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Indian Journal of Adult Education, 1939

Indian Journal of Adult Education, first published as a monthly in 1939, is now brought out 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, Development and current experiments in the field. Contributions on a wide range of themes within this broad framework are welcome.

The average length of a manuscript should normally be between 1500 and 2500 words; in exceptional cases, longer articles can also be accepted. Mimeographed, zeroxed or carbon copies of manuscripts will not be accepted. Manuscript should be typed in double space, on one side, with a 2" margin on A4 size paper. Footnotes and references should come at the end and not on every page. Authors are requested to submit one soft copy along with the CD (MS, Word). Articles can be sent by E-mail at iaeaindia@yahoo.com, iaeadelhi@gmail.com

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Nehru and Tagore Literacy Awards

Nominations Invited

Indian Adult Education Association invites nominations from anyone in India for Nehru and Tagore Literacy Awards for the outstanding work done by institutions/individuals for the promotion of literacy, adult education, continuing education and lifelong education.

Nehru Literacy Award instituted in 1968 is given to institutions/individuals in recognition of the services rendered and meritorious work done for the promotion of literacy and adult education in the country.

Tagore Literacy Award instituted in 1987 is given to those institutions/individuals who have given significant contributions for the promotion of literacy, adult and lifelong education, creating awareness and improving the social and economic status of women in the country.

The institution / individual nominated for Awards should have at least ten years of outstanding work in the field of literacy, adult education, continuing education and lifelong education and the assessment will be on the new initiatives taken and also the extent to which the work done can be a model for replication for others.

The awardees will be selected only on merit from the names nominated by NLMA, DAE, NUEPA, NCERT, UGC, Universities, State Literacy Mission Authorities, State Resource Centres, Members of IAEA and other educational institutions of repute.

The last date for receipt of nominations for both the Awards is June 29, 2012.

Nominations may be sent in a sealed envelope with all details about the institution/individual, outstanding work done, awards, if any, already received, specific recommendations for nominating the institution/individual directly to Shri. K.C.Choudhary, General Secretary, Indian Adult Education Association, 17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi-110 002. One can nominate more than one institution/individual but each one should be in separate envelop.

The decision of the Selection Committee will be final.

India is slowly emerging as an important world power in view of its size, population, technical knowhow and industrial advancement. It has also become one of the biggest markets in the world where every country is racing to send their products for sale. However, there exists a divide in the society due to which India is still not able to become a super power. One of the biggest divide is illiteracy, particularly among women. This problem is always understood properly by the administrators and political bosses due to which education, especially primary education, has got a lot of importance in Five Year Plans with higher financial allocation. While concentrating on children's education the government also has taken simultaneous steps to educate adult illiterates so that the opportunity they have lost in their early age is compensated at the later stage. With all these efforts the literacy rate of India as per Census 2011 is 74.04 percent with male literacy 82.14 percent and female literacy 65.46 percent. However, the status of female literacy still continue to be far less than male literacy which is not a good indication for a country like India which is trying its level best to have an inclusive growth.

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act which came into force on April 1, 2010 was historic as the Act accorded the same legal status as the Right to Life as provided by Article 21 A of the Indian Constitution. Every child in the age group of 6-14 years is assured of 8 years elementary education in an age appropriate classroom in the vicinity of his/her neighborhood. While the Act ensures the children for access to schools, is there any mechanism to ensure quality teaching and enabling the children to reach a level appropriate to the classes they study? Unfortunately, a big question has been raised in this regard by a study conducted by Pratham, a leading Delhi based NGO in five states – Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand and Rajasthan. The study reveals that assumption of the educational planners and administrators with regard to primary education are not based on the ground reality as a class V student is only equipped to study the text books meant for class III and many of the class II students are not able to read more than two alphabets in a word eventhough, they are taught lengthy phrases in class one. The worst part is that a fair number of teachers failed to answer correctly for the questions posed before them from class IV text book. Hence, along with the number, quality needs to be improved otherwise the divide already exists in the society will be widened in the years to come.

The same way the government with much enthusiasm has brought an ambitious adult education programme called Saakshar Bharat in October 2009. While all appreciation goes to the National Literacy Mission Authority for devising an excellent and viable programme and work strenuously to make the same a success, still the same enthusiasm is not found to be filtered down to the level of most of the State Literacy Mission Authorities which are having the primary responsibility of planning, implementation and supervision of the programmes in the state level. The need of the hour is taking the entire programme with all seriousness so that Indian society becomes a reading society.

Hence, development means not simply industries, buildings and roads but the knowledge society.

Dr. V. Mohankumar

International Benchmarks and Evolving Perspectives in Indian Adult Education

A. Mathew

Introduction

The latest programme of adult education, viz., 'Saakshar Bharat – Mission 2012' was launched by the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh on 8th September, 2009 as a flagship programme of the Government of India. It aims to further strengthen and promote Adult Education to mainly non-literate adults who missed schooling, and now feel a need for learning (NLMA, 2010: 1). The Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE), designed and implemented by UNESCO in 35 countries, is a global strategic framework, to collectively revitalize and accelerate literacy efforts in countries where illiteracy poses a critical challenge. LIFE is a strategy for action to support basic education and the achievement of Education for All and to substantially increase literacy learning opportunities. LIFE aims to contribute to the empowerment of learners so that they can make informed choices, take control of issues that affect them, and eventually enhance the quality of their lives (UNESCO, 2006, 11).

Belem Framework for Action, adopted by International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA –VI) in December 2009, is a canopy framework for Adult Education encompassing Literacy and Lifelong Learning. It focuses on harnessing the power and potential of adult learning and education for a viable future. The Framework emphasizes the need to develop literacy that is relevant and adapted to learners' needs and leads to functional and sustainable development, focusing on women and highly disadvantaged populations including indigenous people and prisoners, with an overall focus on rural populations. The Framework fosters a culture of quality in adult learning and enrichment of learning environments and the empowerment of individuals and communities (UNESCO, 2009: 3, 6).

Compatibility of Indian Adult Education with Belem & LIFE

India being signatory to Belem Framework for Action, it is imperative to align India's national policy frameworks in conformity with its international commitments. NLMA has, therefore, organized a cross-sectoral consultation at Bengaluru on 27-28 June, 2011. The purpose was to identify areas and issues that warrant reconsideration to become Belem Framework compliant and to give new direction to adult education

in India that is at par with global frameworks and benchmarks. Hence, the theme of the National Workshop: 'Saakshar Bharat, Belem Framework and LIFE'. The objectives of the National Workshop included: (a) Enhanced understanding of Belem Framework and LIFE; (b) Review of India's adult education policies and programmes in the context of Belem Framework and LIFE; and (c) Advocacy for further strengthening the policy framework for adult education in India. The takeaways from the National Workshop have also been consciously built into the design, which included: (a) Better understanding of Saakshar Bharat vis-à-vis Belem Framework and LIFE; (b) Incisive analysis of adult education policy in India; and (c) Future strategies in alignment with national vision and international commitments.

This article draws on the presentations as well as discussions in the Workshop, and is organized along nine major aspects, viz., (i) Adult Literacy and Education: Definition and Scope, (ii) Equity, Inclusion and Participation, (iii) Total Quality Management, (iv) Design and Delivery, (v) Policy, (vi) Governance, (vii) Convergence and Partnership; (viii) Funding; and (ix) Monitoring and Evaluation.

I. Adult Literacy and Education: Definition and Scope

Definition and scope of adult literacy and education programmes have never been a settled issue. Definition of adult literacy itself, i.e., whether it should be only about levels of proficiency in the 3Rs and should also include other 'literacies', such as health, rights, ICT, etc., are far from settled, and depends upon the country situation in its development context. With regard to the scope of literacy and adult education, there is a world of difference in different countries between the learning opportunities provided and the life needs and interests of learners. This section, as in respect of other sections, examines the perceptions and recommendations of the Belem Framework for Action, the LIFE document, the policy formulations in India and the Indian scene in respect of definition and scope of adult literacy and education in India, and the emerging perceptions on the issue in the light of the deliberations in the National Workshop.

The **Belem Framework** deals with "adult learning and education" as an essential element of the right to education (Jagmohan Singh Raju, 2011[2]). It endorses the definition adopted in Hamburg Declaration in 1997: "the entire body of ongoing learning processes, 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" (UNESCO, 2009: 1).

The Belem Framework also goes into the scope of adult literacy, as: "the most significant foundation upon which to build comprehensive, inclusive and integrated lifelong and life-wide learning for all young people and adults." Given the magnitude of the global literacy challenge, the Framework deems it vital to redouble the "efforts

to ensure that existing adult literacy goals and priorities, as enshrined in Education for All (EFA), the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) and the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE), are achieved by all means possible." The Framework also lays emphasis to "recognize literacy as a continuum", and for planning and implementing continuing education, training and skills development beyond the basic literacy skills, supported by an enriched literate environment (UNESCO, 2009: 1-2).

The LIFE document defines literacy as the "competencies in reading, writing and numeracy and life skills". LIFE positions it as an Initiative not only to promote these competencies, but also to substantially increase literacy learning opportunities, beyond the basic literacy level (UNESCO, 2006: 11).

The LIFE document also refers to the scope of literacy, i.e., what it can and should lead to. It views literacy as an: "indispensable means" for effective social and economic participation, contributing to human development and poverty reduction." LIFE is convinced that, "literacy empowers and nurtures inclusive societies and contributes to the fair implementation of human rights. In the case of mothers, literacy leads to an enhanced quality of life for their families and improved education outcomes for their children" (UNESCO, 2006: 11).

LIFE also talks of promoting: (i) Integration of literacy with various issues including income generation, entrepreneurial training linked with access to micro credit, reproductive health care, and civics and HIV/AIDS prevention; (ii) Life skills, use of applied/appropriate technology, including ICTs, creation of reading spaces and resource, and popularization of science and technology in rural areas; and (iii) Opportunities across the continuum of literacy, post-literacy and continuing education within the framework of lifelong learning (UNESCO, 2006, 27).

Definition of Adult Literacy and Adult Education in India

The Education Commission (1964-66) viewed that the scope of adult education is as wide as life itself. It noted that "one of the major planks in the strategy of a society which is determined to achieve economic development, social transformation and effective social security should be to educate its citizens to participate in its developmental programmes willingly, intelligently and efficiently." It stated that the function of adult education in a democracy is to provide every adult citizen with an opportunity for education of the type which he wishes and which he should have for his personal enrichment, professional advancement and effective participation in social and political life (NCERT, 1971: 778).

National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 locates Adult Education in the mainstream educational system. Highlighting the importance of Adult Education, the NPE observes, "Our ancient scriptures define education as that which liberates i.e., provides the instruments for liberation from ignorance and oppression. In the

modern world, it would naturally include the ability to read and write, since that is the main instrument of learning. Hence, the crucial importance of adult education, including adult literacy." The NPE expects literacy (adult education) to facilitate accomplishment of "national goals such as alleviation of poverty, national integration, environmental conservation, observance of the small family norm, promotion of women's equality, universalisation of primary education, basic health-care, etc. It will also facilitate energisation of the cultural creativity of the people and their active participation in development processes" (MHRD, 1986: 5).

In respect of its scope, NPE states that "comprehensive programmes of post-literacy and continuing education will be provided for neo-literates and youth, who have received primary education, with a view to enabling them to retain and upgrade their literacy skills, and to harness it for the improvement of their living and working condition." These programmes, according to NPE would inter alia include:

- a. Establishment of continuing education centres of diverse kind to enable adults to continue their education of their choice;
- b. Workers' education through the employers, trade unions and government;
- c. Wider promotion of books, libraries and reading rooms;
- d. Use of radio, TV and films – as mass as well as group learning media;
- e. Creation of learners' groups and organizations; and
- f. Programmes of distance learning (MHRD, 1986: 9-10).

Lastly, NPE recognizes "that a critical development issue today is the continuous upgradation of skills so as to produce manpower resources of the kind and the number required by the society. The special emphasis will, therefore be, laid on organization of employment/self-employment oriented and need and interest based vocational and skill training programmes" (MHRD, 1986: 9).

Consistency of Definitions

It is often said that there are frameworks and declarations on adult learning and education, yet there is a lack of agreement on the definition, scope and focus of adult education activities. Rather, concepts on adult learning and education are contextualized according to the needs, historical discourse and shifts in paradigms in a particular country. For example, in high-income and middle-income countries such as Thailand, where adult learning and education is well established and where there is a coherent policy with responsibility for the government and others indicated, the concepts are well-defined and focused. However, in many other countries the definitions, concepts and scope of adult education and learning are not well articulated. Overall, the experiences and records of Asian countries in this regard suggest that, rather than focus on international consistency and uniformity, it would be more appropriate, to concentrate on developing contextualized, endogenous concepts and definitions to design and guide adult literacy and education programmes.

In India literacy is the principal format of adult education. As a sequel to the NPE's Programme of Action (1986), the National Literacy Mission (NLM) was launched in 1988, with the aim of imparting functional literacy to 80 million adults in the 15-35 age group by 1995 (GOI, 1986: 135). It started with a mass campaign approach, known as the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC), but had evolved into a massive programme of adult education.

The NLM conceived literacy as an active and potent instrument of change and for the creation of a learning society. Functional literacy was defined as: (i) Achieving self-reliance in literacy and numeracy; (ii) Becoming aware of the causes of their own deprivation and ways of overcoming their condition through organization, and participation in the process of development; (iii) Acquiring skills to improve economic status and general well-being; and (iv) Adopting the values of national integration, environmental conservation, women's equality and observance of small-family norms.

As proposed in the National Policy on Education (Revised 1992), NLM combined Post-Literacy and Continuing Education (PL & CE) activities in order to consolidate and improve functional literacy skills of neo-literates (MHRD, 1996: 25). The Post-Literacy Campaigns had three broad learning objectives – remediation, continuation and application. A scheme of Continuing Education, distinct from the previous PL & CE, was launched by NLM in 1997, to provide learning opportunities to neo-literates on a continuing basis and to reinforce and widen the literacy skills for personal, social and economic improvement. The Continuing Education Centre (CEC), the main delivery point of CE programmes, looked after by a Prerak (Animator), was meant to be a community-based centre with a library and reading room, besides being an information window and a centre of *charcha mandal*, sports and recreational activities and other life skill programmes (GOI, 1998).

New Perspective

The Saakshar Bharat Programme (SBP) views literacy as a continuum with Basic Education (Equivalency), Skill Development and Continuing Education, beyond the basic literacy stage, and as an interrupted continuum. This revamped adult education system, as envisaged in the Saakshar Bharat Programme, should provide opportunities to meet the learning needs of any type including functional literacy, basic education, higher education, vocational education, physical and emotional development, arts, culture, sports and recreation. Such opportunities of learning should be for all adults, disadvantaged and advantaged, in the age group of 15 years and above who missed the opportunity of formal education as well as all adults who wish to learn outside the formal system of education. Adult Education should be seamlessly integrated with formal education system for horizontal and vertical migration by establishing equivalency frameworks to facilitate credit transfer among formal, non-formal and informal education.

II. Equity, Inclusion and Participation

Illiteracy is the biggest barrier to inclusion in socio-economic and political development processes. Barriers to participation in adult literacy and education on account of age, gender, ethnicity, language, region, etc., are the biggest hurdles for inclusion. Therefore, the strategies for inclusion should address removing the barriers to participation in adult literacy and education programmes. Belem Framework considers inclusive education as “fundamental to the achievement of human, social and economic development”, and for social harmony and dignity in life. It is firm that “there can be no exclusion arising from age, gender, ethnicity, migrant status, language, religion, disability, rurality, sexual identity or orientation, poverty, displacement or imprisonment” (UNESCO, 2009: 5).

In Belem Framework’s view, “of particular importance”, are measures like: (a) Promoting and facilitating more equitable access to, and participation in, adult learning and education by enhancing a culture of learning and by eliminating barriers to participation; (b) Combating the cumulative effects of multiple disadvantage, particularly to the groups in early adulthood; (c) Creating multi-purpose community learning spaces and centres and improving access to, and participation in, the full range of adult learning and education programmes for women; (d) Supporting the development of writing and literacy in the various indigenous languages by developing relevant programmes, methods and materials that recognize and value the indigenous cultures, knowledge and methodologies, while adequately developing the teaching of the second language of wider communication; (e) Supporting financially a systematic focus on disadvantaged groups (e.g., indigenous peoples, migrants, people with special needs and those living in rural areas) in all educational programmes that could be provided free of charge or subsidized by our governments; and (f) providing adult education in prison at all appropriate levels; and so on (UNESCO, 2009: 5).

In respect of inclusion, the approach of LIFE is that of a staunch advocate. It says that: “LIFE specifically aims to contribute to the empowerment of women, out-of-school girls and their families, especially in rural areas, and of those with insufficient or no literacy skills – often the poorest and most marginalized members of society.” This is because, “their empowerment in turn can have a positive impact on the quality of the lives of their families, poverty reduction, socio-economic development, and school enrolment of their children.” Therefore, it says that “taking into account the principles put forward by the Delors Commission, LIFE will promote literacy throughout life so that women and men can engage in ‘learning to be’, ‘learning to live together’, ‘learning to do’ and ‘learning to know’” (UNESCO, 2006, 18).

Indian Scenario

The focus of the National Literacy Mission on the inclusive dimension was always unmistakable, with nearly two-thirds of target group as well as actual participants

being women. The trend was also unmistakable with SCs, STs and rural areas. In the Saakshar Bharat Programme, 85% of the target group fixed for the plan of 70 million coverage was women and nearly the same for SCs, STs, and Muslim minorities. Saakshar Bharat Programme is primarily a rural centric programme. The environment building campaign in Saakshar Bharat is specifically directed towards removing mindsets or ill perceived notions about literacy and removing socio cultural barriers to participation. Gender perspective is an over-arching guiding principle in every aspect of Saakshar Bharat Programme. Literacy programmes in India are strong on using indigenous languages for imparting literacy. Indigenous cultures, knowledge and methodologies are used in the Teaching-Learning methods and processes as well as for environment building and social mobilisation.

Measures for Inclusion

In view of the Belem Framework's recommendations, the measures suggested included: creation of appropriate infrastructure to enhance the culture of learning and education by eliminating barriers to participation of the excluded group like women, SCs, STs, minorities in rural areas and urban slums through awareness, mobilization, environment building and well-designed and targeted guidance, information and motivation. Other measurers on this theme could include:

- Setting up of well equipped multi-purpose Adult Education Centers (AECs)
- The need of curricular relevance to the life context of the learners in respect of economic condition, work situation, and geographical location; and
- In order to improve the access to the programme, the barriers like socio-economic discrimination, patriarchal values in the society are to be kept in mind and initiatives taken to develop need based curriculum, engaging women facilitators, fixing suitable timing for conducting literacy /AE Centre, arranging crèches and mobile literacy centre;
- Thematic packages, not just literacy Primers, should be developed to enable women to practice and apply their literacy skills.
- Persons with a proven record and experience of working on issues of gender, caste, disability, and conflict areas should have a say in decision-making;
- Instructors and Preraks should be especially chosen for their sensitivity to issues of gender, caste equality, and their commitment to Constitutional values of democracy and secularism; and
- Gender should be introduced as a core area in all trainings (NIRANTAR, 2011, Anita Dighe, 2011).

III. Total Quality Management

Total Quality Management relates to the plethora of aspects which deeply impinge upon quality of delivery of the programme and learning outcomes of the participants.

The Belem Framework firmly holds the view that fostering a culture of quality in adult learning requires relevant content and modes of delivery, learner-centred needs assessment, acquisition of multiple competencies and knowledge, professionalization of educators, enrichment of learning environments and empowerment of individuals and communities. To this end, it commits to: Developing quality criteria for curricula, learning materials and teaching methodologies in adult education programmes, taking account of outcomes and impact measures; Recognising the diversity and plurality of providers; Improving training, capacity-building, employment conditions and the professionalization of adult educators; Elaborating criteria to assess learning outcomes of adults at various levels; Putting in place precise quality indicators; and Lending greater support to systematic inter-disciplinary research in adult learning and education, complemented by knowledge management systems for collection, analysis and dissemination of data and good practices (Jagmohan Singh Raju, 2011[2]; UNESCO, 2009: 6). In the LIFE document, there are no explicit programme or strategy components directly linked to quality improvement.

Situation in Indian Context and Emerging Perspectives

The emerging perspectives related to the measures contained in the Report of National Curriculum Framework for Adult Education, such as: (i) Core Curriculum Framework for Adult Education should have a core content covering national values as well as locally relevant issues; (ii) The national values to include scientific temper, communal harmony, gender parity, national integration. It would imply specific focus on the values of India's socio-cultural, ethnic diversity and the need to reflect them in curricular contents, Teaching-Learning processes and living by these values; and (iii) Issues relating to local context would also get equal reflection in the content and curriculum (NCFAE, 2011: 22-23). The NCFAE also stressed that, in order to foster a culture of quality in literacy, there is need to have: Learning environments where learners can express their demands and preferences; Teaching-Learning Materials and methodologies in consonance with learner's needs and practices; Improved training and capacity-building opportunities for adult educators within the philosophical framework of lifelong learning; and Improved employment conditions and professionalization of adult educators.

Other catalysts of improved quality stressed and endorsed by NCFAE included (1) the use of new Learning Technologies, especially ICTs, and in particular: (i) Increased use of ICT for literacy; (ii) ICT aided teaching learning; (iii) ICT aided capacity building; (iv) ICT enabled management information system (MIS); and (v) Computer literacy; (2) learner-centred needs assessment; content relevance to learner's needs; and its efficient delivery; acquisition of sustainable competencies and knowledge that enables learner to meet better the challenges of environment and competencies of educators and learner assessment. (3) Development of quality curricula, learning materials and teaching methodologies in adult and lifelong education programmes is of foremost importance, and felt that this will be feasible only through

active engagement of universities, industry, line departments, industry and other expert agencies. Teaching learning materials and processes must reflect the socio-cultural and ethnic diversity of learners besides creating learning environments where learners can express their demands and preferences. The Workshop recommended that to attract talent in adult education, as a trigger of quality, Literacy Educators ought to be paid at par with educators in the formal education system. Even voluntary teachers should be given financial incentives on performance basis.

IV. Programme Design and Delivery

Design and delivery dimensions deal with the arrangements envisaged for implementation of adult education programmes, such as, institutional set-ups as well as organizational and management structures and implementation modalities designed, capacity building and professionalisation of personnel directly involved in implementation as well as the orientation and sensitization of other stakeholders whose cooperation is necessary for its success, are also part of design and delivery parameters.

The Belem Framework does not deal separately with programme design and delivery dimensions, especially in respect of institutional and organizational infrastructures for implementation of adult education programmes. The reasons are not far to seek. Unlike LIFE, which is global strategic framework for implementation of literacy efforts, Belem Framework is a diagnosis of adult education initiatives in the world, and deals with all aspects in totality, including policy, funding, planning and implementation of adult education programmes, learner needs resonance of its contents and local context resonance of implementation modalities, etc.

The different aspects of its diagnosis that informed the design and delivery architecture included: (a) Recognition and accreditation of non-formal, informal and experiential learning; (b) Advocacy efforts across a number of fronts and strong inter-ministerial cooperation, organizational structures and links between adult education and other sectors; (c) Establishing adequate financial planning to enable adult education to make a telling contribution of the future; (d) Matching decentralization with adequate financial allocation or delegation of budgetary authority; (e) Adult education programmes being responsive to the needs of women, SCs, STs and minorities, rural population and migrants; (f) Diversity of learners by age, gender, cultural background, economic status, unique needs and language and its reflection in programme content and practices; and (g) Professionalisation and training opportunities for adult educators, and so on.

Since it is a strategic framework to assist national literacy efforts, LIFE lays particular stress on programme design and delivery dimensions. These include: (a) Providing governments with technical support for the design and development of context-specific programmes, with delivery mechanisms that are locally relevant,

geared to the empowerment of learners and focusing on gender parity and poverty reduction; and (b) Strengthening existing national institutions and operational infrastructures, which are responsible for the design and delivery of literacy programmes (government, NGOs and other providers), in order to implement LIFE through effective management of resources – human, financial and material. Staff and structures should have the capacity to facilitate inclusion of the most marginalized groups (Jagmohan Singh Raju, 2011[1]; UNESCO, 2006: 28).

LIFE also stressed the need to: (i) Address the deficit of qualified personnel through training of trainers, literacy facilitators and supervisors, undertaking these programmes through learner-centred, learning-by-doing, participatory techniques and the adaptation of regional resources and training packages, exchange of experiences and networking. (ii) Putting in place delivery mechanism that is locally relevant, geared to the empowerment of learners and focusing on gender parity and poverty reduction. (iii) Strengthening of existing national institutions and operational infrastructures, which are responsible for the design and delivery of literacy programmes. (iv) Ensuring that staff and structures should have the capacity to facilitate inclusion of the most marginalized groups. (v) Engaging the private sector in facilitating literacy training for their workforce.

Emerging Perspectives

The design and delivery dimensions recommended represent the handmaid of strategic shift from literacy to lifelong education articulated in the NCF AE Report and endorsed in the Workshop: (a) The instrumentality to translate the new perspective of adult and continuing education in the lifelong learning perspective, would have a nodal agency at national level, viz., National Authority on Adult Education in place of the present NLMA, as a permanent body with its state level counterparts; (b) A dedicated administrative cadre for adult education at state, district and Block levels; (c) The institutional set ups in the form of Adult Education Centres, which are multi-utility – extension – centres; (d) AECs at Block and District levels for higher levels of adult education; (e) The State Directorate of Adult Education (SDACE), as administrative head of the hierarchy of adult education administrative set-up and cadre, with District and Block level offices and cadres for delivery of adult education programmes; (f) The institutional set up for academic and techno-pedagogic support system for adult education at State level, viz., the SRCs would need to undergo a complete overhaul with respect to new vision of adult education in lifelong learning perspective; (g) Professionalization of AE Cadre: The Adult Education Teachers – the Preraks - are first level information providers to all line Depts. and facilitators of multi-utility programmes of AECs. By their systematic and intensive training, they are also expected to be the foot soldiers of adult education and vanguards of NLMA's larger social objectives; (h) The inter-sectoral character of adult education envisaged should also entail systematic and concerted sensitization of line Department functionaries; and (i) Same is the case w.r.t. decentralisation, viz., sensitization and

capacity building of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, Education Departments, the ZSS functionaries, besides the personnel in State Directorate of Adult Education.

V. Policy

Policy, backed up with enabling legislative provisions, is the mother of an enduring adult education system. On the wings of a strong policy back up, it is possible to mount a strong and well-articulated system of adult education. Policies in adult education relate to priority in national development pronouncements and plans of adult education system, i.r.o. its various components such as levels, curriculum framework, contents-learner needs resonance, pedagogy, assessment, equivalence, etc. It also relates to the governance system and role of different agencies as well as allocation of adequate resources.

The Belem Framework locates policy as the most critical measure for adult education beyond the definitional issue. It is convinced that, "policies and legislative measures for adult education need to be comprehensive, inclusive and integrated within a lifelong and life-wide learning perspective, based on sector-wide and inter-sectoral approaches, covering and linking all components of learning and education" (UNESCO, 2009: 3). In particular, it recommends: (i) Developing and implementing fully-costed policies, well-targeted plans and legislations for addressing adult literacy, education for young people and adults, and lifelong learning; (ii) Designing specific and concrete action plans for adult learning and education which are integrated into MDG, EFA and UNLD, as well as other national and regional development plans; (iii) Establishing appropriate coordination mechanisms, such as monitoring committees involving all stakeholders active in adult learning and education; and (iv) Developing or improving structures and mechanisms for the recognition, validation and accreditation of all forms of learning by establishing equivalency frameworks (UNESCO, 2009).

The LIFE document lays emphasis on: Cross-sectoral policy basis at the national level for designing literacy policies and strategies; Fostering human rights and empowerment of learners; Enhancing synergies between formal and non-formal education and promote continuing education opportunities for optimizing access to and retention and use of literacy skills; and Decentralized system of governance to deliver more relevant and context-sensitive literacy programmes (Jagmohan Singh Raju, 2011[1]).

Policy on Adult Education India

Policy documents on education do emphasize on adult education, as seen in the case of Education Commission Report (1964-66) and NPE, 1986 and 1992 (Revised). But these policy emphasis has no legislative backing, as in the case of the formal education system, by Central or State legislatures. The National Workshop

noted for example: India has a well articulated policy on education (e.g. NPE, 1986). However, the policy does not reflect adequately on adult literacy, adult education and lifelong education as envisaged at international levels; there is no legislation on adult education in India, and adult literacy and education plans are not well integrated into MDGs and UNLD, India's action plans for adult learning and education are integrated into its EFA goals.

There is, therefore, a need for clear policy for adult learning and education as part of overall policy for education. The concept of Right to Education needs to be extended to adult education as well. Adult learning and education needs to be recognized as an important contributor to human resource development. Size of the problem of adult illiteracy and lack of awareness in India needs special attention as part of development plans of the country. Adult learning and education in India needs to lay emphasis on gender social and regional equity as well as the marginalized groups. There is a felt need for enacting comprehensive legislation to formally recognize forms of education other than formal and for the recognition, validation and accreditation of learning obtained through adult education. Several countries have already enacted such laws. For example, Thailand's Education Act 1999 institutionalizes credit transfer among formal, non-formal and informal education. To promote a systematic lifelong education, enabling legislative measures will be required to integrate formal, non-formal and informal learning, and Legislative measures would also be required to provide framework for establishing specific structures of lifelong education.

VI. Governance

Good governance is that which enjoys high credibility, transparency and accountability. This gets ensured where the involvement of all stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the programme is ensured through their representation in the organisational-management structures and management of the programme. Sensitization and honing the capacities of different stakeholders w.r.t. their roles in the effective implementation of the programme is equally essential.

With respect to Governance, the Belem Framework stated that: Good governance facilitates the implementation of adult learning and education policy in ways which are effective, transparent, accountable and equitable. And, for this, it held that representation in the organizational-management bodies and participation of all stakeholders is indispensable in order to guarantee responsiveness to the needs of all learners, in particular the most disadvantaged (Jagmohan Singh Raju, 2011[2]; UNESCO, 2009: 3).

Therefore, the Belem Framework laid emphasis on: (i) Creating and maintaining mechanisms for the involvement of public authorities at all administrative levels, civil society organisations, social partners, the private sector, community and adult learners' and educators' organisations in the development, implementation and

evaluation of adult learning and education policies and programmes; (ii) Undertaking capacity-building measures to support the constructive and informed involvement of civil society organisations, community and adult learners' organisations in policy and programme development, implementation and evaluation; (iii) promoting inter-sectoral and inter-ministerial cooperation; and (iv) fostering transnational cooperation through projects and networks for sharing know-how and innovative practice (UNESCO, 2009: 4).

The LIFE document does not insist on a given pattern of governance-related design and mechanism for implementation of literacy. It seeks to subsume governance-related aspects in the Convergence and Partnership-related dimensions.

Governance in Adult Education: Indian Situation

In line with the principle of decentralisation, diversity and plurality of providers is recognised for implementing Saakshar Bharat Programme, such as the PRI system, district administration (Zilla Sakshata Samiti), headed by the District Collector, Education Department, etc. Under the Saakshar Bharat Programme there is: A clear cut strategy for institutionalisation and decentralisation involving the local self government bodies (PRI system); Organisation and management structures, from national to grassroots level covering all administrative levels, viz., State, district, Block and the Gram Panchayat; Stipulation for representation of civil society organisations and the NGOs in implementation of adult learning and education programmes; and Mandatory provision for inter-sectoral representation and cooperation in the organisational and management structures (Lok Shiksha Samitis), at SLMA, District, Block and GP levels.

There is increasing realization that the efficacy of governance design, management structures and system in operation should be manifest and result in (i) high credibility and integrity of the entire adult education system and ensuring transparency, relevance and value; (ii) a highly effective MIS; and (iii) extensive measures to build capacity of all agencies engaged in promotion of adult education in partnership with expert agencies. Thus, as advocated in the NCFAE Report, as also in the National Workshop, there is a need for: (i) Putting in place a dedicated adult education management structures with its own personnel at national, state, district, Block and GP levels as the backbone of adult education system; and (ii) Inter-ministerial/departmental representation in policy bodies of NLMA, SLMA, district and lower levels for their involvement in the design and supervision in implementation of adult education programmes (NCFAE, 2011).

Under the Saakshar Bharat Programme, there is a clear cut strategy for institutionalization and decentralization involving the PRI system. The Workshop was also firmly of the view that this is the future and there is no rolling back of the institutionalization of PRI's involvement as a catalyst for community involvement in literacy and adult education programmes.

VII. Convergence and Partnerships

Adult education, especially in countries with enormous literacy challenge, cannot simply be a government programme; it has to be a national and societal enterprise and engagement. It is even more so given the cross cutting nature of adult education, which is "as wide as life itself", as the celebrated Education Commission Report (1964-66) said. Unless the different ministries/departments and their agencies join together, it cannot assume that mammoth scale. Convergence and partnership within and outside government, the private sector and NGOs and CBOs is not a luxury, but a necessity. This is true across the globe.

Based on strong evidence, the Belem Framework stated that: (i) Adult learning flourishes when states implement decisive initiatives in adult learning and education in alliance with key civil society institutions, the corporate sector and workers' associations; (ii) Public-private partnerships are gaining currency, and South-South and triangular cooperation are yielding tangible results in forging a new form of adult learning for sustainable development, peace and democracy; (iii) Regional and supranational bodies and agencies play crucial and transformative roles, influencing and complementing the initiatives (Jagmohan Singh Raju, 2011[1] & [2]; UNESCO, 2009: 10); and (iv) For a meaningful international cooperation, it is aimed to set up a Centre for Policy Research and Training in Adult Education to promote adult education in E-9 and SAARC countries.

The Belem Framework did perceive that forging partnerships for adult learning and education as one of critical "challenges for adult learning", especially in: promoting and supporting inter-sectoral and inter-ministerial cooperation; and fostering translational cooperation through projects and networks for sharing experiences and innovations.

Based on the experience of literacy initiatives in the 35 countries, the LIFE document suggested that: (a) Proactive partnerships need to be built through networking for planning and implementing literacy-related activities through consultations and dialogue; (b) The critical factor in the success of literacy and adult education initiative is the cooperation of the partnering agencies. Their commitment for national literacy policy, legislation and resources mobilization is critical for the success of the programme; (c) The partners will include: Agencies within the delivery system including government and private and NGO-providers; civil society and NGOs, including youth and women's organization and trade unions; the private sector; the media, including newspapers and educational publishers; Universities, research institutes and institutions for teacher training; Teachers, facilitators, and other extension workers whose function cover literacy provision; Learners and their communities; (d) To promote synergies among partners, a multi-level advocacy and communication strategy needs to be put in place, consisting of a two-pronged approach: one, for convincing major players in the area of education and development

of the urgent need to address literacy; and the other, to involve the media, with the aim of reaching the general public; (e) Sensitize national partners to the importance of integrating literacy into their programmes of work; (f) Identify non-traditional partners and promote innovative and creative actions focusing on literacy; and (g) Lobby decision-makers for greater investments in literacy ((Jagmohan Singh Raju, 2011[1] & [2]; UNESCO, 2006: 23-25).

India's Situation in Partnership: Recommendations of Workshop

India is an ardent signatory to international commitments on EFA Goals and is keenly interested in forging international cooperation with international bodies engaged in adult education, both to share and learn from other countries' experience.

The Workshop shared the experience of exploring collaboration through: Public-Private Partnership; NGOs; Public-public Partnership; and International partnership. It was revealed that, forging purposeful Public-Private Partnerships in the fields of capacity building, TLMs development, use of ICT, resource generation, environment building and setting up model AECs, Basic Literacy, Equivalency, Skill Development and CE programmes could all be important areas.

The experience shared illustrates a feasible scenario of joint efforts, either in entirely shouldering the programme and sharing its activities, of different government organizations – Ministries/Departments, their constituent agencies and institutions – as varied as NHPC, Border Roads Organization, PWD, Health, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Rural Development, ICDS, etc. The collaboration can be in various ways, as for example: (a) Identification of learners within their departments and also within the areas of their jurisdiction, and identifying Volunteer Teachers (VTs) to teach them. The VTs could be from their own employees. (b) Self-Help Groups (SHGs) present another huge platform to undertake the literacy initiative, to cover their own non-literate members. SHGs present a ready target because they are already organized and does not need a separate motivation drive. The VTs could be from among the SHGs itself. (c) The financial institutions dealing with the SHGs like banks, etc. can also facilitate their literacy initiative. (d) Literacy through students by involving teachers and students of Secondary and Senior Secondary Schools. (e) Collaboration for imparting literacy would be grossly inadequate both to the plethora of agencies with expertise and also with people whose learning needs go beyond basic literacy and relate to vocational training, continuing education, life skills, etc (O.P. Bhuraita, 2011).

Therefore, the Workshop endorsed the idea that livelihood and income generation, individual interest programmes etc., could be networked with different departments and their related agencies and institutions for information sharing, extending training opportunities, and trainers. Also, occupational areas for extending vocational and life

skills training could be as wide as life, depending on the institutions and agencies which could be approached.

In the life context of non-literates, given their pervasive deprivation, literacy per se has no appeal and immediate and tangible utility. Linking literacy with such aspects that are vital to their existence and wellbeing makes it more relevant and creates appeal for their participation. Literacy's connection with agriculture is one such critical area. The Workshop recognized that functional linkages between literacy and agriculture constitutes a symbiotic relationship, mutually reinforcing, and recommended that in order to facilitate this connection, there needs to be conceptual and functional linkages between the policy bodies of NLMA and Department of Agriculture and Cooperation from national to Block and Gram Panchayat levels and corresponding guidelines about enduring programmatic interface between education and agricultural extension (A. Mathew, 2011). The Workshop also underlined that cross-sectoral collaboration with institutions of research and training at every level needs to become a mandate, backed up by policy and legislation.

VIII. Financing

Unlike formal education which has a long gestation period, returns to investment in adult education can be quick, as it deals with adults who are already productively engaged. Worldwide, it is recognized that adult education represents a valuable social investment which brings quick social, economic and political benefits, and therefore, merits significant increases in investment.

The Belem Framework is most perceptive in its observations that "adult learning and education represent a valuable investment" which "brings social benefits by creating more democratic, peaceful, inclusive, productive, healthy and sustainable societies." It felt that "significant financial investment is essential to ensure the quality provision of adult learning and education" (UNESCO, 2009: 4). Therefore, it recommended: (a) Investment of at least 6% of GNP in education, and working towards increased investment in adult learning and education. (b) Expanding existing educational resources and budgets across all government departments to meet the objectives of an integrated adult learning and education strategy. (c) Creating incentives to promote new sources of funding, e.g. from the private sector, NGOs, communities and individuals, without prejudicing the principles of equity and inclusion. (d) Prioritising investment in lifelong learning for women, rural populations and people with disabilities (UNESCO, 2009).

Since LIFE is a strategy framework to support national efforts for literacy and adult education, in respect of funding, it says that it will rely "principally on domestic resources, both public and private". However, in respect of the countries with weak economic potential, it feels the need for external support, and dwells on the strategies of mobilizing resources from bilateral and multilateral donor agencies. But, in respect

of funding from domestic resources, its recommendations about mobilizing it from private resources are relevant viz., linking up with large enterprises with a proven record of 'good governance' who do financially supporting LIFE ((Jagmohan Singh Raju, 2011[1]; UNESCO, 2006: 35).

These partnerships have the potential to go beyond mere supply of funds. Transfer of expertise through attachment programmes, for example, may prove equally valuable. Publishing firms and enterprises in the ICT sector can assist countries directly in the development of materials and support an advocacy and communication strategy. Companies promoting household or pharmaceutical products might share expertise in appropriate health care and hygiene UNESCO, 2006: 36).

Funding Adult Education: Indian Situation

India aims to raise its investment on education to 6% of GNP as recommended by Education Commission, 1964-66 (NCERT, 1971: 893). Provision for adult learning and education, which was quite low in the earlier plans received priority in the XI Five Year Plan by providing Rs. 6000 crores for adult education. Provision for adult learning and education by other government departments in their own budget is not much. Efforts are being made for public-public and public-private partnerships in implementation of the programme. Saaksharta Kosh is being set up to receive contributions for adult learning and education from private sector, NGOs, community and individuals.

The National Workshop pointed that expenditure on adult education is justified as education is public and merit good, and as investment in human capital and human development. Besides being a minimum need in itself, it helps in fulfilment of other basic needs. The Right to Education now hopes to extend up to secondary level. Returns to investment in adult education can be quick, by increase in agricultural productivity, curbing population growth, improvement in health and sanitation consciousness and practice, etc.

The celebrated educationist, J.P. Naik, pointed out: "We also believe that any investment in adult education, especially of the non-literate poor, will yield quick results in terms of socio-economic progress and will be extremely rewarding in proportion to its quantum" (Razia Patel, 2011). Against this backdrop, it would be natural to expect adequate share of allocation for education being diverted to adult education in India. However, the expenditure on adult education vis-à-vis education hovered around 3% in different Five Year Plans. Most states spend less than 1% of their total education budget on adult education (Jhandhyala Tilak, 2011). Therefore, the Workshop was unanimous in recommending: the need for adequate fund allocation for adult education needs to be backed up by recognition of the importance of adult

education and the need for sound policies, long and medium term plans and effective schemes. The need for increased allocation for adult education within the education budget to be positioned and backed up by policy measures rather than merely as budget estimate exercise.

IX. Monitoring and Evaluation

What is a stethoscope to a doctor is monitoring for adult education programme to the programme manager, which reflects the health of the programme and its bottlenecks. The systems of information and data bases and its reliability alone can reveal its health and bottlenecks so as to introduce concurrent correctives. Evaluation looks at the learning as well as larger outcomes and impacts of the programme.

In respect of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of adult learning and education programmes, the Belém Framework, acknowledged the need for valid and reliable quantitative and qualitative data to inform policy-making in adult learning and education, and resolved to adopt measures to: (a) Develop a set of comparable indicators for literacy as a continuum and for adult education; (b) Regularly collect and analyze data and information on participation and learning progress in adult education programmes, disaggregated by gender and other factors, to evaluate change over time and to share good practice; (c) Elaborating the criteria to assess the learning outcomes of adults at various levels; (d) Produce a national progress report for CONFINTEA VI Mid-Term Review, coinciding with the EFA and MDG timeline of 2015; (e) Support South-South cooperation in the areas of adult literacy, adult education and lifelong learning; and (f) Monitor collaboration in adult education across disciplines and across sectors such as agriculture, health and employment (Jagmohan Singh Raju, 2011[2]); UNESCO, 2009: 6). The Belem Framework also called upon UNESCO and its structures to undertake certain monitoring and evaluation and other tasks at the international levels.

LIFE recognizes that its effectiveness will be assessed by the outcomes, including the learning outcomes and impacts, at the country level, and holds that effective monitoring and evaluation in each country and timely incorporation of lessons learnt will be critical for its success. It proposes that: (a) Viable systems to monitor and evaluate LIFE progress will be set up both at national and international levels. (b) Evaluation will be based upon a set of objectively verifiable indicators and sources. M&E will be conducted throughout the LIFE in-country implementation (including lower level, e.g. at district and programme level), annually, during mid-way, and at the end of the programme. (c) LIFE will assist countries in monitoring and evaluating the performance of their programmes through technical support and in tracking the progress and evaluating the impacts of countries' literacy programmes and activities. (d) LIFE aims to enhance the general monitoring and evaluation culture for literacy in each country, by building of operational monitoring information systems to inform

policies and enhance the performance and effectiveness of literacy programmes. (e) It would be a three-pronged approach: the development of reliable methods for assessing literacy; establishment of management information systems for literacy; and Sample longitudinal studies on completed learners to assess the impact of literacy. (g) Evaluation of LIFE at the international level by UNESCO and its structures (UNESCO, 2006: 37-38).

M&E in Adult Education in India: Emerging Perspectives

Monitoring and Evaluation are two sides of the same coin, and evaluation uses the monitoring information. In earlier evaluations, importance was given to quantitative aspects rather than qualitative ones, and in evaluation of learning outcomes, the focus used to be on the literacy proficiency rather than qualitative dimensions of improvement, empowerment, self-confidence, self-esteem, etc (S. Nayanatara, 2011). Even in the literacy assessment, it is now being emphasized that it should be non-incurative, promoting courage and boosting self-confidence (S.S. Jena, 2011). There should be complete freedom to learners in choosing pace, place and time as per their convenience, and assessment results should be shared with the learners and other stakeholders.

The literacy proficiency under Saakshar Bharat Programme is assessed through periodical Literacy Assessment Tests, organised by the SLMAs and Lok Shiksha Samitis at District, Block and GP levels, which is jointly certified by NIOS and NLMA. Those who attended the earlier literacy programmes as well as the school dropouts could also take this Literacy Assessment Test, the details of which are available in the NIOS website (Gautam Bose, 2011).

With respect to M&E of adult learning and education programmes, there is the unmistakable approach in the Saakshar Bharat Programme that monitoring is important for improving programme implementation. The current system under the Saakshar Bharat Programme is the web based planning and MIS. Its core features are the web based data bases at different levels. It has 24x7 accessibility of information, and it also affords regular data updation. The MIS relates to physical and financial monitoring at all levels. It shows the physical and financial monitoring at all levels, the learning progress of each individual learner and the performance monitoring of VTs and Preraks/Coordinators.

The current MIS is on public domain which helps to disseminate information to citizens and stakeholders. The MIS also includes fund flow system which helps to keep track effective fund utilization, and also in accurate depiction of income and expenditure, which is the touchstone of integrity in expenditure. The MIS has details of the composition of Lok Shiksha Samitis at different levels as well as about Coordinators and Preraks, profiles of GPs and the household survey data.

Conclusion

This article has tried to analyze and compare some of critical dimensions relating to adult literacy and education in India in relation to some international benchmarks and underpin the measures to make on par with the international benchmarks. In respect of definition and scope, adult literacy and education programme should be seen as an uninterrupted continuum, encompassing basic literacy, equivalency, skill development and continuing education, open to all adults. Barriers to participation are not merely in access, but also in providing relevant curriculum, etc. Multi-pronged approach is needed to eliminate barriers on grounds of age, gender, ethnicity, language, religion, rurality, poverty, etc., and especially for women and girls. Those entrusted with literacy and education of these groups should be specially sensitized about these requirements.

Quality in adult education relates to a plethora of aspects and activities like relevant content, and its delivery, intensive training and professionalization of adult educators and others delivering the programme. The suggestions put forth by the NCFAE Committee relate to all these and desirable to be adopted. The arrangements envisaged for implementing adult education programmes are commonly equated with design and delivery aspects such as institutional set ups, personnel, their capacity building, etc., and the strategies to ensure their adequacy and quality are at the core of effective implementation.

Policy for a well articulated system of adult education is the basis and life nerve of an enduring adult education edifice. Backed by legislation, it should spell out the learning levels, including recognition and certification of prior learning, the institutional set ups and delivery mechanisms as well as professionalization of those delivering adult education. Good governance ensures implementation of adult literacy and education in ways which are effective, transparent and accountable. Representation of all stakeholders in the organizational and management structures and their involvement in the planning, implementation, review and monitoring are critical good governance variables. These are stressed in Saakshar Bharat Programme and further reiterated in the NCFAE Report.

Adult education is as wide as life itself, being essentially cross sectoral. Alliance with agencies across government, NGOs, CBOs and private sector is demonstrated as the most effective and successful way of implementing adult education. Benefits of adult education to the nation and the individuals could be quick and direct and enhancing investments/allocations to adult education is of critical importance. Monitoring and evaluation reveals the health of the programme as well as its bottlenecks for correctives. The M&E system for adult education in India under the Saakshar Bharat Programme is rated to be a state-of-the-art model and is an ideal to follow. In sum, this exercise of analysing adult education in India in relation to the international benchmarks indicated many desirable directions to move ahead.

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Promoting Reading Habits and Creating a Literate Society

Asoke Bhattacharya

Give a man/woman a taste for reading and the means of gratifying it. He/she will become a citizen of all nations and a denizen of all ages'. I read this, if not in verbatim, in my school life in English comprehension. These sentences were ingrained in my memory and still now while studying Gandhi, Tagore or Freire, I find this statement being vindicated. If we delve a bit further into the meaning of the first sentence, we observe that the author speaks of authentic citizenship. Any nation in the world would like its citizen to be a well-read person, thoroughly conversant with the laws of the land and exercising his/her right knowledgeably and efficiently. Furthermore, he/she should know the obligations of a citizen towards the state including the state's obligation towards him/her. The second sentence suggests that reading provides a sense of history of oneself, of his/her nation and that of the world. Without a sense of history, without knowledge of the present in the context of the past and the future no sense of belonging develops. We come from somewhere and intend to go to some destination. This is human transcendence. Sartre called it Being-for-itself. This characteristic of being –for –itself sets it apart from being-in –itself which has no past and no future, the inanimate object or the creatures of the animal world. Thus the characteristic of a true human being is his/her temporality which is bestowed by his/her ability to read.

Humans are social beings. They communicate and interact with other human beings. This interaction and experience percolate through from one generation to the next as well as to the members of each generation. Humans die but the experiences in the form of words and sentences, anecdotes and stories, stay on and become enriched through generations. Thus a new born has in store the treasures of the experiences of the human race.

Speech is the unique property that distinguishes humans from all other living creatures. Speech is the forerunner of thought or concept. The moment someone pronounces a word, the phonetic symbol is transformed by the brain of the person who hears it into a perceptive idea. The transformation of sound into an idea or concept is peculiarly and uniquely human. This has elevated humans from the first level of sense perception to that of forming an idea. This ability has transformed humans into a thinking being. Pavlov, the celebrated Russian scientist who is famous

for his research on conditioned reflex of living beings, called it the second signaling system.

In the course of social development, humans developed this extraordinary addition to the mechanism of brain function based on verbal signals. This highly developed system consists of perception of the words uttered (either aloud or to oneself), heard or seen (reading). The development of the second signaling system immeasurably broadened and qualitatively transformed human higher nervous activity. The development of verbal signals also introduced new mechanisms into the activity of the cerebral hemispheres. Pavlov said that if the human's sensations and concepts connected with the external environment were the first signals of reality, then speech, kinesthetic stimuli going to the cortex from the speech organs were the second signals, i.e. signal of signals. They are abstractions of reality and consist of generalizations.

The first signaling system is concerned with perception which can be visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory or olfactory. The development of internal temporary connections of the first signaling system takes place gradually and through trial and error method. It is how the child learns. The same process takes place in perception of colour. However, unlike animals, a human being's first and second signaling system start developing almost simultaneously. From its childhood, it is addressed verbally by parents, relatives and acquaintances. Although it is not able to speak at this stage, its auditory analyzers start responding to verbal sounds. While its first signaling system of perception is developing, the second signaling system is also operative. The unique result is that the child at the very early stage of muttering associates objects with words. Of course it makes mistakes, but with time it learns the correct word for the object and the process continues for a few more years. The cerebral cortex thus registers the combination of first and second signaling system. For an animal the first signaling system is the highest form of attainment. For human beings it is just the beginning and is quickly superseded by the second signaling system. The process develops through trial and error and practice is the only guarantee of obtaining results. There are cases of humans who were brought up by animals and who never developed the second signaling system. There are also innumerable cases of this when the child has forgotten the mother tongue.

If speech is the first part of the second signaling system, reading is the other part of it. Speech gives access to just that area of knowledge which is being communicated verbally. It is quite limited in scope. The primitive human race had only such limited access to knowledge. But reading gives unlimited access to knowledge. It gives access to the storehouse of all human knowledge. There is only a narrow difference in the life of a primitive person with that of an animal. Modern societies have developed much further due to its domination of knowledge through texts. Hence humans remain only half-human without the knowledge of reading. Can we afford to relegate to a sub-human condition more than fifty percent of our own

compatriots? The ability to read makes a qualitative change in the life of a human being.

It is Paulo Freire who wanted to fill this gap in a scientific way. His experimental results with the illiterate in Brazil have been accepted by the world community. Freire's first literacy attempt took place in Recife with a group of five illiterate persons. Two learners dropped out within a couple of days. But the others stayed on. During the twenty first hour of study one of the persons wrote confidently that he was amazed at himself. Freire says that they began with the conviction that the role of human being was not only to be in the world but to engage in relations with the world. Through the acts of creation and re-creation the human being makes cultural reality and thereby adds to the natural world which he/she did not create. Thus the human being's relation to reality results in knowledge which he/she expresses through language.

As soon as the person becomes aware of his /her role in this creative process, the illiterate would begin to effect a change in his/her former attitude, he/she would discover himself/herself to be a maker of the world of culture .The person would discover that he/she as well as the literate person has a creative and re-creative impulse. He/she would discover that culture is just as much a clay doll made by him or her or by his/her peers who are artists as it is the work of a great sculptor. That any modification of nature by humans is cultural creation. By one master stroke Freire put at par a scavenger and a professor .Both are creators of human culture.

Freire writes that the literacy process as a cultural action for freedom is an act of knowing in which the learner assumes the role of knowing subject in dialogue with the educator.

However, the illiterate cannot always see things in this perspective. Self-depreciation is a characteristic of the oppressed. It is derived from their internalization of the opinion the oppressors' hold of them - that they are good for nothing, know nothing and are incapable of learning anything, that they are sick, lazy and unproductive. Age-old exploitation has made them mute, victims of the culture of silence. They are prohibited from being. It is imperative, says Paulo, to break this silence. The process of liberation starts with the opening up of the illiterate as he/she begins to know the word and the world. Thus the act of reading is pregnant with immense consequences. It elevates an unlettered person from a sub-human state to the state of a full human being.

Gandhi and Tagore were concerned about India's literacy situation. The percentage of illiteracy was more than 85 during the British regime. The colonial Government had just one objective: how to exploit more the human and material resources of the country. The education they imparted was just sufficient for

continuation of their imperialistic design. Tagore had, on every occasion, pointed this out in his own writings. All his travelogues abound in such references. Right from his very early letters he wrote from his first visit to England when he was merely a boy of seventeen to his travelogue he wrote on visiting Persia in 1936 at the invitation of King Pahalavi, he lamented that India was lagging behind in education. It was the theme of his letters from Russia in 1930. He was amazed at the spread of literacy in that vast country. He observed that in spite of extreme poverty the Government was doing everything necessary to educate the men and women. It was the primary activity in nation building. Almost in every paragraph of these letters he shed tears at the poverty and illiteracy of India. Gandhi, himself an educator during his period in Phoenix Settlement and Tolstoy Farm in South Africa in early 1900s knew perfectly well the value of universal education. That is why on return to India he urged his colleagues to open schools in the villages. His wife Kasturba was an ardent activist in this cause. In late 1930s he developed his comprehensive scheme of basic education where he stressed on the notion of functional literacy on a universal scale. Tagore also believed that education that does not relate to the condition of living of the neo-literate was not worthwhile. He therefore experimented with imparting functional literacy to the village craftsmen, farmers and members of other occupations in the countryside. For Tagore culture was an integral part of village life. He therefore composed songs on tree plantation, farming etc. The village folk were enthused to sing these songs at various festivals and fairs. Tagore even composed a song eulogizing the machine. For Gandhi religious motivation was a prime mover for any social undertaking. He popularized Ramdhun throughout the length and breadth of the country. His Satyagraha was a way of life and not merely a political movement. Both of them promoted reading habits among the people and both of them wanted to establish a literate India.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister of India was a great exponent of universalisation of education. His speeches and writings abound in such references. I quote, 'It is universally recognized today that a system of national education is one of the fundamental tasks which faces any government. Not only the existing condition of society determined by the quality of individuals composing it but its future as well. Nothing has a more important bearing on the quality of the individual than the type of education imparted. A truly liberal and humanitarian education may transform the outlook of the people and set it on the path of progress and prosperity, while an ill-conceived and unscientific system might destroy all the hopes which have been cherished by generations of pioneers in the cause of national freedom. He delivered this speech on February 10, 1947 at a press conference even before India became independent. In his speech delivered at the General Advisory Board of Education in New Delhi on March 15, 1952, the Maulana said, '...these five years have brought about a welcome change in the conception of the nature and purpose of such education. Instead of concentrating on literacy, as was generally done in the past, we are now planning education for the adult on broad and more

liberal lines. One of your committees has laid down that the aim of such education is not merely to impart literacy but to give the adult training in all aspects of citizenship. To mark this change in conception, the nomenclature has also been changed, and we now describe it as social education. The Maulana wanted to involve all eligible students of schools and colleges to be involved in the task of eradication of illiteracy. For the Maulana, a literate India was a pre-condition for the functioning of democracy.

After independence, sporadic attempts were made to eradicate illiteracy. We may refer to the Mohim experiment in Maharashtra in the 1960s. The most vigorous and all-pervasive attempt took place in the 1990s when millions of people were involved in this great task. Outstanding results were obtained. But due to an absence of a clear methodology regarding maintenance of the literacy skill developed by the neo-literates, i.e., due to lack of an educational strategy of continuing education and lifelong learning, this gigantic epoch-making endeavor fell flat on the ground. As the objective did not materialize, billions and billions of rupees and the time and energy of millions of persons were wasted. If the policy makers had developed a comprehensive strategy such colossal waste of human and material resources would not have occurred. Without learning from the mistakes, the Government sought to implement another programme called Sarva Siksha Abhiyan. Huge amount of money is being used for this project. Whether this programme is also ill-conceived or not, only the future will reveal. Apparently it seems it is another half-hearted attempt to eradicate illiteracy.

But we could learn from strategies developed by other nations in this regard. I am referring to the Report of the University Education Commission (December 1948 - August 1949). Dr. S. Radhakrishnan was the Chairman of the committee. The report began with the statement, 'With the adoption of the new Indian Constitution the achievement of democracy is only barely begun. Fundamental changes of attitude will be necessary before what is written on paper can become the prevailing way of life. One of the ways points at which democracy will fail or succeed is in the kind of education which will be made available to the common people.' The report further stated "For helpful guidance in this matter, we may turn to the programme of the people's colleges of the Scandinavian countries, especially to those of Denmark." Sir Richard Livingstone, England's foremost figure in adult education, called the Scandinavian People's College "the only great successful experiment in educating the masses of a nation." We are not aware if such guidance were ever sought before launching a nation-wide programme.

The time has changed. India is now an emerging economic power thanks to the vision of our policy makers in the field of higher technical education. 30 crore of our countrymen have now access to the amenities of modern life. This is no mean achievement. It is high time therefore that the nation seriously think of the remaining 80 crore of our people whose life may be compared with that of the people of Sub-Saharan Africa. Their new-born children are dying in large number after seeing the

light of the world, their children drop out early from schools to help the family as child-labourers, their daughters become victims of trafficking and their sons remain without work for years. If the condition of this eighty millions does not improve in a foreseeable future, they will drag down the 30 crore, as Tagore had prophesied in one of his poems—whom you leave behind will drag you down with them. From the economic point of view also, this large section has to come forward. As these people gain literacy and develop skill, they become more productive. This results in the enhancement of their income. The net result is their improved quality of life with consequent economic development of the nation as a whole. The resultant situation gives further boost to the proper working of our democracy. The vast majority no longer remain mute and inert participants in the democratic life of the nation. As active citizens, these people exercise their democratic rights consciously. A literate India is better equipped to do away with the mafia raj that our democracy is slowly being swallowed by. This is the view of Amartya Sen, the celebrated economist.

Under these circumstances, it is high time that India develops a comprehensive policy of lifelong learning that will promote reading habits among the neo-literates and create a literate society. An all-pervasive network of lifelong learning is created for the people residing in villages and urban centres. It may be a three-tiered system of people's educational network. At the Gram Panchayat level there will be established People's School. It will act as a community centre in the style of Jan Shikshan Nilayam. These centres will develop the human resources for appropriate utilization of the material resources. Its activities will be supervised by People's Colleges established at the Sub-division level. These colleges will develop teaching-learning modules and materials for various programmes to be undertaken by the People's Schools. It will also act as the Instructor Training Centres People's Universities will be established at the cluster of districts. These universities will act as rural universities as envisaged by Mahatma Gandhi. The Universities will make appropriate policies for the rural and urban community keeping in view the planning at the state and national level. They will also advise the government in its planning process. This is just an outline. Only a permanent structure of people's education will be able to adequately promote reading habit and create a literate society.

I would urge upon Indian Adult Education Association and Indian Reading Association to impress upon the Government of India about the necessity of a permanent set-up for people's education.

Women in Higher Education – the Challenges Ahead

Dazy Zarabi

Introduction

When India became independent in 1947 the literacy rate was 14 percent and female literacy was abysmally low at 8 percent. Educational inequality was aggravated by economic inequality, gender disparity and rigid social stratification. Hence, it became the prime responsibility of the political leadership, planners and administrators to give the country an effective planning not only to reduce economic inequality among different sections of the society but also improve the educational standard so that everyone gets equal opportunity to acquire the knowledge through educational institutions. Article 45 of the Constitution also stipulates that the 'State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of 10 years from the commencement of the Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years.' Eventhough, this could not be achieved as promised, no efforts have been spared to improve the educational standard of the children in the country. Hence, all the Five Year Plans not only gave primacy in priority to education but also provided increased budget allocation with the result today every village has the primary school and high school at a reasonably short distance. However, the task of providing basic education for all, with concrete plans of action, gained greater momentum only after the National Policy of education (NPE), 1986. With the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) adopted in Jomtein in 1990, basic education in all its facets (Early Child Care Education (ECCE), elementary education, education for adolescents, adult education, gender equality and quality improvement) has been the focus of international attention. Also the Right to Education Act passed by parliament guarantees every child between the ages of 6 to 14 years has the right to free and compulsory education. Today we are at the end of the Eleventh Five Year Plan and the country has reached many heights in the area of industrial development, agricultural growth and science and technology.

The country's literacy rate as per 2011 Census is 74.04 percent with male literacy rate 82.14 and female literacy rate 65.46 percent. Still many areas have not reached that growth of development with the result people living in those areas are not able to enjoy the fruit of development. The same way the gender gap in literacy is still high and in many areas women literacy is far below the national average with the result participation of women in higher education faces a lot of challenges which need to be

addressed immediately. Girls are often treated as inferior and are socialized to put themselves last, thus undermining their self-esteem. Discrimination and neglect in childhood can initiate a lifelong downward spiral of deprivation and exclusion from the social mainstream. Existing discrimination against the girl child in her access to education, health services endangers her current and future life. Hence, the need of the hour is inclusive growth and equal opportunity for girls in the field of education.

Education is a critical input in human resource development and is essential for the country's economic growth. Though the major indicators of socio-economic development viz., the growth rate of the economy, birth rate, death rate, infant mortality rate (IMR) and literacy rate; are all interconnected, the literacy rate has been the major determinant of the rise or fall in the other indicators. There is enough evidence even in India to show that a high literacy rate, especially in the case of women, correlates with low birth rate, low IMR and increase in the rate of life expectancy. Encouraging girls to remain in school until they completed primary education has increasingly become a priority of national and international communities. With increases in the educational participation of girls, the main national development indicators improve. Some important ones are lowered infant and maternal mortality, longer life expectancy, lower fertility rates, and improvements in health, nutrition, literacy, and economic growth.

Education also is a catalyst of physical, intellectual and moral development in a human being. To Swamy Vivekananda "nothing can be done to improve the state of things unless there is spread of education among the women". Education has been of central significance to the development of human society. Our country is not an exception to this sort of trend-setting. Thus, education has been a very important part of Indian social and cultural fabric from the times immemorial. There is hardly any evidence about the educational system and opportunities for women's education in the Indus civilization of Mohenjodaro and Harappa. However, there was a great deal of evidence about the status of women's education in Vedic literature right from the Rigveda onwards. Manu in his famous Manusmriti states that women needed to acquire knowledge for running a good household, managing the home economy and inculcating the knowledge of medicine as well as crafts. Buddhism and Jainism were great agents of change and they gave much importance to the status of women, as they sought change in so many other fields of social activity. As a matter of fact, the modern economy of the 21st century, certainly the knowledge economy requires highly educated people for accelerating the process of economic development. The higher education system of a country plays a significant role in the creation of skilled human resources.

Education is the basic requirement and the 'Fundamental Right' of the citizens of a nation. While Higher education is important in building up a Quality Human Resource Base for the nation, the Basic or Elementary education system holds much more significance. In fact, since the inputs of the Higher Education system

are nothing but the outputs of the Elementary education system, the later serves as the base over which the Super-structure of the whole education system is built up. Attainment of basic education is important both due to its impact on the living standards of the people as also in augmenting their capabilities. Possession of reading and writing skills empower an individual to participate in modern economic processes, and transform her embodied capital into higher earning and better living. The present market based global village puts up a barrier in front of those who 'cannot read or write or count, and cannot follow written instructions'.

With the achievement of independence, the entire outlook towards women changed for the better and a new era was ushered in activating the social, economic and legal changes required for equalizing the status of women with men and their equal participation in the national life of the country. The Constitution of India provides for equal rights and privileges for men and women and also some special provisions for their development and upliftment of their social, economic and political status. Articles 15(1), 16(1) and 16(2) respectively state that "The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them" and that "There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment under any office under State". In pursuance of the constitutional directive, the Government, since independence, have enacted from time to time, a number of legislations to raise the status of women in India and to reduce the traditional gap of inequality between men and women in the socio-economic structure of the country. Attempts have also been made to introduce programmes of development aimed at enabling women to play their role in national life in an effective manner. Partly as a result of changes in the social structure and partly because of effective measures undertaken to speed up the process of development of women, the status of women in national life has undergone a considerable range.

Empowering women as a process demands a life-cycle approach. Therefore, every stage of their life counts as priority in the planning process. Depending upon the developmental needs at every stage, female population has been categorised into 5 distinct sub-groups. They include:

- Girl children in the age-group 0-14 years deserve special attention because of the gender bias and discrimination they suffer from at such a tender age.
- Adolescent girls in the age-group 15-19 years are very sensitive from the view-point of planning because of the preparatory stage for their future productive and reproductive roles in the society and family, respectively.
- Women in the reproductive age-group 15-44 years need special care and attention because of their reproductive needs.
- Women in the economically active age-group 15-59 years have different demands like those of education/training, employment, income generation and participation in the development process, decision making, etc, and
- The elderly women in the age-group 60+ years have limited needs mainly relating to health, financial and emotional support.

Women empowerment has become a prime concern all over the world due to the growing tendencies of victimizing women and committing social crimes on them making them weak, destitute and rescue prone. The situation is grave and formidable, where the women are poor and illiterate. Thus, the only remedy to overcome this horrible malpractice is to make them literate by providing them education at any cost through both formal and informal systems so as to attain a balanced socio-economic development because any attempt to develop a society will be a futile effort unless and until the women are brought to the forefront of the society through proper education, training and social as well as economic rehabilitation. In fact, it is often said that female access to education can be improved through physical proximity to the school system. But a study conducted by the Women Studies Department in twenty-two universities of the country has stated that this is not an important reason for entry into the schools.

Higher Education and Women Empowerment

The higher education for women is not a recent concept in India. A lot of evidences show that in ancient India women acquired higher education in temples. However, under Muslim rulers education for women was prohibited at public places with the result only a few privileged sections could give higher education to their women in their own homes. Infact, credit for women's higher education should go to the Christian Missionaries.

Till the year of Wood's Despatch (1854), no serious steps were taken by government to promote higher education for women. First time, the Despatch of 1854 supported the education of women, which was greatly undermined by the disturbances of 1857, followed by the declaration of the policy of social and religious neutrality. Official efforts for the education of women were, therefore, slow and halting and not much was achieved till 1870. This was due to the social factors such as the system of Purda and Child Marriage; unresponsiveness of parents towards their daughters' education; distrust in the western teachers in girls' schools; absence of a suitable curriculum for girls. The universities had also adopted a strange view on higher education of women. Thus, every woman applicant for the entrance examination of Calcutta University was refused permission by the Syndicate on the ground that, 'in the act of incorporation they have no power to admit any female to a university examination.

Beginning of Institutional Higher Education for Women

Higher education of women started in 188 when two women graduated from Calcutta University. The policy of the government for the promotion of education for women, henceforth, was to follow the principles laid down by the Indian Education Commission (1882-1883) as the government endorsed the recommendations of the Commission on women education with the result the progress was steady at all

stages of educational development. In 1901-02, there were 76 women in medical colleges, 166 in medical schools and many were undergoing training as nurses and midwives.

The government of India's Resolution on Education Policy in 1904 had expressed dissatisfaction with the condition of women's education, but could not do much till the government's Resolution on Education Policy in 1913. A need was expressed for an increase in the number of women teachers and inspectors. In the meantime, on October 12, 1915, a memorandum on women's education was presented to His Majesty's Secretary of State for India who agreed the view to improve women's education but left its implementation to the Government of India. In 1917-19, the Calcutta University Commission made specific recommendations for the expansion of women's education for creation of a separate Board for women's education, special courses to train women teachers' and medical education. The Commission also recommended to throw open post graduate courses for women also. These recommendations were subsequently endorsed by the Hartog Committee in 1929. In 1925, the National Council of Women as established and in 1926 the All India Women's Conference with the National Council of Women decided to raise funds to establish a college exclusively for girls and managed by women only. The All India Women's Educational Conference held in 1928 demanded that the women education should be the same as that of men. All these efforts have helped for the expansion of higher education in pre independent India and between 1921-22 and 1946-47 there were 59 Arts and Sciences colleges and 4288 institutions of professional, technical and special education and the enrolment was 23,207 at collegiate level and 56,090 at professional level.

Higher Education for Women in Post-independent India

Immediately after independence the country was put in fast track mode for development through Five Year plans including education. The Indian Constitution also made provisions and directives with regard to education for women apart from the recommendations of the Commissions and Committees appointed by the Government of India and reports of the Planning Commission. The University Education Commission in 1948-49 recommended women to study in co-educational institutions and the same should be initially at degree level which was also supported by the Secondary Education Commission (1952). The Planning Commission also realized the need for providing vocational education to women both at secondary and university level for skill improvement and to equip them to take up wage or self employment.

At the end of the First Five Year Plan educational facilities improved considerably in regard to the number of girls' institutions and their enrolment. In 1950-51, women accounted for 12.4 percent in colleges and universities and by 1954-55 this proportion had increased to 13.6 percent. The total number of women in higher educational institutions was 81 lakh. During 1951-56 seven new colleges of professional education

for girls were founded and the enrollment of girls in professional institutions increased from 4668 in 1950-51 to 9218 in 1955-56. The number of girls enrolled in colleges for special education was 3294 in 1955-56 as against 1767 in 1950-51.

The Second Five Year Plan (1956-61) also emphasized on the provision of opportunities for education to girls and women. Special measures were suggested to increase the enrolment of girls and the number of women teachers. During the plan period, the University Grants Commission (UGC) provided liberal assistance to women colleges and women hostels. In all – institution were functioning for women's higher education out of which one was University, one Research Institution, 122 Arts and Science colleges, 64 Professional colleges, and 17 Special Education Colleges.

The Third Five Year Plan (1961-66) expanded facilities for women's education as recommended by the report of the National Committee on Women Education. The Union Ministry of Education set up the National Council for women education in 1959, which was reconstituted in 1964. The National Committee on Women Education appointed the Hansa Mehta Committee in 1961 to suggest measures for the improvement of women education. The committee recommended for co-education as well as expansion of vocational courses at higher level. Meanwhile, a committee under the chairmanship of M. Bhaktavatsalam was appointed in 1963 by the National Council of Women Education to investigate the cause of the lack of public support for girls' education, particularly in the rural areas.

The committee made recommendations on public cooperation, state responsibility, women teachers, good working conditions, part-time appointments, posting of women teachers near their homes, preference to women candidates in admission, training facilities for women candidates and residences for women teachers. The recommendations were under consideration and by the time, Education Commission (1964-66) was appointed to review Indian Education in its totality and give special attention to women education. The commission fully endorsed the recommendations of the different committees, particularly 'National Committee on Education of Women (1959), the Committee of Differentiation of Curricula between boys and girls (1961), and Bhaktavatsalam Committee (1963). Moreover, the Commission made other recommendations for planning and implementations of programmes for women education.

The Commission emphasized that adequate attention need to be given to the problems of training and employment of women. The commission specifically recommended that it is necessary to link up higher education with 'Specific Avenue of Employment', where the services of trained and educated women are urgently required. The 10th meeting of the National Council for Women Education held in 1968, recommended that girls need to be prepared for different vocations and occupations and the Institute for Higher Education and Training should train women to assume high-level leadership and responsibility.

During this plan period a committee was appointed to examine problems relating to the status and advancement of women which recommended the development of more employment opportunities, particularly of a part-time nature, to enable women to participate more in productive activities and the creation of an employment information and guidance service for women entering higher education.

The Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-74) considered the recommendations of the Education Commission (1964-66) and other committees concerning women's education, and continued sustained efforts to extend higher education for girls with the result the enrolment of girls increased from 21.5 percent to 23.4 percent at all India level during the period 1966-67 to 1973-74.

The National Council for Women Education set up by the Ministry of Education at its 13th meeting held in 1974 recommended for allocation of funds by the centre for grants to voluntary organizations and institutions for special projects for the improvement of education of girls and women, facilities and incentives to increase enrolment of girls, condensed courses for teacher training, encouraging local girls and women to work as teachers in rural areas, establishing women polytechnics and ITIs in rural areas and provision of quarters for women teachers. The Council in its meeting held in March 1975 also recommended that girls' education need to be further encouraged at the secondary and university level and the same was sent to all the state governments and Union Territories for necessary action. The Government of India also looked into the problems of women's education and found that most of the women still suffer from social and economic disabilities.

Thus the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79) give high priority to consolidation and improvement of educational facilities to women, especially to the weaker sections of the society through correspondence courses and private study, which were to be further expanded.

The Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) implemented various recommendations of different committees such as appointment of women teachers in rural areas, provision of residential quarters for women teachers, science teaching in girls' colleges as well as the greater participation of women in science and technology. Admission policies were streamlined to promote greater enrolment of women in engineering, electronics, agriculture, veterinary, fishery and forestry courses. This brought the women into the mainstream along with men to share the facilities of education and training fully.

National Policy on Education 1986 emphasized the role of education as an agent of basic change in the status of women. The policy emphasized the women's participation in vocational, technical and professional education at different levels. The policy suggested activities under teaching, research, training and extension in

different spheres of education for the empowerment of women. The policy suggested for the implementation of different developmental programmes directly aimed at women's empowerment and supportable socio-economic programmes.

The Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) emphasized the need to encourage talented girls to pursue higher education. It also proposed to expand the "Open Learning System" for women. During the plan period girls constituted more than 37 per cent of the students enrolled in 1989-90 in higher educational courses. However, the most popular professional course for girls was teachers' training, where they constitute nearly 44 per cent of those enrolled. Women's Development Centres were set up in 22 universities and colleges to bring about social awareness on women issue and focused efforts on the development of rural women.

The Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97) emphasized the enrolment of women in different levels of education in higher institutions. The number of women in higher education increased from 13.60 lakh in 1992 to 21.39 lakh in 1997, which was an encouraging sign.

The Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) gave priority to the expansion of education mainly in un-served areas with focus on improving the coverage of women. It encouraged more girls to enter the mainstream of higher education and envisaged plans for free education even at the college level including professional courses. During the plan period the number of women in higher education was increased to 30.3 lakh.

The Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) further consolidated the progress made in women's education in regard to achieve the goal of education for 'Women Equality' as advocated by the National Policy on Education 1986 and revised in 1992 by reducing gender gap at the higher education level. The National Policy on Women Empowerment was adopted in April 2001 for empowering women as agents of socio-economic change. On the basis of this policy, a number of strategies have been worked out for a National Plan of Action. Higher education is one of them, which highlights 'steps for eliminating gender bias in all education programmes, and to institute plans for free education to girls upto college levels including professional colleges. This particular suggestion has been implemented for educating women at the higher level. The Tenth Plan encouraged women to participate in science and technology, especially in rural areas. This includes measures to motivate women to take up subjects like science and technology in higher education and ensure their involvement in development projects with scientific and technical inputs.

The Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012) document has proposed a number of programmes for the educational development of women in higher education which included:

- Increase in Women Enrolment Faculty-wise
- Construction of Women Hostels for Colleges
- Development of Women's Studies in Universities and Colleges
- Capacity Building for Women Managers in Higher Education
- Post-doctoral Fellowships for Women
- Establishment of Equal Opportunity Cells (EOC) for SC/ST/ OBC/Minorities
- Establishment of Residential Coaching Academy for SC/ST/ Minorities and Women in Universities and Colleges
- Post-Doctoral Fellowship for SC/ST
- Post-Graduate Scholarships for SC/ST students in professional courses
- Day Care Centres in universities and colleges
- Indira Gandhi Scholarship for Single Girl Child for pursuing higher and technical education.

Conclusion

There has been a phenomenal growth in a number of women enrolled in higher education since independence. Women enrolment was less than 10 percent of the total enrolment on the eve of independence and it has risen to 41.40 percent in the beginning of the academic year 2009-10. Women enrolment as a percentage of total enrolment in a state is the highest in Goa (59%) and the lowest in Bihar (30%). In terms of absolute number of women enrolment, Uttar Pradesh tops the list of states with 8 lakh, followed by Maharashtra with 7.8 lakh. But still a lot needs to be done.

The setting up of women study centres in universities and cells in colleges, and setting up a system of 'Distance Education' through Open Universities and correspondence courses are aimed at increasing the access of women to higher education and empower them for employment opportunities. The data on women higher education in India clearly show that women lag behind men, despite the rapid enrolment in formal institutions. There are many other factors, which affect the women's access to higher education and causing the gender gap. The most pervasive ones are extreme poverty, raising the question of the opportunity cost in terms of earning in the family, the cultural and social barriers such as seclusion of women, parental indifference to educating their daughters in co-education institutions. Family and community influence is also vital in keeping girls away from or sending them to formal institutions. Early marriage is a significant factor influencing the decision not to go for higher education. There are physical barriers also of having not to go to institutions, which are located at distant places. Parents do not want to send their daughters to institutions located in distant places because of the physical insecurity of the girls. Lack of women teachers in higher educational institutions also restricts the girls for getting higher education. Thus, there is a need for greater attention to curve this gap during the subsequent plans.

The main exclusionary divide as far as access to higher education is concerned remains the rural urban divide. Rural women, almost without exception, have the lowest access to higher education. Amongst the rural women, it is essentially those from the lower rungs of socio-religious communities who have the lowest access in particular. While providing more colleges in the rural areas is necessary, it is crucial that rural women's access has to be considerably enhanced through their physical reach to already existing urban facilities. There are indications of daily commuting of rural women to nearby urban areas for educational purposes in states that have better transport infrastructure. There are regions where women's participation in higher education is low, but which have relatively better environment in terms of gender sensitivity – particularly in tribal and some southern states. In such regions, possibility of increasing physical accessibility has to be thought through carefully.

Also due to lack of separate institutions of higher education, nearly 50 per cent of girl students study in co-educational institutions, especially in degree colleges. The same applies with greater force to the university stage. Thus, there is a high demand of separate women institutions for higher degrees, especially in rural areas. This is the major challenge before the government that how to convince the rural families for sending their daughters to co-educational institutions for higher education. Education has been unanimously endorsed as a fundamental right and is essential for men and women both but women are facing restrictions from family and society mainly.

Safety and secure environment matters the most as far as women's mobility is concerned. Along with enhanced physical access, it is absolutely imperative that suitable measures will have to be in place in this regard. There are several other systemic problems; but two of them are cited to highlight some of them - one is the inadequate funds per se and second, more importantly is the gross under-utilization of even available funds that too in backward states. It is seen that out of the 8 percent of total UGC budget that is spent on women's scheme, as high as 95 percent is spent on hostels. However, the budgetary allocation is grossly inadequate and yet the Plan wise data for the years 1995-96 to 2005-06 show that although about 70 percent of allocated money for hostel construction is sought by educational institutes, about 40 percent is actually utilized as can be inferred from the utilization certificate.

Moreover, there is regional variation, i.e., Bihar has utilized only 17 percent of allocated money whereas West Bengal and Orissa have utilized about 47 percent of allocation. This calls for regular monitoring of defaulters and also easing of procedural requirements needed for financial support. There cannot obviously be 'one glove fits all size' policy. There are pockets where despite having the requisite years of schooling, women find it difficult to enter into higher education. Specific cases and the underlying causes need to be carefully identified and studied and steps taken to address the stumbling blocks.

Government has introduced several policies, but in the absence of systematic data-base on how these policies actually work, been utilized/not utilized, barriers by the end-users etc., it becomes somewhat difficult to suggest effective interventions. It is therefore suggested that various commissioned evaluation studies on the utilization of various grants to women be conducted. A Gender Budgeting Cell is needed for gender responsive budgeting initiatives such as to review expenditure and conduct gender based impact analysis, undertake collection of sex disaggregated data and beneficiary incidence analysis. In addition to enrolment, retention and completion is an issue for women. There has to be avenues for continuing education for women who had interrupted educational trajectory.

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Storytelling through Grassroots Comics for building Life Skills: Exploring the scope for Adolescents with special needs

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Abstract

Adolescents need to be involved in meaningful activities to build their life skills – abilities to face the challenges in life! Some creative activities not only bring out their hidden talent but also enable them to develop materials that can be shared with others. Such materials, locally developed, can become valuable resource materials in youth club libraries.

Comics are stories, which are told visually. They become Grassroots Comics when they are made by people about some issue which is relevant to them or their community. The stories told through the comics are genuine voices which encourage local debate in the society and give valuable feedback to the organizers. Grassroots comics have been mostly used as a campaigning tool for grassroots organizations in India, some South Asian countries, in a few countries in Africa, the Middle East and Europe. Their use for promoting literacy and creating a learning environment seems to be quite promising. This exciting and participatory development communication method can be used effectively with adolescents with special needs. Literacy skills and life skills of school dropouts and drug addicts can be improved through reading materials that are relevant, self created and provide opportunities for psychotherapy.

This paper is based on the assumption that school dropouts are not functionally literate and their interest in storytelling related to real life situations can be used as a medium for improving their literacy skills and life skills using Grassroots Comics through: storytelling; story writing; making Grassroots Comics; story reading; story discussion; and advocacy on issues of concern. The paper reports the process of working with adolescents in training them to make wall posters and using them in their own contexts. An attempt has been made to understand the therapeutic effect

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of making and sharing of Grassroots Comics on the youth with special needs- an empowering and cathartic experience.

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

The towns and cities of India report high incidence of poverty despite their being hailed as engines of growth and instruments of globalization. Urban poverty is estimated to be over 25 per cent (UNDP, 2009). Poverty and family conflicts push children to take to the streets and indulge in anti social and criminal activities. Most street children come from lower socio-economic strata. Abuse often drives boys from their homes (Mander, 2008). Youth with non supportive family environment and negative social influences lack self confidence, have poor literacy skills, unrealistic aspirations, low span of attention and poor life skills. Life skills are the abilities that help individuals to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life. Life skills are essentially those abilities that facilitate the physical, mental and emotional well being of an individual. WHO identified ten core set of life skills in 1994: problem-solving; decision-making; critical thinking; creative thinking; communication skills; interpersonal relationship skills; self-awareness; empathy; coping with stress; and coping with emotions. These can be categorized as thinking, social and emotional skills. Thinking skills are needed for making informed decisions; social skills help establish and maintain healthy relationships; and emotional skills enable a person to cope with stress. There is growing recognition of and evidence for the role of psychosocial and interpersonal skills in the development of young people (WHO, 2003). Life skills build confidence and self-esteem in adolescents to face the realities and challenges of life.

Street children develop skills that help them to endure stress and overcome problems of hunger, pain, restless nights and peer influence. Lack of reflection and thinking about themselves is a drawback for their positive growth. The concept of instant gratification, "to live for the day" is one of the factors that hinders their reflection and understanding of consequences. The choices and opportunities the street child gets are decisions made to satiate his immediate need but not a mediated reflection for his future progressive movement (D'Souza, 2012). Substance abuse among street children can be viewed as part of their coping mechanism to deal with the struggles and harsh realities of life. They often land themselves into trouble with the police.

Several non-governmental organizations are working with this group for whom some government initiatives are also planned. These include day care and residential programmes that aim to help them become critically conscious of their reality, vulnerability and self worth. An empowerment approach views adolescents as citizens with rights to survival, protection, development and participation.

Psychotherapy or 'talk therapy' is a process focused on helping a person heal and learn more constructive ways to deal with the problems or issues within his/her

life. In Group psychotherapy, groups are used both as cast and audience for the exploration of individual problems. Narrative therapy gives attention to each person's "dominant story" by means of therapeutic conversations, which may also involve exploring unhelpful ideas and how they came to prominence. Grassroots Comics can serve as a therapeutic process and facilitate the process of rehabilitation. Comics are stories, which are told visually. They become Grassroots Comics when they are made by people about some issue relevant to them or their community. The stories told through the comics are genuine voices encouraging debate at the local level. Grassroots Comics have been mostly used as campaigning tools for grassroots organizations in India, some South Asian countries, a few countries in Africa, the Middle East and Europe. Their use for promoting literacy and creating a learning environment is an unexplored area that seems to be quite promising. It offers opportunity for reflection and action at individual, group and organizational levels. Used creatively and constructively, Grassroots Comics can become a development communication tool following Freire's dictum that the word which makes dialogue possible has two dimensions – reflection and action. Reflection without action is sheer verbalism and action without reflection is pure activism (Freire, 1972).

PART 2: THE PROCESS

In this section, the process of working with two groups of adolescents with special needs – drug-addict convicts and street children - living in residential facilities has been described. Libraries were added as components to the existing intervention programmes for providing a stimulating learning environment. Functional literacy is a pre requisite for any sustainable intervention, therefore, inclusion of activities around books was considered important for adding value to the rehabilitation programmes.

2.1 Background of the Groups

· Sahyog - De-addiction centre for adolescent boys

The Juvenile Justice Act of 1986 (Amendment 2000) seeks to consolidate and amend the law relating to juveniles in conflict with law. It adopts a child-friendly approach in the adjudication and disposition of matters in the best interest of children. In Delhi, a non-governmental organization SPYM (Society for Promotion of Youth and Masses) is running a residential facility at Seva Kutir, Kingsway Camp in partnership with Delhi Government with guidance from Delhi Judiciary. The centre was inaugurated in 2011 as an experiment for treating drug-addict adolescents convicted under the Judicial Act, awaiting trial. Some of them have even been charged under Section 307 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for attempt to commit murder. About 25-35 adolescents between the ages of 10-20 form the group in Sahyog. They undergo 90 days of treatment for rehabilitation that includes counseling, yoga, non formal education and sports. Vocational training in tailoring, laundry, cafeteria, and computer literacy has also been planned.

Majority of the 33 adolescents were school dropouts and most of them had almost relapsed into illiteracy. While 21 per cent had no schooling, 49 per cent had studied only up to class 5th; 12 per cent till class 8th; and 18 per cent till class 11th. More than 70 per cent of them were functionally illiterate and could not read simple sentences with comprehension. While 13 non literate adolescents wanted to become literate, 10 school dropouts wanted to continue through non formal education programme.

Ummeed Aman Ghar - Residential Home for Street Children offering Bridge Course (RBC)

Dil Se campaign was launched in 2005. The Government of Delhi identified the Centre for Equity Studies as the nodal agency for managing residential homes for street children in allocated government buildings. The foundation of the Dil Se campaign is based on the rights based approach believing that state responsibility toward children that live and work on the streets, should not be based on charitable and custodial notions. Fundamental rights guaranteed by the Indian constitution provide access to protection, nutrition, health care, recreation and above all, love. The Dil Se Campaign came into existence with a few young volunteers or Aman Sathis who befriended street children across the city, building bonds and understanding the ground realities of their lives. They believed that street children need true homes, not merely shelters. Apart from safety and dignified living conditions, they need a stimulating secular environment in which they can heal their traumas, rediscover themselves, evolve and flourish. A total of 126 boys between 10-22 years are residents of Aman Ghar in Delhi. All the children are continuing their education either by going to Jamia School, Deepalaya School, Sarvodaya School, Katha School, NIOS (National Institute of Open Schooling) or attending bridge classes at Ummeed held by a fellow from Teach For India. Almost 80 per cent of the children have parents who reside on the streets as a result of slum demolition drives during Commonwealth Games or earlier. The parents are closely involved with Ummeed and the staff. They often visit the children who in turn go to stay with them during vacations.

2.2 The process of making and using Grassroots Comics Wall Posters

Assessing the interests and literacy level – before starting the library, a rapid assessment was made revealing that adolescents in both groups had poor literacy skills and short attention span. Nearly half of those who had relapsed into illiteracy were keen on becoming literate and the literate peers offered to help them. In practice though, this was difficult to achieve. SPYM therefore engaged a person and volunteer especially for facilitating literacy.

Starting a library – a library was started with limited books. Comics were also included. Our experience of using Grassroots Comics with women and

youth motivated us to explore the possibility of seeking stories and developing them as Comics- an easy to make, read and share graphic medium based on real stories.

Identifying adolescents interested in making Grassroots Comics – when exposed to Grassroots Comics, several adolescents showed interest in learning to make comics. The organizations were asked to identify youth who had the potential of becoming peer educators to participate in a workshop for developing skill in making Grassroots Comics. Of the 34 participants, 6 were from Ummeed and 4 from Sahyog.

Grassroots Comics' workshop – youth and field functionaries from eight organizations participated in a 2-day workshop organized by the Department of Development Communication and Extension, Lady Irwin College (University of Delhi) and World Comics Network. A peer-to-peer approach using participatory methodologies was planned. The postgraduate students had been trained by Mr. Sharad Sharma, the founder Director of World Comics Network and the originator of Grassroots Comics. For most of the youth, it was an opportunity to enter an institution of higher learning for the first time. Their comfort level was evident from the ease with which they interacted with the student-trainers. An exhibition was organized of all the comics made during the workshop. They received Certificates of Participation giving them confidence about their capabilities and skills. Feedback was taken at the end of the workshop. Apart from stating that they learnt to draw, write stories, make cartoons and comics, they stated that the workshop had given them an opportunity to express their innermost feelings and discover their hidden talent of sharing their stories in a creative way. All the youth expressed willingness to share their newly acquired skill of making Grassroots Comics with others in their organizations. A majority of them wanted the workshop to be extended.

Follow up of the Grassroots Comics workshop – the youth thus trained demonstrated their Wall Poster Comics in their respective organizations. This motivated other youth to make similar comics. Storytelling became an interactive activity. Even though many of the adolescents were not interested in writing, most of them wanted to narrate their own stories. Selected Wall Posters made in the workshop were exhibited in Ummeed and Sahyog and the audience was asked to give feedback on the ones they liked most giving reasons for the same.

PART 3: REFLECTIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT

Marginalized groups and people with special needs can use real life stories effectively for making Grassroots Comics or Wall Poster Comics. The process of

making these can be empowering and cathartic for the youth - therapeutic at the personal level as they are able to share their experiences and concerns in their own words or by their own hands. The ability to create a comic story and discuss the issue with others of similar background was found to have facilitated a healthy discussion on issues illustrated and the values being promoted through the rehabilitation programme that they were a part of.

The approach of involving youth (student-trainers) to train youth was found to be very successful in imparting the skill of making Grassroots Comics. The youth were extremely excited to be in the company of other youth, they were at ease in asking questions, seeking help and clarifying concepts.

Following are some insights in using stories of youth - street children and drug addicts- for improving their literacy skills and life skills through the medium of Grassroots Comics:

✿ For adolescents who have undergone traumatic experiences, eliciting stories can be difficult in the beginning. However, when an enabling environment is created, they tend to share their stories which can be therapeutic for some of them. When asked why they want to tell their stories, one of them expressed "*dil halka ho jata ha*" (feel light at heart).

✿ Adolescents in Sahyog wanted to talk and share their tragedies. Their stories reveal: habit of drugs started as an escape mechanism; it increased gradually from a small start; money was needed to buy drugs, this was short, so it led to theft and petty crime; under influence of drugs, the mind stopped working and they got into the next stage of bigger crime and violence; and the web of negative actions increased beyond hope of correction; one fine day they got caught by the police.

In the stories, all police officers are bad and corrupt; each had a different story of being abused by the cops. Their present state of mind is never to go back to drugs. The correctional facility of NGO at first was unwelcome, but soon they understood its benefits.

✿ School dropouts are not motivated to write long stories or texts. Writing a short story for a comic is easy. Expressing stories in words improved writing skills. The first draft of the writing showed the weaknesses in their writing and spellings.

Story writing can improve thinking and analytical skills. Identifying a story to share and planning the sequence requires critical thinking. Listening to success stories can build confidence and inspire some of them. Through storytelling, organizations can help in building the dignity

of marginalized groups- giving them respect and confidence by recognizing their skills and ability to share that skill with others.

- ✿ All the youth were of the opinion that comics were an effective media to communicate with others as they are easy to make and quick to read. They expressed that Comics are a simple means to create awareness about complex issues. It was observed that even the non literate youth could express their stories through visuals in their comics. Grassroots Comics were found to improve the communication skills of the youth.

Even the non literates could express their stories through the visuals. Grassroots Comics can improve communication skills. In Rajasthan, illiterate activists were helped by volunteers with the texts in the comics. The narrators inked their drawings and the text, some even starting to identify words and letters in the process (Packalen and Sharma, 2007).

- ✿ School dropouts relapse into illiteracy or become functionally non-literate due to non usage of their literacy skills. They are generally not interested in reading but can be motivated to read materials that are short, simple and relevant. Story reading - individually and in groups – can improve their reading skills. Comics developed by their peer group arouse their interest.

- ✿ Exhibiting wall posters and discussion around them was observed to enhance critical thinking and build consensus on social values.

- ✿ An analysis of the stories revealed a myriad range of issues and themes that they had chosen to share from their experiences. These included child rights, problems of street children, importance of education, substance abuse, domestic violence, benefits of associating with NGOs and stories of change, success and empowerment. Issues as varied as health, importance of saving water, superstitions and corruption were issues included.

The stories and drawings depicted influence of peer group in taking drugs; police action and going to jail for crimes committed. Resolve to stay away from drugs was reiterated in some and help from organization in overcoming drug addiction was indicated. In the poster exhibition, while reading a poster showing a boy lying on the road under the influence of drugs, the reader looked at others and remarked "this is just like we used to be."

"Berang" made by Aamir (Ummeed)

Father scolds son and warns him that if he takes drugs, he will be killed. The boy does not listen and is lying unconscious on the road after taking drugs. Worker from the organization Ummeed counsels him and explains that drugs are harmful for health. The boy is able to get rid of his drug addiction and is happy because he has got new life due to efforts of Pankaj bhaiya.



- Comics show awareness of rights and need to be recognized. The poster titled "Saada Haq" (our rights) shows parents changing their minds in favour of educating the boy after recognizing his talents.



"Saada Haq" made by Habron (Ummeed)

Rohan requests his father to send him to school but father declines and tells him to work instead. Rohan thinks that he has to prove himself and succeed in life. He takes part in a debate and demonstrates his abilities. Many people are in the audience. Parents recognize his

- Title making was a meaningful exercise. When the title was to be given by the group, it involved discussion related to the contents, its relevance for the individual and its significance for the group.

- After completing the 90-day drug de-addiction treatment, adolescents are faced with the risk of relapse when going back to the same social environment. The value of earning to become independent is reinforced by the organizations. The comic titled "Meri Pahli Kama" meaning "my first salary" was appreciated.



Meri Pahli Kamaï™ made by Shaukat (SPYM)

Mother scolds Ravi for loitering around all day and doing no work. He tells her to keep quiet and tells her that she keeps talking all the time. Ravi's mother complains to his father that he is getting spoiled. He tells her (Rajni) not to worry as he has already talked to a counselor about it. After a few days, Ravi visits a counselor who advises him to respect his elders and do some work for earning money. Ravi reflects and feels that the advice is good. After some time, he earns Rs 550 and feels that his parents will be very happy...



Posters show that street children run away from home because of the tensions in the abusive family. They need a place not only for meeting their basic needs of food and shelter, but also an environment to play, learn and realize their full potentials. Sukvir has depicted his own story and wrote this story because many children like him do not participate in games.

Meri Pahli Kamaï™ made by Shaukat (SPYM)

Mother scolds Ravi for loitering around all day and doing no work. He tells her to keep quiet and tells her that she keeps talking all the time. Ravi's mother complains to his father that he is getting spoiled. He tells her (Rajni) not to worry as he has already talked to a counselor about it. After a few days, Ravi visits a counselor who advises him to respect his elders and do some work for earning



Reading the wall posters aloud in a group and selecting the one they liked best, interesting discussion revealed their values. It also provided insights about the programme interventions considered significant by the participants.

By displaying the wall posters, the creators can get recognition. They proudly wrote their names and that of their organizations and even agreed to have their photographs on the reading materials as “authors” of their stories.

Conclusion

materials in local libraries for strengthening literacy skills is an area that needs to be explored in a wider context to take the process forward.

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Tagore's vision of Education

Kewal Krishan Sethi

It appears that Tagore's views on Education were a corollary to his views on the political and social situation of his days. Tagore did not belong to the school of thought which sought to appeal to the better sense of the British to get political concessions. He denounced these activities as mere slogan shouting or what he called "bragging with the tongue". He believed that true emancipation lay in self-reliance. He was firmly of the view that the western education had merely created divide between the upper and the lower classes. The upper class was becoming alienated from their own culture. As a response, Tagore undertook the collection of the folk tales and the folk songs, which in his view, depicted the innermost spirit of the people. As a necessary adjunct of this approach, he stressed the importance of the mother tongue. He founded Calcutta Sarswat Sammelan in 1892, to find ways and means of evolving standard scientific terminology in Bengali. He published an article in 1901 on the scientific achievements of J. C. Bose in Bengali wherein the obtuse scientific subject was described in lucid and clear Bengali.

Tagore did not belong to the category of people whose deeds do not match their words. Many an eminent person swore by swadeshi but sent their ward to Paris and Switzerland for studies. When the time came for education of Tagore's children, he started a home school. Jagadanda Roy was one of the teachers who later on became a noted member of staff at Shantiniketan. Tagore's first serious education write-up was 'Shiksher Herpher' in 1892 wherein he lamented the cruelty of children having to learn in closed door rooms away from nature. He criticised the mercenary aims and objectives of education and called it the wastage and futility of efforts. It only prevented the instrumentality of creative joy of receiving, retaining and assimilating fresh knowledge. He was not the first or the only person to carry such views but these are significant in the light of his later experiments. He was criticised for his views and came out with another article in 1893 wherein he defended his views about teaching through Bengali.

The desire to return to ancient system of education was not limited to Bengal. Many others thought on the same lines and also proceeded to found schools on these lines. Haridwar Gurukul was established by Swami Shradhhanand and Central Hindu College in Varanasi by Smt. Annie Besant. Spurred by these precedents,

Tagore established the ashram school at Bolpur in 1901. The setting up of the Indian University Commission in 1902, passing of the Indian University Act in 1904, Bengal partition in 1905, added to the drive for demand for national education. As a reaction to these events, Bengal National College and School was set up in 1906. Tagore's fundamental view was that in India, education was never dependant on the State and always looked towards the society for its sustenance. He appealed for approach to the national problems with village as centre of national reconstruction.

Though initially Tagore took active part in the political agitation against partition of Bengal, he soon retired from the movement to practically implement his ideas which he did by setting up cooperative banks, by encouraging indigenous cottage industries, by expansion of primary and adult education, by improvement of village roads and rural hygiene, and by establishment of libraries and laboratories. Meanwhile, he continued to write about his views on education and to speak about them at various conferences and meetings. He wanted education to make a man a true citizen. Society as a whole must unite and cooperate for progress. On the importance of teaching of History, he opined that "it is a most lamentable ignorance for the man not to know what man has done or can do in this world" (Rabindra Rachnavali vol 12, p 320).

He was not against the participation of the students in the national struggle but he said that education is their first and foremost duty of the students. In relation to exceptional circumstances, he said, "At such moments, the adults give up their business pursuits, the youth their pleasures, and the scholars their studies, and join the movement. It happens like this everywhere, and this is natural." (Rabindra Rachnavali vol 12, p 624). But he advises against impatience to achieve results.

Though Tagore was against blind copy of western pattern of education, he was not for blind imitation of ancient educational system. He gave his own exposition of feature of educational system which he considered good for India. He said that "it should be at the residence of the teacher and be a life of discipline (brahmcharya) during the entire period of education." But it is not enough, it must be reinforced by "wholesome influences of cosmic nature".

The three fold ideal situation of education is summarised as:

- learning to feel oneself at one with the animate, inanimate and vegetable existence of the world. Learning to see fire, air, water, land and the whole universe pervaded by a universal consciousness is true education.
- ideal institution should be located away from the turmoil of human habitation, in solitude, under the open sky, amidst the fields, trees and plants.

- we must establish in our schools, in every manner possible, the ideal of reducing the unnecessary in our life. To the extent that we shall be making the unnecessary indispensable to us, we shall be losing our power.

Thus the three aspects of good education are, according to Tagore, residential education, education in nature, and education in an atmosphere of bareness and simplicity. Tagore believed that at least up to the age of seven, nothing should come between the child and nature. Contact with nature is good for adults also. The books should not come between our mind and life. Excessive dependence on books has undermined our independence of judgment and overpowers our common sense. The superstition of infallibility of books should be eradicated from the mind of the child and the adult. Another important ingredient of child education should be education of feelings as distinguished from the education of senses and of the intellect.

The peculiarity of Indian civilization is that, unlike other civilizations, it was product of forest - not the dense forest but the tapovan- the forest of devotion. The forest gives a message of peace and serenity; of austere pursuits and renunciation; of sublime happiness and tranquillity. The true education is in attaining equilibrium between discipline and freedom; between getting things ready-made and those acquired by independent efforts. He did not believe in regimentation of adopting a particular method for teaching. According to him, in the last analysis, the education can be imparted only by a teacher and not by a method. The system and method of education must be in accordance with the national needs and that alone will be the national education. The long political subjugation has sapped the high aspirations of the people and the first thing required is to restore the confidence in self and awakening of the spirit of enquiry which gave rise to the high ideals of Indian polity.

His philosophy of curriculum followed the same principles. He was of the view that "whatever is worth knowing is knowledge. It should be equal for men and women - not for the sake of practical utility, but for the sake of knowing. The desire to know is the law of the nature". Knowledge consists of two departments - pure knowledge and practical utility. Of the former there is no distinction between man and woman, or between man and man. About the latter, there can be differences since each is meant to fulfil a different destiny in the world. The education must be universal and for the masses. For too long the emphasis is on materials and furniture, not on knowledge. He laments the indifference on the part of the Government towards mass education but more the indifference of the people on this count. On the inevitable question of medium of education, he naturally favours the mother tongue. On the question of lack of textbooks in native languages, he declares that the will must precede the action. We cannot expect the leaves to appear first when the tree has not taken the roots.

His views about the aim of education are contained in the following words, "We have come to this world, to accept it and not merely to know it. We may become

powerful by knowledge, but we attain fullness by sympathy. The highest education is that which does not merely give information but makes our life in harmony with all existence". (Personality, Macmillan, p 116)

Presently (and we are speaking of the twenty first century) the reverse is happening in India. The entire system of education is heartless. The student is burdened with dry as dust textbooks swallowed mechanically, pompous paraphernalia and stupid vanity of the official guardians of education, brutal and blind machinery of discipline which forbids any expression of freedom. The student is to be bribed by providing freebies like uniforms, textbooks and mid-day meals to retain him in school. It is all a colossal waste of resources for achieving futile objectives of dubious statistics. The teacher is subject to various directives issued by the higher authorities and has to fill up numerous returns to keep an increasing volume of statistics at the cost of the education of the children.

It is to the credit of Tagore that he did not stop at theorising about educational model for India but went on to put it on the ground. Shantiniketan was set up at Bolpur in 1901. The first four years were turbulent with many head masters coming and going. The number of students to start with were ten including Tagore's son. The students were to be self-sustained except for cooking and sweeping. Use of shoes and umbrellas was prohibited. Music and games were important part of the schedule. Teaching of poetry and reading of books, other than textbooks, encouraged. However, the teachers were not abreast of the ideals which had pushed Tagore into this experiment and there were discordant notes. Finances were hard to come by. Tagore had to sell part of his properties to raise resources. Tuition fees was introduced, albeit unwillingly.

In 1905, Tagore moved to Shantiniketan. Order was restored and new life infused in the ashram. The institute was run on democratic lines. The teachers selected a three men council to administer. The students had their own parliament. The education was not along the prescribed lines. The students could join classes in various subjects according to their proficiency in the subject. Groups were formed but a student could be member of more than one group. Textbooks were used only to prepare for the matriculation examination. At the lower level they were absent. Science was taught through experiments. Observation was encouraged. One of the prescribed tasks was to ask the students to study a flower from its blooming to its withering away and record their observations. These experiences were then discussed in assemblies. These assemblies also had literary sessions. Regular health checks were done and exercises and sports maintained the students in good health. Tagore also introduced social service. The students were expected to take up classes for the children as well as adults in the neighbouring villages. They also distributed homeopathic medicines. The day started with religious prayers and ended with them but there were no dogmatic instructions in religion.

But there were also obstacles. The Government thought it to be unsuitable method of education and ordered Government servants to keep their wards away from the school. In 1908, girls were also admitted but this led to various problems and had to be discontinued after two years (not to be resumed till 1922).

The institute attracted attention of the outsiders mainly because Tagore was already a world figure. Many foreigners visited the school and appreciated the work being done. Gandhi ji stayed at the ashram for five months. Governor of Bengal visited the school in 1915. Thereafter every Governor made it a point to visit the institute at least once in his tenure.

Examinations were not on the traditional lines. Senior students often set the papers for the junior classes. The students could answer the question papers at their convenience at a place of their choice. Yet there were few cases of trust being taken advantage of. Tagore, himself, took classes of both junior and senior students. The school was proficient in sports and won against Kolkata teams in football as well as cricket. Cultural treats were also held and were enjoyable. There was complete freedom and the disciplinary cases were decided by the students themselves. Corporal punishment was prohibited.

Despite the love of the students for the institute, the life was not easy. The financial worries nagged all through especially because the number of teachers was large compared to the number of the students. The World Was I made things harder. It led to fall in number of students and more financial worries. Some discordant notes were always there especially as Tagore was very insistent about his ideals.

Gradually Tagore's educational ideals became more universal. Ancient India still inspired him and he believed that Asia should be bringing a better civilization to the world including the Western countries but he also saw the need of the modern requirements of education. His new ideas were, perhaps for the first time, included in his address in Salem, Tamil Nadu in 1919 which talk came to be known as the seed for 'Centre of Indian Culture'. Later these views were elaborated in Bengali article called Vishwa Bharati. The three fold approach was (a) India should consolidate her own culture to contribute to world culture; (b) she should invite her own scholars to educational centres to pursue and produce knowledge; and (c) education should be related to every aspect of life of her people. But Vishwa Bharati institute was ultimately to be developed as a 'world centre of knowledge'.

It is evident that before the start of Vishwa Bharati, Tagore was involved in deep thinking about the nature of institute which is clear by his reference in his various letters, talks and lectures. In one of his lectures in 1921, he described it as "Eastern University" (Creative Unity, 1922, p 173). In his address to Vishwa Bharati Parishad in December 1923, he said that "recent foreign tours inspired me to broaden the original scope of the institution". (Vishwa Bharati 1922, reprinted 1953 - pp 20-24).

Despite all this the basic idea of discarding the intellectual slavery and taking up, by India, of its rightful place in pursuit of knowledge remained the cardinal principle. Every branch of knowledge, he averred, had two aspects - its content and its critical appraisal. While the former can be learnt from any country, the latter has to be judged by the standards of the country of learner.

Tagore often talks about "national school". What did he mean by it? India, he said, is unified entity of many communities. A school which shows the unified power of knowledge acquired through education, which teaches the fundamental unity is the national school. This unity cannot be a product of political process. It must come through inner unity of mind. The basic thing is that youth must keep the creation fresh and dynamic. It must fight against the status-quo mentality. True scientific temper lies in attempting to conquer all obstacles. Science is basically spiritual search for truth and could benefit the whole humanity. In his last lecture on education as convocation address of Gurukul Kangri in 1941, he said, "we have a feeble interest in our own country. We love to talk about politics and economics; we are ready to soar into the thin air of academic abstraction, or roam in the dusk of pedantic wilderness; but we never care to cross our social boundaries and come to the door of our neighbouring communities, personally to enquire how they think and feel and express themselves, and how they fashion their lives". (Education: Lucknow: May 1942)

Vishwa Bharati

Regular teaching in Vishwa Bharati was started in addition to the school running already at Shantiniketan as a new experiment in July 1919. The subjects introduced originally were Hindu Philosophy, Buddhist Philosophy, Sanskrit Grammar, English Literature, Biology. Pali and Prakrit were added later on. By 1928, it had departments for Islamic Culture (including study of old Persian and Arabic), Tibetan Culture, Jain Culture. The institute also taught, besides Bengali, Hindi and Urdu. Other languages were also promised if the number of students warranted it.

Gujarati was taught for some months by a teacher from Gujarat in 1921. Music from different parts of India was included as a subject. South Indian Vina and Manipuri Style of dancing were introduced in 1919, Kathkali in 1933, and Kathak dance style also in thirties. Hindi Bhavan was set up in 1939 to do research in Hindi literature.

Regular classes to prepare the students for Intermediate and BA examination of Calcutta University were started in 1926 and regular subjects as per the syllabus for these examinations were introduced.

The institute attracted students from different parts of India and also some foreigners from Sri Lanka and Nepal. In January 1920, of the 168 students, 32 were non Bengali. In 1940, in Kala Bhavan, a wing of the institute, of the 75 students, 39

were non Bengali; in Shiksha Bhavan, of the 126 students, 51 were non Bengali; in Patha Bhavan, of the 130 students, 48 were non Bengali.

The staff was also drawn from all over India. Udgokar came from Pune; Sangameshwar - an expert in Vina - from Pithapuram, Budhhimanta Singh from Manipur, Hirjibhai Pestonji from Mumbai taught French and English, Gurdial Malik - a Punjabi from Sindh - taught Sufism, Narsinhbhai - a Gujarati from East Africa taught German, and there were many others. There was a stream of visitors from different parts of India and from other countries who addressed the students on specific subjects apart from general lectures.

In accordance with its main philosophical foundation, practical education was emphasized. There were four departments viz. Agriculture (including Horticulture and Animal Husbandry), Industries, Village Welfare, and Education. Sericulture was introduced for some time but dropped later on. Industry department became a separate institute in 1937, and became known as Shilp Bhavan. The Education department provided for night schools for adults in the neighbouring villages. There was also a day school for girls. Rural Circulating Library was set up and had 1500 books by 1940. Education department also ran training courses for primary school teachers of the nearby areas. Village Welfare department ran a number of activities to further the wellbeing of the villagers. These included sanitation and health, cooperatives etc.

Another innovation of Vishwa Bharati was to start distance learning programmes. While the State Government did not accept the proposals to open centres of learning at other places and states, Calcutta University accepted the proposals. Vishwa Bharati, itself, started examinations for award of Adya certificate, Madhyma diploma and Upadhi diploma. The medium of these was Bengali. These were roughly equivalent to matriculation, intermediate and BA. Later some more examinations were added on the pre matriculation side. A special organization Loka Shiksha Samasad was set up for the purpose in 1937. Till 1957, 14,686 students had appeared in these examinations.

As mentioned above, Art was an integral part of studies at Shantiniketan. However a five year course for Fine Arts was also run additionally. It included various branches of Fine Art such as Free hand drawing, Painting, Fresco painting, Clay modelling, Embroidery, Litho printing. Woodcut, Leather craft, Etching were also included. In 1940, there were 75 regular students, including 33 girls. 39 of the students were non Bengali.

Post-independence, Vishwa Bharati was given a new character. It was granted the status of central university in May 1951. In 1951, Prime Minister Nehru took over as Acharya (Chancellor) and ever since then Prime Minister has been ex officio Acharya.

The university is divided into institutes, centres, departments and schools. The respective departments are included in the institutes. The university's various programmes dealing with its rich cultural heritage as well as art and dance education are funded by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visva-Bharati_University)

Patha Bhavan, which was set up by Tagore, is the oldest school. The School had 1036 students in the year 2009 (resident 238, day scholars 798) from Class I to X. Patha Bhavan (PB) admits students every year in these two categories, viz., residential and day scholars, through admission tests conducted in each category. The admissions for residents, subject to reservation rules for SC, ST and other categories, are based on a test. For day scholars admissions follow a reservation of 50% for the wards of the staff members. PB's classes begin with Class II for which the feeder channel is the Mrinalini Ananda Pathasala (kindergarten) where 50% of the children are wards of VB employees with the balance 50% open to all. Student teacher ratio is 16: 1. Apart from customary subjects, the students are taught co-curricular subjects like – Dance and Music, in regular routine. Moreover, they are taught Fine Arts subjects like – modelling, painting, artistic handicrafts, weaving, woodwork, metal work. In addition to that they are taught physical education in a regular routine. The emphasis is still on teacher student dialogue but regular books are used from class 7 onwards. The medium of instruction is Bengali, with a provision for students from other regions to appear in their assessment examination in English.

The day scholars are there up to 12:30 or 1 pm and their interaction with teachers is limited. It is known that some of them take private tuition afterwards so that their academic performance is better than the residential students. The classes are held in open air but the standards of cleanliness, according to an inspection team, are not so good. In fact, some retired teachers feel that it is just a stenotype school now. Some felt that the wards of staff and alumni were proportionally too many and this also affects the performance. The expectations of the parents are common with all other parents viz. good marks in examinations which would ensure progress in the world. (These were the findings of a high level committee set up with Shri Gopal Krishan Gandhi, Governor of West Bengal as chairman) This leads to all the ills of school education system elsewhere.

Uttar Shiksha Sadan caters for class 11 and 12 and follows the curriculum as prescribed by examining body elsewhere. The only thing special about the institute is the time devoted to extracurricular activities. The University organizes under graduate and post graduate courses. Besides the normal courses, there are special ones for Music, Fine Arts, Physical Education and Social Work. There are special departments for such subjects as Environmental Studies, Journalism, Rural Credit, Rural Studies and Bio-Technology.

Other institutes of Shantiniketan, and there are many, can also be described on similar basis but the main point is how far the basic objectives of Tagore in setting up the institute are being served. Is it just like any other central university distinguished only by the fact that it was set up by an eminent Indian who had some innovative ideas about how education should be imparted. Another aspect to consider would be whether the experiment can be repeated elsewhere and the benefits which were intended by free style teaching in communion with nature and outside the bookish approach can be replicated elsewhere.

It must also be noted that of late, the University is plagued by the same problems which other universities face. In July 2010, the students went on strike against the hike in fees. The situation turned violent after police came charged the agitating students on instructions of the Vishwa Bharati authorities July 17 night. (<http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/> dated July 27, 2010). The students burnt effigies of the Vice-Chancellor and Registrar inside the university campus. The matter could finally be resolved by reducing the hike to half. In November the employees were agitating and in January 2011, Trinmool Chhatra Parishad led an agitation by the students.

Tagore expected the institute to remain apolitical and to take to agitational aspect only in exceptional circumstances (like freedom struggle), but this year, teachers, non-teaching staff and former students went on a sit in strike to express sympathy with Anna Hazare who was on fast in Dilli against corruption. Supriyo Tagore, the great grandson of Rabindranath's elder brother Satyendranath Tagore, is of the view that "Rabindranath had visualised the university as an institution that would facilitate the creation of knowledge. But there is a "total lack of will among the powers-that-be."

Supriyo, who is a past principal of Patha Bhavan - secondary school - is of the opinion that "the entire university, had become exam centric". In May 2011, he complained to the Prime Minister that the Patha Bhavan is being treated as another Central School. There used to be no distinction between junior and senior teachers but the recent advertisement showed three categories of teachers. (Pathabhavan Praktoni News dated May 24, 2011). He called upon the Prime Minister (who is also chancellor of the Institute) to preserve the original character of the institute.

The Institute was started for a limited number of students and even now the High Level Committee has recommended the total strength of students for Patha Bhavan (the secondary school -class 2 to 10) as 600. Considering that the institute is a prestigious institute, recommendation of such a small number has its significance. We may note that Delhi Public School, Mathura Road Delhi (the flag bearer of the chain of schools carrying that name), the number of students to be admitted to KG class alone is 240. The recommendation of the HLC is that it should be entirely residential institute which makes sense considering that communion with nature

cannot be limited to six hours a day. The reduced number of students will not be an adverse factor. After all Doon School has a land area of 70 acres and only 480 students. Lawrence School, Sanawar, Himachal Pradesh has 139 acres of land and 670 students. As regards the student teacher ratio, Doon School ratio is 8 : 1 and of the Lawrence School 9 : 1. To be really effective, Patha Bhavan should have similar ratio. The present student teacher ratio is 16: 1.

Two distinct ideas worked with Tagore when he founded the School and later on extended it to Vishwa Bharati. One was to have a school where the students learnt in communion with nature and outside the prescribed style of bookish and exam oriented education. The other was to have a prestigious research institution where the scholars from all over the world may congregate to do research on Indian culture and traditions and spread the message around the world.

We are following neither. The school part has been converted into a regular affair with all the ills which assail the system elsewhere. Instead of the Institute being a torch bearer to show light to others, it is just another school. On the other hand, the research part has given over to a regular graduate churning machine. The website of the institute does not mention any recent work of outstanding merit on the research site. It is not clear if this is just an omission or that it has nothing to offer on this count. (The number of titles directly related to Tagore is more than 375 out of the total titles numbering 750. - <http://www.visva-bharati.ac.in/Publication>).

The natural thing will be to split the two streams. One would be a prestigious fully residential school which will follow the path laid down by Tagore. The other would be a purely residential research institute which would truly be 'Centre of Indian Culture' much on the lines of Indian Institute of Advance Studies, Shimla about which President Zakir Husain had expressed the hope that the Institute would, 'grow into a site of free enquiry, of disciplined intellectual activity, both critical and constructive, where the illimitable freedom of the mind is respected and nurtured, and where excellence in all its aspects is the guiding star'. (<http://www.ias.org/institute.html>)

The other point of consideration would be whether the experiment can be replicated. In view of the rapid urbanization (presently residents of urban conglomerates account for 40 % of the total population), it is doubtful if living with nature would be practical. But there are other aspects which can be profitably followed elsewhere. The first and foremost thing is to free the students from the essential bookish knowledge which they have to acquire from a very tender age. (It is painful to see three years olds reciting English rhymes which they neither understand nor relate to). Under the new system, the examinations prior to class 10 have been done away with (even the class 10 is optional for CBSE) but nothing is as yet in place for assessment of the progress of the students. How far the education can be redirected into creative activity is still to be discussed, let alone put into practice. We would need special training for the teachers for that. And we would need a lot more teachers than available at

present or are likely to be available in the near future. The important thing is the student teacher ratio. The current ratio in India is 40 and the Right to Education Act 2009 promises to bring it down to 35. Sixteen would be a long way off. If we have really to follow the path shown by Tagore, music and arts teachers would be needed and we hardly have any presently in the Government run schools (which account for over 80 % of the students). Privately funded schools will also be expected to fall in line and it would mean further increase in the school fees which, incidentally, are far too high at present.

This would also mean reversal of the present trend of centralization. Ministry of Human Resources Development swears by the National Curriculum Framework developed by NCERT. While this is a good document, to expect it to apply uniformly all over the country is too much especially when this is done mechanically. For example, the NCF talks of elementary education being in 'home language' but there is no move to provide for development of books in the local languages. The NCF says that fifty per cent of the content of a book should relate to local areas but there is no machinery or budget to provide for this. The Right to Education Act 2009 qualifies the entire concept by inserting phrase 'as far as practicable' (Section 29 (2) (f)). The practical difficulty may be anything - lack of budget, lack of teachers, lack of books or (which is more likely) lack of will. If we consider that Tagore did not want any textbooks whatsoever, the difference in approach becomes apparent since the Act speaks of responsibility of the Local Body to 'ensure timely prescribing of curriculum and courses of study for elementary education'. (Section 9 (f))

All this has to be changed if we have to even partially follow the vision of Tagore and to make education a source of pleasure to the student. Most of all, we have to adopt Tagore's views about reducing the unnecessary in our lives and learn in an atmosphere of simplicity and bareness, in communion with nature, unfettered by prescribed textbooks and routines. The best education is that which liberates not binds (*sa vidya ya vimuktaya*) and harmonises our existence. Perhaps we will have to think out of box to make education student centric and a real pursuit of the ideals of Tagore to achieve "Education for Fullness".

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Empowerment & Employability of youth - Role of Lifelong Learning

M.C.Reddeppa Reddy

Introduction

About 45 per cent of the population is less than 20 years of age and about 950 million people are below the age of 65 years. Many youth are employed in jobs of low quality, underemployed, working long hours for low wages. Many of them are engaged in dangerous work or receive only short term and or informal employment arrangements. More than 50 per cent of the employed youth are disadvantaged due to lack of workplace skills. As per the World Youth Report (2003), about 84.5 million young people in India live under extreme poverty line. About 44.2 per cent (44million) of youth population is under nourished which is 23 per cent of the total youth population of the world. Gross enrollment percentage of youth in higher education is 7 per cent as compared to 92 per cent in USA, 52 per cent in UK, 45 per cent in Japan, 11.1 per cent in Asian countries and about 10.3 per cent in all other developing countries.

In India, large workforce is waiting for the work opportunities. Too many people are competing for the same job. White-collar jobs are in demand. There is a demand for the new skills and rapid growth. Employability depends on the knowledge, skills and attitude of the youth. It is estimated that by 2025, about 300 million educated youth will be waiting for jobs/ employment in the country. About 57 per cent of them will not be having requisite skills for employment. About 90 per cent of the school / college leavers will have bookish knowledge instead of vocational knowledge. Only 7 per cent of the youth, who are in the age group of 15-29 years, will receive vocational training. Further, it is estimated that about 25 per cent of the total working population in the world will live in India by the end of 2010. The present paper mainly focuses on empowerment and employability of youth. The determinants of employability are explained briefly. The paper discusses on the need for lifelong learning in the context of employability, role of lifelong learning in empowerment and employability, and learning strategies in the context of employability skills.

Youth Empowerment

Everyone seems to be talking about empowerment these days, female empowerment, worker's empowerment, and youth empowerment are just some of the phrases that are flying around. But what exactly does that empowerment mean. The Youth empowerment is an attitudinal, structural, and cultural process whereby young people gain the ability, authority, and agency to make decisions and implement

change in their own lives and the lives of other people, including youth and adults (Vavrus & Fletcher, 2006).

Youth empowerment is often addressed as a gateway to intergenerational equity, civic engagement and democracy building. Many local, state, provincial, regional, national, and international government agencies and nonprofit community-based organizations provide programs centered on youth empowerment (Journal of Extension, 1998). Activities involved therein may focus on youth-led media, youth rights, youth councils, youth activism, youth involvement in community decision-making, and other methods (Sazana & Young, 2006).

Empowering Youth specifically addresses the four empowerment assets in an engaging style for empowering young people in their own communities (Kelly Curtis, 2007):

1. Offers ideas for youth workers and educators.
2. Focuses on the development of the Empowerment assets in young people.
3. Provides the opportunities and means for youth to genuinely serve others.
4. Helps young people feel safe enough to grow into confident leaders.

A quality youth empowerment programs could greatly help the child, teen, or young adult in our life (Cindy Van, 2011).

Youth Employability

Employability skills or generic skills are those which can be applied to most workplace situations. They are general in nature, and cover a range of 'whole of job' experiences. They are sometimes referred to as the 'soft' skills, but teachers should not take this to mean they are dispensable or easy to learn. For many students, mastering employability skills can be a challenging and confronting process, requiring intensive teacher and school input and explicit teaching, role modeling and task planning. For this reason, it is important to work towards an employability skills lesson plans series or sequence as this allows you, as teacher, to devote time, curriculum resources and effort towards teaching employability skills as an important part of your careers, work education or life learning program.

Employability skills are usually seen as covering eight core skill areas:

- ♦ Initiative
- ♦ Teamwork
- ♦ Communication
- ♦ Using technology
- ♦ Solving problems and using initiative
- ♦ Being able to self manage

- ♦ Learning for life
- ♦ Planning and organising

Transferable Skills are required to get the employment. They include:

- ♦ Writing Skills
- ♦ Online tutorial from LSE on Writing for Economics includes advice on writing job applications
- ♦ IREE Paper: Using Writing to Enhance Student Learning in Undergraduate Economics
- ♦ Case Study: Developing Skills through Regular Assessment
- ♦ Case Study: Students' assignment as a piece of economics journalism and follow-up
- ♦ Resources from the Write Now CETL
- ♦ IT Skills
- ♦ Online Text in IT skills for Economists
- ♦ Archive of Computers in Higher Education Economics Review (CHEER)
- ♦ Presentation Skills
- ♦ Funded project: Presentation Skills for Economics Undergraduates
- ♦ Handbook Chapter: Undergraduate Research in Economics
- ♦ Handbook Chapter: Seminars
- ♦ Reflections: Classroom practice and student engagement
- ♦ Case Study: Making the Leap to Web-based Study
- ♦ Personal Development
- ♦ Research Skills
- ♦ Team Work
- ♦ Multiple Skills

Handbook Chapter: But the most effective way to build fruitful links with employers is to ensure our students are:

- ♦ aware of all the graduate opportunities open to them
- ♦ have high aspirations
- ♦ the skills necessary to manage their careers
- ♦ appropriate work experience
- ♦ the ability to make effective applications for employment

Employability skills, while categorized in many different ways, are generally divided into three skill sets: (i) basic academic skills, (b) higher order thinking skills and (c) personal qualities. The basic skills are necessary for getting, keeping and doing well on a job. Application of higher order thinking skills in the use of technology, instruments, tools and information systems takes these higher order skills to a new level, making the employee even more valuable. Employees with good personal skills practice good personal habits, come to work as scheduled, on time and dressed

appropriately, and are agreeable to change when necessary. These are the skills, attitudes and actions that enable workers to get along with their fellow workers and supervisors and to make sound, critical decisions.

Determinants of Employability

The following issues such as awareness of job opportunities, developing of self-confidence/ high aspirations, course curriculum, career related experience, involvement in extra-curricular activities, relations with employers, awareness of selection procedure, career development/management skills would determine the employability of youth and students. They are described hereunder:

Aware of employment Opportunities

At the start of their degree course some students have an idea of their employment aspirations but many have no idea at all. The full diversity of employment opportunities available should be made known to students early in their courses so they can make appropriate decisions.

Development of self-confidence and high aspirations

A proportion of students has very low self-esteem and aim low with regard to career aspirations. This may be a particular problem with students entering through a widening participation route. Being aware of the employment destinations of their predecessors helps students to know what they can aspire to. Talks given by graduates of a few years ago can help students to realize that others to whom they can relate have succeeded and consequently they can too. It is important that the whole range of employment opportunities is addressed.

Course Curriculum

The issue of curriculum promotes employability of students. This issue splits into two areas:

- ♦ Issues around discipline specific knowledge, skills and attitudes;
- ♦ Issues around skills and attitudes which are not discipline specific.

In both cases it is essential that students can identify and evidence the skills they have developed. Too many students fail to appreciate the skills they actually possess. In recent years there has been some over-emphasis on the non-discipline specific skills. While it is true that students with good skills and attitudes in discipline non-specific areas will be employable in some jobs, they may NOT be employable within discipline-orientated jobs unless they ALSO have the appropriate discipline-specific knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Career related work experience

Our students are not encouraged to obtain work experience. The benefit conferred on a student's employment prospects by a period of appropriate work experience cannot be over-emphasized. Indeed some employers look initially ONLY at applications from graduates who already have career related work experience. ALL work experience can be beneficial if the student is aware of and can enunciate the skills and experience gained. Students should be encouraged to regard even term-time part-time jobs, usually taken on primarily to reduce student debt, as opportunities to develop skills and commercial awareness. But even better are vacation placements, sometimes referred to as internships that offer project work and appropriate training.

Involvement in extra-curricular activities

Employers are looking for students who are intellectually able, skilled interpersonally, team players, numerate and literate! Many of these attributes are acquired, practiced and demonstrated through extra-curricular activities. Students often find difficulty in appreciating the contribution of their work experience and especially "free-time" activities make to their employability.

Relationships with employers

There is a need to build links and relationships with employers both in the discipline and outside it. Many employers outside the discipline-specific area may not be aware that our graduates may make excellent managers/administrators in all sorts of employment areas. They may make successful bankers, fast stream civil servants, marketers, management consultants, editors, accountants and other private and public sector professionals.

Aware of selection procedure for employment

The students also do not know the information about the variety of interviewing (psychometric testing, group selection activities, and presentations) and other selection methods employed by employers. In addition, students need general information about the application process, for example, the likely numbers involved, the fact that not all applications will even be acknowledged, the time sequences, appropriate clothing for interviews and the sorts of questions asked.

Career development skills

Many students are uncertain about their future careers and will not see the relevance of considering employability. However, employability is a generic issue consideration of which will shape the choices made by students both within a course

(e.g. optional papers), within their part-time employment (e.g. what they get in terms of skills and experience from particular jobs) and in their spare time and extra-curricular activities (e.g. what experiences they gain and what skills they develop in these activities).

Career development skills are central to this issue and students need to develop these skills at the earliest possible moment as these are relevant to their options within university courses as well as their development within employment.

Career management skills

A proportion of students do not have the skill to manage degree programme choices and the careers. The days of 'a job for life' have gone. Transience, flexibility, change and the need for lifelong-learning now characterize much employment. Students need to be fully conscious of the requirement to actively manage their choices within degree programs, in extracurricular activities, and in their personal and professional development during employment. In this way they will be optimally positioned to make the transition into work and pursue and successfully manage their desired career path. Students who possess the career management skills needed to make appropriate career choices. In addition they should have other attributes such as confidence and high aspirations and the ability to network, especially at times of transition.

Need for Lifelong learning in the context of Employability

Lifelong Learning (LL) plays a vital role in development of the employability skills through institutional, on-job and combined training programs, for a variety of clients ranging from first time job seekers, to the employed, the unemployed, individuals who have dropped out of the workforce and to the older workers. The new concern to meet the day-to-day needs of individuals, societies, allied with growing recognition that most learning takes place informally outside the school framework, has led to unprecedented emphasis on the uniqueness of each person as a learner. Adults want to learn specific things at different stages in their lives: a mother wants to be able to talk intelligently to her children about what they are learning at school; a worker wants to master new skills so as to put to himself in line for promotion or another job; a citizen wants to play a more useful role in his community. Up to the present time, education has been more or less teacher/subject oriented especially at the lower level where the great mass of the people are involved. The stress has been upon acquiring and memorizing information. Children and grown-ups have been expected to learn at a pace and under constraints beyond their own control. Now, educationists are beginning to insist that education must become learner-centered: the learner must decide for himself what stimuli he will respond to and control his own responses. But if he is to learn effectively, he must know how to make optimum

use of the most up-to-date learning tools available to him. So, the main object of lifelong education is to assist people to become self-motivated and self-directing.

The essential need for organizing lifelong education, at least to remove obsolescence, for equipping the future generations for a world characterized by rapid change and the difficulty of keeping up with advances in knowledge have led in most countries to an evaluation of what educational institutions should aim at. Instead of bloating the curriculum with a view to providing information, the trend is towards "providing basic concepts and principles" and the development in students of the capability to learn on their own.

From a pure materialistic point of view, it was observed in a recent study sponsored by the European Commission that 'intellectual capital is depreciating at 7 per cent per year (which is a much higher rate than the recruitment of new graduates) with a corresponding reduction in the effectiveness of the workforce'. Yet another study asserts that 'in electronics and related areas of engineering, knowledge is doubling every 2.5 to 3 years and so 10 years after graduation, a 32 year old engineer is practicing in a world where 80 per cent of the knowledge he is using has been discovered since he graduated' (Armando Palomar and Marti Parellada, 2001).

Role of Lifelong Learning in Empowerment and Employability

The Lifelong Learning (LL) develops a right decision to do a course depending upon the demand for the jobs. It helps the young people to see the relationship between school and future life roles. It is a lifelong pattern of roles including family member, student, employee and community volunteer. It also develops academic skills required for adoptability in our rapidly changing society. It helps to equip with sufficient self-understanding about the educational /vocational opportunities to make sound career decisions. It promotes to equip with career decision making skills, job-hunting skills and job-getting skills. It develops understanding in relation to the world of work. LL helps to equip with job-specific occupational skills and inter-personal skills that will allow them to enter into and attain some success in the world of work. It makes the people to aware of available means for changing career options and of social and personal constraints on various career alternatives. It facilitates to acquire and use occupational information to make informed career choices.

Learning Strategies for developing employability skills

The learning strategies for employability skills are classified as guided learning, self-directed learning, peer learning and application of knowledge and skills.

Guided learning: Guided learning is an interaction between the career advisor, the student, and the materials of instruction. The advisor guides the process on the basis of his understanding of both student and materials so as to create learning

experiences that will be meaningful to the student. The function of the advisor is to guide the student into the kind of experiences that will enable him to develop his own natural potentialities.

1. It ensures remediation of learning defects;
2. Helps the student to acquire a more stable level of literacy skills;
3. Gives tailored advice to individual students;
4. It also helps in the transition from guided learning to self-learning;

There are many guided learning strategies viz., Demonstration, Guided discussion, and the tutorial.

Self-Directed Learning

Self directed learning emphasizes the individuals role in learning and his personal responsibility in it. Thus, the concept is based on premise that 'students posses the potential for self-initiation and self-evaluation in learning. Under self-study method, a student performing effectively is one who perceives things to do, personalize learning, exercises self-discipline and makes use of human resources. The methods such as visits/tours/field trips, problem solving, open learning, programmed learning and compute assisted learning, etc., facilitate self-directed learning.

The new educational methodology will lay stress on the production of materials needed for self-learning. They include: placements, internships, project work, observation, simulation, computer assisted learning, web-based learning, websites etc.

Computer Assisted Learning (CAL)

As the computer becomes more commonplace, so more learning packages will become available and it will be easier for the educators to employ this approach. It facilitates instant access to information with infinite patience and accuracy, and it provides opportunity for systematically organized learning for all learners. The increasing amount of information and lack of qualified teachers necessitate its use. In this, the learner can learn at his own pace, receive immediate personalized feedback and freely choose the content, sequencing and degree of difficulty of instruction.

Web-based Learning

The web can help us to re-focus from teaching to learning, from teacher to student. Web is a viable means to increase access to education and promote improved learning. The web appears to offer at least three distinct advantages in promoting improved learning: i. Web Appeals to Students' Learning mode, ii. Web Provides Flexible Learning, and iii. Web Enables New Kinds of Learning.

Email provides a way for students to contact the instructor directly and for the teacher to broadcast news to all registered participants. Internet visitors are invited to join class discussions provided they identify themselves as such. This is refreshing addition to the course as it potentially broadens the range of opinions expressed in on-line discussions. The students who are shy or uncomfortable about participating in class discussions often no longer feel that way in on-line forums. The synchronous and asynchronous communication tools allow live audio and video to be carried over the internet, enabling the creation of an on-line learning environment that stimulates a real classroom. Yet, this virtual classroom still allows students the flexibility of taking part in the class from any Internet connection in the world.

The web is a tool that fits well with this new learning environment. It empowers students to become part of the Internet community and to take advantage of the wealth of learning opportunities available through the Internet. The career progression of individual students with particular discipline related degrees can be found on the Prospects.ac.uk website under the 'Use your subject' section.

Peer Learning

Peer learning means learning of students from their own peers. It is possible by exchanging or sharing of knowledge and experiences. Discover to work well within a group of the peer and to discover how to function as a significant part of a team. Participating in discussions/brain storming sessions/ seminars and role-playing, the student has an opportunity to exchange views and share their knowledge.

Application of knowledge/skills

Application of knowledge/ skills would facilitate continuous learning. To apply the knowledge/skills would help to derive benefit and to verify the facts. The methods which provide the opportunities for application of knowledge or practice include: Case study, Projects, Workshops, Assignments and Practical.

Conclusion

The concepts of empowerment and employability have been made clear. The determinants of employability such as awareness of job opportunities, developing of self-confidence, course curriculum, career related experience, involvement in extra-curricular activities, relations with employers, awareness of selection procedure, career development/management skills are explained briefly. The paper discussed on the need for lifelong learning in development of the employability skills and the role of lifelong learning in promoting empowerment and employability of youth. Finally, various learning strategies viz., guided learning, self-learning, peer learning and experimental learning have been discussed.

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Impact of Libraries and Cultural Centres for Empowering Rural Women

Prabhakar Singh

Men and women are like wheels of a family car. By birth, both are equally intelligent and talented. But our social systems, traditions, cultures and beliefs create differences among them. Through division of work, the kinds of works to be performed by men and women in our social system have been specified. The system, carved out as a convenient way to both the genders in carrying out their work, upon continuous existence for several years, develops a kind of monotony thus adversely affecting the women as a whole. By bequeathing them the 'secondary status' in the society, the women community has been made 'weaker' and 'helpless'.

In the post-Independent era, by incorporating/amending appropriate provisions in the Constitution of India, several rules/laws have been framed to give equal status to women in our society and to link them to the mainstream of development. Through Five Yearly Planning, the Government has been implementing several educational and developmental schemes with the main focus of making women self-reliant, both socially as well as economically.

Despite several constitutional provisions, rules, laws and developmental schemes in place to favour women, their development is still not as anticipated. However, there has been a considerable improvement seen in the status of urban women based on their educational capabilities as a result of the aforementioned efforts of the Government. But rural women still lagging behind the race a long way in the development process due to lack of education. As per 2001 census, approximately 57% of rural women were illiterates. Of the total identified illiterate population of 18 million in the age group of 7 years and above, the state of Madhya Pradesh alone accounted for nearly 12 million illiterate women.

Women empowerment cannot be visualized without literacy and education. Literacy plays a significant role in making the individual aware of ones rights thereby respond to their duties. Only a literate person can pave a way to development for self, family, society and country.

Women education is the focal point in all the developmental programs aimed at linking the women who were grossly deprived of to the mainstream of development

for decades. As revealed from various reports, women were major beneficiaries of literacy and continuing education programs. As per 2004-05 annual report of National Literacy Mission, approximately 124 million people were made literate in the country from May 1988 to March 2005, of which 60% (approx. 74 million) were women. In a typical rural India setting where women are completely dependent on their male counterparts for all their day-to-day needs, it is not an easy task to drag them out of their self-constrained boundaries and make them self-reliant. Women participation in the activities of adult literacy and rural libraries and cultural centres has become very significant in view of their empowerment.

Establishment of Rural Libraries and Cultural Centres in Madhya Pradesh

In the form of allied programmes under continuing education, approximately 47103 rural libraries and cultural centres were established on 26th January 2003 with the view to retain the literacy skills of the adults who were made literate through earlier literacy programmes, post-literacy programmes and 'Padhna Badhna Aandolan' as also to provide the entire community an opportunity for continuous reading in view of their social and economic development (Singh: 2008 B:34). The main objective of these centres was to bring about a multiplier effect by pushing up the status of the lives of neo-literates and people in the community by creating an educated and knowledgeable society by organizing educational programmes and activities.

Different educational activities and developmental programmes viz. literacy classes, conduct of library and reading room, discussion forum, organization of short duration training programmes, information window, games and cultural activities, equivalency programme, income generating programmes, quality of life improvement programme and individual interest promotion programme, etc. were organised through the rural libraries and cultural centres.

Need of the Study

Since January 2003, in Madhya Pradesh, along with the promotional activities of education through organizing various educational activities of the rural libraries and cultural centres, inventions in the science, latest improvements in technology and important information related to the development were taken to general public, particularly rural people, women and other deprived sections of the community. These centres also worked as nerve centres to curtail the blind-beliefs and social evils prevailed in the society and promoted advanced scientific temperament as also the social and economic development of women and deprived sections of the community.

The extent of impact of the rural libraries and cultural centres on rural socio-economic development and women empowerment will only be known when the impact of these centres is studied and hence a need was felt to undertake the present study

titled 'Impact of Library and Cultural Centres' on rural socio-economic development. Main objectives of the study were as below:

1. Gather information pertaining to the formation of rural libraries and cultural centres as also of their activities and programmes.
2. Know the participation of the villagers in the activities of the centres and their opinion
3. Study the impact of these centres on rural socio-economic development

Method

This study was completed based on the data collected using interview schedule and group discussions from 48 preraks (facilitators) and 564 beneficiaries of 48 rural libraries and cultural centres of 12 blocks in 4 districts viz. Jabalpur, Mandla, Narsinghpur and Chhindwara which were selected on stratified random sampling method. Along with this, through observations and available records, physical status of the centres was obtained and information about the activities and programmes organized at these centres was also received.

Major findings of the Study

The major findings of the study are based on the responses collected through well structured interview schedules from villagers who took part in the activities of these centres. However, due importance has also been given to the information received through discussions held with preraks (facilitators) of these centres, Volunteers, Resource Persons and local people's representatives at various levels viz. district, block, cluster as also of the community while arriving at the findings.

Impact of libraries & cultural centres on the empowerment of rural women

Table No.1: Educational Status of the Beneficiaries

S.No	Status of education	Beneficiaries of the centres		
		Male	Female	Total
1	Neo-literates	100 (41)	162 (51)	262 (46)
2	School dropouts	26 (11)	45 (14)	71 (13)
3	Previously educated adults	53 (22)	58 (18)	111 (20)
4	School going children	64 (26)	56 (17)	120 (21)
	Total	243 (100) (43)	321 (100) (57)	564 (100) (100)

As evident from the data, 57% of the total beneficiaries were women, of them, 51% were neo-literates, 14% were school drop-outs, 18% were previously educated and 17% was school going girls.

Table No.2: Participation by beneficiaries in the activities organized at rural libraries

S.No	Activities	Participation of beneficiaries								
		General			Tribal			Total		
		M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1	Literacy classes	43 (34)	67 (44)	110 (39)	63 (54)	89 (53)	152 (54)	106 (44)	156 (49)	262 (46)
2	Reading Room/ Library	127 (100)	153 (100)	280 (100)	116 (100)	168 (100)	284 (100)	243 (100)	321 (100)	564 (100)
3	Discussion Forum	102 (80)	115 (75)	217 (78)	98 (84)	157 (93)	255 (90)	200 (82)	272 (85)	472 (84)
4	Self-Help Groups	19 (15)	79 (52)	98 (35)	43 (37)	107 (64)	150 (53)	62 (26)	186 (60)	248 (44)
5	Vocational development trainings	9 (7)	63 (41)	72 (26)	25 (22)	78 (46)	103 (36)	34 (14)	141 (44)	175 (31)
6	Cultural activities/Games	119 (94)	111 (73)	230 (82)	104 (90)	159 (95)	263 (93)	223 (92)	270 (84)	493 (87)
7	Information Window	97 (76)	94 (61)	191 (68)	100 (86)	138 (82)	238 (84)	197 (81)	232 (72)	429 (76)
	Total	127 (100)	153 (100)	280 (100)	116 (100)	168 (100)	284 (100)	243 (100)	321 (100)	564 (100)

A significant achievement is that women have actively participated in the activities and programmes of the rural libraries and cultural centres established in the state as part of the literacy and continuing education programmes. Rural women, who are mainly at the receiving end of the social evils and blind beliefs, were on their way in becoming self-dependent by associating themselves with the rural libraries. Although women participation was not as good and as anticipated in the earlier literacy programmes, there was a considerable improvement in their participation as far as the activities of the rural libraries were concerned. Perhaps, the reason could be that through the rural libraries, the alphabetical and numerical knowledge was extended to link with the lives of the women. When the women came to know that discussions about issues related to their lives and problems were going on at these centres, they themselves pulled out towards the centres to take part in the activities of the centres despite having been suffered from various problems. It was clear from the discussions that although some women had to face embarrassment in the beginning by their peer beneficiaries with their disdainful remarks and sarcastic imitations as also by physical and mental harassment by their male-counterparts at homes, yet they came forward and participated in the activities of the centres. Their participation in the activities of the centres not only enhanced their literacy skills but they also got a platform where they can sit together, discuss, exchange their thoughts thereby finding solutions to their problems as well as take part in the developmental activities thus leading towards empowerment.

As they were learning and doing new things by group efforts involving discussions and exchange of thoughts among themselves, they moved forward and with this, a lot of opportunities opened up for their empowerment. Although a number

of immeasurable factors were responsible for women empowerment, yet there were certain things with which women empowerment can be understood.

During the study, it was revealed from the group discussions that by stepping out of the four walls of the house and taking part in the activities of the library, apart from reading books, they had the opportunity to express their thoughts without any hesitation in group discussions that led to their personality development and honed their thought expressing ability.

Table No.3: Rationale behind casting vote by beneficiaries

S.No	Basis to vote	Beneficiaries								
		General			Tribal			Total		
		M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
1	Good performance of the candidate as perceived by them	61 (64)	55 (51)	117 (57)	27 (34)	59 (60)	86 (48)	88 (50)	115 (55)	203 (53)
2	As told by the family head	15 (16)	33 (30)	48 (23)	13 (16)	18 (18)	31 (17)	28 (16)	51 (24)	79 (21)
3	As told by others	8 (6)	12 (11)	20 (10)	32 (41)	16 (16)	48 (27)	40 (23)	28 (13)	68 (18)
4	Don't exercise their franchise	12 (12)	9 (3)	21 (10)	7 (9)	6 (6)	13 (7)	19 (11)	15 (7)	34 (9)
	Total	95 (100)	110 (100)	205 (100)	79 (100)	99 (100)	178 (100)	175 (100)	209 (100)	384 (100)

Through rural libraries, women got the information about the activities and programmes of Panchayats which led to their increased participation in the activities of Panchayat and village assemblies (Gram Sabhas). 55% women respondents told that they cast their vote based on the good performance of the candidate.

Table No.4: Beneficiaries awareness about marriage of their daughters

S.No	Opinion about marriage of their daughters	Beneficiaries of the centres		
		Male	Female	Total
1	After 18 years of age	151 (54)	145 (51)	296 (52)
2	Between 15 and 17 years of age	48 (17)	102 (36)	150 (27)
3	After completion of education	81 (29)	37 (13)	118 (21)
	Total	280 (100)	284 (100)	564 (100)

Participation in the activities of rural libraries favourably changed the way beneficiaries think about girls' education and their marriage. The result was that a large chunk of beneficiaries (73%) desired to see their daughters get married only after attaining 18 years of age, and 21% of them also opined that they be married only after completion of their education.

Usually, women and girls from rural areas do not get proper health facilities or adequate educational opportunities. A positive change in their status was taking

place ever since the rural libraries started playing a major role in the society as a result of which the village daughters were getting educated and becoming self-reliant.

Table No.5: Association in form of groups by beneficiaries of the centres

S.N.	Name of the group	Beneficiaries of the centres		
		General	Tribal	Total
1	Self-help groups	98 (35)	150 (53)	248 (44)
2	Youth groups	107 (38)	90 (32)	197 (35)
3	Women groups	84 (30)	119 (42)	203 (36)
4	Bhajan groups	108 (39)	157 (55)	265 (47)
5	Not associated with any group	135 (48)	79 (28)	214 (38)
	Total	280 (100)	284 (100)	564 (100)

4% of the respondents were associated with self-help groups through the rural libraries as revealed from the group discussions and more than 1/3rd women (36%) were associated with women groups. This made it clear that awareness about issues related to community formation and education was enhanced in women. These groups proved to be very useful to rural and tribal women. By associating themselves with these groups, a feeling of unity was felt by them. The ability of finding solutions to the social problems was developed in beneficiaries as they exchanged thoughts and ideas among them during discussions of these groups. Their immediate financial needs were also met with the help of self-help groups. These groups were also finding solutions to their social problems and also focusing on savings and income generation.

Participation in trainings related to skill development

Women developed 'savings' as a habit after their association with self-help groups. Approximately 31% beneficiaries who associated with the groups received training on different trades viz. stitching/embroidery, motor –rewinding, incense sticks/wax candles making, pickles/papad making, bamboo basket making, mat making, leather toys making and also on agriculture and cattle rearing.

Table No.6: Participation in trainings related to skill development

S.N	Skill development trainings	Beneficiaries of the centres		
		General	Tribal	Total
1	Stitching/embroidery	17 (6)	12 (4)	29 (5)
2	Motor winding	13 (5)	13 (5)	26 (5)
3	Incense sticks/ wax candles/ detergent soaps/ pickles/ papad making	16 (6)	37 (13)	53 (9)
4	Mat/ basket/ leather toys making	0 (0)	29 (10)	29 (5)
5	Agriculture and cattle rearing	26 (9)	12 (4)	38 (7)
6	No training received	208 (74)	181 (64)	389 (69)
	Total	280 (100)	284 (100)	564 (100)

There had been a strong impact of these groups in finding solutions and solving problems related to their social and economic problems, as revealed from the group discussions. Before their association with the SHGs, women used to be borrowing small amounts of money from private lenders for their immediate needs by pledging their immovable properties, jewellery, utensils, etc. Apart from the high interest rates being charged by these lenders, sometimes, they were also exploiting these women mentally as well as physically by pushing them into a web of debts with high interest rates which they were unable to repay. Through SHGs, these women were getting small amounts of money for their immediate needs in a respectable and easy way. This way, women members of SHGs were not only able to find solutions to their financial problems but also to their social problems as well.

Table No.7: Participation in special occasions/celebration of days

S.N.	Participation in Special Occasions	Beneficiaries of the centres		
		Male	Female	Total
1	Literacy Day	186 (76)	180 (56)	366 (65)
2	Women's Day	19 (8)	184 (57)	203 (36)
3	Independence/Republic Day	146 (60)	164 (51)	310 (55)
4	Holy and other local celebrations	170 (70)	185 (58)	355 (63)
	Total	243 (100)	321 (100)	564 (100)

As revealed from the study, more than 50% women respondents came out of the four walls and enthusiastically participated in the public celebrations on special occasions/days at the centers. In a typical rural Indian setting where participation in public celebrations, programmes, festivals is forbidden for women, more than 50% attendance of women in these programmes was really significant in terms of their empowerment. This was an indicator that there was a clear progress in the status of women.

Our systems and laws were ineffective in alienating the kind of social inequalities/discriminations being faced by women. Rural libraries took a lead in this direction in organizing various education activities by involving rural villagers thus brought about a positive change in their lives.

Development in women's education

Table No.8: Average age of girls at marriage

S.No	Average Age (years)	Beneficiaries of the centres		
		Male	Female	Total
1	18 and above	160 (57)	133 (47)	293 (52)
2	Between 16 and 17	84 (30)	98 (35)	182 (32)
3	Below 15	36 (13)	53 (18)	89 (16)
	Total	280 (100)	284 (100)	564 (100)

It is evident from the study that in 52% families of the beneficiaries of the center, marriage of girls was taking place only after attaining 18 years of age as stipulated in law. 73% respondents even expressed their strong desire to see their daughters get married only after 18 years of age, and 1/4th of them furthermore opined that they be married only after completion of their education (See Table No.4). This would definitely improve the status of girls' education as also make them empowered.

Awareness development in women about current issues and problems

Table No.9: Issues discussed in discussion-forums on which work was done for the village development

S.No	Issues	Beneficiaries of the centres		
		Male	Female	Total
1	Enrolment and attendance in school	171 (61)	213 (75)	384 (68)
2	Rural sanitation, vaccination, protection of diseases and construction of toilets	167 (60)	182 (64)	349 (62)
3	Gender equality	187 (67)	128 (45)	315 (56)
4	National unity and fraternity	153 (55)	140 (49)	293 (52)
5	Environment and water conservation	166 (59)	116 (41)	282 (50)
6	Agricultural and cattle rearing	141 (50)	181 (64)	322 (57)
	Total	280 (100)	284 (100)	564 (100)

It is evident from the study that in both rural and tribal areas, by taking part in discussion forums being organized at rural libraries and cultural centers, villagers became very attentive towards various developmental issues and their participation in them also increased viz. enhancement in school enrollment and attendance, awareness about gender equality, health and hygiene, practicing modern techniques in agriculture & cattle rearing and a feeling to contribute to the cause of development of the village was also developed.

Table No.10: Information received by beneficiaries through rural libraries

S.No	Particulars	Beneficiaries of the centres		
		Male	Female	Total
1	Department of Education	258 (92)	266 (94)	524 (93)
2	Department of Panchayat & Rural Development	246 (88)	233 (82)	479 (85)
3	Department of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry	205 (73)	161 (57)	366 (65)
4	Department of Health	213 (76)	226 (80)	439 (78)
5	Social Welfare Department	148 (53)	179 (63)	327 (58)
6	Women & Child Development Department	190 (68)	188 (66)	378 (67)
7	Department of Forests and Environment Protection	72 (26)	136 (48)	208 (37)
	Total	280 (100)	284 (100)	564 (100)

These centers were very crucial in view of the social and economic development of rural women as revealed from the study that in both rural and tribal areas, the beneficiaries received information about different developmental schemes of various departments viz. Education, Panchayat & Rural Welfare, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Health, Social Welfare, Women & Child Welfare, etc through these centres. These findings corroborate the fact that, in both rural and tribal areas, the rural libraries and cultural centers had a very significant role in linking the women to the mainstream of development by making the information on various developmental schemes, which were specifically being implemented for women, accessible to them.

Based on the foregoing facts and findings it is clearly evident that through rural libraries and cultural centers, not only knowledge and awareness level was enhanced in women but there was significant improvement in their self-confidence, self-respect and their vocational skills too to some extent. Through the group efforts of the rural libraries and cultural centers, women came out of their self-constrained boundaries and were slowly reaching out to various levels - school, panchayat, bank, janpad, etc. - to leave a strong imprint of their own. This way, women were marching ahead to make an identity for themselves particularly in their families and in society at large. Put together, simply this is nothing but women empowerment.

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Educational Roles of Cooperative Institutions in Fisheries Resource Management: Case studies from Northern and Central India

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The fast depletion of natural biological resources and its associated adverse consequences on biodiversity loss, environment and livelihood related issues have led to a serious thinking and multidimensional action at different levels towards sustainable management of natural resources. In this connection, two aspects have gained prominence in recent two decades:

(1) The significance of awareness and education has been recognized in several international and national conventions, agreements and policies related to environment and sustainable development. An entire chapter of Agenda 21, an action plan arising from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, is devoted to "Promoting education, Public awareness and Training". The Article 13 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has also emphasized the subject of public awareness and education. At national level too, India's National Environment Policy has emphasized the importance of education and awareness creation for environmental conservation. In the fisheries sector too, there is ever increasing concern for sustainable utilization and conservation of fast depleting natural resources. It is now believed in the fishery sector that unless the stakeholders are made aware of the consequences of their harmful actions towards natural fish germplasm resources and, are educated about the sustainable practices, other measures will also be less effective in producing the desired results.

(2) The failure of centralized approaches to natural resource management has led to a wide range of arrangements globally, whereby the sharing of management responsibility for fisheries by resource users and governments, is widely seen as a key to improve natural resource management and reduce over-exploitation of resources. In this context the user groups and local institutions have been recognized as significant for resource management and biodiversity conservation. Today there is a large amount of theoretical and empirical literature available, globally, on analysis of co-operative management or co-management arrangements in natural resources including fishery resources (Jentoft 1989, Pinkerton 1989, Pomeroy and Williams 1994, Jentoft and McCay 1995, Sen and Nielsen 1996, Pomeroy and Berkes 1997,

Jentoft et.al. 1998; Karlsen 2001; Pomeroy et.al. 2001; Almeida et.al. 2002, Neiland and Béné 2003, Nielsen et al. 2004, Thomson 2006).

Cooperative Institutions in the fisheries sector in India

Fisheries are complex and interdependent ecological and social systems that require integrated management approaches. The actions of one person or group of users affect the availability of the resource for others. Managing such common pool resources requires conscious efforts by a broad range of stakeholders to organize and craft rules enabling equitable and sustainable use of the resources for everyone's benefit. In the fisheries sector, though in the developed countries and some of the developing countries, several new groups and professional associations of fishing communities have emerged in recent two-three decades; in India, this role of organizational support and social connectedness among fishing communities is played, by and large, by conventional fishermen groups, fishermen cooperative societies and federations.

The fishery cooperative movement which began in India in 1913 in Maharashtra, has grown into multi-functional units at the primary/ village level, federations at district/ regional, state and national levels. There is a National federation; 17 state federations, 108 central societies and 11,847 primary societies of fisherfolks having a membership of 19, 17,305 (Source: Hand Book on Fisheries Statistics 2005).

Case studies from Northern and Central India

In India, fishing cooperative societies have been studied by very few researches (Singh & Dhar Choudhary, 1997; Bhatta, 1997; Nair & Singh, 1997; Rahim & Singh, 1997; Moorti & Chauhan, 1997; Deepak, 1998). However, in majority of the cases these organizations by their very nature and reason for existence have focused on increasing the maximum output from the fishery resources and, thereby, increasing the livelihood, income and wellbeing of their members. Barring a few recent studies (Jyotishi and Parthasarathy 2007, Tyagi *et.al* 2007 and Tyagi *et.al* 2008) these fisherfolk organizations in India have been viewed and studied in a limited perspective of production-oriented and/or political organizations limited to and interested in only furthering their economic/commercial interests. The possibility of these organizations playing active educative role in creating awareness among their members towards resource enhancement measures and coordinating actions of their members for sustainable management of the fishery resources, have not been explored.

Objectives:

In the above perspective, case studies of fishing cooperative societies were undertaken in three states of northern and central India namely, Himachal Pradesh (H.P.), Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) and Madhya Pradesh (M.P.). The objectives were:

- (1) To document the roles played by fishing cooperative institutions at the selected locations towards fisheries resources management and conservation under different institutional arrangements, and
- (2) To assess the educative value and impact of these roles on conservation and management of the resources.

Methodology

The study covered 58 fishing cooperative societies at the following identified locations of three selected states: Gobind Sagar and Pong reservoirs (H.P.); Tawa and Bergi reservoirs (M.P.) and societies from Sultanpur, Faizabad, Ambedkarnagar, Jhansi and Lalitpur districts (U.P.). A total of 580 members and office bearers of fishing cooperative societies were interviewed with the help of a specially prepared questionnaire. Besides, information was also collected from records/reports of the selected societies and concerned state fisheries departments and in-depth interviews with key informants and state fisheries dept. officials and NGOs. The methodology included a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. Roles played by cooperative societies and their federations were documented through interview schedule qualitatively, where as quantitative indices were prepared to measure the orientation and performance of fishing cooperative societies and their members with respect to conservation and resource management. Finally, a qualitative assessment was done to assess the impact of roles played by cooperative societies on conservation and resource management, by way of educating and empowering their members.

Educational roles played by Cooperative institutions in fisheries resource management

Table - 1 given on next page summarizes different roles played by the fishing cooperative societies and their federations at the locations studied. Before discussing these roles and their educational value, a brief mention about the prevalent management pattern for fisheries resources at the selected locations during the time of study is necessary, so as to understand the situation in proper perspective.

In Tawa and Bergi reservoirs (M.P.), fisheries was managed by the federations of fishermen cooperative societies for 10 and 6 years, respectively, which were given on lease to these organizations by the state governments after sustained collective mobilization and agitation by the people displaced by these reservoirs. This lease has been discontinued from year 2007 (for Tawa reservoir) and 2001 (for Bergi reservoir) However, the responses about roles played by cooperative institutions refers to the period when the fisheries in the reservoirs were managed by these institutions. In H.P., on the other hand, the state fisheries department acts as the major regulatory authority and cooperative societies work closely under the supervision and control of the state department in management and utilization of the reservoirs and lakes on

lease to the fishing cooperative societies for fisheries management. In U.P., state fisheries dept. gives small reservoirs and lakes on lease to the fishing cooperative societies for fisheries management, whereas, large reservoirs are managed by the state fisheries development corporation by auctioning to contractors through open bidding.

Table – 1: Roles played by the cooperative institutions in HP, MP and UP

SN	Locations and/ Roles played		
	HP.	MP.	UP.
1	No mass collective action, initiated by state agencies	Organized collective action to get the fishing rights; to get them renewed for another term	Mostly formed to take advt of govt. schemes due to requirement of state policy
2	Coordinate the fishing efforts of their members and regulate the collection & marketing of fishes	Devised mechanisms & procedures to coordinate the fishing efforts and fish marketing activities	Occasionally taking water bodies on lease for fishing
3	Provide a structural & organizational base for state agencies to collect royalty	Provided a structural & organizational base for state agencies to collect royalty	Element of social & organizational force for members absent
4	Maintain proper records	Maintain proper records	No proper record keeping
5	Facilitate implementation of Govt. welfare schemes	Facilitate implementation of Govt. welfare schemes	Not a structural & organizational base
6	Offer suggestions to state agencies & Eager to innovate for improving resource	Offer suggestions to state agencies & Eager to innovate for improving resource	Lack of interaction with state agencies
7	Facilitate equitable sharing of benefits among its members	Facilitate equitable sharing of benefits amongst members	Occasionally taking advantages of Govt. schemes
8	Provide moral support to their members	Provide moral support to their members	No involvement of members Functioning controlled by influential people
9	Provide an organizational base at grass- root level for state fish agencies to implement resource enhancement measures	Undertake efforts and serve as a social & organizational force for making members to abide by conservation rules	Lack of interest & ambition towards resources management
10	--	Made own conservation rules	--
11	--	Undertake stocking of fish seed	--
12	--	A unique expt of developing low-cost rearing ponds at periphery of reservoir & mobilizing people to form groups of tribals to rear fish seed	--

It is clear from the information presented in table 1 that cooperative societies in H.P. and M.P., besides playing routine production-oriented and regulatory functions like coordinating and regulating the collection and marketing of fishery of their members, providing a structural base for state agencies to collect royalty form fish production, facilitating equitable sharing of benefits among their members, maintaining proper records, etc; also played a number of educational roles. These roles included: providing an organizational base at grass- root level for state fish agencies to implement resource enhancement measures, Offer suggestions to state agencies and eager to innovate for improving resource, Facilitate equitable sharing of benefits among its members, Provide moral support to their members, Devise mechanisms & procedures to coordinate the fishing efforts and fish marketing activities, Undertake efforts and serve as a social & organizational force for making members to abide by conservation rules, Make and implement own conservation rules and starting a unique experiment of developing low-cost rearing ponds at periphery of reservoir & mobilizing people to form groups of tribal fisherfolks to rear fish seed.

In U.P. however, the situation was altogether different. The cooperative institutions were mostly dormant, controlled by influential people without much involvement of members. They were formed for taking advantage of Govt. schemes. The element of social & organizational force for members was not there in fishing cooperative societies of U.P. Therefore, they were not found playing active role even in production-oriented regulatory functions. Similarly, no educational roles in resource management were played by such institutions in U.P.

Educational value and Impact of cooperative Institutions on fishery resource management: A comparative scenario

In order to assess and realize the educational value and impact of different roles played by cooperative institutions at different locations, it is interesting to compare their performance on certain resource conservation and management parameters. The comparative situation in this regard, as brought out by the quantitative indices developed for this purpose, is presented in table-2 below:

Table 2. Comparative assessment of the performance of the cooperative institutions across different locations

Performance Variables	H.P.	M.P.	U.P.
Conservation orientation	High Mean* 46.1	High Mean* 46.5	Low Mean* 36.2 #
Rule enforcement by societies	Medium 2.30 [4*]	High 3.40 [4*]	NONE 0 [4*] #
Conservation performance	Very High 27.0 [30*]	Very High 17.10 [21*]	Very Low 2.58 [15]* #
Effect of cooperative societies	High	High	NONE

* Possible score range was 15 – 60;

[*] Maximum obtainable score

Significantly lower than fisherfolk members of fishing cooperative societies of HP and MP

It is clear from the data that at the studied location in H.P. and M.P.; the orientation of the members of fishing cooperative societies towards resource conservation was high whereas, it was low in U.P. Involvement of cooperative institutions in enforcement of management rules was medium in H.P. and high in M.P., however, in U.P. it was very low. Similarly, performance of these institutions, in terms of following resource conservation rules as set forth by the state government agencies, was very high in H.P. and M.P., but again, it was very low in U.P.

If we compare these findings with the roles played by cooperative institutions (as discussed in the previous section), a positive association between the roles played by cooperative institutions and their performance in resource management and conservation can clearly be discerned. The educational value of different socio-educational roles played by cooperative institutions in H.P. and M.P. have had positive impact in terms of high conservation orientation of their members and very high conservation performance of these institutions in H.P. and M.P.. Though, it is not statistically proven here, as the study is done in a case study approach, however, the trend is clear.

Conclusions

1. This study brought out that at locations where cooperative institutions of fishermen were active and effectively played important roles having socio-educational value, they were able to contribute towards resource conservation and management parameters. This could have been possible because of the educational value and the socio-organizational and moral authority that such institutions had over their members, at locations where they were active (H.P. and M.P.).
2. The study also compels us to view cooperative institutions of fisherfolks as social organizations having dormant capabilities (beyond production motives), which could be sincerely and effectively identified, promoted and utilized for resource conservation and management goals in fishery resources.
3. It is also, however, to be highlighted that mere existence of cooperative institutions on paper is no guarantee (as the case of U.P. makes it clear) that these will serve educational purposes among the fisherfolks. Their effectiveness and vibrancy may be determined by the dynamics of several location specific socio-economic and political factors which need to be studied and accordingly educational and awareness creation strategies can then be planned and implemented.

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The average length of a manuscript should normally be between 1500 and 2500 words; in exceptional cases, longer articles can also 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 A4 size paper. Footnotes and references should come at the end and not on every page. Authors are requested to submit one soft copy along with the CD (MS Word). Articles can be sent by E-mail at iaeaindia@yahoo.com, iaeadelhi@gmail.com

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Editor s Note

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Nehru and Tagore Literacy Awards

Nominations Invited

Indian Adult Education Association invites nominations from anyone in India for Nehru and Tagore Literacy Awards for the outstanding work done by institutions/individuals for the promotion of literacy, adult education, continuing education and lifelong education.

Nehru Literacy Award instituted in 1968 is given to institutions/individuals in recognition of the services rendered and meritorious work done for the promotion of literacy and adult education in the country.

Tagore Literacy Award instituted in 1987 is given to those institutions/individuals who have given significant contributions for the promotion of literacy, adult and lifelong education, creating awareness and improving the social and economic status of women in the country.

The institution / individual nominated for Awards should have at least ten years of outstanding work in the field of literacy, adult education, continuing education and lifelong education and the assessment will be on the new initiatives taken and also the extent to which the work done can be a model for replication for others.

The awardees will be selected only on merit from the names nominated by NLMA, DAE, NUEPA, NCERT, UGC, Universities, State Literacy Mission Authorities, State Resource Centres, Members of IAEA and other educational institutions of repute.

The last date for receipt of nominations for both the Awards is June 29, 2012.

Nominations may be sent in a sealed envelope with all details about the institution/individual, outstanding work done, awards, if any, already received, specific recommendations for nominating the institution/individual directly to Shri. K.C.Choudhary, General Secretary, Indian Adult Education Association, 17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi-110 002. One can nominate more than one institution/individual but each one should be in separate envelop.

The decision of the Selection Committee will be final.

Indian Tradition gives a lot of respect and importance to females. No Hindu religious ceremony is complete without the participation of wife with her husband. One of the Hindu Gods – Shiva is projected as 'Ardhnareeshwar' (half man and another half woman) to show the equal right of wife in man's life. The same way no Christian or Muslim marriage is solemnised by the religious leaders without the consent of the bride. Like elephant herd is led by a she elephant, in the traditional Indian society the words of elderly woman in the family was the final order which every one obeyed. Unfortunately, over the years females lost much of their pride and ultimately made dependents of their husbands eventhough they contribute a lot more than their husbands as workers along with a number of other family responsibilities. In fact, they make happy homes. At the end they are called weaker sex. When this discrepancy will be over and who will restore the old glory?

The glory can be restored only by the society as a whole. As long as the female child is considered as burden the violence against it can not be eliminated. The unkind attitude of people towards females has greatly affected the balance of sex ratio between males and females. As per 2011 Census some of the states/UTs have the dubious record of low female sex ratio. They include Daman (618 females per 1000 males), Dadra & Nagar Haveli (775 females per 1000 males), Chandigarh (818 females per 1000 males), NCT Delhi (866 females per 1000 males) and Haryana (877 females per 1000 males). The number of females is so low in Haryana with the result boys are reportedly finding it difficult to get matching girls for marriage. Hence, girls are brought even from far away states like W. Bengal to marry Haryanvi boys.

As it is a matter of concern, the government has taken a number of steps including ban on sex determination in the hospitals and nursing homes. But still it goes on with the close association of ill minded and money craving doctors who are unfit for the noble profession. This is only about feticide. What about infanticide?

Recent incidents which were reported in leading newspapers and TV channels shook the entire country. One was the death of two year old Falak in All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi who was battered by her

mother (unfortunately the mother was a victim of human trafficking). The second one was three months old Neha Afreen died in a hospital at Bengaluru who was battered by her own father as she was a girl. The third one was the body of a three months old girl found lying near a drain in lane No.10 in Nathupura's D Block of Delhi. The fourth one was a body of one day old girl found in a drain in Shanti Nagar area of Loni in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh. How cruel is that girl children are either eliminated in the womb itself or after birth. Worst is females in most cases are their own enemies - as mother-in-laws, sister-in-laws and daughter-in-laws.

Hence, there is a concerted effort essential not only from the part of government but also from the civil society so that children – both boys and girls are treated as gods and females as the source of strength.

Dr. V. Mohankumar

ICT and Economy on the Changing Dimensions of Education and Learning in India – A Double-Edged Sword?

Sayantana Mandal

Introduction

The last four decades have witnessed a wide spread of modern Information Communication Technology (ICT) and the last two decades show its acceleration and overwhelming effect to all corners of the world along with a noticeable economic growth in India. With new inventions and constant innovations, the ICT has reached up to a level where it made itself available to the mass. During the last two decades, India also witnessed a rapid change, not just in the world of technology, but also in the world of economy and education. It is perhaps not an exaggeration to claim that ICT revolutionized India and became a boon for the economy, creating a new era of up surge in GDP (Gross Domestic Production) and a vision to become a knowledge society in future. It also promotes the global dimension of education and lifelong learning since it supports a fast change in the society and wants the education to become flexible, not only to be accustomed with the modernizing technologies, but also to be able to learn and contribute effectively in the economy. However, the growth on one side creates several challenges for the economically and educationally disadvantaged sides of India where the use of modern ICT for education is very limited. This perhaps poses a threat for an even more unequal ground for development. On one hand, less use of ICT can cause less development, and on the other hand, fast use of modern ICT creates the 'digital divide'. Is then ICT intertwined with economy can be treated as a double aged sword for the educational development for all? Could, ICT be accused for the unequal socio-economic development in India? Is ICT a tool for the development of only few who can afford and access it? There could be several questions like these. However, to understand the issue, we probably need to look it from several vantage points and analyze the relation between ICT, economy and the changing dimension of Indian education critically.

It is a complex issue, as the relation between ICT, economy and Indian education are not only related with the advanced technologies, but also intertwined with the world economic activities and globalization. Therefore, to discuss this issue with a specific focus, this paper analyzes policies and documents related to ICT and education, in order to find out;

How does ICT and economy help modifying the education and learning in India in contemporary time?

and

What are the major consequences of the changes influenced by ICT and economy on education and learning in India?

The main objectives of this paper are to find out how ICT, coupled with the recent economic activities, changes the direction and dimension of learning (formal, non-formal and informal) in India. It focuses on two main aspects. First, it tries to find out what are the elements, which are changing the direction of education to a more globally oriented one, which urges for more flexibility, use of modern ICT tools and a less state interventionist approach. Secondly, it also tries to see the other side, which is the underdeveloped side of the Indian economic and educational situation and tries to analyze why modern ICT could not make noticeable difference to change the traditional educational and learning paradigms in India and indirectly influence to follow traditional methods.

As India follows a mixed and complex method of both education and learning, the paper often mentions education and learning together to include all (formal, non-formal and informal) its aspects. To discuss the issue while keeping the focus, this paper analyzes the issue from a macro perspectives and confines its analysis into the national level policies and relevant documents. It delimits from discussing the issue at regional levels acknowledging that India is a big and diverse country and micro scale analysis are also important to gain further insights.

The paper discusses the issue in two main sections, where in the first section it discusses how ICT and economy helps changing the Indian education and learning to a more globally oriented one and in the second section, it shows how the lack of several factors causing the Indian education and learning less prone to the global educational scenario. This rather opposite views are summarised in a brief discussion afterwards in the conclusion section. It is the hope that this paper would add more insights to the understanding of the relation between ICT, economy and 'education and learning' in India in the contemporary context. To analyze the issue critically, it takes the help of several scholarly works including the works of Rizvi and Lingard (2010), Bajwa (2003) and Reddi (2010) among others. It also includes the analysis of the major policies, both from national and international levels. The paper starts to set the scene for the analysis in the next section, where the global educational dimension is discussed in brief, along with a short introduction of the overall relation between ICT, economy and education.

Setting the scene

"Knowledge has become the principle force of production over the last few decades" (Lyotard:1984). "The world is experiencing a major shift from an economy

and society based on mass production to one, based on knowledge creation. This shift has significant implications for the development of human resources and for changes in all of the components of the education system, not just the use of ICT' (UNESCO 2011:4). Even beyond education and learning, ICT can represent a new source of economic growth and a powerful tool for social transformation. Hence through their economic and social effects, ICT can contribute in creating a knowledge society and economy' (Atchoarena in UNESCO 2011). It helps us to become a part of the globalized world and kindles many other changes in the society. It is helping the way people interact with the world. Interaction through social networking sites help reunite friends, raise voices against corruption and autocracy, provides networking among the groups of various interests, enabling to explore different opportunities of learning and many more. Mobile phones today, are no more just a tool for talking or texting; it provides much more interactivity, information sharing and enables the user to learn.

The 'traditional' ICT tools like radio, television etcetera are less interactive, but informative. Hence, they also play very important roles in providing learning opportunities. It can also be said that the modern ICT revolution has changed and somewhat minimized the importance of traditional learning methods. The practice of studying content, data, and so forth are fast becoming less important and quickly being replaced by a learning paradigm, which focuses on the capacity to find, access and apply knowledge for problem solving. The traditional teacher-student relation is also being replaced with a more open and flexible mentor-learner relationship where the teacher is not seen as 'guru' or content of all knowledge, rather a person who guides to the source of knowledge. As the technology changes very fast, the learners are now supposed to be proactive and lifelong learners. This approach towards education is termed as lifelong learning and it is the agenda of development in many countries worldwide.

Acknowledging the importance of ICT, the emphasis is given on ICT literacy, analytical ability and the ability to solve problems and various other skills and competencies developments. (Khan & Williams 2007:165). In short, ICT is changing the way we learn up to a great extent. These have profound consequences on the Indian education and learning scenarios. As the global discourse of education and learning is highly pro-technology in nature, it promotes the use of ICT, almost ubiquitously. It is also recognized that the use of ICT can bring progress in educational achievements. However, problem arises as India is a highly diversified place and inequality in many socio-economic aspects is already very acute. ICT can further add up to this inequality by increasing the 'digital divide'. At the same time, ICT cannot be neglected. This dilemma provides the space to discuss the issue. The following section starts by explaining how ICT is influencing the present discourse of development through promoting both modern and traditional perspectives of education in the same country. It starts with how ICT promotes the global dimension of education and learning in India.

ICT and economy as a supporting force to the global dimension of education and learning in India

In India, the path towards technology-induced development, especially associated with ICT, was given a vent in 1984 by the Congress Government under Rajiv Gandhi in 80s (Bajwa, 2003). In 90s' the stress on Information Technology (IT) become even higher and continued to grow and because of the National task force on Information Technology and Software Development in 1998, which aims to establish India as a information based superpower in a decade. Later the ministry of Information Technology (1999) was set up followed by another task force on information technology as a knowledge superpower, which aims to upgrade Indian economy and society based on the educational development of all (primary, secondary and tertiary; formal and non-formal) sectors. In the mean time, the economic liberalization tied with the growing development of the tertiary sector helped India to become one of the top ten fastest growing economic in the world (Bajwa, 2003). These provide a stronger base for India to focus on educational changes to attain a competitive worldwide position.

However studies on the Indian economy show that the changes in different economic sectors were not gradual. That means it did not follow a linear path of moving from an agricultural economy to a manufacturing economy and then to a service based one. Largely Indian economy, in its pre liberalization era was dominated by agriculture and that too with very rudimentary machineries. However, the liberalizations of economy in 90s, as stated earlier, also brought major changes in the world of ICT in later stages. Before that period, importing and exporting of goods were difficult and sluggish. In the fast changing world of technologies, India was lagging behind. But in the post reform period, businesses surged up. Bangalore (now Bengaluru) became the 'Silicon Valley' of India. Now there are ICT clusters in many major cities in India. It portrays a developed India inside a developing country framework.

The total growth of this sector over the years is mind boggling. 'The Estimated GDP generated in the ICT sector has increased from Rs. 656 billion in 2000-01 to Rs. 2530 billion in 2007-08, which amounts to a compound annual growth rate of 21.3 per cent. The CSO estimates that the share of the ICT sector in total GDP has risen from 3.4 per cent in 2000-01 to 5.9 per cent in 2007-08. ICT services dominate the ICT industry and over time the share of ICT services in total GDP has increased from 3.1 per cent in 2000-01 to 5.5 per cent in 2007-08 (Chandrasekhar 2010). The Indian software and service an export including ITES-BPO is estimate d US \$ 49.7 billion in 2009-10 at an increase rate of 5.5 percent. This is coupled with the growth of telecommunication market. In recent years it is one of the fastest growing telecommunication markets in the world (UNSTATS). Recently, the share of internet has increased dramatically and now it contributes nearly 5% of GDP growth (nominal local currency) and its growing at a rate of more than 20 percent (OECD national accounts, McKinsey analysis). India, here is leading the growth component followed

by China (McKinsey 2011). All the major companies like HP, IBM, Dell, Microsoft, Intel and many others are investing more on ICT sectors in India. All of these trends predicts that Indian ICT market will continue to grow and this has made this sector an important player in the service lead development trajectory and help India to rank 11th among the top service exporting countries. Not only that; the ICT market in India is growing at a rate of 33 percent during the last the past five years and also accounted for 5.2 per cent of India's National GDP during 2003-04(Jain and Agrawal 2007: 41).

Although India enjoys the fruits of ICT, it is increasingly facing competitions at an international level. In the 'Knowledge Economy Index' (KEI) 2009 India ranks 109 with a score of 3.09 out of 10 which is 9 rank below its previous rank of 100 in 2008 (World Bank, 2009). However, it is not only the individual ranking that matters. China, the neighbouring giant ranks far ahead than that of India (18 and 23 individually and jointly with Taiwan and Hong Kong respectively, in 2009). Countries like Brazil (KEI Rank 54 in 2009), South Africa (KEI rank 65 in 2009) and other developing countries are coming up as potential competitors. In another report by the World Economic Forum (WEF), India ranks 48th in the Network Readiness Index (NRI 2010-11), which is five ranks below from its previous rank. China, on the other hand ranks 36 and made significant progress. In fact, china has leapfrogged 23 positions and features among 10 most dynamic countries worldwide. In terms of improvement in Asian countries; Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Vietnams have been the fastest improving economies along with China since 2006. (WEF 2011:24). As a result, in spite of the progress in the number of mobile phone users or increased business in tertiary sector, India's rank has not improved over the past half decade. This shows that it is not enough to be just good; rather India should be globally competitive as a nation to keep the sustainability of the growth it is enjoying now. These senses of competition, which can be considered as a by-product of globalization, influence India to follow a global path of liberalizing market, improving physical infrastructure etc.

However, the real challenge is the virtual nonexistence of quality human resource. Several reports have raised their concerns about the inadequate numbers of quality science and technology graduates in India. Even in the Indian Institute of Technology (IITs) the quality of students has declined (Narayana Murthy 2011). Contrasting, but the truth is that the 'nation that made 'offshoring' a household word, finds itself short of useful human resources to meet the demands. Today, 75% of technical graduates and more than 85% of general graduates are unemployable by India's high-growth global industries, including information technology and call centres, according to the National Association of Software and Services Companies' (The Wall Street Journal 2011). This is causing several problems. First of all, in a competitive situation, below quality graduates means jobs moving to other countries. In long term, this also indicates towards a less feasible innovation system, which could also mean a less sustainable development for India. Thirdly, it questions the traditional, bureaucratic and often-outdated (without a few exceptions) education system, which is unable to produce decent quality graduates who has the basic necessary skills to be

employable. It in fact, questions the entire education system, not just because the graduates are not sufficiently skilled to be hired, but to the system which aims mainly at passing exams, which in most cases overlooks the actual learning, skills and competencies development of the pupils. This rather triggers another question of how to change the mind-set of the students, teachers and educational authorities that a degree does not necessarily mean knowledge. However, in spite of the negative impact of the education, the demand of (and for) ICT is still on the rise. Still now, from both international and national standpoints, India is a cheaper and quality place for ICT based economy. It is a growing market as well. However, to exploit this opportunity, it needs a constant supply of a large number of highly capable human resources, who can execute the ICT based works for the global and local market and be sufficiently innovative to take this into the next level to lead India from a service supplying economy to a service consuming and producing one. Therefore, the demand here creates an urge to promote educational and learning opportunities for the national economic development.

This also demands a flexible education system and learning environment, which secures a constant and sufficient supply of human resource to the ICT arena starting from the very basic level of primary education and all the way to the top, including the non-formal and informal areas of learning. It also urges for an ICT ready country for the expansion of the economy. The International organizations promote this vision as well. World Bank clearly puts forward the idea that *the* 'opportunities for countries in the developing world to become successful knowledge based economies are plentiful, and leapfrogging is a real possibility' (World Bank 2007:167). Based on the pillars of Knowledge Economy (education, innovation and ICTs), it prescribes that 'India should continue to leverage its strengths to become a leader in knowledge creation and use. To get the greatest benefits from the knowledge revolution, the country needs to press on with the economic and education reform agenda that it put into motion more than a decade ago and continue to implement the various policy and institutional changes needed to accelerate growth. The necessary reforms include a reform in the educational system which does not only should include a development plan for ICT skills, but also include other soft skills development, such as problem solving, analytical skills, group learning, working in a team-based environment, and effective communications. Once required only of managers, these skills are now important for all.

Fostering such skills requires a learning system that is flexible; basic education should provide the foundation for learning, and secondary and tertiary education should develop core skills that encourage creative and critical thinking. Non-formal and informal learning should accompany as well. According to the World Bank, it is therefore necessary to develop an effective lifelong learning system to provide continuing education and skill upgrading to persons after they have left formal education in order to provide the changing skills necessary to be competitive in the new global economy (Dahlman & Utz 2005).

Since the aim of India is to become a knowledge society based on building a knowledge economy, the World Bank recognizes that, 'Education is the fundamental enabler of the knowledge economy [and] with ICT use becoming all-pervasive and its impacts transformational. It has become an essential backbone of the knowledge economy' (Dahlman & Utz, 2005), there is a high preference of promoting the global dimension of lifelong learning as the attributes supports the core component of modernizing India based on ICT. In fact, all the major international organizations (e.g. World Bank, OECD, UNESCO etc.) recommend educational restructuring focusing on the changes the ICT brings to the society. Here it can be seen that the focus is on the 'perceived labour market needs of the global economy and a process of developing education to take advantage of the knowledge economy' (Rizvi and Lingard 2010:82-117).

In addition to the changes in the formal education sector, ICT provokes new ways of learning through informal and non-formal ways. For example, the combined approach of affordability and regionalization help ICT to grow and become an enabler of lifelong learning in India. For instance, although the dominating language in ICT world is still English, but the trend is to provide ICT services in regional languages (WEF 2011). The reasons are to tap the non-English speaking market and to outreach many more people. This increasing dominance of regional approach helps ICT in India to grow in a much faster speed. More and more people, who could not use the services before, are now getting benefited. Farmers and fishermen are using the technology to get weather forecasts; market conditions (demands and selling price etc.). Recently the service is being provided through mobile phones, a more secure and accessible mode of communication in India where internet connection and speed is still not satisfactory and many places suffer with power cuts. It is effective, since in India, on average, there are 44 mobile subscriptions per 100 populations and one third of that is rural population (WEF 2011). A growing number of mobile stores and reappearing centres also help to earn and learn new technologies and helps enabling users about the ICTs. This informal and non-formal ways of learning is contributing in the changes of learning in contemporary India.

The policy response regarding the advancement of ICT, changing global economic interactivity and influence of international organizations are quite interesting to look at. In the same line with the previously set up task forces, the recent national five year plans (10th and 11th) started to recognize the 'competitive advantages of brain power, assimilate and adopt spectacular developments in system integration and technology. It wants to harness them for the national growth in today's knowledge-based world economy soon after, it realized that technology and knowledge could be a tool to give India a competitive advantage (Bajwa, 2003). Rizvi and Lingard (2010: 80) demonstrate this urge for change as a result of an 'enormous pressure on educational systems' to not only to develop the formal educational system, but also to align all other educational systems capable of handling the requirements of the global economy. The 11th planning commission largely supports this claim by saying that;

Science, technology, and innovation are even more relevant today. Scientific knowledge and expertise, innovation, high technology, industrial infrastructure and skilled workforce are the currencies of this new era (Planning Commission Govt. of India 2011:165).

The planning commission also recognizes that more and intense improvements are necessary in the science and technology sector to support the national economy. It recognizes the international competition and challenges, and seeks to develop an innovation eco-system with;

- an education system which nurtures creativity;
- an R&D culture and value system which supports both basic and applied research and technology development;
- an industry culture which is keen to interact with the academia;
- a bureaucracy which is supportive;
- a policy framework which encourages young people to enter into scientific careers and
- an ability to scan scientific developments in the world and use technology foresight to select critical technologies in a national perspective.

(Planning Commission- Government of India, 2011:165)

As a step towards progress in the digital development, India has set up a National Mission on Education through ICT to provide better internet connectivity in the higher educational institutes. Efforts are being made to translate the ICT related books from English to regional languages. Radio reached almost all over the country, the cable television network is broadcasting 24X7 in various regional and international languages, telephone access reaches almost everywhere through the 'public' telephone booths and now spreading rapidly with the public and private mobile telephone services. In the major documents, the government recognizes that the importance of ICT literacy as a first step towards the knowledge society. In the formal and non-formal educational sectors, use of computers is being promoted. To promote the access even further, Indian government has introduced the cheapest tablet computer named 'Aakash' (meaning 'sky') for students at a subsidized price of just \$35.

The government also promotes public private partnerships in developing ICT based and market oriented training modules, promotes private institutions in ICT based learning. The vocational institutes are encouraged to become ICT equipped wherever possible. Libraries are facilitated to be electronically accessible and encouraged to work with the government to create, store, disseminate knowledge based on ICT platform, and promote information literacy initiative by collaborating with different entities (e.g. teachers) and so on. To promote literacy initiatives, the government mainly takes the help of television and radio as major tools. Several pilot projects (e.g. PREAL, Khilti Kaliyan, Chauraha) are executed in different regions using ICT.

To use the existing infrastructure in public schools to promote ICT learning for out-of-school youth, 'Bridge to the Future Initiative' (BFI) program has been undertaken in South India. Some major projects are running or completed with foreign funding. The Commonwealth of Learning (COL), a pilot project with the 'technology based community learning centre' model, was sponsored by the British Department of International Development. 'The ICT Application for Non-Formal Education' project aims at enabling learners to expand their livelihood opportunities and assist them in improving their quality of life. The development of dedicated software for literacy development can be seen in the 'Tata Computer Based Literacy Program (CBFL)'. Intel's initiative to develop teacher-professional development by the 'Intel-Tech' programs spreads in many countries including India, with the mission to 'accelerate 21st century education for the knowledge economy as a trusted partner to governments and educators' (Intel 2007). National Knowledge Commission (NKC) recommended several measures to make Indian higher education more ICT enabled, more autonomous and competitive. The University Grants Commission (UGC) has devised an action plan for academic and administrative reforms, ICT skills development is being promoted via vocational education and trainings. Overall, the government put much more effort to promote the ICT education and development keeping in mind the competitive global labour markets (extracts from the major documents including the 11th five year plan, Govt. of India 2011).

Overall, it can be noticed that, on policy, the government recognizes the fact that ICT is a necessity of the modern world and therefore educational reforms are must. It also recognizes that the education has moved out from its traditional shell and entered into a more open learning paradigm which is also, in many extends, ICT dependent. The changes ICT brings to the Indian education sectors to foster the global dimension of lifelong learning is in turn also a matter of national interest. It is related with national economic development and individual success in twenty first century. It is a benchmark tool for Indian dream to become a knowledge superpower. Here ICT is changing the dimension of education through liberalization; privatization and globalization constitute the current social, economic, technological and political space (Reddi 2008). Following Jarvis's theory (Jarvis 2007 and 2008) it can be said that the global superpowers (multinational firms, powerful government etc.) are, in many ways controlling the world market of ICT and as India is a big contributor in the supply of services, it has to cope with the changing learning paradigms to sustain and keep growing. The positive forces are coming from the international organizations supporting the global paradigm of learning. According to Reddi, "We no longer have a choice. It is no longer an 'if' but 'how' to deploy the technologies optimally (Reddi 2008). In a similar way, ICT gets a ubiquitous 'yes' from all stakeholders. These overwhelming influences and potentiality of ICT were understood by India in 80s and from there, the technological advancement has helped India to leapfrog a long way towards the economic maturity. These positive results also work as a supporting force to change the other not so technology dependent sectors and work as a catalyst of educational development in India. Here, the relation between ICT and global

dimension of learning are rather complementary and it has improved the standards of lives to a great extent. Therefore, to consider it only as an influence of the multinational firms and global capitalism would limit its scope. 'Education' here seems embracing the global lifelong learning paradigm, which is already liked with the ICT revolution and aims to be global in standard wherever feasible.

However, ICT, in spite of influencing many changes in the economic direction, technological orientation and communication revolution also helps creating several pitfalls and negative situation where the global lifelong learning can be questioned. Along with this, there are several other issues related to ICT in India, which limits the scope of the global dimension of education and learning in India. The next section elaborates on this issue in detail.

Limitations of ICT and economy to support the global dimension of education and learning in India

Paradoxically, ICT is both the problem and the solution to lifelong learning. It is an immense problem in the kinds of dis-benefits it brings. [...], However, the fact is that ICT is producing a major change in both the content and the processes of learning, such that we do not have the option of ignoring it" (Mason 2004).

This above comment may refer to the point that the limitations of ICT are not similar to the drawbacks of different economic ideologies or social-economic-educational reform strategies. In addition, the resistance to ICT, in this case, is not prominent in the form of a total 'no-no'. Rather it highlights the problem ICT brings coupled with the neo-liberal economy. Overall, it could be summed up in two alluring terms of 'digital divide' and 'knowledge divide'. ICT, with its up-to-date and sophisticated inventions and innovation accelerated the Indian economy and some, who are not directly linked with ICT industries, have also got benefited. Nonetheless, overall, ICT holds limited potential to spread the wealth to the poorer section of the society (Dreze & Sen 2002). Unlike the heavy manufacturing industries, in ICT based industries it generates few opportunities for the unqualified and hence it initially contributed effectively in establishing a wider 'digital divide' (Konana & Balasubramanian 2001). Further studies show that when the ICT boom started in the states of Karnataka and Maharashtra there were no ICT policies and the industries were mostly driven by private sectors. That resulted in an unequal distribution of wealth and knowledge where the section with more knowledge suddenly became rich and other half without necessary education stayed poor or become poorer in comparison. As ICT industries, unlike other industries, are more flexible in welcoming resources (here human resource) from all over the world, it bothers less of reforming the local resources into effective resource. Moreover, as India produces a huge number of graduates each year and people are more flexible to travel for jobs, it is easier for the industry to select the best among many without concerning about the overall development of the actual learning of the nation. However, to understand the issue, it is necessary to dig

deeper, where it reveals that in India, the problems are many and appear from different directions. It can be broadly and roughly classified in the following segments;

- Mode of ICT tools– Old vs. New
- Affordability
- Unequal access
- Lack of infrastructure
- Lack of understanding
- Other barriers – political, social, religious, gender related etc.

Starting with a theoretical argument, which shows that, by definition, ICTs are basically information-handling tools- a varied set of goods, applications and services that are used to produce, store, process, distribute and exchange information (UNDP 2001). Therefore, by definition, it covers every information and communication tools. However, in practice, it is broadly synonymous with computer and related modern electronic communication technologies. In fact, the UNDP document classifies them into two broad categories, namely the 'old' and 'new'. The old includes radio, television and telephone and the 'new' includes computer, satellite, wireless technology and internet (UNDP 2001). However, 'what is old and what is new'; Livingstone argued (Livingstone 1999). According to Livingstone, it is 'time' and 'space' relative and hence subjective. Reddi (2008) also supports the argument that what is new in the west (developed West) is not necessarily so for the rest of the world (Livingstone 1999 in Reddi 2008). In case of the ICT movement in India, it has been mainly depended on the so-called 'old' ICT tools and has recently been started experimenting with the 'new' once. In fact, many new programs India are based on 'old' ICT tools. According to UNESCO, both 'old' and 'new' ICT tools are useful in learning (UNESCO). However, new technologies are more interactive and hence offer more self-learning opportunities compared to radio and television, which are mostly non-interactive. Internet alone makes a huge difference. The use of mobile phones can be mentioned in this regard, but the efforts by this mode are still on an experimental level in India. Therefore, in theory, people who can afford and/or get access to modern ICT tools, learn more and faster compared to others. They are likely to become more creative and not just become passive listeners. The possible consequences include that the users of old technologies will be far behind than the users of newer technologies. The gap will increase further. Secondly, the users of new ICT tools have better learning and employability opportunities in future, since the world is moving towards a knowledge society based on modern technologies. However, at present, the statistics shows a limited scope for this, for India. It shows that there are only 5.1 internet users per 100 people and broadband subscribers are less than one (0.6) per 100 people (2009-10) in India. The internet access in schools are not adequate and the speed is often slow. As a consequence, India ranks 118 with a score of 5.1 (out of 10) and countries like Zambia, Botswana and Libya are ahead than that of in India. China is far ahead with a rank of 75. Apart from the internet, the number of household with a personal computer is also low and India ranks lower than that of Ghana,

Kenya, Sri Lanka and Pakistan (data 2008, source – World Economic Forum, 2011). However, the problem does not stand alone. It is coupled with other factors like affordability, unequal access etc.

Affordability is certainly another crucial factor in India to promote ICT. Even though, globally ICT is becoming cheaper, it is not so for many Indians. Having a personal computer is unthinkable for many who cannot even afford electricity connection due to their poor economic condition. For some, it can cost a month's salary or more (Dighe 2008). In these circumstances, the government need to step in and support with different mechanisms. The good news is, it is happening in some states (e.g. Karnataka with the private partnership of NIIT). The effort to provide tablet computers at a subsidized price can be mentioned here. Mr. Kapil Sibal, said that it will enhance learning in India as it will be able to reach to the masses. In his words; "The rich have access to the digital world, the poor and ordinary have been excluded. Aakash will end that digital divide" (Sibal in BBC 2011). The future will provide the answer; however, the efforts are far less than sufficient for the whole nation of more than a billion people. The future of ICT based learning is, thus, not very promising for many.

Reddi shows his concern saying that there are likely to be four levels of learners. The first level of learners are those who can afford the high cost of education. They will get best educational facilities and infrastructure. The second level will consist of intelligent and competent students, who are initially unable to afford the cost of education but will be able to get it through the public institution on the basis of their outstanding merit. This group will soon catch the first level of learners. The third level will consist of academically and financially poor students who have to get education from lower quality institutions and hence more backward in future. The last group will consist of the illiterate and poor and they are less likely to be able to improve their learning conditions and standards up to any satisfactory level needed for 21st century (Reddi 2008). Furthermore, it can be already seen that economically advanced regions tend to pay more for ICTs. For example, urban areas are better ICTs equipped than that of rural regions. The World Economic Forum shows that 22 percent of urban population spends 51 percent of the total ICT spending in India and the rest of 49 percent spending is done by the 78 percent of rural population (World Economic Forum 2011:49). "The real challenge is [therefore] to promote the effective application and use of ICTs throughout the economy to raise productivity and growth, not just in a few pockets. Ensuring that the benefits of ICTs are shared by all requires an enabling environment for ICTs" (Dahlman & Utz, 2005). Hence, affordability of ICTs, although alarming, but not the only main problem.

There are many places in India without a broadband network or electricity connection. Many rural and semi-urban areas are suffering with severe power cuts, the versatile FM radio networks are mainly limited to cities and its periferies, Internet uses via mobile phone is increasing in the urban areas but not so much in the rural areas. There are more apart from these rather technical drawbacks of accessibility

issue. There are faults in planning as well. The content is often not relevant, local and timely and hence although available, is often not accessed. Furthermore, preparing the multimedia contents in local languages is a great challenge and it has not yet been overcome fully. The learners are not often not consulted while preparation of materials and contents. The contents often come as a result of the top-down mechanism India follows and hence it is not rooted in ground realities. These discriminations makes ICTs practically less useful (Reddi 2008). However, discrimination can also happen at household levels. In India, girls in many places are prevented from using ICTs freely and women users of internet represents a much smaller number (Indian Telecommunication Union 2002 in Dighe 2008). Rural, illiterate and rural women are often not given the ownership of control of the means of communication with the perception that they cannot handle the technology (Reddi 2008). These are serious problems of access which prevents India to stick to its traditional method of classroom education and less spontaneous learning. Coupled with these, there are other problems too. In a sub-tropical country like India, the installation and maintenance cost of a computer is much higher. It needs an air condition and machines should be prevented from dust and other natural hazardous objects. Most of the money is therefore spent on establishing the hardware, that often there is less money left for the actual training or planning. The result are either rejecting the modern ICT methods or stick to its minimal use which results in a less satisfactory output. In addition to these, there are problems of caste discriminations, poverty and many more; some of which are discussed earlier and also related with the drawbacks of the educational progress of the nation.

There is another very serious problem related to 'perception'. There is little recognition that ICT can be used to truly enhance lifelong learning. Many think that it is merely another educational tool and hence do not utilize the full potential of it. There is lack in teacher training to use ICT properly. In many places, the practice is to use computers as a tool to make power point presentation, which is barely any significant up-gradation from the old overhead projections. There is lack of understanding that the style of teaching has to be changed. As Mr. Sam Pitroda (advisor to the Prime Minister, India) clearly points out;

Teacher today spends most of his or her time in delivering content and creating content. Content is already created on internet, there is no need for teacher to deliver content. Role of a teacher will have to change to that of a mentor. All of these models will change the way we used to look at education (Pitroda 2010).

It is seen that; in many cases teachers do not feel comfortable to change their teaching style and also resist inclusion of ICT in the everyday education system. They often feel threatened and further challenged when told that they have to use ICTs. They feel scared that they might lose their job and will be replaced by the ICTs (Reddi 2008). This lack of understanding, sometimes coupled with negative political will and poor planning and regulation work negatively for the promotion of ICT induced learning in India.

Conclusion

From the above discussion, it is perhaps understood that ICT is an important, dynamic and inevitable learning tool in the present world. ICT helps not just in the formal learning, but also in the informal and non-formal learning sectors. Hence the proper planning and successful use of ICT can lead to individual and national development. It may help to achieve better educational attainments and better utilization of the human resources and in result, could provide possibilities for economic developments. However, on the other hand, there are several problems, directly or indirectly related to the progress of ICT, which gives ICT a rather negative perception in the society. This negative perception can sometimes convey a negative impression that ICT is causing the divide. Here, it is perhaps important to mention that;

Technology is a double-edged sword. In the 20th century, rapid technological advances led to rising standards of living, literacy, health and life expectancy. They also made possible a century of more deadly warfare, the industrialization of mass murder, global warming and ecocide. The promise of ICTs for the 21st century likewise presents both opportunities and challenges. ICTs, like all technologies, are tools. How they are used depends on the user and the context (UNDP 2001).

UNESCO recognizes that under the right conditions, it is believed that ICT can have a monumental impact on the expansion of learning opportunities for greater and more diverse populations, beyond cultural barriers, and outside the confines of teaching institutions or geographical boundaries (Haddad & Draxler, 2002 in UNESCO 2002:11). However, the situation in India in relation to the use of ICT is by far close from 'right'. On the one hand, the government initiatives are inadequate and unevenly placed. In remote and economically disadvantageous areas there is no or poor infrastructure for internet, computer, or even electricity lines. On the other hand, gender, economic and educational discriminations against the use of ICT is still present. Moreover, teachers, who are educated, sometimes resist ICT enabled learning methods or use it minimally.

Although the situation has improved a lot, but from the governments to the teachers, taboos and limitations related to modern ICT could not be overcome yet. In the form of a traditional teacher-student relation, use of traditional tools and teaching styles, use of backdated and outdated study materials and finally the inability to understand, implement and act according to the changing globalized society has reduced the scope of ICT in India. Rather it indirectly continues to support the traditional perspective of education in the developing section of India. On the contrary, flood of ICT keeps bringing new opportunities for some who are either able to afford, understand and use it.

In the midst of this rather diversified, somewhat contradictory and overall confusing situation, one thing is clear; theoretically, ICT can provide endless learning

opportunities. However, in practice, the possible consequence is a future towards more 'digital and knowledge divide' as the developed section will continue to grow at a rapid pace and the gap is tend to grow even larger, unless further initiatives are taken. The initiatives to spread the benefits of ICTs to all and prevent it to become a double aged sword, planning should be based on scientific facts, practical situations and statistical evidences, and not on common naive perceptions. In this regard, the planners may look at other countries with similar conditions, where they have effectively implemented some methods. Here, one thing to note is that there cannot be any ubiquitous solution for the whole nation.

It also seems important to get rid of some over-simplified perceptions regarding ICT, economy, education and development for all. Instead of carrying a naive believe that the goodness of ICT and the economic benefits of the developed service sector will trickle down to all, it seems important to plan early to prevent the increasing digital divide. The analysis of Rizvi and Lingard also shows that in a developing economy (like India), success depends on people's knowledge stock, skills level, learning capabilities and cultural adaptability. Therefore, policies are encouraged to go beyond deregulating the market and actively promote reforms of education and training so that it can better contribute in the national development (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). How to use the potential of ICT as an immensely effective learning and developmental tool for all is a challenge, and proper planning needs further micro level studies to find out specific micro-scale solutions. Nonetheless, following the UNDP's view, it could be said that, in present economic situation, ICTs can be a 'double aged sword' or a 'highway for learning and development' depends on the users and how they use it in the present globalizing Indian context.

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Some Aspects of Global Positioning System (GPS) Technology Application in Medical and Healthcare for Rural Sector

S.S. Ahluwalia

ABSTRACT

Rural sector of our country is suffering from lack of proper medical and health care services. Today, many disabled and sick individuals living in rural areas struggle and suffer due to lack of medical facilities/care. Without doctors or nurses nearby, it is difficult for rural residents to access emergency responders or even caregivers who can monitor them for easily preventable diseases, major health conditions or day-to-day well-being.

Introduction

750 million people of our country live in rural areas. The development in rural areas, has not kept pace with the overall progress of our country. Even today, rural sector poverty remains as an eye sore. Rural population faces acute shortage of basic facilities such as healthcare, medical facilities, drinking water and roads. Today, many disabled and sick individuals living in rural areas struggle and suffer due to lack of medical facilities/care. Without doctors or nurses nearby, it is difficult for rural residents to access emergency responders or even caregivers who can monitor them for easily preventable diseases, major health conditions or day-to-day well-being. This has seriously affected the livelihoods of poor people

Sustainable livelihoods development in rural India is essential to unleash the processes of all-round growth of our country. The solution to serve these communities is telemedicine — technologies that provide long distance home health care that is priceless to many pregnant women, terminally ill people and others with disabilities who require remote home monitoring to safeguard their health.

In recent years, there have been a number of advances that have pulled technology into the home health care arena, making the possibilities for improvement endless. The most remarkable of which is telemedicine — an affordable, in-home health monitoring system already popular in Scandinavian countries.

Telemedicine and GPS in Developed Countries

NASA developed the wireless Lifeguard system, a lightweight, portable device that enables physicians to monitor the health and safety of explorers in remote locations. The system allows real-time monitoring of vital parameters such as heart rate, blood pressure, Electrocardiogram (EKG), breathing rate, and temperature. The Lifeguard's button sensors stick to the skin to take EKG and breathing rate. The system's sensors connect to the Lifeguard by wires. Lifeguard's data logger has a transmitter that radios collected data by satellite to a base station computer. This is a good example of a system that could be used in telemedicine.

Germany's Vitaphone has launched a handset that can record heart-activity data when pressed to a patient's chest and transmit it to doctors. With the Vitaphone 2300 (Cardio Phone) Vitaphone is presenting a completely new innovation to the world: It is now possible for the first time to record, save, and digitally transmit 3-channel EKGs via mobile phone and without cables or adhesive electrodes. The EKG is obtained via electrodes on the back of the mobile phone. To this end, it is simply placed against the naked chest of the patient.

The EKG recording is started with the press of a button and takes place completely automatically. The same is true of the transmission of the EKG to the medical telemedicine service center of Vitaphone, which is staffed around the clock with doctors and where the EKG is evaluated. The GPS receiver integrated into the Vitaphone 2300 also allows the medical service to precisely determine the position of the patient in the event of an emergency. High-risk patients in particular can be given optimal care thanks to telemedicine.

The computerized LifeShirt by VivoMetrics Inc. has been tested by the United States Air Force for its ability to monitor armed forces in the field. The Air Force will enhance the LifeShirt monitoring system with GPS and long-range wireless capabilities to create an advanced method for real-time location and physiological monitoring of military personnel in the field. Also planned are ways to improve the sensitivity of GPS localization so that it can be used to track personnel inside buildings.

The LifeShirt is a washable, mesh-like, lightweight shirt which uses embedded sensors to collect and continuously monitor over 30 physiologic indicators of health and disease including respiratory and cardiac function as well as other physiological parameters. The data is delivered via handsets for monitoring by medical personnel. Ideal for use in telemedicine.

Indian scenario for development of medical care and health facilities

The Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) plays a pivotal role in correcting the developmental imbalances and accord due priority to development in rural areas. To

ensure a reasonably good quality of life for the masses in rural India, the Ministry of Rural Development is implementing a number of programmes aimed at providing opportunities for livelihoods and sustainable development. The substantial increase in the budgetary allocation for rural development reflects the strong commitment of the Central Government to sustainable development in rural areas and also towards creating more livelihoods opportunities. One of the areas for emphasis is health care and medical facilities. However it is seen from results of last few decades that the desired result in medical and health care are far from even satisfactory level. The reasons for unsatisfactory results are many.

These vary from misallocation of resources to inefficiencies in delivery system. The health problems in are aggravated by high incidence of infectious and communicable diseases on one hand and modern diseases like cancer and AIDS on the other hand. The former is generally associated with malnutrition, unhygienic sanitation, illiteracy, and ignorance. Further, rapid growth of population and significant number of people below the poverty line, and large rural and urban unorganized sectors makes it even more difficult for health services to keep pace with health needs.

Telemedicine generally refers to patient care, while telehealthcare incorporates a variety of health-related activities. The common thread lies in the fact that all of these activities involve the transfer of information about health-related issues between one or more sites using telecoms technology to affect the transfer.

One of the primary issues of the healthcare system suggested is the establishment of a telematic network for primary care, assigning the general practitioner the role of human interface in the system with a view to deliver the services the patient.

The basic function assigned can be, of preventive information of the patient, orientation and guidance of the decisions related to health. This interface will not only reflect the specific patient's needs and personal preferences, but also take into account constraints such as , Budget limitations, the social and economic opportunities and the management all the healthcare systems services to be delivered to the patient. The management of the system will be particularly critical in the case of financial involvement of governmental bodies.

GPS technology can provide an efficient and cost effective system for health care and medical facilities in rural sector and the salient aspect of the same are discussed in this paper.

The application of information techniques in the hospitals was initiated a couple of decades ago. Since that time the market of hospital hard- and software increased tremendously. Today computer systems and in-house networks are available in almost

every hospital even in the smaller ones. Many of them are using Local Area Network for their internal use. The areas of application are mostly restricted to administration, i.e. the documentation of general patient's data instance for reimbursement and the management of the hospital. Describing the state of the art one can at least state that the informatics infrastructure concerning hospital administration is fairly well developed. Although most of the GPS have a modem, it is hardly being used for external communication and exchange of information. Most GPS use the modem if they want to contact the service provider in situations when technical problems occur.

There is a need to include applications like laboratory services, image processing, acute care and in the decision making process for diagnosis and treatment in small hospitals. In advance hospital in big cities these facilities are available to some extent. To make use of GPS enabled health care and medical facilities this is the first step required to integrate it with telemedicine and health care.

Technical Details

GPS and PDA in Location Determination

In South Africa a pilot study was undertaken on linking of GPS and PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) for location of patient. Pilot study concluded with observation that it is possible to use simple PDA/GPS device to locate home of patient. It was also found during study that in densely populated informal settlement GPS technology is more accurate than Aerial photographs in identifying home and more efficient than addresses provided by the participant. The study was conducted in two communities in greater Johannesburg in South Africa, Willers farm a relatively sparsely populated informal settlement and a portion of Alexandra, an urban township with densely populated informal settlement. Ten participants in each community were asked to locate their homes on Aerial photographs. Nine from Willers farm and six from Alexandra were able to identify their home. The total time taken by research assistant unfamiliar that area to locate their home from each community given the addresses was compared with total time taken by a community volunteer with half an hour of training to locate the same house using the device. The time taken to locate the ten household was reduced by 20 % and 50% in each community respectively by PDA / GPS device.

Medical Information System

Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), Inc USA has developed number of software tool and utilities to work with GPS and Global Information System (GIS) which are available for commercial use and associated data. Two technologies namely, GPS and GIS can be used to near accurate measurements and creation geographic databases for further analysis/ research.

Low cost tools which are available and can be used are ArcPad and ArcView to create MAPS in field areas with relevant data base. ArcPad is designed to be a stand-alone program or a field-based extension to a desktop or enterprise GIS system. Data collection with ArcPad is fast, easy, and significantly improved with immediate data validation and availability. ArcPad provides database access, mapping, GIS, and GPS integration to users out in the field via handheld and mobile devices. These devices and programs give users a new way to leverage their geographic databases—in the field. , ArcPad enhances handheld, portable touch screen computers with vector and raster image display, custom form-filling capabilities, and real-time positioning using an optional GPS receiver.

GPS is an accurate measurement Technology, which can be used to create instant local area maps and also attach the desired database on the point, line and area. The basic component has an antenna and from the antenna a cable is attached with a palm card computer that receives the satellite emitted radio signals through software of ArcPad. Before the measurement a data base for point, line and area has to be created using ArcView GIS mapping software. The GPS equipment particularly the palm card computer is a handheld one and receiver system with antenna can be easily carried manually or in a vehicle. The system can be carried very easily to any accessible areas and instant map could be recorded in the palm carder. The finished map can then be downloaded to the central station computer for further analysis. The GPS measured location data is integrated with the ArcView GIS to integrate maps with databases and friendly user interface

Development of Medical Information System

Through GPS and PDA, location of medical practitioner, private and government hospital, nursing homes, family planning centers can be obtained using PAN card enabled computer systems. The location thus obtained can be plotted on the map using GIS. It is a well known fact that GPS and GIS are quite accurate and a map of the city can be made available at nearby villages at some Nodal points (panchayat bhavan etc) for perusal by village population. The database of medical practitioner with their qualification, location of their clinic, telephone number, email address etc can be created and integrated with the map which includes similarly the facilities , offered by government hospitals private clinics, nursing home and family planning centers, time for OPD and the days when specialist is available for consultancy in respect of a city nearest to village can be created and with user friendly interface can be positioned at centre point in villages.

The integrated database with the map can be depicted on a touch screen monitor at nodal point with user friendly interfaces which help in location of specialist like child specialist gynecologist, surgeon, eye specialist etc with a touch of screen in vicinity of the village. The Information System for Medical Care will be quite useful for rural populations.

Conclusion

GPS application to create Medical Information System in Indian Rural sector is just a beginning. It is first step in providing relevant information to rural population with least cost. A full fledged telemedicine system as prevalent in advanced country can gradually come up depending upon the success of the present systems. Large-volume commercial applications such as cellular phones, personal communication systems, and in-vehicle navigation systems will fuel continued development of these technologies. Rural development in general and medical health in particular will benefit from these developments. The challenge for the next decade will be to create hardware that is small, rugged, and within the reach of common people. Along with this goes the challenge of creating inexpensive applications that are integrated, flexible, and which can be supported by limited staff maintenance and training resources. As with many other technologies, development of GPS/GIS technology in India must take place to meet these requirements in the rural sector. Financial aspects and government approval which are essential to implement the system are not covered and will be taken into account once detailed study is under taken and prototype fabricated and tried in one of two rural areas.

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Role of Open Universities in Promoting Reading Habits and Creating Literate Society

M. V. Lakshmi Reddy

Abstract

Promotion of literate societies and their reading habits are the responsibilities of all organisations and individuals involved in educational endeavours of the nation. The potential and effectiveness of the organisations and the individuals may vary widely. But, those organisations and individuals with high potential and greater acceptability can certainly do a better job. It is needless to emphasise that the Open Universities (OUs) have effectively demonstrated to the world that they have huge potential to play their parallel as well as supplementary and complementary roles in promoting higher education. As a result, OUs have established themselves as the order of the present and inevitability of the future. However, a fact is that, though OUs have extended the benefits of higher education to a large majority of the needy, they are yet to play their due role in extension of adult education – reaching literacy and education to the millions of non-literate adults who are about one-fourth of the country. It is high time that the OUs direct part of their efforts towards promotion of literacy and reading habits, or else, they may get directed in this regard by the concerned sooner or later. OUs with their immense potential are, no doubt, better placed not only to promote, strengthen and sustain reading habits among their entire staff, students and the public but also to create literate society. This paper, therefore, focuses on the role that the OUs can play in promoting the reading habits and also in creating the larger literate society.

Linkage between the Process, Pre-requisites and Effect of Reading

The individuals who can read are those with mastery over reading all alphabets and other basic elements of a language in all their possible combinations. Numerates also may be able to read, but only the numerals in all their permutations and combinations along with operations upon them. But, the effective readers are only the literates – who possess the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic with understanding. Literate society is nothing but the sum total of literates of a given society.

If we closely examine the process, pre-requisites and effect of reading we can notice an inseparable linkage between the three. It may unwittingly be a surprise for

us to notice a fact that before a person becomes a literate he/she first begins to read. And, it is only thereafter a person becomes literate with further reading. Then only differences in reading abilities, interests and opportunities arise among literates leading to formation of different reading habits characteristic of an individual or, for that matter, of a literate society.

It is thus universal phenomenon that a person is first initiated to reading, to begin with, as the reader of an alphabet of a language, then to reading of the remaining alphabets as independent letters before mastering all the alphabets and other elements of that language plus the numerals in their different combinations and permutations.

Therefore, if we look at reading by an individual in the historical perspective of his/her progress in reading, it is actually the initial effect of reading by him/her of the first letter of a language that develops motivation or interest to read other letters and so on before becoming a literate. Hence, it is very clear and significant that even a non-literate has first to read to learn reading — the independent letters, the syllables, the words and sentences in that order – and to become a semi-literate, and later a literate, an independent reader, a reflective reader, a critical reader, a creative reader and so on. So, we can clearly notice that reading to learn and learning to read are the two essential and inseparable pre-requisites to become a member of reading society, then of a literate society and learning society.

Reading and learning reading *ab initio* form essential part of the process of becoming a literate. In other words, without the individuals beginning to read, formation of a literate society cannot be thought of. So, it is the reading society that progresses towards the literate society. We can, therefore, categorically say that it is only *that society which begins to read* that becomes a *literate society*, and it is only the literate society that will be an effective *learning society*. Beyond doubt, it is the *literate and learning society* that is the order of the day for survival, progress and development of a nation. It follows that, in a learning society every individual must at least be an independent reader or a literate. Here, one should note that 'reading skills' and 'literacy skills' are not one and the same; but the latter is broader and subsumes the former.

So, it is implied that:

- a) if the **society is illiterate**, ability to read must be developed in its individuals by *initiating them to read* – to begin with the independent alphabets and/or numerals first thus introducing them to language and/or mathematics; and
- b) if the **society is literate**, the literates must be enabled to put to use their literacy skills to *form and promote their reading habits*.

From the above discussion, it is clearly established that for **creating a reading and literate society** the *essential pre-requisites* are that the individuals of the given society must:

- i) at least be able to read, or must be literates;
- ii) be in a position to spare some time to read;
- iii) have interest to read on their own or must be motivated and guided to read;
- iv) have some material which is appropriate to their level of reading ability and understanding; and finally
- v) be in a position to actually spend part of their spare time on reading the material of their choice.

The above mentioned pre-requisites combined together develop certain reading habits characteristic of an individual in his/her given reading context/environment in the society.

Range of Reading Habits and Factors Inhibiting Reading

Based on the author's own reading habits since childhood to till date (his present fifties), and on close observation of others' reading habits, he attempts to present the summary of common reading habits of individuals as follows. Basically, the individual reader:

- *Exhibits* the passion for reading as it is enriching, useful and/or joyful experience, or considers reading as essential for his/her survival and progress;
- *Sets* suitable timings for reading every day (if reading is his/her routine), and spares some time that is convenient to him/her every day for reading. Even if hard pressed for time on any day, it is the habit of some people to read for some time every day either during breakfast, lunch or dinner (while one eats alone) or during tea-times; or while commuting from home to school, college, university, or office or on any work and back home in a vehicle — car, van or a public transport bus (when sitting or standing comfortably); or while waiting at bus-stop, railway station or an airport; or while travelling in a train or a flight; or while lying on the bed before going to bed.
- Keeps alternative reading materials suitable for reading at different times convenient to him/her during a day. These alternative materials may be a daily newspaper, a weekly or monthly magazine or other periodical, or office work-related material, or a book or any study material of a course/programme, a pocket dictionary, a mobile with Internet facility or a dictionary as a part of its applications feature, or a laptop with wi-fi facility, etc.
- Reads as per the priority list of the materials to be read in a day, a week or a month and as per the timings accordingly prioritised for reading them. Also, sets priority timings for watching select TV news channels as per the

regular schedule and reads the displayed news text as part of prime news or the running-strip-news.

- Reads and improves his/her own material under preparation for any specific purpose or target-specific and time-bound submission of a paper, or an article, or a book or any course material for publication and the like.
- Visits a library for reading during fixed-time every day (if possible), or his/her fixed library-day(s) in a week or month, or visits/uses digital library or open resources by accessing relevant material through Internet.
- Does long-duration concentrated reading of any targeted materials available with him/her by choosing most convenient place free from disturbance either at home, or in the school, college, university, work place or at any other location. The 'other location' may be balcony or roof-top of the house, or open and pleasant agricultural field, or a room in the agricultural field housing an electric motor/pump-set, or harvesting ground in the field, or an isolated area in the peaceful public park or any thing like that.
- Refers a dictionary as soon as he/she comes across any new word while reading any material in print or in the computer. Or reads a few new words every day from any one dictionary of his/her choice, be it a pocket dictionary or that in a mobile, more particularly when short but convenient time is available for reading.
- Remembers and visits important websites or makes a list of them that he/she wishes to browse through some time every day, or once a week or with any other frequency. Such websites may be popular national and regional newspapers, or institutional websites or other popular websites of public information / importance.
- Searches on the Internet for websites related to his/her immediate tasks, needs, interests, etc or for websites related to select topics, areas or fields of his/her choice. Some times he/she may copy and paste these websites in a file or e-mails them from his/her own e-mail account to the same account itself or to his/her alternative account, as the case may be, for future reference and reading. Further, while reading the e-mails in the Inbox every day, if any important website is communicated by any known contact, he/she may visit and read that website.
- Utilises any time that is going to be a waste or idle-time on any day for reading by browsing and exploring from the Internet or by using CDs or other storage devices having any purposeful/interesting material for reading any fun books, joke books, popular poetry, folk songs, cinema songs or such other literature for pleasurable reading.
- Identifies suitable material for reading any time in the near or distant future and collects it accordingly.

Keeping in view the above commonly observable range of reading habits we can easily identify the factors that inhibit reading and formation of reading habits.

Basic Factors Inhibiting Reading and Reading Habits in Developing Countries: As per the provisional population totals of 2011 Census, India has literacy rate of 74%. Still it has 272,950,015 illiterate population aged 7 years and above (<http://www.imaginmor.com/census-of-india-2011.html>). It, thus, holds the disgraceful distinction of being the world's largest illiterate country. Yet, at the same time, it holds the contrary distinction of highest multilingual country with so many people who can read and write in 3 or more languages/scripts, which is an advantage it has to tackle the menace of its illiteracy. All the illiterates have to be brought into the reading society by making them literate. Further, these literates have different levels of reading abilities and hence require material of different standards suiting to the level of their reading skills, needs and interests. Such facilitative learning environment is either lacking or inadequate for them.

From the foregoing discussion we can sum up the basic factors inhibiting reading habits and creation of literate societies as follows.

- Lack of basic ability/skills to read.
- Non-availability of suitable material to those who can read.
- Lack of ability to afford the available reading materials.
- Inadequate institutional support to promote reading habits.
- Inequalities in availability of reading materials to diverse categories of literates in their social environment.
- Inequalities in availability, accessibility and affordability of user-friendly technology-based materials.
- Inadequate reach of print, electronic and digital media to the needy.
- Non-utilization or ineffective utilization of the available resources by the literates due to disparities in their abilities, background and contexts.

Of course, we know, on the other hand, many people who know reading very well plus means and opportunities for their reading is not a problem, yet they do not read enough. They have neither much initial interest nor lasting interest in reading books and, thus, render literacy in them useless. They also need to be encouraged to read in their own interest.

Towards Facilitation Efforts: The opportunities for reading can be enhanced by the own efforts of the individuals concerned, by improving the learning environment in the community in which they live, and by involving the institutions such as the educational institutions, the libraries and the mass media – press, electronic, digital and multi-media with Internet facility, among others. For many adults it is the initial opportunities to their reading that play an instrumental role in creating reading habits and generating interest in them to read further so as to promote, strengthen and sustain reading habits for creating literate and learning societies.

We are aware that the initial guidance and help to read is offered either at home

by parents, if they are literate, or by other literate person(s) in an informal institution like family or neighbourhood learning environment; or by the paid teachers or instructors in formal or non-formal learning set-ups. It is actually the first opportunity to read that opens the doors to learning reading and then to further levels of reading and writing. For a person capable of reading, the reading activity is a combination of passion, hobby, habit, skill and necessity to promote his/her own reading ability in order to cope up with new knowledge, changing environment and needs or requirements of a literate and learning society. The reading habits have to be developed in all the people to make them read and reap the benefits of their reading, and the Open Universities have their role to play in this regard.

Role of Open Universities: Strategies for Promotion of Reading Habits and Creating Literate Societies

The growing need and significance of becoming a literate and a reader for survival and progress vis-a-vis prevailing educational, economic, political, social, institutional and technological environment is driving an individual into the situations of "read or perish" or "write or perish" or "learn or perish". These situations warrant every individual to become a member of reading and literate society. It is in this context an attempt is made below to highlight the role that the Open Universities can play in promoting reading habits among the members of learning society and in creating larger literate society.

There are 89 Open Universities in the world (Otto Peters, 2010) and 15 of them (16.8%) are in India alone; one national open university, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and 14 State Open Universities. Every OU has many Schools of Studies, Departments, Institutes, Centres, Divisions and other Units at its headquarters which perform different functions related to planning, developing, launching, implementing, and evaluating different academic programmes.

Besides these, depending upon their jurisdiction either all over the country or the State concerned, as the case may be, each of these Open Universities has a well established institutional network of its own centres and many collaborating institutions at different levels for catering to the diverse needs of learners. For instance, being a national open university, IGNOU has its network of Regional Centres and Student Support Centres called Study Centres, Programme Study Centres, Community Colleges, Work Centres, etc spread through out the length and breadth of the country for its students in India and Partner Institutions outside the country for its overseas students. Similarly, each State Open University (SOU) has its network of Regional and Study Centres across the State of its jurisdiction while some have their networks expanded beyond the concerned state as well.

Table 1 presents the magnitude of network of Regional and Study Centres of different Open Universities in India.

Table 1: Number of Open Universities in India and their Regional and Study Centres

Sl. No.	Name of the Open University	Number of Regional Centres	Number of Study Centres
1.	Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University, Ahmedabad	2	507
2.	Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad	23	218
3.	Indira Gandhi National Open University, IGNOU, New Delhi	67	3,252
4.	Karnataka State Open University, Mysore	7	429
5.	Krishna Kanta Handique State Open University, Guwahati	NA	220
6.	Madhya Pradesh Bhoj Open University, Bhopal	11	1824
7.	Nalanda Open University, Patna	NA	28
8.	Netaji Subhas Open University, Kolkata	NA	191
9.	Pt. Sunderlal Sharma Open University, Chattisgarh	4	45
10.	Tamil Nadu Open University, Chennai	NA	700
11.	U. P. Rajarshi Tandon Open University, Allahabad	5	300
12.	Uttaranchal Open University, Nainital	8	300
13.	Vardhaman Mahaveer Open University, Kota	6	87
14.	Yashwant Rao Chavan Open University, Nashik	8	1500
15.	The Global Open University, Dimapur	NA	NA
Total		141	9601

Sources: (*Note:* websites given below were visited on 25th November 2011).

1. www.makemycareer.com/courses-detail-page.php?...
2. <http://www.careers360.com/news/4603-review-of-prominent-distance-education-institutes>
3. IGNOU. 2011. *Profile 2011*.
4. www.ygencdc.com/Downloads/CDC-KSOUBrochure.pdf
5. <http://www.kkhsou.in/main/about.html>
6. <http://www.grotal.com/e/Madhya-Pradesh-Bhoj-Open-University-Bhopal-C2514>.
7. http://www.brandbihar.com/english/nalanda_open_university.html
8. <http://www.grotal.com/e/Netaji-Subhas-Open-University-Kolkata-C2357>.
9. http://chhattisgarheducation.net/universities/Open_University/Study_centers_bsp.pdf
10. <http://targetstudy.com/university/297/tamil-nadu-open-university/>
11. <http://www.grotal.com/e/UP-Rajarshi-Tandon-Open-University-C1358>
12. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uttarakhand_Open_University
13. <http://www.vmou.ac.in/AllStudyCentres.asp>

14. <http://targetstudy.com/university/196/yashwantrao-chavan-maharashtra-open-university/>

Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), the leviathan with 2.8 million students retains the pole position in India's first ever objective rating of Distance Learning Institutes. It accounts for a massive 30 percent of the total enrolment of ODL institutes in the country (<http://www.careers360.com/news/4596-30-Best-Distance-Education-Institute>). Of course, the latest figure of IGNOU's enrolment is 2.9 million (IGNOU, 2011). The Open Universities have thus shown their impact on the society's march towards a reading and learning society by enrolling millions of students to its academic programmes. Therefore, the Open Universities need to have effective strategy for promoting reading habits of their entire staff (teaching, academic and non-academic at all levels), their students on and off the campus, and their prospective students and other sections of the literate community. At the same time, the Open Universities cannot ignore their role in catering to 272,950,015 illiterate population aged 7 years and above, to enable their march towards the reading, literate and learning society, who can equally be their prospective students.

A) Strategy for Promotion of Reading Habits

The strategy of Open Universities for promotion of reading habits must aim at strengthening the reading habits of its entire staff (teachers, academics and non-academics), its students on rolls, its prospective students and others of the literate society. It is only the material in print, electronic and digital mode that is available to them which can promote their reading habits.

- i) Material for all the staff members:* a) Each OU must publish a volume containing comprehensive list of up-to-date documents that should be read by each and every member of its staff. This list must include: the governing Act, Statutes, Ordinances, Regulations, Finance Code, and different types of rules (Fundamental Rules, Recruitment and Promotion Rules, House Allotment Rules, Code of Conduct, Classification, Control and Appeal Rules, etc) and specific duties and responsibilities of different categories. Such a volume should be made available free of cost to every staff member, from top to bottom — the Vice-chancellor, Pro-vice-chancellors, all officers, teachers, academics and other employees — for their thorough reading and reference. All the listed materials must be put on the institutional website not only for promoting access to staff for reading but also for ensuring transparency and accountability through their self-induction, self-orientation, and self-training. These documents must be periodically up-dated and accordingly up-loaded.
- b) Library at the headquarters of every OU must publish a comprehensive volume containing exhaustive list of titles (with author indicated) of its collection — discipline or subject-wise — along with their accession numbers. A copy of such a list must be distributed to every School / Department /

Institute / Division / Centre at its headquarters and also to its Regional and Student Support Centres for creating awareness of the library collections as well as facilitating their easy access and consultation, as and when required. Such a list must be put on the institutional website with a link under its Library Unit/Division for information of all staff members at all the levels. This will also be useful to promote reading among the interested students and the public. Similarly, every Regional Centre and every student support centre must also publish a volume containing a list of collections in the library of the respective centre and make it available/accessible to their staff and the students. Every five years all these volumes containing such lists of collections at all levels must be revised by adding the new acquisitions in their respective libraries.

ii) *Materials and activities for and by the Directors/Heads, the faculty and the research scholars of the Schools/Departments/Institutions/Divisions, etc:*

a) In every OU the Director of each School/Department/Institution/Division in consultation with the concerned Library staff must prepare and publish a comprehensive list of titles of books and journals available in the library which are related to its disciplines and programmes on offer. A copy of the same be made available to every faculty member and research student of the School/Department/Centre concerned for enhancing their access to all relevant materials.

b) Every OU should provide an independent computer with Internet facility in the office to every faculty member for searching, accessing and reading the open resources available in different websites.

c) Every School/Department/Centre, etc offering academic programmes shall organise book-reading or book-review sessions or presentations on current researches every week or fortnight on a particular day at specified time. Book-choice for reading or its review or research presentation may be left to the members concerned.

d) The faculty and the research scholars may be encouraged to read any one dictionary in their life completely. In this regard they may be encouraged to purchase mobiles that contain a dictionary under its applications feature, which is useful for ready reference at any time by any one who uses it.

e) Occasionally, reading-camps should be organized at the headquarters, and at all the Regional and Student Support Centres, etc for motivation of all the concerned.

iii) *Materials for the students enrolled for various academic programmes and for all other interested readers:*

a) Every OU must upload soft copies of the complete set of course materials of all the programmes on its institutional website for reading and reference by the all the students, the faculty of other institutions, and the interested public.

- b) Each School, Department, Institute, Centre and Division (of every Open University) offering academic programmes must bring out a 2-4 page comprehensive brochure of its programmes on offer for publicity purpose. Adequate number of copies of the same shall be sent to the Regional Centres and Student Support Centres for their up-to-date information and publicity among the potential/prospective students in the concerned region. The soft copies of these brochures must also be put on the institutional website.
- c) The printed course material of a programme must reach the students enrolled for it as per the prescribed schedule. The electronic version of complete set of course material of the programme must also be made available to the concerned students in CDs and SD card (memory card or electronic-chip usable in mobile phones) along with the printed course material for their reading in any optional mode of their choice at any time. OUs must tie up with mobile phone companies to put suitable port for such SD card and also load soft copy of the course material into such card/chip.
- d) Every Regional Centre and Student Support Centre of every Open University must also publish annually up-to-date booklets, brochures, pamphlets, etc of programmes being offered under or by it and the same should be distributed free of cost to the prospective student visitors and the public with double purpose of wider circulation for promoting reading habits in them as well as ensuring publicity for the programmes.

Thus, diverse reading communities must be encouraged to know about variety of materials available for their reading and progress with little effort and least expense.

B) Strategy for Promotion of Literate Society

Open Universities need to have different strategy to initiate the illiterates to reading and to enable them to emerge as a class of neo-literates. Many developing countries including India have been launching extensive and intensive literacy campaigns to promote literacy. Therefore, the Open Universities' strategy for promotion of literate society must aim at catering to the non-literate, semi-literate and literate communities and enabling their march towards reading and literate society. This calls for broad and sustainable strategy such as the following which requires comprehensive, well coordinated and concerted efforts of all relevant institutions, organisations, personnel and people involved in the OUs network, among others. In India the strategy of OUs in this regard can be as follows.

- i) Every Open University must have a School, Department, Institute or Centre for Adult, Continuing Education and Extension and should offer academic programmes at Certificate, Diploma, Degree and Master's level for capacity building and professional development in adult education. The curriculum of these programmes must be uniform through out the country for parity and also excellence. IGNOU has already taken a lead and launched Post-

Graduate Certificate in Adult Education (PGCAE), Post-Graduate Diploma in Adult Education (PGDAE), and Master of Arts in Adult Education (MAAE) programmes through open and distance learning mode, which have been developed by involving experts available in the field across the country. It is appropriate that these programmes are adopted by all the State Open Universities as well. Towards this end, IGNOU, SOUs, National Literacy Mission Authority (NLMA) under MHRD, and University Grants Commission should prepare a joint strategy to ensure that every Department/Centre of Adult, Continuing Education and Extension of every OU and also of every conventional university offer these programmes by using IGNOU's course materials for their students for uniformity and excellence in standards.

- ii) Similarly, IGNOU should come out with course material for undergraduate course in adult education which should also be adopted by all OUs and undergraduate colleges of conventional universities. Suitable steps should be taken to include 'Adult Education' as one of the courses of undergraduate programmes all over the country. All conventional undergraduate colleges offering Arts programmes must be made the programme study centres OUs for their undergraduate programme in adult education. All the undergraduate colleges must also be involved in adult literacy and awareness programmes at the community level. Meanwhile, the steps also should be taken to accommodate the successfully completed students of PGCAE, PGDAE and MAAE for effective utilisation of their capabilities in the undergraduate colleges as faculty as well as other functionaries in the field.
- iii) It must be made mandatory for all the Departments / Centres of Adult, Continuing Education and Extension in the conventional universities, the conventional colleges having the Department of Adult Education (DAE), the State Resource Centres for Adult Education (SRCs), the District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs), District Resource Units (DRUs) and other suitable institutions including NGOs working in the field of adult education to become the Programme Study Centres (PSCs) for the adult education programmes of open universities. The Regional Centres of IGNOU and of all State OUs must be given time-bound target to complete this process of making them the PSCs of adult education in cooperation and coordination with the Directorate of Adult Education (DAE) under MHRD, the State Directorates of Adult Education and the State Higher Education Department of the concerned states.
- iv) The PSCs under each Regional Centre of IGNOU and other SOUs must be assigned specific geographical area for grassroots level practical work/field work. Adult Education Centres and the Jan Pustakalayas in the local communities in that area must work in close collaboration with the

concerned Programme Study Centre of that area. The services of the students pursuing adult education programmes (Certificate, Diploma, Degree and Master's) of OUs and conventional universities shall be utilised effectively, as a part of their practical work / field work for promoting literacy, awareness, functionality and continuing education among adults. Adequate funds with time-bound targets must be provided to every Regional Centre and PSCs there under which have students enrolled for undergraduate as well as PGCAE, PGDE and/or MAAE programmes in adult education for identification and enrolment of non-literate adults into adult education centres **and making them literate. There must be a provision that mandates** every student to make at least one non-literate a literate as a part of his/her programme related practical work/field work in the community.

- v) The services of all the successful students of adult education programmes (Undergraduate, Certificate, Diploma and Master's) must be utilised as preraks, instructors, supervisors, coordinators and other functionaries at higher levels on part-time / full-time basis by providing every opportunity available in the field to these professionally trained / qualified students only. The NLMA and DAE under MHRD at the Centre, and State Literacy Mission Authority (SLMA) and State Directorate of Adult Education (SDAE) of each State plus UGC, IGNOU and SOUs must come out with a policy binding every implementing agency to ensure all career prospects and benefits to accrue to the professionally trained adult educators only as they can play committed, courageous and instrumental role in building and transforming the character of the communities concerned and the society at large.
- vi) Every unemployed Graduate in any part of the country must be encouraged to enroll for either PGCAE, PGDAE or MAAE offered by OUs or any conventional university and their fee must be reimbursed by the State concerned after they complete their programmes. And, all these students should be involved either as volunteers or as paid functionaries in implementation of adult education programmes. But, their involvement should form part of the practical work / field work of any one of the above mentioned programmes for which they have enrolled.
- vii) All the Adult Literacy Primers (Improved Pace and Content of Learning primers) and other reading material available in the form of literacy, post-literacy and continuing education material must be made use of by the students as a part of their practical work in promoting literacy, awareness and functionality among adults of the community. Thus, while studying they will be getting an opportunity to serve the community as a part of their course/programme related activity. The diversity of community-based

practical activities given below (Lakshmi Reddy, 2011a) will help in establishing the sustainable and long-term links between the formal, non-formal and informal institutions on one hand and the community, college and university students and the functionaries of different programme on the other hand, besides paving the way for their employment or self-employment of the interested student community.

- ✓ Conducting a survey of a community, local institutions and government programmes.
- ✓ Conducting a survey of career interests of degree college students and their interests in involving themselves in adult education activities in the community.
- ✓ Internet browsing and commenting upon ten given websites.
- ✓ Organising campaign(s) for promotion of awareness and functionality in the community.
- ✓ Community networking and information dissemination among the community by holding a meeting and showing the given websites.
- ✓ Observing, as a participant or as an outside observer, any training programme(s) organised for field functionaries.
- ✓ Seeking intervention of implementing agencies of formal, non-formal and adult education programmes.
- ✓ Establishing a professional network of student colleagues (peer group) and professionals / experts.
- ✓ Gathering and addressing the community on a community issue / problem / evil.
- ✓ Facilitating establishment of an Adult Education Centre / Continuing Education Centre in the community.
- ✓ Organising a community talk (Lecture), a debate or a panel discussion in the community.
- ✓ Organising a quiz programme in the community.
- ✓ Organising discussion group(s) in the community.
- ✓ Organising a field trip or tour for the community.
- ✓ Organising visits by functionary(ies) of development and/or welfare programmes or by specialist(s) for promotion of a sustainable development practice in the community.
- ✓ Observing the functioning of a Coaching Centre or Study Circle coaching the students for entrance examinations to professional courses or any competitive examinations for positions of public service.
- ✓ Promoting any socially useful and/or productive activity of student's own interest/choice in the Community.
- ✓ Forming and running a voluntary organisation/Non-Governmental Organisation in the local area.

viii) There must be sustainable library strategies for promoting and sustaining the reading habits of neo-literates so that they are prevented from relapsing into illiteracy. The neo-literate adults should have suitable reading material and other learning opportunities made available at their homes and also in their neighbourhood. When the greedy policy makers in high power-seats of the country have made themselves, along with many other Government employees and others in the equivalent positions, entitled to even petty reimbursements such as newspaper bills every month, are the poor neo-literates not entitled to have free and facilitated access to their reading materials at their homes and also in their neighbourhood? In this context, the least favour that can be done to the non-literate, semi-literate and neo-literate communities all over the country is to provide "Digital libraries for adults or Internet-based learning resources or open education resources for adults" (See Lakshmi Reddy, 2011b, p.22) which can change their learning environment drastically (emphasis added):

"We know how the advanced adults with high academic qualifications, skills and abilities are exploiting the rich resources available in the digital libraries and other open education resources through Internet facility available to them in their institutions and/or at home. To provide neo-literates and self-learners with such facility, there is a need to put all the relevant materials suitable for different types of learners of particular language in selected websites and communicate the same to all the Adult / Continuing Education Centres. Also, the websites of electronic versions of all the local newspapers should be provided to them. Further, the important and most useful websites for enhancing their networking with people's representatives, constitutional authorities, and other public servants need to be made known to them. Every Adult / Continuing Education Centre or adults' corner of every local library in every state must be provided with at least one computer with Internet facility so that the adult learners can reap the benefits of these digital resources for their learning and development" (p.22).

ix) Quite recently, Telecom and HRD Minister Kapil Sibal launched the PC tablet – Aakash, the world's cheapest tablet – priced at \$35 (Rs 1,750) for students pursuing graduation and said that the government aims at increasing production to bring down the cost of the tablet to less than \$10 (Rs.500). (http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2011-10-06/news/30250564_1_tablet-sd-card-datawind). If the same 'Aakash' can also be provided to every home, but free of cost to the BPL families and at about Rs.250 to every other rural and remote household just above the poverty line, that would be the greatest ever service that the Government can provide to the hitherto un-reached non-literate and neo-literate communities. Once that is done even the literacy primers (IPCL and all other available primers) and other reading material (PL and CE) can be put on the Internet – website

for non-literates and neo-literates, as a part of SLMA or any other institutional website — with suitable links. If the open literacy and adult education resources are, thus, made available and accessible to the non-literates, semi-literates and neo-literates at their homes — in the form of an invisible largest web library with free Internet connectivity in their PC Tablet (such as Aakash) — no one can really stop them from utilising the same and becoming members of reading and literate society either with the help of an instructor, guide or mentor of their own choice or of the trained instructors provided for them at adult education centres. Of course, it is just a matter of objective, fair and serious commitment by the concerned policy makers for such a cause with full vigour, rigour and restlessness. Once that is done, we need to remember forever that, we do not have to teach them reading habits and literacy, and rather we have to study a lot to understand the diversity of reading habits they exhibit in terms of where all they read (places unimaginable for the urbanite policy makers) and at what times (places combined with time) will be astonishing for the so called planners and strategists. This is so because the non-literate is neither uneducated nor alone — every non-literate is amidst three literates who can facilitate his/her reading for literacy acquisition and further learning.

In the present context of rural mass increasingly becoming familiar with technological gadgets such as mobiles, amongst many other things, just one 'Aakash' like PC Tablet in every non-literate or neo-literate home will change the whole character of hitherto non-reading and non-literate communities of the society. They will read and learn at their own homes or places of work in day or even in the night time (surely in the calm, peaceful and pleasant environs on the roof-tops of their pukka houses or of their neighbours' houses, or in the isolated electric motor pump-set rooms in the fields, and other convenient places) to reap the benefits of literacy and further learning.

Roles of Regional Centres, Student Support Centres, Adult Education Resource Centres, Local Adult Education Centres and other local institutes: OUs with their grassroots level network and technologically advantageous position can play very significant role by enlarging the role of their Regional and other Centres to work in collaboration with other grassroots level institutions as suggested below. The suggested efforts of these centres and institutions in promoting literate society and its reading habits may include the following.

- a) Promote picture books for non-literates, simple stories woven around pictures for semi and neo-literates for their easy reading and clarity of understanding. Cartoon collections can also be used to help them in reading and understanding the messages in wide variety of cartoons. Materials containing different signs, signals, etc with their meanings, simple puzzles, mathematical games, language games, etc will also serve as a source of attraction for them to come to the centre for reading and learning.
- b) For non-literates and semi-literates (who feel difficulty in reading certain material such as religious books and interesting popular stories), reading

these books aloud to them by others clearly and regularly will create a learning environment that motivates them to pursue literacy. Such reading aloud can help even in creating and setting up mini reading corners by others in different communities / social settings including their homes that provide diverse reading materials of interest to adult learners. This will also be helpful in promotion of different levels of reading skills such as accurate reading, speed reading, information handling while reading, etc. Later, if their reading habits are further facilitated that will foster in them a love for strengthening their reading skills and promoting a reading culture in their community.

- c) Diverse sustainable library strategies such as the following can be followed for enhancing the access to materials and promoting reading habits (Lakshmi Reddy, 2011b): i) School-based Libraries, AEC-based Libraries, and/or Specialised Rural / Urban Local Libraries; ii) Progressive Conversion of Each Adult Literacy/Education Centre into a Grassroots Library; iii) Gradual Conversion of a corner of a Library or Community Centre into Literacy, Post-literacy and Continuing Education Centre; iv) Using selected Libraries as Nodal Libraries-cum-Adult / Continuing Education Centres; v) Re-organising and Extending the Existing Libraries in Cities; vi) Single Window Information Centre or Multiple Service Centre; vii) Adults' Home Libraries in Villages and Towns; viii) Mobile Libraries for Reaching the Workers at their travel points or work places; and ix) Digital libraries for adults or Internet-based learning resources or open education resources for adults.
- d) Mass media such as the Press, Radio, TV, and local/regional language magazines can help in advertising literacy programmes, reading and writing projects and competitions, local seminars, workshops, interviews with writers, teachers, instructors, etc that are scheduled or taking place at adult education centres, local libraries / Jan Pustakalayas, and at such other agencies. The publicity writings in the newspapers and programmes on TV, Radio, etc will increase their interest and motivation to read further and strengthen their reading habits.
- e) If the lists of different primers, post-literacy, continuing education and other materials are prepared by the local centres and made available/accessible to adults with different levels of reading and writing skills, they can accordingly choose the relevant materials of their choice for their reading and writing.
- f) For accelerating the reading habits and understanding intensified reading contests or book-talks should be organised periodically in their locality so as to motivate them to read and prepare an abstract or review of the books for participation in the reading contests or making a presentation on the same.
- g) Story-telling by neo-literate or literate adults organized either at the adult education centres or in the community will also motivate them to read seriously. The materials such as myths, legends, fairy-tales, stories about animals, things, etc with some pictures and sense of wonder, humor,

- adventure, spirit of imagination, etc will be interesting for them to read. Collection of old weekly and monthly magazines with stories and series will also be useful to promote their reading skills and habits at the local centres.
- h) Drama groups and puppeteers groups can be formed with adults having good reading skills combined with dramatic and puppetry skills. Dramas and puppet shows by them, organized under the guidance of any experienced person, will make them read the relevant material thoroughly before they perform. These dramas and puppet shows should be based on popular themes/books or small and interesting story material provided to them.
 - i) Special materials linked to local crafts and traditional skills will attract the craftsmen and others interested in these crafts and skills which have relevance and significance to their community life.
 - j) Organization of quiz competitions based on the material collections available in their local support centre will promote reading interest and competitive spirit in them to gather information for effective participation in the quizzes. These quizzes may be held at various levels for various groups, but often combined with some possible fun. Computer-based quiz materials of various kinds, if made available, will motivate them to become tech-savvy advanced readers with higher levels of reading skills.
 - k) All reading materials that have practical and local importance or utility-value to literate adults will motivate them to read, understand and use them for their benefit in their lives. These include different filled-in copies of certain forms such as railways reservation forms, bank applications, withdrawal forms; or immunization chart/schedule; or the material related to diseases and their symptoms, age-specific health problems/disorders; or issues and problems of general community health, agriculture, animal husbandry; or popular poetry, cinema songs, folk songs and folk literature, etc.

Conclusion

Effective implementation of the above strategies requires well-knitted structures and concerted, coordinated and cooperative efforts of all the personnel / functionaries and others involved in these endeavours at all levels. If that is ensured the journey towards the intended goal may not be long, difficult or challenging. But, beyond doubt, a good beginning done at the earliest with such spirit and commitment at all levels will be the most welcome step in this great and enchanting endeavour. If that good beginning becomes a reality, that itself is like half done and it is not so difficult to realize the dream of seeing India as the largest literate, reading and learning society in the world.

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Poverty Alleviation among Women through Vocational Skills Training in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study was designed to examine the alleviation of poverty among women through vocational skill training in Benin City in Edo State in the South-South Geo-political zone of Nigeria. A total of 100 respondents were used for the study comprising of women randomly drawn from three major skill training centres in Benin City. The study reveals that women were able to acquire productive skills that made them to be self-reliant and self employed thereby raising their economic status. Women also experienced improvement in social interactions and connections with increased self esteem and confidence (self concept). It was suggested that frantic efforts should be made in raising the consciousness of the women and public enlightenment programme should be intensified to enable more women participate and that more fund be released for the expansion of existing facilities for greater opportunity for women especially the rural dwellers to get engage in the programme.

Introduction

Poverty is a problem with many faces. It is no longer restricted to the economic dimension. The multidimensional aspect of poverty is fully recognized. One face may show the material conditions, which involve the absence or lack of goods and services for the people. Another face may depict the economic positions of the people, which involve certain situations where a person or a group of persons have low income and limited resources. The other face of poverty, which is social, affects the poor through exclusion, lack of entitlement, and being too dependent on others in order to live, (Fasokun, 2004).

Globally, poverty has been identified as the world's biggest social problem especially among the women folk. It is a complex multi-dimensional problem, which has to do with lack of control over resources, including land, skills, knowledge, capital and social connections. It deprives the individuals assets and opportunities to which every human being should be entitled. Hence, the United Nations Millennium

Development Goal (MDGs) number one is geared towards addressing the issue of extreme poverty and hunger. It is also worthy of note that education is an indispensable tool to eradicate poverty. In view of this, there has been a clarion call that women should be empowered through education, especially in the area of skill acquisition, when the issue of women and development came into the lime light during the United Nations Decade for women (1975-1985).

The problem of unemployment is a common phenomenon in Nigeria today and the women are not exempted. To this end, it is advocated that women should be given training and knowledge that will enhance their economic development.

The alleviation of poverty has generally been the cornerstone of economic policy in Nigeria. This is so because Nigeria is considered one of the poorest nations of the world. Corroborating this assertion, the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) cited in Edohen (2011), recently placed Nigeria as the 13th poorest nation in the world with 70 percent of its population living on one dollar per day. About 80 million people according to the United Nation's Agency are grappling and wallowing in abject poverty. The poverty level is so high that more than four (4) in every ten (10) Nigerians live in conditions of extreme poverty of less than ₦320 per capita per month which can barely provide for a quarter of the nutritional requirement of healthy living. Studies have shown that poverty flows deeper and is more entrenched in Africa and particularly in Nigeria.

The GNP per capita and purchasing power continued to decline with high inflation and increasing income inequality. United Nation children fund (UNICEF) classifies Nigeria as a country with severe child malnutrition and very high mortality rates. Aboyade (2006), observed that poverty in Nigeria is characterized by lack of purchasing power, exposure to risk, insufficient access to social and economic services, limited opportunities for income generation, insecurity to life and property. In addition, poverty is more prevalent in the rural areas and the majority of these poor people are women, both in urban or rural areas. Infact, in terms of the prevalence of poverty at any point in time, most studies agree that women suffer the hardest deprivation. In the author's opinion poverty seems to have a female face since women constitute most of the 80% of Nigerians currently living below poverty line. In a similar vein, Okojie (2011) pointed out that Nigerian women who represent about 48% of Nigeria's population, experience poverty in the following ways: economically through deprivation; politically through marginalization; socially through discrimination; cultural through ruthlessness; and ecologically through vulnerability.

The Nigerian Education philosophy is based on the integration of individual into a sound and effective citizen vis-à-vis the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities, competences, as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his society (National Policy on Education, 2004) It is within this framework that vocational education, especially for women becomes relevant.

Similarly, the United Nations Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the advancement of women (1985) recognizes that education is the basic tool that should be given to women in order to fulfill their roles as full members of society. The acquisition of skills and knowledge is essential to the development of autonomous and productive individual woman.

Education is the principal means through which the poor and marginalized individuals can break the vicious cycle of poverty and participate in societal development. Educating girls, no doubt, is a country's single most effective route or way out of poverty. This is because a baby born to an educated woman has a better chance of surviving until adulthood than the one who is not (Fasokun, 2004). Therefore, vocational education offers a second chance to women who could not benefit from the formal school system, the opportunity to obtain useful knowledge and skills to improve their lots in the society.

Vocational education is not a new concept in Nigeria educational system. This is because from time immemorial, in the different traditional sectors, children learn from their parents whatever occupations their parents were doing. This ranges from farming, weaving, gold-smithing; fishing, cooking, painting, woodwork to carving to mention a few. Omolewa (2001), contended that one very vital area of training in the traditional setting is Vocational Education and further pointed out that "it was considered a crime to breed an unemployed citizenry". According to Umar (1986), cited in Omoruyi and Ojogwu (2005), women vocational training courses were first introduced in Nigeria in 1977 by the Ford Foundation of America.

The programme then was aimed at providing vocational skills in agriculture, then industries and commerce, promote local craft and technology and provide and prepare women for trade tests for employment. Since then there has been tremendous growth in educational programme in the country (Omoruyi, and Ojogwu 2005).

The establishment of women education units in the federal and state ministries and eighty-eight (88) women vocational centres in the country attest to the awareness and recognition of women's indispensable role in nation building. Women are keys to nutrition security of the household, particularly if they have command over income (World Bank, 2000). Vocational skill training will go along way to provide women in Benin city with business skills that will enable them carry out business entrepreneurship and explore every available opportunity around them. It will keep them occupied rather than engaged in all sorts of indecent jobs like prostitution and the likes.

There is a growing awareness that lack of economic empowerment is a major factor responsible for high prevalence of human trafficking in Edo State. Edohen (2011) reported that trafficking is more likely to affect girls who have dropped out of schools for economic reasons, and therefore appears to be an alternative means of

livelihood for them and their parents. Poverty is becoming an endemic phenomenon in that it could be said to be the root cause of child labour and female trafficking in Benin City. Education is the principal means of arresting this current trend and reducing it to the barest minimum. Hence, Now (2006) argued that Education is the key to development. Quality basic education, as well as secondary and higher education, vocational training and skill acquisition throughout life are indispensable tools to eradicate poverty. There is a relationship between poverty and ill-health, poverty and illiteracy and economic backwardness.

Therefore the task of this study was to examine how vocational skill training has helped to alleviate poverty among the women in Benin-City. In view of this, the study sought to provide answers to the following questions: What types of vocational skills are available in the skill acquisition centres?

What effects have the vocational skills acquired had on the economic status of the trainee? Has the training improve the involvement of the trainees in social activities in the society? Are the women favourably disposed towards the training programme? What are the problems confronting the women in the programme?

Methodology

The study employed the descriptive survey research design. It used a sample of one hundred (100) women randomly drawn from three major skill acquisition centres in Benin City. These included Women Education Centres, Iyaro, Edo State Skills Acquisition Centre, Evbomodun, Aduwawa and Skill Acquisition Centre, Sapele Road, Benin City.

The instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire tagged "Women Vocational Training Impact Questionnaire (WVTIQ). The questionnaire was subdivided into two sections. The first section consisted of demographic information of the respondents with seven items. While the second section covered the effects of the training on the economic status, social involvement and worthwhileness of the programmes in the vocational centres with 18 items.

The responses had two levels of rating, i.e. Yes and No. The validity of the instrument was established by giving the draft to some experts in vocational education in the Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City. for Scrutiny. The final design was based on the contributions and amendments by these experts.

The reliability was established through a test-re-test procedure using an interval of two weeks. It was only after these steps that the actual collection of data was done. The data collected was analyzed using frequency count, simple percentage and mean score.

Results

The results were presented according to research questions.

Research Question One: What type of vocational skill are available in the skill acquisition centres?

Table 1: Mean Scores and Rank Order of Courses in Skill Acquisition Programme

Variables	Mean Score	Rank
Catering	7.00	1 st
Computer Training	5.50	2 nd
Fashion Design	1.50	3 rd
Secretariat training	0.33	6 th
Hair dressing	0.83	4 th
Others	0.66	5 th

Table 1 shows the type of skills enrolled for by the participants in the programme. Catering ranked first, computer training second, fashion design third while hair dressing, secretariat training and others were ranked 4th, 6th and 5th respectively.

Research Question Two: Has your economic status be enhanced since enlisting in the training Programme?

Table 2: Percentage response on Enhancement of economic status of trainee after the programme

Options	Frequency	%
Vocational training has enhanced my economic status	86	90.50
Vocational training has not enhanced my economic status	9	9.50
Total	95	100.00

The data presented in Table 2 revealed that out of the 100 respondents, 90.5% of them agreed that their economic status has been enhanced since they enrolled in the training while only 9.5% were of a different opinion. This clearly shows that the programme is viable economically.

Research Question Three: Has the training improved your social activities in the society?

Table 3: Percentage response on Improvement of trainees involvement in social activities

Options	Frequency	%
Vocational training has improved my involvement in social activities	79	83.16
Vocational training has not improved my social activities	16	16.84
Total	95	100.00

Table 3 shows that 83.16% of the respondents agreed that the training has improved their involvement in social activities in the society while 16.84% disagreed. It means that the programme has definitely improved their social activities in the society.

Research Question 4: Are the women favourably disposed towards the training programme

Table 4: Perception of the training programme

Options	Frequency	%
High perception	88	92.63%
Low perception	7	7.37
Total	95	100.00

The result in Table 4 indicates that 92.63% of the respondents were favourably disposed towards the training programme while 7.37% rated the programme low. It is obvious that the training programme was worthwhile and has satisfied the needs and aspirations of the women.

Research Question Five

What are the problems confronting the women in the programme enrolled for?

Table 5: Problems Confronting Women Participants in the Programme

Variables	No	%
Finance	22	23.16
Transportation	15	15.79
None	58	61.05
Total	95	100.00

Table 5 indicates that 61.05% of the total respondents are not encountering any problem in the programme, but 23.16% of them felt that finance was a problem while 15.79% of them were of the opinion that transportation was the major hindrance.

Discussion of Results

There are availability of diverse skills in the centers for women to choose from which include catering, computer training, fashion design, secretariat training and hair dressing. The choice of skills depends on the ability and interest of the women. Majority of the women attested to the fact that their economic status had improved in the course of enlisting in the training programme. This clearly shows that the programme is viable economically and therefore would enhance their financial status. This finding corroborates with the view expressed by Akosile (2007) that skill acquisition will ensure financial independence and a better standard of living for women, especially at the grassroots. Also adequate awareness creation and enlightenment on adult literacy will go a long way to help women's situation in all aspects, and stop violence against them. Moreover, it was observed that the knowledge gained by women in vocational training provided a direct source of income for them and they were able to supplement their husbands income, thereby eliminating poverty ignorance, diseases and reducing infant mortality to a minimum level. Bhasin (1992) alluded to the fact that women became economically independent and self-reliant when engaged in vocational training. To further buttress this finding, Now (2006), pointed out that, a quality basic education, as well as secondary and higher education, vocational training, and skill acquisition throughout life are indispensable tools to eradicate poverty. Therefore, vocational training is capable of equipping women with useable skills that can be utilized to supplement the income of their husbands, thereby making them to be self-reliant and self-employed.

The study also revealed that the social involvement and interaction of women have also improved tremendously as a result of their training. This is in line with the view of Okukpon (1994) that public enlightenment and social interaction amongst women of diverse group helped women originally placed in "purdah" to be able to now communicate, socialize and engage in other meaningful activities. The women did not only benefit economically but also socially thereby improving their self-esteem and confidence. The study also indicated that women were favourably disposed towards the training programme. The programme has satisfied their needs and aspirations. The women did not encounter too many problems participating in the vocational training programmes in Benin City.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are put forward for the promotion of women skill acquisition and literacy.

- There should be more public awareness and enlightenment creation by government, private agencies on the benefits of educational programmes including literacy, vocational and skill acquisition programmes to women/girls so that more of them can enroll for the training programmes.
- Government, NGOs and private individuals should make more fund available for women educational programmes so that the existing facilities can be expanded and the quality enhanced. This will increase greater access to educational opportunities for the women.
- Policy makers should integrate school education to economic activities to ensure wealth creation so that the level of poverty can be minimized if not eradicated totally.
- Vocational education planners should identify problem areas and the way forward thereby, improving on women's involvement and participation in vocational training.

Conclusion

It has been established in this study that vocational skill training enhanced the well being of women in Benin City. Nigerian women suffer the hardest deprivation in terms of prevalence of poverty at any point in time and education is the principal means of breaking through the vicious cycle of poverty. In order to reduce the level of poverty especially among women to the barest minimum, women should be empowered economically through vocational skill training programmes so that they can embark on productive ventures aimed at eradicating poverty.

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Does women's education translate into economic participation? Mapping the gender gap index at sub-national level for India

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Abstract

Gender Gap Index (GGI) is a relatively new index to assess the male-female gap in attainments in various sectors such as economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment, and health and survival. India ranked poorly at 113th position out of 135 countries that were scored in 2011. Since there could be substantial differences within large countries, the present study was undertaken to quantify the GGI for the different states of India. . The overall GGI for the country was 0.576 depicting huge differences between attainments of women as compared to men. There were large variations in the values of gender gap index across different States in India ranging from 0.507 to 0.697. Most states performed satisfactorily in educational attainment, and health and survival but lagged behind considerably in economic participation and political empowerment. It was also seen that while most states had been able to close large gaps in educational attainment but had been able to make very limited progress in economic participation. The educational achievements of women did not necessarily translate into increased economic participation. The results showed that eleven out of 24 States analysed had not covered even 60% of the gender gap and the other 13 States had only covered 60-70% of the gender gap. None of the States had covered 70% or more of gender gap. The States of Nagaland and Himachal Pradesh occupied the top two positions whereas Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Orissa were in the bottom category as they had the largest attainment gap between men and women.

Key words: Gender gap index, India, Development, Education, Economic participation, Health, Political empowerment.

Women and men share many aspects of living together, collaborate with each other in complex and ubiquitous ways and yet end up- often enough- with different rewards and deprivations.

Amartya Sen

Introduction

The latest Gender Gap Report of the World Economic Forum (WEF), Geneva, indicates a dismal record of India. India was ranked 113th out of 135 countries together with countries such as Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Cameroon (WEF, 2011). While the Nordic countries namely Norway, Sweden and Finland are at the top, Yemen and Chad are at the bottom. Other emerging economies such as South Africa, China and Brazil occupied 14th, 61st and 82nd positions respectively. Even in South Asia, countries such as, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Maldives scored 31st, 69th and 101st rank respectively with India trailing behind at 113rd rank. India has remained more or less at this position since 2007.

India ranked 112th out of 134 countries in 2010, 114th out of 134 countries in 2009, 113th out of 130 countries in 2008 and 114th out of 128 countries in 2007 and 98th out of 115 countries in 2006, the first year such a report was published. This annual report, which assesses the ability of a nation to distribute resources between women and men in its overall population estimates gender gap based on health, education, economic participation and political empowerment. Gender Gap Index is a very powerful tool increasingly being used all over the world to measure progress of women relative to men. The economic indicators capture the participation, remuneration and advancement gap, the educational indicators measure the differences in access to literacy and educational opportunities, the health component provides an overview of the quality of life of women captured by differences in life expectancy and sex ratio and the political empowerment analyses the participation by men and women in various levels of governance (Hausmann et.al.2008).

India was ranked 134th in health gender gap, 121st in education gap and 131st in economic participation and opportunity gap. The only silver lining was the very favourable ranking of India in the political empowerment gap, occupying 19th rank, leaving behind countries such as USA and Australia. A major reason for this was the use of criterion of number of years with female head of state in past 50 years and Mrs. Indira Gandhi being the prime minister of India for 15 years, the second longest serving female prime minister globally.

India is a large country accounting for more than 17% of the world population. It also has diverse agro-climatic zones, topography, religions, ethnic groups, political scenario, incomes and levels of development. There are large differences between attainments of women across the different states of India. For example, the female literacy rate in the State of Bihar is a mere 34% as compared to 88% in Kerala as per 2001 Census figures. Similarly the life expectancy at birth for women in Madhya Pradesh is 57 years whereas it is 73 years in Mizoram. Assigning one gender gap index value to such a large country, therefore, does not adequately reflect the diverse regional differences. Indices such as Gender Gap need to be quantified at the sub-

regional level to suit the differing contexts and plan as per the needs of the region. The present study has been, therefore, undertaken to quantify the existing Gender Gap for the different States of India.

Methodology

The methodology used for computation of the Gender Gap Index was the same as that followed by the World Economic forum (Hausmann et. al. 2010). Fourteen indicators have been used in the Global Gender Gap report 2010 to capture the gender gap index (Table 1). In order to calculate the value of Gender Gap Index, data must be available for at least 12 out of the 14 indicators. From the Indian perspective, the suitability of the above indicators was examined keeping in view the data availability at the State level. Over all 14 variables were chosen, four each in 'Educational' and 'Economic' components and three variables each in 'Health' and 'Political empowerment' components (Table 1). While the variables for educational attainment component were almost the same, there were minor changes in the other three components. The economic participation component included ratios of female to male labour force participation rate, main work participation rate and gender gap in wages. These variables were selected because 90.87% workforce in the country is still employed in the unorganized sector (NSSO, 1999-2000). The health component included child sex ratio (0-6 year age group) as an additional variable in order to capture the use of modern medical techniques in sex selective abortions reflecting the preference for a male child. The political empowerment component included participation of women in the Local Government, State Government and Central Government to represent the participation of women in governance at the three levels. Since these three variables perfectly captured the political empowerment of women in the country the criterion of number of years of a female head of state in the last 50 years was not considered. Data pertaining to the above variables was collected for 24 States of India representing more than 90% of the Indian population. Madhya Pradesh and Bihar include Chattisgarh and Jharkhand, respectively, since the data for these new states was not available for all variables. Most of the data collected referred to the period between 2001 and 2006.

The female and male values for different variables were converted to ratios (female value/male value) to capture the gap between men and women for that variable. The ratios were modified so that the highest ratio for any variable would be one. There were two exceptions to this rule. The first was female to male sex ratio where the maximum value could be 0.944 since the normal sex ratio at birth is 1.06 males for every female born ($1/1.06=0.944$). The same applied to child sex ratio also. Secondly for life expectancy, the maximum value could be 1.06 based on the United Nation's Human Development report which uses 87.5 years and 82.5 years as the maximum life expectancies for women and men respectively ($87.5/82.5=1.06$) (Hausmann et al. 2008).

The weighted averages of the variables within each sub-index were calculated to create the sub-index score. This method gives more weightage to those variables that exhibit large variability. To ensure that each variable would have the same impact on the sub-index, all variables were normalized by equalizing their standard deviations. This was attained by calculating the effect of 1% change in each variable. These relative weights were used to determine the weighted average of different variables. The selected variables along with their weights are depicted in Table 2.

The index values for each variable were calculated by multiplying the female to male ratio of the variable with the weight assigned to that variable. The index values of variables of each component were totaled to get the sub-index of that component. Finally, an un-weighted average of the sub-indices was taken to arrive at the final Gender gap index value. A value of zero denotes total inequality between females and males, whereas a value of one would denote complete equality.

Results and Discussions

The Gender gap index

The overall gender gap index calculated for India (0.573) was close to the value reported for India in the Global gender gap report (0.615). The sub-index values for educational, economic and health aspects were generally similar in the present study as well as the global gender gap report. The difference in the overall gender gap index value is because of differences in the variables selected, especially in case of political empowerment (Table 1). In the present study the sub-index value for political empowerment is only 0.09 as compared to 0.273 in the global report. This was due to inclusion of a component in the global gender gap report namely female head of State during the last fifty years. In the present study this variable was dropped in favour of a more suitable variable, namely representation of women in the local government along with participation of women at state and national level politics.

The present study has shown that there are large gaps in all the States in terms of equitable distribution of resources and opportunities between women and men. Eleven out of the 24 States had not even covered 60% of the gender gap (Figure 1). The progressive northern states including Punjab and Haryana were a part of this group. The other 13 states had covered more than 60% but less than 70% of the gender gap in various sectors. The Southern as well as the North Eastern states were a part of this group. Madhya Pradesh was also a part of this group because of better performance in economic participation. Overall the values of gender gap index ranged from 0.50 in Bihar to 0.69 in Himachal Pradesh (Table 3). Himachal Pradesh, the best performing state in terms of closing the gender gap, had covered 93-95% gap in education and health & survival but only about 68% gap in economic and a mere 20% gap in political empowerment. Himachal Pradesh faltered on the Health and survival component because of low sex ratio and child sex ratio but made up by doing well in the other three components. On the other hand, Bihar, the worst

performing state had covered 97% of the gap in health, but faltered on all the other three components and managed to cover only 62% gap in education, 32% gap in economic and a mere 10% gap in political empowerment. All the States performed very poorly in political participation and empowerment. Four States occupying the top category namely Himachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya and Andhra Pradesh performed poorly in the political component but made up by better scores in economic, education as well as health and survival. The four worst performing states in terms of gender gap index namely Bihar, U.P. West Bengal and Orissa performed poorly in three components namely education, economic participation and political participation. The only saving grace for them was the health and survival component.

At the country level, 84% gap in educational attainment, 96% gap in health & survival, 37% gap in economic and 11% gap in political empowerment had been covered. This indicated that while considerable gender gap had been covered in educational attainment and health, women lagged far behind men in economic participation and political empowerment.

A more detailed analysis of the various components of the Gender gap index would be helpful in providing an insight into the causes of gaps between the attainments of women and men in different States and regions of India.

Educational Attainment

The performance of most states in terms of reducing the gender gaps in education was generally good although the sub-index value for educational attainment showed a fairly wide variation from 0.62 in Bihar to 0.96 in Kerala (Table 4). The States of Bihar, Rajasthan and Orissa were in the bottom category since they had covered less than 80% gap in education. On the other hand, eleven out of the 24 States had been able to cover more than 90% of the gender gap in terms of educational attainments. The very low scores of Bihar are attributed to poor performance in all the four variables of education. In case of Rajasthan and Orissa, performance was better in primary education, but poor in literacy rate as well as secondary and higher education.

In terms of literacy rate, Bihar had closed only 56% of the gender gap as against 95% in Mizoram. The states of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Haryana were the poor performers which had been able to close less than 75% of the gender gap in literacy. By contrast, North eastern states, Punjab and Kerala had performed better and had closed more than 80% of the gap in literacy rate. At the all India level, 71% of gender gap in literacy had been covered indicating the need for more sustained efforts in the field of adult education targeting women.

In terms of Primary enrollment ratio, the state of Bihar was at the bottom as it had been able to cover only 75% of the gender gap. On the top of the ladder were six

states namely Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab and Meghalaya which had achieved complete equality in enrollment of boys and girls at primary school level. All the States except Bihar had covered more than 85% of the gap between male and female enrollment rates at the primary level.

The performance of girls as compared to boys in secondary school enrollment rates was poorer as compared to the primary level. Here again, Bihar was the worst performer and was way behind other States as it had covered only 61% of the gender gap in secondary school enrollment. As compared to primary enrollment ratio, where six States had index value of one, in secondary enrollment, only three States namely Sikkim, Punjab and Meghalaya had index value of one, indicating equality among males and females in these States. Except for Bihar and Rajasthan all the states had covered more than 80% gap in secondary school enrollment. Secondary school education is critical in breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty and has huge beneficial impacts on health, marriage, fertility rates and child rearing practices (World Bank 2009). It is therefore very important to focus on reducing the gender as well as other divides (regional, rural urban, rich and poor) in this variable.

There are several reasons for higher gender gap in secondary level enrollment. The low completion rates at primary school (50%) limit the number so students ready for secondary school enrollment. The distance of school from home limits the probability of girl child attending or enrolling in school due to problems of eve-teasing and safety of girls. About 27% districts in India have less than one secondary school for every 1000 students and a third of the villages have secondary schools beyond 5 km making it difficult for female children to attend school. Besides this, there are deep rooted societal attitudes placing low value on girl child education, attainment of puberty, difficult curricula leading to a high drop out rate from school (World Bank, 2009).

In case of enrollment in tertiary level or higher education, the performance of several states was poor with Orissa covering only 25% and Bihar only 37% of the gender gap. While five states had not covered even 60% of the gender gap in tertiary education, another 11 states had covered less than 80% of the gender gap. Conversely the states of Punjab and Kerala had achieved 100% equality in female and male enrollment in higher education whereas Uttaranchal and Himachal Pradesh had achieved 93 to 96 % equality.

An analysis of the ratios of female values to male values in educational attainment reveals that a large majority of States had covered major gaps in primary and secondary level enrollment but lagged behind in literacy rate as well as enrollment in higher education. Lack of basic literacy skills, deprive people of opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge and also expose them to exploitative elements in society. The low levels of education due to high drop out rate from primary and secondary schools limit the income earning capabilities of individuals. An additional

year of schooling is known to enhance wages by at least 10%. Besides, an educated mother would always ensure that her children go to school. Research has shown that when girls have less than five years of education, the average age of first time mothers is 19 years but when girls have at least 12 years of schooling, the average age of first time mothers is 25 years. There are significant reductions in total fertility rate, child mortality and malnutrition rates as well as in maternal mortality rate leading to the overall improvement in the health of mother as well as the child (World Bank, 2009).

The lacunae in the education system, the attitudinal barriers of different sections of society to education, the lack of connect of education to real life are all the challenges that need to be tackled to cover the gender gap in educational attainment

Economic Participation and Opportunity

This component is meant to capture the economic participation of women in the household as well as the economy at large. This component was represented by participation of women in labour force and main work force as compared to men as well as the gender gap in wages in rural and urban areas.

Overall the index values for economic participation were very low ranging from 0.26 in West Bengal to 0.75 in Nagaland indicating that West Bengal had been able to cover only a quarter of the gender gap in economic participation, conversely, Nagaland had been able to cover three quarter of the gender gap (Table 5). Out of 24 States, half of the States had not been able to cover even 50% of the gender gap in economic participation and the other half had covered between 50 and 75% of the gap. The States of Uttar Pradesh, Assam Bihar, Kerala, Punjab, Haryana and Orissa were among the low performers whereas, Himachal Pradesh, North-eastern States except Tripura were among the better performers.

The States of Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal had not even covered 20% of the gender gap in participation in main work force (workers engaged in economic activity for more than 183 days of the year) as compared to Nagaland which had covered 76% of the gap. Sixteen States had not even covered 50% of the gender gap, the rest of the States had covered 50-76% of the gender gap. The Northern states as well as Assam and Tripura from the North -East, Kerala from the Southern states were among the poor performers, the other South Indian States were in the mid category and the North Eastern States (except Assam and Tripura) were among the better performers. . This may be because of greater acceptance of female participation in public domain in the Southern states of India than in the North (Raju S., 1982) and greater control over resources and visibility of women in the north-east region where matriarchy is common. Conversely, in many northern States, participation of women in work force is considered a sign of low status of the family and as a family moves up the economic ladder or seeks upward mobility by Sanskritisation (lower castes

seeking upward mobility by emulating the practices of upper castes), women are withdrawn from work force.

The participation of females in labour force was generally higher than main workers in majority of the states. In the States of Rajasthan, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat, the participation of women in labour force was 20-25% greater as compared to main work force. This may be because of comparatively easy availability of jobs in labour force rather than main work force as well as the necessity of women from very poor families to contribute to family income. As many as twelve States had not even covered 50% of the gender gap, four States had covered 50-60% of the gender gap and the rest eight States had covered between 60 and 82% of the gender gap. The state of Tripura had been able to cover only 15% of the gender gap and was at the bottom whereas Nagaland was at the top since it had covered 82% of the gap.

The gender gap in wages in rural and urban areas of casual and regular workers ranged from 0.30 in Kerala to 0.80 in Himachal Pradesh. As many as 13 States had not even covered 60% of the gap in wages of females and males. The rest 11 states had covered 60-80% of the gender gap in terms of wages. Punjab, Haryana, Bihar, Orissa were among the poor performers whereas, the North-eastern states (except Assam), Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh performed well on this front. Overall women in all the states did not perform well in terms of economic participation and lagged far behind men. The reasons for this poor enumeration of working women (specially in unorganized sector) and a large part of work performed by women is as family labour and hence non-remunerative and unrecognized (Rustagi, 2004). The other reasons are the over involvement of women in traditional household care giving roles with little value placed on economic participation and decision making. Perpetuation of gender stereotypes and social division of labour typecasting women mainly as domestic sphere workers and men as breadwinners are additional barriers to recognition of women's economic contribution (Bardhan 1985, Tinker 1990).

It was also seen that while most states had been able to close large gaps in educational attainment but had been able to make very limited progress in economic participation. *The educational achievements of women did not necessarily translate into increased economic participation.* Though education is known to improve the *income generating ability of women, improve their health status by reducing their fertility rate and by better access to medical care*, it may not translate immediately into increased economic capabilities. Other factors such as change in traditional attitudes of society towards economic participation, vocational training, reducing care giving burdens of women and invisibility of women's work, redistribution of intra-household responsibilities between women and men, institutionalised child care facilities are very important for an equitable economic contribution of women. Marriage and motherhood need to be made compatible with economic participation of women (Hausmann, R., 2009).

Health and Survival

The performance of States in closing the gender gap in health and survival was good as all the States had been able to close 91% to 98% gaps between women and men. The sub-index scores for Health and Survival ranged from 0.91 in Haryana and Punjab to 0.98 in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh and 0.99 in Kerala (Table 6).

In majority of the States (19 out of 24), life expectancy of women was higher than that of men by one to two years since women have a biological edge over men and live longer than men (Sen and Anand 1995). The female to male ratios for life expectancy ranged from 0.98 in Tripura to 1.06 in Bihar and Kerala. However, in five States namely Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, men had marginally higher life expectancies than women. This pointed towards low status of women in these States.

In terms of female to male ratio in the society as well the Child sex ratio (0 to six years), the wealthy States of Haryana and Punjab performed the worst showing strong preference for the male child. The States of Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh were also among the poor performers (sex ratio of 0.86 to 0.9) in terms of closing gender gaps in sex ratio. The missing numbers of women reflected the practice of sex selective abortions and other forms of discrimination and violence faced by women in their life cycle. By contrast, in 11 states, the sex ratio almost touched the equality benchmark.

Comparatively, the Northern States performed poorly in Health and survival component because of lower ratios in all the three variables of health. The Southern States performed the best, occupying top positions in health and survival component. One of the constraints of the health component was the inability to include reproductive health problems of women such as repeated pregnancies, lack of ante-natal care, lack of trained birth attendants, abortions, high maternal mortality rate, high fertility rate, problems at menarche and menopause. These variables could not be considered because of absence of corresponding male values.

Political empowerment

The performance of women on the political front was quite poor with index values ranging from zero in Mizoram and Nagaland to 0.20 in Himachal Pradesh (Table 7). Overall 11 out of 24 States had not covered even 10 % of gender gap in political empowerment. The other states had only been able to cover a meager 10-20% of the gender gap.

The participation of women in politics was there mostly in the Local Government, because of 33% reservation of seats for women (73rd and 74th amendment of the Constitution of India, 1992). As many as six states namely Uttar Pradesh, Punjab,

Manipur, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Assam had reached the equality benchmark in participation of women in local Government as they had covered 100% of the gap between men and women. In three North-Eastern states, namely Meghalaya, Nagaland and Mizoram, this reservation did not apply therefore, the values were zero for participation in local Government.

The participation of women in the State Legislative assembly was very poor in all the States ranging from zero in Nagaland and Mizoram to a mere 11 % in Andhra Pradesh pointing to the dominance of males in the state level politics. There were hardly any regional differences in the participation of women in Legislative assembly. The participation of women in the Parliament was nil in many States, a mere 5-10% in the other states. The only exception was Himachal Pradesh which had been able to cover 40% of the gender gap. Overall, the participation of women in politics was very limited except for their participation in the Local Government, because of the reservation policy of the Government. Women's participation in State level and National level politics was less than 10%. This was the situation in all the States of India. The reason perhaps is that majority of the women hesitate to join politics, since conventionally it has been a male domain. Moreover, domestic responsibilities, lack of financial clout, criminalization of politics and the threat of character assassination make it increasingly difficult for women to be part of the political framework.

To make an impact in political empowerment, women need to be represented at all the levels in governance. It may take a long time before women on their own participate in equal numbers as men in political governance. Therefore the passage of women's reservation bill for reservation in Parliament and Legislative assembly will be useful to improve the political attainments of women vis-à-vis men. This may also help to mainstream gender concerns in governance and decision making.

Conclusion

This study has shown that the concept of Gender Gap Index earlier studied at the global/national scale is equally relevant at the sub-national scale. The average Gender gap index for India was 0.576 depicting large difference between attainments of women as compared to men. At the same time, the index for most states of India was low indicating widespread gender gaps across the country. It was also shown that none of the States had covered more than 70% of the gender gap. Most states performed satisfactorily in educational attainment, and health and survival but lagged behind in economic participation and political empowerment of women. As long as the traditional care giving and supportive roles played by women in the household continue without much value being placed on their economic participation and role in governance and decision making, the present trends are likely to continue. Emphasis must shift from satisfying practical gender needs of women (food, fuel, fiber, fodder and freshwater) to fulfillment of their strategic gender needs encompassing the access

of women to education, economic participation, control over resources as well as decision making. The rigid social norms governing the intra-household division of work, limiting of physical mobility of women, strict gendered codes of behaviour are all obstacles to the development of women. As Mahatma Gandhi had rightly said, "No nation can flourish when one half of the society lives in a state of semi paralysis". The enormous gender gaps prevalent even in contemporary society point to this paralysis and need to be addressed immediately. Gender equity is a necessary precondition for progress of a country or region. The Gender gap index can therefore be used, not only, to monitor the progress of women in different sectors but also to trigger targeted action. The analysis done in this study can serve as a show window to other developing countries and give an idea to policy makers and planners about prioritizing programmes for women and facilitate gender mainstreaming.

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Table 1. Components and variables of Gender Gap Index used by Hausmann et. al. (2008) in the Global Gender Gap Report and the present study.

No.	Components	Variables (Global Gender Gap Report)	Variables chosen for India
1	Economic Participation and Opportunity	Ratio of female labour force participation to male value	Same as Hausmann et. al. (2008)
		Ratio of wages received by females over that received by males for similar work	Same as Hausmann et. al. (2008)
		Ratio of estimated female earned income over male value	Not considered
		Ratio of female legislators, senior officials and managers over male value	Not considered
		Ratio of female professional and technical workers over male value	Ratio of female work participation rate (main workers) over male value
2	Educational Attainment	Ratio of female literacy over male value	Ratio of female literacy over male value (7 plus age group)
		Ratio of female net primary level enrollment over male value	Ratio of Gross enrollment rate at primary school for females over male value
		Ratio of female net secondary level enrollment over male value	Ratio of Gross enrollment rate at secondary school for females over male value
		Ratio of female gross tertiary level enrollment over male value	Ratio of enrollment rate at tertiary level for females over male value
3	Political Empowerment	Ratio of females with seats in parliament over male value	Same as Hausmann et al (2008)
		Ratio of females at ministerial level over male value	Number of females in State Legislative assembly over male value
		Ratio of number of years of a female head of State (for the last 50 years) over male value	Number of females in Local Government over male value
4	Health and Survival	Ratio of healthy female life expectancy over male value	Ratio of life expectancy at birth of females over male value
		Sex ratio at birth (Converted to female to male ratio)	Sex ratio (number of females per thousand males)
		-	Child sex ratio (0-6 years)

Table 2. Weights assigned to different variables used in computing Gender gap index at sub-national level for India

	Standard Deviation	Standard Deviation per 1% point change	Weights (w)
Educational Attainment			
Literacy rate of females over male value (7 plus age group)	0.1001	0.0999	0.2361
Gross enrollment rate at Primary school for females over male value	0.0574	0.1741	0.4116
Gross enrollment rate at Secondary school for females over male value	0.1048	0.0954	0.2256
Enrollment rate at Tertiary level for females over male value	0.1866	0.0536	0.1267
Economic Participation and Opportunity			
Female work participation rate (main workers) over male value	0.1658	0.0603	0.3288
Female labour force to male value	0.1692	0.0591	0.3221
Per capita income females over male value	0.1562	0.0640	0.3491
Health and Survival			
Life expectancy at birth of females over male value	0.0237	0.4223	0.3942
Sex ratio (number of females per thousand males)	0.0253	0.3956	0.3693
Child sex ratio (0-6 years age group)	0.0395	0.2533	0.2365
Political Empowerment			
Number of females in local Government (Gram Sabha, Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad) over male value	0.3110	0.0322	0.0688
Number of females in State Legislative assembly over male value	0.0311	0.3215	0.6878
Number of females in Parliament (Lok Sabha plus Rajya Sabha) over male value	0.0879	0.1138	0.2434

Table 3. Sub-index scores of various components and Gender gap index across states of India. Lower the value, higher is the gender gap in that variable.

Name of the state	Sub-index score for Educational Attainment	Sub-index score for Economic Participation and Opportunity	Sub-index score for Health and Survival	Sub-index score for Political Empowerment	Gender Gap Index
Andhra Pradesh	0.870	0.585	0.983	0.128	0.641
Arunachal Pradesh	0.801	0.645	0.953	0.038	0.609
Assam	0.891	0.313	0.964	0.117	0.571
Bihar	0.625	0.321	0.979	0.104	0.507
Gujarat	0.815	0.440	0.954	0.064	0.568
Haryana	0.912	0.404	0.910	0.108	0.583
Himachal Pradesh	0.935	0.689	0.958	0.203	0.697
Karnataka	0.897	0.500	0.987	0.098	0.620
Kerala	0.964	0.331	0.990	0.178	0.616
Madhya Pradesh	0.805	0.536	0.952	0.157	0.613
Maharashtra	0.909	0.456	0.965	0.107	0.609
Manipur	0.890	0.588	0.962	0.080	0.630
Meghalaya	0.958	0.673	0.964	0.036	0.658
Mizoram	0.906	0.656	0.965	0.000	0.632
Nagaland	0.945	0.750	0.967	0.000	0.666
Orissa	0.786	0.384	0.967	0.131	0.567
Punjab	0.962	0.332	0.918	0.156	0.592
Rajasthan	0.738	0.556	0.957	0.127	0.594
Sikkim	0.916	0.562	0.948	0.058	0.621
Tamil Nadu	0.902	0.521	0.978	0.088	0.622
Tripura	0.886	0.368	0.957	0.058	0.567
Uttar Pradesh	0.807	0.287	0.936	0.119	0.537
Uttarakhand	0.927	0.377	0.978	0.113	0.599
West Bengal	0.872	0.262	0.972	0.118	0.556
India	0.845	0.379	0.969	0.113	0.576

Table 4. Gender gap in variables relating to attainments of men and women in Education. Lower the value, higher is the gender gap in that variable.

Name of the state	Literacy rate females/ male value	GER* Primary females/ male value	GER* secondary females/ male value	Females in higher education females/ male value	Sub-index score for Educational Attainment
Andhra Pradesh	0.72	1.00	0.95	0.59	0.870
Arunachal Pradesh	0.69	0.89	0.85	0.63	0.801
Assam	0.78	0.99	0.93	0.70	0.891
Bihar	0.56	0.75	0.61	0.38	0.625
Gujarat	0.73	0.87	0.82	0.78	0.815
Haryana	0.71	1.00	0.96	0.91	0.912
Himachal Pradesh	0.79	0.99	0.98	0.93	0.935
Karnataka	0.75	0.98	0.95	0.81	0.897
Kerala	0.93	0.98	0.95	1.00	0.964
Madhya Pradesh	0.65	0.95	0.86	0.52	0.805
Maharashtra	0.78	1.00	0.98	0.72	0.909
Manipur	0.77	0.96	0.94	0.79	0.890
Meghalaya	0.91	1.00	1.00	0.83	0.958
Mizoram	0.95	0.93	0.99	0.60	0.906
Nagaland	0.86	0.98	1.00	0.89	0.945
Orissa	0.67	0.97	0.88	0.26	0.786
Punjab	0.84	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.962
Rajasthan	0.58	0.93	0.65	0.57	0.738
Sikkim	0.80	0.99	1.00	0.75	0.916
Tamil Nadu	0.78	0.98	0.96	0.76	0.902
Tripura	0.80	0.96	0.94	0.71	0.886
Uttar Pradesh	0.61	0.94	0.80	0.74	0.807
Uttarakhand	0.72	1.00	1.00	0.96	0.927
West Bengal	0.78	0.99	0.91	0.61	0.872
India	0.71	0.95	0.88	0.71	0.845

Table 5. Gender gap in variables relating to attainments of men and women in Economic participation and opportunity. Lower the value, higher is the gender gap in that variable.

Name of the state	Work participation rate main workers females/ male value	Female labour force females/ male value	Wages of females/ male value	Sub-index score for Economic Participation and Opportunity
Andhra Pradesh	0.50	0.64	0.62	0.585
Arunachal Pradesh	0.60	0.63	0.70	0.645
Assam	0.23	0.29	0.42	0.313
Bihar	0.22	0.31	0.43	0.321
Gujarat	0.28	0.53	0.51	0.440
Haryana	0.31	0.35	0.54	0.404
Himachal Pradesh	0.49	0.78	0.80	0.689
Karnataka	0.40	0.53	0.56	0.500
Kerala	0.26	0.44	0.30	0.331
Madhya Pradesh	0.39	0.60	0.62	0.536
Maharashtra	0.50	0.56	0.32	0.456
Manipur	0.58	0.47	0.70	0.588
Meghalaya	0.59	0.73	0.70	0.673
Mizoram	0.65	0.62	0.70	0.656
Nagaland	0.74	0.82	0.70	0.750
Orissa	0.20	0.48	0.47	0.384
Punjab	0.24	0.41	0.35	0.332
Rajasthan	0.38	0.61	0.67	0.556
Sikkim	0.51	0.46	0.70	0.562
Tamil Nadu	0.46	0.57	0.54	0.521
Tripura	0.24	0.14	0.70	0.368
Uttar Pradesh	0.15	0.35	0.36	0.287
Uttarakhand	0.43	0.35	0.36	0.377
West Bengal	0.19	0.26	0.33	0.262
India	0.32	0.46	0.36	0.379

Table 6. Gender gap in variables relating to attainments of men and women in Health and Survival. Lower the value, higher is the gender gap in that variable.

Name of the state	Life expectancy at birth females/ male value	Number of females in population/ male value	Number of females in 0-6 years population/ male value	Sub-index score for Health and Survival
Andhra Pradesh	1.04	0.94	0.94	0.983
Arunachal Pradesh	1.01	0.90	0.94	0.953
Assam	1.01	0.93	0.94	0.964
Bihar	1.06	0.92	0.94	0.979
Gujarat	1.03	0.92	0.88	0.954
Haryana	1.01	0.86	0.82	0.910
Himachal Pradesh	1.01	0.94	0.90	0.958
Karnataka	1.05	0.94	0.94	0.987
Kerala	1.06	0.94	0.94	0.990
Madhya Pradesh	0.99	0.92	0.93	0.952
Maharashtra	1.04	0.92	0.91	0.965
Manipur	0.99	0.94	0.94	0.962
Meghalaya	0.99	0.94	0.94	0.964
Mizoram	1.00	0.94	0.94	0.965
Nagaland	1.04	0.91	0.94	0.967
Orissa	1.00	0.94	0.94	0.967
Punjab	1.03	0.87	0.80	0.918
Rajasthan	1.02	0.92	0.91	0.957
Sikkim	1.02	0.88	0.94	0.948
Tamil Nadu	1.03	0.94	0.94	0.978
Tripura	0.98	0.94	0.94	0.957
Uttar Pradesh	0.98	0.90	0.92	0.936
Uttarakhand	1.05	0.94	0.91	0.978
West Bengal	1.02	0.93	0.94	0.972
India	1.03	0.93	0.93	0.969

Data Source: Life Expectancy at birth: SRS bulletin (1998). The values of Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Delhi are estimates by IIPS (2000). For Nagaland values are for urban areas only. Sex ratio: (Census of India 2001); Child sex ratio: indiastat.com (2001)

Table 7. Gender gap in variables relating to attainments of men and women in Political empowerment. Lower the value, higher is the gender gap in that variable.

Name of the state	Females in Local Govt.(Panchayati Raj)/ male value	Females in Legislative Assembly/male value	Females in Parliament/male value	Sub-index score for Political Empowerment
Andhra Pradesh	0.49	0.11	0.09	0.128
Arunachal Pradesh	0.39	0.02	0.00	0.038
Assam	1.00	0.05	0.05	0.117
Bihar	0.54	0.06	0.10	0.104
Gujarat	0.40	0.02	0.09	0.064
Haryana	0.56	0.05	0.15	0.108
Himachal Pradesh	0.58	0.10	0.40	0.203
Karnataka	0.75	0.03	0.11	0.098
Kerala	1.00	0.10	0.16	0.178
Madhya Pradesh	1.00	0.09	0.11	0.157
Maharashtra	0.77	0.04	0.10	0.107
Manipur	1.00	0.02	0.00	0.080
Meghalaya	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.036
Mizoram	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.000
Nagaland	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.000
Orissa	0.56	0.10	0.11	0.131
Punjab	1.00	0.06	0.18	0.156
Rajasthan	0.63	0.08	0.13	0.127
Sikkim	0.52	0.03	0.00	0.058
Tamil Nadu	0.54	0.04	0.10	0.088
Tripura	0.50	0.03	0.00	0.058
Uttar Pradesh	1.00	0.05	0.07	0.119
Uttarakhand	0.65	0.05	0.14	0.113
West Bengal	0.57	0.07	0.12	0.118
India	0.75	0.06	0.08	0.113

Data Source: Members in Panchayati Raj System: Ministry of Panchayati Raj (2006), Members in Legislative Assembly: Election Commission (2002); Lok Sabha members: Lok Sabha Secretariat (2004); Members of Rajya Sabha: GOI (2001).

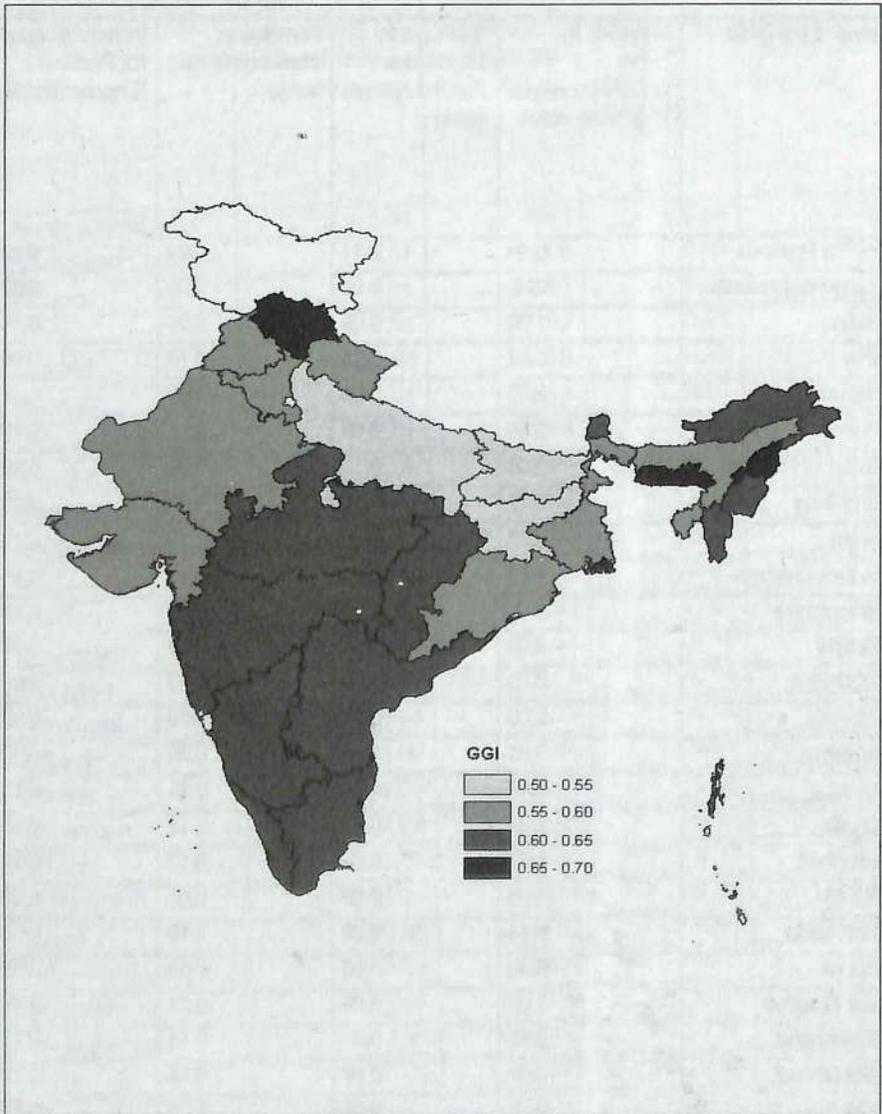


Figure 1. Variation in the Gender gap Index across different states of India. Lower the value, higher is the Gender Gap in that state.

Coverage of Health Related Issues and Concerns in Fashion and Lifestyle Women's Magazines in English - An Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Women's magazines have been a valuable source of health information for their readers, highlighting issues that were ignored by the mainstream press.

The purpose of the study is to analyse the coverage of health related issues and concerns in Women's Magazines published in English. Content analysis was utilized for understanding the type of health issues discussed in the content, coverage on the top health concerns that Indian women should be aware of. Survey was considered to identify the time when women seek health information from these magazines. Femina India and Just for Women are the two magazines that the researcher analysed in the study.

The study has revealed that magazines failed to create awareness on the top health concerns such as heart disease, breast cancer, autoimmune diseases (lupus, Diabetes type 1 and multiple sclerosis), osteoporosis and depression that Indian women should be aware of. These magazines focus more on the fitness and cosmetic aspects of health.

Moreover, the study reveals that majority of women regularly seek health information from these magazines. Eventhough, some women say that the health section in the magazine is second only to physicians, it is essential for a magazine to provide the authentic and unbiased information regarding health.

Keywords

"Women's Magazines, Women's health, Health Coverage and media, Health Awareness"

Introduction

For more than a century, women's magazines have provided readers with a wealth of information aimed at helping them develop essential feminine skills and

knowledge. Magazines have published articles advising women how to bake the perfect meatloaf, how to maintain the perfect hairstyle, and how to experience the perfect orgasm. Magazines have offered advice about how to save money on back-to-school clothes, how to save time in the kitchen, and how to save a failing marriage. To help women cope with life's imperfections, magazines have provided instructions on how to select fashions that hide figure "flaws," how to cope with male rejection, how to circumvent cranky co-workers or inept bosses, and how to help a child who is failing in school. For about the cost of a fast-food lunch, a single issue of a women's magazine provides at least a dozen articles offering advice to readers on how to make their lives easier, homes safer, and families happier. Women's magazines serve the role of a modern "high priestess" offering step-by-step instructions for "the demanding—but rewarding state of womanhood".

Women's magazines have become a how-to guide for daily living, and among the topics included in these instruction manuals is health. Fashion and lifestyle women's magazines publish informational articles covering a broad spectrum of health topics, and magazines invite readers to learn more about their bodies so that they can prevent illness and forestall disease. While these publications have been praised as an important source of health information for women, magazines also have been criticized for their superficial treatment of health related topics and their failure to challenge patriarchal and capitalistic ideologies, which dictate that happiness can be achieved through relationships with men and acquisition of products advertised in magazines.

The background study on women magazines and health issues shows several international studies which have attempted content analyses of women's magazines to explore the presentation of health related information; most of them have analyzed advertising health related products, editorial and other contents. Also it identified that limited studies in India have conducted survey with women concurrently along with a comprehensive content analysis of the health section of Fashion and Lifestyle Women's Magazines.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to analyse the coverage of health related issues and concerns in Fashion and Lifestyle Women's Magazines. The main objectives included studying when the women population seeks health regarding information in these women's magazines, analyzing the type of health issues discussed in the content. (age related issues, emotional and mental health, reproductive health, fitness, violence and women, women as carers), finding out the coverage on top health concerns for Indian women such as heart disease, breast cancer, autoimmune diseases (lupus, Diabetes type1 and multiple sclerosis), osteoporosis and depression and determining the quality of the content (with respect to sources, experts quoted and framing).

Related Work

A literature by Moynihan et al. (2000) reported that news media stories about medications provided inadequate or incomplete information about the benefits, risks and costs of the drugs. In addition, many failed to identify the financial ties between study groups or experts and pharmaceutical manufacturers.

A relevant literature by Jones (2004) investigated the accuracy of breast cancer detection messages in top-selling Australian women's magazines and three weekend newspapers. Results of this study indicated that messages in the media were providing very little information on appropriate screening procedures and were misrepresenting the age of breast cancer sufferers.

A most relevant literature by Weston and Ruggiero (1985-86) studied six women's magazines in 1970s found that the publications regularly included articles on dieting and sexual health but did not focus on health problems or illnesses that were the most frequent causes of death among women. Also these articles did not mention violence against women, specifically rape or domestic abuse.

In an analysis of articles appearing in 13 women's magazines from October 1995 to September 1996, the Media Research Center (MRC) found that among 56 health articles, 35 offered only one point of view and framed stories in alarmist language that presented minor risks as major concerns (MRC, 1996). Dr. Elizabeth Whelan, president of the American Council on Science and Health reviewed 14 magazines published in 1996 and found that they "tended to emphasize nonexistent or trivial health risks, while largely overlooking major causes of disease particularly cigarette smoking". Gerlach and colleagues (1997) examined seven women's magazines, published from 1987 to 1995, and found that colon cancer, the third leading cause of cancer deaths among women, was seldom mentioned. Finally, a Kaiser Foundation report, noting that sexual health was prominent topic in women's magazines, recommended that the publications expand their coverage to include information about AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases, rather than focus on pregnancy, abortion, and contraception (Broaden sexual, 1998).

Canadian researchers Guillen & Barr (1994), analyzing magazines published for adolescent girls from 1970 to 1990, concluded that articles on nutrition and fitness emphasized body shape and weight loss. One study by Gritz (1987) suggested that magazines often depicted the ideal body as slim and smoking as a means to achieve thinness.

Rowan (2000) has argued that a key factor in effective health communication is building trust, and women's magazines appear to have a level of credibility among their audiences. In spite of criticisms and declining newsstand sales (Fine, 2003), magazines remain an important source of health information (The female persuasion, 2002).

So what are women's major health concerns? Astbury and White (1998) identified six key themes relevant to women's health information needs. These themes, based on a review of research findings, policy documents, and the content of women's common requests to health information services, were:

- Age-related issues
- Emotional and mental health
- Reproductive health
- Violence and women
- Women as carers
- Fitness
- Emerging health issues (including women and alcohol; breast cancer; cervical cancer; diabetics, AIDS; Cardiovascular disease.)

The top five of the most common health concerns that Indian women today should be aware of are heart disease, breast cancer, autoimmune diseases (lupus, Diabetes type 1 and multiple sclerosis), osteoporosis and depression as reported by Aparajitha, 2012.

The above literatures imply the important role of the women's magazines, how the media influences people on the health related behavior and knowledge, the potential for misinformation on health to be communicated and the necessity to analyze the content provided in these women's magazines.

Methods

The research design used in the study is the descriptive type. The researcher adopted content analysis and community survey to analyse the coverage of health related issues and concerns in Fashion and Lifestyle Women's Magazines. Based on the survey results the top two women's magazines that had regular readership in Chennai were chosen. They were Femina (India) and JFW. Femina and JFW between December 2011 and February 2012. The content which carried the health information was focused.

Key Findings

Survey Results

The top two women's magazines read by the respondents are Just for Women and Femina. 79% of the respondents are regular magazine readers. Also 62% of these women regularly follow health sections in Women's magazines. Most of the women generally follow health section and majority of them also follow health magazine before consulting a health professional.

In terms of health information, majority of the women said magazines are second only to physicians as sources of health information

Content Analysis

1. Femina India

1(a) Characteristics of the Articles

Number of articles in the health section was quite less when compared to the overall page limit of the magazine. The length of each article was on an average not more than one page.

The first edition of January devoted mostly to the New Year special articles and hence, the number of articles on health was only two. Again the first edition of February covered features about India's 50 most beautiful women and hence, the health article published was only one.

The authors of the articles were the editors of the magazine and references of experts were quoted in most of the articles. Dr. Mohan Thomas is an expert from London who replies to queries through e-mails. However, the latest trends in health and beauty do not quote any experts. The beauty and fashion sections tend to occupy most of the magazines.

1(b) Content of the articles

Every issue consists of one article regarding queries on cosmetic surgery and fitness. Almost every issue also contains an article regarding healthy food which portrays women as carers. The health food is also targeted on the entire family the woman cooks for.

Every article consists of visual elements to enhance the quality of the article. The queries section provide the photos of experts but fail to provide visual images of the problems discussed which is a major drawback. For the problems discussed regarding cosmetic surgery, proper replies cannot be given without the images of scars or the skin.

Fitness, General, Cosmetic and Reproductive Health are covered almost every month. No article published on the top 5 health problems that Indian women should be aware of. The quality of the content in respect to experts quoted is satisfactory.

1(c) Framing of the articles

All articles used prognostic framing which is essential when it comes to health

information. One health product is promoted in every issue under health and beauty section.

2. Just for Women

2(a) Characteristics of the Articles

The overall coverage on health issues in the magazine when compared to Femina is less. Being a monthly magazine it covers only one or two articles on an average on health related information.

The length of the article does not exceed two pages. The articles are provided with experts and their photographs. The December 2011 edition had only one article regarding health which is in the queries section.

2(b) Content of the articles

There is no coverage on the emerging health issues that women should be aware of. The information is more about reproductive health and fitness. No major attention to any other type of health issues.

Visual images are presented along with the article. The query section also contains visual images of the concerned problem. The fitness section provides visuals for every step in yoga, which is an advantage. No articles regarding health for women have been published.

Quality of the content and experts' quote are satisfactory but the content is found to be too small. Health section hardly covers 3-5 pages in every issue. The articles do not cover the emotional and mental health problems of women.

2(c) Framing of the articles

All articles use prognostic framing which is essential when it comes to health information.

Conclusion

Even though, a number of magazines are published in India exclusively for women, the researcher has chosen only two magazines – Famina India and Just for Women for this study as they are more popular. For analysis only three issues of the magazines were taken (December 2011, January and February 2012) as most of the time the magazines publish in a set pattern and the sample taken are more than adequate to reflect all the issues analyzed. After a detailed analysis as discussed above the researcher has come to the following conclusions:

- Women's magazines are still not giving more importance to health related issues and almost failed to create awareness on the top health concerns such as heart disease, breast cancer, autoimmune diseases (lupus, Diabetes type1 and multiple sclerosis), osteoporosis and depression that every Indian woman should be aware of.

- Majority of the women regularly seek health information from these magazines and some of them read the health section more to gain knowledge before consulting the health professional.

- Most regularly covered health issues in the magazines are related to fitness and it is not known how authentic is the information provided in respect of the sources and experts quoted.

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A Study of Dropout rate at Primary Level in Education Zone Qaimoh, District Kulgam (J&K)

G. H. Mir

Abstract

Dropping out of children from primary schools has been viewed as a serious educational and social problem. Dropouts are acting as the main obstacle in the way of universalization of elementary education. There are various causes like economic, social, domestic, infrastructure etc responsible for dropout rate. The paper evaluates the dropout rate of different schools in education zone Qaimoh of Kulgam district at the primary level from the year 2006 to 2011. The dropout rate at primary level in the said zone was 20.83%.

Introduction

Although children are starting primary education in greater numbers than ever before, the rate at which children dropout from school remains high in many low income countries where over half of the children who start primary school do not complete the full cycle of education (Lewin and Sabates, 2011). The term "dropout" means pupil who leave the school during any part of the academic year without completing the class in which he or she is studying. Hartog committee (1928) defined it as, "The premature withdrawal of children from school at any stage before the completion of primary course". Dropout signifies the mid-way withdrawal from the education system i.e. primary education. J.P Naik (1964) has remarked that, "It is not enough to enroll a child into a school and to see that he attends regularly from day to day. We have also to see that he or she makes progress regularly from class to class and is not withdrawn from the school till he or she completes the elementary course. However, Indian education commission (1964-66) recommended three provisions at elementary educations i.e. universality of provision, universality of enrollment and universality of retention.

As India is committed to the creation of a secular, socialistic and democratic pattern of society, this dream can be realized only if we are able to provide educational

opportunities to every member of the society. Even after more than 60 years of independence we have not been able to control the dropouts in education system. Dropout is defined as a condition in which child discontinues schooling after having attended the school for some time generally should mean that a child remains in the school for a considerable period of time and then gives up his studies. However, dropping out from the school before completing the prescribed course is neither desirable for the individual nor is beneficial for the society as a whole. Dropouts will affect our quality of education. As a result of substantial rates of dropout and non-completion of primary school education, many children are leaving schooling without acquiring the most basic skills.

Their brief schooling experience consists frequently of limited learning opportunities in overcrowded classrooms with insufficient learning materials and under-qualified teachers (Alexander, 2008). Children of different ages and abilities are mixed together in single classrooms without proper adaptation of teaching methods to improve learning and to induce school engagement (Little, 2008). Such schooling circumstances, together with personal and family level factors such as ill-health, malnutrition and poverty jeopardize meaningful access to education for many children. As such, many children are enrolled in schools but fail to attend, participate and progress, thereby drop out from school (Sabates et al, 2011).

Objectives of the study

The following objectives have been framed for the present study:-

1. To find out the dropout rate in primary level in Zone Qaimoh (District Kulgam).
2. To study ratio of dropouts in these institutions with reference to sex.
3. To find out the main causes of dropout rate in this zone.

Methodology of the study

Sample of the study: The sample for the present study of education Zone Qaimoh was collected from eight (08) clusters. From each cluster three (03) institutions have been selected on the basis of systematic random sampling technique. Therefore twenty four (24) schools have been selected as a sample for the investigation.

Tools and techniques of the study: The data for the present investigation was collected with the help of following tools:

Information blanks: Information blank-I was developed for the investigation and administered with the purpose to survey different elementary schools existing in the zone Qaimoh and collect information with regard to school going children sex wise.

Information blank-II was developed in order to get the right information about the dropout students.

Procedure: The information blank was administered to the sample subject in order to find out the different elementary schools in the zone Qaimoh and also to find out their enrollment. The roll statement of different schools of zone Qaimoh was collected from the year 2006 to 2011. It was collected from the records of various institutions in order to find out the dropout rate at the primary level.

Statistical Treatment: The data was analyzed by applying percentage statistics:

Analysis and Interpretation

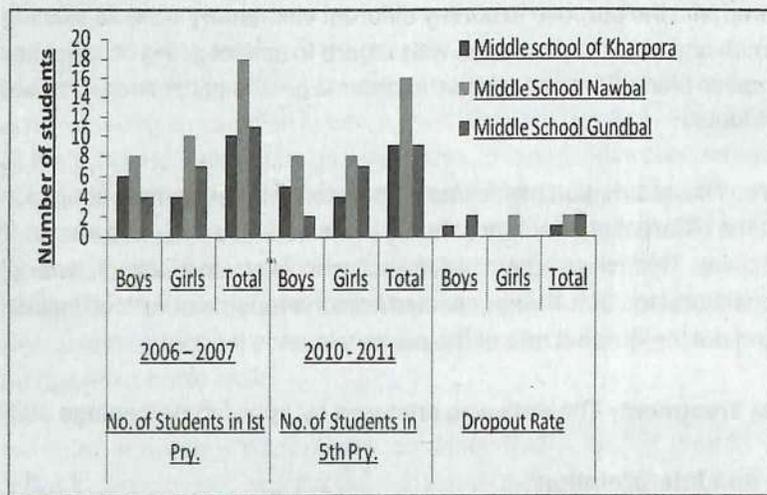
The dropout rate of different clusters of Zone Qaimoh is given below in the Tables from 1 to 8 and graphically presented in Fig. 1 to 8.

1. Cluster Nowpora Kharpora: The dropout rate of this cluster is given in Table 1 and graphically presented in Fig.1. In Middle school Kharpora in 2006 – 07, there were only 10 students enrolled in class 1st Primary out of which 6 were boys and 4 were girls. In 2010 – 11, the enrolment in class 5th primary was 09. So one student dropped out during these years. Hence dropout percentage of this school was 10%. In Middle School Nawbal in 2006 – 07, the enrolment of 1st Primary was 8 boys and 10 girls and the total was 18 students. In 2010 – 11, the enrolment in 5th primary was 8 boys and 8 girls. So two girl students dropped out during these years. Hence the dropout percentage of the said class was 11.11%. In middle school Gundbal in 2006 – 07, there were 11 students enrolled in class 1st, out of which 4 were boys and 7 were girls. In 2010 – 11, the enrolment of this class in 5th primary was 9 in which 2 were boys and 7 were girls. So 2 students dropped out during these years. Hence dropout percentage of this school was 18.18%.

Table 1: Dropout rate of the cluster

Name Middle School	No. of Students in 1st Pry. 2006 – 2007			No. of students in 5 th Pry 2010 – 2011			Dropout Rate		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Kharpora	06	04	10	05	04	09	01	...	01
Nawbal	08	10	18	08	08	16	...	02	02
Gundbal	04	07	11	02	07	09	02	...	02

Fig1: Drop out rate of cluster

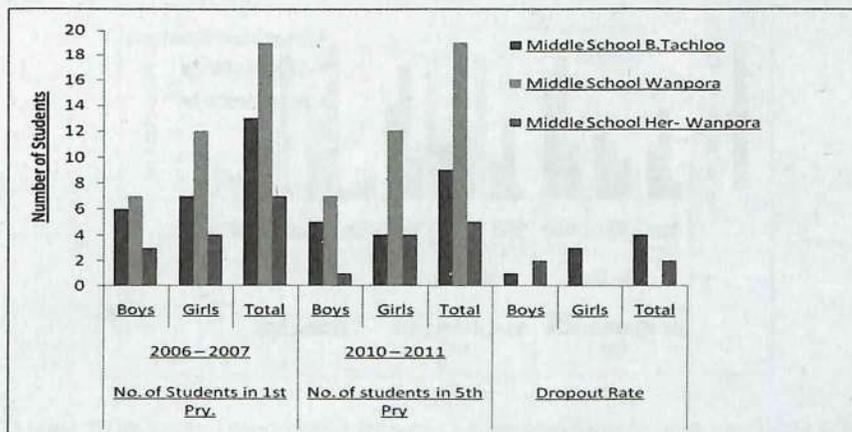


2. Cluster Wanpora: The dropout rate of cluster Wanpora is given in Table 2 and graphically presented in Fig. 2. In the middle school Bonpora Tachloo in 2006 – 07, the total number of students enrolled in 1st primary was 13 out of which 6 were boys and 7 were girls. In 2010 – 11, the enrollment in 5th primary was 5 boys and 4 girls and the total was 9. So 4 students dropped out in which 1 boy and 3 girls during these years. Hence the dropout percentage of this school during these years was 30.76%. In Wanpora Middle school in 2006–07, the total number of students enrolled in 1st primary was 19, out of which 7 were boys and 12 were girls. In 2010–11, the enrolment in 5th primary was 19. So during these years dropout percentage was nil i.e. 0%. In Middle school Her-Wanpora, the total enrolment in 1st primary in 2006 – 07 was 7, out of which 3 were boys and 4 were girls. In 2010 – 11 the enrolment of this class in 5th primary was 5, out of which 1 was boy and 4 were girls. So 2 students dropped out during these years. Hence the dropout percentage of this school was 28.57%.

Table 2: Dropout rate of cluster Wanpora.

Name Middle School	No. of Students in 1 st Pry. 2006 – 2007			No. of students in 5 th Pry 2010 – 2011			Dropout Rate		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Bronpora Tachloo	6	7	13	5	4	09	01	03	04
Wanpora	07	12	19	07	12	19	....	.....	.....
Her- Wanpora	03	04	07	01	04	05	02	....	02

Fig 2: Dropout rate of cluster Wanpora.

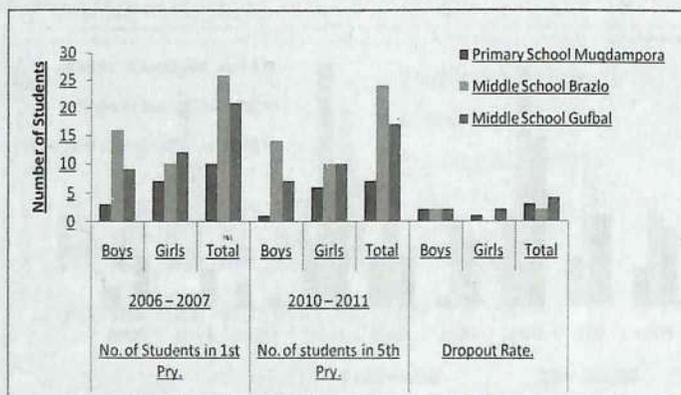


3. Cluster Qaimoh: The dropout rate of cluster Qaimoh is given in Table 3 and graphically represented in Fig. 3. In the primary school Maqdampora in 2006 – 07, the total enrolment was 10, out of which 3 were boys and 7 were girls. In 2010 – 11, the enrolment in 5th primary was 7, out of which 1 was boy and 6 were girls. So 3 dropped out during these years in which 2 were boys and 1 was girl. Hence the dropout percentage of this school was 30%. In Middle School Brazloo in 2006 – 07, the total enrolment of 1st primary was 26, out of which 16 were boys and 10 were girls. In 2010 – 11, the enrolment in 5th primary was 24, out of which 14 were boys and 10 were girls. In this way 2 boys dropped out during these years. Hence the dropout percentage of this school was 7.69%. In Middle school Gufbal in 2006 – 07, the total enrolment of 1st primary was 21, out of which 9 were boys and 12 were girls. In 2010 – 11, total enrolment in 5th primary was 17, out of which 7 were boys and 10 were girls. Hence 4 students dropped out during these years in which 2 were boys and 2 were girls. So the dropout percentage of this school was 19.04%.

Table 3: Dropout rate of cluster Qaimoh

Name Primary/Middle School	No. of Students in 1st Pry. 2006 – 2007			No. of students in 5 th Pry 2010 – 2011			Dropout Rate		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Primary Maqdampora	03	07	10	01	06	07	02	01	03
Brazlo	16	10	26	14	10	24	02	....	02
Gufbal	09	12	21	07	10	17	02	02	04

Fig 3: Drop out rate of cluster Qaimoh .

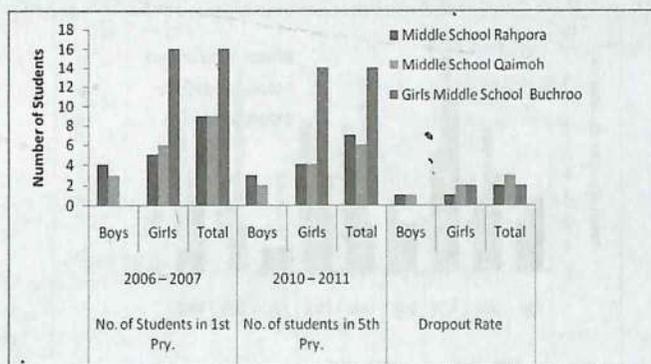


4. Cluster Khudwani: The dropout rate of cluster Khudwani is given in Table 4 and graphically represented in Fig. 4. In Middle School Rahpora in 2006 – 07, there were only 09 students enrolled in 1st Primary, out of which 4 were boys and 5 were girls. In 2010 – 11, the enrolment in 5th Primary was 7. So 02 students dropped out during these years in which 01 was boy and 01 was girl candidate. Hence dropout percentage of this school was 22%. In Boys Primary School Khudwani (BPS) in 2006 – 07, the total number of students enrolled in 1st Primary was 9, out of which 3 were boys and 6 were girls. In 2010 – 11, the total enrolment in 5th primary was 6 in which two were boys and 4 were girls. So 3 students dropped out during these years out of which 01 was boy and 2 were girls. Hence dropout percentage of this school was 33.33%. In Girls Middle School Buchroo in 2006 – 07, the total number of students enrolled in 1st primary was 16 all of which were girls. In 2010 – 11, the enrolment in 5th primary was 14. So 02 girls dropped out during these years. Hence the overall percentage of dropout of this school was 12.5%.

Table 4: Dropout rate of cluster Khudwani

Name Middle School	No. of Students in 1 st Pry. 2006 – 2007			No. of students in 5 th Pry 2010 – 2011			Dropout Rate		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Rahpora	04	05	09	03	04	07	01	01	02
Khudwani	03	06	09	02	04	06	01	02	03
Girls Buchroo	....	16	16	....	14	14	....	02	02

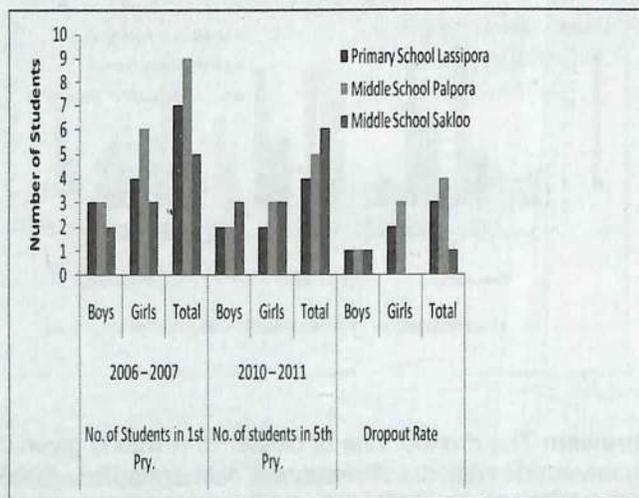
Fig 4: Drop out rate of cluster Khudwani.



5. Cluster Khrewan: The dropout rate of cluster Khrewan is given in Table 5 and graphically represented in Fig. 5. In Primary school Lassipora in 2006-07, the total number of students enrolled in 1st primary was 7, out of which 3 were boys and 4 were girls. In 2010-11, the enrolment in 5th primary was 4, out of which 2 were boys and 2 were girls. So 3 students dropped out during these years in which 01 was boy and 2 were girls. Hence dropout percentage of this school was 42.85%. In Middle School Palpora in 2006-07, there were only 9 students enrolled in class 1st primary, out of which 3 were boys and 6 were girls. In 2010-11, the enrolment in 5th primary was 5, out of which 02 were boys and 03 were girls. So 4 students dropped out during these years out of which 1 was boy and 3 were girls. Hence dropout percentage of this school was 44.44%. In Middle School, Sakloo in 2006-07, there were 6 students enrolled in Class 1st Primary, out of which 3 were boys and 3 were girls. In 2010-11, the enrollment in 5th primary was 5 in which 2 were boys and 3 were girls. So 01 student dropped out during these years. Hence dropout percentage of this school was 16.66%.

Table 5: Dropout rate of cluster Khrewan.

Name Primary/Middle School	No. of Students in 1 st Pry. 2006-2007			No. of students in 5 th Pry 2010-2011			Dropout Rate		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Primary Lassipora	03	04	07	02	02	04	01	02	03
Palpora	03	06	09	02	03	05	01	03	04
Sakloo	02	03	05	03	03	06	01	00	01

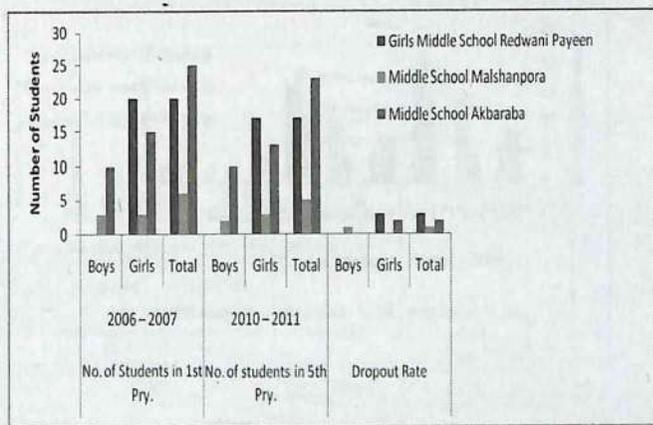
Fig 5: Drop out rate of cluster Khrewen.

6. Cluster Redwani: The dropout rate of 3 different schools of this cluster is given in Table 6 and graphically presented in figure 6. In Girls Middle School Redwani Payeen in 2006 – 07, the total number of students enrolled in 1st primary was 20, all of which were girls. In 2010 – 11, the enrolment in 5th primary was 17. Thus 3 students dropped out during these years. Hence dropout percentage of this school was 15%. In Middle School Malshanpora in 2006 – 07, the total number of students enrolled in 1st primary was 6, out of which 3 were boys and 3 were girls. In 2010 – 11, the enrolment in 5th primary was 5, out of which 2 were boys and 3 were girls. So 1 student dropped out during these years. Hence dropout percentage of this school was 16.66%. In Middle School Akbarabad in 2006 – 07, the total number of students enrolled in 1st primary was 25, out of which 10 were boys and 15 were girls. In 2010 – 11, the enrolment in 5th primary was 23, out of which 10 were boys and 13 were girls. So 2 students dropped out during these years and both of them were girls. Hence dropout percentage of this school it is 8%.

Table 6: Dropout rate of cluster Redwani.

Name of the School	No. of Students in 1st Pry. 2006 - 2007			No. of students in 5 th Pry 2010 - 2011			Dropout Rate		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Girls Middle School Redwani Payeen	...	20	20	...	17	17	...	03	03
Middle School Malshanpora	03	03	06	02	03	05	01	...	01
Middle School Akbarabad	10	15	25	10	13	23	...	02	02

Fig 6: Drop out rate of cluster Redwani.

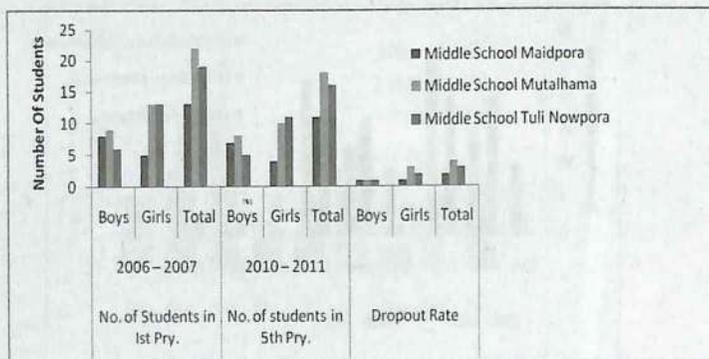


7. Cluster Chadder: The dropout rate of 3 different schools of this cluster is given in Table 7 and graphically presented in figure 7. In Middle school Naidpora in 2006 – 07, the total enrollment in 1st primary was 13, out of which 8 were boys and 5 were girls. In 2010 – 11, the enrollment in 5th primary was 11, out of which 7 were boys and 4 were girls. Thus 02 students dropped out during these years, out of which 1 was boy and 1 was girl student. Hence the dropout percentage of this school was 15.38%. In Middle school Mutalhama in 2006 – 07, the total enrollment of 1st primary was 22, out of which 9 were boys and 13 were girls. In 2010 – 11, the total enrollment in 5th primary was 18, out of which 8 were boys and 10 were girls. So 4 students dropped out during these years out of which one was boy and 3 were girls. Hence the dropout percentage of this school was 18.18%. In Middle school Tulinowpora in 2006 – 07, the total number of students enrolled in 1st primary was 19, out of which 6 were boys and 13 were girls. In 2010 – 11, the total number of students in 5th primary was 16 in which 5 were boys and 11 were girls. So 3 students dropped out during these years in which 01 was boy and 2 were girls. Hence the dropout percentage of this school was 15.78%.

Table 7: Dropout rate of cluster Chadder

Name Of the School	No. of Students in 1st Pry. 2006 – 2007			No. of students In 5 th Pry 2010 – 2011			Dropout Rate		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Middle School Naidpora	08	05	13	07	04	11	01	01	02
Middle School Mutalhama	09	13	22	08	10	18	01	03	04
Middle School Tuli Nowpora	06	13	19	05	11	16	01	02	03

Fig7 : Drop out rate of cluster Chadder.

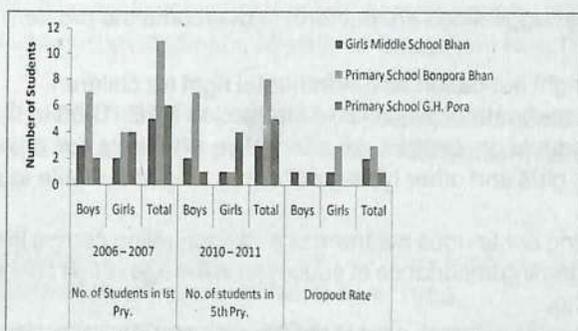


8. Cluster Bhan

The dropout rate of cluster Bhan is given in Table 8 and graphically represented in Fig. 8. In Girls Middle School Bhan in 2006 – 07, the total number of students enrolled in 1st primary was 5, out of which 3 were boys and 2 were girls. In 2010 – 11, the total number of students enrolled in 5th primary was 3. Thus 2 students, 01 male and 01 female, dropped out during these years. Hence the dropout percentage of this school was 40%. In primary school Bonpora Bhan in 2006 – 07, the number of students enrolled in the 1st primary was 11, out of which 7 were boys and 4 were girls. In 2010 – 11, the total number of students in 5th primary was 8 in which 7 were boys and 1 was girl. So during these years 3 students dropped out and all the 03 were girls. Hence the dropout percentage of this school was 27.27%. In Girls Primary School Herpora in 2006 – 07, the total number of students enrolled in 1st primary was 6, out of which 2 were boys and 4 were girls. In 2010 – 11, the total number of students in 5th primary was 5 in which 1 was boy and 4 were girls. So 01 student dropped out during these years. Hence the dropout percentage of this school was 16.66%.

Table 8: Dropout rate of cluster Bhan.

Name of the School	No. of Students in 1 st Pry. 2006 – 2007			No. of students in 5 th Pry. 2010 – 2011			Dropout Rate		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Girls Middle School Bhan	03	02	05	02	01	03	01	01	02
Primary School Bonpora Bhan	07	04	11	07	01	08	....	03	03
Primary School G.H. Pora	02	04	06	01	04	05	01	....	01

Fig. 8: Dropout rate of cluster Bhan.

Causes of Dropout: There are various causes responsible for premature withdrawal of children from schools. Despite tremendous increase in enrollment process in 1st primary, the dropout rate continues and many children do not complete full cycle of education and dropout before reaching 5th primary.

- The precarious economic conditions of the parents become a big handicap in keeping back their children from schools particularly when the poor parents have to bear the costs of books, stationary, uniform, private coaching etc. The poverty of the parents in the territorial area under study i.e. Qaimoh, results in involvement of school going children in wage earning, domestic work and child labour.
- The practices like child marriage, traditions, beliefs etc are responsible for dropout of the children.
- The illiteracy of the parents and poor literacy rate of the community at large too play an important role in dropout of the children.
- Inadequate facility in terms of infrastructure, staff, organization and management etc. are also the causes for early withdrawal of the children from schools.

Conclusion

The following major conclusions have been drawn from the present investigation.

1. The overall dropout rate of education zone Qaimoh is 20.83%. The cluster wise dropout rate of education zone Qaimoh is as under:

Suggestions

The following suggestions are put forth to overcome the problem of dropout.

1. Ensure right education as fundamental right for children.
2. Making adequate provisions as directed in NPE, 1986 in the form of non-formal education centres as alternative channels for dropouts, working children, girls and other types of children who are unable to attend full time schools.
3. Organizing continuous awareness and counseling camps in the area under study regarding importance of education in the age of fast changing landscape of learning.
4. To increase investment, correct deficiencies and improve school infrastructure to the desired level.
5. Enhancement of more scholarships to the outreach children.
6. Ensure implementation of schemes/ acts and its effective follow-up.
7. Form a team of teachers, civil society members/ panchayat members/ municipal committee members for proper implementation of right to education.

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The average length of a manuscript should normally be between 1500 and 2500 words; in exceptional cases, longer articles can also 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 A4 size paper. Footnotes and references should come at the end and not on every page. Authors are requested to submit one soft copy along with the CD (MS Word). Articles can be sent by E-mail at iacadelhi@gmail.com

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Today due to vast expansion of electronic media, particularly Television and participation of private channels in a big way the Indian viewers have too much of information. Information dissemination is part of development and necessary for the common people to know what is happening not only in and around them but also world wide. But today there is too much of information and people generally have no choice of coming to a conclusion on their own judgement. Why? Because channels take a particular topic or topics of interest on their own, and not of the people mostly to project themselves as saviours or fighters for the particular cause or causes. In the last few days the topics of interest chosen by the channels are mostly of personal acquisition for which the reply cannot be given instantly by the accused. The viewers have no choice except to accept the conclusions given by the channels. In the name of wider participation of people in the discussions, the channels invite different persons including experts but unfortunately they are given either less time to answer for the question (s) raised or no time as too much of interference in between by the moderator with the result the persons participate in the discussions either conclude their points of view in between or abruptly stop giving the answer. In this way the channels almost take a lead in raising an issue, accuse a person or persons, argue in such a way so that all will come to a particular conclusion and almost give judgement on the issue (s) taken-up.

Many now feel whether this is really good for democracy and is it called freedom of press or communication. Even the Chairman of the Press Council of India is much worried about the information explosion by the channels and many times indirectly and directly given warning also. He has even proposed to government to bring TV channels also under the control of Press Council of India so that there is some control over their actions.

Hence, it may be appropriate that the TV channels have self-control and project what is much more important for the development of the people and the country so that inclusive growth is ensured. Corruption is a social evil and needs to be addressed by everyone for which the press and electronic media have greater role to play. However, the role should be restricted to giving information and not argument like court proceedings for coming to a conclusion as this is the domain of one of the most important pillars of democracy which is called judiciary.

Dr. V. Mohankumar

Globalisation, GATS and Trading in Education Services

G. Kamalakar

Abstract

General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) is a relatively new agreement. It entered into force in January 1995 as a result of the Uruguay Round negotiations to provide for the extension of the multilateral trading system to services. The articles of GATS formulated then were essentially a methodology, which would form the basis for future negotiations. GATS is supposed to cover over 160 services, including education with a view to achieving a progressively higher level of liberalization, pursuant to Article XIX of the GATS, WTO Members are committed to entering into further rounds of services negotiations. The first such Round started in January 2000. All Members of the World Trade Organization are signatories to the GATS and have to assume the resulting obligations. So, regardless of their countries' policy stances, trade officials need to be familiar with this Agreement and its implications for trade and development. These implications may be far more significant than available trade data suggest.

Key words: WTO/GATS, trade in services, liberalization, policy reform, Economic Development, the new economy.

Introduction

If we were asked to name one institution that symbolized the idea of the 'global' in the array of international organisations that now loom large on the education policy horizon, there is little doubt the World Trade Organization (WTO) would be high on the list. Following its establishment in 1995, the WTO has been embroiled in controversy and faced constant crises (Wilkinson, 2003). It has also become the target for the anti-globalisation movement, as well as being a fierce battle-ground between the developed and developing economies over trade and access to markets.

So, what is it about the WTO, its purpose, programmes and politics that has generated such fierce protest and raised the political hackles of the

developing countries sufficient to bring the various rounds of negotiations, including many of the Ministerial meetings (notably Seattle, Doha and Cancun) to the edge of collapse? And, why is it that, despite the insistence by the former WTO Director, Mike Moore, that the WTO could do splendid work and advance the progress of the human species (1999), there continues to be a widely shared view that the WTO is a problematic organization sullied by a significant deficit in democratic procedure (cf. House of Lords, 2001; Rodrik, 2001; Callinicos, 2003; Patomaki and Teivainen, 2004). Critics point to the bullying tactics of the powerful member states, as well as the imposition of a mercantilist model of economic development on members, with little or no scope to reverse decisions that might not work in the interests of the country. Critics also ask why is it that public services, like education and health, are now incorporated into the mandate of the WTO's General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), and worry about the long-term consequences for national governments and their policymaking space of the commoditisation of education in this way.

In this paper I examine why it is that the education sectors of national economies have been targeted as an area of regional and global trade, how education is conceptualised and regulated within the WTO/GATS framework, and the implications of these processes for member states. In particular I will be arguing that though GATS formalises trends already taking place in the education sector (from primary to higher education), by reframing education using the language of trade and humidifying it within the global regulatory framework, it transforms education into a legally protected industry that can be traded globally. However, critics point out that while trade in education is argued to be a means for developing economies to engage with the global economy, others argue not only is this model of development favours Anglo-Saxon interests but that it has the potential to undermine education as a human right.

Regulating Trade in the Post-War Period – from the GATT to the WTO

The history of the World Trade Organization can be traced to 1947 when a new trade body, the International Trade Organization (ITO), was created. However, the US refused to join the ITO (Ravenshill, 2005); instead, it became the leading country in the establishment of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). What made the GATT operable was that there was a shared political commitment amongst its member states; of progressive enlargement of an international free market with a concern with trade

liberalisation in a system of progressive interventionist welfare states (Mundy and Iga, 2003:283). This approach was characterised as embedded liberalism.

However, during the 1970's the shared vision that underpinned the embedded liberal order came under pressure as a result of fundamental changes taking place in the global economy. The recession and iconic oil-shocks of 1973 became the final breaking point for the post-war settlement which had, in retrospect, shown signs of serious problems as early as the 1960s. The net result was that when the Bretton Woods system collapsed in 1973, the US share of output had fallen by 10 percentage points since 1950 and its share of exports had fallen to less than the combined total of Germany and Japan (Mitchie and Smith, 1995: 25-26).

The 1973 recession shook the capitalist world, launching it into two decades of economic restructuring and social and political readjustment in what Tickell and Peck (2005) termed 'roll back' neo-liberalism. However, even before the crash, "a minority of ultra-liberal economic theologians" (Hobsbawn, 1994: 409) had attacked the domination of Keynesian thinking, instead promoting the unrestricted free market as the model of economic development. By 1974, free marketeers were on the offensive (Marchak, 1991: 93), though they did not come to dominate government policy until the 1980s. As events unfolded, neo-liberals and their economic policies came to dominate state policymaking and the agendas of the global institutions. Governments at the national level, such as the United States, UK, New Zealand, Australia and Chile, embraced neo-liberal ideologies, prioritising the free flow of trade unhindered by state interference (Karns and Mingst, 2004: 361).

By the mid-1970s, trade in services were becoming major components of international trade, and accounted for an increasing proportion of international investment. Marchak (1991) argues that the internationalisation of manufacturing firms that took place throughout the 1960s and 70s was a precondition for the growth of the international services sector. Thus, when US manufacturing went global, the export of services also expanded. However, by 1984, the US's share of trade in services had not only levelled off but declined as new competitors entered the arena, including local suppliers, who were better able to provide services locally to transnationals firms. As Marchak observes, though the advent of telematics is able to reduce the tyranny of distance, many of services, such as banking or insurance,

are best located near the consumer (Marchak, 1991: 86). The services sector presented transnational firms with huge problems around domestic regulations (under foreign direct investment), inhibiting their expansion globally. Barriers included regulations on investment, establishment, foreign exchange, insurance, shipping, employment and so on (Marchak, 1994: 84). In order to respond to the challenges presented by these barriers, various service coalitions formed to lobby for change, including the US based Coalition of Service Industries (created in 1982), dedicated to pressuring the US government¹ to negotiate for the reduction of barriers to US services exports. The CSI also used its lobbying capacity to shape negotiations taking place under the GATT, to include services and not just goods into the mandate of the GATT. Getting rid of domestic regulations would, the CSI argued, enable service firms to expand globally and enhance the global competitiveness of its members

Estimating the size of the services market

Trade in services is estimated to be one of the most dynamic growth sectors. Based on current WTO trade figures, trade in services account for 1/5th of global trade and 60-70% of GDP in the advanced OECD countries (Hartmann and Scherrer, 2003: 5). 75% of the trade in services is located in the industrial OECD countries, especially the US, Canada, EU (the biggest exporter, largely composed of the UK, France, Germany) and Japan, while the remaining 25% is shared by HK, China, South Korea, Singapore and India (ibid). At present, most of the services trade is in transport and tourism; however this could change if domestic regulations in other service areas were lifted.

Using IMF balance of payments figures, the WTO Secretariat (1999: 5) reported that commercial services grew at an average rate of 8 percent per annum over the period 1990-97, compared with 7 percent for merchandise over the same period. Over the same period, Asia was the most dynamic services exporter, recording average growth rates of 12 percent. By contrast, Latin America was the only large region where merchandise exports grew more rapidly than services exports. By bringing trade related property rights and other kinds of services into the system of world trade, the WTO estimated that it would significantly increase world trade.

If it were possible to quantify the value of education as an industry, it is estimated to be huge. The expenditure on (public and private) education

globally is upward of US\$2 trillion (Oxfam, 2002), while expenditure on public education globally is estimated to be around US\$1386.8 billion (Fredrikssen, 2003).² Heyneman (2001) also gives us some idea as to what the education marketplace might be composed of; technology services, books, testing services, the provision of schools, the provision of higher education and so on (see Heyneman, 2001).

Until the early 1980s, education continued to be regarded by national states as a public service. However it was already clear significant changes were taking place, not only in the governance of education³ but also in how education was conceptualised. Between 1980-82, the Thatcher government created a full-fee-based regime in international education in the UK to generate export revenue, while locally students were encouraged to regard themselves as customers and choosers of services. Australia and New Zealand had also embraced neo-liberalism *and* regionalism as a means of generating a competitive economy.

By the early 1980s, following a period of significant public sector restructuring, the Australian and New Zealand governments had set about aligning themselves with the 'Asian' region⁴ (Ziguras, et al, 2003; Dale and Robertson, 1997: 212) with a specific eye to the 'internationalization' of higher education and the provision of English language in locally-organised English Language Schools. Despite the rhetoric of internationalisation and cultural diversity, the national interest was firmly cast in economic terms. ⁵ The more entrepreneurial higher education institutions acted quickly. Not only were huge numbers of full-fee-paying students (particularly from Asia) recruited into (largely business) programmes offered in UK, New Zealand, and Australian universities (Ziguras et al, 2003: 360), but many of these universities set up off-shore operations around the Asian region and beyond.

The result was a spectacular increase in the volume of student movement from the Asian region shaped by government policy, entrepreneurial higher education institutions, an expanding middle class, and the demand for English (Marginson, 2004: 138). Trade in education services rapidly became a huge industry. For instance, the Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show that in 2002, education service exports grew by 2.9%, while education remained the third largest export services earner, bringing in AUS\$4.1 billion each year (behind tourism AUS\$9.3 billion) and transportation (AUS\$7.6 billion). Currently it is Australia's 14th largest export earner and one of the most aggressive in developing its education export

industry. Indeed, despite or because of its location, "Australia has grown in trade in education services faster than any OECD country, and has one of the world's highest proportions of overseas students in education, second only to Switzerland" (Ziguras 2003: 360).

Figures for the UK tell a similar story. By 2004 there were around 270,000 students studying in UK universities (both off-shore and in the UK), paying around GB£1.5bn in fees and contributing to GB£3 to the economy.⁶ With such a significant investment in, and dependence upon, the 'education export market', there is also a concern expressed in the UK as to how best to maintain or increase market-share, as the UK faced competition from the US, Australia, Malaysia and Singapore.

In New Zealand, universities not only opened their doors to trade, but the state-funded schooling sector did as well. As Lewis (2003: 23) observed, the increase in number of foreign students in New Zealand schools has been spectacular, boosted by the marketing efforts of local schools and the government. By 2001, the export of education was estimated by the New Zealand government to be worth \$NZ 1.5 billion—or 1.4% of GDP (Ministry of Education, 2001)—placing it in the top 10 export income earners (compared with \$5.8 billion for tourism). With heavy dependence on the income earned from education exports, the New Zealand government has moved to market the idea of 'place' (New Zealand) as well as to protect the reputation of this new industry from 'rogue traders'. 'Brand New Zealand' is now stamped across education; one of the selected service industries that the New Zealand government has chosen to individually promote.

These developments in the UK, Australia and New Zealand, had a significant effect on the US's share of the market. A report to the US Department of Trade presented the government with a worrying trend; that their share had declined from around 40% to 30% of the global student market over the 1980's and 90s (<http://www.ed.gov/offices>). The report noted not only impediments, such as the cost of studying in the United States, but that there were significant barriers placed in the way of students obtaining permission from their home countries to study in the United States. The revenue implications for the US were immense. As the report noted more than half a million foreign students studying in the USA spend an estimated US\$9 billion per year.

Foreign students, largely from Asia, are also a significant economic

resource for the US economy, given that a large number, particularly in the science and technology areas, tend to remain in, or return to, the USA following their studies. Chalamwong, (2004: 6) reported figures for 2002 of 646,000 foreign students studying in universities in the United States on student visas, with more than half of this number from Asia. At the same time, these sorts of figures have given rise to a concern with brain drain in the supplying countries. Chalamwong, (2004: 17) notes that over a 10 year period, less than 50 percent of Chinese students studying abroad returned to China, with the result that the Chinese government has curtailed the number of students leaving as well as looked at ways of expanding its own higher education provision to meet with the high level of demand for education. The US also faces competition from countries like Australia, who have stepped up its skilled migration programme since 1998.

As competition over a share of the global education services market has stepped up, key actors (governments, institutions and transnationals firms) within the developed economies have intensified their interest in the way in which the domestic and international regulatory systems of the interstate world impede their project of creating a global trading system.

The WTO and Services

The establishment of the World Trade Organization in 1995 emerging from the Uruguay Round of negotiations was deeply symbolic of the emerging global regime. This new institution replaced the GATT and now reached ambitiously into two new areas of trade regulation; trade in services and intellectual property. These two agreements – the General Agreement on Trade in Service (GATS) and Trade Related Intellectual Property Services (TRIPS), substantially advanced the rules-based nature of the trade regime. As the WTO Secretariat observed: "...the economic rationale calling for services liberalisation under GATS is no different in principle from the rationale that has driven the liberalisation of merchandise trade under GATT since 1948" (WTO, 1999: 1). The role of the WTO was to "...formalize, deepen and widen an international system of trade regulation. It was also to bring greater coherence in global policymaking by drawing together the work of the WTO with that of the IMF, the WB as well as to develop relations with other bodies such as the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the Telecommunications Union and the International Organization of Standards" (Wilkinson, 2002: 129).

Pressure had begun to build from the developed economies—particularly the US—shortly after 1979 to expand the GATT regime to include new issues such as services and investment (Winham, 2005: 100). This was sharply resisted by countries such as India and Brazil who regarded their service sectors as public services. There were also added problems of defining services using the language of trade. As Winham points out: ... services are processes, defining them is difficult, unless a strict functional definition is employed. ... The tasks for the negotiators at the Uruguay Round were to incorporate GATT principles of transparency, national treatment and reciprocity, as well as newer principles such as market access, into areas of trade that was conceptually dissimilar from trade in goods (2005: 101).

This meant developing a code of principles (GATS) as well as identifying which sectors these principles would be applied to – a revolutionary move on the evolving global landscape (Robertson and Dale, 2003). Negotiators then identified measures that restricted trade in services – such as barriers to the labour mobility, cross border supply, commercial presence and the purchase or consumption of services across borders. The result was an agreement that “is not yet complete, not terribly user friendly, with a complex geometry and *al acarte* obligations set against the backdrop of near universal coverage and sovereign immunity in liberalization matters”. (Sauve, 2001: 3). When education is stated in ‘trade-speak’ it is difficult for the education community to understand (Altbach, 2004: 1).

Much of the concern with the WTO emerges from the kind of organization it is. It is best described as a formally contracted body of rules backed by a judicial system, the dispute panel, and a minimum of political structure. The WTO Agreement outlines a number of specific functions to be taken by the WTO as a collective body; these include the implementation of the Uruguay Round Agreements, maintenance of a forum for further negotiations, administration of the dispute settlement system, administration of the Trade Policy Review Mechanism, and liaison with the World Bank and the IMF (Winham, 2005: 107).

The structures created to carry out the functions of the WTO are a Ministerial Conference meeting every two years, a General Council which can also meet as a Dispute Settlement Panel and Trade Policy Review Mechanism Body, and three councils in the areas of goods, services and intellectual property. There is a small secretariat (of around 500 employees) located in Geneva.⁷ Decision making in the WTO is made on the basis of

consensus, though there is considerable evidence that consensus is achieved through the powerful countries (known as the Quad – the EC, USA, Japan, Canada) and their allies (Singapore, Australia, Brazil, New Zealand) 'bullying' the less powerful countries into agreement (Jawara and Kwa, 2003). The level of influence a country can exert through the WTO mechanisms is largely determined by their share of world trade (Hartmann and Scherrer, 2003: 9).

The tasks of the WTO are carried out by professional staff along with the delegation from those Member States (at present 155) that is able to manage a presence in Geneva. For instance, in 2000, 24 countries (out of the 144 members at the time) had no permanent presence in Geneva (Kwa, 2002). Furthermore, the sizes of the delegations of the developed economies (lobbyists aside) are twice as large as those from the developing countries (if they are able to establish a presence). This uneven state of affairs suggests a shortfall in legitimacy for the WTO, a view strongly put by the House of Lords Select Committee on Economic Affairs (2002: 47) on the management of the international trading system where they observe:

We recognise that member countries of the WTO vary in size and economic power. They vary, therefore, in their capacity to influence decisions in the WTO and more fundamentally to maintain a presence in the WTO. It would be naïve to believe that an organization like the WTO would not be dominated by a small group of rich countries. The important question, which applies to the International Monetary Fund and to the World Bank as well, is whether this domination is excessive. We believe it is in all three institutions, but the evidence we received placed most emphasis on the WTO. We urge the Government, with its European partners, to consider, first, how to improve the balance of power in the WTO, and, secondly, how to ensure that decisions are more transparent.

Over and above the structures mentioned above, there are over 20 committees and working groups, with various numbers of working parties. Again, without a presence in Geneva, developing countries are unable to participate in important negotiations that take place between the Ministerial Meetings. Furthermore, negotiators from the developing and least developed countries are often excluded from key negotiations or bullied into accepting proposals that undermine their interests (Kwa, 2002; Kapoor, 2004: 529; Wilkinson, 2002: 134).

Such criticism has made the WTO vulnerable to the anti-globalisation lobby. In order to overcome these, countries like Canada and bodies such as the British Commonwealth have been working to ensure country representation to the WTO in Geneva, technical support for Commonwealth developing country ambassadors in Geneva, and capacity building in trade policy formulation, implementation and negotiation skills training to negotiate national interests effectively in the WTO (Williams, 2003). Finally, because of the historical circumstances in which it was fashioned, the WTO's system of regulation is built upon a series of legal agreements that better suit the needs of the industrial states than their developing counterparts. More than this, it is a system of regulation that favours the economic preferences and legal customs of its founding members. (Wilkinson 2004). Members who join the WTO opt in under a single undertaking to a series of binding rules and a built-in agenda to engage in ongoing negotiations leading to progressive liberalisation.

GATS and Education

Within the WTO framework, the GATS consist of three components:

- a. A framework of rules that lays out the general obligations governing trade in services, which it does in much the same way as the GATT does for trade in goods. It provides disciplines on transparency, most favoured nation treatment, market access, and national treatment.
- b. Annexes on specific services sectors; and
- c. Schedules detailing the liberalisation commitments of each WTO member.

These result in a combination of top-down rules where all measures and sectors are covered unless they are explicitly excluded (MFN, Transparency, Domestic Regulation, government procurement, subsidies) and bottom-up rules where measures and sectors that are specifically identified and included (market access, national treatment). (Sinclair 2000). In theory this means it gives countries a change to pace their liberalisation of trade in services (Eglin, 2003: 7), however the overall direction is toward liberalisation.

GATS include all sectors of education within its scope; primary, secondary, higher, adult and other. Four modes of trade are identified:

Mode 1- cross border supply – for instance, services through international mail, internet, and teleconference facilities;

Mode 2- consumption abroad – for instance, students studying abroad;

Mode 3- commercial presence – for instance, foreign direct investment in the form of setting up branches in the territory of another Member State; and

Mode 4- presence of natural persons – ‘temporary’ (with temporary yet to be defined) entry of workers in the territory of another Member State.

One of the main issues and sticking points for those concerned with education is whether Member States education sectors are exempt. GATS Article 1.3 excludes services “supplied in the exercise of governmental authority”. GATS Article 1.3 (c) further defines a service supplied in the exercise of governmental authority as: “any service that is supplied neither on a commercial basis nor in competition with one or more service suppliers”. Given that public services have been radically transformed since the early 1980s, the category of services supplied purely by government without any commercial interest or intent is small if not almost non-existent. While trade negotiators have provided a few examples of what might count as an exemption (social security, central banking, army), as Sinclair (2000: 57) notes: “...most public services, including even basic universal services such as primary and secondary education (K-12), are provided through a mix of public and private funding and in competition with private suppliers, both not-for-profit and commercial”.

The considerable amount of ambiguity around the status of the education sector in relation to Article 1.3 has made those concerned with protecting education services very nervous. It is here, too, that we see a clash between those who see education as a public service regulated by states, and those who see it as a service that could be delivered by any supplier regulated by global trade rules. Hartmann and Scherrer (2003: 6) note: ...state rules for the supply of services is based on a quite different set of motives. They are intended to ensure that basic services are provided nation-wide, are universally accessible, that quality standards are maintained, and particularly in the case of infrastructure services, that democratic participation and control are assured ...this encroaches deeply into a body of rules that was and still is committed to other goals than hindering or facilitating cross border economic activities.

Similarly, in commenting on the higher education sector, Altbach (2004: 2) notes that while there are differences amongst the anti-GATS lobby, what

unites them is "...a concern with what can be called a public good and by conviction that higher education is not a commodity to be traded without constraint. There is a recognition that higher education is a complex phenomenon involving not just the marketplace but also national culture, the values of society, and access and social mobility...it is therefore a public good and to some extent a public responsibility".

In response, supporters such as Sauve (2001: 16) argue that governments are not forced to either become members of the WTO or to offer their education systems for the purposes of trade, and that "detractors often present false, inflammatory and misleading characterisations of the purpose, rules and policy consequences of the GATS" (op. Cit: 12). He also argues: "...the market for trade in education services is big, diverse, innovative and growing fast. It will almost certainly continue to grow as societies place an increased premium on human capital enhancement as a source of development and as a means of better equipping individuals and societies to confront, adjust to and take advantage of the demands arising from closer economic integration." (op. Cit: 4). If the high demand sectors (such as the lifelong learning market) are to respond to rising levels of demand, new suppliers who have experience in cross-border supply, must be allowed to enter the market (Larsen, 2003: 9).

For countries such as the United States and the larger European countries, with strong and mature higher education systems, the likelihood of being significantly affected by foreign providers (such as transnationals firms) is slim. However, for smaller and developing countries with high unmet demands for access to education and with smaller academic systems and universities, GATS could result in considerable external impact (Altbach, 2004: 1).

A second significant issue concerns the difficulty or costliness of reversing decisions. Member states, once a sector and mode are committed, will if they want to withdraw have to wait for a period of three years, they will have to exchange the commitment for another, and will have to pay potential firms future lost earnings. However, for Sauve (2001: 10), commercial suppliers must be able to feel confident about their investments in the education sector.

The highly controversial nature of the inclusion of education in the GATS, coupled with the activities of the anti-GATS lobby in pointing to and monitoring

the negotiations, has resulted in an element of wait and see in national negotiating strategies, with only a handful of Member States (8) tabling their requests or offers 8 (Knight, 2003: 6)

WTO and Development

Despite the assurances of WTO Director Mike Moore (1999), that "...the WTO could do splendid work and advance the progress of the human species", and Nelson Mandela's hope that the WTO would become a means for forging a new partnership for development based on trade and investment, for many, the WTO represents the global triumph of a particular model of economic development. As Rodrik observes:

It is widely accepted, not least in the agreement establishing the World Trade Organization (WTO), that the purpose of the world trade regime is to raise living standards all around the world—rather than to maximise trade per se. Increasingly, however, the WTO and multilateral lending agencies have come to view these two goals—promoting development and maximizing trading—as synonymous, to the point where the latter easily substitutes for the former. The net result is a confounding of ends and means. Trade has become the lens through which development is perceived rather than the other way around (Rodrik, 2001: 5).

Rodrik (2001: 16) argues that the augmented Washington consensus is a particular model of institutions and economic development, and there is no reason to assume that this is the best or only way in which trade ought to take place. For instance, import substitution models did well until the 1980s, while outward-oriented industrialisation, such as in the case of Korea and Taiwan, was based on a coherent strategy of the return to private investment. Alternatively, China, Mauritius and India developed a dual track system – of an export zone with a highly protected economy. For Rodrik (2001: 25), the real debate is not whether integration is good or not, but what the consequences of integration are over national and local policies and priorities.

A 'development' focus rather than a 'trade focus would mean that developing nations could articulate their needs, not in terms of market access, but in terms of the policy autonomy needed to exercise institutional innovations" (op. Cit: 7). In this kind of model the WTO could be an institution that managed diversity rather than one that tended to reduce national institutional differences. This is supported by Rose et al (2003: 6) whose

viewed formed the basis of advice to the Commonwealth Meeting of Education Ministers in 2003.

GATS, Education and Human Rights

The right to education is recognised in several international instruments (see Article 13, para 2 of the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights – adopted in 1966). To achieve full realisation of this right: (a) primary education should be compulsory and available free to all; (b) secondary education in its different forms shall be made available and accessible to all, in particular by the progressive introduction of free education, and (c) higher education in its different forms shall be made equally accessible to all, in particular by the progressive introduction of free education. To ensure this, states must ensure availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability (High Commissioner Human Rights (2002: 17).

The emergence of the GATS and its relationship to education as a human right has become a concern of the UN Commission on Human Rights. In a specially commissioned report on GATS, the Special Rapporteur stated that the "rapid development of international trade law necessitates a decisive reaffirmation of education as a human right" (Tomasevski, 2001: 5). This led the High Commissioner (2002) to observe that; the liberalization of trade in services, without adequate government regulation and proper assessment of its affects, can have undesirable effects. Different service sectors require different policies and time frames for liberalization and some areas are better left under governmental authority (p. 20)...

While the WTO Agreements provide a legal framework for the economic aspects of the liberalisation of trade, they focus on commercial objectives. The norms and standards of human rights provide the means of providing a legal framework for the social dimensions of human rights... A human rights approach to trade liberalisation emphasizes the role of the State, not only as negotiator of trade rules and setter of trade policy, but also as duty bearer for human rights. In the report, the Commission points to the different ways in which GATS might exaggerate social inequalities in education. For instance, in Mode 1 (cross border supply) those advantaged by virtual suppliers are those who have the necessary infrastructure, such as the internet, to access education. Mode 2 (consumption abroad) could lead to the introduction of a dual market of fees, and exaggerate inequalities if the governments do not

have a way of ensuring cross subsidization (see Lewis, 2005). Under Mode 3, (commercial presence) for example if user fees were introduced, then services are likely to become more expensive and it is not always easy to regulate foreign suppliers. Finally, Mode 4 (presence of natural persons), while it but can enable knowledge transfer and remittances to be returned to the sending country, it can also lead to brain drain.

Furthermore, locking countries into their schedule of commitments and penalising them for seeking reversals highlights the tension between commercial interests and human interests. In making this point the High Commissioner observed that from a commercial perspective, holding countries to their commitments to liberalise is important to ensure transparency and predictability in international trade and the payment of compensation is a legitimate commercial response to the settlement of disputes. From a human rights perspective, however, the focus is less on predictability and more on the need for flexibility to modify or withdraw commitments to liberalise services where experience demonstrates that a commitment constrains or limits the enjoyment of human rights. The need for flexibility is particularly relevant for developing countries given that they are in a dynamic process of building infrastructures. ...Moreover, while compensation to affected parties might be appropriate in some cases upon withdrawal of commitments, a human rights approach would question whether states should be sanctioned for taking action to protect human rights (2002: 28).

GATS is also seen as having important consequences for the marginalised and poorer sectors of societies, including indigenous peoples, and women and girls. For instance, GATS does not provide for any recognition of indigenous rights or cultural identity. In the NZ case, Kelsey argues that there is no recognition of obligations to Maori under the Treaty of Waitangi (2003: 8). There are also concerns with the way in which gender-based inequalities are likely to be exaggerated. Williams (2003: 106), in a report on multilateralism and gender to the Commonwealth Secretariat, states: The implementation of GATS and the expansion of commitments in the education sector are likely to exacerbate negative trends in education. These include diminishing the role of the state/decentralisation of education through (a) shifting the financial responsibility from national to household budgets; (a) the privatisation of the education system; (c) imposing community based and user fee systems for primary education; (d) inadequate resources for universal primary education, (e) insignificant movement toward universal

secondary education, (f) rising costs of private education (106-108). The irony, it seems, is that " ...if a child does not get the education he/she is entitled to according to the Convention of the Human Rights of the Child (papa 28 and 29) there is no way to force that government to meet its commitments. However, if a company trading in education services loses its right to trade in a particular country, that country where the company is based will have, according to the WTO rules, the right to compensation. Rules concerning trade seem to be much stronger in international law than rules concerning human rights" (Fredrikssen, 2003: 8).

Recent Developments – Benchmarking

There was considerable hope that the meeting in Hong Kong would be used to progress the interests of the developing countries, and the broad coalitions (such as the G20 led by Brazil and India and the G33 led by Indonesia and the Philippines) would give the developing countries more clout. However observers, in reviewing the Hong Ministerial meeting that took place in December 2005 (cf. Oxfam, 2005), argue that in the services area, the developed countries "were not satisfied with the developing countries offers" with the result that the EC called for 'benchmarking'. In essence this means that all countries have to demonstrate a minimum commitment in terms of numbers of sectors and level of ambition. This overrides the bottom-up approach which ostensibly enabled countries to move forward at their own pace. While the bilateral process is preserved, developing countries face increased pressure to take part in plurilateral negotiations. In essence, if a country asks another to take part in plurilateral negotiations, they are obliged to consider such requests (though in the initial first draft countries were *required* to enter into negotiations rather than merely consider them). Developing countries are also being urged to aim for new qualitative benchmarks, such as enhancing levels of foreign equity participation.

There are also continued concerns about the way in which the developed economies, in particular the EC and to a lesser extent the USA, have used their power to influence proceedings. As the Oxfam briefing paper notes (p. 4) "In a move symptomatic of the way development considerations are squeezed out by power politics as a ministerial approaches, the chair of the services negotiations produced a draft text in October 2005 that suited the EU's proposals, despite developing country opposition".

Concerns over process, in particular transparency and accountability and the pressure on countries to respond in a very short period of time, continue to be expressed by delegates, especially with regard to negotiations over services (op. Cit: p. 6; 16). Taken together, these recent developments suggest that there will be continued pressure on countries to both modify their education sectors and to regulate them through global rules.

Conclusion

While some observers have asked "what is all the fuss is about?" with regard to applying GATS mechanisms to the education - given that education has been globalising as an industry without GATS, it can be argued that the creation of a set of global rules that both creates and regulates a global education market and industry represents a very significant transformation in the role and function of education. While it is true that many countries who are member states of the WTO have been rather tentative about committing their education sectors, nevertheless, this does not alter the fact that by drawing education sectors into the economy as a direct contributor to accumulation, education is being asked to do more than develop human capital or contribute to nation building through the development of societal cohesion. It seems to me, however, that when member states allow their education sectors to be a part of the bundle of goods and services that make up trade agreements, in response to the pressures of more powerful neighbours (as in the case of African states such as Ghana and Senegal), these member states lose control over an important development and societal mechanism - education. The limited ability, if not impossibility of turning around decisions without large remuneration implications, should make any national government nervous about what is being traded, and what is at stake. There is a real tension between education as a human right and education as an area of trade. When member states allow education to be included and traded in global agreements like GATS, member state's ability to ensure that education is a right for all, rather than a commodity to be purchased by the well off is considerably diminished. In sum, it could be concluded that the GATS as it stands is a high price to pay to regulate the global education industry.

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Remembering Shri Anil Bordia (1934 – 2012)

L. Mishra

It was August 19, 1987. I had joined as Joint Educational Adviser (in the rank and pay of a Joint Secretary to Govt. of India) in the Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India. Years later in course of a panel discussion on my book brought out by Sage Publications Pvt. Ltd. and captioned 'Human Bondage – tracing its roots in India' on July 22, 2011 at the Council of Social Development to which Shri Anil Bordia was also invited as one of the speakers, I was given to understand in his own words that it was he who was instrumental in my selection to that position. After my joining I was put in charge of Adult Education, Indian Languages and Sanskrit. Unlike Shri Bordia (who was Director, Education in Rajasthan and Joint Secretary in charge of Adult Education, Govt. of India and who hailed from a family of distinguished educationists – his father Late Shri Dadabhai Bordia was the Director, Higher Education in Rajasthan), I am neither an educationist nor an educational activist and certainly not an Andragogist to qualify for the post of Joint Secretary, Adult Education, Govt. of India. It was a rare opportunity and challenge which was placed before me without my realizing the solemnity of that occasion and setting. The setting was that (a) National Literacy Mission, one of Late Rajiv Gandhi's five Technology Missions which had already been announced to the nation was in the offing (b) a document captioned 'National Literacy Mission' written in simple bulletised language and which continues till date as one of the most finely crafted government publications had already been in place and (c) a note for the Cabinet on the Mission was under circulation amongst all concerned Ministries/ Departments (the note received the approval of the Cabinet later).

This was an extremely difficult period for me both personally as well as in terms of discharge of daily official routine. Eventhough, I came from Bhubaneswar and was selected to head one of the five Technology Missions of the then Prime Minister – Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi, I could not, on account

of the cumbersome bureaucratic procedure, get any official accommodation for 7 to 8 months (a sufficiently long waiting period for a senior official) and had to put up in a small room of Odisha Bhawan with my wife and daughter till February 1988 and suffer the resultant personal and functional inconvenience. In addition to adult education I was put in charge of Indian Languages (22 languages listed in 8th schedule of the Constitution) and Sanskrit which brought within my purview activities of a number of national level institutions i.e. (a) Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad (b) Central Institute of Languages, Mysore (c) Central Hindi Directorate, Agra, (d) Rastriya Sanskrit Sansthan, New Delhi and (e) Lal Bahadur Shastri Rastriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth, New Delhi and seven other such Vidyapeeths elsewhere in the country. To make matters worse and contrary to the conventionally accepted practice, I was required to report to multiple authorities above me such as to Prof. Kirit Joshi, the Special Secretary, MHRD and Smt. Krishna Sahi, MOS for Indian Languages & Sanskrit, Shri Anil Bordia, the Secretary and Late Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, Cabinet Minister for Adult Education and Shri Sam Pitroda, Adviser to Prime Minister for the Technology Missions on Eradication of Illiteracy. Apart from serious problems of time management, this entailed too wide a span of supervision and control which violated one of the basic principles of public administration i.e. unity of command.

All these limitations notwithstanding, I was acutely conscious of the fact that adult education and national literacy mission were the central focus of Shri Bordia and that I had been brought on central deputation primarily to head the National Literacy Mission once it was approved by the Cabinet and the Mission was formally launched. I spent the first six months after my joining in visiting all the major States (Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Gujarat) which accounted for a major share of India's illiteracy, studying the history of adult education in India and other countries (Asia, Africa and Latin America), reviewing efforts made by different States/UTs in experimenting with different models of adult literacy and education from time to time and in particular between 1937 to 1985. Shri Sam Pitroda, Adviser to Prime Minister in charge of all the five Technology Missions used to organize joint visit of all the Mission Directors to different State capitals which helped in familiarizing me with the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats which characterized and influenced the contours of adult education.

There were a number of seminal developments during this period which determined the course of events to follow in the subsequent months. One was a genuine realization that (a) a Govt. funded and Govt. controlled centre based programme without generating a natural and spontaneous demand in the minds of the masses for functional adult literacy was no longer the need of the hour and will not work (b) social mobilization for literacy cannot be the mandate for a Govt. Ministry or Department which was most ill-equipped for the same (c) social mobilization for literacy will be possible only through a confluence of creative forces and energies outside the ambit of Govt. i.e. through creative thinkers, writers, artistes who can compose, sing and perform on the stage, inspire and motivate scores of unlettered adults to come to the fold of the literacy programme, anyone and everyone who has the urge, inclination and commitment to work for promotion of functional adult literacy for others and (d) A study of 'Pedagogy of the oppressed' (1972) by Paulo Freire, an outstanding Brazilian adult educator which conveyed powerful messages like (a) adult learning cannot be a subject object relationship (b) it cannot be promoted through the banking concept of education which treats human mind like a receptacle and tends to stuff it with unnecessary, unimportant and irrelevant details and (c) the teacher and the learner must learn from each other from the books of their lives in a dialectical mode.

Throughout the first six months (August 1987 – January 1988) I was reminded of the Preamble to the Constitution of UNESCO which reads, 'Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the foundations of peace will have to be laid'. I had, however, no clue as to how to shape and influence human mind which is known for its myriad diversity on the efficacy of functional adult literacy.

As we progressed, the futility of adopting a successful model of adult literacy through harnessing the findings of scientific and technological research became clearer. No doubt we needed good quality black boards, roller boards, slate, chalk, pencil, lead pencil, well visualized and illustrated pictures through a good printing technology but these were not enough to shape and influence human mind and create a ground swell through which innumerable unlettered adults can perceive and internalize the instant gains of functional literacy. The Committee of NLM which was set-up under the Chairmanship of Prof. Ram Iyengar, Additional Director General, CSIR went on experimenting with the idea of harnessing the findings of scientific and technological research for the benefits of the deprived sections of the society

for several months. The Committee met regularly under his stewardship but did not produce any perceptible results either by way of designing and patenting good quality black board, roller board, slate, chalk, duster, lanterns, petromax lights (Institutes of Petroleum, Dehradun miserably failed in designing a smokeless lantern while National Chemical Institute, Pune could not design a dustless chalk which will not produce a sing sung noise as one writes on the blackboard) or designing techniques for inspiring and motivating the adult learners' mind. Finally, through one of the visits of the five Mission Directors undertaken by Shri Sam Pitroda to Thirvananthapuram in the first week of March 1988 we chanced to come in contact with Shri M.P. Parameswaran, a brilliant nuclear scientist who was also a social and educational activist of Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP), who had played a pioneering role in launching the silent valley project in Kerala (an admirable example of social mobilization for protection and conservation of environment). Soon thereafter we had a detailed heart-to-heart dialogue in my room in Shastri Bhawan as to how to conceptualize and operationalize the 'Silent valley' model for launching a mass campaign for total literacy. After a lot of soul searching and a lot of permutations and combinations we hit upon the idea of Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti (BGVS), a confluence of creative forces and energies which can make Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) in India a reality exactly the way it happened in Cuba (1959-61), Myanmar (1969-71), Ethiopia (1974-79) and Nicaragua (1985-87).

This is how a campaign for total literacy in Ernakulam was conceptualized on the premise of the principle 'nothing succeeds like success'. Ernakulam at the relevant point of time had already 77 percent of literacy but was left with about 2,00,000 unlettered persons in 6 – 60 years age group. It was thought and rightly so that if Ernakulam could be made fully literate through a campaign mode it will have a tremendous spin off effect for the whole of Kerala State and if Kerala State became fully literate through the same TLC mode, that will be a model for the whole country to emulate.

And that is what exactly happened. The campaign for total literacy for Ernakulam district was launched by late Shri E.K. Nayanar, then Chief Minister of Kerala at the Darbar Hall, Ernakulam on January 26, 1989. It took exactly a year for the TLC Ernakulam to come to a logical close through which 1,34,000 unlettered persons who were identified as such through a household survey could be made functionally literate with the help of 20,000 volunteer instructors, 70 percent of whom were women. Such a commendable experiment could be piloted and successfully concluded on account of a

number of progressive forces and elements of civil society under the dynamic leadership of late Shri K.S. Rajan, then District Collector of Ernakulam. Ernakulam was declared as the first fully literate district in the country by late Shri V.P. Singh, then Prime Minister of India on February 4, 1990. A campaign for total literacy for the whole of Kerala State (13 districts excluding Ernakulam) was also launched on that day. A fully literate Kerala became a historical reality on April 6, 1991 when it was declared as such in a colourful ceremony held in the open ground opposite Darbar Hall, Ernakulam in presence of a number of distinguished personalities like late Shri Bhisham Sahni, brother of late Shri Balraj Sahni and an acclaimed writer, Shri M.P. Parameswaran, Shri K.K. Krishna Kumar, Prof. Menon and so on. Then followed in quick succession campaigns for total literacy for Puducherry, Goa and for about 250 districts in West Bengal, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Bihar, UP, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh by the time I left NLM and MHRD in March 1993.

The rest is all history. There was no looking back. It was an electrifying experience for all of us who were an integral part of that experiment. District Magistrates were vying with each other to get TLC projects sanctioned for their districts by the Executive Committee of National Literacy Mission Authority (NLMA). The gusto and tempo with which some of them were proceeding to operationalize TLC concept were incredible; this was to be seen to be believed. It was the second freedom struggle in motion – a struggle for emancipation of millions of unlettered persons from the curse, shame and scourge of illiteracy.

That history undoubtedly would have been different without Shri Anil Bordia being at the helm of affairs as Secretary, Education, MHRD. He was a senior member of Indian Administrative Service of 1957 batch but was strikingly and refreshingly different from others. He was totally unorthodox and unconventional in his attitude and approach. He did not believe in treading the oft-treaded path in a casual, routinized and stereotyped manner. He had his own uncanny ways of carving out areas of success, howsoever formidable may be the bottlenecks. He had an unbounded energy, unfailing optimism and unmistakable commitment to a cause of interest and relevance to the common man and had the resolute will to make things happen out of the hide bound contours of traditionalism and conservatism.

The period from August 19, 1987 to May 31, 1992 that I spent with him was the most endearing; it was also the most exciting and memorable phase

of nearly five decades of my civil service career (1964 onwards), the like of which is not to be experienced by me again.

To illustrate, after Dr. M.P. Parameswaran and I jointly hit on the idea of creation of a national level apex organization like BGVS as a prelude to launching the TLC experiment and I formally presented my thoughts on the subject to him both orally as well as in the file for creation of BGVS with active encouragement and patronage from Department of Education, Ministry of HRD there was total agreement and whole hearted endorsement on his part. He accepted the proposition with total firmness and decisiveness on the following grounds:

- Govt. cannot do justice to the task of social mobilization and environment building;
- its only an umbrella organization of creative thinkers, writers and artistes which can do justice to such a concept which is the normal and natural precursor to the concept of TLC;
- Govt. should not treat such an organization as a contractor or a substitute or a competitor but as one which can supplement and complement Governmental initiatives on a footing of complete equality.

Without such acknowledgement with firmness tinged with humility from the head of the Department in the Ministry of HRD, BGVS would not have been born and without BGVS, the principal catalyser, TLC experiment would have remained inconceivable.

We have thought, planned and acted together for nearly five years. We have spoken at all fora – governmental as well as non-governmental with the same voice, same energy, same conscience and same force. There may have been occasional differences on the knitty gritty of operationalization of TLCs but such differences were always harmonized into what is perceived to be the largest good of the largest number.

To illustrate, we were totally on the same wave length on the following points:

- Illiteracy is a predicament while functional adult literacy is an asset in the making of a complete woman and man.
- Illiteracy is not a fatality; it is not preordained. It can be fought with the same grit, courage and determination like fighting small pox or any other scourge and can be successfully overcome.

An unlettered person is not a goof, not dunderheaded. He/she has a rich treasure of oral literacy, a lot of earthly wit and wisdom, practical intuition and ideas which go to make life worth living. He/she cannot be wished away merely because of lack of access to the print medium of communication. He/she has unsuspected possibilities and potentialities and can become functionally literate with determination and resolve like Kondiva (Bhola Ram Athwle) became literate in Sai Paranjpe's film 'Angootha Chaap'.

Age, social origin or any other form of crippling disability and disadvantage is no bar to acquisition of literacy.

True functional literacy must liberate us from our traditional pride and prejudice, ego hassles which flow from our ignorance, conceit and ill perceived notions about life;

True functional literacy must dismantle obscurantist ideas and practices and inculcate a truly rational and scientific temper. It is much rather that the country and countrymen remain illiterate than to have a scripture oriented literacy which will promote obscurantist ideas and practices.

True functional literacy must provide an antidote to all the divisive and disruptive forces which divide humanity; it must dismantle the walls of differentiation, segmentation and discrimination, make human beings better, higher and nobler and make the world a better place to live in. I recall Shri Anil Bordia quoting the English version of those immortal lines from Rig Veda at the World EFA conference held at Jomtien (Thailand) in March 1990.

'Let us think together
 Let us act together
 Let the advice be unanimous
 Let the assembly be unanimous
 Let your mind be unanimous
 Agreeing with your thought
 I give you harmonious advice
 With the same oblation I worship you'
 - Rigveda

With his ardent faith, belief and commitment to the core national values like secularism, national integration and communal harmony, protection and conservation of environment, women's equality and empowerment and small family norm/planned and responsible parenthood to be promoted by

education he conceptualized a set of exemplar primers or teaching learning materials based on an innovative technique known as IPCL or improved pace and content of learning. IPCL envisaged three sets of primers namely primer No. I, II & III to be designed on the principle of progression in learning. This implies learning from stage to stage. As the learner proceeds from one stage to another he/she discovers the joy and excitement of learning; he/she also acquires the strength, courage and confidence that he/she can learn. Every primer had a set of drills and exercises which were to be attended to by every learner. As the learner practiced those drills and exercises and was able to solve the problems, it reinforced his/her confidence in self learning. Similarly every primer had three tests at the end and these tests were to be administered by the Volunteer Instructor. In other words, any learner who would qualify in all the nine tests at the end of three primers could be said to have crossed the nascent stage of learning and reached the stage of self sufficiency in reading, writing and arithmetic.

IPCL was an innovative and admirable technique in the science of adult learning (Andragogy) in more ways than one. It rested on the principle of progression which recognizes the differential traits, attributes and capacity of different learners to learn differently. Our learners are differently endowed. Some are slow learners and some fast ones. Those who are slow learners need to learn step by step and need a lot of patience, resilience and diligence to learn. The principle of progression is very conducive to their easy and natural learning.

Secondly, Improved Pace and Content of Learning (IPCL) puts the learners centre stage and puts the Volunteer Instructor in the background, as a promoter, facilitator and catalytic agent. It attaches a lot of emphasis on the efficacy of self learning and self-evaluation. As both the categories of learners i.e. slow and fast proceed from stage to stage and discover that they can learn, their self confidence in learning is enhanced. Thirdly, IPCL promotes joyful learning. Learning should be a source of excitement joy and not a dull, drudgenous and desultory exercise. Fourthly, IPCL does not belittle or minimize the minimum norms and standards in reading, writing and arithmetic. It promotes and sustains them through the nine tests to be administered at the end of three primers.

It should be noted that IPCL is not the only innovative technique of learning; there could be many others. It was never the intention of Shri Bordia that this was the only technique to be tried out on the ground to the exclusion of

others. He never sought to establish the primacy and centrality of IPCL. As a matter of fact, he had a great personal admiration for veteran Andragogists like Late Shri Mustaq Ahmed, Late Shri Satyen Moitra, Late Dr. Chitra Naik, Prof. Anita Dighe, Prof. C.J. Daswani, Shri Vinod Raina, Prof. S. Krishna Kumar and Prof. Anita Rampal and many others and treated them with utmost dignity and respect in all the meetings of the Executive Committee of NLMA and outside.

As a matter of fact, State Resource Centres which were instrumental in flowering of geniuses like late Satyendra, late Mustaq Saab, late Chitratai and Rameshbhai Thanvi, (just to mention the names of few old veterans who were Directors of State Resource Centres at Kolkata, Delhi, Pune and Jaipur) were the brain children of Shri Bordia in mid-seventies where he was Joint Secretary, Adult Education, Govt. of India. He had conceptualized then that good, reliable and committed NGOs like Bengal Social Service League, Kolkata or Indian Institute of Education, Pune or Rajasthan Adult Education Association, Jaipur or Andhra Mahila Sabha, Hyderabad or Literacy House, Lucknow or Bharatiya Gramin Mahila Sangh, Indore or Tamilnadu Board of Non-formal Education, Chennai could be given the encouragement and support alone provide academic and technical resource support to the National Adult Education Programme. It is a happy augury that starting with 15 SRCs, the number has gone upto 33 as of now and all the SRCs in the reorganized set-up are rendering pioneering services to 'Saakshar Bharat', the new Avatar of NLM.

Long association with NGOs of repute and standing like Seva Mandir, Udaipur had convinced him that (a) Govt. does not have the desired outreach to the unreached (b) the resources of Govt. were limited and there were a number of competing claims for the same kitty (c) Govt. cannot assume responsibility for everything on its shoulders and therefore governmental initiatives needed to be supplemented and complemented by NGO initiatives. This ethos and culture of respect for grassroots level organizations and recognition of the very valuable contribution made by them was carried forward to every segment of activity in the Department of Education, Ministry of HRD which he headed.

The same imagination and vision of Shri Bordia manifested itself in Delhi Schools Literacy Project (DSLPP). The goal of National Literacy Mission i.e. making 30 million unlettered persons functionally literate by 1990 and an additional 50 million by 1995 was by all counts a stupendous task which

was to be accomplished in a short time frame. Soon after launching of the Mission on May 5, 1988 by late Shri Rajiv Gandhi, then Prime Minister of India we were on the lookout for a number of positive and proactive elements of civil society who could contribute to the work of the mission by adopting a no nonsense, unconventional and down-to-earth approach which would also be rational, secular and scientific. We soon came across Smt. Rajni Kumar, former Principal, Springdales School, Dhaula Kuan who was the then Chairperson, Patel Education Society. We had several rounds of discussion with her to work out a strategy and methodology of mobilizing young student volunteers of as many progressive schools located in the NCT of Delhi as possible so that with some modicum of orientation and sensitization they could act as nucleating agents and impart functional literacy on the principle of 'Each one Teach one' to the unlettered adults of the area where the school was located or proximate thereto. This programme has been on the ground for 24 years and has gathered momentum. Beginning with just 15 schools involvement in voluntary literacy work there are as on date more than 100 schools as members of DSLP which along with about 7000 student volunteers are actively involved in literacy work. This has been one of the most impressive and yet most inexpensive programmes of imparting functional literacy which has been sustained through meager resources of participating schools and generous voluntary donation from NGOs. More than 6000 learners are annually being made literate and numerate.

Shri Anil Bordia wanted to maintain the indigenous character of the campaigns for the total literacy and was all in for making them as inexpensive as possible while emphasizing on their area specific, time bound and result oriented character. In furtherance of this objective he was in favour of pooling resources from a variety of sources and integrating them imaginatively and skillfully to achieve desired result. He was not particularly in favour of external funding of these campaigns even though he had an excellent rapport with all the international bodies like World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNIFEM, UNFPA and ILO. It is needless to mention that with a refreshingly original mind, clarity and sincerity of purpose and courage of conviction he had made his presence felt in all international fora.

'Mahila Samakhya' is yet another seminal and refreshingly original contribution of Shri Bordia. 'Mahila Samakhya' was a very well structured, projectized activity meant for promoting rank and file leadership amongst women with a view to achieving women's equality and empowerment in all spheres of activity – at home, at the school, at the clinic, at the work place

and in public life. Through a number of grassroots level functionaries on the same model as Saathins of Women's Development project of Rajasthan, he sought to disseminate a number of powerful messages of interest and relevance to women with a view to infusing the ability in women to take autonomous decisions which will promote individual and collective self reliance of women. He was ably assisted by Smt. Vimla Ramchandran, a distinguished educationist whose services were brought on deputation from Delhi University for this very laudable cause.

Importance of research in adult education has been recognized long since and in the recent Belem Declaration in December 2009 such importance has been reinforced. Regretfully investment in such research in India has been minimal. Shri Bordia wanted to give a push to such research and wanted a National Institute of Adult Education (NIAE) to be in place. Space for this was located, a beginning was made by appointing Dr. Anita Dighe as the first Director, NIAE and a few research activities were started with a lot of gusto and tempo. I recall with nostalgia how in early 90s myself and my colleagues – Smt. Anita Kaul, Shri P.K. Tripathi and Shri R.K. Saini had worked unremittingly day and night to have the infrastructure for NIAE in place in a warm and hospitable environment under a highly professional patronage of Shri Bordia. Regretfully, however, the proposal did not meet the approval of the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance and the note for the Cabinet could not be carried to its logical conclusion due to lack of concurrence of IFD. That was the end of NIAE which Shri Bordia had conceptualized with such clarity, conviction and passionate commitment. The grounds on which the proposal did not get the approval of IFD are that (a) the DAE as a service delivery organization is already in existence and (b) creation of another parallel body like NIAE will be a duplication of the same activity. Shri Bordia and I tried to clarify and carry conviction to IFD by stating that (a) DAE in its present truncated form cannot do justice to research (b) it has all along been used as a window for service delivery of first the NAEP and later the NLM (c) it has been coordinating with State Resource Centres for material production for basic and post literacy and continuing education and training of adult education functionaries and (d) it was not mandated to carry out any research activity. Despite our most earnest pleas and efforts we did not succeed and NIAE had a premature end before it could be born.

But Shri Bordia was totally unfazed by this development. I still recall with a lot of pride and distinction how he walked away from the room of

Secretary, Expenditure in April 1992 (I was with him at that time) with his head held high when the then Secretary, Expenditure remained rigid, inflexible and obdurate in his stand for not according concurrence of IFD to the proposal for creation of NIAE.

That was the man and that was the spirit, fiercely independent, refreshingly original, not to be cowed down by any extraneous pressure, far less any influence. Contrary to general perception Shri Bordia believed in being participative and consultative. In seminars, symposia and workshops as well as routine meetings he would allow a full natural and spontaneous interplay of forces, opinions, viewpoints but had a mind of his own and would always take decisions after considering full implications of the point of view of others in a manner which would make his decisions appear clear, logical, coherent and in the best interest of the people at large for whom a particular programme or activity like adult education was intended.

In the entire decision making process he had always a soft corner for tribals, dalits, women and other marginalized sections of humanity. I recall the conversation between Shri Chimanbhai Mehta who was Minister of State in independent charge of MHRD for a brief period during April - December 1990 (when late Shri V.P. Singh was the Prime Minister). All the Joint Secretaries of the Ministry were being introduced to the new Minister. When my turn came, the Minister enquired about my background and the previous post held. When it was mentioned that I came from a labour background (I was DG (LW)/JS during 1982-85) the Minister wanted to know how labour and adult education went together. Shri Bordia had responded to this query in his own characteristic and refreshingly original style by stating candidly that, 'he is a deeply caring, visibly compassionate and intensely committed to the deliverance of the poor, deprived and disadvantaged and in the world of adult education in India where one has to deal with millions of unlettered persons who also constitute the downtrodden sections of society these are the attributes most required for a functionary handling the responsibility of implementing adult education programme' the Minister nodded in approval and approbation.

This was Shri Anil Bordia, my venerable mentor and role model who was a legend of his time. The five years I spent with him, his benign leadership and magnanimity constitute the most memorable phase in nearly 50 years of my civil service career (both national and international). Whether as Secretary, Education, MHRD, Govt. of India or as Chairman, Lok Jumbish

Parishad or as Chairman, National Educational Foundation implementing education and training programmes for the adolescents and youth called 'Doosra Dasak', he had one vision, one goal and one mission i.e. how to reach the unreached, how to initiate the uninitiated and how to bring a little cheer in the cheerless faces of mute millions. How many troubled hearts has he quieted and strengthened, how many weary souls did he bring peace and bliss! Words turn out to be too poor a medium of expression of one's genuine feelings about such a great man and noble soul. I used to sing with him on many occasions those inimitable lines from 'Ebar Phirao More' of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore as to what every adult learner should be at the end of the programme. I quote from the original Bengali translated by me into English:

'Floating aloft on the crest of waves
Of an uncharted sea
We have to move on and on
Keeping truth as our polestar
Being unafraid of Death'.

Jai Hind

Challenges in Higher Education in an Era of Internationalization

Raju Narayana Swamy

Abstract

Globalization is not a synonym of global trade, but it is more than that. It poses diversity of trends in the economic, social and cultural aspects of all societies. In the globalization context, India is trying to take up the responsibility of facilitating and promoting economic policies that are in consonance with the norms of global free trade, privatization of public sector, tax reforms, environment and nuclear disarmament related agreements. In this process education also turned out to be a commodity of international trade. It is now no more a public good on domestic level, but a private good on global scale. Problems with education in India are complex and public debate on them is often full of rhetoric. In the existing discourse education is expected to be the key tool for enclosure into the 'knowledge society' and 'technological economy'. A well-informed discourse requires an understanding of how a mass evolves with passage of time. This understanding is crucial for design of an effective state apparatus for higher education. The paper analyse the impact of globalization in Indian higher education system.

Introduction

Globalization is a set of processes by which the world is rapidly being integrated into one economic space via. increased international trade, the internationalization of production and financial markets and the internationalization of a commodity culture promoted by an increasingly networked global telecommunication system. This economic space is increasingly connected to cultural influences and to political relations that are also global in nature (Stromquist, P. Nelly & Karen Monkman (eds.) (2000).

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The economic globalization has as its aim for the whole world to accept the rules of market economy, where the final result would be free market, free flow of ideas, information technology and a unique currency (Djordjevic, Miroslav & Sonia, Stoiljkovic (2009). In the Manifesto of the Communist Party, Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels wrote:

“Modern industry has established the world market, for which the discovery of America paved the way... The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chase the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere and establish connections everywhere”.

The governments and elites of Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Oceania have been incorporated into the global political-economic order on favourable terms. At the same time as they enthusiastically claim, the rural and urban poor of the 'Third World' have not clearly been incorporated into the current international order on favourable terms (Berger, Mark, T. (1994). For Marx 'the bourgeoisie has, through its exploitation of the world market, given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. It has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood. All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations'. Globalization though has contributed for rise in market expansion and technology advancement; there have been apprehensions in terms of its impact on the people who live below poverty line. The concerns expressed by globalization mainly include:

- Benefits of globalization to different sections of the society
- Globalization's role in widening the gaps between the 'haves' and have-nots' in the world
- Its role in destabilizing and distorting the traditional cultures and values
- Its role in alienating the youth from their place
- Its role in facilitating the rich countries to grow richer by drawing the resources of the poor

Its role in diminishing the state from a 'welfare state' to a 'modern state'

Global Market and Public Sector

Traditionally, when government service providers were part of central government it was very common for them to be responsible also for industry regulation. The distinction between service provision and regulation was often unclear. In the case of the traditional monopoly service providers this was not a significant issue from a competition perspective. However, as these sectors have been liberalized, with the commercialisation of the government business and entry of private competitors, competition issues arise if government businesses are responsible for both service provision and the regulation of other service providers (OECD, 2004).

A system of free trade is internationalized by signing an agreement like the GATS¹ or the acceptance and participation of many countries in international organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Such institution and their rules will be globalized when most countries in the World participate in them. Here new factors accelerating the process of economic globalization include:

- Exploitation of the scientific and technologic revolution promoting the globalization process at great speed.
- Establishment of international production networks established with transnational cooperation playing an increasingly important role.
- International economic, financial and commercial organizations exercising a vital role in promoting the globalization (Cap, Chu Van, [year not mentioned]).

Here the power exercised by markets may not benefit all. Financial markets believe in extremely speculative ways; not only do they not engage in productive investments, but they have triggered currency devaluation of entire countries, with corresponding consequences in reduced national wealth, thus leading to limited public policies. In a market led state, the role of states is being reduced to that of creating a conducive environment for private sector led development. The public sector has to reduce the cost-burden it puts on the economy and roll-back so as not to crowd-out the private sector. The public sector itself has become more customer focused

and efficient by adopting private sector approaches to management or be privatized together. The focus of the public sector will be one of policy formulation rather than implementation (Chittoo, B. Hemant, & others, 2009). It is in such a wider socio-political and socio-economic global market context. In the post-independence period, access to higher education continues to be depriving for the poor and more so for the disadvantaged groups. The enrolment rate (GER) for higher education which has risen from 0.7 percent in 1950-51, 1.4 percent in 1960-61, and 8 percent in early 2000 is still very low (about 10 percent) compared to the world average of 23.2 percent and an average of 54.6 percent for developed countries, 36.3 percent for countries in transition, and 11.3 percent for developing countries. Even the existing EER of some 60 percent indicates that 40 percent of students who complete their higher secondary programs do not enter the realm of tertiary education. Accessibility and quality of education are the most concerning attributes of our education system. Lack of infrastructural development, dearth of quality academics and absence of work culture particularly in the field of research are prevalent features of most of our institutions especially the state run universities and private institutions. Though India can boast of having the largest system of higher education in terms of the number of institutions, relative terms, it still lags behind developed and even several developing countries for access, representation of SCs, STs and women etc. Globalization intensifies the exclusion of SCs and STs. Societies on the fringe of the global economy-'the unconnected' face exclusion even more devastating than their present difficulties.

The IHDS data shows that overall, 81 per cent of males and 60 percent of females aged 15-49 are literate. This number is comparable to the 2001 census figures of 75 percent and 53 percent of individuals aged 15 and older. While literacy is a basic determinant of the quality of life as well as the quality of the labour force, far more complex skills will increasingly be required as industrialization continues apace. As incomes in skilled occupations have grown, demands of these occupations have also increased, and a college degree or an advanced technical diploma is often needed for well paying jobs. India has the second largest higher education system in the world comprising of 279 universities, over 13,000 colleges, about 7.5 million students and over 3,50,000 teachers at tertiary level. The country is also presently involved in trade in educational services. But only 9 percent of males and 5 percent of females hold such qualification. Moreover, these skill levels are differentially distributed across different parts of the country (Desai, Sonalde, B. & others (2010). This highly diverse educational

system will have a multidimensional impact under globalization. Foreign institutions are entering the country in a big way taking advantage of differential and excessive demand for higher education.

Cross Border Supply

Globalization demands flexibility, with flexible people in continuous, lifelong learning. The ability to produce outputs, i.e. collaboratively in global networks is more appreciated by the market than an academic degree fixed in space and time (Sundar, Satya, 2008). Many foreign institutions are offering educational programmes to Indian students. Education in India is mainly influenced by 'broad socio-economic circumstances'. The general barriers for educational excellence, efficiency and equity are probably low personal income, growing control over education by government and non-performing institutions (Zhou, Kebao, (2009). The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) also has formulated policies in this regard and is offering programs in both liberal arts and professional areas. But, the open universities have not been able to make much headway, as our universities are only fairly effective (Shrivastawa, Sunita, year not mentioned).

Education Abroad

Higher education has now a strong global tang in India. International student outflows from India have been growing rapidly. Indian students are now moving to foreign countries like UK, Australia and US for higher education and research. During 2001 there were 54,660 Indian students in US alone with the total number from abroad exceeding 1,000,000 nearly. More than a quarter million Indian students were studying abroad in 2008-2009. The Indian student population is over 97,000 in Australia (Thanuskodi, S., 2011). This increase in the rate of outflow is at the undergraduate and master's level. With the rapid rise in skill premiums and the difficulties of access to quality institutions within the country, the outflow is increasing (Kapur, Devesh, 2010). In contrast there were only 7791 international students in India, mainly from the developing countries or East Africa and South Asia².

Foreign Institutions in India

One of the features of higher education is that it is expanding in all regions of the world. The following table shows the trends in the expansion of higher education over the past two decades. Foreign higher education institutions

establish institutions or programs in developing countries under a variety of arrangements ranging from cross-border franchised agreements, joint programs, validation programs and subcontracting. A survey report says that during the year 2000, 27 providers from five countries (including 10 from UK and 12 from US) offered programmes, mainly at Masters level, in the professional areas of engineering and management through franchise (Shrivastawa, Sunita, (Year not mentioned)).

Table: 1 GER in Higher Education in Selected Countries

Country	1985	1995	2006	2008
Australia	27.7	72.9	73.0	77.0
Bangladesh	5.1	6.0	7.0	7.0
Cameroon	2.2	4.0	7.0	9.0
Canada	69.6	87.8	62.0	—
Cyprus	6.0	17.0	33	43.0
Ghana	1.4	1.4	6.0	6.0
India	6.0	6.6	12.0	13.0
Kenya	1.2	2.0	3.0	4.0
Malawi	0.5	0.6	1.0	—
Malaysia	5.9	11.7	29.0	32.0
Mozambique	0.1	0.4	1.0	—
New Zealand	33.1	59.6	80.0	78.0
Nigeria	3.5	4.0	10.0	—
pakistan	2.5	3.0	5.0	5.0
Singapore	13.8	33.7	—	—
South Africa	13.25*	18.9	15.0	—
Sri Lanka	3.7	5.1	—	—
Tanzania	0.3	0.5	1.0	1.0
Uganda	0.8	1.7	3.0	4.0
United Kingdom	21.7	58.0	59.0	57.0
Zambia	2.0	3.0	—	—

Note: — not available, * -1990., GER- Gross Enrolment Rate

Source: UIS, 2008, for 2006; UIS, 2010, for 2008; otherwise UNESCO, 1998.
& N.V.Varghese, (2009)

Rapid expansion of higher education first occurred in the developed countries, followed by developing countries a decade afterwards. The demand for the knowledge economy and the pressure to develop higher

education is accountable for the increasing rate in developed countries. At a later period, these same factors played a similar role in the expansion of higher education systems in developing countries. Among the developing countries, those experiencing globalization have undergone a more rapid expansion of their higher education sector. India introduced laws in the 1990s permitting the operation of private and transnational institutions of higher education. Rapid expansion of these institutions in India mainly was dependent on non-state resources, highlighting the association between globalization, markets and the expansion of higher education.

State Contribution in Higher Education

The share of higher education in the total planned resources has decreased from 1.24 percent in 1964-74 to 0.35 percent in 1992-97 period. The expenditure on higher education, as percentage of GNP has fallen from 0.98 percent in 1980-81 to 0.35 percent in 1994-95. The share of higher education in total expenditure on education has fallen from 28.19 percent in 1990-91 to 15.7 percent in 1996-97. The approach of government towards hike in fees and shift of resources can be noted from the approach paper to the 10th five year plan also. "Since budget resources are limited, and such resources as are available, need to be allocated to expanding primary education, it is important to recognise that the universities must make greater efforts to supplement resources from the government. It is important to recognise that that universities must make greater efforts to supplement resources apart from the government (government of India, 2002-07). Higher education has been shifted to the list of non-merit good from the list of merit good in India. It has ignored expenditure on education as social investment and the complementary nature of public and household expenditure on education. It is to be realised that the funding of higher education requires both public and private resources under economic austerity. The role of the state and public support to higher education is diminishing to ensure its educational, social and institutional missions (Geetha, Rani, P., year not mentioned).

Conclusion

The challenge for Indian state is how it combines private providers with government responsibility to regulate and monitor the provision of subsidised higher education. There should also be a balance between assurance of access of education for low-income students and quality academic coverage

for the needs of globalized economy and society. The new global scenario poses challenges for the higher education system in India. Responding to these challenges the UGC state "Universities have a central role to play in promoting societal change. It must make an impact on the community if it is to preserve its legitimacy and gain civic support". It is to be realized that social changes can only be brought about by people and not through technology alone which itself is a product of human effort. Hence human resources development, at all levels, needs to be given precedence and made a part of the nation's overall approach.

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(Endnotes)

¹ The idea behind this is the creation of an open, global market place where services, like education can be traded to the highest bidder. GATS cover the educational services of all countries whose dual systems are not exclusively provided by the public sector, or those educational systems that have commercial purposes. Since total public monopolies in education are extremely rare, almost all of the world's educational systems fall under the GATS umbrella. In India, we cannot get exemption in education form the applications of GATS because education at all levels, particularly at higher education level, is not entirely free (i.e. some fees has to be paid). See also Mithilesh Kumar Singh (year not mentioned), 'Challenges of Globalization on Indian Higher Education', www.asef.org.in, Accessed on 15th January 2012.

² International higher education has become a lucrative business. In 1992-93 the US gained US\$ 6.1 billion through the presence of 438,000 students on its educational campuses. In 2000 with the number of students increasing to about 514,000 the annual gained US\$ 10 billion. In 2000 international students studying in Australia contributed net economic benefits to the Australian economy worth A\$3.2 billion. See also Sunita, Shrivastawa, (Year not mentioned), '*Globalization & Internationalisation of Indian Education*', www.ssmrae.com, Accessed on 15th January 2012.

Applying Knowledge of Management to Lifelong Learning

Rohini Kashikar Sudhakar

Introduction

In this paper, an attempt is made to apply management theories to Lifelong Learning (LLL) as every educationist is in a way a leader and manager. Efforts are made to see how concepts, theories, functions, principles, skills of management can be applied to LLL. For the purpose of this paper an endeavor is made to relate the experience of fieldwork practicum gained while guiding the students of Department of Continuing and Adult Education, SNTD Women's University in its course titled, 'MA in Non-Formal Education and Development' (MANFED). M.A. in Non-Formal Education and Development

The Department of Continuing and Adult Education and Extension Work of S.N.D.T. Women's University has been working in the field of Non-Formal Education since its inception (1971). It has been observed by the faculty members of the department that number of Non-Formal Education programmes introduced by Government and Non-Government organizations is increasing with time. And that there is an urgent need for developing the academic base of Non-Formal Education to apply the wealth of knowledge accumulated over the years by introducing course in Non-Formal Education and Development.

Course Objectives

The course in M.A. in Non-Formal Education and Development is formulated with the main objectives to provide skilled and trained manpower in the field to Non-Government Organizations, Service Industries, Training Institutions, Professional and Government Organizations and to train a cadre of personnel in programme management of Continuing Education and Extension Work and equip them with the skills of planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Fieldwork

The students of the said course are required to do Fieldwork. Fieldwork is learning by doing. It develops professional skills through practical learning which blends theory and practical as it combines philosophy with action. While doing fieldwork student get an opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge taught in class rooms in different practical situations. Financial expenses for conducting LL courses in the fieldwork agency of the students are provided by Department of Continuing and Adult Education. By giving the brief background of the course here efforts are made to apply knowledge of management to lifelong learning programmes conducted by the department by guiding students of the said course in their fieldwork agencies.

Background of lifelong learning

The population of world is growing in leaps and bounds but expansion of education infrastructure has still not been able to catch up. Formal educational systems adapted to the socio-economic changes around them very slowly. It was from this point of departure that planners and economists began to make a distinction between informal, non-formal and formal education. Hence, there is tripartite categorization of learning systems informal, formal and non-formal (Combs and Ahmed (1973). Non-formal education became part of the international discourse on education policy in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In the context of higher education it can be seen as related to the concepts of extension of education and lifelong learning. The history of Indian education shows that in India "Oral method" of transferring knowledge from one generation to the next generation through Vedas, Upanishads, Jataks, mythologicalkathas, kirtanwas common. Educational institutions like Nalanda, Takshila and Vikramshila were well known. But it reached only a certain class of people. Women remained out of such education. With formal education we failed to make all Indians literate and hence there is a need for alternative education i.e. NFE/LEE. The World Conference on Education for All held in March 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand, adopted a Declaration calling upon all member states and international agencies to take effective steps for achieving Education For All by 2010. The ultimate goal affirmed by the World Declaration on Education for All is to meet the basic learning needs of all children, youth and adults. "Literacy and Non-Formal Education is a measure of their importance for achieving Education for All. Each academic organization that is the school, college, and society at large along with its available resources.

It is said that 'Life is all about learning (Satish Kumar, 2002).

Management of Lifelong Learning can help educationist in managing various programmes' of LLL. Through this method the one working in the field of academics, non-profit organizations/NGO's and corporate sector can reach the unreached to provide educational opportunities.

Key concepts of Management

Vision

Vision of the institution comprises of decisions regarding institutional mission, target audience, programmes offered, geographical areas to be served, comparative advantages and action steps (Desouza, 1986). Academic institution without clear vision of where the institution is trying to go all efforts to progress towards achieving goals and objectives will be futile. The students of MANFED with the knowledge of the concept of vision try to find out from their respective field agency's vision. As they are told that SNTD's vision statement is 'Sanskrita Stree Parashakti' meaning "An Enlightened Woman is a source of infinite strength".

Mission

Mission answers the question what is the organization here to do? Why does the organization exists? As in the case of universities, its existence depends on how it fulfills its purpose of offering teaching, research and existence. Students of MANFED gain the knowledge of their respective field agency's mission by discussing it with their field supervisor. The mission of SNTD Women's University is that " it has committed to the cause of women's empowerment through access to education particularly higher education through relevant courses in formal and non-formal streams. Further SNTD is committed to provide a wide range of professional and vocational courses for women to the changing socio-economic needs, with human values and purposeful social responsibility and to achieve excellence with quality in every activity"

Objectives

Objectives represent milestones we expect to reach before too long. They are the ends towards which activity is aimed. Objectives have to be

Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timed (SMART). Management is the process of obtaining the participation, the coöperation and the intervention of others in the accomplishment of one's organizational objectives. In the process of fieldwork students get to know the objectives of various organizations.

Strategies

Strategies help in defining a broad direction to be pursued by the organization to proceed towards its goal. Once goals are established several directions exist to reach those goals.

By working with field agencies students come to know how programme strategies of different NGOs are different and what makes their field agency different from others.

Policies

Policies are statements of intent. They provide guideposts to the organization. This enables the organization to stay on track. Policies guide channels of thinking and action in decision making. Through theoretical knowledge in the class students learn about various policies of international, national governments for various groups like children, women, youth, SC/ST, disabled, elderly people and minority groups. Students in the process of fieldwork learn how that particular agency works on policy/policies. In the fieldwork seminar they understand that different field agencies have been working on different areas.

Procedures

Procedures help to establish the method of handling future activities. They provide chronological sequence required for action. For example, the procedure to be followed to conduct examination is enrollment of students, issue of admit cards, conduct of examination and declaration of results.

Rules

Rules allow no deviation. They restrict thinking to some extent when we do not want people in the organization to use discretion. A rule guides us whether a specific or definite action is taken or not with respect to a situation.

For example whether to allow a student to appear for the examination without admit card or not?

Modern management theorists define management as a combination of five functions of management. Henri Fayol, the father of the school of Systematic Management, has offered the five functions of management that focused on the key relationships between personnel and its management. They are:

(1) Planning

Planning is the function that determines in advance, what should be done. It consists of selecting the goals of the institution. Drawing up a plan of actions that combine unity, continuity, flexibility and precision given the organization's resources, type and significance of work and future trends. Creating a plan of action is the most difficult of the five tasks and requires the active participation of the entire organization. Planning must be coordinated on different levels and with different time horizons.

Mechanisms for promoting ownership and accountability through participatory planning deserve increased attention. Presently one finds that NGOs have started using this type of mechanism, but still there is a lot to improve on this.

The academicians/ educationists heading Lifelong Education programmes have to keep in mind that the ultimate aim is to make education more responsive to the needs of the learners. For this, the educationists will need to devise logical goal directed programme with the help of their team, community members. Academic planning involves a systematic analysis of qualitative and quantitative aspects of the institution.

While planning NFE courses the educationists will have to take into consideration the local needs of the people. This can be done by discussing with the persons working in the field, trustees of educational institutions, constantly taking note of needs of people with the help of NGOs, or by remaining in constant contact with the academicians and members of corporate sector.

Students placed in the institution for conducting Lifelong Education courses can contact field experts, conduct survey, or undertake participatory

rapid appraisal to find out what exactly local people need to learn. This process of finding learning needs also should focus on the type of resources available with the community. Through such surveys, educationists get to know the needs of the target people and students get an exposure of doing research. Based on the findings of surveys, educational programmes can be organized for the community. If needed students can be guided to generate Lifelong Education through various ways like involving community in raising questions for the deprived status (Paulo Freire's approach), Kala Jathas, taking passed out students/alumni of the institution and teachers rally in a community and convincing people about the importance of Lifelong Education. Door to door service to clear people's doubts about the courses and then registering them for Lifelong Education right there itself.

(2) Organizing

Providing capital, personnel and materials for the day-to-day running of the institution and building a structure to match the work. Organizational structure depends entirely on the number of employees. An increase in the number of functions expands the organization horizontally and promotes additional layers of supervision.

The educationist will have to be involved in assigning activities to groups and individuals. Local community needs to be involved in organizing various programmes. Regular meetings can be held with the NGOs, Corporate Sectors, schools, residential hostels working for children and women like observation homes, destitute homes, prisons etc. Such a friendly community involvement will definitely open avenues for the educationists to plan the relevant programmes for the community. The experience shows that series of the courses can be organized in the residential institutions like prisons, observation homes, women's hostels etc. Recently, the students had organized courses in a girl's hostel in Kolhapur. These included need based courses like cooking, bakery, handicrafts, paper/cloth bag making, embroidery, candle making, etc.

(3) Commanding /Staffing

Optimizing return from all employees is the interest of the entire enterprise. Successful managers have personal integrity, communicate clearly and base their judgments on regular audits. Their thorough knowledge of personnel creates unity, energy, initiative and loyalty and eliminates

incompetence; It involves selection and training of personnel and establishing a system of compensation, appraisal and promotion. Many academic organizations organize programmes to sensitize its stakeholders towards issues related to human rights, issues of dealing with the people living with HIV/AIDS, issues related to rights based approach etc.

Various strategies have been deployed to increase access and reduce dropouts, such as reducing the cost of schooling through free primary education or stimulating demand through food programmes and conditional cash transfers. Other measures have concentrated on quality and on efforts to make both formal and Lifelong Education more accessible. In Mumbai one finds many NGOs like Kherwadi Social Welfare Organization, Door step, Smile are presently involved in offering supportive learning classes, vocational education to dropouts, needy youth.

The corporate structure should be introduced to the programmes of non-formal education. It can fund literacy, continuing education programmes of a particular area, support literacy classes, relevant continuing education courses in their own premises for their own workers.

(4) Coordinating / Leading

Unifying and harmonizing activities and efforts to maintain the balance between the activities of the organization to see that the objectives of the institute are met. Fayol recommended weekly conferences for department heads to solve problems of common interest.

The local community needs to be involved in organizing various programmes for them. Regular meetings can be held with the parents, with women to discuss their problems/worries about their daughters, their health problems, with young boys for dropping out of the school etc. Such a friendly community involvement will definitely open avenues for the department to plan the relevant programmes for the community.

(5) Controlling

Identifying weaknesses and errors by controlling feedback, and conforming activities to plans, policies and instructions. It is not possible to determine whether work is progressing properly, if there is no expected progress against which it can be checked. Basic hierarchical model allowing

command functions to operate efficiently and effectively through co-ordination and control method need to be followed by the managers of education. Every educationist has to see that activities are controlled considering the budget at their disposal and ensuring the expected outcome of the programme.

Douglas McGregor, an American social psychologist, proposed his famous 'X' and 'Y' theory in his book 'The Human Side of Enterprise' (1960). According to him Theory 'X' (Authoritarian Management style) the average person dislikes work and will avoid it if he/she can. Therefore, most of the people are forced with a threat of punishment to work towards organizational objectives. The average person prefers to be directed; to avoid responsibility; is relatively un-ambitious, and wants security above all else.

However, Theory 'Y' (Participative Management style) is effort in work is as natural as work and play, people apply self-control and self-direction in the pursuit of organizational objectives without external control or the threat of punishment, commitment to objectives is a function of rewards associated with their achievement, people usually accept and often seek responsibility and the capacity to use high degree of imagination, ingenuity and creativity in solving organizational problems is widely, not narrowly, distributed in the population.

Experience show that if students are committed and motivated they can go beyond their capacities to gain knowledge. Fieldwork supervisors have to believe that students are creative they do not work for money and they work because they want to learn. Students of Lifelong Education also have to think that people with whom they work are creative and are interested in working. It is observed that in educational institutions the intellectual potential of the average person is only partly utilized.

Principles of Management

Management principles are statements of fundamental truth. These principles serve as guidelines for decisions and actions of managers. They are derived through observation and analysis of events which managers have to face in practice. Henri Fayol's 14 Principles of management are:

(1) Division of Work

By separating a small part of work, the workers speed and accuracy in its performance increases.

This principle is applicable to both education as well as managerial work. While implementing the NFE course the educationists will have to divide academic and non-academic work. The person In-charge has to seek the co-operation of all his team members for achieving the common good.

While implementing Lifelong Education, students learn how to divide work as they have to see which work will be done by themselves and which by the institution with whom they are placed. For example if they have to organize a course in Bakery they will require to divide the work between themselves and the institution like proper place and infrastructure at the time of the course can be provided by the institution with whom they have been placed but the things needed to be purchased for the bakery course can be purchased by them. Following is the general principle of work distribution:

Work to be done by students	Work expected to be done by the institution
Planning the courses	Announcing the course
Budgeting	
Inviting Resource persons	
Formulating course curriculum	Infrastructure
Resources (3Ms) shared by the university	Resources shared by the institution
Monitoring	Assistance to students as and when needed
Planning for Examination	
Certificate distribution	

(2) Authority and Responsibility

The issue of commands followed by responsibility for their consequences. Authority means the right of a superior to give order to his subordinates; responsibility means obligation for performance. This principle suggests that there must be parity between authority and responsibility. They are co-existent and go together, and are two sides of the same coin.

Once the educationist's role as an implementer of NFE programme is decided every one working under that is supposed to have the authority of conducting educational programme needed.

(3) Discipline

Discipline refers to obedience, proper conduct in relation to others, respect of authority. It is essential for the smooth functioning of all organizations.

While implementing the NFE the educationist will have to see that the NFE course once started runs regularly and on time. For this purpose one will have to see that participants are regularly present for the course on time. If needed, one will have to adopt various strategies like calling the learners by phone or personally inviting the participants to the NFE course. This is to see that participants are present before the arrival of the resource person to maintain discipline.

(4) Unity of Command

This principle states that every subordinate should receive orders and be accountable to one and only one superior. If an employee receives orders from more than one superior, it is likely to create confusion and conflict.

Unity of Command also makes it easier to fix responsibility for mistakes. Lifelong Education programme in-charge has to see that her subordinates get command from only one and not many as this will lead to chaos and failure of the programme.

One student is responsible for one course/programme and reports to only one supervisor.

(5) Unity of Direction

All those working in the same line of activity must understand and pursue the same objectives. All related activities should be put under one group, there should be one plan of action for them, and they should be under the control of one manager.

It seeks to ensure unity of action, focusing of efforts and coordination of strength.

There has to be one coordinator for assigning work to students so that they are able to work properly in the community.

(6) Subordination of Individual Interest

The management must put aside personal considerations and put company objectives first. Therefore the interests/ goals of the organization must prevail over the personal interests of individuals.

In the field of academics the main stake holders are students, teachers, non academic staff, parents of students and the larger society. One has to remember that first preference goes to students/learners' development.

(7) Remuneration

Workers must be paid sufficiently as this is a chief motivation of employees and therefore greatly influences productivity. The quantum and methods of remuneration payable should be fair, reasonable and rewarding of effort.

The educationist has to see that when the services of experts, resource persons are availed of that person has to be paid the amount right on time.

(8) Degree of Centralization

The amount of power wielded with the central management depends on company size. Centralization implies the concentration of decision making authority at the top management. Sharing of authority with lower levels is called decentralization. The organization should strive to achieve a proper balance.

Under the supervision of Department of Continuing Education, SNDT women's University, most of the departments, colleges made a valuable contribution to literacy movement in various parts of the state. They could do such work by involving teachers and students. Their involvement could lead to innovative experiments, action research, preparing curriculum for continuing education programmes and certification of courses. Moreover, the department could extend its infrastructure and personal resources for literacy and continuing education programmes.

Recently it was experienced that the criteria of selection of resource persons and remuneration for resource person of Lifelong Education course is decided by the university/ institute conducting the course. However, in

case of emergency student responsible to conduct the course can invite a guest faculty for the course (like when suddenly the regular faculty takes leave).

(9) Scalar Chain

Scalar Chain refers to the chain of superiors ranging from top management to the lowest rank. The principle suggests that there should be a clear line of authority from top to bottom linking all managers at all levels. It is considered a chain of command. It involves a concept called a "gang plank" using which a subordinate may contact an immediate superior or his superior in case of an emergency, defying the hierarchy of control. However, the immediate superiors must be informed about the matter.

Largely Lifelong Education too follows this principal. The NGOs are the major institutions involved in offering Lifelong Education and one knows that most of them do follow chain of commands (eventhough they deny it). Students gain the knowledge of organizational structure in few days of their fieldwork. This knowledge helps them in every aspect of their fieldwork.

(10) Order

Social order ensures the fluid operation of a company through authoritative procedure. Material order ensures safety and efficiency in the workplace.

Identify the suitable student for the particular course. Identify the suitable institute for the particular course.

(11) Equity

Employees /learners must be treated kindly, and justice must be done to ensure a just workplace. Managers should be fair and impartial when dealing with employees/learners.

The supervisor must treat the students organizing the courses without any favoritism. The person organizing courses in a difficult area may be given more freedom and liberty as compared to the person holding the similar programme in a congenial establishment.

One needs to take initiatives to reach as many as possible as several children still face major physical and social barriers to primary education. Research shows that most of out-of-school children are in families with uneducated mothers, live in rural areas, and come from low income households. Girls are particularly numerous among them. Children who live in conflict areas and are affected by HIV/AIDS are also less likely to attend schools.

An environment of non-discrimination is necessary so that everyone not only experts, teaching staff, learners but all stakeholders will have a say in the overall implementation of Lifelong Education programme.

For the well being of women and children male members need to be equally involved. Programmes are needed not only for the education of mothers but also for fathers as their involvement in the programmes will reduce gender inequality.

(12) Stability of Tenure of Personnel

The period of service should not be too short and employees should not be moved from positions frequently. An employee cannot render useful service if he is removed before he becomes accustomed to the work assigned to him.

Students organizing the course are not to be replaced with others during the duration of the course:-

(13) Initiative

Using the initiative of employees can add strength and new ideas to an organization. Initiative on the part of employees is a source of strength for the organization because it provides new and better ideas. Employees more likely to take greater interest in the functioning of the organization.

Students/ institutes organizing courses are to be given freedom to conceive and carry out their plans within the broad guidelines given by the University.

Even if they commit a few mistakes it may be discussed and corrected but not penalized.

(14) Esprit de Corps / Team work

This refers to the need of managers to ensure and develop morale in the workplace; individually and communally. Team spirit helps develop an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding.

These can be used to initiate and aid the processes of change, organization, decision making, skill management and the overall view of the management function.

Team approach in students has to be promoted and need to be demonstrated.

Skills in Management

Through fieldwork following skills in students can be developed:

a. Leadership skill

The students have to develop competence in several areas including: rapport building, organizational diagnosis, dealing with the change process, finding and using resources, managing the leadership work, and building skills and confidence in others.

b. Communication skill

Richard Nelson- Jones (2003) has given five main ways of sending communication/ action, skills messages. They are:

Verbal messages - messages that people send with words.

Vocal messages - messages that people send through their voices for example through volume, articulation, pitch, emphasis and speech rate.

Body messages - messages that people send with their bodies for example through gaze, eye contact, facial expression, posture, gesture, physical proximity, clothes and grooming.

Touch messages - a special category of body messages that people send with touch through the parts of the body they use, what parts of the another's

body they touch, how gentle firm they are, and whether or not they have permission.

Action taking messages - messages that people send when they are not face-to-face with clients. For example: sending letters, e-mails or invoices.

Examples of Small verbal rewards which helpers can give to the client for sharing and exploring their interest - 'Uh-hum' is more vocal than verbal:

'Uh-hum'	'Sure
'Please continue'	'Indeed'
'Tell me more'	'And'
'Go on'	'So'
'I see'	'Really'
'Oh?'	'Right'
'Then'	'Yes'
'I hear you'	

c. Documentation, Report writing skill/Presentation skill

Students improve their formal speech when they are provided with opportunities to do classroom presentation. This helps them to organize their ideas sequentially, chronologically and thematically. In addition to regular assignment presentation, field work presentation provides them practice in organizing their speech around problems and solutions, causes and results, and similarities and differences. During such presentations both teachers and peer students evaluate the performance of the students. Further, in the process of constructively criticizing others, learners can learn to apply criteria for good speech and employ tactful social skills. In doing so, they can increase and improve their own skills.

Experience shows students do take efforts in preparing their presentations by using multi media and learn to use computer and do give power point presentations. Positive comments in their presenting efforts can lead to greater skills and confidence in speaking in front of larger groups.

d. Networking skill

While implementing the Lifelong Education courses in the field students learn to network with the university, university departments, NGOs, experts

and funders as without networking they just can not reach out to fulfill their fieldwork objectives.

e. Time management skill

Time management is related to mental and physical fitness. And fitness cannot be achieved without self discipline and good habits. It does help in maintaining personal stability. In the process of meeting academic deadlines students do learn to set priorities, prior attention and conquer waste of time.

f. Monitoring and supervision skill

Monitoring involves counting what we are doing and it involves routinely looking at the quality of our services.

Monitoring is the routing process of data collection and measurement of progress towards programme objective. Following are the three main domains of information required for monitoring Lifelong Education. They are:

- i. Inputs: Resources going into conducting and carrying out the project or programme i.e. administrative staff, admission procedures, finance, material and time
- ii. Process: Set of activities in which programme resources (human and financial) are used to achieve the results expected from the programme (e.g. number of workshops, training programmes, how to do, etc.)
- iii. Outputs: Immediate results obtained by the programme through the execution of activities (e.g. number of books for adults prepared and distributed, persons, persons trained, number of persons benefitted from Lifelong Education, number of beneficiaries got the job or start their own business or gain knowledge, etc.)

The fieldwork supervisors need to be careful to see that the system developed by the students is well evaluated.

g. Helping skill

The humanistic school based on humanism, a system of values and beliefs emphasizes the better qualities of human kind and people's abilities

to develop their potential. Through Lifelong Education students are given opportunities to develop not only their own potential but also of those with whom they work.

For example a few students placed in an organization called 'Shrameek' for field work faced a unique problem when the NGO asked them to conduct morcha/rally to focus the corrupt practices in a ration shop. Initially, the students were reluctant to get involved in such activities but then they were made to lead the rally and then they could understand that they have the power to bring changes.

h. Empathy skill

Empathy is the capacity to identify oneself mentally with and fully to comprehend the client's inner world. Through empathy emotional climate is created to know and reach out to receive client's communications and meanings. This is used to help the person.

i. Problem solving and negotiation skill

Students of MANFED are trained in life skills through workshop. In the community they have to practice these skills wherever needed. In the fieldwork students face a number of problems like cleanliness, water shortage, non-receipt of ration card or Adhaar card, irregular attendance of participants or even the resource persons of lifelong learning programmes, drop-out of participants in between from the lifelong learning programmes. In such situations students of MANFED have to use some skills by applying the theory learnt in the same through self-awareness, critical thinking, creative thinking and clarifying values so that they can find solution. Students are also taught to use past experience while solving problems. Students are also taught the formula of 'ASK' and 'Power' while solving the problems and negotiating with people. 'ASK' and 'Power' means:

ASK

A = Ask W/H questions that are who, where, whom, why, when and how

S = Seek information to choose right alternative

K = Know your alternatives and take decisions and firm with it.

POWER

P = Know the problem

O= Find options

W= Weigh your options

E= Know your emotions

R= Resolve the problem by choosing right choice.

j. Practical Creativity skill

In the Fieldwork setting students do get ample scope to develop their practical creativity. They can create work for themselves in various fields with their innovative ideas and ability to convince the management of their respective institutions.

Fieldwork supervision

Through fieldwork supervision the potential of students and management skills can be brought out. For this purpose right condition, situation and learning experience need to be provided to students by the fieldwork supervisors and faculty supervisors.

Conclusion

Adult education for long has been treated as imparting 3 Rs – Reading, Writing Arithmetic and hence, a lot of importance was given to basic education with no or little stress for continuing education to retain the skills acquired and to use the same in the day-to-day life. But this simple meaning has been changed over a period and now the aim is to create a learning society for which Lifelong Education programmes are important. Learning is a lifelong process. For creating learning societies one needs to nurture learning communities. Through Lifelong Education courses universities can play a major role by extending its reach to the un-reached. In such Lifelong Education courses fieldwork which is an integral part of the academic exercise should not be treated as a mere ritual or peripheral activity but should be core of the discipline. The efforts made in this paper in relating Lifelong Education management as a method of Lifelong Learning will lead to draw out a road map to develop the discipline to face challenges in the field of education.

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Role of Colleges in Community Learning and Development: An Insider's View

Tabasum Ismail

Community Learning and Development (CLD) or Community Education may be defined as learning for social, economic, political, moral, ethical, mental, physical and material development of individuals and groups of individuals of communities irrespective of age groups. The learning techniques may be derived from formal or informal methods, but plans, schemes or activities are chalked out in consultation with the participants individually or collectively. The intention of Community learning and development is to grow the ability of individuals or groups of all ages of communities through their performance with a view to organize and encourage them, to solve their problems collectively and improve their quality of life. It also aims at building the power of mind of individuals and groups to contribute towards betterment of communities to the best of their abilities. The idea behind this community education is also to develop the ability of participants and through them that of the communities to understand and participate in democratic processes and enable people to strive for providing good governance, quality education and technical institutions and a society free from corruption, favoritism and nepotism.

The parameters of community learning and development may vary from community to community. In advanced societies where literacy rate is very high, people are aware of their duties and rights. They acquire latest information about the state's planning in connection with development of civic facilities, education, health, electricity, drinking water, construction of roads, establishment of industries, etc. through electronic and print media. They can monitor implementation and failures, if any, of such schemes. They can monitor the functioning of private sector institutions and can make them accountable. They take care about imparting quality education, better health care and development of moral values in their children. These communities are structured societies and well organized to solve their day to day problems efficiently. They ensure good governance, industrial development and corruption free societies.

In the developing countries, on the other hand, where literacy rate is very low, the uneducated lot of society cannot be expected to have complete knowledge of their rights and duties, nor can they have first hand information about state sponsored planning or implementation of welfare schemes. In such communities generation gap between youth and elders happens to be wide that leads to diversity of opinion, multiplicity in approach for solving problems and hence lopsided development of such communities. In the developing countries, therefore, all stakeholders particularly the state administration, civil society and education institutions need to evolve an effective mechanism to educate people about their rights and duties and their social, economic and political problems and remedial measures that need to be taken to solve them.

In the state of Jammu & Kashmir, political uncertainty has devastated the very fundamentals of socio-economic fabric due to which problems confronted by people are countless and the path ahead seems gloomy. As a result people are passing through a state of anxiety and instability. To get people out of this morass, endeavors have to be made by civil society, educationists and intellectuals to restore peaceful atmosphere and provide transparent governance. In this era of knowledge economy, education is the most important asset that our children should acquire. Although educational planners have devised fruitful schemes like imparting free education to children, SSA, RMSA and PMRP but failure of such schemes is a matter of anxiety for all of us. Therefore, people need to wake up and look into the possible flaws in these schemes or in the process of their execution so that the resources and efforts that we invest in such schemes don't go waste. We need to be well aware of our duties towards our society and to contribute to the best of our efforts in the process of building a prosperous society free from all social evils; a society wherein youth are taught by the best teachers in the best possible schools; a society where parents act as counsellors and guides to make youth realize that all this will bear fruit only when they work hard and earn honorable space in the society.

Institutions of higher learning like colleges can play a vital role in the process of community learning and development. They have an army of resource persons as individuals and groups coming from different geographical, racial and lingual communities available; whom they can organize to educate and train individuals and groups of individuals of communities of different age groups. The students and teachers of colleges

can act as a mighty force against social evils prevalent in the communities. This, in fact, is the real essence of knowledge and education. They can start a forceful campaign against social evils like gambling, drinking, eve teasing and lying of children, child marriage and child labor, drug addiction, drug trafficking and drug production and dowry. This is the real essence of knowledge and education. A campaign against use of tobacco products like cigarettes for smoking or use of non-biodegradable articles like polythene bags can be launched more effectively by school or college going students patronized by learned and experienced teachers than law enforcing agencies. After all, the community of learned scholars can check social evils by educating and counselling of youth much effectively than any other social reforming organizations. In our past contributions made by reformers to eradicate social evils like irrational superstitious and unhealthy cultural habits, have been fruitful. In the same way the community of dynamic enthusiastic teachers along with students can be a forceful and stable front because of their rational approach against the immorality. Education of children in villages is essential for development, prosperity and honorable living of people of the rural areas. Unless and until the rural population in our remote areas is educated, the development of our nation in general and the villages in particular is not possible. So, for community learning and development, colleges nearer to these remote villages should adopt them and do the needful to ensure that the communities living therein receive due guidance and assistance for their education and development. To start with, teachers of such colleges should motivate, guide and depute enthusiastic students to these remote villages to start a drive for educating both children and adults in such areas.

Very recently University of Kashmir has adopted Mir Baheri, a small village, on similar pattern. Teams of students from colleges can visit the villages of far-flung areas to educate people and lend information about the state sponsored welfare schemes for villagers like health care, education, industrial development and supply of drinking water and electricity, etc; besides their rights and duties. The colleges can make batches comprising of students and teachers, and to enthuse and distinguish these batches from one another, such groups can be named, for example, as Mars, Venus, Neptune, Mercury, etc. and carry out various activities in an organized manner.

The important categories of resource persons that colleges can organize

for community learning and development very effectively include NSS and NCC students, Alumni Associations and parent-teacher organizations. The NSS students usually select backward and downtrodden areas for performing some kind of social service like repairs of roads, street cleaning, etc. They can organize members of such communities and guide them as to how they should unite to solve their day to day problems in a descent manner. Similarly, NCC volunteers can train other students of their institutions and also the youth of the neighborhoods as to how they can voluntarily help their fellow colleagues at the time of natural calamities like earthquake, fire, floods, etc; and make the process of Community-based education a success. Career counselling centers, functioning in many colleges, can play important role in guiding students to choose subjects/streams, providing information about suitable job markets and motivating them to eradicate social evils and development activities in their localities. Many colleges host IGNOU study centers and candidates pursuing different courses through these centers generally happen to be government or private sector employees and belong to different institutions. Both the resource persons and candidates of IGNOU study centers can be organized to educate people and promote community learning and development. Through all these means colleges will not only contribute towards the education and development of communities residing in remote areas, but will also train their own students for playing bigger and responsible role in the holistic development of societies.

Another concern in J & K is women education. The women in J & K are lagging far behind men in education and social status. Moreover, social evils like dowry and traditional self proclaimed superiority of men over women are contributing negatively to the progress and development of women. Despite the fact that women's day is celebrated throughout the world and particularly in educational institutions every year, the women folk is not yet enjoying due status in the society. In view of the role that women play in the overall development of children and families and hence communities, empowerment of women and their education should be given priority in programmes related to community learning and development. Though women's cells already exist in a number of colleges particularly in co-educational institutions; functioning of these units need to be guided and monitored by experienced educationists so as to make them more effective for the cause they have been established for. In fact, such women's welfare cells should be constituted in all colleges and not selectively. The college teachers and students, in collaboration with women's cells or separately can launch organized movement for providing education to women, against

dowry, discrimination of women in different walks of life and empowering them to acquire their due status. Now a days NGOs are also contributing towards encouraging women in different fields. Colleges should collaborate with such NGOs by offering necessary and possible manpower and infrastructure. Schemes like adult education should be brought closer to women and implemented with all sincerity so that they get basic education.

Unfortunately, the schemes like adult education could not be successfully implemented in the state of J & K due to variety of reasons. For example, teachers active in trade union activities were given the responsibility to run adult education centers so that they are not a disturbance to educational administrators and fellow teachers. Such practices need to be discarded. Adult education like any other stream of education is equally important to improve the educational status of women. Therefore, a special drive is needed to make adult education programmes successful and achieve the targets set for the state including in the rural areas so that adults are enabled to read and write and solve simple arithmetic problems.

Consistent efforts have to be made to make people understand their socio-economic and political problems and their solutions besides, welfare schemes initiated by the state administrations. The individuals or groups of individuals, participating in the class demonstration have to be enabled to realize their duties and rights. They have to be guided to identify the social evils existing in their communities and the remedial measures needed to get rid of such evils.

Begging has become another social evil in J & K. Along with genuine people, many people have made begging a profession. NSS and NCC volunteers and Alumni associations can be made to identify genuine beggars in their areas and then the administrative bodies can play a pivotal role in their rehabilitation or elimination. In the rehabilitation process funds can be provided by government, corporate sectors and social organizations for training these financially weaker sections of society in different vocational trades like cutting & tailoring, knitting, etc. at makeshift centers in colleges, wherein the financially weak students can also earn while they learn.

Jammu & Kashmir has witnessed an unprecedented turmoil for the last two decades. It has rendered innumerable children as orphans, countless women as widows and huge number of people physically handicapped. All these needy and helpless organs of the society need to be rehabilitated.

Despite the fact that some NGOs have been looking after some of these unfortunate people, but a lot more needs to be done to rehabilitate them. Higher education institutions can contribute in this direction significantly.

Some colleges, in J & K run professional and vocational courses also. For example, in Baramulla Government College besides Science, Arts and Commerce, prestigious courses like MCMP, MCVP, BCA, IT, Spoken English, Sociology and Psychology are also taught. The students enrolled for these courses can be organized to work wonders in promoting community learning and development. The students and faculty members of these courses can arrange multi-purpose programmes like classes and practical demonstrations for young and old members of different communities. Students of these courses can be given assignments aimed to make use of them in promoting community learning. In fact such assignments can be made a part of the course curriculum, for which they can be awarded grades based on their performance. Students studying Media can guide them to choose and benefit from different sources of information and their applicability in society. IT students can train small children and even elders of nearby localities in computer application, computer networking, web-designing and operation of and utility of internet. Language, sociology and psychology students can train individuals and groups of individuals of rural societies in communication skills and educating common people about policy planning, issues confronting communities and measures that need to be taken for their solution. The school going children can be acquainted with the use of latest education tools and teaching aids like maps, models, overhead projectors, slides, LCD projectors and audio-visual classes, etc. Even school going children can be exposed to regional and national educational satellite channels. Such initiatives can imbibe zeal and enthusiasm for learning among the youth.

The less educated and unorganized communities have to be made aware that imparting moral and quality education to their children, besides imbibing high moral values, importance of helping the needy, cleanliness and better health, etc. should be their first priority. Parents have to be advised to send their children to the best schools where, besides, formal education, moral education is imparted. Attempts have to be made to incorporate moral education in the school curriculum. The members of these communities have to ensure that there is no political intervention in the functioning of education institutions. Our educational institutions should be located at ideal places where there is calm and peace and the teachers are competent and

God fearing so that every aspect of the philosophy behind the concept of school reaches to the body and soul of children. Parents should act as counsellors and facilitators rather than dictators in the process of selection of careers in accord with their aptitude. Parents need to be educated to realize that giving pocket money to children and not monitoring their expenditure make them to get addicted to bad habits like drug addiction, drinking, gambling and loss of moral and ethical values.

The colleges can arrange seminars, symposia, debates, cultural programs, and even workshops to inculcate self-confidence, work culture, helping attitude, moral values and general awareness. Teachers of science streams can guide, train and motivate people to setup industrial, agricultural, horticulture, sericulture and animal farm based units under self and society employment schemes and the duty of the government and banks to provide necessary financial support for successful implementation of these schemes. They can encourage people to start animal farming and cultivation of many medicinal and aromatic plants and enable them to market our geographical diversity for infusing new life to our tourism industry. For raising the status of socially, economically and educationally backward people and harmonious development of the state, government can be persuaded to build housing colonies with education, sports and civic facilities for these economically weaker sections of the society.

The colleges can organize groups of individuals of communities and guide them to identify their genuine problems and launch peaceful but forceful and disciplined campaign to solve these genuine problems. Such organizations should be educated to abstain from stone pelting, unnecessary sloganeering, road blocking and damaging public property while demanding solution of their problems. In short, communities have to be educated to become disciplined, hard working and emancipated.

The communities have to be poised well to open new chapters, new hopes and new opportunities for the people in general and the youth in particular. They need to be educated to strive for better and brighter economic opportunities. The state administration including the institutions of higher learning, civil society and the intellectuals need to make efforts to industrialize the state, promote trade, tourism and other job avenues for the educated youth. The civil society, the intellectuals, common people and the youth comprising a community should be upright, honest, have uniqueness in thought and action and be able to provide a corruption free society, good

governance, spirited education system and a promising job market for the educated youth.

Community learning and development is a well thought of and marvelous scheme for working with and promoting life standards of communities. It aims at making people to realize importance of mutual help, common understanding and making collective efforts to eradicate social evils and solve their problems. However, the state administration may have to fix priorities to formulate welfare schemes for communities and guidelines for implementation of such schemes. Higher Education Department may allot ranks to education institutions on the basis of their performance in community education. National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) can also take cognizance of educational institutions in their performance towards community learning and development. In this way institutions can compete to make community learning and development a successful enterprise.

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Quality Maintenance in Higher Education

Shweta Agarwal

Introduction

A major challenge developing nations face today is that of creating an environment conducive to the cultural, economic and social development of their people. Historically, education has been a determining factor of the progress of human civilization. The modern world is using education increasingly as an instrument for all round development. There is a growing and welcome realization amongst the developing countries that education is the key to development. Education shapes the destiny of a nation. The quality of manpower in any country ultimately determines the sustainable well being of its people. Creation of social opportunities for all sections for society is a reflection of the progress of that society and education is the principal instrument for developing human capabilities. Education, as a liberating force, fosters growth, social equality and technological progress. Globalization and the emergence of a new society more dependent on knowledge and information technology have further underlined the importance of education in pursuing developmental goals.

Concept of Quality

The concepts of quality used in industry are being considered for application in the field of education. Quality has been defined in them as the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs (Bureau of Indian Standards 1988). Higher Education focuses educational endeavors on four main areas—

1. Class-room Learning (Knowledge)
2. Examination (output in knowledge)
3. Research (new knowledge)
4. Service to society (applications of knowledge to life)

The learner and the educator must both aim at and move towards this goal. The international conference on Quality Assurance in Higher Education

was held in 1991. The International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) was launched during this conference.

Quality Assurance has been defined by Green and Harvey (1993) as "The mechanism and procedures designed to reassure the various 'stakeholders' in higher education that institutions accord a high priority to implementing policies designed to maintain and enhances institutional effectiveness".

Vroeijenstijn (1995) described it as "Systematic, structured and continuous attention to quality in terms of quality maintenance and quality improvement". Quality assurance is a dynamic process involving continuous monitoring of performance and corrective action when necessary.

Quality and Education

The Quality is "multidimensional" and through higher education it strives to develop human resources of global standards. Perceived thus, quality defines the goals and purposes of education. Quality impacts the content of higher education, its processes, its output or product, as it seeks to develop human resource with required skill's, excellent in performance and capable of, delivering the goods as a unit of the work force.

Today there is a strong feeling that the skills of graduates do not match the needs and the expectations of the employment sector. In the developing countries unemployable graduates pose a greater problem than unemployment itself. What are these skills, which are expected by the employers of the graduate work force? What are the skills, which describe 'Quality Education' and which such an education is capable of fostering in its products? The five top skills identified by employers and required of the education work force are; (1) Time Management (2) Ability to work under pressure (3) Accuracy and attention to details (4) Oral communication skills (5) Managing different tasks at the same time. The UNESCO document on "Thematic Debate: The requirements of the world of work", has added a few more to this list, as flexibility, innovativeness, creativity, entrepreneurship, versatility and teamwork. These skills today are the parameters by which the quality of higher education is assessed. Such education enable, persons, societies and even nations acquire competencies required for living meaningfully in a competitive globalize world.

Quality Assurance Cell

- The Eight Thrust Areas
- Academic Planning
- Academic Support
- Infrastructure Planning and Maintenance
- Student Support and Service
- Staff Support and Service
- Administrative Support
- Research Mobilization
- Research Promotion

Need for Quality Assurance

An independent task force set up by UNESCO in 1998 has in its report entitled "Higher Education in Developing Countries – Peril and Promise," said that today higher education demanded by the masses and can no longer be confined to a tiny elite. This is more so in the developing world due to three factors at the work here. Firstly, the incredible growing thirst for knowledge; secondly the growing importance of knowledge in society; thirdly, the inexorable and often cruel logic of globalization.

Some Constraints in the Higher Education System

Government of India admits that we are unable to utilize 30% of our degree holders and 52% of our diploma holders of technical education. Many studies have been made and they have said the possible reasons for wastage could be –

- Ø Failure of top-management to have a long-term vision.
- Ø Lack of exemplified top-administration commitment.
- Ø Lack of leadership and determination to drive the transformation through.
- Ø Lack of necessary aptitude for the course among the concerned students and lack of develops the same.
- Ø Inadequacy of instructional facilities, possibly due to the curtailment of departmental budget.
- Ø A heavy and outdated curriculum.
- Ø Relaxation of admission criteria for admission.

- Ø Limited use of technology as a teaching medium in the institutions/universities.
- Ø Teaching profession unattractive to youth for pecuniary considerations leading to shortage of qualified faculty.
- Ø Training programmes for improvement of the faculty are rarely initiated which affects the quality of teaching.

Efforts at Improving the System: Imparting Quality Education

a) Special remedial courses for non-urban/no-elite students

Because of schooling and even college study in the local vernacular, these students in management or engineering college often ask the teacher to explain the term in the local language. This affects the quality and progress of education. Some of the students are often first or second generation learners. They need special orientation/remedial course to be brought on par with the other students.

b) Multiple Entry and Flexibility

It has been observed that while a student is pursuing a particular branch he/she has an aptitude in another branch of professional study. Unfortunately our professional course are not flexible and do not allow lateral switch over. This is allowed in developed countries and India also can adopt the same.

c) Improvement of Teaching Methods

Production of different teaching material and teaching aids involving use of Information Technology have been started. But these need to be stepped up.

d) Need for review of course content

Mere accumulation of information is not knowledge and complete knowledge by itself dose not give the necessary wisdom. The purpose of education is not to produce "educated individual" at one stretch by putting all information and knowledge into course at one time, but on the other hand, it is to take the individual to progressive stages where he/she would be in a position to acquire what further information and knowledge he/she wants for his/her future activities. If we accept this philosophy, then the need is to

structure a curriculum, which equips an individual for lifelong learning along a concrete path.

e) Industry-Institution Collaboration

The gap between the industry and the academia can be bridged by constant dialogues, which can increase the knowledge pool for industry and constant teacher interaction with the industry can help in enhancing the knowledge pool. The industry and the academia can combine their strengths for R & D, Quality improvement, Human Recourse Development, Cost Management etc. There needs to be symbiotic and synergistic relation between the industry and the academia.

f) Today industry feels that a substantial section of the graduates are not aware of the business environment and do not have the essential business skills, as a consequence of a outdated curriculum. Industry expect that the recruits should be well versed in contemporary areas and have the ability to apply knowledge there in and possess technical and soft skills.

g) Develop teachers and motivate them for continuous improvement. This would require a well-programmed induction-orientation followed by continuous training in state of art technologies and methodologies. This may be achieved through continuous exchange programmes with industrial setups. This would help developing teachers as well as allowing a feel of the needs and wants of the industry.

h) Decentralization of administrative setups in professional institutions. This would help them to grow as being more responsive to the needs of the industry and society.

i) University must motivate, support and ensure that professional institutes must take up training in latest technological and methodological advancements.

j) Students must be exposed to real-time situations. Role and content of field training must be increased.

k) Training-cum-production centers can also play an important role in inculcating skills in students.

- l) As a part of national policy for employment generation, professional education must inspire students for entrepreneurship and self-employment.
- m) Continuous review and updating of curricular, teaching methodologies and equipments.
- n) Include members from industry and society on advisory boards so that their point of view is represented. Some mechanism for scanning the environmental requirements by the higher education system must be devised.

Conclusion

Institutions should innovate practice which will continuously upgrade the quality of higher Education. The failure of our higher education systems to produce sufficient number of good teachers need to be looked in to seriously. Only then, universities truly become centers of knowledge production. The system should generate spirit of inquiry and experimentation among its students. The ultimate result of this transformation would create a healthy, dynamic and innovative system. Systemic efforts in preparing the action plans and implementing the same will enable the attainment of our goals in higher education.

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Critical Adult Education for Managing Social Exclusion: Clues for Literacy Facilitators

Ayo Garuba

Abstract

Adult education is generally acknowledged to be a potent force for managing diversity and enhancing social stability especially in an environment of social divergence and contending forces of disintegration that obtain in a country like Nigeria. This paper examines *Critical Adult Education as a practical framework for managing diversity and social exclusion in Nigeria*. The paper specifically; (1) undertakes a conceptual exploration of social diversity, social exclusion and critical adult education, (2) examine the social diversity and exclusion situation in Nigeria context and (3) discusses how critical adult education principles can be applied to enhance the effectiveness of adult education as a tool for increasing inclusion and participation of adult in learning and in national affairs, generally. The paper also demonstrates practical application of critical adult education strategies during adult literacy lesson.

Key Words: Social Diversity, Social Exclusion, Adult Education and Critical Adult Education

Introduction

Eduard Lindeman, one of the founding fathers of modern adult education studies and practice has rightly observed that "orthodox education may be a preparation for life but adult education is an agitating instrumentality for changing life" (Lindeman, 1926: 165). What Lindeman is saying here is that compared to formal schooling and education which as a result of its restrictive scope and coverage, tend to limit the extent to which beneficiary can be independent to explore the environment and query existing reality, adult education offers the client a means for self-realisation and an instrument with which to "liberate consciousness from social and structural confines" (Davison, 1989; 1).

The assumption here is that the adult, being naturally endowed with capacity for critical thinking and abstraction only needs some form of refinement to discover him/herself and be able to act on the environment and become an agent of change in the process. This is the position of Davison, (1989) when he states that "adults can build the world they want through their control of adult experience" (p. 1). Within this context, adult education presents a viable process for the refinement of people to meet emergent demands of social living. The major issue here is: **how do we liberate the client of adult education from social and cultural confines so that at the end he/she becomes not only prepared for life but is constantly agitated to be an instrument of change in life?**

Another major issue which adult education has to contend with is social exclusion which represents a process through which groups or individuals are isolated from the society to which they belong or live. According to DFID (2005), there is widespread exclusion of some groups from access to basic services including learning opportunities, a situation of which contributes to the creation and sustenance of poverty in Nigeria. The question also remains: **how does adult education respond to this social exclusion which seems to have permeated virtually all the facets of the Nigerian society? How does adult education serve to instil in the clientele the spirit of inclusion rather than exclusion in an environment of social diversity that is dominated by the spirit of 'I', before and above 'others'?** These are the critical issues which modern adult education practice must face in Nigeria.

It has been argued (Shor, 1992; Freire, 1993; Quigley, 1997:), for adult education to be culturally relevant to the needs of client, socially empowering and participant driven, it has to reflect a critical pedagogy. The argument here is that existing programmes in adult education are mainly designed and implemented within a be-all and fit-all model. In addition to being noncritical and participant driven, a one model fit all design do not consider the needs and interest of the clientele who are adults and youths with clear mission for embarking on the programme. The implication here is that at the end, most adult education programmes are not able to offer a provision that can meet the immediate and long-time need of the 'non-traditional learners'.

The purpose of this paper is three fold. First the paper begins with a conceptual exploration of the focal terms. To this end, meaning of concepts of social diversity, social exclusion and critical adult education are explored. Second, the paper examine the problem of social diversity and social exclusion in Nigeria with particular emphasis on the identification of types and causes of the problem in the country. Lastly, the paper presents critical adult education as a model for addressing the issue of diversity and exclusion in Nigeria.

Exploration of Key Concepts .

There are four key concepts of concern in this paper: Social diversity, Social Exclusion, Adult Education and Critical Adult Education. We shall try to explore the meaning of each of them and identify the connection or the relationship between them.

Social Diversity

Social diversity is a term used to describe existence of groups and interests who are said to be unique within the larger group. Though these sub-groups may be inter-related or interdependent but the existence of commonalities among members of each sub group tends to promote morbid allegiance to the subgroup and this may, at times, be at the expense of loyalty to the larger group.

Diversity is third of the three main development discourses which Rogers (1999) identified as having influenced the field of adult education, the first two being deficit and disadvantage discourses respectively. While the central issue in deficit discourse is that development can only take place if the deficit in resources (material, skill, training and attitudinal) that has been identified with the society is met, the focus in disadvantage discourse is on unravelling the reasons behind people's poor status and poverty that pervades virtually all the components of the society. The disadvantage discourse locates under development in the oppressive structures and the attitudes of the few privileged one in the society and on the basis of this, canvasses for social action against the oppressive structure, and empowerment of the oppressed and under privileged as the only way to effect change in the social system. It is the disadvantage discourse that informs the Freirean literacy model that dominated literacy and development programmes in Africa and other countries of the south in the seventies and eighties (Dighe n.d.).

The central issue in diversity discourse is in the recognition of the existence of different participant groups and interest in the society. Here the participant groups are not taken to be docile but as having the capability to develop on their own. To this end, diversity discourse advocates greater role and visibility for the participant group in taking decision on issues that affect their lives and existence. Thus the role of 'experts' is down played while promoting a more dominant diverse group structure in the society. Here, education and other intervention programme have to offer a more diverse rather than a universal solution to development issues. According to Dighe (n.d) citing Torres (2000) as authority, education can only achieve its aim of fostering learning in the learners to meet their needs, if diversity is taken as the norm and not the exception. The usual one-size-fits-all model of education and intervention programme cannot be the solution to development problem in a society of diverse interests and culture. The only effective educational intervention programme is one that adopts a diversified model that is designed to meet the needs and aspiration of each component groups in the society.

Diversity can take many forms ranging from gender, race/ethnicity, religion, disability, educational attainment and social status. An emerging form of diversity which though, has attained global recognition especially in the Western world is sexual orientation through which individuals whose sexual orientation falls within erstwhile condemnable status of lesbianism and gay now openly canvasses for recognition and legality within the social and political system. It is to be noted here that the issue of gay and lesbianism seems to be gaining national attention in Nigeria with the botched attempt to pass a bill seeking to make it legal and acceptable in the country

With understanding and acceptance of social diversity, we become more informed of the various factors and dimensions that differentiate people in the society and even globally. To us in adult education, social diversity should be core in the design and implementation of programmes especially as it is within the adult population that diversity is more pronounced. In addition, the adults can be more conscious and protective of all the features and elements that differentiate them from each other. Thus group allegiance is more pronounced within the adult group who, apart from constituting a group with diverse interests and needs are also noted for morbid adherence to group cause.

All this diversity inclinations of the adults are not to be lost on adult education programme planners and efforts have to be made to ensure active involvement of all participant groups both at the level of design and implementation of programmes.

Social Exclusion

As Peace (2001) would argue, social exclusion is a concept in need of clarification. As a phenomenon, social exclusion relates quite highly to a range of issues that borders on social living and effectiveness. Peace (*ibid*) further argues that social exclusion is a concept which defines "a wide range phenomena and processes related to poverty, deprivation and hardship, but it is also used in relation to a wide range of categories of excluded people and places of exclusion" (p. 17). However, claims have been made (Amartya Sen, 2000, for instance) that social exclusion is a redundant concept in that it is merely expressing an existing concepts in social disadvantage particularly, poverty. Here, social exclusion is seen as an adjunct to poverty and other situation of social disadvantage and discrimination. Much as social exclusion maintains some form of correlation with poverty, the relationship can however not be expressed in absolute term as there are various situation or circumstances that can lead to social exclusion which has no direct relationship with poverty. It is probably convenient to argue that social exclusion can be a cause and effect of poverty (and vice versa) and not that it is all about poverty. In addition, access to material resources or being non poor does not provide immunity to being socially excluded. Consider within this context, such statement as "social exclusion is a contested term, it is used as another way of talking about poverty" (Burrhardt, Le Grand and Piachaud, 2002; 1) can be considered sweeping and, and to a reasonable extent, inappropriate. For instance, in spite of not being poor and, in position of affluence, many suffer from knowledge and information exclusion which can be more tormenting than most other form of exclusion in this modern day of information and communication technology (ICT), especially with virtually all facets of human transaction and interaction going online – banking, communication, learning etc.

Though Silver (1994) has traced its emergence as a concept in the field of development to early social theorist like Weber and Karl Max, social exclusion is still relatively a new and emerging concept in modern policy discourse and development studies. France has been credited with early

use of (or evolution of?) the concept of social exclusion in 1970s (Ebersold 1998). Then, it was being used to describe the ensuing deprivation and marginalisation from inadequacy of existing social welfare packages designed to meet exigencies of social and economic transformation. In addition, the emergence of social exclusion as a term in English language has been traced to its "debut in the European Union Poverty Programmes in the 1980s. (Peace, 2001; 18).

A somewhat practical and policy oriented definition of social exclusion has been offered by the Department of International Development (DFID) in one of its policy papers. According to DFID (2005), social exclusion is

"a process by which certain groups are systematically disadvantaged because they are discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, caste, descent, gender, age, disability, HIV status, migrant status or where they live. Discrimination occurs in public institutions, such as the legal system or education and health services, as well as social institutions like the household" (p.3).

To be socially excluded is to be left out of the social scheme and not to be socially relevant within a particular milieu/context. No one wants to be left out, as being left out connotes social rejection. Social exclusion thus describes the "the process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from the society in which they live" (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 1995), quoted in de Haan and Maxwell, (1998: 2).

Social exclusion covers all those in situation or condition which puts them in disadvantage status (like race, faith, and physical condition) as a result of which they ((1) are denied access to decent means of living and survival in the society and of contributing their quota to the development of the society and (2) lost their status and esteem of full and equal partners in the society. To Howarth and Kenway (1988) the 'exclusion' in social exclusion means 'exclusion from systems which facilitate social integration' (p. 80). Rogers (1995) has identified six key areas within which individuals and groups can feel the impact or effect of social exclusion. These are:

Exclusion from goods and services including material goods and services (education healthcare etc);

Labour market exclusions (unemployment, underemployment and employment in low paying unstable employment);
Exclusion from land (homelessness, housing and unsettled land claims);
Exclusion from security including physical security;
Exclusion from human rights (discrimination, non-acceptance by mainstream culture); and
Exclusion from macro-economic development strategy (the adverse effects of the market and restructuring policies. In the developing world this would also include the effects of structural adjustment policies) (p. 45).

Social exclusion may also be voluntary or self imposed. This is where the question of agency in social exclusion comes in. The agent is the one in whom the responsibility for the exclusion lies. Here the agency "could be people experiencing aspects of exclusion themselves, in which case the exclusion is voluntary; or, more likely, they are members of the parent society itself, in which case the exclusion is involuntary" (Richardson and Le Grand, 2002; 3). A typical case of voluntary exclusion is the case of the popular Boko Haram group in Nigeria. The group seek to exclude themselves from formal education because they consider it sinful.

In so doing, they have actually taken up arms and are prepared to go to any length to enforce their believe. It is within this context that the definition of a socially excluded person advanced by Burrhardt, Le Grand Piachaud, (1999) is considered apropos here. To Burrhardt, Le Grand Piachaud, "An individual is socially excluded if (a) he or she is geographically resident in a society, (b) he or she cannot participate in the normal activities of citizens in that society, and (c) he or she would like to so participate, but is prevented from doing so by factors beyond his or her control" (cited in (Richardson and Le Grand, 2002; 3).

One attraction of social exclusion as a concept in policy and development is its appeal as a more subtle expression than related concept like 'poverty' and 'social discrimination'. Further, social exclusion as a term in development studies provide more ground for "the understanding of deprivation firmly in traditions of social science analyses" (de Haan, 1999: 1), though, the term exclusion tends to find more application within the non-economic social scientists.

Adult Education

As this is a forum of academics and professionals in adult education, we shall not bother to engage in a lengthy examination of the meaning of adult education as a concept. Rather we shall proceed to adapt one of the several definitions of the concept that are available in literature. This is in spite of the fact that it has been said that "adult education is so amorphous and diverse that it is difficult to define it precisely (London and Wenker, 1963; 1), a difficulty that is informed more by the diversity in its clientele, subject matter and delivery techniques.

It is within the above background that we shall adopt the definition offered by Cyril Houle. According to Houle (1996), adult education defines

the process by which men and women (alone, in groups, or in institutional settings) seek to improve themselves or their society by increasing their skill, knowledge, or sensitiveness; or it is any process by which individuals, groups, or institutions try to help men and women improve in these ways. The fundamental system of practice of the field, if it has one, must be discerned by probing beneath many different surface realities to identify a basic unity of process. (p. 41).

This definition can be described as comprehensive because it emphasizes variety in terms of process and practice and more importantly, it highlights on a more important feature of adult education that is quite relevant to our need in this paper and that is voluntariness. Being an activity designed for and embarked upon by those who are regarded as mature, participation in adult education is always voluntary. However it is to be noted that there may be other reasons that can compel participation.

Critical Adult Education

Critical theory is all about transformation of the field of adult education and proper understanding of its purpose (Mezirow, 1981). Critical theorists posit that for emancipation to take place, there must be an active participation and involvement of the oppressed people themselves. What this goes to say is that a top down programme of intervention may not work for the oppressed as such programmes are designed without active involvement of the target of such intervention. Rather a bottom up approach which Freire (1974) has described as "an active, ideological, critical and criticism-

stimulating method" (p.45) will offer a more pro oppressed and more inclusive approach.

The focus of critical theory is to expand the scope of adult literacy programme beyond its usual frontier of teaching specific literacy skills to a level at which participants are able to imbibe some measures of social activism and possess the urge for societal transformation. A critical adult literacy education (CADE) thus takes literacy beyond skill acquisition and seeks to equip the adult with the capacity to examine alternatives.

Critical adult education is associated with some distinctive features which (Degener, 2001) has identified as follows:

1. Programmes are designed with due consideration of the background, needs of students.
2. Relationship between teachers and students is informed by dialogue
3. Environment of teaching and learning should be democratic and such that allows students to use their developing literacy skills to analyze critically their place in society, understand how certain cultural assumptions and biases have put them and their families at risk, and ultimately learn how to challenge the status quo.
4. Critical adult education programmes equip learners with the capacity to use the newly acquired literacy and other skills to transform their lives and the society in which they live. (p. 27)

As an intellectually focused strategy, CADE seeks to create a world that is just by equipping people with the intellectual capacity that enhances their ability to query the status quo and move the society forward. Critical adult education is also in line with Eduard Lindeman statement on the meaning of adult education when he asserted that:

Authoritative teaching, examinations which preclude original thinking, rigid pedagogical formulae—all these have no place in adult education... Small groups of aspiring adults who desire to keep their minds fresh and vigorous; who begin to learn by confronting pertinent situations; who dig down into the reservoirs of their experience before resorting to texts and secondary facts; who are not led in the discussion by teachers who are also searchers after wisdom and not oracles: this constitutes the setting for adult education, the modern quest for life's meaning (Lindeman, 1926, pp. 10-11).

Countries within the North American region (especially Nicaragua and Cuba), have successfully adopted CADE in their literacy programmes especially during their years of struggles. Though it might be said that the success of critical pedagogy in these countries was influenced more by the fact those countries were under repressive administration ((Degener, 2001), the fact still remains that the motivation for the adoption of CADE was the need to cope with social challenges of which social exclusion was one.

In a critical adult education programmes, learners are exposed to the usual literacy skill acquisition and, in addition, to use of literacy skills as a weapon to query the status quo. This is where CADE is relevant to fostering of social inclusion in Nigeria. Literacy learning can serve to equip learners with the skills of reading, writing and numeracy in addition to civics education where the diversity and exclusion issues in the society would be critically examined.

Managing Social Exclusion through Critical Adult Education in Nigeria

Our next issue of focus is on the examination of the various ways through which critical adult education can be effective as an agent of inclusion especially in the management of cases of social exclusion in Nigeria. But first, a brief look at social exclusion in Nigeria is considered essential.

Social Exclusion in Nigeria

Nigeria as a diverse country with more than two hundred ethnic groups prominent among which are the Hausa-Fulani in the North, Igbo in the East and Yoruba in West. In addition there is multitude of adherents of different religions of which Islam and Christianity account for the largest. The presence of this diversity has not really being an avenue to forge unity among Nigerian as the nation continues to record inter-ethnic crisis and religious rioting in different parts of the country (especially in the North) on annual basis.

Ethnicity and religious adherence do at times dictate tune of politics and access to resources which means some experience exclusion from social services and access (Aina, Hughes, Kerr-Wilson, and Soyoola, 2008). Social exclusion in Nigeria may be voluntary and non voluntary with the former being more preponderant. As a matter of fact it is the emergence of Boko Haram phenomenon that has served to bring voluntary social exclusion into focus in the country.

Individuals and groups experience varying form and level of exclusion in Nigeria. People may be excluded from access to economic resources, education, employment or alienated from governance, Agents of exclusion may include government, elites, social groups, community leaders and religious organisations/leaders.

Social exclusion is driven by factors such as:

1. Poverty
2. High level of illiteracy
3. Extreme interpretation of religious codes leading in most cases to violent confrontation with adherents of other faiths.
4. Ethnicity, indigeneity (DFID, 2008) which have created what is now known as settler syndrome.
5. gender inequalities
6. physical disability

These factors can determine the extent to which individual or group can access social services and assets, as well as participate in politics of the community. Experience has shown that governance is conducted and resources managed in such a way that individuals are excluded from social and economic activity that are quite to their self realization and esteem as members of the community.

Critical Adult Education and Social Exclusion in Nigeria

As earlier alluded, literacy level is one of the major drivers of social exclusion in Nigeria. This is one reason where adult education is quite relevant to the promotion of inclusive practices and arrangement in Nigeria. *Since Crisis and conflicts in Nigeria are essentially adult affairs, it is only reasonable that adult education plays a critical role in efforts to contain them.*

The essence of CADE as an agent of social inclusion in Nigeria is to get participants to be able to reflect on their experience and or in relation to those of others. As posited by (Davison, 1989), "Critically examining experience can lead to the awareness that actions could have been, and can be, otherwise" (p.1). in critical adult education context, literacy is taught using a model that encourages critical thinking and examination of context and background of issues. CADE therefore provides avenue for adults to

acquire literacy competence and be able to apply the competence to in the interpretation of social situations especially the implications of activities and events on the social well being and harmony of the community.

For those experiencing exclusion, CADE can be utilized to explore their condition of social and economic isolation with a view to identifying alternatives and confronting the situation headlong and not in a violent manner. Here the strategy of engagement may be relevant to their situation. This involves attempt to reach out to the agents of exclusion and getting them to appreciate the situation of the excluded. An interactive forum which involves joint examination of issues by the agents and the excluded during literacy learning can provide the needed opportunity for this engagement.

Application of Critical Adult Education Strategies in Literacy Centres

To begin with, it is essential to state that the use of learning through conversation and interaction strategy is central to effective critical adult education lesson. The essence of conversation in CADE is to allow each participant to express him/herself and at the end, develop an interpretive skill which is necessary for critical consciousness.

During lesson, participants are guided (by the facilitator) to identify all the factors that tend to lead to and sustain exclusion and the various ways in which whether as individual or group members, they have contributed to causing and/or sustaining exclusion of certain group from the mainstream.

In box 1 below, a hypothetical case which the facilitator can use for conversation and engagement with participant during a literacy session is presented.

Hypothesis 1: choice between financial gain and communal well-being

Ayo, an economically deprived and illiterate adult is offered money by Adamu, leader of a particular political group that is bent on fomenting trouble in the community as a protest for loosing in a ward election. Ayo is to serve as the arrowhead of the protest that was to be marked by violence and destruction of winning party members' properties.

The Facilitator in a critical adult education will now engage the group in conversation using the hypothetical case. He/she is expected to raise the following questions on the above hypothesis.

- a. *What are the motives of Adamu in engaging Ayo and what really does he stand to gain as the sponsor?*
- b. *Apart from the funding what other resources has the mastermind (Adamu) committed to the 'project'? for instance; Is any member of his/her own family going to form part of the infantry team? If none, why?*
- c. *What does Ayo stand to gain and what does he stand to lose as an individual*
- d. *What are the options available for Ayo*

The whole essence of the above interaction in the literacy class is to show the participants that there is always (1) an alternative to any opportunity and (2) every opportunity has its own cost and (3) that it is individual's ability to identify alternative and cost and be able to resolve the conflict between the two that makes the critically literate person.

Other critical questions may include:

1. *Why are we divided in this community/nation?*
2. *Whose is benefiting from our being divided?*

The main point which the facilitator needs to ponder about here is that it is not effective teaching when teacher teaches to answer question but it is effective when teaching is directed to asking question. Thus it is not for the teacher to answer question but to ask them and get the learners to answer them and at the same time be able to ask further questions. The point here is that literacy empowerment goes beyond acquisition of reading, writing and numeracy skills, being economic active and productive to being informed enough to identify the demands of the environment and respond actively to those demands.

Adoption of CADE as a strategy for implementing literacy programme may however face some challenges. Some of the critical challenges to be addressed within the context of critical Adult Education include but not limited to: meeting the training needs of adult literacy facilitator who are not competent in the methodology of critical adult education; widening access and

participation in adult learning for excluded groups like persons with disability especially those with sensory or mobility impairments; and those who suffer some other forms of social exclusion. In addition all the factors that tend to stymie access and participation in learning for the adult have to be identified and removed. Factors which may border on meeting cost of learning, social commitments and mobility have to be removed.

One other major issue that have to be addressed is that of participation in adult education and literacy programmes. There is a general low level of participation in non formal adult education especially literacy education in the country. This has been confirmed by the findings of the 2010 literacy survey in the country conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). The survey reveals that "only about 30.2 per cent of the adult population was aware of the existence of the literacy programmes in the country. This is because some literacy Centres are located far away from people who needed them" (NBS, 2010; 28). To address the issue, the survey recommended that the level of literacy education of adults in the formal and non-formal education should be raised. Intense awareness campaigns are therefore needed to mobilise for quality participation

Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper presents critical adult education as a model for managing diversity and fostering social inclusion in Nigeria. Adult education can be a potent force for managing diversity and enhancing social stability especially in an environment of social divergence and contending forces of disintegration that obtain in Nigeria. But then, design and implementation of adult literacy programme has to move away from the traditional arrangement which, rather than seeking to empower the client, tend dominate them. Adult education programme should therefore be designed with beneficiaries and not for them. It is like the popular saying of the disability studies groups (DSG) – 'Nothing about us without us'

There is a strong need for empirical examination of social exclusion in Nigeria. Suffice to say that social exclusion has not really been a major focus of research in Nigeria. As noted by DFID (2008) "very little attention has been given to the role of social exclusion in Nigeria's national development strategy, which has poverty reduction at its heart" (p. 4).

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The entire nation was shaken in the middle of December 2012 by the shameful, cruel, beastly and unimaginable sexual harassment and physical assault of a 23 year old girl who was a qualified Physiotherapist by a few men including a minor boy in a moving bus in the night on December 16, 2012 when she was returning back home alongwith her friend. The rest is known to all in India and the world through widely covered media reports about her struggle for life both in Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi and Mount Elizabeth Hospital, Singapore. The sad end of her death came on December 29, 2012 as shocking news to one and all who believe in the prestige and safety of women and girls.

The girl with all wounds, both in mind and body, bravely lived for a few days due to her own internal strength and urge for living alive. Yes, doctors in both the hospitals gave the best of attention and treatment to her. In order to conceal her real name from the media glare the same was not revealed and hence, she got the nick name of 'Damini' by some and 'Nirbhaya' by some others. Even if the real name is disclosed in future she will be remembered for ever by these two names only.

In India sexual harassment on women, young girls and even small children happens every day and is covered in print media as small news items. Unfortunately, such news is found to have been not given importance by many of the readers and even if someone reads is not giving any serious thought to this great social problem. Of course, a few others read such news for pleasure of knowing the cruel illegal act.

But in the present case it was not. The youth, particularly young girls and boys, came out openly to extend moral support to the girl and expressed their utmost anger against those who committed the criminal act. The anger shown by the youth even shattered the government and compelled to go for formulating a new law for severe punishment and disposing the case expeditiously. This shows clearly that if youth come forward, join together and raise voice against any matter which affect the prestige, integrity and

morality of the country in general and any section of the society in particular, they can deal the same effectively. This is the positive side of the whole sad episode.

The hope now is that our country is in the safe hands of youth who are the shapers of the future.

Dr. V. Mohankumar

Gender Inequalities among Agricultural Labourers in Chittoor District

*C.Lathamma
K. Rathnaiah*

Introduction

More than two-thirds of the population of India is dependent on agriculture. Though Green Revolution technologies enhanced agricultural productivity, they also widened economic disparities and deepened gender discrimination in community life. The introduction of capital-intensive technologies in the agricultural sector has had differential impact on men and women and women have been adversely affected due to lack of access to technology (Boserup, 1970).

Gender discrimination in the employment sector is enduring, an overwhelming majority of 'women working within the boundaries of informal sectors. Despite all the developmental efforts, 96 percent of the women workers in the country are reportedly employed in the unorganized sector (Deshpande and Deshpande, 1999) characterized by low wages, high levels of insecurity of employment and appallingly poor conditions of work. Developmental efforts of the post- World War II period have had differential impacts on women and men of the developing economies. Implementation of structural adjustment programmes and restructuring of economies which commenced during the mid-1980s lay emphasis on encouragement of private capital. Retreat of the state especially from the welfare sectors and cutbacks in public sector expenditure accentuated the vulnerability of the poor particularly women, in many of the developing countries. (Gosh, 1994). Several studies have questioned the argument that in the process of development, the benefits would "trickle down" to all sections of society irrespective of gender, class, and community.

Given the fact that, gender inequalities operate within the large matrix of structural inequalities such as class, caste, race and ethnicity, the implications of such unequal power relations on various aspects of women's life need to be highlighted in the analysis of women's work and health. Gender inequality is reflected in the unequal sharing of benefits and adversities

between man and woman. It reflects itself in women's differential access to employment, education, health care, resources, and welfare measures. And it distorts social justice and development. Thus, contrary to the traditional epidemiological methods of identifying the disease and exploring its causes, we should begin by identifying the major areas and activities of women's lives and then move on to examining their impacts on women's health and well being.

Even though a number of studies are available on gender inequalities in development planning, and its adverse impact on women, only very few studies focus on how gender discrimination and other social inequalities are detrimental to the health of women. The critique on non- inclusion of gender as a parameter in the analysis of women's health has a history of only few decades, while the overemphasis on biomedicine as the key to improve health status has been questioned by various scholars during the 19th century itself. Engel's work on the conditions of working class in England and Virchow's contributions to the understanding of social determinants of health were some of the important contributions to the broadening of the concept of health and the notion of multiple causality in the analysis of health and disease. In India, this view was accepted by the National Movements, and the Bhore Committee (1946) found that the low state of public health and the resultant high mortality and morbidity, especially among mothers and children, was preventable. According to the report, the low health status was mainly due to the absence of environmental hygiene, adequate nutrition, and provision of preventive and curative services, with co-operation from the people. However, beyond the recognition that health and diseases are the outcome of the interaction of various socio-economic, political, ecological and cultural factors, the actual interventions remained more techno-centric.

Apart from this, various studies have amply recorded the associations of poor health and 'Various social constraints such as poverty, hierarchical caste structure, inefficient health care services and other inequities (Banerji, 1982; Qadeer, 1985; Zurbrigg, 1985). In a highly stratified society, those who are at the bottom of the social order, who do not have adequate access to and control over the resources and public facilities are deprived of the basic needs including education, employment, housing, sanitation, and health. When we look into women's health! ill health, the issues are more complex as the social roots of it are inextricably interlinked with the iniquitous power relations between men and women in different spaces including home, work place, and society.

Women and health

Despite the fact that women's mortality and life expectancy rates give us an idea regarding the macro-level picture of their health, the strength of any analysis of women's health and welfare would lie in recognition of enormously varying socio-economic, cultural, and geopolitical context of their life. Redefining women's health, Doyal (1995) argues that, contrary to traditional epidemiological methods of identifying the disease and exploring its causes, we should begin by identifying the major arenas and activities that constitute women's lives and their impacts on women's health and well-being.

In India, until the late '80s, the female mortality rate was higher than the male mortality rate. Though this trend has reversed subsequently, the sex differentials in child mortality indicate an unfavourable situation for the girl child during 1996, the female child death per 100 male child death was 163.1 (WHO, 2000).

According to Sen (2001), "the mortality disadvantage of women works mainly through a widespread neglect of health, nutrition and other interests of women that influence survival".

Given the patriarchal nature of medicine, until the recent past, crucial health issues of women were perceived fertility and its consequences, to wit, health in relation with population issues. Hence, in India, studies on women's health highlighting aspects other than maternity and nutrition do not have a long history. Even the WHO's initiatives on women's health which has a history of more than three decades, began with a focus on maternal health and family planning. However, over time, with new knowledge and understanding of the deeper issues in women's health, the vision has widened to relocate women's health in wider social context with a perspective of gender mainstreaming (WHO, 2000).

Objectives

The major objective of the study therefore, is to understand the linkage between gender inequalities among agricultural labourers in agricultural field.

- Examining how gender inequalities affect women's lives

- Understanding the socio-economic background of women workers
- To identifying the factors influencing gender inequalities.

Socio-economic and Demographic Profile of Agricultural Labourers

Historically, the agricultural labour force was constituted by the lowest sections of the social order who lived in great penury and deprivation. The majority of them even today live in appallingly poor conditions with high levels of illiteracy, indebtedness, and enforced idleness.

Operational definitions of the concepts used

Women agricultural labourers: Women who conduct agricultural operations as hired wage labour and whose main source of livelihood is wage labour in agriculture.

Household: The members of a family who stay together in the same house and partake of the food prepared in the same kitchen. The terms household and family are used synonymously.

The landless: Those who do not own or possess any land

Sample

For the purpose of the study I have selected three mandals of Chittoor district Chandragiri, Renigunta and Chinnagottigallu. From each mandal have selected one village the next stage 30 members have selected from each village and 20 members have selected from village of Chinnagottigallu.

Variables of the Agricultural Labourers Respondents

Variables	No. of respondents	Percentage
Gender	50	
a). Male	20	40%
b) Female	30	60%
Age (years)	50	
20-25	15	30%

26-30	20	40%
31-35	08	16%
36-40	07	14%
Caste	50	
OC	10	20%
BC	15	30%
SC/ST	25	50%
Income	50	
Below -1000	10	20%
1001-2000	15	30%
2001-3000	09	18%
3001-4000	07	14%
4001-5000	05	10%
5000 -above	04	8%
Education	50	
Illiterates	30	60%
Literates	20	40%
a) Primary	8	16%
b) Secondary	7	14%
c) Inter	4	8%
d) Degree	1	2%
Type of family	50	
Nuclear family	40	80%
Joint family	10	20%

The above table shows the 40 per cent of the respondents are males and rest 60 percent are females and age group of 26-30 respondents highest percentage of percent 40 lowest percentage in 36-40 age group of 14 percent and highest per cent respondents SC/ST. 50 percent respondents, lowest 20 percentage of OC respondents and highest income 1001-2000 30 percent of respondents lowest income 5000 above respondents in 8 percent and Illiterates 60 percent of the respondents, literates 40 percent and Nuclear Family in highest respondents 80 percent and only 20 percent respondents in joint family.

Factors

Employment and gender bias

Agriculture used to be the major source of employment for both men

and women in the village. But, the proportion of male labour in the agricultural sector has declined over time. Men began to move out for better employment and higher wages. In our sample were women workers whose work experience ranged as short as one to two years. In the study area double cropping rice cultivation is prevalent. Each crop has duration of nearly five to five and half months. The first season commences in mid-May and the second season in late October. Inter-cropping in between the two seasons with vegetables and pulses is on the decline. Employment opportunities in the agricultural sector are diminishing quite rapidly due to changes in land use and cropping patterns associated with commercialization of agriculture. There is a distinct gender division of labour within the agricultural sector in the study area and gender discriminatory practices are evident not only in allocation of types of work and rates of wages but in timings of work as well. Introduction of Green Revolution technologies deepened such divisions with men increasingly confining themselves to mechanical operations like using tractor or spraying insecticides. Tedious manual activities such as transplanting of seedling, weeding, harvesting, transporting harvest, threshing, drying of hay, etc are wholly or mainly done by women. Other than the mechanical operations, men's work includes the making of field boundaries and setting up of barriers in the field. Also, some of the men work in the drying of hay. Only very few men, and that too from the Scheduled Castes, participate in activities such as manual harvesting.

Expenditure and men's share

It was difficult to gather information from all the respondents on household expenditure on food, education, personal expenses, and health care classified according to sex. Focus group discussions suggest that in more than 90 percent of the households, the men's share of expenditure on food items is quite small. A good proportion of men's earnings are spent on consumption of alcohol, outside eating, cinema, and travel. According to many women respondents, men give at the most Rs 20-25 for household expenses when they get Rs 100 a day. What the men usually spend at the household level, according to women, subscription for chit funds and occasionally for health care and education of children. In all, they spend a maximum of Rs 40 to 55 from their income of Rs 100.

The rest of the money goes for personal consumption. Women spend very little on their personal needs. In fact, during the work days they spend Rs 6-7 for tea during lunch time and Rs. One for betel leaves among those

who chew (the number is very few). That is, when the woman spends almost her entire earning on household needs, men spend only 40 to 55 percent of theirs. This points to the fact that despite the wages of men being higher than of women, when it comes to the household expenditure, it is women's contribution that becomes the substantial part. The woman's role as the substantial provider of the family subsistence, however, calls into question the long-standing notion that it is the man who is the major breadwinner of the family.

Gender Inequities in the Household and the Society

Gender discrimination against women manifests itself in intra-household relations and in the social space. Within the household, women and men are differently positioned in relation to the allocation of responsibilities, processes of decision-making, and access to and control over resources.

Intra-household relations

Sharing of domestic responsibility

Irrespective of the differentials in socio-cultural dimensions across communities and classes, women shoulder the responsibility of domestic labour. Among the agricultural worker households too the case is not different; women perform an overwhelming proportion of the various items of unremunerated domestic work; in addition they attend to paid work in the farms. During work days, woman wake up at around 4.30-5 am to finish cooking, cleaning and feeding of children before going to work by 7.30-7.45 am; they get back to bed only by 10-10.30pm.

Nearly 70 percent of the women reported they do not get any help from their men in the discharge of domestic responsibilities such as cooking, fetching water, washing clothes, cleaning floors or caring of children. There is no difference in this regard even in the better off families among them. The few women who get support get it either in fetching water or in the care of children.

The gendered relations have created an environment at home which does not allow women to put their feet up even after long hours of tedious, backbreaking work such as transplanting, weeding or harvesting. After collecting wages, these women rush to the nearby shops for buying food

articles and then to their kitchen for preparing dinner. Usually, women do errands and fetch food articles and other household items, in addition to the work in the kitchen.

Obviously, most of these works are invisible and not reckoned as work at all. They are considered women's responsibility. It will not, however, be entirely correct to believe that all women internalize such gender roles uncritically. It is largely the social pressures that impose such burdens on them.

Decision-making and resource control

Decision-making and control of available resources are two important areas where distinct gender inequities prevail in most families. The role of decision-making in the household is decided on the basis of sex and age. The role of women in economic and other important decision-making for the households is insignificant. Nearly three-fifths of our women respondents reported that they do not have any role in decision-making in the household and that it is their father, husband or other male members who take decisions. Nevertheless, in one-sixth of the families, women have an important role in decision-making together with men. In one-eighth of the households, women take decision because they are households with only women, or of widows or separated women without older male members. Although gender discrimination ascribes to women an inferior status, old women (mother or elder sister) often wield the decision-making power. But the proportion of such households was found to be less than 10 percent.

Gender inequities are often reflected in women's lack of access to and control over resources including their own wages. Since the size of landholdings among the workers is limited (which are mostly homesteads) and so are their alternative array of economic resources. Their labour power is practically the only economic resource they have. Even over women's wages men wield considerable control. Nearly one-half of women in our sample reported that they have little freedom in spending their wage income; they have to hand over their earnings to their husbands.

The women, who are 'free' to spend their income, exhaust it entirely on household expenditure. Thus, the 'freedom' they have is to spend it on household consumption mainly on food articles. 'Freedom' in fact becomes fetters-the entire burden of purchasing household consumption items is

passed on thereby to the shoulders of the women. Many of the women who conceded that they are forced to hand over their wages to husbands reported that they are not allowed to enquire into the ways their husbands spend the money. Also, for many of them, any reluctance on their part to hand over the money would invite abuse and assault.

Men wield control not only over economic resources but on their women's mobility and freedom to work as well. Men and women have more conflicting than co-operative priorities. But the conflicts of interests are camouflaged most of the time under semblance of consensus. Open conflicts affect women adversely.

Caste Discrimination in Community Life

Caste discrimination in the socio-cultural life in the village is not yet been completely wiped out. The intensity of such discriminatory practices has undoubtedly declined. Even today, caste Hindus and the OBCs would not eat food cooked in SC families. Lower caste people are addressed by their caste names. The lower social status of SCs in terms of land ownership, education, employment, and living standards still continues and acts as barrier to social upward mobility. Most of them still lead lives mired in poverty and illiteracy and poor health.

We are committed to gender equity in all aspects of our programs and operations. Because many countries have socially ingrained gender inequities, we often must focus specific attention and resources on ensuring that women are fully able to engage in development activities and benefits.

We have also learned through more than 45 years of experience that using gender approaches and analysis is part of doing "smart" development. Gender approaches and tools allow us to bring an awareness of gender issues to our program design implementation, and monitoring and evaluation activities.

Community-Driven Gender Approaches

"Gender" refers to the roles, responsibilities, attributes and power relations that are socially constructed by and assigned to men and women of a given society or community. These constructs vary greatly by culture, geographic region, socioeconomic status and context and they change over time.

Women Key to Economic Growth

Women are essential to economic growth in developing countries. Moreover, investments in women often return multiple dividends in terms of helping to improve the well-being of their children families and communities.

- ◀ Women are central wage earners. Their earning and productive activities provide vital income to many households.
- ◀ Women also are vital food producers and prepares. Women in developing countries produce between 60 and 80 per cent of food crops.
- ◀ Yet women continue to face social barriers and inequities that prevent them from realizing their full economic potential.

Women and Gender Inequities

In both developed and developing countries, women face gender – based inequities that often impede their ability to earn a living and better their lives and those of their families.

- Women worldwide typically earn less than men for the same work, and their jobs are constructed in lower in lower paying industries and the informal sector. In addition family labour is usually unpaid.
- Women tend to work longer hours under the double burden of domestic and remunerative labour.
- Women constitute the majority of the world's agriculture labourers but receive only a small fraction of the available extension and support services.
- Women have less access to and control over recourses, benefits and opportunities, including land, assets, credit, training and household income.
- Female-headed household are overrepresented among the poor food insecure and women and their children are the majority of refugees and displaced populations.

- Women are further disadvantaged economically and socially because they often receive approximately half the years of schooling of men, and have less access to health care services and fewer legal rights.

Moreover, women's empowerment cannot be achieved without engaging men in the process.

To facilities progress toward gender equity, we encourage gender audits and gender awareness training in our programs and operations. In line with our core values, we respect diversity, emphasize a participatory culture and promote transparency.

Suggestions

- The strategy under this approach was to argue that, in the context of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), gender analysis made good economic sense. It was recognized the understanding men's and women's roles and responsibilities as part of the planning of development interventions improved project effectiveness.
- Gender equality, leading to increased work opportunities, enhanced capacities for livelihood developments, labour rights to women, enhanced social protection and overall increasing voice can enable women to participate equally in productive employment growth of the nation, gender equality, linked with women empowerment, is this seen has a key aspect of economic growth.
- Women's involvement in the process of decision-making, and creating awareness are the most urgent requirements of modern society. There is a significant gap between women's potential and actual productivity every women is a fountain of power and energy but the boulders that have blocked its exuberance have to be removed to allow this stream to how freely. Women will them March on their own.
- Gender gap in four critical areas of inequality between men and women. Economic participation and opportunity outcomes on salaries, participation levels and access to high skilled employment; educational attainment outcomes on access to basic and higher level education, political

empowerment outcomes on representation in decision making structures; health and survival outcomes on life expectancy and sex ratio.

Conclusion

The study points out some of the poignant issues in the life of women agricultural workers. There was a high load of morbidity among them. A major proportion of the significantly high levels of perceived health problems among them are constituted by chronic skeletal muscular problems. The lives of these women are plagued by high levels of occupational and often poverty-induced diseases, reproductive health problems. Abortions, premature delivery, and still birth are outcomes of their deprived socio-economic, cultural, and political conditions and gender inequities. The socio-cultural norms and practices that endanger the women's health are reflected in their low age at marriage and low age at first childbirth. Also, the high mortality of children below the age of five years even among women of younger age groups explains the high levels of fertility among this group of women.

Other than underemployment, illiteracy and inadequate facilities for life, women's access to 'livelihood is rendered increasingly difficult by men's lack of economic and emotional support and violence against women. Men's share in the sustenance of the family is found to be relatively much less than that of women in the sample households.

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Lifelong Learning: Need and Importance

Prabhakar Chavan

Introduction

Lifelong education means education resulting from integration of formal, non-formal, and informal education so as to create ability for continuous lifelong development of quality of life. Learning is therefore part of life which takes place at all times and in all places. It is a continuous lifelong process, going on from birth to the end of our life, beginning with learning from families, communities, schools, religious institutions, workplaces, etc. The African traditional society envisioned lifelong learning by the roles one was expected to play in society from child, youth (boy or girl), young adult, junior elder to senior elder. Today with less defined changes in life roles there is need for new strategies to motivate lifelong learning

Characteristics of Lifelong Learning

The concept of lifelong learning spans a wide range of education and training issues and speaks to many different audiences. Common themes conveyed in literature on lifelong learning articulate four characteristics which transform 'education and training' into the concept of 'lifelong learning'

Informal Learning

The first characteristic of lifelong learning is that it encompasses both formal and non-formal/informal types of education and training. Formal learning includes the hierarchically structured school system that runs from primary school through the university and organized school-like programs created in business for technical and professional training. Whereas informal learning describes a lifelong process whereby individuals acquire attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educational influences and resources in his or her environment, from family and neighbors, from work and play, from the market place, the library and the mass media.

Self-motivated Learning

The second common theme of lifelong learning is the importance of self-motivated learning. There is a heavy emphasis on the need for individuals to take responsibility for their own learning. Lifelong learners are, therefore, not defined by the type of education or training in which they are involved, but by the personal characteristics that lead to such involvement. Cassandra B. Whyte emphasized the importance of locus of control and successful academic performance.^{[13][14]} Personal characteristics of individuals who are most likely to participate in learning, either formally or informally throughout their lives, have acquired:

- ◆ The necessary skills and attitudes for learning, especially literacy and numeracy skills.
- ◆ The confidence to learn, including a sense of engagement with the education and training system.
- ◆ Willingness and motivation to learn.

Although education and training may have economic benefits for individuals, it is recognized that economic incentives alone are not necessarily sufficient to motivate people to engage in education and training. A range of motivational barriers need to be identified and addressed in order for some people to participate in education and training. While some of these barriers are economic and can be overcome with financial assistance, many people are deterred from engaging in education and training by social and personal factors.

An Australian survey of participants in adult education courses identified a range of factors motivating people to undertake adult learning, such as

- ◆ To upgrade job skills
- ◆ To start a business
- ◆ To learn about a subject or to extend their knowledge
- ◆ To meet new people
- ◆ To develop self-confidence
- ◆ To get involved in the community
- ◆ To develop personal skills
- ◆ To participate in social networking

By acknowledging the range of factors that act as both a motivation and

barrier to engagement in education and training, lifelong learning policies tend to promote participation in learning for its own sake rather than as a means to a specific end (i.e. employment). The goal of participation in learning thus appears to be more significant than the reason why. This can be seen as an acknowledgment of the range of factors that motivate people to participate in formal and informal learning other than, or in addition to, instrumental goals.^[11]

Self-funded Learning

Self-funded learning is the third characteristic of the lifelong learning literature. The concept of self-funded learning is linked to the characteristic of self motivated learning. In recognition of the costs involved in subsidizing lifelong involvement in education and training, the lifelong learning policy agenda emphasizes the responsibility of individuals to finance their own continuing education and training with minimal support from government. The West report defines a lifelong learner as a person who takes responsibility for their own learning and who is prepared to invest time, money and effort in education or training on a continuous basis.^[16]

Universal Participation

The fourth distinctive feature of the lifelong learning policy literature is a commitment to universal participation in education and training. In advocating 'lifelong learning for all', the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) argues that universal participation is necessary for meeting the economic demands of the 21st century. The concept of universal participation includes both informal and formal learning for all purposes - social, economic and personal. In arguing that universal participation in lifelong learning is necessary for social cohesion in a time of rapid economic and social change, the Delores report proposes four characteristics of lifelong learners that would be the Pillars of a learning society:

- ◆ Learning to do (acquiring and applying skills, including life skills)
- ◆ Learning to be (promoting creativity and personal fulfillment)
- ◆ Learning to know (an approach to learning that is flexible, critical and capable)
- ◆ Learning to live together (exercising tolerance, understanding and mutual respect)

Importance of Lifelong Learning

The importance of Lifelong Learning/Education has been repeatedly stressed in several educational policy documents and discourses in India. While the Report of the Education Commission (1964-66) observed that education does not end with schooling but is a lifelong process; the National Policy on Education in India 1986 (modified in 1992) considered Lifelong Education as the cherished goal of the educational process which presupposes universal literacy, provision of opportunities for youth, housewives, agricultural and industrial workers and professionals to continue the education of their choice at the pace suited to them. It observes that the critical development issue is the continuous up gradation of skills so as to produce manpower resources of the kind and the number required by the society. Although these policies were translated into practice and a number of Lifelong Learning programs were implemented by governmental, non-governmental organizations and universities in the country during the last three decades, the bulk of the programs continued to focus on adult literacy and continuing education mainly due to the massive number of non literates (300.14 million) and neo literates (110 millions) as estimated by the National Literacy Mission (NLM-Literacy Facts At A Glance, 2007). With the formulation of the Eleventh Five year Plan (2007-2012), the Government of India put forward the idea of expanding the scope of the Continuing Education Program by developing it as Lifelong Education and Awareness Program (LEAP).

This may be partly influenced by the global discourse on Lifelong Learning and partly due to the socio economic changes taking place within and outside the country, several socio economic factors. In a technology driven knowledge based competitive economy, the landscape of learning is fast changing in India. The growth of Indian economy at an average rate of 9.2% per annum during 2006-7 (Economic Survey 2006-7), tremendous expansion of Information Communication Technology and the rapid globalization have all been instrumental in bringing about changes in the job skills so that the workforce keeps on learning and updating their skills to be globally competitive. The country's economic performance depends critically on access to and the adoption of new technology and improving the skills of the labor force. Since 92.4% of India's workforce is in the unorganized sectors (National Sample Survey, 61st Round, 2004-5), they need regular upgrading of skills to compete in the globalize economy. Equipping the labor force with relevant skills implies the need for creating a variety of learning and training

opportunities. In this process, the university system in India will have to play an important role.

Developing Lifelong Learning as a Discipline of Study & Field of Practice

During the XI Plan emphasis would be laid on expanding the scope of Adult Education as Lifelong Learning and improving its quality and developing it as a Discipline of Study and field of practice. Since the knowledge base of Lifelong Learning in India continues to be weak, systematic efforts should be made to generate new knowledge through rigorous researches and scholarly publications. While it may be desirable for the University Departments of Lifelong Learning to collaborate with Government Departments and NGOs, they should not become merely implementing agencies of the readymade programmes but strive to link theory to practice and vice versa and focus on generating knowledge and bringing out publications which are essential functions of Universities.

Global and National Context for Learning and Teaching

Increased demand for external accountability, with the establishment of the National Higher Education Council and the expectation that our degrees shall be benchmarked to international standards.

- ◆ A growing emphasis on flexibility and lifelong learning.
- ◆ Structural changes to academic programmes arising from the development of a credit framework.
- ◆ Increasing focus upon the development of personal and transferable skills, including employability and entrepreneurial skills, to ensure that our graduates have the competence that employers are entitled to expect from them.
- ◆ New forms of learning arising from developments in ICT and other technologies – distance learning and blended learning.
- ◆ The need to increase the provision of part-time, community and work-based learning, including students learning off campus

Role of Educators in Lifelong Learning

- ◆ Educators are guides to sources of knowledge
- ◆ Educators serve as facilitators for the student's acquisition of knowledge
- ◆ People learn by doing, or Action Learning
- ◆ People learn in groups and from each other
- ◆ Assessment is used to guide learning strategies and to identify pathways for future learning.
- ◆ Educators develop individualized learning plans
- ◆ Educators are lifelong learners. Initial training and ongoing professional development are linked
- ◆ People have access to learning opportunities over a lifetime.
- ◆ Learning is put into practice.
- ◆ Learners reflect upon learning and analyze their personal development

Benefits of Lifelong Learning

A number of important socio-economic forces are pushing for the lifelong learning approach. The increased pace of globalization and technological change, the changing nature of work and the labour market, and the ageing of populations are among the forces emphasizing the need for continuing upgrading of work and life skills throughout life. The demand is for a rising threshold of skills as well as for more frequent changes in the nature of the skills required. Nancy Merz Nordstrom, M.Ed., lists the top 10 benefits of lifelong learning as such:

- ◆ Lifelong learning helps fully develop natural abilities.
- ◆ Lifelong learning opens the mind.
- ◆ Lifelong learning creates a curious, hungry mind.
- ◆ Lifelong learning increases our wisdom.
- ◆ Lifelong learning makes the world a better place.
- ◆ Lifelong learning helps us to adapt to change.
- ◆ Lifelong learning helps us find meaning in our lives.
- ◆ Lifelong learning keeps us involved as active contributors to society.
- ◆ Lifelong learning helps us make new friends and establish valuable relationships.
- ◆ Lifelong learning leads to an enriching life of self-fulfillment.

Conclusion

The main criticism of lifelong learning is the predominantly economic interpretation of the term. It has become problematic for many educators and practitioners who have come forward with such terms as "Lifelong (L) Earning" and "Learning to Earn" as their succinct criticism of the way the term is being promoted.

The present situation is a continuation of the OECD lifelong learning discourse made public in its report, *Recurrent Education: A Strategy for Lifelong Learning* which reframed the lifelong learning discussion in largely economist and employability terms. Gelpi points out that "in the industrialized countries, at the time of the economic boom of the 1960's, the ideology of 'lifelong education=general education' reflected in effect the necessity for the rapid training of workers at average and higher levels also in the vocational field .

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Lifelong Learning for Elderly - Role of Universities

Anjali Pahad

Introduction

Lifelong Education is a key to individual and social development in the 21st century. India has set before itself the goal of "Education for All" by 2010. Education is envisaged as an instrument of social transformation and is expected to play an important role in social development. In this context, education should be viewed as a lifelong process. It begins in early childhood and continues throughout life says Chakarborti (2004).

Lifelong Education and learning has generated considerable interest amongst educationists across nations. The report to the International Commission on the Development of Education (1972) has recommended Lifelong Education as a master concept for educational policies in the years to come for both developed and developing countries. In 1996 UNESCO report of International commission on Education for 21st Century reiterated that the concept of learning throughout life emerges as one of the key to the 21st Century.

Many institutions and development agencies are engaged in providing Lifelong Education to people of various age groups, say children, youth, adults and elderly people. The approaches adopted to impart Lifelong Education by these institutions vary in nature. Also the target groups as well as programmes are different from one organization to the other. Some impart Lifelong Education through formal approaches and some others make efforts to reach out to the communities to provide education based on their needs. They are all analogous in their concerns to reach the unreached.

As Lifelong Education suggests learning opportunities throughout life, there is a great significance of lifelong learning for elderly in the present context. There are many responsible factors for this and they are as follows:

(i) Increased Life Expectancy

Advancements in the medical science have resulted in the increased life expectancy of an average person and hence, now-a-days more and more people live longer into old age. Thus providing scope is important for people to avail post-retirement leisure time actively and fruitfully.

(ii) Changing Family Systems

Due to the revolutionary changes in the societies related to technology, social, educational, the family composition in India is shifting from joint to nuclear system wherein only the parents and unmarried children stay together. This creates a strong need for the elderly population of the country to either live independently or stay at old age homes. Family bonds are becoming weak, thus there is a great necessity to have improved quality of life. Lifelong Education has a scope to impart learning opportunities to older people.

(iii) Economic Changes

There are drastic economic changes as the result of globalization process. Hence, the cost of living is increasing day by day. India is witnessing the consuming society in comparison to the conservative societies of the past. The interest rates of the banks are steeping heavily thus affecting the elderly population, particularly those who depend more on the bank balance after retirement. The repercussions of this are directly affecting various facilities to be availed by older generation like medical facilities. Thus, once again it justifies the need of a strong Lifelong Education system for elderly.

Apart from this, there are many other problems like cultural changes in societies, changing recreational patterns the family, migration (temporary or permanent) of the family members which the elderly people have to face today. Hence, the concept of lifelong learning for ageing proves to have promising solutions to such problems and provide pleasure in their life.

Role of Universities in Providing Lifelong Education

Lifelong Education not only offers learning opportunities for life, but is also designed to offer need based programme for different periods of life which ensures effective programme of continuous learning. There are

different modes of continuing education programmes which include distance education, adult and non-formal education, extension education, etc. But the need of the hour is to extensively utilize the available facilities in the university system for imparting Lifelong Education as it can serve the best platform.

This education provides wide access to information and empowerment of masses, thus making efforts for an achieving and aspiring society. So are the objectives of university system. For instance, the infrastructure and other physical amenities of universities are of great help. The financial grants provided to universities can also be of great help to run the Lifelong Education. The university faculty can take-up the responsibility of imparting Lifelong Education through proper intensive orientation. The student community can act as an important nucleus for implementing this education. The university system can also be utilized for involving projects related to extension programs for imparting Lifelong Education. Apart from this the university can play effective role in imparting Lifelong Education in many ways, like:

In India many universities have Adult and Continuing Education Centres/ Departments. The objectives of such centres are to train people in preparing adult educators, conducting programmes/workshops for various sections of the society. These centres can be used for covering the elderly populations of the country. For many years the focus of such centres has been on women, children, youth and their related issues. Now is the time when, adult educators in making, can be imparted training in catering to the elderly as target groups of their programmes. These centres can develop content; provide special learning experiences to develop competencies in their graduates to take up programmes for ageing. According to Joshi (2004) the objectives of such programmes could be:

1. Conception of philosophy of education for ageing.
2. Understanding participatory ageing education.
3. Development of ability to plan Co-ordinate, supervise and evaluate the educational programs for ageing.
4. Organization and legal provision for ageing.

The status of Lifelong Education of ageing people in India is not very satisfactory. There are hardly any systematic organized efforts in this regards. Attempts can be made by targeting the educators by imparting training and

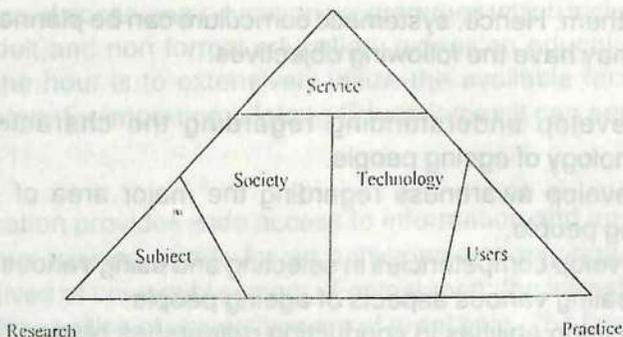
education to them. Hence, systematic curriculum can be planned for ageing people that may have the following objectives:

1. To develop understanding regarding the characteristics and psychology of ageing people.
2. To develop awareness regarding the major area of concerns of ageing people.
3. To develop competencies in selecting and using various approaches for dealing various aspects of ageing people.
4. To develop abilities in conducting researches related to the ageing population.
5. To develop abilities in conceiving planning implementing and monitoring programs for the ageing population.
6. To undergo internship training programs in the organization working for ageing population.

This way such educational programmes for educators can contribute a lot to meet the growing needs of ageing population.

Research is primarily the process of systematic scientific inquiry for new knowledge. Development to any new area is possible through research and scientific technology and its implementation in a right manner. Research in any discipline forms the foundation of technology through which all the developments takes place. It is believed that research is the key to sustainable development. In India, where people have to voluntarily opt for and participate in the developmental programs, the role of research and development becomes crucial and critical. In case of lifelong learning for elderly the need for research is all the more important because it can immediately show in concrete terms the benefits of education to the people.

The researches in Lifelong Education for elderly should focus on theory and practices. Practice oriented research aimed solving field problems, but it creates imbalance if the theory based researches are not conducted. Thus there is a strong need for holistic approach to researches into consideration the paradigm shift in information work and the related social change. In this context Mishra and Joshi (1998) have identified five parameters which should be taken into account the THEORY-RESEARCH - PRACTICE TRIANGLE leading to sustainable development of information infrastructure.



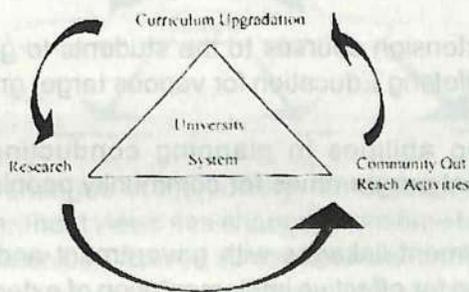
Thus universities can seriously indulge in taking up researches on various aspects of education for ageing and contribute a great deal in this field. The university education system should gear-up to make maximum use of ICT adopting the following, directions in order to disseminate knowledge and information:

1. Utilizing of various ICT like internet, emails, computers, etcetera for interactive communication should be encouraged.
2. Development and use of locally managed media have great potential for effective learning.
3. Blending new educational technique with traditional forms, rituals, festivals in order to encourage people to receive knowledge for Lifelong Education should be promoted.
4. Multimedia approach should be adopted. It means utilizing all the communications media plus the interpersonal communication channels. For designing integrated Lifelong Educational programs.
5. Creating network of satellite video transmission systems and computers to help constituting a lifelong learning system.

Thus appropriate communication strategies based on multimedia approach deliberately planned, organized and directed in a manner and form which are popularly relevant to the changing environment and the desired changes, will be essential for the success of all the lifelong programs for ageing population.

Extension services through its many educational programs and activities intend to bring about changes in what people do and their knowledge,

understanding. Universities should be prepared to take the role and responsibilities of planning and implementation of the Lifelong Education programs for ageing population through the strong community outreach activities. This can prove to be efficient in imparting lifelong knowledge and skills to them. Thus universities with three tier system can really contribute in the development of ageing population.



Lifelong Education for Elderly – An Experience of M.S. University

The Department of Extension and Communication, Faculty of Family and Community Sciences, M.S. University, Vadodara has varied experience in working with the community in which innovations and experiments in imparting Lifelong Education for Elderly people is an important one. This department started functioning in the year 1954 and one of the major components of study was rural extension, with the major objective of preparing village women to participate in community development programs.

It was conceptualized as a program extending educational services to rural families for their upliftment through informal approaches. More than four decades ago, the idea of lifelong learning was very new. In those days, the role of the department was restricted to formal education in the form of teaching and research and non-formal education supplementary education, continuing education were not specified clearly in the objectives of the department.

In course of time the university realized the importance to form objectives to meet the needs of extension and hence, the vision came. Accordingly to it the department should contribute towards building a learning society where various sections of the society, namely rural, urban, semi-urban can continuously approach the department for self-development.

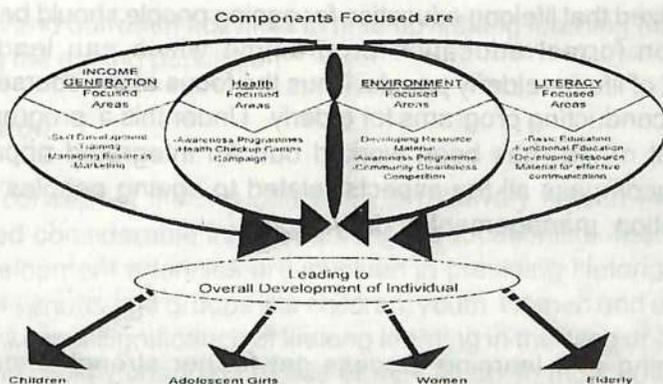
Based on the vision the department has strong focus to carry out the mission of responding to the extension needs of the society while sensitizing university students to the realities faced by the people in the community. The idea behind the extension is to extend the human resources of the university to people and to take back knowledge gained from the community to the university, for further conceptions and implementation of development programs. Hence, the objectives set are:

1. To offer extension courses to the students to gain insight into the needs of Lifelong Education for various target groups.
2. To develop abilities in planning conducting and evaluating development programmes for community people.
3. To development linkages with government and non- government organization for effective implementation of extension programmes.
4. To strengthen community outreach programmes in order to reach out to Women, Adolescent Girls, Children and Elders.
5. To familiarize students with various target groups for extension through a theory and practical oriented courses.
6. To strengthen the component of extension by conducting training for students offering courses and providing research orientation to the students.

To attain these objectives the core mission of the department is:

- to educate
- to train
- to undertake research and
- to provide service to the community which is preserved, reinforced till today as well as further expanded whenever the need arises.

Keeping in view the vision and mission, the department is engaged in imparting Lifelong Education to various sections of the community, covering women, adolescent girls, children and elders. The Lifelong Education is imparted in following areas:



With the rapid changes in the society, the objectives of teaching and learning in the department views sea changes from time to time. Department offers courses in extension as well as communication. The focus of these theory and practical courses is on developing understanding creating awareness regarding various concepts, developing psychomotor skills in using various extension activities approaches, using communication technology. The rural and Urban Extension courses have started focusing on the Elderly people as their target groups, other then women, children and youth.

The courses like Community Health and Recreation is one such courses, where the masters degree students are placed in old age homes or in the clubs for old people where the students have to plan the programmes catering to the needs of the inmates. Under this course the students visit their target groups and interact with them. which is a strongly felt need of the aged people. Further they plan health related activities like medical check-up, lecture by doctors followed by interaction, yoga, etc. Students also plan recreational activities like indoor games, organize film shows. Many times such activities are planned and conducted on the demand of the elderly people. Few such activities are like arranging birthday parties, celebration of the festivals in old homes.

To conduct such activities various methods and approaches like role play, drama, puppet show, folk theatre are used. These methods are generally appreciated by the elderly people.

Another courses is "Adult and Non-formal Education" which the department offers both at the undergraduate and post-graduate level.

It was realized that lifelong education for ageing people should be catered under the non-formal education programme which can lead to the enhancement of life for elderly people. Thus the focus of the course was on planning and conducting programs for elderly. Under this a programme on "Enhancement of life" has been worked out. An integrated approach is adopted to encompass all the aspects related to ageing peoples' life like health, recreation, management of daily chores.

Research

The teaching and learning process get further strengthened if it is integrated with research. Research keeps the process of inquiry vibrant and alive. Hence, the department encourages researches in various areas like health, literacy, environment laws and policies related to different target groups. The focus of the researches are more on women with the result studies emphasize portrayal of women in media, women and human rights, laws protecting women and environment, women and education. Today, the focal point is more on issues and challenges of lifelong learning. Many M.Sc, level projects and Ph.D level studies are focusing on the ageing population of the country. Interdisciplinary researches targeting the third age population are being conducted in the department. To mention a few, Media Usage targeting the third age population are being conducted in the department. To mention a few, media usage by the the elderly, Problems of ageing population of Baroda city, Perceptions of elderly People regarding changing roles of society, Case studies of non government organization working for elderly are the recently undergoing research titles.

Research projects funded by UGC and Ford Foundation are also conducted in the department focusing the ageing population.

The Faculty of Home Science has women studies Research Center which has rich collection of research studies, scientific literature and data on various aspects relating to women. It also has research journals in different disciplines and subjects in print and electronic forms. These facilities help the department students and staff to have access to research resources throughout India and abroad. This helps to widen the research activities and improve quality of research in the department.

Thus, these are the various efforts made by the department in teaching,

research and outreach activities to take up lifelong learning for all, specially targeting the ageing population.

Conclusion

The concept of lifelong education is relatively new in India yet it has generated considerable interest amongst educationists. Many Institutions and development agencies are involved in providing lifelong education to people of various age groups like children, youth, women and elderly people. There is a great significance of lifelong learning in the lives of ageing people due to the rapidly changing needs of the society. In this context, university system can really contribute in imparting lifelong education.

Contributions from higher education system can be through teaching, research and outreach activities. This paper highlighted the efforts made by Department of Home Science Extension and communication in imparting knowledge regarding lifelong learning for elderly to the students through teaching, research and extension. Thus such educational interventions in the life of aged can ensure the quality of their life and can facilitate the maintenance of personal growth and development even during the ageing period. The universities and colleges need to be used as focal points of activities to spread and sustain skills and expertized through the process of lifelong learning.

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Reading Habits of Rural Women

*Pooja Negi
Vijiya Rani Dhoundiyal*

Abstract

Reading is a vital behavioral factor in a knowledge based society and an emerging knowledge economy. The main objective of the study is to access the reading habits of rural women. A sample of one hundred women was taken from Sarkar Ki Aali village of Hawalbagh block, district Almora using incidental random technique. The study provides an insight into the reading habits of rural adult women and result indicated that reading still survives among women in rural societies despite the electronic media boom. However respondents reported that due to excessive burden and insufficient time they get less time for reading. The majority of the women have stressed the need for a local library fully equipped with adequate and varied reading materials.

Introduction

India is considered to be a rural country where women are playing a very significant role in managing the home as well as caring of livestock and farming. They have extensive work load with dual responsibility for farm and household production. Women's work is getting harder and more time-consuming due to ecological degradation and changing agriculture technologies and practices. Women in rural India have an active role and extensive involvement in agricultural and non-agricultural activities. Despite her great contribution in overall development of family and nation, she is found most vulnerable section, continue to face the basic problems; such as economic and political inequalities, social discrimination etc, due to ignorance and illiteracy (Pattanaik, 2005; Dhoundiyal,2005). It is a well known fact that growth of society depends on the capabilities of the people and these, in turn, depend on education of individuals. Well literate women are more apt to adopt modern agricultural practices.

Education plays a significant role in human development. The ability to read and write is an important asset enabling woman in general and rural woman in particular to have increased opportunities in life. Women need constant updating of their knowledge of new changes in order to adapt to the social and technological changes that are taking place at an unprecedented rate.

This could be possible through continuous reading, adequate training, education and effective library facilities to support these information needs. In this context, reading especially is a resource for continued education, acquisition of new knowledge and gaining information with regard to day-to-day life. It is reported that women in every age group read less newspaper (Naik 1981)). Panigrahi (1998), reported that domestic burden and children's education prevents working women from regular reading. Reading is an important aspect associated with literacy. To meet the challenges of 21st century, women should not only know how to read and be literate but also be functionally literate. It is only through education of women that we can expect happier family life, better hygienic condition and greater reduction in fertility rate, increased production and economic prosperity. Rural societies, which depend heavily on women for their survival, are especially resistant to educating them. As per the latest census report (2011), the female literacy rate in India is still low in comparison to male population even after so many years of independence.

In an era when technology has shrunk the world into a global village and when information has been brought to the fingertips of a small section of society, it would be unfortunate if the masses were denied access to basic information due to the inability to read and write. It is reported by Loan (2011) that there is a need to bridge the gaps in reading culture between urban and rural regions for developing a great reading nation. Reading does not only enrich the mind but also sharpens the intellect of the reader. Reading contributes not only to an individual's well being, self development and progress but also to the whole nation and the world. Gordon (1976) stated that the thirst for reading and a wider dissemination of books is a sign of progress in the world.

Reading habit refers to the behavior which expresses the likeness of reading of individual types of reading and tastes of reading (Sangkaeo, 1999). It is a pattern with which an individual organizes his or her reading. The reading habit is one of the powerful and lasting influences in the promotion

of one's personal development in particular and social progress in general. Regular and systematic reading sharpens the intellect, refines the emotions, elevates tastes and provides perspectives for one's living; and thereby prepares one for an effective civilizing force tending to unite social groups through the dissemination of common experiences (Thanuskodi, 2011). A good reading habit is necessary for a healthy intellectual growth and plays a very crucial role in enabling a person to achieve practical efficiency. By reading books, one gets confirmation or rejection of one's own ideas, which makes one think more critically about right and wrong in the society (Noor, 2011). Reading is therefore, necessary for rural women to develop their personality and to find solutions to the problems they encounter in their day to day life. In India, rural women who are large in number, living in conditions of illiteracy, poverty, ignorance and where the pressures of heavy work load kept them busy. It is worthwhile to know the reading habits of women in rural communities. The purpose of this study is to assess the reading habit of rural adult women.

Objective

Following are the main objectives of the study

- ◆ Studying the reading habits of rural adult women with regard to their educational and economic status.
- ◆ Studying the kind of reading language and literature they like most.
- ◆ Studying the topics which are preferred for reading among them.
- ◆ Studying the problems faced by the respondents with regard to reading.

Scope and Limitation

The present study is confined to the analysis of reading habits of rural adult women of Sarkar Ki Aali Gram Sabha, Hawalbagh Block, Almora District, Uttarakhand. It covers both married and unmarried rural women under its preview. It includes only those rural women having their age range of 20 years or above and educated up to primary level or above.

Methodology

The questionnaire method was adopted to collect the data. An open ended questionnaire consisting of 30 questions was designed and

administered. The questionnaire covered different aspects such as interest in reading, kind of literature and language preferred in leisure hours, preferred topics in reading material, problems faced by the respondents with regard to reading, preferred place for reading and availability of material. A sample of hundred (100) women were selected through incidental sample technique from Sarkar Ki Aali Gram Sabha of Hawalbagh Block, district Almora of Uttarakhand.

Data Analysis

Among the sample respondents, 37% belongs to the 30-40 years, followed by 30% from the age group of 40-50 years, 28% belongs to the age group of 20-30 years. Only 5% of the respondents are within the age group of 50-60 years. On the basis of educational status of selected women, two groups were formed (Group-I, N=60; education up to higher secondary and Group-II, N=40, education above higher secondary (Table-1). The data were summarized and percentages were calculated.

Table-1: Educational Level of Respondents

Educational Level	Number of Respondents(100)
Up to higher secondary	60 (Group-I)
Above higher secondary	40 (Group-II)

It is evident from data in Table-2 that only 37% women of group-I showed interest in reading while 63% were interested in activities like watching television, gossip, sleeping and knitting. However, in group-II, 65% women were found to have interest in reading and 35% women were interested in watching television, listening radio, knitting, gossiping and sleeping.

Table – 2: Percentage of Women Showing Interest in Reading

Group	Total Number of Respondents	No. Of Women Showing Interest In Reading	Percentage
I	60	22	37%
II	40	26	65%
Total	100	48	48

It is evident from data in Table -3 that among the various types of reading material, newspaper is greatly liked by the respondents. The most popular newspaper are Amar Ujala and Dainik Jagran. In group-I, majority (58.30%) of the women liked to read newspaper, 13.3% liked to read short stories. The percentages of women liked to read novels and magazines were 16.7% and 8.30% respectively. Very few women (3.30%) liked to read poems and essay. In group-II, 52.5% women liked to read newspaper, 27.5% women liked to read stories and 10% were interested in reading magazines (Manorama and Grahsobha)

Table – 3: Literature Read in Leisure Hours

Group	Newspaper	Stories	Novels	Magazines	Others
I (N=60)	35 58.30%	10 16.7%	08 13.3%	5 8.30%	02 3.30%
II (N=40)	21 52.5%	11 27.5%		04 10%	04 10%
Total (N=100)	56	21	08	09	06

Data in Table- 4 shows that in group-I, 50% women interested in reading topics related to domestic matters while 11% women preferred topics related to education and politics. 10% women liked to read topics related to general knowledge and only 5% were interested in reading religious topics. In group-II, the most popular topics among women (50%) are related to politics. 25% women preferred to read topics related to domestic matters. The least preferred topics of interest were general knowledge and religious.

Table – 4: Preferred Topics in Reading Material

Group	Domestic	Politics	General Knowledge	Religious	Others
I (N=60)	30 50%	11 18.33%	10 16.66%	05 8.33%	04 6.66%
II (N=40)	10 25%	20 50%	05 12.5%	04 10%	1 2.5%
Total (N=100)	40	31	15	09	05

Data in Table-5 reveals that majority of the women (89%) meet their reading needs through self purchase whereas only 10% women borrow books and other reading material from their friends and relatives.

Table-5: Means to Satisfy the Reading Needs

Means to satisfy reading needs	Group I (N=60)	Group II(N=40)	Total (N=100)
Through self purchase	56 (93.3%)	33 (82.5%)	89
Through friends and relatives	04 (6.6%)	06 (15%)	10
Public library	-	01(2.5%)	01
University library	-	-	-
Women's club library	-	-	-

It is evident from data in Table-6 that home is the dominating place for reading as majority of the respondents (86%) prefers to read in home.

Table-6: Favourite Place for Reading

Favourite Place	Group-I(N=60)	Group-II (N=40)	Total (N=100)
Home	56 (93.3%)	30 (75%)	86
Library	-	01(2.5%)	01
Park	03(5%)	04(10%)	07
Others	01(1.6%)	05(12.5%)	06

Data in Table-7 shows that the majority of the respondents like to read in Hindi language. In group-I, 91.6% women prefers to read in Hindi language and in group-II, 75% women read in Hindi language whereas only 22.5% women like to read in English language.

Table-7: Preferential Language with Respect to Reading

Group	Hindi	English	Others
I (N = 60)	55 (91.6)	-	05 (8.3%)
II (N = 40)	30(75%)	09(22.5)	01 (2.5)
Total(100)	85	09	06

Findings and Discussion

- ◆ It was found that all respondents were having low economic status.

- ◆ 60% women were having education up to higher secondary and 40% have education above higher secondary level (Table-1).
- ◆ 37% women of group-I showed interest in reading. In group-II, 65% women were found to have interest in reading (Table-2). Altogether 48% women were interested in reading in their leisure hours. Such result may indicate that the respondents have positive outlook and taste in reading different kinds of literature in their leisure time.
- ◆ It was found (Table -3) that newspaper and short stories are greatly liked by both the groups and it is an encouraging sign to note that women are the avid readers of newspaper and short stories.
- ◆ In both the groups, the preferred topics in reading material were, political G.K. and domestic while the least preferred topics were science, economic and religious (Table-4).
- ◆ To fulfill the need for reading, access to materials is very important. One of the interesting features of this study is that the majority of women in both the groups meet their reading needs through self purchase, though the cost of newspaper, magazines, short stories etc. has gone up so high (Table-5). Very few respondents depend on public libraries which primarily meet informational, educational and recreational needs of the public. This finding is consistent with the finding of a study conducted by Kemparaju & Thavamanidevi (1990) which reported that majority of the female students meet their extracurricular reading through self purchase and very few students were found to be dependent on public libraries.
- ◆ It was surprising to note that in both the groups, majority of women were not found to be the members of any public libraries. Home is the dominating place for reading as majority of the respondents prefers to read in home (Table-6). The respondents reported that this is due to the unavailability of sufficient time, work load at home and non-availability of library facilities at their village. Respondents wish to have library fully equipped to provide the reading material according to their respective interests and tastes.
- ◆ It was interesting to discover that the reading materials, the rural women read for pleasure were consequently read in the first language i.e. Hindi (table-7). One possible explanation for this occurrence could be based on lack of fluency and vocabulary in foreign language.

- ◆ The respondents reported that due to, excessive burden of household chores, child rearing and work in the fields; women generally get less time for reading.
- ◆ Respondents suggested that good reading habits can be inculcated among rural women through providing library facilities at grass root level.

The above findings of this study lead us to conclude that women included in the sample have a good taste towards reading and are very much aware of the importance of reading in human life. However, there is a lack of reading among the women, having education below higher secondary level, who may not be aware of the impact of reading for their self-development. It is important to encourage the reading habit among women in rural societies so that they grow mentally, realize their full uniqueness and powers in all spheres of life. To foster reading habit, it is necessary to establish rural libraries. Organization of mobile libraries is also useful to promote the habit of reading. Book donation camps may be organized to add the number of the books of the library and to gain a sense of attraction towards the rural library among rural mass. Books, magazines and other reading material are needed to be distributed at cheaper rates or free of cost. Motivation can also be given to the rural women through continuous training and orientation programme where the idea of reading as a constant practice can be imparted to them. A library should be established at a central place to exclusively accommodate a collection on and about women with membership facilities open to women only. The local library and some other agencies should conduct meetings on information requirements of rural women at frequent intervals. The municipal authorities should establish a library where in a reader's profile (information needs and reading interest of the rural women) are recorded as a guidance for procuring various reading material for women. The reading material according to needs should reach the doorstep of every woman in village through mobile book services once in a week or at regular intervals within the village by the local public library to cultivate the habit of reading among the rural women.

This study has some implication for further research. Due to time and cost constraints, the sample size in this study is quite restricted. The scope of the research has been substantially wide too. Thus further studies contemplate a larger sample size. Reading habits in other parts of the country can also be carried out to help shed light on whether the reading behavior in a different setting will give rise to different result.

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Women and Empowerment

Vilas Adhav

In the present discussion on development empowerment has become a most popular goal. Initially it was associated with the alternative approach to the development. But by the mid eighties it became a necessity to challenge and transform the unequal political, economic and social structure thus empowerment became the key term. It was treated as the weapon of the weak – best achieved through community participation and grassroots organizations. In the course of time empowerment assumed many meanings. Mainstream developmental agencies viewed empowerment as a means to enhance skills within the given structure without transforming them. Some scholars call for more precise understanding of power and empowerment. For them empowerment means the process of challenging the existing power relations and of gaining the control over power sources. Finally we see empowerment as both the process and outcome. Many subtle and unexpected strategies should be employed to empower women and enhance equality in an increasingly complex world.

Scholars believe that in ancient India, the women enjoyed equal status with men in all fields of life. However, some others hold contrasting views. Works by ancient Indian grammarians such as Patanjali and Katyayana suggest that women were educated in the early Vedic period Rigvedic verses suggest that the women married at a mature age and were probably free to select their husband. Scriptures such as Rig Veda and Upanishads mention several women sages and seers, notably Gargi and Maitreyi. Some kingdoms in the ancient India had traditions such as nagarvadhu ("bride of the city"). Women competed to win the coveted title of the nagarvadhu. Amrapali is the most famous example of a nagarvadhu.

According to studies, women enjoyed equal status and rights during the early Vedic period. However, later (approximately 500 B.C.), the status of women began to decline with the Smritis (esp. Manusmriti) and with the Islamic invasion of Babur and the Mughal empire and later Christianity curtailing women's freedom and rights. Although reformatory movements

such as Jainism allowed women to be admitted to the religious order, by and large, the women in India faced confinement and restrictions. The practice of child marriages is believed to have started from around sixth century.

The Indian woman's position in the society further deteriorated during the medieval period when Sati, child marriages and a ban on widow remarriage became part of social life in India. The Muslim conquest in the Indian subcontinent brought the purdah practice in the Indian society. Among the Rajputs of Rajasthan, the Jauhar was practised. In some parts of India, the Devadasis or the temple women were sexually exploited. Polygamy was widely practised esp. among Hindu Kshatriya rulers. In many Muslim families, women were restricted to Zenana areas. In spite of these conditions, some women excelled in the fields of politics, literature, education and religion. Razia Sultana became the only woman monarch to have ever ruled Delhi. The Gond queen Durgavati ruled for fifteen years, before she lost her life in a battle with Mughal emperor Akbar's General Asaf Khan in 1564. Chand Bibi defended Ahmednagar against the mighty Mughal forces of Akbar in 1590s. Jehangir's wife Nur Jehan effectively wielded imperial power and was recognized as the real force behind the Mughal throne. The Mughal princesses Jahanara and Zebunnissa were well-known poets, and also influenced the ruling administration Shivaji's mother Jijabai was deputed as queen regent, because of her ability as a warrior and an administrator. In South India, many women administered villages, towns, divisions and heralded social and religious institutions.

The Bhakti movements tried to restore women's status and questioned some of the forms of oppression. Mirabai, a female saint-poet, was one of the most important Bhakti movement figures. Some other female saint-poets from this period include Akka Mahadevi, Rami Janabai and Lal Ded. Bhakti sects within Hinduism such as the Mahanubhav, Varkari and many others were principle movements within the Hindu fold to openly advocate social justice and equality between men and women. Shortly after the Bhakti movement, Guru Nanak, the first Guru of Sikhs also preached the message of equality between men and women. He advocated that women be allowed to lead religious assemblies; to perform and lead congregational hymn singing called Kirtan or Bhajan; become members of religious management committees; to lead armies on the battlefield; have equality in marriage, and equality in Amrit (Baptism). Other Sikh Gurus also preached against the discrimination against women. The traditions such as sati, jauhar, and

devadasi have been banned and are largely defunct in modern India. However, some cases of these practices are still found in remote parts of India. The purdah is still practiced by many Indian women, and child marriage remains prevalent despite it being an illegal practice, especially under current Indian laws. European scholars observed in the 19th century Hindu women are "naturally chaste" and "more virtuous" than other women. During the British Raj, many reformers such as Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Jyotirao Phule etc. fought for the upliftment of women. While this list might suggest that there was no positive British contribution during the Raj era, that is not entirely so, since missionaries' wives like Martha Mault née Mead and her daughter Eliza Caldwell Mault are rightly remembered for pioneering the education and training of girls in south India - a practise that initially met with local resistance, as it flew in the face of tradition. Raja Rammohan Roy's efforts led to the abolition of the Sati practice under Governor-General William Cavendish-Bentinck in 1829. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar's crusade for the improvement in condition of widows led to the Widow Remarriage Act of 1856. Many women reformers such as Pandita Ramabai also helped the cause of women upliftment.

Kittur Chennamma, the queen of the princely state Kittur in Karnataka, led an armed rebellion against the British in response to the Doctrine of lapse. Abbakka Rani the queen of coastal Karnataka led the defence against invading European armies notably the Portugese in 16th century. Rani Lakshmi Bai, the Queen of Jhansi, led the Indian Rebellion of 1857 against the British. She is now widely considered as a nationalist hero. Begum Hazrat Mahal, the co-ruler of Awadh, was another ruler who led the revolt of 1857. She refused the deals with the British and later retreated to Nepal. The Begums of Bhopal were also few of the notable female rulers during this period. They did not observe purdah and were trained in martial arts. Chandramukhi Basu, Kadambini Ganguly and Anandi Gopal Joshi were few of the earliest Indian women to obtain educational degrees.

In 1917, the first women's delegation met the Secretary of State to demand women's political rights, supported by the Indian National Congress. The All India Women's Education Conference was held in Pune in 1927. In 1929, the Child Marriage Restraint Act was passed, stipulating fourteen as the minimum age of marriage for a girl through the efforts of Mahomed Ali Jinnah. Though Mahatma Gandhi himself married at the age of thirteen, he later urged people to boycott child marriages and called upon the young men to marry the child widows.

Women played an important part in India's independence struggle. Some of the famous freedom fighters include Bhikaji Cama, Dr. Annie Besant, Pritilata Waddedar, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Anjali Ammal, Aruna Asaf Ali, Sucheta Kriplani and Kasturba Gandhi. Other notable names include Muthulakshmi Reddy, Durgabai Deshmukh etc. The Rani of Jhansi Regiment of Subhash Chandra Bose's Indian National Army consisted entirely of women including Captain Lakshmi Sahgal. Sarojini Naidu, a poet and a freedom fighter, was the first Indian woman to become the President of the Indian National Congress and the first woman to become the governor of a state in India.

Women in India now participate in all activities such as education, politics, media, art and culture, service sectors, science and technology, etc. The Constitution of India guarantees to all Indian women equality (Article 14), no discrimination by the State (Article 15(1)), equality of opportunity (Article 16), and equal pay for equal work (Article 39(d)). In addition, it allows special provisions to be made by the State in favour of women and children (Article 15(3)), renounces practices derogatory to the dignity of women (Article 51(A) (e)), and also allows for provisions to be made by the State for securing just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief. (Article 42).

The feminist activism in India picked up momentum during later 1970s. One of the first national level issues that brought the women's groups together was the Mathura rape case. The acquittal of policemen accused of raping a young girl Mathura in a police station, led to a wide-scale protests in 1979–1980. The protests were widely covered in the national media, and forced the Government to amend the Evidence Act, the Criminal Procedure Code and the Indian Penal Code and introduce the category of custodial rape. Female activists united over issues such as female infanticide, gender bias, women health, and female literacy. Since alcoholism is often associated with violence against women in India, many women groups launched anti-liquor campaigns in Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and other states. Many Indian Muslim women have questioned the fundamental leaders' interpretation of women's rights under the Shariat law and have criticized the triple talaq system.

In 1990s, grants from foreign donor agencies enabled the formation of new women-oriented NGOs. Self-help groups and NGOs such as Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) have played a major role in women's rights in India. Many women have emerged as leaders of local

movements. For example, Medha Patkar of the Narmada Bachao Andolan. The Government of India declared 2001 as the Year of Women's Empowerment (Swashakti). The National Policy for the Empowerment of Women case was passed in 2001. In 2006, the case of a Muslim rape victim called Imrana was highlighted in the media. Imrana was raped by her father-in-law. The pronouncement of some Muslim clerics that Imrana should marry her father-in-law led to widespread protests and finally Imrana's father-in-law was given a prison term of 10 years, The verdict was welcomed by many women's groups and the All India Muslim Personal Law Board.

Jawaharlal Nehru had said "You can tell the condition of the nation by looking at the status of women." The following phrase of Manusmriti, "Na Stree Swathantryam Arhati" (woman is undeserving for independence), reflects our whole attitude towards women in our country. Woman suffers discrimination and injustice in all stages of her life. Declining sex ratio portrays our discrimination shown towards her even at the stage of birth. Often the lame excuse is women are the 'weaker sex'! But biological evidence proves, due to the presence of two X hormones women are more resistant to diseases compared to men. Life expectancy is a proof of this.

Certainly, it is the needful to have an overview of the struggle carried by Mahatma Phule and Dr. Ambedkar, who supported it thoroughly by rebelling against the women harassment. The studious analysis can not be neglected in relation to problem of women and caste. Mahatma Phule has severely criticized Brahmin and some leaders from Satyashodhak Movement. In 'Satsar' Part I and 'Satsar' Part II, when they criticized the books of Pandita Ramabai and Tarabai Shinde. He had notified that the woman is harassed much by the all levels of the male dominated society including Brahmin and Shudra also. It was a first step leading towards the liberty of women. It was not for the time being only but also a revolutionary step into the salvation of woman at large.

(In our country life expectancy of women is 65 whereas for men it's only 60 years). Census 2001 shows our national sex ratio as 921:1000 (921 females for 1000 males), and this will lead to detrimental social problems if not corrected. The main reason for this is female infanticide.

Gender wise abortions are on the rise. In economically developed states such as Haryana and Punjab the tendency is found to be more. Abortion though legal in our country, gender based abortion is a crime here. Strict

measures should be taken for the implementation of Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation & Prevention of Misuse) Act 1994, which prohibits any prenatal diagnostic techniques and sex selective abortions. A shocking study reveals that half of the world's malnourished children live in India owing primarily to the lack of nutritious food available to the mother. In all the critical stages, be it infancy, childhood, adolescence or the reproductive phase many women suffer malnutrition purely due to the discrimination and the narrow mindsets of the society. According to Mahatma Gandhi, "If you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate an entire family." Our predominant patriarchal system doesn't provide enough chances for women to have higher education even if they wish. Girls should be motivated to take up higher education. Universal education for all below 14 years should be strictly implemented. There is an urgent necessity of framing gender sensitive curricula at all stages of primary education to address sex-stereotyping menace. Women should be allowed to work and should be provided enough safety and support to work. Legislatures such as Equal Remuneration Act, Factories Act: Constitutional safeguards such as maternity relief, and other provisions should be strictly followed. Poverty eradication policies need to be implemented. Macro economic policies would help in this drive. Through economic empowerment women's emancipation could be realized.

Dowry still remains the major reason for all the discrimination and injustice shown to women. Dowry has always been an important part of Hindu marriages. Not only among Hindus, are its evil tentacles now spreading to other religions also. Although dowry was legally prohibited in 1961(Dowry Prohibition Act), it continues to be highly institutionalized. It is ridiculous to see that even among highly educated sections; the articles of dowry are proudly exhibited in the marriage as a status symbol. The practice of dowry abuse is rising in India. The most severe is "bride burning", the burning of women whose dowries were not considered sufficient by their husband or in-laws. Most of these incidents are reported as accidental burns in the kitchen or are disguised as suicide. It is evident that there exist deep-rooted prejudices against women in India. Cultural practices such as these tend to subordinate women in our society. Dowry is one of those social evils that no educated woman will own up with pride; still many are adhering to it, why? Women should be more economically empowered and should be educated properly regarding the various legal provisions such as Section 498ACrPC, protection from domestic violence etc. only then only this evil menace could possibly be eradicated from Indian social system.

True empowerment will only be reached when women take part actively in the decision making process of our country. Women Reservation Bill that entitles to provide 33 per cent reservation in Parliament is a bill of utmost importance. The success of 73rd & 74th amendment which reserves certain number of seats for women in the local bodies should be an encouragement for the Bill to be passed at least in this current session. Mainstreaming and women's empowerment is central to human development. Empowerment of women could only be achieved if their economic and social status is improved. This could be possible only by adopting definite social and economic policies with a view of total development of women and to make them realize that they have the potential to be strong human beings. The various articles of our constitution enshrine principle of gender equality. We started giving special attention to the causes of women by the fifth five-year plan. For considering the grievances and preventing the atrocities against women a National Commission for Women (NCW) was set up in 1990. But despite all these measures there should be a strong determination among every man that every woman in this country should be honoured. Only then empowerment in its true meaning will be realized.

The problems of rural women are more serious – they never celebrate the birth of female child, male child has importance, lack of education, superstition, health problems, lack of economic liberty, selling of girls, prostitutes, the status of women in family, age difference between husband and wife, sexual harassment etc. so it is the need of time to co-ordinate the power of studious politicians, the policy makers and administrators to implement it and come into existence.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar on Women Empowerment

The second session of the All India Depressed Classes Women's Conference commenced at 10 A.M. on July 20, 1942 in a specially erected pandal in the Mohan Park, Nagpur in the presence of 75000 audience. Women delegates and visitors numbered about 25000. On the dais distinguished leaders including Dr. Ambedkar were seated. Dr. Ambedkar was presented an address by the Chairman of the Reception Committee. Addressing the Conference Dr. Ambedkar said:

"...I am very happy to have this occasion of addressing you. There cannot be an occasion of greater happiness to any one interested in the advancement of the Depressed Classes than to witness this gathering of

women. That you would assemble in such vast number – almost 20 to 25 thousand strong would have been unthinkable 10 years ago. I am a great believer in women's organization. I know what they can do to improve the condition of society if they are convinced. In the eradication of social evils they have rendered great services. I will testify to that from my own experience. Ever since I began to work among the Depressed Classes, I made it a point to carry women along with men. That is why you will see that our Conferences are always mixed Conferences. I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved and when I see this assembly, I feel both convinced and happy that we have progressed. I shall tell you a few things which I think you should bear in mind. Learn to be clean, keep free from all vices. Give education to your children. Instill ambition in them. Inculcate on their minds that they are destined to be great. Remove from them all inferiority complexes. Don't be in a hurry to marry: marriage is a liability. You should not impose it upon your children unless financially they are able to meet the liabilities arising from marriage. Those who will marry will bear in mind that to have too many children is a crime. That parental duty lies in giving each child a better start than its parents had. Above all, let each girl who marries stand up to her husband, claim to be her husband's friend and equal, and refuse to be his slave. I am sure if you follow this advice you will bring honour and glory to yourselves and to the Depressed Classes"

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Response of Girl Children to Elementary Education: A Study of Sarva Shiksha Mission, Siliguri Educational District

Mahbub - Ul - Alam

Introduction

The gender gap in education can be understood in the overall context of the position of women occupy in society. According to 2001 Census the gender gap in literacy in West Bengal is 17.36 percent. The Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of women's sixth report on Educational Programmes for women (2000–2001) also ascribed low Gender Enrolment Ratio (GER) and high drop-out rates to gender inequality, social discrimination and economic exploitation coupled with low enrolment of girls in school, low retention and high drop-out rates. The pattern of enrolment of girls and boys at primary and middle school levels point to a massive gender gap. In fact neglect of women begins with indifference shown towards the education of girl-child.

In rural areas, girls are mostly engaged in household work such as fuel and fodder collection, fetching water and sibling care. Other reasons why girls in rural areas rarely pursue studies are parental indifference, teachers' apathy to teach girls, absence of single-sex schools, unsafe travel and lack of facilities such as toilets, exclusive common room for girls etc. But despite of several positive recommendations, interventions remain constrained by a lack of data on educational status and out-of-school girls in the school going age (6–14). In this context, a study was conducted in 2008 on the status of girls' education at the elementary level in Siliguri Educational District after the introduction of the Sarva Shiksha Mission activities in this part of the country.

The present study made a quick review of the situation empirically in the context of *Sarva Shiksha Mission and Gender Questions* in the case of Siliguri Educational District.

Background of the present study

According to the Government of India, reaching out to the girl child is central to the efforts to universalize elementary education. Sarva Shiksha Mission or *Education for All* programme recognizes that ensuring girls' education requires changes not only in the education system but also in societal norms and attitudes. A two-pronged gender strategy has therefore been adopted to make the education system responsive to the needs of the girls through targeted interventions which serve as a pull factor to enhance access and retention of girls in schools and on the other hand to generate a community demand for girls' education through training and mobilisation.

The targeted provision for girls under Sarva Shiksha Mission include :

- ◆ Free textbooks to all girls upto class VIII
- ◆ Separate toilets for girls
- ◆ Back to school camps for out-of-school girls
- ◆ Bridge courses for older girls
- ◆ Recruitment of 50% women teachers
- ◆ Early childhood care and Education centers in/near schools/ convergence with ICDS programme etc.
- ◆ Teachers' sensitisation programmes to promote equitable learning opportunities
- ◆ Gender-sensitive teaching-learning materials including textbooks
- ◆ Intensive community mobilisation efforts
- ◆ Innovation fund per district for need based interventions for ensuring girls' attendance and retention.

The National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary level (NPEGEL), launched in September 2003 is an integral but distinct component of the Sarva Shiksha Mission. It provides additional provisions for enhancing the education of underprivileged/ disadvantaged girls at elementary level through more intense community mobilisation, the development of model schools in clusters, gender sensitisation of teachers, development of gender sensitive learning materials, early child care and education facilities and provision of need-based incentives like escorts, stationery, work books and uniforms etc., for girls. All Educationally Backward Blocks have been included under NPEGEL.

In addition, for the target pockets where girls education is lagging behind,

the Government of India has made another intervention for girls i.e. the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) to reach out to girls from marginalised social groups in over 3,000 educationally backward blocks in the country where the female rural literacy is below the national average and the gender gap in literacy is above the national average. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) is a scheme launched in July 2004, for setting up residential schools at upper primary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, OBC and minority communities.

Sarva Shiksha Mission, Siliguri Educational District

Like other parts of the country, the Sarva Shiksha Mission launched in Siliguri Educational District area under the jurisdiction of Darjeeling district of West Bengal. The administrative set up of the Darjeeling district is different from other districts of the state. Out of the four subdivisions of the district, with the three subdivisions in the hill regions i.e. Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong constitute the Gorkha Hill Council. The remaining only one subdivision in the plain Terai region constitutes the Siliguri Mahakuma Parishad having administrative structure like other Zilla Parishads of the state of West Bengal. For administrative and operational purpose of Sarva Shiksha Mission, the Siliguri Sub-division is designated as Siliguri Educational District. The Siliguri Educational District comprises of four Development Blocks viz. Matigara, Naxalbari, Phansidewa and Kharibari and the Siliguri Municipal Corporation area. The Phansidewa and the Kharibari blocks are the NPEGEL blocks as the girls' education scenario of these blocks are below the national average. The Sarva Shiksha Mission, Siliguri Educational District had geared up its activities with special attention to girls' education.

Objectives of the study

- The study aimed at –
- i) To study the enrolment status and nature of attendance of girls in the schools.
- ii) To find out the causes behind non enrolment of girls to the schools.
- iii) To find out the rate and causes behind drop outs of girls at different levels of school education.
- iv) To find out the status and necessary improvement of teaching-learning process.

- v) To evaluate the educational attainments of the girl students with reference to learning and skill development.
- vi) To assess the impact of programmes especially initiated by Sarva Shiksha Mission for girls.

Methodology

In order to achieve the aforesaid objectives a survey was conducted in Sarva Shiksha Mission, Siliguri Educational District area. Conventional sociological methods, tools and techniques were adopted to conduct the study. This research was exploratory as well as evaluative in nature. There were structured schedules and set of questionnaires to conduct the study. A sample survey was carried out on 75 randomly selected schools giving due weightage to their size in the six circles. The sample was drawn from the list of schools and other information made available from the office of the Sarva Shiksha Mission, Siliguri Educational District. Schools from all the six circles under Sarva Shiksha Mission thus covered in the sample survey. Another survey on 25 randomly selected girl students each from class VII and Class VIII of the sampled schools was also conducted to assess their educational status and socio-economic background. While designing the survey some special attention was paid to the NPEGEL and the scheme of KGBV initiated by government of India under Sarva Shiksha Mission. Four types of survey schedules were introduced to get the requisite data. They were:

- a) A schedule for background information of the schools under survey.
- b) A survey schedule for girl students of class VII and VIII to assess their socio-economic background, educational status, nature of response to formal education, problems faced and enrolment status of their siblings, etc.
- c) A schedule was used for knowing the KGVBs functioning in this area.
- d) A schedule for the girl students staying in KGBV.

In addition, some qualitative information were collected from Headmasters/ Headmistresses, School Teachers, VEC/ MTA members, Schools having NPEGEL centre through interview on girls education under Sarva Shiksha Mission, Siliguri Educational District, problems they encountered and their suggestions in improving the functioning of Sarva

Shiksha Mission in this respect. Though all the parameters stated above were taken into consideration with due importance but in this paper, major emphasis has been given on the attainment levels of the class VII and VIII standard school going girl students and their socio-economic status.

Major findings of the present study

As regards to year of establishment of the schools, it was observed that 32 per cent of the schools were established before 1960, 23 per cent during 1961 – 70, 25 per cent during 1970 – 80, 7 per cent during 1980 – 90, 9 per cent during 1990 - 2000 and the lowest 4 per cent after 2000. After the introduction of Sarva Shiksha Mission, Siliguri Educational District, only 4 per cent schools were established. By type of school building, it was seen that about 55 per cent of the schools were of semi- pucca type and the rest 45 per cent were having pucca building. No kachcha type of school building was there among the sampled schools.

There were 212 teachers in 64 sampled primary schools. The male-female ratio of sanctioned primary teachers was about 63:37. Thus by sex two-third teachers in primary schools were male and one-third was female. In percentage term the gender gap in case of permanent primary teachers was 26 among the total 204 teachers. It is interesting to note that only eight permanent primary teachers' posts were lying vacant in all the six circles out of the total 212 sanctioned posts. In case of Para teachers the gender gap was less (only 10%) as compared to the permanent teachers in all the circles. In case of distribution of teachers by sex in secondary schools, the scenario was quite different. Among the secondary teachers 60 per cent of the sanctioned posts were for female teachers while 40 per cent posts were for male teachers in the sampled schools. It is quite satisfactory at the same time good that more female teachers were teaching the grown up/ adolescent girls at secondary level which is desirable.

There were in total 22,735 enrolled students in 75 sampled schools of which 11,732 (51.60%) were girls. The rate of drop-out was negligible and only about one percent. In primary schools the overall rate of enrollment of girl students was quite higher than the boys. The actual attendance of girl students in primary section on the day of survey was quite satisfactory and high. It was about 75 per cent. Among the schools surveyed, there were two hostels exclusively for the girls from poor families. They were run under the

scheme of KGBV. Both these hostels were well furnished and accommodated 50 girl students in each.

In case of five need based incentives for the students' only two (3%) schools had been able to arrange escorts for the girl students and six (8%) schools provided stationeries to them. Among the surveyed schools 21 (28%) schools provided workbook and 25 (33%) schools had Early Child Care Education curriculum in or around school in convergence with ICDS programme. About 29 per cent of the schools have distributed uniform among the students of both the sexes. One of the running issues in Sarva Shiksha Mission has been the use of the innovation fund to create ECCE centres in schools not covered under ICDS. Under six circles of Siliguri Educational District area, there were only 25 such centres among 75 schools. It is important that the education department continues to play a strategic role in strengthening pre-school education and ensuring child care facilities to the children below school going age.

As regards to Programme Undertaken for Girl Students under the purview of Sarva Shiksha Mission, it was expected that the following programmes are supposed to be organized by the school and particularly for girl students. With reference to study tour it had been observed that all the schools in Siliguri Educational District area had organized altogether 26-study tour. Only 15 per cent of school arranged Back to School Camp for Girls. Regarding Bridge Course for girls, the survey recorded that except one circle the schools in other circles did not respond at all to this special programme. The overall achievement of this scheme was quite disappointing. In all circles, parents are called by the schools in briefing them about their wards. The overall participation of parents in enquiring and discussing about the progress and problems of their children in schools was somewhat satisfactory. Many school teachers from all the circles attended the teacher's sensitization programme arranged in the concerned area. But such programmes were quite infrequent and ran rather casually. Intensive Community Mobilization Programme had been introduced to motivate the local people in favour of providing elementary education to their children including girl. In two circles, such a programme had been arranged by only one school under each circle. On the other hand, in one circle it was organized in 9 (41%) schools. Another one circle recorded in holding a substantial number of such mobilization programme.

In Siliguri Educational District area the headmasters of 61.33 per cent of schools had no idea about gender-sensitive teaching-learning materials and methods. This concept was equally new to school teachers. Teachers of only 29 schools (38.67%) had some idea about gender sensitive teaching learning material and method mooted by Sarva Shiksha Mission. But they were not all that clear about its operative part. Only 21 (28%) schools had a plan to introduce this method in near future, another 44 per cent had no plan for its immediate implementation and it was turned down by 28 per cent schools. The survey showed that the girls of 56 (75 per cent) schools (both co-education and girls) took part in sports at different levels of competition. The girls of 39 per cent schools participated in the block level sports. Girls of only 9 per cent schools took part in state level sports meet. But the overall response of the schools to encourage their girl students to take part in state level sports meet was not appreciating at all. There is an urgent need to boost up competitive spirits among the girl students and ensure their greater participation in sports.

Educational Attainment and Status of School going Girls

It has been observed that while selecting school 74 per cent of the girl students had no option in selecting any school other than the present one. Only 26 per cent of them had that opportunity. Behind the reasons of selecting the present school instead of joining to similar other schools in the area, it has been observed that most of the girls selected the school they are at present studying because either it is exclusively a girls' school or the medium of instruction in the school is that of their own. A few girls however opined that as they failed to get admission in some other schools, they joined in this particular school. Among the other reasons put forward by the students in selecting present school, the most important consideration was the proximity of the school to residence. About 61 per cent of girls had to come to school from a distance of one to two km and for another 20 per cent it was three to four km. This is important to note that still two per cent of girl students were attending their schools from a distance of five and above kilometers. Some special attention may be paid to these distant students.

Data on conveyance used by the girl students in attending their schools reveal that 58 per cent of them had to come to school on foot. Bicycle is used as a mode of conveyance by 18 per cent of girl students while for another 24 per cent it was bus or auto rickshaw. So particularly for the senior girl students who come to school on foot and are devoid of any

communication/ transportation facility, the provision of providing escort to some of them (who are in need) may be thought about. As majority of the girl students come to school on foot, the provision of providing bicycle to the needy and distant girl students may be considered. For the girl students belonging to poor families and attending the schools by bus or auto rickshaw, a policy may be adopted to meet up their conveyance charges/ fares in part or full.

It has been observed that in 45 per cent of schools there were separate sections for girl students. In 9 per cent of schools there were separate sitting arrangements for girls in the common class rooms. Since 28 per cent schools were exclusively for girl, the sex based sitting arrangement was not a concern for them. There was no such sex based segregation in sitting arrangement in 18 per cent of schools. According to some guardians the matter needs serious consideration particularly for the higher class girls as they are in the adolescent stage.

Residential hostel facilities were available only in 18 per cent schools. There were only two KGBV in Siliguri Educational District. In these two Vidyalayas 100 (50 in each) girl students were enjoying the residential hostel facilities. In other four circles there was no KGBV even when there is a felt need for the same.

It is quite appreciating that toilet facilities for girl students were available in all the schools under survey. However, the quality of those toilets was not always good and not considered for any assessment in this survey. It is seen that there was only one school with common room facility for girl students. Special attention is needed in this regard since girls require some privacy in schools particularly in their leisure hours. In all the sampled schools there were drinking water facilities for the students. But how far the water they are consuming is safe or not was unknown to them. It is expected that safe drinking water would be made available to the students in the schools since most of the pupils particularly in rural areas suffer from water borne diseases.

There was electricity in all the sampled schools under survey but fans were available in the classes of only 55 per cent schools. The survey shows that there was no necessary furniture in the class rooms. Particularly the girls of the upper classes were provided with minimum furniture in their classes. There was a need to provide new and sufficient furniture to them

and to repair the old ones for comfortable use. The survey reveals that only two schools had small library. The schools in other four circles were run without any library and reading room. Some steps must be taken in providing library facility to the girl students. All the schools have their own play ground. It seems that there were necessary arrangements of games and sports in these schools for the students, both boys and girls. The survey reveals that in every school there were minimum arrangements of medical aids for their students and especially for the girl students. It reflects the concern of the school authorities on the first aid facilities may require to their students, teachers and non-teaching staff.

The present survey shows that most (73%) of the schools were providing free text books to the girl students. But in 50 per cent schools of a circle and all the schools of another one circle, the girl students alleged that they were not getting this aid from their schools. It is undoubtedly a matter of serious concern as these schools have failed to adhere to the guidelines of the Sarva Shiksha Mission properly in distributing text books among the students in free of cost. A good picture came out of the study with reference to stipend/ scholarship provided to the eligible girl students from all the schools under survey. This will certainly motivate the girl students in studies, help reduce drop outs and attract other girls to school education. During the survey it was asked to the students whether the school provides the girl students the study materials like free stationeries (pen, pencil etc.) or work books or escort for coming and going back to home from school or not. The responses recorded reveal that in no school such facilities were provided to the girl students. With reference to mid-day meal to the girl students it has been observed that except one girls high school, in other schools there was no such arrangement. The underlying reason is not known and the matter may be taken into consideration by the competent authority.

The survey shows that among the total 541 girl students belonging to class VII and class VIII, 45 per cent of them had no private tutor. It implies that these 45 per cent of girl students were entirely dependent on teaching of their school in general and class teachers in particular.

Among the girl students who were having tutors, 42 per cent of them had only one tutor, 12 per cent had two tutors and only one per cent had three tutors. It shows that in majority of the cases the girl students used to take the help of only one tutor to guide them in their studies in addition to their school teachers. The provision of private coaching/ tuition (Remedial

Coaching) facilities extended by the Sarva Shiksha Mission in this region was not uniform in all the areas of the NPEGEL Blocks. It may be taken into serious consideration.

On the question of hours spent in studies at home, there is no denying that our girls of school going age are supposed to extend help to their parents in various domestic works. It is more common in case of girls coming from poor families in rural areas. They often used to look after their minor siblings, fetch water for drinking/ domestic purposes, collect fire woods for cooking etc. Despite all these household duties they perform in their families, the girls have also enrolled them in school. So a basic question was – how much time/ hours did the girl students spend in their studies at home? It has been observed that 15 per cent of the girl students spent one to two hours daily in their studies at home. For another 57 per cent it was three to four hours. Those who spent five or more hours in preparation at home they comprised 28 per cent of the total girl students belong to class VII and VIII. From detail analysis it appears that most of the girl students (85%) got at least three hours at home for their study. It implies that the families are now allowing their minor girls to go ahead with their studies at home by lessening their work load in domestic chores.

The survey reveals that 82 per cent of the girl students had never been disqualified in their examination and got promoted to next class. Since the measuring scale of progress in school education is the examination, therefore this promotional trend somewhat signifies the consistent and sustained progress of girl students in their studies at school. The survey further reveals that the girl students of the schools located in rural/ remote areas like Phansidewa or Kharibari circle consistently did better result as compared to schools in urban/ semi-urban circles like Siliguri West and Siliguri-Naxalbari. The girl students who had been disqualified for once were 15 per cent of the total respondents. About 32 per cent of girl students in Bidhannagar circle had this record in their progress report. The percentage of repeatedly disqualified girl students appeared to be not all that significant and it was only two per cent.

It has been observed that there were 99 teachers in class VII and 100 teachers in class VIII. By sex, out of total teachers of class VII, 33.5 per cent were male and 66.5 per cent were female. The ratio of male-female teachers in class VII was thus 1 : 2. In class VIII majority (64%) of teachers were female. And the sex-ratio was quite favourable to lady teachers. By sex all

the teachers taught in class VII in the schools of Phansidewa and Kharibari circles were female. It implies that the girl students at upper elementary level were being taught mainly by female teachers. Their role in promoting sex sensitive teaching-learning could be effective one in the wake of new directives of Sarva Shiksha Mission.

The major causes of dropouts (though not all that alarming) as identified by the respondent girl students are:

- ◆ Lack of parent's awareness about the need of education of their kids.
- ◆ Poor economic condition of the family.
- ◆ Work at home, mainly household duties in absence of parents and looking after the minor siblings.
- ◆ Early marriage and limited aspiration.
- ◆ Apathy against education of girl children
- ◆ Engagement of girls as wage earner.
- ◆ Negative attitude towards girl children.
- ◆ Lack of seriousness among the girls in their study.
- ◆ Stagnation / loss of interest.
- ◆ Distance of school from residence and problems of communication.
- ◆ Unavailability of school uniforms.

With reference to problems faced by girl students in pursuing their studies, it has been observed that the work load at home often upset their daily preparation or in completing home tasks in due time. As a result they fail to attend the school regularly and in responding to the question asked by the class teacher. Naturally they started to suffer from some kind of inferiority complex.

Another problem was related to lack of proper guidance at home in preparing lessons. Only listening to class lectures appeared too many students not helpful to make the things clear/ understandable and for what there is a need of some guidance at home. Students devoid of such a facility often fear to attend school as they could not respond properly to the class teachers or failed to submit the home task to him/ her.

Socio-economic Background of the Girl Students

By type of school about 63 per cent of the girl students were from co-education schools and 37 per cent from girls' schools. As two-third of the

girl students were found studying in co-education schools their needs need to be taken into special consideration keeping in view the gender questions. By standard of school 72 per cent were from secondary and 28 per cent were from higher secondary schools. In teaching and learning process, the mother tongue of the teachers and the students is always important particularly from the point of view of articulation and communication. The question of mother tongue of the girl students was important particularly at the elementary level as the students leaving their family come to school and adopt standardized languages. In Siliguri Educational District, for 68 per cent of the girl students their mother tongue was Bengali, for 17 per cent from higher secondary .be taken into consideration.ent and status it was Nepali and for another 15 per cent it was Hindi.

With reference to the expected and actual age of the girl students as specified for the particular class the survey reveals that in class VII, 38 per cent of the girl students were above the age of 13. In case of class VIII, 36 per cent were above the age of 14 while another 29 per cent were between the age of 12 and 13. The presence of girl students in the respective class above their ideal/ expected age needs some special attention and examination.

By religion majority (86%) of the girl students were Hindus, seven per cent were Muslims and six per cent were Christians. By circle 10 per cent girl students in Siliguri-Naxalbari circle were Muslim, 20 per cent in Phansidewa and six per cent in Bidhannagar circles. Christian girl students were mainly found in Bidhannagar circle and where their proportion was 58 per cent. By Caste/ Community more than 51 per cent of the girl students were belonging to the category of scheduled castes, 16 per cent to scheduled tribes, another 16 per cent to OBCs and 17 per cent to general castes. The proportion of SC girl students was considerably high (more than 80 per cent) in Siliguri West and Kharibari circles. On the other hand ST girl students were more in Bidhannagar and Naxalbari circles. In Siliguri-Naxalbari circle 31 per cent of the girl students were OBCs. In case of Phansidewa circle their proportion was 20.

By education a sizeable section of the parents of the girl students under survey was totally illiterate. In case of father it was 25 per cent and mother 44 per cent. So it is to be noted that the girl students who are presently at upper elementary level their mothers were mostly illiterate and they were the first generation learners. Among the majority of educated parents their

educational level was up to class VIII. The presence of graduate parents was extremely negligible. By family size the girl students were mostly from medium sized families with an average of 5.8 members. However in Bidhannagar circle the size was relatively big (6.7) and it was relatively small in Phansidewa circle (5.3). As most of the students come from the medium sized families, the kind of opportunities and facilities they enjoy/ share in these families need a special attention particularly from the point of resource constraints and budgeting on education.

Among the total siblings of girl students belonging to age group, 6-14, 537 were males and 650 were females. About 72 per cent of male siblings (brothers) and 74 per cent of female siblings (sisters) of school going age were in school. The proportion of the siblings who did not ever enroll in schools was 7.26 per cent in case of male and about 11 per cent in case of female. On the other hand the overall proportion of dropped out siblings was 17 per cent. By sex it was about 20 per cent in case of male and 14 per cent in case of female. Thus it appears that by proportion the trend of drop out in case of girl siblings was slightly lesser than the male siblings. However, the matter of non-enrolment of girl siblings is a point for special attention and needs a review.

On the question of number of earning members in the family, it has been observed that 70 per cent of the girl students were from single earner families and another 24 per cent from double earner families. Only six per cent of the girl students used to live in families having more than double earners. By economic status 58 per cent of the girl students were from families belonging to BPL category. So by number of earners and economic status the girl students were mostly from the poor/ impoverished families. Occupationally, fathers of 20 per cent of girl students were engaged in agricultural activities either as cultivator or as an agricultural labourer. About 20 per cent of fathers were wage labourers, nine per cent were Tea Garden labourers and 24 per cent were in petty business. Only 12 per cent were in service. So occupationally a sizeable section of fathers was engaged in wage earning. In case of mothers majority (76 per cent) were housewives. Among the working mothers majority of them were either Tea Garden labourer or wage labourers. In such families the girl students may be relieved from different domestic works to carry forward their studies at home as well as at school satisfactorily. Necessary arrangements may be made from the end of Sarva Shiksha Mission to cater the need of the girl students in such families.

In terms of household facilities, the survey reveals that about 30 per cent of the girl students were living in kachha and 40 per cent in semi-pucca houses. Another 30 per cent were fortunate enough to live in pucca houses. In the house of the girl students' average number of living rooms was 2.42. The circle wise picture in this respect was not all that different. Taking into consideration the average size of the family and average number of living rooms available to the girl students, their nature of stay in the house was not all that comfortable and conducive for studies. For about 19 per cent of the girl students there was no electricity in their house. Some alternative arrangements may be thought about including providing kerosene lamps etc. to the extremely needy students to pursue their studies.

Conclusion

From the above survey results it is seen that a good response among the girl students was found towards education for all in Siliguri Educational District but still now there are lot of grey areas which needs due consideration for achieving the goal. It may be taken into consideration to establish more schools in the Sarva Shiksha Mission area according to the need of the area or to extend infrastructural development to the existing schools by providing sufficient space to accommodate more students. Measures for replacing the tin or making some alternative arrangements like fixing of ceiling or use of any other technology for absorption of heat may be thought about. There is a big gender gap in the sanctioned posts of primary teachers, though the Sarva Shiksha Mission, has nothing to do in this regard, but the matter draws due attention of the competent authorities. It is quite appreciating that by sex at the high/ higher secondary schools two-third of the teachers was female and one-third was male. It indicates that the girl students were better exposed to and learning their lessons from female teachers. In case of promoting gender sensitive teaching and learning this situation may be quite helpful. Further better access to lady teachers may help the girl students to take them in confidence and to communicate/ interact with them more intimately. There is a need of adequate attention in order to ensure the availability of basic facilities to the students while asking funds for infrastructural development to Sarva Shiksha Mission. But it is good that the girl students in the schools were provided with separate toilets. Since many of the girl students belong to weaker sections and are coming from poor families, they were not in a position to purchase school uniform and stationeries. That also made them irregular in attending school. Some long term measures may be taken to meet up this problem permanently.

Besides, the problem which the girl students are facing greatly in this region is their poor socio-economic condition. If it is not taken into consideration with due importance, as many as new schemes/ interventions be introduced, the desire for having an educated India will remain far away from its reaching point. At the same time the facilities which are being made available now a day like KGBV, remedial coaching etc. especially in the NPEGEL blocks are too meager. These facilities needs to be created for a maximum number of girl students since most of them belong to BPL categories. The micro level introduction of schemes/ interventions for the girl students need to be introduced at macro level so that the desired level of results of Sarva Shiksha Mission can only be achieved as part of achieving the global goal – Education for All.

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Provision of Equitable Educational Opportunities in Andhra Pradesh

R. Onnur

In the present paper an attempt is made to explain the equitable educational programmes available for all the marginalized population groups viz., Dalits, Adivasis, religious minorities, physically challenged people and economically backward persons in Andhra Pradesh.

Profile of Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh (A.P) is the first linguistic state to be formed in the Indian Republic, and came into existence on 1st November, 1956 by merging the nine Telugu-speaking districts of the old Hyderabad state, with the other districts which had been separated from the erstwhile state of Madras in 1953. Andhra Pradesh is the fifth largest state in India in terms of territory and population. It has an area of 275069 square kilometers and accounts for 8.37 per cent of the total area of India. It is the biggest of the four South Indian states both in area and population. Geographically, Andhra Pradesh is bounded on the North by Odisha and Chhattisgarh states, on the west states of Maharashtra and Karnataka, on the south by Tamil Nadu, and on the East by the Bay of Bengal.

The sea border is about 960 kms. The state has three distinct natural regions, Rayalaseema, Coastal Andhra and Telangana. The state has at present 23 districts in all (4 districts in Rayalaseema, 9 districts in Coastal Andhra and 10 districts in Telangana). The Rayalaseema region is a maze of hills, rocks and has the driest tracks in the peninsular plateau. This region is confronted by frequent droughts and famines, and agriculture is very risky here.

Thus, Rayalaseema is backward agriculturally, economically and socially. The Coastal Andhra region comprises the fertile deltas of the perennial Krishna and Godavari rivers. With immense quantity of water and rich black

alluvial mud, these rivers have created a great compound delta extending over 0.40 million hectares. This region has several agro-based industries. These coastal districts have valuable minerals. Thus, the region is agriculturally very rich. The Telangana region consists of senile plains intersected by broad, open and almost graded valleys. With poor sandy soils and low rainfall, life is hard in general in this region except in the areas which have irrigation facilities. At present Telangana is the most backward region agriculturally as well as economically in the state. It is linguistically more mixed than the other two regions and has a higher proportion of tribals than the others.

AP has been lagging behind several other states in India in terms of socio-economic development including education. But from 2004 onwards under the dynamic leadership of the Late Dr. Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy, the then the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh several equitable educational programmes were initiated on the state continuous basis at levels for the all benefit of all the marginalized population groups.

The following are the objectives of the present study:

1. It aims to explain the equitable educational programmes for pre – school children for the marginalized population groups at the primary level (class - V).
2. For the marginalized population groups at the High School level (class VI-X), at the +2 level (Class XI – XII) and To at in Higher education (Degree, Post-graduate and Vocational and Professional courses)

Methods and materials

The author of this paper has sufficient knowledge of all the on-going education programmes from pre-school to higher education in Andhra Pradesh. But to cross-check its authenticity, several government officials working in the Department of Education were personally met and all the relevant facts collected. Current Newspapers also have served as one of the sources of information, as they report from time to time the happenings in the state.

Table 1: Literacy Rates in Andhra Pradesh and India - 2011

Characteristics	Literacy Rate					
	Andhra Pradesh			India		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Residence						
Total	75.6	59.74	67.77	82.14	65.46	74.4
Rural	70.24	52.05	61.14	86.39	67.38	77.09
Urban	85.99	75.02	80.54	93.74	85.44	89.84

As Table –1 show, according to 2011 census of India, the literacy rate in Andhra Pradesh is far below the national average. The literacy rate in Andhra Pradesh is 67.77 % as against the national rate 74.04 % Among the 35 states in India, A.P stands at the 28th place along with Rajasthan in literacy. To remedy the situation, a number of programmes have been initiated over the years.

Educational Programmes for the Pre- school children

A large number of Anganwadis and Balwadis have been established both in rural and urban areas of the state. Admission to them is open to all children (in the age group 3-5 years) who intend to join them irrespective of their caste, creed, colour and socio-economic status. All the children who are admitted in Balwadis are given 80 grams of food equivalent to 350 calories, daily. In all, there are 80,000 Anganwadi workers in Andhra Pradesh at present.

Educational programmes at primary level (class I - V) for day scholars

Free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14 years is a constitutional commitment in India. The Government of AP has initiated a number of programmes to achieve the goal of Universal Elementary Education (UEE). In A.P., there are 62162 primary schools, 17823 upper primary schools with enrollment of 72,29,193, 16195 high schools, 97 higher secondary schools, with an enrollment of 36,22,055, 3565 aided schools and 16530 non-aided schools owned by the private bodies. In all, there were 135150 schools in the state by the year 2009 – 2010. Of them, 87% of the schools that impart elementary education are in rural areas. The average numbers of classrooms in each primary school was 2.8 (2006-2007). The

average number of students – per class room in primary schools was 30. The gross enrolment ratio at the primary level was 99.86% (2006-2007). The total number of teachers working in all types of schools in the state was 511579. The overall drop-out rate at the primary level was 5.42% as against the national average of 8.61%. The drop-out rate at the primary level among the boys was 5.37% as against the national average of 9.06%. Similarly, the drop-out rate among girls was 5.46% as against the national average of 8.12% (National University of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi, 2008).

In Andhra Pradesh in all the government and local body schools at the primary level (from class I - V) education is provided free of cost to all children (the day scholars) irrespective of their caste, creed, colour and socio-economic status. As part of free education, text books and sports kit are also provided free of cost to all of them. In addition, mid-day meal including an egg is also provided for six days in a week. Added to this, free bus pass is given to every child in case the distance from its home to school is more than 1 km.

In addition scholarships are also given to students belonging to Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist and Parsi communities. All these efforts are directed towards increasing the literacy rate among them bringing and down the dropout rate to the lowest level possible.

Equitable Educational Programme at Upper Primary /Higher School (Class VI - X) Day Scholars

Admission is open to all children without any discrimination in upper primary (Class I-VII) and high schools (Class VI-X). These schools are run by the state government/Municipalities /Zillaparishats. As stated earlier, the facilities extended to all the day scholars at the primary level mentioned earlier are provided to the upper primary and high school students too.

Educational programmes at primary level (class I - V) residential schools

The Government of AP has also established a large number of residential schools to provide free education to all the marginalized population groups viz., Adivasis, Dalits, economically backward people, physically challenged

people and religious minorities. both boys and girls are given admission to these schools.

The criteria for admission into these schools are that the family income of the student is less than Rs. 1.00 lakh per annum.

Children admitted to such residential schools are provided with the following facilities free of cost.

1. Free board and lodging
2. Text books and notebooks
3. 4 pairs of clothes every year
4. Toilet soap and other material
5. Blankets
6. Plate for food and a water glass
7. Trunk Box to keep his/her belongings.
8. Special Tuition for those who are poor in studies
9. Health facilities including provision of Vitamin A and B and iron and folic acid.

Educational programmes at High school level (VI - X)

The Government has been providing free of cost the following facilities to the children admitted into Boarding High schools (Class VI - X).

1. Free Board and lodging
2. Text books and notebooks
3. English medium education
4. 4 pairs of clothes every year
5. Soap and other material
6. Blankets
7. Plate for food and tumbler
8. Trunk Box to keep one's belongings
9. Rs. 40/- towards pocket expenses for boys and Rs. 75/- for girls
10. Special Tuition to those who are poor in studies
11. Television for recreation in hostels
12. A nurse to take care of the hostel inmates health
13. Distribution of vitamins – A, B, C and iron and folic acid tablets

In addition, the government of Andhra Pradesh has also established Navodaya schools which are residential schools. Admission into these schools is through an entrance test. The students selected through the state level test are provided with special facilities such as coaching to write various competitive examinations etc. These schools, and hostels are managed by the A.P. Social Welfare Board, Department of Tribal Welfare, etc.

Schools for Blind Children

The Government of A.P has established one school in each district of the state, exclusively for blind children they are given free education like all the other children. The facilities extended to students staying in hostels in other school are also provided to these disabled children. In addition, each student is paid Rs. 500/- per month to engage one reader to facilitate his or her study.

Equitable educational programmes at +2 level (XI - XII standard)

Way back in 1970, colleges were established for the XI and XII standard students. They are called Junior colleges. They are also known as 'Intermediate' or '+2' colleges. After passing the 10th standard examination those who wish to continue their studies may seek admission in a junior college to complete intermediate (XII standard). Only after the completion of intermediate, students can seek admission in a Degree College or in any of the professional courses. Therefore, intermediate is a turning point for students who wish to go for higher education. Therefore particular importance is attached to intermediate or plus 2 education by parents and students.

There are two types of colleges in the state to study +2. They are (a) Government Colleges and (b) Private Colleges, which have come to be called corporate colleges too. In Government Colleges, the fee for every student is very nominal, about Rs. 250-300 per annum. Economically backward students are exempted from paying even this small sum. But corporate colleges charge exorbitantly. Right now, they are charging as much as Rs. 25,000 per annum per student. The rich and those of the middle income group offer to pay the fee for their wards. These colleges provide intensive coaching for two years. A vast majority of the students of corporate colleges usually secure good marks and get admission in various professional courses including the IITS without much difficulty. Therefore, even the poor

wish to admit their wards in corporate colleges, although the fees are beyond their means. Therefore, the state government as part of the policy of equitable education, has chosen to pay the college fee of all economically backward children who have score 450/600 marks in the 10th standard examination and find admission in corporate colleges.

As on date there are 806 government junior colleges, 12 government vocational junior colleges in Andhra Pradesh. Also, there are 2500 private junior colleges and 753 private vocational junior colleges in the state.

In addition, there are Governmental Residential Junior colleges exclusively for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe students. For them all facilities are provided which include food, accommodation, fee waiver, packet money, special coaching to write the entrance tests to get for admission into the IITs and other professional courses.

In Andhra Pradesh, there are 847 engineering colleges as on date with an intake capacity of 3.39 lakh. Students in the state desire to do engineering because of the employment opportunities. But, it is not easy for the poor get admission to an engineering course as it is very expensive. Therefore, in order to provide quality technical education in the state, the Government of A.P. has established six IITs in the state. The selection for admission to them is based on an entrance test. The entire cost of education in the IITs is borne by the state Government. Each IIT has an annual intake capacity of 3600. Thus, all the students deserving and students belonging to Below Poverty Line families can hope to have technical education.

In addition to the engineering colleges there are in the state 251 polytechnic colleges in the state with an intake capacity of 69,450. There are also 745 Industrial Training Institutes (ITI) with an intake capacity of 1, 31,585.

The Government of A.P is also encouraging the starting of private medical colleges too. To day there are 53 medical colleges with an intake capacity of 5850. The state today stands on the top with largest member of medical colleges in India. There are also 18 dental colleges in the state with an intake capacity of 1770. There are 290 B. Pharmacy colleges with an in take capacity of 29520. There are also 47 D. Pharmacy colleges with an intake capacity of 2560 in A.P. Even in medical colleges, the state government has a fixed the fee structure. In the case of government medical colleges, the

fee payable by each student per annum is only Rs.16, 000/-. In the case of private medical colleges, the fee structure is different. It is decided on the basis of merit of the students. The first category students have to pay only Rs.60, 000/-+9500/- per annum.

The second category students need to pay Rs.200000+55000/- per annum. Students belonging to the SCs, STs BCs, religions minorities, physically challenged persons and those whose family income is less than Rs. 1.00 lakh per year are entitled to fee reimbursement.

Higher Education in Andhra Pradesh

At present, there are 34 state universities in Andhra Pradesh. In addition there is one medical university, one agricultural university, one veterinary university, one Vedic university, one Women University (exclusively for women). 5 central universities, 2 deemed universities, 2 Law universities and 19 conventional universities and one Open University. Also all the conventional and central universities have started Distance mode education too.

Students who intend to join B.A, B.Sc and B.com are given admission in degree colleges. Students who belong to the BPL families are given admission in college hostels with free board and lodging facilities. The fee paid by them is refunded to them at the end of the academic year. Further, each student is entitled to be given Rs.2000/- per annum for pocket expenses. In the case of, the physically challenged, they are provided with tricycles also.

There are 251 Government Degree Colleges and 179 Aided Colleges in the state with a total enrolment of 3,85,126. During the last three years, 76 Under Graduate Restructured courses were started in 78 degree colleges. Similarly, 60 Restructured Post Graduation courses were started in 59 colleges.

The Day scholars belonging to the BPL families are given free bus passes, and pocket money. Their fee is reimbursed. In case of blind students, they are entitled to all the benefits provided to the BPL families. Each blind student is permitted to engage one person as reader to whom the government pays Rs.500/- per month.

Equitable Educational opportunities at Post-graduate level

Similar facilities are offered to all the students who take admissions in post-graduate courses. The state Government has been giving permission to open more and more postgraduate colleges, to provide opportunity for as many as possible to pursue post-graduation. In the case of self-financing courses where the fee is very high, the SC and ST students are exempted from the fee. But then, in the case of students belonging to backward castes, they are given exemption to the extent of Rs.20, 000/- per annum. As usual, all the students are entitled to free board and lodging, pocket money etc.

Equitable Educational Opportunities in Professional Courses

There are in the state at present 644 Master of Computer Application (MCA) colleges with an intake capacity of 46,795, 926 Master of Business Administration (MBA) colleges with an intake capacity of 86,905, and 327 Bachelor of Education (B. Ed) & Diploma in Education (D. Ed) colleges with an intake capacity of 62890. And there are 1,330 Arts, Sciences & Commerce colleges with an intake capacity of 83150.

In Andhra Pradesh, a large number of students prefer to join professional courses. Usually, a majority of them wish to do engineering, while others choose one of the following: medicine, pharmacy, Biotechnology, Agriculture, Veterinary science, Nursing, Dental surgery, Physiotherapy, Information Technologies, Business Management etc. Therefore, the state Government has liberally permitted /encouraged the opening of a number of professional colleges in the private sector.

As a result, now there are a large number of professional colleges in the state for Nursing, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Education, Physiotherapy, Business Management and Information Technology in the private sector. Therefore, it is now easy to get admission in these courses. Even in the case of other professional courses, there is a provision for fee reimbursement for all students who belong to the BPL families.

This is in addition to the other facilities such as board and lodging, pocket money etc to the students of BPL families (Sakshi Daily News Paper dated 25-01-2009).

Equitable Educational Opportunities for Muslim Minorities in Andhra Pradesh

A vast majority of Muslims in Andhra Pradesh are poor. Their population constitutes 8.9 percent in the total population of the state (68,00,000). Two-thirds of the Muslims live below the poverty line. According to the 2001 Census only 18 percent of Muslims are literate. In order to uplift the Muslims, 12 pre-metric and 16 post-metric hostels exclusively for boys and 4 pre-metric and 6 post-metric hostels for girls have been established in Andhra Pradesh. Further, 12 English medium schools have also been established for Muslim boys and girls. Scholarships are also being given to Muslim students belonging to the BPL families from the academic year 2006-07 from class I to X. onwards. Further, the state Government has started providing 4 per cent reservation for Muslim in all educational institutions and in employment from the year 2006. As a result, thousands of Muslim students are able to get admission in engineering colleges, a few hundreds in Master of Computer Application, Master of Business Management, and Bachelor of Pharmacy, Bachelor of Dental Surgery and Medicine and all other professional courses. The Government has encouraged the opening colleges exclusively for Muslims. In fact, as on date there are 4 medical colleges exclusively for Muslim with an intake of 500 students.

Thus, the state government has been providing equitable educational opportunities to all people including the Minorities and Dalits living in the state. Several neighboring states are now trying to emulate the example of Andhra Pradesh in this regard.

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Cultivation of Reading Habit – The Need of the Hour for Lifelong Learning

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Thounaojam Ruhichand Singh

“A Reading Nation is a Leading Nation”

- Karl Marx

Abstract

It will be unfair to apportion all the blame for the shortcoming of the present literacy programmes to the educational administrators. All efforts to eliminate illiteracy would be in vain unless reading materials are made available to the adult learners to enjoy reading and a book culture is cultivated among them. The paper highlights the present status of the RRRLF beneficiary public libraries run by NGOs in the Thoubal District and their role in promoting reading habit among the adult learners. It argues that traditional public libraries have not succeeded to help in eradicating adult illiterate and promoting life-long learning. It, therefore, suggests the establishment of Adult Literacy Libraries which can effectively help in promoting reading habit among the illiterates in order to combat illiteracy from Manipur. The paper stresses the importance of stocking these libraries with suitable and adequate reading materials made easily accessible to the illiterates at the village or rural community level.

Keywords: Public library, RRRLF, Reading habit, Adult learner, Thoubal District

Introduction

The Public library may be also defined as a local educational institution outside the formal education system. In village areas, with aid from Government or N.G.Os libraries (rural public libraries) are set up and managed by local people to provide various reading and learning opportunities for

community development and improvement of people's quality of life. The concept of rural public libraries is that of a community owned resource centre for lifelong access to educational materials. While on one hand, it serves as a store house of knowledge and information. With easy access to the library local people may cultivate the habit of reading in order to develop their mind and skills. This turns village into viable place to live by creating jobs and access to technology, thus balancing the urban rural opportunity gap and make the society a literate, knowledgeable, harmonious and peaceful society.

The existence of Public Library is in itself a monument against illiteracy. All efforts to eliminate illiteracy would be in vain unless reading materials are made available to the adult learners to enjoy reading and a book culture is cultivated among them. The government and the organizations go hand in hand to improve the knowledge of the people. Raja Rammohan Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF) and Manipur Library Association (MALA) clubs and NGO libraries, etc. are taking great roles in the cultivation of reading habits in the states. Besides it tireless efforts Manipur is still lagging behind from other states of India in consideration of reading habit. There should be one public library for every 3000 people according to IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) Standard. In Manipur we have one library for 14,353 people if we include club libraries in the calculation or otherwise we have one library for 2, 29,644 people. For this study, we will discuss about the RRRLF beneficiary public libraries run by NGOs in the Thoubal District and their role in promoting reading habit among the adult learners. Thoubal district occupies the bigger portion of the eastern half of the Manipur Valley. According to Census 2011, the total population of the district is 420,517 and the literacy rate is 76.66%. In Manipur SAAKSHAR BHARAT MISSION (SBM)-2012 (Women Literacy) was launched on the 15th Jan 2010 at Thoubal district. This year, the District has been awarded Satyenz Maitra Memorial Award by the expert committee as the best performing district for completing various tasks on priority basis with quality in the implementation of SBM. The programme is also implementing in other three hill districts (Tamenglong, Senapati and Chandel) of the state.

Public libraries in promoting reading habit

Padma Shree Dr. S.R. Ranganathan, the father of library movement in India, assigned the public library with new functions as:

- To read out books for illiterates

- To present wall pictures and charts representing the new and latest facts and ideas.
- To arrange discussions among the literates and illiterates.

Any person who cannot afford to purchase books but would like to read books can also borrow books from a public library. By making books easily available to people public library also helps in cultivating reading habit. Persons missing the opportunity of getting in touch with books at childhood days, find it hard to acquired reading habit in their later years. So, for inculcating the reading habit among the adult learners public libraries should;

- Create an environment conducive to reading so that the adult learners feel at home and comfortable
- Organize programmes for stimulating love of books and of reading by co-coordinating libraries, books publishers, and book sellers to meet the learners frequently.
- Introduce mobile library services in remote areas to form the habit of reading.
- Infuse awareness among the adult illiterate on the source of information and encourage them to make use of the information which are available in the library.
- Provide information on all the aspects such as agricultural, financial, public hygiene, family welfare, legal matters etc.

Considering the universal recognition of the similarity between aims and methods of the public library service and adult education programmes in the matter of imparting non-formal education with all the above irrefutable advantages in favour of an integrated library cum-adult education services, one can easily ask why they disregarded completely by the planners of Adult Education programme . Some of the agreements in support of the plea for the integration of the present Adult Education programme with public library services are:

- The undeniable utility and efficacy of public library services in doing adult educational work.
- Public libraries can easily be equipped to serve as resource centres for adult education programmes at various locational levels, without incurring much additional cost, is being incurred now.
- If the two services the public library and adult education services are integrated, and their financial, material and staff resources pooled to

together, the existing public library system in the country could be easily revamped. It may even be possible to establish new public libraries in rural areas where none exist and may be, in this way the long-cherished dream of public library in every village come true.

RRRLF beneficiary NGO Libraries in Thoubal district

In Manipur, presently, there are 11 (eleven) Government Public Libraries and 130 (One Hundred and thirty) Government Sponsored Public Libraries run by NGO (Club / Voluntary) in this State. The existing 11-Government Public Libraries and 130 beneficiary Club/Voluntary Organization Libraries have been linked with the RRRLF, Kolkata for many years and receiving assistance from the Matching and Non-matching schemes of the Foundation, in kind, like books, furniture and equipment regularly. Present study is based on the ongoing system of NGO member libraries of RRRLF to show the role of public libraries in their localities of Thoubal District, especially in promoting reading habit among the adult learners. The concerned libraries have been surveyed through questionnaire prepared for the functions, services and activities of the libraries. The libraries which do not return the questionnaires are excluded in this analysis. The background of the organizations of the NGO libraries is shown in the following Table:

Table-1: Organizational Background

Name of the Organization	Address	Registration No.	Date of Establishment	Year for membership Library of RRRLF
Tentha Heibung Tranquility Club	Tentha Heibung, tentha	1079 of 1972	1969	1997
The Library Development Youth Association	Elanghang-pokpi	1223 of 1973	1971	1987
Kangleipak Loina Sillon Lup	Yaripok Bamon Leikai	3327 of 1981	1980	1985
Peoples' Museum, Kakching	Kakching	4122	1981	1990
Students' Association Library	Kakching Khullen Makhia Leikai	5071 of 1983	1981	1986
United Youth's Club, Khangabok	Khangabok Mbeisnam Leikai	504 of 1964	1984	1984

Khelman Public Library Cum Information Centre	Khelman, Thoubal	44/RS/TH/88	1986	1989
Public Library & Information Centre	Khangabok Part - III	122 of 1987-88	1987	1988
Integrated Rural Development and Educational Organization	Wangbal	137 of 1988	1988	1988
Wangkhem Youth Club	Wangkhem, Yaripok	272 of 1963	1988-89	1989-90
The Kakching Khong Youth Development Association	Phundrei Makha Leikai	45 of 1993	1990	2003
Kakching Khunou Athletics & Cultural Organization	Kakching Khunou	37 of 1991	1992	1994
Library & Information Centre, Kakching	Kakching Phousupat Leikai	42 of 1995	1994	2005
Advanced Volunteers' Organization	Kakching Wairi Ward no. 2	113 of 1986	1996	
Creative Youth Organisation	Sapam Mayai Leikai	5135 of 1984	2002	2002
Tentha Educational & Sport Reformers Association (TESRA)	Tentha Heibung Mamang Leikai, Tentha	43 of 2000-01	2003	2005
The Ujung Khunou Rural Development Organisation	Ujung Khunou Leikai, Waikhong	82 of 1996	2007	2007

Source: Returned Questionnaires

Assistance from RRRLF

Assistance received by 17 (seventeen) organizations of NGO libraries from RRRLF are shown in the following Table:

Table - 2: Assistance of Library from RRRLF

N=17

Name of Assistant Item Received	Building Grant	Furniture	Book	TV	Orientation /Seminar/ Refresher Course	Children's Infrastructure	Others
No. of Libraries	2 (11.67%)	10 (58.82%)	15 (88.23%)	6 (35.29%)	7 (41.17%)	1 (5.88%)	Nil

Source: Returned Questionnaire

Table 2 shows that the book assistance becomes the major assistance given by RRRLF and it is followed by the furniture, TV set and other electronic and digital materials. Orientations / Seminars/Refresher Courses are conducted under the RRRLF in a very small manner, not in a grand style. In this District, only two NGO libraries get the assistance of RRRLF and the Children infrastructure is also got only by a library.

Collection of the Libraries

The collections of the concerned NGO libraries are briefly discussed in the following table:

Table-3: Collection of Book

No. of Books	1000 Below	1000-3000	3000-5000	5000 Above	Total
No. of Libraries	4 (13.52%)	4 (13.52%)	4 (13.52)	5 (29.41%)	17

Source: Returned Questionnaire

Table 3 shows that only five libraries have the collection of books above 5000 in number. There are four libraries in which the collection ranges from 1-1000, 1000-3000 and 3000-5000 book. But, special collections for adult learner are not found in these libraries.

Services/Facilities of the Libraries

The services and facilities provided by the libraries are shown in the following Table:

Table-4: Users' Services

N=17

Type of Services	Readers Services	Book Loaning	References Services	Special Services for adult learners
No. of Libraries	16 (94.11%)	11 (64.70%)	1 (5.88%)	nil

Source: Returned Questionnaire

Table 4 shows the users' services given by the libraries. Although many services are not available in various libraries for their users but 16 libraries do give its readers services. Book loaning services are available in 11 libraries. Except 1 or 2 libraries, all the libraries do not provide reference services. Regarding the special services for adult learners, no library provides such type of special service.

Readers and Visitors

The readers and visitors of the libraries are also shown in the following Table and Figure:

Table-5: Readers of the Libraries

N=17

No. of Readers (Enrolled)	200 Below	200-400	400 Above
No. of Libraries	8 (47.05%)	3 (17.64%)	2 (11.76%)

Source: Return Questionnaire

Table 5 indicates that out of 17 libraries only 13 libraries have enrolled readers.

Table - 6: Visitors of the Libraries

No. of Visitors (per month)	200 Below	200-400	400 Above	Total
No. of Libraries	6 (35.29%)	7 (41.17%)	4 (13.52%)	17

Source: Returned Questionnaire

Table 6 shows that an average, 7(seven) libraries are found to be visited by 200 – 400 monthly. Unfortunately, in the survey it is found that among the enrolled readers and visitors the number of adult learner is nil.

It is unfortunate that the philosophy of public library service regarding the adult illiterates has not yet gained recognition, in practice, or acceptable in practice, in the district, though vast majority of people still remain illiterate.

The idea of public library serving as effective institution for the eradication of the tremendous population of adult illiterates in the district, has so far failed to gain any belief in the mind of our educational administrators, although they universally accept the importance of the role of libraries in the promotion of reading habit for the expansion of literacy and lifelong learning. The traditional public library system in the district has not been able to satisfy the needs of providing adequate and suitable reading materials for the adult learners. Even when assessed as an urban utility of the public library system has not made any meaningful impact on the population. This is so because in the first place these public libraries do not stock suitable materials and services for the illiterates. Secondly no conscious efforts are made to relate the public library system to literacy campaign.

Significant Efforts of public libraries

People are not easily persuaded to take the trouble of learning to read and write until they are convinced that the knowledge gained thereby will open up avenues of advancement in their life-condition, in their pursuing more gainful occupations. Advocates of libraries all over the world have contended that libraries can and do perform this persuasive function. The public library should provide timely, accurate and reliable information services to the adults. Programmes need to be undertaken are given below:

- Libraries can function as co-ordinate agency for the department of the government and deliver information about the programmes of the governments to the adult learners.
- A modern public library does not confine its resource to books and other printed materials only. It should be equipped with ICT based resources and services like audio-visual aids which can carry on successful motivation through charts, pictures, films, televisions shows.
- Libraries can select, stock and serve easy to read materials for the actual work illiteracy and serve the follow up reading materials to those who have picked functional literacy,
- Guidance and counseling on all the matters such as agriculture, public health and hygiene, family welfare, legal matters, etc.

- Public library system should co-operate and co-ordinate with other social organizations and institutions in community and create a comprehensive collection of reading material and graphic material relevant to the community.

Adult education practitioners and policy makers should support their activities with suitable and adequate reading materials. That is if they do not want their learners to relapse into illiteracy, the followings may be the alternatives:

1. The setting up of publishing house to turn out cheap and plentiful suitable reading materials which can be distributed free of charge to the learners or sold to them at highly subsidized prices.
2. The establishment of adult literacy libraries to complement the existing moribund public libraries. Adult literacy library should be built upon the concept that the literates should have cheap and suitable reading materials easily, at their disposal. In this connection, the small libraries of the Adult Education Centres of SBM should be developed by local bodies and served as effective adult literacy libraries in the district.

Thus public library should cater the recreational needs of the neo-literates by making them available relevant and suitable reading materials at their door steps. Unless suitable reading materials in regional languages are easily available and accessible through public libraries at the village level, the problems of illiteracy cannot be easily solved. Public libraries should endeavor to create consciousness and reading interests among the illiterates through various means in co-operation with the regional and local voluntary agencies.

Conclusion

So far adult education practitioners and policy makers in the state have completely neglected public libraries and have left them out of their scheme of things. All their efforts and the huge amount of money being pumped into their literacy programmes have been and will continue to be little consequence so long as they fail to make suitable reading materials available to their illiterates through a well conceived rural library system. Manipur state cannot bear the cost of establishing such libraries. It is here that international aid, both government and non-governmental, is urgently required. Already organizations such as Swedish International Development Agency, UNDP/

UNESCO, International Council for Adult Education, German Foundation for International Development (DSE), Canadian Organization for Development through Education (CODE), and many other are helping in this field. This paper wishes to appeal to these donors and our authority that their aid should be extended to the establishment of rural, community or village adult literacy libraries in the state. The Manipur Public Library Act, 1988 should be implemented without any further delay to develop the public library system in the state.

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Self-Help Group Movement - A Step towards Women Neo-literate Micro Entrepreneurship: A Case Study in Tripura

Saswata Sen
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Among the essential pre-requisites for achieving significant headway in the rural sector, knowledge and credit occupies a very important place. In the era of globalization, access to knowledge and access to credit are the prime determinants of employment. Hence, by providing knowledge through education and accessibility of credit through Self-Help Group movements under Micro-Credit Approach to the mass people of a nation can transform the rural economy by facilitating self-employment, income creation, saving-mobilization and hence resulting self-sustainability and independent growth.

Introduction

Access to knowledge and access to credit are the two essential pre-requisites for achieving significant headway in the rural sector. In these studies, several social scientists like Solow (1957), Backer (1960), Schultz (1961), Renshaw (1970), Harries and James (1971), Harbison (1973), Denison (1983), Psacharopoulos (1991), Sen and Dreze (1996) and others have emphasized the role of education in overall development of a country. On the other hand several studies stress the role of credit for rural development. For instance, Morman (1919), Murray (1949), Frankel (1971), Dantwala (1966), Agarwal (1987), Sector Policy Paper of the World Bank (1974,1975), Hacque and Shirohi (1986), Ramaswamy and Resom (1988), Krishnakumari (1989) and many others have accentuated the role of credit in rural development.

Education refers to the development of human skills and knowledge of the people or labour force. A skilled person can easily create employment opportunities for himself / herself and others taking advantage of access to credit. So, extension of skill & knowledge through literacy programmes and facilitating access to credit through Self Help Group (SHG) movements under the Micro-credit system can transform the rural economy by expediting self-employment, income creation, saving-mobilization and hence self-

sustainability and independent growth. Micro credit as defined by Grameen Bank (Bangladesh), symbolizes small loans extended to the poor for undertaking self-employment projects that would generate income and enable them to provide for themselves and their families. The defining criteria used are thus the size of loans and the targeted people comprising micro-entrepreneurs, particularly women micro-entrepreneurs, from low income households. These loans are generally offered without any collateral.

Current development theories adumbrate that economic dependence, disempowerment, illiteracy and lack of access to credit are the major causes of poverty. To tackle poverty, Government of India has been implementing several developmental programs since independence. The basic idea behind these developmental activities is to attain an overall development in rural sectors providing basic infrastructural facilities to the rural mass in such a manner that the share of National Development should reach to all section of the people of the country. As per the concept of 'Bharat Nirman' all basic urban facilities and amenities are to be ensured in each and every village so as to eliminate the gap between the 'Modern India' and 'Grameen Bharat' and hence, Tripura, a small petite state of Northeast part of India, is also not exception from this idea.

In Tripura there are elected bodies of three tier panchayats through which both political and economic decentralizations of planning are being implemented under the title Gromodaya. As a part of this decentralized planning, local panchayats have been playing an indispensable role in employment generation particularly among the people of scheduled casts, scheduled tribes and other backward communities through SHGs. The success of decentralized planning is the out come of literacy campaign of the State launched in 1995 in the name of Total Literacy Campaign (TLC), where governmental and non- governmental functionaries played a significant role. The basic concern of literacy movement focuses on achieving - Functional Literacy, Functional Awareness and Self-reliance. While the women neo-literates have achieved significant strides in the first two objectives of literacy program, the present activity of literacy campaign which is better known as Continuing Education Program (CEP) has been stressing much emphasis on achieving self-reliance by involving the neo-literate women in micro-credit system through the formation of SHGs. The attempts may be registered as the burning need of the hour particularly for Tripura, which has been suffering from the problems of infrastructure bottleneck. An attempt has been taken here to conduct a study on the role of SHGs run by women

neo-literate in income generation program and also on their intervention in socio-economic transformation of the society to which they belong in West Tripura District.

Perspective of the Study

The present scenario of co-existence of high literacy rate with higher poverty rate indicates a contrary character of the state's economy and as a result of this, the state can not achieve its expected growth rate. Considering the above scenario, this study emphasized the potentiality of employment or self-employment in the perspective of expansion of micro credit approach through SHGs. Keeping all these in mind, this study focuses on the following objectives.

- * To trace out the socio-economic conditions of member of the women neo-literate SHGs.
- * To capture the scenario of income generation activities of the women neo-literate SHGs.
- * To find out the role of members of the women neo-literate SHGs in socio-economic upliftment of the society.

Data and Method

The present study is the outcome of an evaluation project entitled, "Impact Analysis in Socio – economic Status of SHGs of West Tripura Districts", sponsored by the Department of Rural Development, Government of Tripura. In this work, SHGs were selected on the basis of Stratified Random Sampling Approach (SRSA). All the sixteen Blocks in West Tripura District were considered as a strata and SHGs were selected from almost all of the panchayats of a particular block through Random Sampling Method (SRM). This paper constitutes the Phase-I of the evaluation work. The field work was conducted in the later part of the year 2006. In Phase-I, two Blocks of West Tripura District namely Bishalgarh and Dukli were considered for the survey, where 529 and 304 SHGs were selected from these Blocks respectively. At the aggregate level 833 SHGs were surveyed, out of which Women neo-literate (WNL) SHGs were 258. The present paper focuses only on WNL SHGs. The groups having more than 80% women neo-literate members are considered as WNL SHGs.

In the evaluation work, both quantitative and qualitative approaches were

used. Questionnaire is used here to capture the various achievements of quantitative dimensions of SHGs. A questionnaire consisting of 25 items was administered to 1666 SHGs leader - two from each group, the president and secretary of the group. Qualitative approach includes Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and Personal Interaction (PI). The FDG was conducted at two levels. Level one comprises of the president and secretary of the groups along with other members. The second level consists of the local panchayats.

Demographic and Social Features

It is customary to present the demographic and social background of the women group members as they exert tremendous influence on availing credit and its utilization.

Age Profile: In general, the members of the SHGs belong to the age group of 18 to 50 years. The details of age-profile show that 69.3 % of the selected SHG members belong to the age group 26-40 years and 9.9 % of them to the age group upto 25 years. The distribution reveals that around 79 % of the beneficiaries belong to less than 40 years of age, who represent the economically active segment of the population. **Gender wise Classification of SHGs :** Maximum 428 SHGs out of 833 SHGs, which is around 51.38% of total surveyed SHGs run by female members, while only 16.81% SHGs were run by male members. Out of 833 SHGs, 258 SHGs were run by WNL members, which is around 30.97 % of total surveyed SHGs. These indicate the women domination in case of formation of SHGs.

Size of the SHGs : Out of 833 SHGs around 95.68 % SHGs were formed with 10 to 15 members while 4.08 % of SHGs were found with 16 to 20 members. There was only 0.24% SHGs having more than 20 members. **Educational Status:** Generally, the literacy rate among rural women is very low, which influences the use of credit for economic betterment of the members. Maximum 32.63 % of total surveyed SHG members having qualification between VI – X standard followed by 31.43 % of neo-literates (men neo-literate & women neo-literate), 26.27 % having qualification between I - V standard & 9.67% having qualification more than XI standard. As far as Neo-literates were concerned, nearly 92.59 % members belong to Women Neo – literate (WNL), which was around 29.10 % of the total observed members at the same level.

Economic Status: Around 74.17 % of total WNL members belong to BPL while that of APL it was only 25.83%.

Social Status: From the view point of Social Status, maximum 45.48 % WNL members belong to General Category followed by 31.72% of SCs , 18.68 % of STs , 2.15% of OBC & 1.97 % of RM at the aggregate level. Thus it was found that around 54.52% of WNL members (SCs, STs, OBC & RM) belong to downtrodden social category. Occupational status: As per as occupational status (before joining the SHGs) is concerned, maximum 35.62% of total WNL members were unemployed (unmarried women) followed by 23.90% of housewife , 14.55 % of petty business, 13.92% of farmer & 11.98 % of daily labour. Around 59.55 % (unemployed & housewife) members of total WNL engaged themselves with such activities from where they were not able to have any direct income before joining Self-Help Groups .

Employment Generation

No doubt any financial assistance, if utilized properly, generates gainful employment opportunities in the rural economy. It was observed from the field survey that the WNL members also got gainful employment opportunities as shown in the following table. Table -1 shows the experience in training as well as involvement in income generation activities (IGA) of WNL members of the SHGs.

Table – 1: Details of experience in training and involvement in income generation activities of WNL SHGs.

IGA	WNL SHGs with training experience		WNL SHGs involved in IGA		WNL members involved in IGA	
	No. of WNL SHGs	% of TWNL SHGs	No. of WNL SHGs	% of TWNL SHGs	No. of WNL members	% of TWNL members
Piggery	44	17.05 %	94	36.43 %	962	33.90 %
Bamboo & Cane	15	5.01 %	Nil	-	Nil	-
Mushroom	32	12.40 %	Nil	-	Nil	-
Nursery	16	6.20 %	Nil	-	Nil	-
Fishery	8	3.10 %	29	11.24 %	291	10.25 %
Agriculture	5	1.94 %	17	6.59 %	187	6.59 %
Poultry	20	7.75 %	55	21.32 %	670	23.60 %
Goatery	Nil	-	30	11.63 %	320	11.28 %
Small Business	Nil	-	20	7.75 %	250	8.81 %
Buffalo / Cow	Nil	-	13	5.04 %	158	5.57 %
Total	140	54.25 %	258	100 %	2838	100 %

Source: Field Survey

Note: TWNL: Total Women New Literate

From Table -1, it is clear that at the aggregate level around 45.75% of total WNL SHGs have not received any kind of training facilities. Maximum 17.05% of total WNL SHGs have training experience in piggery followed by 12.40% in mushroom cultivation, 7.75% in poultry, 6.20% in nursery, 5.01% in bamboo & cane, 3.10% in fishery and 1.19% in agricultural activities. From the above table, it reveals that most of the WNL members started their ventures without having any proper training facilities. Around 36.43% of total WNL SHGs have started their venture in piggery, 21.32% in poultry, 11.63% in goatery and 11.24% in fishery. Around 93.41% WNL members engaged themselves in off-farm activities. As far as off-farm activity is concerned nearly 79% WNL members involved themselves in only four trades namely piggery (33.90%), fishery (10.25%), poultry (23.60%) and goatery (11.28%). None of the WNL members were found involved in bamboo & cane, mushroom and nursery activities though around 25% WNL members had training experiences in these trades.

Generation of Income

There is a symbolic relationship between generation of income and employment opportunities and the potential of employment can be judged by the amount of income generated in any activity. The details of increase in monthly income (average of last six months) of WNL members of SHGs are shown in Table - 2.

Table - 2: Details of increase in income (monthly average) of WNL member of the surveyed SHGs

IMAI	Rs.100-200	Rs.201-300	Rs.301-400	Rs.401-500	Rs.501-700	Rs.701-1000	Rs.1001-2000	Total
Individuals	1750	964	62	15	32	Nil	15	2838
PTWNL	61.66	33.97	2.18	0.53	1.13	-	0.53	100

Note: IMAI: Increase in Monthly Average Income, PTWNL: % of Total WNL member,

From the above table it is clear that all the WNL members have registered themselves as an earning member of their families. From Table - 2, it reveals that maximum 61.66% of total WNL members have

the additional earning capacity of Rs.100-200/- per month to their family. Around 33.97% of total WLN members contributed to Rs.201-300/- per month as an additional income of their families. Nearly 2.18 % of WNL members' family income have increased as an average of Rs.301-400/- per month after joining SHGs.

Use of Income Generated

The opinion of the members of the SHGs revealed that they productively made use of the income generated after receiving the loans. 41.11 % of the members reinvested their income on off-farm activities, 19.30 % of them revealed that a part of the income generated was utilized for education purpose of their children and 14.84 % of them spent on health care. 13.38 % of the members told that income generated was spent for meeting the household expenditure and 11.37 % reported that they have spent it on purchase of productive assets for them.

Role of the members of SHGs in socio-economic upliftment of the society

From the FGDs and personal interviews it came to the notice that all the surveyed WNL members have been working under the leadership of a literacy Prerak who runs a Literacy Centre with a population of 2000 – 2500 in a non tribal panchayat / village and with a population of 1500 – 2000 in a tribal panchayat / village. These members of the SHGs are practically the driving force of their locality that get themselves involved in certain social activities like "Mata Shishu Mela" (an activities of RCH program), Anti Dowry Activities, Legal Literacy Campaign (LLC) etc. They also belong to a body namely Village Sanitation and Water Committee (VSWC) constituted by the panchayat under the vigilance of the respective R.D. Block. These WNL members have involved themselves in implementing Sanitation and Safe-drinking water program in their respective localities.

Observations and Findings

The study reveals that more than 50 % of the total surveyed SHGs are run by female members.

Out of total neo- literates, nearly 93 % members belong to Women Neo-literate (WNL), which was around 29 % of the total observed members.

Around 74 % of the total WNL members belong to BPL category and nearly 55 % of the total WNL members belong to downtrodden social category like SC, ST and OBC. Nearly 60 % of the total WNL members were not able to earn any direct income before joining SHGs. More than 45 % of the total WNL SHGs started their venture without any proper training facilities. More than 80 % of the total WNL SHGs involved themselves only in four income generation activities i.e. goatery (11.63 %), poultry (21.32 %), piggery (36.43 %) and fishery (11.24 %) while only 27.91 % of the total WNL members have received scientific training facilities in goatery (Nil), poultry (7.75 %) piggery (17.05 %) and fishery (3.10 %). All the WNL members have registered themselves as additional earning members of their families after joining SHGs. Nearly 61 % of total WNL members have supported to their families through providing on an average of Rs. 100-200/- per month as an additional income.

Summary and Policy Suggestions

In this paper attempt has been made to find out the role of SHGs run by Women Neo-literate (WNL) in the income generation program and also on their intervention in socio-economic transformation of the society. The study shows that most of the members of the surveyed SHGs were women. All the WNL members have been successfully contributing to their families providing additional income after joining SHGs. Besides, they have been playing a significant role in socio-economic development. From the above analysis, it reveals that most of the WNL members concentrated themselves in particular income generation activities, which may result in 'Crowding-out Effect'. On the other hand, most of the WNL members have engaged themselves in such an income generation activities like piggery, goatery, poultry and fishery in which they have not received any scientific training facilities, which is essential from the view point of the sustainability of their venture.

It reveals from the study that most of the members of SHGs are women. It is a well known fact that the women particularly of poor families are more disciplined, realistic and credit worthy and more concerned with the development of their families and hence they are found to be involved much in SHG movement. It is also of general experience that women can utilize their earning in a better way than their counterparts. One of the essential factors for successful implementation of the SHG movement is active involvement of the Women Neo-literate members in

essential steps of decision making starting from opening bank account to the marketing of the products. This factor also helps in leadership training on the part of rural women neo-literate who is usually found to be introvert. In addition, it has become successful in developing capacity building, leadership building, generating awareness in executing social works, self-reliance on the part of the Women Neo-literate. The success story of some SH Group's venture shows that the Women Neo-literate can also flourish in their life style if they are given the appropriate scope. Thus SHG movement has opened ample scope for earning on the part of Women Neo-literate. And hence the movement can be registered as a movement of **'Women Neo-literate Micro Entrepreneurship'**.

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