted at the national level need fuller implementation and it should not confine only to achieving self-reliance in literacy and numeracy alone but emphasis also has to be on "becoming aware of the cause of one's deprivation and moving towards amelioration of conditions through organisations, and participation in the process of development, acquiring skills to improve the economic status and general well-being and imbibing the values of national integration, conservation of environment, women's equality, observance of small family norm etc. In other words, Adult Education concept should be fully implemented and not limited to literacy achievement only. The concept of life long learning has to be institutionalized in the system of education specially for adults. The work force need to be updated in their knowledge and skills for meeting out the demands of industry. The spread of communication media is opening new avenues for adult education specially devising programmes through distance learning techniques. Demographic changes are taking place and life expectancy has almost reached to 62 years and the senior citizens need diverse and flexible approaches to adult learning for variety of interests and activities. Education for sustainability and sustainable development is an important agenda before the nation and adult educators have to play an important role. Population and Development Education in holistic manner is a priority area and we need to devise innovative and creative programmes. These are the tasks before all of us and I am confident that fraternity of Adult Educators will be able to prove their capacities and capabilities in a coordinated manner.

Indicators lead towards optimistic approach and after reviewing the overall scenario I am also optimistic that India will be fully literate in near future and our dream of learning society will be fulfilled and we will enter in 21st century with a successful and strong scheme launched by NLM called "Continuing Education Scheme".

I feel happy that working group on Adult Education has gone to the extent of recommending cent percent financial assistance for the entire Ninth and Tenth Plan period so that states don't have difficulty in accepting the scheme. But we feel that the state and community involvement and participation is absolutely essential for the success of the programme.

This scheme seems to be a noble scheme and if implemented in real spirit, it may bring remarkable improvements at individual and community level and we will be marching towards achieving the dream of life-long learning. The key of adult learning as discussed in July 1997 in International Conference on Adult Education at Hamburg will be "Learning for all" and Life-long Learning in 21st Century as committed by us at the international forum. Our commitment is strong, our vision is clear and hopes are bright and with this spirit I welcome you all again on the eve of the 47th All India Adult Education Conference. On behalf of the Association, I assure the adult education community, our full cooperation and collaboration in all endeavours of national importance specially to literacy movement, universities, state governments, VAs and other concerned with this great nation building activity.

**J.L. Sachdeva**

## **Adult Education : Challenges for the Twenty First Century\***

Liquidation of illiteracy has received priority in adult education programmes in India because of large scale illiteracy in the country. But this over emphasis on literacy has caused a setback to the other programmes of adult education. Adult Education extends to all people in all walks of life from illiterate or semi - literate men and women at the end of scale to people who have had highly specialised or more sophisticated education at the other.

It is true that eradication of illiteracy in the country should be treated as an important objective of the adult education programme, but at the same time education of the educated is equally essential. The knowledge is growing very fast in bewildering volume and variety. It is also becoming more and more specialized. An educated person tends to relapse into ignorance and become uneducated unless he/she keeps himself/herself abreast of new knowledge.

While it will be necessary to continue literacy education for non-literates but education of the semi-literates, educated and the elite should receive equal emphasis in the twenty-first-century. Professional updating, citizenship education, empowerment of women, adult education in the new economic policy, research in adult education should receive priority in the 21st century.

The programme of adult education in the twenty-first-century has to be diversified and should be comprehensive in nature. It means that adult education should enable the community as a whole through process of social change and increased self confidence, to effectively participate in national development.

The programme should meet specific needs of different groups of learners and should consist of variety of need-based programmes. It should be continuing programme of education as the needs of learning continue to change and expand.

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\* *Working Paper of the Conference*

Some of the programmes/priorities for adult education for twenty-first century are discussed below:

### **1. Decentralization of Adult Education**

The literacy programme to give desired results has to be decentralized as visualised by National Policy on Education - 1986. The policy has emphasised the need to decentralise planning and administration process from district to village level. To make this decentralisation possible, the State Governments have to play an important role and should become active in the process and the programme of adult education should not be seen as a centrally sponsored programme. It would be ideal if democratically elected Panchayati Raj Institutions are actively involved in this programme. The Panchayats could be given complete responsibility to liquidate illiteracy in the area in which they are functioning. But to achieve this the Panchayats have to be provided technical support, funds and facilities. The smaller the area, the greater the scope for people's participation. Being a small area, the programme will also become more transparent.

With the limited resources available, it is desirable that existing institutions particularly village schools should be made the centre of activity, the fulcrum both for formal and non-formal/adult education. The schools should become community centres. It should improve the community life and should concern itself with the people, their needs, welfare, recreation and vocational education. An adult education teacher may be appointed to take care of education of out-of-school children and education of adults.

### **2. Education of the Educated**

Society is run by adults who are bread winners, the teachers, administrators and the ministers. It is they who make decisions. The quality of all the decisions made by adults directly affect the nature of our life in the present and in the future. So the provision of opportunities of education of those who have already formal education is not only desirable but a necessity.

**Continuing education** can be planned to get the following experiences:

- to learn new and necessary occupations as present skills for jobs become technologically obsolete. The knowledge explosion changes

the volume and content of knowledge so fast that the knowledge acquired during any period of life becomes incomplete and obsolete, if it is not argued and revised continuously. In progressive competitive societies, continuous replenishment of knowledge becomes a necessary condition of survival and promotion.

- to continue personal development so that every individual may further his intellectual and emotional growth throughout life.

Some Universities have started continuing education programmes but they are by and large vocational education programmes. The need is to involve all universities and other educational institutions and NGOs in the endeavour. The programmes should be both for skill development and intellectual growth.

### **3. Adult Education for Senior Citizens**

By the turn of this century there will be about 150 million senior citizens (those aged 60 and above) in India. These chronologically old require new competencies and skills to improve their quality of life. There is hardly any programme of adult education which can enrich their lives. Some developing and developed countries are organising programmes for the elderly. There are schools for the aged in China. The training programme includes courses of general, scientific and cultural knowledge, research in agriculture and "experience exchange". "U3 A" (Universities of the Third Age) programme in some European countries make older persons aware that they are still a part of society, contributor and not an intert dependent.

In the twenty-first century adult education programmes for elderly have to be formulated to make life-long education a reality by providing older people opportunities for reviewing and refreshing their knowledge and to get new experiences.

### **4. Empowerment of Women**

In order to give women their rightful positions in the main stream of national development, it is essential that they should be empowered psychologically, economically and politically.

Women are socialized to be submissive, to serve and to let the men take all major decisions. Psychological empowerment involves the reverse in the

patriarchal order of doing things. It calls for developing competence in women to make decisions at personal and societal level. It means development of self-confidence and self-esteem in women.

It has been experienced that financial dependence is one of the key sources of subordination of women. It is thus essential to provide support to them to have independent income. This could be possible if income generating activities are part and parcel of the educational programmes for women. They should also be provided financial facilities and management skills to be self-reliant.

Political empowerment mobilizes women for social change. To make women politically active, it is essential to prepare them for collective action. They should be helped to organise themselves and wherever their organisations like Mahila Mandal exist they should be strengthened. The women themselves have to organise in order to attain the required change. Through participation in their own organisations they will play an affective role in Panchayats and other legislative bodies.

The programme for women should develop an analytical and questioning mind and scientific approach to understand realities around them. In some programmes of women, the men should also be associated. It should be a mixed group. The change in the attitude of men will help the women to get a rightful place in society.

##### **5. Adult Education for Human Rights**

The first basic human right to equality is denied by our society. Adult Education has to play an important role to draw attention to this denial not only of the learners who are the victims but also those who violate this human right. The study and understanding of the 30 articles of human rights will bring home the fact that these articles are being violated.

Adult education for Human Rights should lead on to action to counter all the many violations of these rights by us, by our community and by our society. In literacy programme the developmental and anti-poverty programme should be highlighted so that beneficiaries know the various benefits and facilities which have been enacted for them and on that basis fight for rights. Similarly, in continuing education, the participants should be trained to fight against the various

discriminations in our society. Efforts should be made to strive for a society where every human being is recognised as equal in rights and dignity.

#### **6. Creation of Scientific Temper**

Adult Education in the next century has to take science and technology to the common people. Practical aspects of the science in common man's day-to-day life should have to be brought home to the people in rural and urban areas so that a scientific temper, a spirit of enquiry is created for upliftment of the people steeped in superstitions. Universities, NGOs and Educational Institutions have to play a significant role in this direction. The need is to provide adequate support for such programmes so that the message of scientific temper reaches the masses.

#### **7. Adult Education in Global Market Economy**

In the new economic policy, structural adjustments are being made. This has put many out of jobs due to modernization and automation. Adult Education has now to play wider role. It should meet the emerging demand for education, training and retraining of people so that they are in a position to face the competitive labour market.

Unemployment and under employment particularly in the rural sector constitute the largest group in the weaker sections of society. Adult education should provide skill development and income generating programmes for them. This would be possible if the network of Shramik Vidyapeeths is expanded and there is a Shramik Vidyapeeth at the Block Level. The rural masses in addition to skill development programmes have also to be provided entrepreneurial skills so that they opt for self employment rather than hunting for jobs. This will also check the migration from rural to urban areas which is becoming a great health hazard and an environmental problem.

The workers in the unorganised sector in the urban areas should also be provided opportunities in training and upgrading the technical and vocational skills so as to improve the quality of their life. They have to be organised to withstand the exploitation from vested interests. They should be helped to be self-reliant so as to solve their own problems.

**8. Involvement of other Ministries/departments in adult education**

The responsibility for control and administration of adult education by and large remains with the Education Department of the Ministry of Human Resource Development. To give adult education a wider role, the other Ministries should also share responsibility. In Thailand most ministries have responsibilities for atleast one component of adult education.

The Task Force on Adult Education and Out-of-School Education appointed by the Planning Commission for Fifth Five Year Plan had recommended that two per cent of the expenditure on all developmental activities should be set apart for the education and training of the beneficiaries. This suggestion was a significant one and should be reconsidered if adult education is to be implemented in wider perspective in the twenty- first-century. Adult education will thus become concern of many ministries/departments of the Government of India and not only of Human Resource Development.

**9. Research in Adult education**

Adult Education has been undergoing tremendous change in terms of policy, programme and practice during the last two decades. These changes at many a times have been undertaken without sufficient feedback from the field. The evaluation studies have been undertaken for some projects but the suggestions, recommendations of these studies have not been taken into considerations while designing the new programme.

The adult education programme is directly related to people and their problems. It can promote self reliance among the people and in solving their problems. But these could be solved effectively if action and applied researches are available. The quality and effectiveness of adult education programme depends to a large extent on research and investigation by which it is backed. It is research which can develop alternative models for adult education including literacy. Research alone can give answers to many questions and better insights into problems relating to adult education. Adult education programme in 21st century should have explicit policy of promoting emperical researches in adult education. The researches should cover the broader aspect of adult education and not only confined to literacy/post literacy programmes.

Research should be conducted at all levels. It should not be responsibility of the Universities alone. Grass root level organisations should also undertake applied and action researches for which they should be provided the necessary training and the financial assistance.

To sum up, the adult education programme should meet the specific needs of all sections of society including non-literates, neo-literates, semi-literates and the educated. But it should ensure larger participation of the weaker sections including women in the process of development and decision making. Adult Education should empower the poorest of the poor.

## **Presentation of Nehru and Tagore Literacy Awards**

### **NEHRU LITERACY AWARDS**

**1996**

*Citation in honour of*

**Shri Tarlok Singh**

Shri Tarlok Singh, educationist, economist, and policy planner has a long and distinguished career of over six decades in planning, development and promotion of adult education in the country.

Born on February 26, 1913 Shri Tarlok Singh has a long and distinguished career of service. He was Director-General of Rehabilitation in Punjab. He was Jawaharlal Nehru's first Private Secretary during 1946-47.

He was closely associated with the Planning Commission during 1950-67 and was intimately connected with preparation of India's Five Year Plans. He was its Member during 1962-67.

Shri Tarlok Singh was Fellow and Visiting Professor at the Stockholm University Institute for International Economic Studies, Visiting Research Economist at the Princeton University, Woodrow Wilson School for Public and International Affairs. He served as Deputy Executive Director for Planning with UNICEF in New York.

He has been closely associated with All India Committee on Eradication of Illiteracy among Women since its establishment in 1984. He has worked extensively on the role of adult education in reducing poverty and in bringing social change.

Shri Tarlok Singh was the first Chairman of the Indian Association of Social Science Institutions during 1978-81 and has since served as Chairman of its Programme Committee and is the Editor of its interdisciplinary social science journal 'IASSI Quarterly.'

Shri Tarlok Singh is a prolific writer and has written comprehensively on education, poverty and social change.

In appreciation and recognition of his incredible services to the cause of adult education, the Indian Adult Education Association feels honoured in presenting him the Nehru Literacy Award for 1996.

**1997**

*Citation in honour of*

**Prof. C.L. Kundu**

The Nehru Literacy Award has been instituted by the Indian Adult Education  
*Indian Journal of Adult Education* Oct.-Dec. 1997

Association to recognise and honour the distinguished contribution whether of individuals or institutions towards the removal of illiteracy and promotion of adult and continuing education among adults.

The Award for the year 1997 is being presented to Prof. C.L.Kundu for his outstanding contribution in promotion and development of adult education in the country.

Born on October 1, 1936, Prof Kundu obtained Masters Degrees in Psychology and Education and Doctor of Philosophy.

Prof.Kundu has a long and distinguished career of service. He was Principal, University College of Education, Kurukshetra, was Head, Department of Education, Kurukshetra University, Dean, Faculty of Education at the same University. He was also Honorary Director, Centre for Adult, Continuing Education and Extension, Kurukshetra University. He is at present Vice-Chancellor, Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla.

He has the distinction of producing for the first time modules for numeracy and jurisprudential method of generating awareness in the literacy programme.

Prof Kundu was Visiting Professor in the Department of Adult and Continuing Education, University of Cincinnati, USA, Visiting Fellow, University of Jerusalem, Israel and Visiting Fellow, National Institute of Community Education, Flint, Michigan, USA.

He was appointed National Lecturer, Adult Education by University Grants Commission, was Fulbright Fellow, United States Educational Foundation in India. He was awarded Flint Michigan (USA) Award for conducting leadership training programmes of persons from United States and other parts of the world in community education.

He was Member, Standing Committee, UGC, represented UGC on Adult Education Advisory Committees of a number of Universities, was National Evaluator of Adult Education Programme in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh.

Prof Kundu has directed, coordinated and participated in various Conferences, Seminars and Workshops on Adult and Continuing Education.

He has undertaken and guided various research studies in adult education. Prof Kundu has written extensively on adult education.

The Indian Adult Education Association, therefore feels, honoured and privileged in presenting him the Nehru Literacy Award for the year 1997.

## **TAGORE LITERACY AWARDS**

**1996**

*Citation in honour of*

**Prof. Kamalini H. Bhansali**

The Tagore Literacy Award was instituted by the Indian Adult Education Association in 1987 to honour the special contribution of individuals or institutions

towards the eradication of illiteracy and promotion of continuing education among women of this country.

The Award for the year 1996 is being presented to Prof. Kamalini H. Bhansali for her outstanding contribution in promoting continuing education and life-long learning among women.

Born on February 20, 1926 Prof. Bhansali took her Masters Degree in Education and B.A. (Hons.) Degree in Economics from the University of Bombay.

Prof. Bhansali started her career as a teacher in New Era School, Bombay (1948-52). She was Inspectress of Primary Schools, Bombay Municipal Corporation (1952-60); She became Registrar, SNDT Women's University (1960-86) and rose to the position of Vice-Chancellor of the same university (1986-89). At present she is Professor Emritus in Non-formal Education, SNDT University.

She was President, Indian Association of Women Studies, New Delhi; Member of the Standing Committee on Adult, Continuing Education and Extension Studies, University Grants Commission; Member, Academic Council, University of Bombay; Member, Syndicate of the Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore.

Prof. Bhansali has coordinated, directed many national and international conferences, seminars and workshops. She has also visited many countries to study adult and continuing education and development programmes.

A prolific writer, she has written extensively on adult, continuing and life long education and women studies.

In recognition of her valuable services to the cause of adult and continuing education for women, the Indian Adult Education Association feels privileged in presenting her the Tagore Literacy Award for 1996.

## **1997**

### ***Citation in honour of***

#### **Smt. Kamala Rana**

The Tagore Literacy Award was instituted by the Indian Adult Education Association in 1987 to honour the special contribution of individuals and institutions towards the eradication of illiteracy and promotion of adult and continuing education among women of this country.

The Award for 1997 is being presented to Smt. Kamala Rana for her pioneering work in integrating literacy with rural development for women in the country.

Born on May 18, 1930 Smt. Rana got her Masters Degree in Social Work from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, specialising in community organisation and personnel management. She earlier obtained Bachelor of Arts and Law Degrees from University of Delhi.

Smt. Rana started her career as Chief Social Worker in Indian Cooperative Union as incharge of five Community Welfare Projects in Delhi and made 5000 women literate in five years. She integrated medical services, vocational training, crafts in literacy programme. She was UNICEF Project Officer for India during 1983-90 and was incharge of all programmes of women and children in rural areas, Social Input on Area Development (SIAD) and Education for Women and Girls in Punjab, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chandigarh and Delhi.

She has organised and participated in a number of national and international conferences, seminars, workshops including a seminar on Functional Literacy/Family Life Education of seven countries of South-East Asia. Smt Rana has also worked as a resource person for literacy projects in Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia.

She has provided consultancy and resource support to many organisations. She is President, Optimum Development Resource Agency, former Consultant UNICEF, Girls Education, Consultant CASP/PLAN India Projects.

Smt. Rana has written comprehensively on Adult Education for Women.

The Indian Adult Education Association feels privileged and honoured in presenting her the Tagore Literacy Award for the year 1997.

## **Acceptance Speeches**

**TARLOK SINGH**

I have first to express my deep regret over not being personally present in the annual conference of the Indian Adult Education Association.

In August 1996, when the conferment of the Nehru Literacy Award was first mentioned to me, I felt taken aback. Not having been directly associated with field activities, such a thought had never entered my mind.

I remembered how, late in 1937, when I first entered public service in Hoshiarpur district in the Punjab, news of the early pioneers of the adult education movement had reached us. A few of us, two lawyers, a doctor, a professor in the local DAV College, and a gifted District Panchayat Officer, who later rose to be Vice-Chancellor of the Punjab University in Lahore, got together and formed an *Ilam Parchar Society* or *Mass Education Society*. We soon found willing volunteer teachers, and set up three night centres for literacy, one in the Balmiki Mohalla, a second in the local Islamia School, and the third in the Congress House. After some nine months of work, as I was due to move to another district, at my request, the

Municipal Committee in Hoshiarpur agreed to take over the three night centres. Thereafter, I got immersed in other work in other districts.

When I came to prepare a book on *India's Development Experience*, which was published by Macmillan in 1974, it was with a certain sense of shock that I realised how far we had fallen behind imparting literacy to our people, specially in the rural areas, to women and girls, and to scheduled castes and tribes. I noted this as an area of serious failure in all the Planning which had engaged us through the years. I began to ponder how this failure came to occur. What were the roots of this failure?

Undoubtedly, at each stage in development, there is a constraint in resources. An objective like literacy called for a basic choice in terms of priorities. How and why did we fail to make such a choice? I asked myself again and again.

I recalled that around 1950, when we began our work in planning, the air was filled with emphasis on social education. Even as late as the Third Plan, social education was being stressed as the main requirement. It was given a wide connotation. Social education implied an all-comprehensive programme of community uplift through community life. It comprised literacy, health, recreation and home life of adults, training in citizenship and guidance in improving economic efficiency. It was held out as the key to the success of planned development in a democracy. It was noted that in several directions there had been a measure of progress, as in the development of community centres, reading rooms in villages, organisation of youth groups and mahila mandals, and revitalisation of village panchayats and the cooperative movement. The village school, the village panchayat, and the cooperative were described as the three pillars of democracy. The main financial provisions for social education were made through the schematic budget for community development.

Within a few years, under the impact of pressing problems like food shortage, and the introduction of hybrid varieties of seeds, community development itself weakened and social organizers were dropped. The literacy rates reported in the 1961 census were already beginning to cause concern, but we failed to confront the problem boldly enough.

Another crucial decision was made early in the First Plan. This was the stage for giving absolute priority to elementary education for the age-group upto 14 as envisaged in the Directive in the Constitution. This would have limited the growth of illiteracy in the future. Again, serious food shortages and prevalence of inflation led to a different view of priorities.

In the mid-fifties with the pressure for larger numbers of technical personnel, in keeping with the needs of new industries, then under active considerations, the decision was taken to concentrate on the 6-11 group, and leave over the 11-14 groups to continuation schools. However, while losing an organic view of the entire period of 6-14 years, little was done to create the necessary continuation facilities.

Thus, with the growth of population, the total number of illiterates increased

year by year before our very eyes. Enrolment figures and numbers of increase in primary schools, largely ill-equipped, were deceptive. The large numbers of drop-outs and the extent of wastage were noted, but communities were not mobilised to tackle these problems. We failed to grapple with the problem of illiteracy until towards the close of the decade of the seventies through the launching of the National Adult Education Programme. Soon this too came up against political difficulties.

Some years later, around 1988, establishment of the National Literacy Mission came as a breath of fresh air. Soon, a new issue was raised, whether the 'centre approach' as it was called, was not too slow, too uncertain to yield the needed results. After the Ernakulam experience in Kerala, reliance came to be placed more and more on Collectors of districts and measures for creating greater awareness. The entire Total Literacy Campaign came to be highly centralised. The planning, coordinating and supervisory role of State Governments was minimised. Districts and District Committees came to be dealt with directly from the centre. The choice of voluntary organisations to be associated with TLC became somewhat arbitrary. Large numbers of voluntary organisations, which had been listed in a Directory published in 1986 were left to their own devices. Undoubtedly, major results had to come from Government initiatives. Voluntary organisations had a large qualitative role of their own. This was now allowed to suffer.

Extensive involvement of voluntary organisations as in Gujarat is an exception. The errors of the Total Literacy Campaign are now being slowly corrected. The effort to realise 'targets' in too short a time has been accompanied by poor planning on the ground, without sufficient relation to actual conditions in different parts of a district and among different groups. A much more flexible approach allowing sufficient time and not insisting on achieving 'targets' all too quickly would have been better. Much of the statistical information now being given about the fulfilment of 'targets' may before long prove to be deceptive and a considerable relapse into 'illiteracy' is not unlikely in many districts. Nor have post-literacy programmes been yet given a solid, continuing base.

These and other aspects have been for me a constant cause of concern and, over the past years, in many written contributions, I have tried to draw attention to the potential risks in the TLC approaches as they have operated in practice.

I have pleaded for a critical look by leaders of voluntary organisations associated with the Indian Adult Education Association, so that with all the energy and the initiations that have gone into the Total Literacy Campaign, and these are to be fully appreciated, we have a more solid and sure base as we advance to the end of the century.

It is fortunate that the link between Universal Elementary Education and Total Literacy is now being once again stressed. However, the resources actually allocated for both these goals are the only real test of priority actually given to them. In view of past failures and diversions, we need to be ever more wary and vigilant. Errors and omissions which have injured progress in the past should not allow to persist or

be repeated. The main goals should not be obscured, other essential ingredients should be built into them, and the focus kept continually on rural areas, on scheduled castes and tribes and other backward classes, and on women and girls.

On this occasion, while conveying my profound gratitude to the Indian Adult Education Association, and wishing it all success in its labours, I can only share my present anxieties, and urge upon the dedicated workers associated with it to play a still larger role in national and state and local planning in laying a strong base for future efforts in eradicating illiteracy and assuring continuing education and provision of universal elementary education for the entire 6-14 group.

**C.L. KUNDU**

I am, indeed, grateful to Indian Adult Education Association for considering me fit enough to receive the Nehru Literacy Award for 1997. Indeed, I feel honoured, humbled and flattered. With deep gratitude, I acknowledge today my first tutor in Adult Education, Late Sh. S.C. Dutta, former General Secretary of Indian Adult Education Association who initiated me to Adult Education when I was Professor & Dean, Faculty of Education at Kurukshetra University in a Conference held at Panjabi University, Patiala in the year 1978.

According to Toynbee, a civilization survives only so long as it makes adequate response to the challenges of its time. In the slowly changing cultures, much of the learning that one needs to adapt to his cultural and physical environment can take place in the years of childhood and youth. Further, learning that is necessary can be acquired incidentally during a normal lifetime. Beyond this, the amount and nature of learning required depend largely upon the rapidity of change in the outer world. When major changes occur in the physical or cultural environment, man must adjust to them. He must learn or perish. By learning and using the educational process throughout his life, man can (1) assure maximum personal development, (2) learn how to control the products and processes of science and technology maximally for his own benefit, and (3) perfect his ability to live democratically in all areas of human relationship.

The Constitution of India conceives of extending the education facilities to all. We are, however, nowhere near our objectives even after five decades of independence. A very large segment of the population is still far outside the conceived goal. Over the years, the number of illiterates has increased. The situation in some states, indeed, is alarming. Although the universalisation of primary education is an absolute necessity, the dropouts need educational care and facilities. Even from the utility angle, these adults can be provided with skills for self-directed learning leading to self-activated reliance in their own potentialities as human beings, and to

facilitate them to play an active role in their own development. This makes the magnitude of the problem more pronounced, and demands propitious action.

Adult education is not an alternative; it is a necessity. Ignorance and poverty are two fundamental problems. Ignorance is directly related to illiteracy. And illiteracy breeds poverty, thus there is a definite correlation between illiteracy and poverty. It is in this context of our economic, political and social goals of development that we consider the legitimate role of adult education.

One of the serious concerns, to my mind is a pressing need to improve the teaching of adult educator, but there are difficulties and uncertainties concerning the way of defining and meeting this need. The systematisation, regulation and control found in regular, school oriented teacher education is lacking, and is unlikely to come into being. The UNESCO International Conference on Adult Education described mobilising and training sufficient professional personnel as the biggest challenge facing adult education. The UNESCO Recommendation on the development of Adult Education that : "training for adult education should, as far as practicable, include all those aspects of skill, knowledge, understanding, and personal attitude which are relevant to the various functions undertaken, taking into account the general background against which adult education takes place. By integrating these aspects with each other, training should itself be a demonstration of sound adult education practice." The challenge in India is serious and demands immediate attention.

The training of adult educators is obviously hampered by the high proportion of voluntary and part-time personnel not easily available or amenable to training, and some uncertainty as to where the priority belongs. Some emphasise upon updating the subject matter being taught, while others suggest that higher priority be given to teaching and learning processes; some emphasize the development of a leading cadre of professional adult educators while others consider that the larger number of "grass-roots" part-time teachers should attract the main attention. Some stress conceptual understanding of the field, others practical skills of instructions, others again the largely intangible personal qualities of empathy and rapport which are held to distinguish the best adult educators. However, it is generally assumed that the content of educational and training programmes for adult educators in India varies greatly according to the situation, circumstances and presumed needs of those being trained as well as the length of time available for training. Here, I would suggest that : a sound philosophic conception of adult education based on a consideration of its major aims and issues and embodying convictions concerning the basic values which it should seek to achieve; and understanding of the psychological and social foundations on which all education particularly adult education rests; " an understanding of the development, scope and complexity of the specific agency or programme in which he works and the broad field of adult education. an ability to undertake and direct the basic processes of education : the refinement of objectives; the selection and use of methods and contents; the training

of leaders; the provision of guidance and counselling; the promotion of programmes; the co-ordination and supervision of activities, and the evaluation of results; personal effectiveness and leadership in working with other individuals, with groups, and with the general public; and a constant concern with the continuance of his own education throughout life”, may also be kept in view. In my perception training is a continuous process starting with initial training to provide a “first-aid kit” and followed by inservice training. Here, it is suggested that University must involve deeply in adult education programmes, of course, particular and peculiar circumstances of the region, the nature of the Institution, its clientele, its resources and means of support will fashion the final decisions. We must gear our programmes and thoughts more to meeting the social needs of the area and clientele we serve. This places heavy emphasis on tying Adult Education to action programmes. The University as an agency for research and training, as cultural repository, as a source of new ideas and way of doing things has no parallel. We have to do something for the total welfare of the society through appropriate training programmes.

**KAMALINI H. BHANSALI**

I feel very privileged to be the recipient of the Tagore Literacy Award, 1996 instituted by the Indian Adult Education Association in 1987, recognising individuals and institutions who have made significant contribution towards promotion of adult education among women, thus helping them improve their social and economic status.

Before me, nine tall people in the field of adult education have been honoured with the above Award on International Literacy Day. Following in their foots steps, I feel doubly honoured.

The Indian Adult Education Association, established in 1939, has done yeomen service to the cause of adult education in the country, sparing no effort of getting it recognised as an essential component of development. Its sphere of action has various dimensions and its major thrusts are as a forum of sharing, disseminating information and networking; offering opportunities for academic dialogues and lobbying; supporting projects and studies; building links between national and international bodies; recognising eminence in the field through the Nehru and Tagore Awards. In the coming years the Association will have to add new facets to match new needs.

My priority being women’s education it came naturally to me to focus on adult and continuing education as a means of empowering women from grass root to managerial level. It was in the 1970s that I was inducted in this alternative stream of education by stalwards like Dr. MOHAN SINHA MEHTA, DR. D.S.KOTHARI and later influenced by the philosophy of Dr. MADHURI SHAH. Since then I have not

looked back. SNDT Women's University a pioneering and service oriented institution was among the first few Universities in the country to set up a Department of Continuing Education in 1971, which has played a leadership role in promoting the third dimension.

Adult Education in India has over a century old history and has witnessed many transformations, both conceptually and operationally. The first major effort in the later decades of the last century was through starting of night schools, followed by Gokhale's Bill of Free and Compulsory Elementary Education in 1912 at the Viceroy's Council, introduction of private studies for women by Karve at the SNDT Indian Women's University founded in 1916, appointment of Adult Education Commission in the 1930s and the establishment of the Adult Education Association in 1939. These efforts were enriched through innovative experiments, to name a few, Basic Education and productive work, the Karma marg of Mahatma Gandhi, the Lokshiksha, the constructive work of village welfare programme by Tagore to rouse the villages atmashakti; education project of Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad for the masses and in recent years, the non-formal education, Open School and Open University Programmes. At the higher education level, the University Grants Commission in its landmark policy frame in 1977 accepted extension as the third dimension equal to teaching and research and 103 Universities have established Departments of Adult and Continuing Education and Extension Work. In 1978 the National Adult Education Programme was launched, the 1986 National Policy on Education and the Rammurti Committee's review report pledged to eradicate illiteracy; 1988 saw the establishment of the National Literacy Mission, a societal mission visualised as a people's movement, followed by total literacy campaigns.

Notwithstanding the above strides, 1991 census revealed that 302.41 million people in India were illiterate, of whom 195.64 million (60.8%) were women, In some of the most of backward States, literacy rate of women was hardly 20% and much less in the case of tribals and dalits. Even in this decade, there are villages, where not a single woman is literate. This is a serious handicap the country is facing, even after 50 years of independence, which is a violation of the country's commitment of democratic values. Statistics are depressing but a sensitivity to educating this half of the population is growing, particularly through the efforts of Committee and Commissions on Women at national and international levels, the most recent being the Cairo and Beijing Conferences. If the rapid progress of women is to be achieved, the commitments of these bodies need to be translated into reality. The Jomtien Declaration of Education for All too has focussed on the education of girls and women.

The objectives of higher education are shifting. The Ninth Plan National goal for higher education is sustainable development with equity and social justice. For the first time the UGC Working Group on Higher Education for the Ninth Plan has devoted a full Chapter to "University and Social Change" covering two important areas of adult and continuing education and women's studies. In order to empower women it is necessary that both these sectors

work closely and achieve sustainable adult education by combining human and technical development. In the light of this background what should be our vision for adult learning in the 21st Century?

In a fast changing world, facing fresh challenges of growing numbers, India, becoming one of the most populous in the next century, shifting population with a 'greying' nation, emerging newer economic and trade demands, exposure to fast track technologies, particularly in respect of information and electronic communication and many more, non-formal education will be the most sought after alternative for the future. Continuing education in this scenario becomes a tool of learning throughout life, central to the home, to the work place and to the community, offering a second or even a third chance, substantiating Aristotle's thought process. "To learn is a natural pleasure, not confined to philosophers but common to all."

The Fifth International Conference on Adult Education, recently held in Hamburg, Germany, has chalked out an agenda for the future, touching various facets, emphasising literacy as a human right advocating that in order to make lifelong learning a cultural pattern, one hour a day should be set aside for learning, particularly by girls and women and work places should offer this opportunity.

Empowerment is the need of the day, not only for women but for people who have no voice—dalits, common man on the street and the like. Education helps in raising these voices. The Delors Commission's Report published by UNESCO, "Learning : The Treasure Within" has identified the four pillars of education, Learning to know, Learning to Do, Learning to Live Together and Learning to Be, which can be taken up as a framework for rebuilding education. The report further points out that the concept of learning throughout life will be the key which will give access to the 21st Century. Knowledge is for everybody's service, but in the search of knowledge one has to keep running—running continuously to update, upgrade and widen horizons digging the "treasures" as deeply as possible for maximum gains. On the other hand Universities and Institutions need to keep their doors open, allowing the wind to blow freely, giving opportunities to individuals to walk in and walk out. Particularly women need to be equipped to meet the challenges of life through several options, structures and opening of new fields of learning so that they can pursue their education within their role responsibilities in their own time.

Conventional as well as modern technology if used wisely as a process of learning makes a difference in the lives of human beings. I am tempted to cite two examples of success stories which can be considered as Demonstration Projects.

Mass literacy campaigns can be made exciting as proved by the unique and imaginative experiment conducted in Pudukkottai in Tamil Nadu. Here an innovative use of cycle for women coupled with the official effort and people's determination made women empowered and at the same time helped them to be on the move.

Founder of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh who promoted the concept of micro-loans for small business has now touched a novel way of using Cellular

Phones to benefit village-level micro-enterprise. Cellular phone is considered an elitist technology but it is converted into a technology to empower people. He has launched a project Grameen Phone Company in Dhaka and proposes to give at least one cellular phone in each of the country's 65,000 villages in the next six years thus linking them to the outside world and the same time enabling the phone holder to be a small business venture through setting up a public office. This strategy will help to serve poor people to better their quality of life.

These are isolated projects but slowly gaining global attention for replication for their innovative approach.

On this occasion, I urge the Indian Adult Education Association to aim towards fulfillment of a learning society where continuous opportunities are provided for satisfying the potentials of an individual for diverse needs, beginning from literacy and basic education to equivalence and career oriented programmes, citizenship education and quality of life improvement, to awareness thrusts leading to higher levels of professionalism. On our part, let us work with courage and conviction and move towards the dream of making educational institutions the "main meeting places" of learning throughout life. Let us not forget our responsibility as educated citizens to spread the light of learning which will, in fact, be enriching the lives of all involved in this process.

The True is the ancient sanskrit saying (translated) :

"Oh Goddess of Learning : Your treasure is unique. It increases when spent and decreases when stored."

I am grateful to the Indian Adult Education Association, its President Shri B.S. Garg, and the panel of Experts who nominated me for this prestigious award.

**KAMALA RANA**

It is an unforgettable moment in my life to receive the Tagore Literacy Award. I am honoured and privileged that the Indian Adult Education Association selected me for this Award.

I received my earliest inspiration from my mother Sushila Sharma who taught me the need to be self reliant, independent and dedicated in whatever I did in life. She said "It is very easy to get married and raise a family. What is most important is utilising your life by serving the community. Become a dedicated person and earn a name in society for your services." That was 1938, 1940 and even later my father a medical practitioner by profession was a regular donor to the Indian Adult Education Association. These two inspired me deeply.

Inspired by Dr. (Mrs.) Welthy Fisher, founder of Literacy House and a close associate of hers for over 20 years, I was able to see the most deprived sections of

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Society at close quarters in rural Uttar Pradesh. Initiated several women's cooperatives making literacy an essential part of learning also formed a Health Cooperative for Mehrauli Block I had the privilege to work closely with Kamla Devi Chattopadhyay, Durgabai Deshmukh, and L.C Jain-in many significant Literacy Projects. I am grateful to them and my family for strengthening my efforts.

A unique opportunity came to me when I was able to organise an International Seminar for Seven countries i.e. Afghanistan, Iran, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Nepal, and India to crystallise the concept of Functional Literacy and Family Life Education. After that event each of these countries developed National Projects. Thereafter, I organised two workshops both for development of objectives and Plans of Action through Literacy House, Lucknow for the Hindi speaking states and through Andhra Mahila Sabha, Hyderabad for the Southern states. Through these specific planning workshops my future efforts to integrate literacy with other developmental issues became clearer and more meaningful in the lives of illiterate group in the country. I designed special projects and materials for women in Bhartiya Grameen Mahila Sangh, Indore, Y.W.C.A of India for Tamil Nadu and participated as a resource person in the material preparation exercise for Functional Literacy for Regional Resource Centre, Chandigarh including the states of Haryana, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. During the U.N. International Conference in Mexico city, I had the honour to be selected on the six member Literacy Panel to represent Asia.

During my years in UNICEF I had the opportunity to integrate literacy for the first time in all programmes for women in Jammu & Kashmir through development of literacy material in Urdu for Kashmiri women, as well as Literacy Projects in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Himachal, Haryana and Punjab. Special attention among the poverty alleviation programmes, was given to DWCRA (Development of Women & Children in Rural Areas) SIAD (Social Inputs in Area Development) and education related to safe drinking water, health education, sanitation and Girls Education under UPE.

I feel very concerned at the slow progress under NLM. This is a matter of grave consequences for the future development of India. Corrective steps and new strategies need to be developed immediately. For planning the unit for NLM is the District. A close knit linkage has to be effectively developed right upto each village for an honest appraisal of what the country has achieved so far not in numbers but in raising the comprehension level of illiterate people, and their ability to become independent in handling their lives.

A large section of deprived members of the community are left out. We have to reach them in their habitat for they comprise the 40% below poverty line who have still not been able to utilise the services of the TLC volunteers. So systematic coverage of all illiterates by volunteers, voluntary organisations, and educational institutions until they are fully literate is very necessary and needs special attention of NLM at all levels.

Village and Mohalla are the unit for planning, implementation, evaluation and reinforcement of post literacy and C.E. Plan big and act small is best illustrated

in a point that Tagore made in the "Swadeshi Samraj".

"I cannot take responsibility for the whole of India. I wish to win only one or two small villages. We have to enter their minds to acquire strength to work in collaboration with them. That is not easy and requires austere self-discipline. If I can only free one or two villages from the bonds of ignorance and weakness, there will be built on a tiny scale, an ideal for the whole of India".

What needs deep reflection and action in NLM and all over the country by Adult Educators is to understand that

- Sincere commitment and action alone will bring results worth mentioning and for that sincerity at all levels is important. Literacy is not a task but a mission.
- That learning is a process of personal growth and understanding about several aspects of life. It takes time and patience to get internalised in a person.
- The 21st century will create many new challenges for adult learners in India and the ability and skills to face these complexities can be handled if the post literates of today become middle /high school graduates in the next five years.
- Therefore open schools with suitable syllabus should be an extension of NLM if the majority of people knowing only 3R's are to survive at all.
- Methods of education through radio, T.V. and newspapers especially devised for people with limited skills to enhance their learning/educational standards have to be adopted for every region/state at suitable intervals.
- Professionally trained volunteers for educating every one beyond post literacy have to be prepared in every block to cope with the frustration of those who are eager to learn more but are not yet ready to be on their own. This is the most frustrating and dangerous situation which needs to be understood and solved to let people go into 21st century with confidence and determination as educated people, and not as groups left in the wilderness of ignorance.

Rising population of India is reaching an alarming size. Research studies have established a strong negative co-relation between female illiteracy on the one hand and fertility and infant mortality on the other. Analysis of 15 major states accounting for 90% of the total population of the country shows that women's literacy and education are positively associated with low population growth rate. An urgent need for India. Two crucial steps for women's literacy are

- Timeliness of the phase beyond Post literacy and its completion by especially trained women volunteers with support from other developmental agencies.
- Special support developed through health education and skill training programme and services to sustain interest in self-development through education.

I thank the Indian Adult Education Association once again for giving me this prestigious Award. I still have to work for a more literate India and like Robert Frost I would like to say I have 'miles to go before I sleep'.

## Group Reports

### GROUP I

#### *Strategies for Adult Literacy in the 21st Century*

**Chairman : Dr. K. Sivadasan Pillai**  
**Rapporteurs : Dr. V. Reghu**  
**Smt. Jaya Arya**

The group felt that several strategies are necessary for Adult Literacy Programme in India for the 21st Century. As a country we were not able to achieve even one percent literacy growth (in a year) after 1947. Based on our past experience we need total involvement of the Government, people and the whole system in strengthening literacy programme. The following recommendations were made by the group:

- Formal Educational Institutions will have to play an effective role in strengthening the Non-Formal Education Programmes.
- The materials used for literacy needs some change. Studies are necessary to modify the present primers (1 to 3) according to the social needs and necessities. It may even be made a Single Primer incorporating all the essential components including literacy, numeracy, legal literacy, population awareness, environment education, etc.
- Universities will have to take specific roles in supporting the literacy programmes. Training of functionaries, monitoring, evaluation, research etc. are some of the areas where universities can take a leadership role.
- Volunteers in TLC has limitations. It is better to provide financial support to functionaries involved in Literacy Programmes in all sectors namely G.O.s, N.G.Os, Semi Governmental organisations, Universities/Colleges etc.
- Multifaceted approach is necessary for eradication of illiteracy. Centre based approach, small group approach, each one teach 1/2/3/4/5 approach etc. are also recommended according to the needs of the area.
- Specific efforts may be made to improve the literacy status of women in the country. (Special programmes for women are also suggested if found necessary).
- Coordination of literacy programmes (at all levels) is very important in

the successful organisation of Adult Literacy. Village/Block/Taluk/Dist./ State level coordination is essential for achieving the goals. Inter-departmental agency coordination is also important.

- Literacy programmes for the future is to be made more functional/life touching. Post Literacy and Continuing Education Programmes should be built into all on-going and future programmes.
- Training input, Monitoring & Evaluation of Literacy Programme needs special attention. Necessary steps are to be taken to link them with field level realities.
- The Managers of the programmes will have to study lessons from experiments and research studies conducted in the area for improving the whole situation.
- Motivation and Environment creation etc. are to be seen as a continuous process.
- Every effort be made through G.Os and N.G.Os for securing total literacy in India at the earliest, preferably by 2005.
- Modern and folk media relevant to each area may have to be fully utilized for environment creation, programme management, dissemination of success stories and ways of tackling difficulties encountered, monitoring, evaluation and follow-up.
- Suitable model at the national level may have to be evolved with provisions for adoption with necessary modifications according to local needs and conditions.
- Studies/Researches are necessary in the following areas to strengthen the literacy programme :
  - Organisational structure of the programme.
  - Materials approved for TLC and their impact.
  - Monitoring and Evaluation systems followed in TLC.
  - Environment creation and motivation of learners.
  - Actual Teaching - Learning process.

## **GROUP II**

### ***Broadening the Concept of Adult Education in the 21st Century***

**Chairman : Prof. S.P. Ahluwalia**  
**Rapporteurs : Shri Shahzad Hussain**  
**Shri J.S. Chauhan**

The group discussed the issue in the light of existing scenario. The present definition of Adult Education which includes adult education in the context of literacy, social awareness and functionality requires immediate attention of the adult educators, educationists and policy makers as there is a sea change in the Indian context. The programme must address to the problems of the millions of illiterates, semi-literates

and neo-literates. The all round development—physical, social, psychological and economic as well as spiritual should be initiated through adult education.

There is a need for a clear cut definition of literacy. The IAEA being apex body should formulate/coin such a definition.

There has been too much multiplicity in the implementation of the programme due to which it has lost its actual colour. There are too many programmes for the same 'clientele' — there must be qualitative improvement in adult education programme with total coordination of all other agencies/departments. Literacy alone can't change everything in the fast changing scenario. It can work as a catalyst.

What they learn, they can't practice. There is lot of exploitation and this situation must be looked into. Implementing agencies should ensure change in social structure and the value system must be conducive for neo-literates (neo-literates facing problems at Blocks, Courts, Police Stations in getting their problems solved).

Improvement in present monitoring system be made. It should be more reliable in the coming century. People should be made liable and responsible. Sense of commitment, patriotism, communal harmony, health issues, women empowerment should be the core issues to be adhered to in broadening the concept. The adult education should invariably include vocationalization in its definition. The age group 15-35 which was decided long long ago owing to the then circumstances be changed/reviewed as elderly people especially 55+ need special care from all of us. The life expectancy has increased to 60+ years and there is large chunk of aged citizens who need our mental/physical/spiritual support. The adult education definition should include them also.

It may be summed up as:

1. The present definition of adult education although broadly covers development of adults be further broadened and must include everything for the total development of the adults.
2. The vocational training be considered indispensable part of adult education.
3. The Basic Literacy be strengthened further and strategies be developed for continuous learning.
4. The existing age group 15-35 be reviewed and changed, and
5. The adults of 55+ be included in adult education definition with special focus on all the aged citizens and their problems, prospects, aspirations be addressed. Special package for 55+ should be provided.

### GROUP III

#### *Adult Education for Democracy and Human Rights*

**Chairman : Professor B.B. Mohanty**

**Rapporteur : Dr. Deepali Barua**

The group, keeping in view the challenges before Adult Education for the

21st century and being concerned about the uncertain political situation in the country when India is celebrating the Golden Jubilee of its independence reiterated the views of Mahatma Gandhi on Adult Education: "Adult Education should neither begin, nor end with the 3Rs". It also recollected the philosophical definition which Swami Vivekananda had for Education, which is "Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man."

In assessing the existing situation of Literacy vis-a-vis Adult Education in the country, the group was unanimous that the awareness and functionality components are totally missing from the programme inputs, and therefore there was an urgent need for making literacy campaigns and programmes more broad based so as to face the challenges before it.

The group was also unanimous in its thinking that Democracy and Human Rights are the two sides of the same coin.

The following were the recommendations of the group:

- 1) Adult Education should have very strong components of Citizenship Education and Political Education, in terms of contents, methodology and strategy.
- 2) Legal Literacy should be another strong component of Adult Education to be imparted to all concerned so as to stop the exploitation of the people by political, societal and bureaucratic vested interests.
- 3) Adult Education should inculcate in the people scientific temper so as to break the "Culture of Silence" which is engineered and sustained by the power elites.
- 4) Empowerment is the other name of development of critical awareness or 'conscientization', and should result from an integrated programme of education, creation of self confidence and awareness of rights and responsibilities, to be built into the Adult Education programme at all stages and phases. Greater emphasis is to be paid for women's empowerment. The group reiterated that empowerment is a self-engineered process.
- 5) Information leading to maningful communication ultimately results in behavioural and social changes which are the functions of education. Right to Information should be accelerated by Adult Education.
- 6) Right to Education is in-built component of Human Rights. Adult Education should be responsible in making the people aware so that they, exercise their 'Right to Education'.
- 7) Adult Education should be instrumental in building peace so that violence is fought with a moral and ethical force flowing from people themselves.
- 8) All the above mentioned tasks have to be implemented through the development and use of teaching-learning materials, training programmes, organisation of symposia, workshops, seminars and conferences, inter-personal communication, design, development and utilisation of people's media, the electronic media like radio, video and television.

**GROUP IV*****Role of Adult Education in New Economic Policy*****Chairperson : Prof. B.L. Parakh****Reporteurs : Dr. O.P. Gupta****Shri A.H. Khan**

In the beginning Prof. Parakh dealt with the salient features of the new economic policy particularly the globalisation and liberalisation of economy resulting into the entry of foreign entrepreneurs and multinational companies. Adverse impact on the traditional artisans, farmers and traders because of the liberal imports presently seen in India in the form of unemployment and under employment will further aggravate in the next century. Increasing population will need more jobs which in the wake of mechanisation and automation will not be available. With low level of literacy and education a large part of the population will not be able to compete with the multinationals. Improvement in health conditions and medical facilities has resulted in increase in the longevity of average citizen and it is estimated that the population of the senior citizens (those aged 60 years and above) will be about 150 million. This number will need to be gainfully engaged in some productive activities. Increasing use of vehicles will further pollute the already polluted environment. Trend of urbanization will give birth to slums and dismal living in cities.

The following suggestions were made by the group :

1. With the successful implementation of the Total Literacy Campaign and Post Literacy Campaign the task of continuing education will be challenging. At this stage more and more awareness programmes encompassing the diverse fields of small and cottage industries, agriculture and animal husbandry, social forestry area, specific technological innovations based on the needs of society should be launched.

2. Shramik Vidyapeeths imparting vocational training should be established in every district for the benefit of the neo-literates. NGOs should be encouraged to establish such Vidyapeeths. Other technical institutions catering to the needs of society should be established in different areas.

3. For economic emancipation and empowerment of the women specially the neo-literates suitable legislative measures should be adopted regarding land holdings, real estates and property.

4. To avoid the adverse effects of liberal imports of consumer goods, market literacy should be undertaken along with legal literacy. Consumer education regarding the utility of indigenous and locally manufactured product will play an important role in the cause of 'Swadeshi Movement'.

5. Indian traditions and cultural heritage should be presented. This will be possible with courses designed according to the Indian conditions devoid of much

pomp and show. The ill effects of media particularly in the advertisement area can be neutralised with education at the adult literacy centres.

6. To ensure pollutionless environment increasing use of petroleum products should be stopped and use of environment friendly energy should be encouraged. These may be solar, hydro and biogas energy.

7. To avoid economic exploitation of the masses the adult education centres should work as catalysts of change which will be possible when such centres are equipped with the requisite facilities and trained instructors.

## **GROUP V**

### ***Empowerment of Women***

**Chairperson : Smt. Kamala Rana**

**Repporteur : Smt. Ilaben Naik**

The discussion first of all focussed on the urgent need to change the attitude of men towards women in society. For this the effort should be continuous and at every level.

2. Serious efforts need to be made to create and sustain self-confidence and self-reliance among women through adult literacy and education and also through all programmes for women.

3. Mahila Mandals need to be further strengthened and take up the responsibility for motivating the nonliterate women for improving their knowledge and awareness through participation.

4. Women need to learn skills along with their education for economic independence, with freedom to spend their own earnings.

5. To create awareness among families and village community regarding the importance of women's literacy in every family so that girls and women are encouraged to improve their knowledge through education.

6. The awareness should be created in social groups and communities for giving women an equal status in all aspects of life.

7. Women have been elected to Panchayats and many of them are Sarpanchs also. They need to be enlightened about their right and responsibilities and the need for them to exercise their rights and fulfill their responsibilities in all aspects of women's development.

8. A Jan Andolan for creating awareness regarding the need for women to come forward and join mainstream development in the country.

9. 'Apathy' among women should be regarded as a negative factor and needs to be removed through education in every rural and urban community. They must be given education in the way in which they can utilise their energies.

10. Women should also be trained in protecting themselves physically by learning Judo-Karate.

11. A special campaign across the country to stop "exploitation" of women must be launched through media, press and in all local fairs and festivals in villages, towns and cities.

12. Women should actively promote the education of girls in very family, and forum where they can raise their voice and actually get girls to continue their education. This will reduce illiteracy among women in the future, and will instil a sense of self-confidence among girls. It will also reduce "gender bias".

## **GROUP VI**

### ***Research in Adult Education***

**Chairman : Dr. G.M. Malik**

**Repporteurs : Dr. G.H. Mir**

Adult Education has a wide role to play to make the Indian democracy a success. It is a matter of great concern that we are celebrating our golden jubilee of independence and half of India's population is still illiterate inspite of several programmes launched in this regard. The group felt that most of these programmes were started without taking into account the proper researches and were started on field experience. Research in adult education is a backbone upon which depends the success of the programme. The group identified the following critical areas which need serious researches to be taken up by various functionaries—grass root level workers and other agencies of experts.

1. The present measures, being adopted for motivation of learners and masses, are not getting success in the field so new measures are to be discovered through researches to make it a mass movement in real sense.

2. Voluntary agencies are not coming forward in North where as there has been good response of voluntary agencies in the South.

3. How to bring a learner to the centre? Inspite of various efforts of NLM it is observed that the literacy has not become felt need of learners. Therefore, there is, very poor response on the part of learners.

4. Content of T/L materials and teaching methodology requires research because the learners either don't turn up at all to the centres or they drop out very early without getting minimum level of learning.

5. It has been observed that role of mass media is not adequate and proper to motivate the learners to attend the literacy centre.

6. The Government is encouraging the poor and deprived communities by giving them several special benefits. The major chunk of illiterates belong to these communities. Such measures should be adopted in these communities so that they

give first priority to literacy. There is a need to conduct research on efficacy of good schemes on literacy programmes.

7. The maximum number of illiterates is from women folk. They lack motivation and are not inclined to attend the literacy centres. Special research should be taken up to suggest special remedial measures for women literacy programme.

8. Present literacy campaigns are based on volunteer teacher's motivation without any kind of incentive to him. It is being observed that it is becoming very difficult to get proper help from literate community for this purpose. Most of the voluntary teachers are students who drop out very frequently because of their examinations and studies. So researches are required in this area to motivate the V.Ts by providing them some kind of incentives.

9. Training of V.Ts is very weak and of a very short period hardly of 3-4 days which is not developing proper competence and attitude towards literacy.

10. T/L material is so overloaded in terms of content that the voluntary teachers are not fully equipped to do justice with the learners and this results in a very poor understanding of very important issues of national and social concern.

12. IPCL approach of teaching methodology based on eclectic method has not received positive response both from learners and V.Ts. Therefore, they are adopting the traditional method of teaching.

13. Management structure of literacy campaigns at districts level is not functioning well. There is not proper coordination within different agencies, NGOs inter-departments and elected public representatives. The different committees formulated at different levels are not playing their desired roles. Only collectors are dominating each and everything which should be reviewed.

14. PLC and CE require researches with regard to organisation, content, training, monitoring and evaluation. No system has so far been developed for the evaluation of PL and CE. The job chart of Preraks also needs research.

15. There is need to evaluate the contents of learning material meant for neo-literate. Research into the criteria for the selection of proper T/L materials be evolved on the basis of research findings.

16. Research into oral literacy be undertaken taking into account the differences in rural-urban, tribal, non-tribal composition of the population.

## **Recommendations**

The 47th All India Adult Education Conference organised by the Indian Adult Education Association, in collaboration with the Gurukul Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Harwar and held in the picturesque campus of the Vishwavidyalaya during November 27-30, 1997

**keeping** in view the challenges before Adult Education for the 21st century and being extremely concerned about the uncertain political situation in the country, when India is celebrating the Golden Jubilee of its Independence;

**after** assessing the adult education situation in the country as reflected in the deliberations, in the group discussions and thematic workshops in the context of the Indian educational scenario;

**being** totally disappointed at the incidences of ever increasing violence seen everywhere including in the sacred houses of legislature;

**after** witnessing every hours and every day the decline in honesty and discipline in private and public life;

**being** shocked at the happenings in which public safety is in grave danger:

**seeing** in the horizon dark clouds which go to cast a still darker shadow on secularism to which India is wedded to;

**being** concerned about incidents which threaten our democratic bases, recommend the following for consideration, evaluation and advocacy of and by the policy makers, personnel, NGOs, Government organisations, universities, research institutions, volunteers, activists, media groups and all concerned involved in Adult Education in India:

- 1) The strategies for Adult Education in the 21st century have to be designed in such a way that formal educational institutions will have to play a significant role in strengthening literacy, adult education and non-formal educational programmes, meaningful teaching, learning materials are produced, better training programmes utilising appropriate training methodologies are organised, appropriate local media, and electronic

media are used, and necessary structural changes are made with a view to make the adult education programme need-based, particularly with reference to women and face the ground realities with determination.

- 2) The scope of Adult Education has to be broadened so that it has within it all the sectors, fields and activities touching the lives of people, thus reducing the dichotomy between formal education and non-formal education; and accordingly the methods, techniques and materials for Adult Education have to be suitably designed in the context of the challenges to be faced by it in the coming century.
- 3) There is an urgent need for making literacy campaigns and programmes more broad based; and Adult Education should have very strong components of Citizenship Education and Political Education including Legal Literacy, inculcation of scientific temper so as to be able to break the “culture of silence” of the people.
- 4) In the context of the New Economic Policy focussing on globalisation and liberalisation of economy, Adult Education should advocate the policy, principles and methods of appropriate technology so that small and cottage industries are not only protected but developed and sustained; people’s handicrafts are sustained and popularised and khadi and village industries are kept on the agenda of the people at every level; and our rich cultural traditions are more vigorously brought into the mainstream of national life.
- 5) Women have to be empowered by themselves through a well designed strategy of inculcation of self-confidence, creation of a spirit of scientific temper which destroys superstitions, customs and beliefs and spread of education so that they become the guardians of our rich culture and tradition.
- 6) Research in Adult Education and for Adult Education has to be formative, summative and action-oriented using the appropriate research methods, so as to bring in qualitative and quantitative improvements in the adult education programmes.

## **ADULT EDUCATION NEWS**

### **Garg Re-Elected President, IAEA**

**Prof. BS Garg**, Chancellor, Rajasthan Vidyapeeth, Udaipur has been re-elected President of the Indian Adult Education Association at a meeting of the Council held in Hardwar(UP) on November 30, 1997.

Sarvshri **KC Choudhary**, **RN Mahlawat** and **NC Pant** have also been re-elected as General Secretary, Treasurer and Joint Secretary respectively.

The following Office-Bearers and Members of the Executive Committee have been elected for a three-year term.

#### **President**

Prof. BS Garg (*Rajasthan*)

#### **Vice-Presidents**

Shri BN Kamble (*Maharashtra*), Prof. BB Mohanty (*Orissa*), Shri BL Parakh (*Rajasthan*), Dr. KS Pillai (*Kerala*), Smt. Kamala Rana (*Delhi*),

#### **General Secretary**

Shri KC Choudhary (*Madhya Pradesh*)

#### **Treasurer**

Shri RN Mahlawat (*Haryana*)

#### **Joint Secretary**

Shri NC Pant (*Madhya Pradesh*)

#### **Associate Secretaries**

Shri AL Bhargava (*Madhya Pradesh*), Prof. Nanubhai Joshi (*Gujarat*), Shri AH Khan (*Bihar*), Smt. Manju Lohumi (*Himachal Pradesh*)

**Members**

Smt. Rajashree Biswas (*West Bengal*), Shri Sudhir Chatterjee (*West Bengal*), Smt. Nishat Farooq (*Delhi*), Dr. Arun Mishra (*Uttar Pradesh*), Shri SS Nandwana (*Rajasthan*), Smt. Indira Purohit (*Rajasthan*), Shri S Ramesh (*Tamil Nadu*), Shri TK Ray (*Orissa*).

**TLC Projects in 429 Districts**

The TLC projects have been launched in 429 districts out of a total of 520 districts in the country. Of the districts taking up TLCs, 193 districts have completed first phase of imparting basic literacy skills and are now implementing post literacy and continuing education programmes.

64 million people have been made literate out of 118 million non-literates identified thru' surveys since the launching of NLM in May 1988.

Over 10 million literacy volunteers have been mobilised since the launching of the mass literacy campaign in 1989 in Ernakulam in Kerala.

There are over 35 million non-literates in the 9-14 age-group which are being covered thru' the literacy, non-formal education, post-literacy and continuing education programmes.

The post-literacy programme covers those not made literate by TLC and those below minimum level of learning and provides stabilisation, reinforcement and upgradation of learning.

The NLM objective is to make 100 million adults literate by 1999.

**Women and Girls in India**

It is estimated that there are about 160 million girls below the age of 16 in India and that 12 million more are born here every year. However, 1.5 million die before their first birthday, a further 850,000 die before they reach the age of five, and only 9 million survive to see their fifteenth birthday. Half the population of India under the age of 14 are girls. Yet girls are traditionally "invisible" in Indian society.

A disadvantaged girl is kept away from educational opportunities. She is underfed and therefore undernourished even though she is the mainstay for farming and household chores. Her work responsibility starts when she is hardly three years old, assisting her mother in the daily work. From about the age of five onwards a girl will typically carry water, gather fuel, cook, and look after younger siblings. All of this work contributes to the economic survival of the family, but because the girl's work is unpaid she receives very little recognition.

The discrimination that girls face begins even before birth with sex determination of the fetus through amniocentesis, even though the laws prohibit abortions linked to gender selection. Discrimination for girls persists through childhood and adolescence. Despite all the developmental measures and constitutional guarantees, girls and women still lag behind men and boys in their ability to take up educational opportunities. The literacy rate is almost double for males; for every 100 literate females there are 165 literate males. The female participation rate in education is one-third of the total enrolment as against their population proportion of 48 per cent. Even though education is symbolized by the Goddess Saraswati, the traditional bias against girls attending school predominates.

In India girls often form a cheap source of labour in many types of jobs. Typical employment is found in factories, farms, cottage industries, middle-class houses as maid servants, building construction, mining and quarrying, and transport - usually for long hours without fair financial compensation. Non-governmental organizations estimate that there is a total of about 45 million girls-children working in India. This includes a World Health Organization estimate of about 15,000 child prostitutes working in the brothels of Mumbai.

Access to health facilities are fewer for girls than for boys because parents pay less attention to daughter's illness than to a son's. Girl-child mortality is higher in rural areas compared to urban settings. Some of the reasons for this are:

- Gender bias - girls are assigned a secondary position next to all male family members for food, resulting in nutritional deficiency among mothers and infants.
- Absence of effective immunization of pregnant women and babies.
- Absence of growth-monitoring system.

- Poor primary health care.
- Lack of safe drinking water.
- Lack of proper health and nutrition education.

- *Real Lives*

### **Over 40 million girls 'Missing in India'**

There are between 40 to 50 million "missing" girls and women in India, says the report - *The Progress of Indian States* - prepared by officials of UNICEF.

The report, prepared by Mr. AK Shiva Kumar and Mr. Jon E Rohde of UNICEF, points out that a "missing" girl is one who was never born or died early, because of gender discrimination, leading to further disproportion in the sex ratio in the country.

While in the industrialised nations, there are, on average, 106 women per 100 men, and 102 women against 100 men in South-East Asia, there are, on the contrary, only 93 women per 100 men in India.

According to the report : "Only where societies specifically and systematically discriminate against women, are fewer of them found to survive."

The report's data underscores this point : According to the 1991 census, there were 493,563 "missing" girls in Uttar Pradesh alone in the age bracket 0 to 6 years.

The report says, "Even though biologically speaking, the probability of girl children surviving is greater than that of boys, in India, the situation is the opposite."

It goes on to give the reasons for the disparity : "A significant number of girls are not alive, often because they have not been allowed to live, either through selective abortion following sex-determination in pregnancy, or they have survived only hours or for a few days because of inadequate attention following their delivery."

The report points out that the district with the lowest child sex ratio in India is the infamous Salem, in Tamil Nadu, with just 849 girls per 1000 boys in the 0-6 age group. The nine other districts with bad track records are - Bhind, Jaisalmer, Kaithal, Jind, Amritsar, Faridkot, Bhatinda, Kurukshetra and Hissar.

The report says, "Anti-female bias against girls and women is by no means limited to the poor. For instance, Punjab and Haryana, two of the richest states in terms of per capita incomes, have among the lowest female-to-male ratios : 87.4 women to 100 men in Haryana and 88 women for every 100 men in Punjab. Also, a girl in a Punjabi house-hold has a 10 per cent higher likelihood of dying before the age of five years than her brother."

On child labour, the report estimates there are 500,000 street children in the cities of Bangalore, Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kanpur and Madras, with 55 million children in servitude.

The State with the highest number of child labourers Andhra Pradesh - 2,181,462 in 1991 - and among the other important states Kerala and Himachal Pradesh have the distinction of harbouring the least.

In an indictment of the primary education system of the country, the report says, "45 years after independence, in 1991, only 52 Indians out of every 100 were able to read and write. More disturbing is the disparity between men and women : Whereas 64 men out of 100 could read and write, only 39 women could do so. These achievements are also not uniform across the country. The economic losses arising from such high levels of illiteracy are enormous, to say nothing of the social discrimination and lack of opportunities suffered by the illiterate."

The report also points out that with a total fertility rate average of 3.6 in 1992, India remains far from the goal of two children per family. While the four Southern states form the backbone of those which are leading in controlling population, the explosion is evidenced in the northern states of Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, with the last having a total fertility rate of an astounding 5.2.

Even where some progress has been made, there remains much to be done. For instance, the report says, "Remarkable progress has been achieved in immunising children and in the control and eradication of guineaworm. Yet, around two million infants still die each year today, almost the same number as in 1960; and most of these deaths are avoidable."

Then again, it says, literacy rates may have doubled since 1961, but there are still nearly 60 million more illiterate persons, and only 64 per cent of children reach grade five of primary schooling and even among them "many cannot even read or write a simple sentence."

### **Kerala Bags First JRD Tata Award for Population Control**

Kerala is the first recipient of the prestigious JRD Tata Memorial Award instituted by the Population Foundation of India, New Delhi for excellence in reproductive health and population programmes. Announcing this Dr. Bharat Ram, Chairman, said that State had made remarkable progress, comparable to international standards, in bringing down its fertility and infant mortality rates.

At the district level, Palakkad in Kerala, Chidambaranar in Tamil Nadu and Kurukshetra in Haryana have been selected for the JRD Tata Best Districts Award. The national award consists of a trophy and Rs. 10 lakhs and the districts award consists of trophies and Rs. two lakhs each.

By 1990, the State had achieved a crude birth rate of 19, a crude death rate of 5.9 and infant mortality rate of 17, far exceeding the goals set for the entire country to be achieved by 2001. Kerala achieved the replacement level of fertility as early as in 1988, a target which most other states are not likely to achieve even in 2016.

Palakkad has been awarded for achieving remarkable progress in the field of infant mortality (31 per 1000); adult literacy (90.14 per cent) female adult literacy (86.96 per cent) and total fertility rate (2.65) in 1991.

Chidambaranar district in Tamil Nadu has registered a remarkable drop in infant mortality (43 per 1000); total fertility rate (3.05 per cent); adult literacy (78.96 per cent) and female literacy rate (73.14) in 1991.

The awards were presented by the Prime Minister of India, Mr. I.K. Gujral in New Delhi on November 13, 1997.

### **Better Collaboration Between the Voluntary Sector and Government Urged**

At the recently held meeting of voluntary organisations (VOs) and representatives of governments across the Commonwealth in Edinburgh six recommendations came up on the future of VOs and government relations in the Commonwealth.

These recommendations lay out a set of measures that will strengthen collaboration between VOs and governments in areas ranging from the development of policy to improved legislation affecting the voluntary sector.

The recommendations include:

1. The distinctive purposes and activities of VOs, and the vital roles they play in the development process should be recognised and promoted.
2. Formal mechanisms should be established through which NGOs can participate in official policy making, as part of open governmental processes. Such mechanisms should be at all levels of government and should include mechanisms and networks established by VOs themselves in order to formulate collective viewpoints and make them known to government.
3. Legal frameworks and regulatory mechanisms should be developed which reflect the increasingly diverse nature, scope and purposes of VOs in contemporary society. Such frameworks should be established in consultation with VOs.
4. Civil society demands ethical conduct, accountability and transparency from both governments and VOs. Accordingly VOs should implement codes of conduct, while governments should establish and make known clear principles concerning their relationship with VOs.
5. Action should be taken to strengthen the capacity of VOs to achieve their objectives, maintain their values and discharge their responsibilities.
6. Action should be taken to improve the viability and sustainability of VOs.

### **World Conference of NGOs**

A World Conference of NGOs was held in Tokyo recently to undertake midterm review of the International Literacy Decade and the progress made since the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand).

The Conference was deeply concerned at the lack of adequate attention and resolve by many governments and by international funding agencies, some of whom appear to have lost interest in literacy and non-formal education, to undertake or support action on a significant scale to meet the basic learning needs of illiterate adults and out-of-school children and youth, both by expanding

educational opportunities and by improving the quality and relevance of basic education.

It recognized that illiteracy is closely associated with poverty and related social and economic problems and that literacy action to be effective must therefore be part of a concerted effort, using a participatory approach, to deal with the root causes and consequences of illiteracy, such as excessive population growth, imbalances in world economic development, and under-employment, exploitation of girls and women, child abuse, substance abuse, and malnutrition.

The Conference was convinced that political will, supported by popular will, is a prerequisite for effective, large-scale action to promote literacy and UPE, and that NGOs can and must be active partners in creating the necessary policy environment in redefining the nature and structures of education, notably to include those who are presently excluded, in order to meet present and future basic learning needs, and to develop the corresponding institutional, managerial and professional capabilities;

It felt that NGO activities should complement and reinforce, but not replace, the responsibility for and provision of basic education by the public authorities, while demonstrating creative approaches to enhance learning;

The conference affirmed its belief that the ultimate purpose of literacy action is to enhance human potential so that individuals and communities are empowered to shape their own destiny and that, consequently, priority attention should be given to meeting the basic learning needs of girls and women and disadvantaged population groups.

### **Recommendations**

It recommended the establishment of a "literacy watch" at the international and national levels to constantly remind governments of the importance of literacy.

It urged partners in the literacy and basic education task - NGOs, governments, aid agencies, the business sector and local communities - to:

- develop partnership as the complementary action of diverse partners (government, NGOs, local communities and the private sector);
- maintain and respect the separate identities of partners;

- lend maximum support (validation, recognition) to each other, (including UNESCO support for NGO approaches in negotiations with governments);
- seek to develop multilateral (for example, NGO-government-business) as well as bilateral partnerships;
- diversify modalities of partnership (for example, projects, information exchange, document production, technical expertise...);
- mobilize the talents and energies of large numbers of students and other young people in the delivery of literacy and basic education, particularly through youth and student associations;
- promote the use of modern means of communication in view of developing exchanges and interaction between all partners concerned;
- diversify approaches in promoting and improving literacy by using sport, music, and games which are motivating factors in the educational process.

The conference recommended that the knowledge and training of the educators and project managers be reinforced through capacity building sessions. The evaluation necessary to carry out any project must be part of such training sessions.

It urged all literacy programmes to pay special attention to the problems, needs and aspirations of women as majority of illiterates are women.

### **UNESCO Literacy Prizes**

Projects for Paraguayan youth, Algerian girls and women, the employees of a Togolese company and unemployed Philippine women were among the initiatives rewarded with literacy prizes from UNESCO on International Literacy Day, 8 September 1997. The International Reading Association Literacy Award went to the Don Bosco Roga Project, created by the Salesian Society of Paraguay in 1987. It helps to integrate homeless youth into the community through literacy

and vocational training, and has sent 700 drop-outs back to school. The Noma Prize rewarded the Algerian Literacy Association Iqraa (which means "to read"), founded by Aicha Barki in 1990. The Association, which promotes literacy among girls and women, reached 40,000 women in 1996 through 150 literacy centres. Two programmes were awarded the King Sejong Literacy Prize. The Women in Enterprise Development (WED) programme, run by the Notre Dame Foundation for Charitable Activities Inc., was established in the Philippines in 1984 to meet the needs of illiterate unemployed women. The Togolese Cotton Company (SOCOTO) was also awarded the prize for its encouragement of literacy in the workplace. The company runs a large network of literacy centres and has introduced literacy training for small cotton farmers. The winners, along with honourable mentions, received their prizes in ceremonies held in their countries.

### **School Enrolment High in DPEP Districts : Report**

The education of the girl child is expected to get a fillip in the near future with the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) intending to shift its focus to retention with special attention to girls above nine years of age.

The enrolment of girls has increased more rapidly in the DPEP districts as compared to the non-DPEP ones. Interestingly, some of the DPEP districts have shown a high concentration of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population also. This varies from 8 per cent to as high as 60 per cent.

According to a study on "Access and Retention in DPEP districts" submitted to the Department of Education in the Human Resource Development Ministry recently, Assam and Haryana registered over 18 and 15 per cent increase in girls' enrolment respectively in the DPEP districts as compared to non-DPEP districts. Based on a two-year data, Maharashtra gained 13.7 points in its DPEP districts while Madhya Pradesh notched up only 5.6 points. In Kerala where primary grades enrolment is reportedly declining since the last 10 years, the rate of decline in enrolment is lesser for DPEP districts as against the enrolment rate in non-DPEP districts. In Tamil Nadu, the DPEP maintained the same trend in its enrolment and decline profile as that in non-DPEP districts. Karnataka, however, shows large year-to-year variations. Preliminary analysis indicates that increase in DPEP districts is less than that of non-DPEP districts in the last two years.

The study also concluded that there was a reduction, both, in repetition as well as in the area of gender and social inequities. The trend shows that the share of girls in the total enrolment is above 40 per cent for the most districts. Of the total of 16 districts, three districts with share of girls' enrolment from 35 per cent to 40 per cent are in Madhya Pradesh alone. Except Madhya Pradesh, the repetition rates are generally lower among girls than boys. As against 16 districts, 11 show higher repeater rate for girls than boys in Madhya Pradesh.

As against this, the lowest repeaters are in Kerala viz practically zero in Grade one. Assam has 45-50 per cent repeaters in Grade one as also the highest repetition rates: 30-35 per cent as compared to other states.

At the national level, between 1993 and 1996 the differential increase in enrolment in DPEP districts was higher by 3.70 to 16.8 percentage points as compared to non-DPEP districts.

### **Towards Human Rights**

The Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission, Mr. Justice Venkatachaliah, emphasised the need for making human rights education an integral part of the curriculum of schools and colleges. He was inaugurating a seminar organised by the Human Rights Education Movement of India in New Delhi recently. He said "There are about 330 million children in India of which 38 per cent are below 14 years. It is high time that they were taught about the values of human rights so that posterity could have a just society." There was also a necessity, he added, for spreading the light of knowledge for a better future for mankind.

At another function, the former Supreme Court Judge Mr. Justice HR Khanna emphasised the need for fostering a climate of discipline and adherence to democratic values. "Liberty if allowed to degenerate into licence is suicidal for it takes away liberty itself," he stated.

In his address on "All Human Rights for All" Mr. Justice Khanna asserted that "too many restrictions might obliterate the right on liberty itself."

Mr. Feodor Starcevic, Director, UN Information Centre, said that "human rights are the foundations of human existence and co-existence." He opined that it was universality of human right that gave them their strength.

Mr. Ashok Desai, Attorney General, in his introductory address, said that "the sustenance of human rights also requires recognition of changes that are needed in society from time to time."

### **Education, Gender Equity, Healthcare Essential for Economic Reforms**

The noted economist, Prof. Amartya Sen said in New Delhi on December 29, 1997 that road ahead of India would depend much on the integration of different concerns - preservation of democracy, rapid social progress specially in education, health care, land reforms and gender equity. India had suffered in the last 50 years from ignoring the need for such integration and the tendency to neglect social development in particular.

Prof. Sen currently the Head of Trinity College, Cambridge (U.K.) and former Lamont University Professor of Economics and Philosophy, Harvard University (USA) was delivering a lecture on "India - What Prospects" under the auspices of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

He said that it was only because countries such as China and the East Asian economies had high literate levels and effective land reform programmes that they were prepared to reap the benefits of economic reforms.

People with no schooling cannot easily cross the barriers to participate gainfully in global economic arrangements and even lose jobs from global competition, he said.

He suggested that India could get more out of its democracy by working for the politicisation of central issues of governance, including need to address more fully its extraordinary problems of internal disparity.

**Obituaries****Janardhan Rai Nagar**

Shri Janardhan Rai Nagar, Chancellor, Rajasthan Vidyapeeth (Deemed University) and the recipient of 1980 Nehru Literacy Award passed away in Udaipur on August 15, 1997. He was 86.

Shri Nagar educator, litterateur and social worker had a long and distinguished record of service to the country. The Rajasthan Vidyapeeth founded by him in 1937 has grown into a complex of educational institutions which are serving both formal and non-formal educational needs of the State. He had done pioneering work in linking adult education with skill development.

He had received awards for outstanding work in rural development and social welfare.

**C.K. Dandiya**

Smt. Chandra Kanta Dandiya, former Director, Department of Adult Education, University of Rajasthan and former Vice-President, Indian Adult Education Association (1975-78) died in Jaipur on August 07, 1997.

**T.R. Nagappa**

Shri TR Nagappa, former Research Officer, Karnataka State Adult Education Council and a Life Member of Indian Adult Education Association died recently in Mysore.

Shri Nagappa had worked extensively on follow-up literature for neo-literates.

**P.T. Bhaskara Panicker**

Shri P.T. Bhaskara Panicker founder of Kerala Association for Non-Formal Education and Development (KANFED) died in Thiruvananthapuram on December 31, 1997.

He had written primers for non-literates and booklets for neo-literates.

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The Indian Adult Education Association founded in 1939, aims at improving the quality of life through education visualized as a continuous and lifelong process. It directs its efforts towards accelerating adult education as a process, a programme and a movement.

The Association co-ordinates the activities of various agencies--Governmental and voluntary, national and international--engaged in similar pursuits. It organises conferences and seminars and undertakes surveys and research projects; it endeavours to up-date and sharpen the awareness of its members by bringing to them from all over the world expert views on, and experiences in, adult education. In pursuit of the policy, the Association has instituted the Nehru Literacy Award and Tagore Literacy Award for Women's Literacy, for outstanding contribution to the promotion of adult education in the country. It has also instituted the Dr. Zakir Husain Memorial Lecture, which is delivered every year by an educationist of eminence.

The Association has brought out many publications on themes relating to adult education, including the Hindi editions of several UNESCO publications. It brings out the Indian Journal of Adult Education, Proudh Shiksha, Jago aur Jagao and IAEA Newsletter.

The Association acts as the Indian arm of the International Council for Adult Education, International Federation of Workers' Education Associations and the Asian-South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education. Its membership is open to all individuals and institutions who believe in the aims and objectives of the Association.

Its headquarters are located in the Shafiq Memorial at 17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi-110002.