

INDIAN JOURNAL OF  
ADULT EDUCATION

VOL.74 NOS.1-4  
JAN-DEC. 2013

IAEA  
LIB

Vol. 74, No.1

ISSN 0019-5006

January-March 2013

# Indian Journal of Adult Education



(Estd. 1939)

Indian Adult Education Association

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## INDIAN JOURNAL OF ADULT EDUCATION

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Published quarterly by the Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA), 17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi – 110 002. Phones : 23379282, 23378436, 23379306 Fax : 91-11-23378206  
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Contents of IJAE are indexed in Current Index to Journals in Education, New York; Content Pages in Education, Oxfordshire, England and Guide to Indian Periodical Literature, Gurgaon (Haryana),; and microfilmed by University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA.

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ISSN 0019-5006

Subscription: Inland Rs. 250.00 p.a., and  
Overseas US\$ 60.00 p.a.

Printed and Published by Dr. Madan Singh for Indian Adult Education Association,  
17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi – 110002.

Printed at M/s. Graphic World, 1686, Kucha Dakhini Rai,  
Darya Ganj, New Delhi – 110 002.

### 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, zexored 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 iaeadelhi@gmail.com

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# INDIAN JOURNAL OF ADULT EDUCATION

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## *Editor's Note*

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## IAEA Publication

IAEA is shortly to publish a book titled "Adult and Lifelong Learning - Selected Articles" with the following:

- ◆ Foundations of Adult Education - Prof. N.K.Ambasht
- ◆ International Benchmarks and Evolving Perspectives in Indian Adult Education - Dr. A. Mathew
- ◆ Lifelong Learning in India - Opportunities and Challenges - Prof. S.Y. Shah
- ◆ Community learning and development: Approaches to build capacities of communities - Prof. M.C. Reddeppa Reddy
- ◆ Promoting Reading Habits and Creating a Literate Society - Prof. Asoke Bhattacharya
- ◆ Saakshar Bharat, Belem Declaration and Framework of Action (BFFA) and Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) – Commonality and Differences - Dr. L. Mishra
- ◆ ICT and Economy on the Changing Dimensions of Education and Learning in India: A Double-Edged Sword - Sayantan Mandal
- ◆ Sustainable Library Strategies for Adult and Lifelong Learning - Dr. M. V Lakshmi Reddy
- ◆ Tribal Education as a Tool for Rural Transformation: A Case Study of Paniyas in Wayanad - Dr. Raju Narayana Swamy, IAS
- ◆ Training for Adult Education Functionaries in India - Dr. V. Mohankumar
- ◆ Centrality of Evaluation for Adult Education and Learning - Prof. H.S. Bhole
- ◆ Review and Analysis of Research in Adult Education - Dr. Manjeet Paintal and Dr. Anuradha Sharma

## Editor's Note

Every year International Women's Day is celebrated all over the world on March 8<sup>th</sup> to project their achievements in the economic, social and political sense and also calls for their rights, equality and awareness. On this occasion a number of functions are organized in India also. Are these functions having any meaning in India and really help in the advancement of women in various spheres? Over the years participation of women in social, political and administrative fields have increased but not to the desired level, it may be because of lack of support from the family and women's own lack of initiative. In many communities they are still in weaker position and not able to forcefully put forward their claim. Unfortunately, in the recent past sexual harassment of women in work place, educational institutions and on the road have increased a lot and their projections in the newspapers and electronic media have almost created a fear psychosis in their mind. In recent time sexual harassment not even spared the children and small girls.

The theme of International Women's Day 2013 is "The Gender Agenda: Gaining Momentum" and the themes for the last five years were (from 2008 to 2012) "Investing in Women and Girls", "Women and Men United to End Violence Against Women and Girls", "Equal Rights, Equal Opportunities: Progress for all", "Equal Access to Education, Training and Science and Technology" and "Empower Rural Women – End Hunger and Poverty. Did we really create awareness on these themes and what are their achievements? Mere celebration has no meaning unless it is converted into action. Hence, society in general, family in particular should now realize the importance of women and start supporting them like a rock which will give not only confidence but also energy for women to progress and achieve new heights.

**Dr.V.Mohankumar**

## New Publication

IAEA is shortly going to publish a book titled 'Skill Development Training in India: Policies and Institutions' authored by Dr. V. Mohankumar and B. Sanjay with the following chapters:

- I. Vocational Education: A core Strategic Sector Still Missing Top Priority
- II. The Need for Vocational Education: Changing Economic and Labour Market Scenario
- III. Role of Vocational Education in India: An Understanding Through Various Commissions & Committees
- IV. Institutional Framework for Vocational Education & Training in India
- V. Jan Shikshan Sansthan – Unique Institutions for Vocational Training
- VI. Role of Vocational Education in Harnessing Outsourcing Opportunities
- VII. National Skill Development Mission: The Path Ahead

# Conceptual Evolution of Adult Education in India and Correspondence with Global Trends

*A.Mathew*

## Introduction

What we understand today about the scope of adult education and its curriculum and contents is a vastly changed and broadened vision and version as compared to the initial phase when attention was devoted to this engagement and programme. An entire evolutionary process resides in this journey and its understanding could yield a better appreciation. It could be interesting to notice how and why these incremental additions to the scope of adult education came on the national discourse which inevitably got reflected in the curriculum and content.

Two instances could serve as a snap shot, with regard to the focus of this paper, viz., to look back and appreciate the evolution and broadening of perception and vision of adult education with respect to its scope and contours. One, the view of Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) in 1939, the earliest official document on adult education, that "literacy is a movement of further education and must not be regarded as an end in itself." Referring to the Mass Literacy Campaigns and Programmes in many Provinces in 1938, the Committee said that "the primary aim of the campaign must not be merely to make adults literate, but to keep them literate. The instruction itself should be closely related to the adult learner's occupation, their personal interests and the social and economic condition under which they live" (cited in Sohan Singh, 1957: 57). The other, the view of the Education Commission (1964-66) that "Adult education is as wide as life".

With reference to the concept, vision, objectives and purpose of adult education and also the learning components envisaged and spelt out during different programme phases, as encapsulated in its curriculum and contents, there are two central points that this paper seeks to highlight, viz., (a) the

centrality and continuity of certain basic life needs, as the core of adult education; and (b) the changing focuses, as sought to be given precedence, at certain programme phases, without necessarily negating the other important needs that adult education should address. These trends in the perceptions and visions of adult education, are perused through programme phases like: (i) Literacy as social mobilization for the nationalist movement; (ii) Literacy for citizenship and democracy through Social Education in the fifties; (iii) the Gram Shikshan Mohim in Maharashtra, (iv) Functional Literacy phase of 60s; (v) Critical Pedagogy and literacy as instrument for liberation phase of NAEP during the 70s; (vi) the retention of the critical pedagogy in diluted forms through the 1980s, with other larger social objectives suggested by the Review Committee on NAEP in 1980 and as further reiterated by the NPE, 1986 and its Programme of Action; (vii) the continuation of these objectives under NLM and through the 90s and beyond, till 2007, guiding the content and curriculum of the full blown literacy movement covering basic literacy, post-literacy and continuing education programme. The approach during the 1980s and 90s in India approximates to the global trend of Mass Literacy Campaign and the EFA Movement approaches. Thus, an attempt is also made to trace the coincidence of international trends corresponding to the Indian trend in adult education. It is not a history of implementation of different adult education programmes and projects. It seeks to touch the vision and focus of adult education and its curriculum and content during the various programme phases.

### **Literacy as Social Mobilization for Participation in Nationalist Movement**

With the advent of popular Ministries in the Provinces, adult education in the country received not only new life but new orientation. The new syllabus of adult education was not confined to pure literacy, but included, in theory at least, civic education of adults. The media of education were extended to include publications, posters, cinema shows, etc. The movement for adult literacy, for as yet it was not very much more than that, began in the Provinces, but the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) reflected accurately the interest and thought of the country on the subject. In its 4<sup>th</sup> meeting in December 1938, it appointed a Committee to consider the question of adult education. The highlights of the Report, as became evident in the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board in May 1940, contained many recommendations, as adduced above.

The Mass Literacy Campaign (MLC) in Bihar, as in all other Provinces, and Princely States were already started and were based on civic education, which was inspired by Gandhiji's experiment in education. Gandhiji's ideas about adult education were the major factor in influencing the concept, purpose and role of adult education during the nationalist movement. Gandhiji's Basic Education (*Nai Taleem*) was based on work as pedagogy and basis for knowledge and learning; this was the same principle both for children as well as for adults. In the case of adults, activity-based learning had a larger vision viz., (i) relevant to life's immediate needs, as the universal truism for motivation and interest to learn by adult illiterate poor in rural areas; (ii) the spirit of co-operation which working together brings; and (iii) broadening the mental horizon of illiterates so that they participate intelligently in the freedom struggle (D.P. Nayar, 1980: 203). To Gandhiji, adult education was clearly a political strategy for social mobilization of the rural people – illiterates and literates, to participate in the nationalist movement.

While Gandhi's Basic Education, widely emulated in different Provinces, was a constructive programme meant for strengthening of the democratic nation in the making, the Mass Literacy Campaign under the Congress Government in Bihar Province during 1938-39, was like "waging an unremitting war on poverty and ignorance" (cited in S.Y. Shah, 1999). It is surprising to note that the perception of the nexus between poverty and illiteracy and the conviction for a war on both as an inter-connected strategy.

The curriculum and content contemplated and developed for Bihar MLC, as in other Provinces, were charts and primers – charts for imparting literacy, through alphabetical method, used in formal education system and using students and teachers. Primers may have contained awareness and knowledge inputs regarding illiteracy and ignorance, illiteracy and poverty, etc. (Sohan Singh, 1957). Besides, the meetings and rallies addressed by political leaders, the instructors who were High School and College students and teachers must have given supplementary information and motivation regarding participation in the freedom struggle.

The understanding about what to teach adults stemmed from ideas of the nation state, the role of adults as citizens and their participation in the development of the country, in the socio-economic, cultural and political development processes. The image of educated persons was the ideal for the adult education programme as well.

## Literacy for Citizenship and Democracy: Social Education, 1950

For an understanding of the knowledge imparted through adult education, it is important to remember some basic facts. The social education programme initiated as adult education during the first Five Year Plan, and implemented by the States, continued in some States like Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, etc., well up to the time of NAEP in 1978. The only exception were two, namely, the Gram Shikshan Mohim in Maharashtra and the FFLP which was started in three districts of three states initially, like Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka, in 1967, scaled up to 100 by 1973-74 and 144 covering many states by 1978 when the NAEP was introduced.

The objectives of Social Education were to: a) Instill a consciousness of the rights and duties of citizenship and foster a spirit of service to the community; b) Develop a love for democracy and impart an understanding of the way in which democracy functions; c) Knowledge of the outstanding problems and difficulties facing the country and the world; d) Develop love for the pride in our cultural heritage through the knowledge of our history, geography and culture; e) Teach the simple laws of personal and community health and develop habits of hygiene and cleanliness; f) Foster the growth of the co-operative spirit as a way of life; g) Provide training in crafts both as a hobby and as a means to economic betterment; h) Provide cultural and recreational facilities by way of folk dances, drama, music, poetry, recitation and other ways of spontaneous self-expression; i) Provide through these various activities as well as through reading and discussion groups, an understanding of the basic moral values; j) Give a reasonable mastery over the tools of learning-reading, writing, simple arithmetic and to create an interest in knowledge; and k) Provide facilities for continuation of education through libraries, discussion groups, clubs and Peoples' Colleges (SY Shah, 2012).

The core curriculum suggested in the Social Education included: (1) Health and Hygiene (2) Family and Community living (3) Vocations (4) Literacy and Cultural activities and (5) Recreational activities. The Social Education was defined as a "course of study directed towards the production of consciousness of citizenship among the people and promotion of social solidarity among them". It had three main aspects: (i) The spread of literacy among grown-up illiterates, (ii) the production of an educated mind in the masses in the absence of literacy education, and (iii) the inculcation of lively sense of rights and duties of citizenship - both as individuals and members of a powerful nation (cited in SY Shah, 1999).

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister and who was devoted to, and who took personal interest in adult education, emphasized that attention must be paid to education in citizenship, to personal and public health, to the provision of information which would allow people to effect some improvement in their economic condition, to the encouragement of art and literature, including creative activities and to the development of universal ethic of tolerance, mutual appreciation and universal principles of right conduct (Anil Bordia, 1981: 59).

### **Gram Shikshan Mohim (Village Literacy Movement), 1959-1963**

The Gram Shikshan Mohim, 1959-1963 was the first genuine MLC initiated after Independence albeit in one district, viz., Satara in 1959 and up-scaled later to the whole of Maharashtra. As part of the curriculum and as topics in the syllabus, information was given regarding:

- (i) Sanitation, farming, administration of the village, child development;
- (ii) Importance of cleanliness, instructions regarding use of bathrooms, latrines, urinals, etc;
- (iii) Inculcation of healthy habits among villagers; and
- (iv) Information regarding farming methods of sowing, various types of manures, preventive measures for crop damage by diseases in view of the centrality of agriculture to the life in the village.

For the initial campaign, the literature used consisted mainly of charts, strips and booklets, covering the topics, as above, and also relating to common themes of economic, social and religious nature, relevant to villagers (S.N. Saraf, 1982).

After the initial four months' campaign was over, the programme of re-training in literacy and enriching the knowledge of neo-literates was taken up. This follow-up work was done through the circulating library scheme and social education centres. Four sets of booklets, each set containing 10 booklets, were circulated among the neo-literates by the teachers of primary schools through the children enrolled in schools. The theme of the materials was of direct relevance to the neo-literates and catered to their social,

religious, cultural and economic felt needs. The titles of these forty booklets were:

**First set:** *Our neighbour, our animals, our crops, kitchen gardening, our treasurers, Goddess Amba of Kolhapur, Ramayana Balkanda, Coastal part, Man's wonderful study, Gandhi Baba.*

**Second set:** *Village family, Jewel-like Jawar, Paddy (Japanese Method), Rama Sita, Shivaji, Jeeja Bai, Sant Tuka Ram, Sant Ek Nath, Jyotiba Phule, Dr. Ambedkar.*

**Third set:** *Gandhiji's village, groundnuts, new way, Ashoka, Eyes were opened, Agarkar, I shall be a farmer, Courts of law, Saint Gadgebaba, Bajra.*

**Fourth set:** *Sugarcane, night soil pits, Youth clubs, the farm shows the work, Sweet little home, mahila mandals (women's clubs), wheat, better nutrition within one's means, Sweet grapes, animal diseases.*

These were materials about national leaders, historical personalities, major agricultural crops, civic and social matters, religious deities, etc. It is revealing and sobering to note that these aspects of learning as part of adult education were internalized as critical and followed at least 6-7 years ahead of the global trend as evident in (EWLP) and in (FFLP), a few years thereafter.

### **Functional Literacy: Shift from Citizenship Pre-occupation**

Improving the efficiency of the farmers for increasing agricultural production in the districts covered under HYVP was the objective of this programme of Farmers' Training and Functional Literacy Programme started in 1967-68 in three districts as a pilot project. As the operations involved adoption of improved and scientific practices, the farmers' training programme provided the essential inputs. Since illiteracy constituted a serious obstacle to increased production, the functional literacy programme of Ministry of Education (MOE) helped illiterate farmers to not only acquire literacy in reading and writing skills, but also the agricultural knowledge of immediate use to them in their day to day work. Much like the programmes in Algeria, Ecuador, Guinea, India, Iran, Madagascar, Mali, Tanzania, Zambia, etc., as part of the UN Agencies-sponsored EWLP, the functional literacy was envisaged (S.C. Dutta, 1986: 93-94) to help farmers to:

Complete simple application forms for loans;

- Read and prepare their own Input Cards;
- Write simple letters;
- Keep simple account of the operations;
- Read and understand labels on fertilizer bags and pesticide packages; and
- Read and make use of simple extension bulletins, rural newspapers, etc.

## Learning Materials

The concrete contents – subjects or themes – were identified by undertaking a quick survey in a few sample areas in selected districts. The survey sought to find out the needs and requirements of farmers cultivating the HYV of crops and applying modern methods and practices with regard to those crops. It was on the basis of the survey and discussions with the technical, professional and knowledgeable personnel in the field that the agricultural practices were identified and included in the curriculum and in the teaching and learning material.

The Directorate of Adult Education of the Ministry of Education under the Union Government, New Delhi prepared the first book in Hindi, *Kisan Saksharata Pehali Pustak*, using the analytic-synthetic method containing 18 lessons to be covered in a period of six months. The first book was based on the findings of the survey conducted in the Lucknow district in millet (jowar) growing area, mainly with small farmers.

This was followed by a set of five supplementary readers based on different HYV of crops. The first book was accompanied by a teacher's guide, designed to help teachers in the methodology of using the book, and co-relating agricultural practices with literacy skills. This was a prototype to be adapted to conditions in various districts, which varied from the social, agricultural, linguistic and cultural points of view. More than 70 teaching and reading materials in various Indian languages were produced (S.C. Dutta, 1986: 95; J.C. Mathur, 1972: 51).

*The Teaching and Learning (T-L) methods promoted and experimented within the FFLP were based on a combination of oral instruction, audio-visual communication, dialogues and discussions, demonstration and practical work. These increased learners' participation and active involvement in searching solutions for the problems faced in daily life. In respect of the*

focus and objectives, and correspondingly in the curriculum and content of learning, in FFLP, there was a marked shift in emphasis from the traditional 3 R's to the 3 F's – functional literacy, food production and family welfare (S.C. Dutta, 1986: 99).

This programme required a new type of problem-based curriculum and integrated instructional material, for educating and informing illiterate farmers about high yielding varieties of seeds and package of improved agriculture. *The curriculum and content in adult education was designed as production-cum-learning-cum-discussion groups.* The pedagogy for adults hinge on demonstration, hands-on, discussions, shared learning. Seeing and experiencing is more effective and spontaneous learning process for adults.

The FFLP was the first programme funded by Government of India with the collaboration of many UN Agencies like UNESCO, UNDP, FAO and in its 10 year existence was subjected to at least 10 evaluations on different aspects, separately and together, by so many different agencies. This was also the first inter-ministerial and inter-departmental programme involving the Ministry/Department of Agriculture, Information Broadcasting and Education, from national, state, district, block and village levels.

The critical nature of inter-departmental coordination, so essential for the success of a cross-cutting programme like adult education, with implications for the learning inputs from so many different departmental agencies, was highlighted as follows:

*Adult education and adult literacy is a total programme. It can not be run in isolation and that too by one department and within that department by one officer who is over-burdened with many jobs. We have to pool the resources – men, money and materials of all governmental departments dealing directly or indirectly with various programmes of adult education. It is high time that we free ourselves from problems of departmental jurisdiction and forge a united front to tackle this national problem. This type of close collaboration is not only essential at the national and state levels but it is even more important at the district, taluk and village levels. In this enterprise,*

*I am sure that the Departments of Agriculture and the All India Radio will extend their full cooperation, and treat it not as a fringe activity but the hard core of the programme. Functional literacy is to be treated as equal among partners and not the last .... (cited in S.N. Saraf, 1982: 68, emphasis added).*

## **Non-Formal Education**

Introduced since 1975-76, NFE especially the functional literacy programme for the 15-25 age group youth and also up to 35 age group was, to provide meaningful education to especially the weaker sections of society who were denied the benefits of formal education. The programmes were to be related to the needs and aspirations of the learners. Conceptually incorporating latest thinking in the field of adult education, NFE was seen in need to form an indispensable link between life, work and learning. Since the learners are already participants in several community work and civic activities, shoulder family responsibilities and have reached certain level of experience and maturity, the content of the programme was emphasized to be appropriately designed to strengthen what they possess and provide what they do not. The significant aspect of NFE was its emphasis on locally relevant and diversified content, including science (A. Mathew, 1990).

## **Non-Formal Education for Women**

In the states not covered under the FFLP, the earlier programmes implemented by the States continued. These included the programmes of Adult Education and Extension by University Departments of Adult Education, Non-Formal Education for 15-35 age group, as part of the larger NFE programmes, NFE for Women, Condensed courses for Women organized by Central Social Welfare Board as well as the All India Radio programmes for women and organizations of Mahila Mandal in rural areas, the Functional Literacy for Adult Women (FLAW). In FLAW, contents included: altitudinal changes to play the role as citizens, elements of health and hygiene, food and nutrition, home management and child care, civic and vocational education (SY Shah, 1999; S.C. Dutta, 1986; Anil Bordia, 1982: 13).

## **NAEP: Policy Perspective on Curriculum and Contents**

The National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) was the first programme in adult education undertaken by the Central Government in 1978 on a national scale. The conceptual framework of NAEP was concretized by emphasizing three aspects of the content:

- (a) Literacy and numeracy, of a sufficient level, to enable the learners to continue learning further in a self-reliant manner;

(b) Functional development wherein functionality is viewed as the role of an individual as a producer and worker, as a member of the family and as a citizen in a civic and political system; and

(c) Social awareness, including an awareness about the impediments to development, about laws and government policies, and the need for the poor and illiterate to organize themselves for pursuit of their legitimate interests and for group action (Anil Bordia, 1982: 26).

In respect of instructional agency in NAEP, it was presumed that school teachers would mainly shoulder the responsibility of being instructors. After national level consultations, it was decided they should be not be excluded from it, but should be fully involved as instructors, as incorporated in the policy document — *Outline of National Adult Education Programme*. But distinct preference for utilization of young people as instructional workers was decided as policy. Prior to NAEP, designated and specific workers manned the teaching-learning task in the adult education programmes, such Social Education Organiser in Social Education, and teachers and other such functionaries in other forms of adult education programmes. In NAEP, students as well as non-student youth were preferred as Instructors, in view of their idealism and dynamic vitality in organizing development-oriented various NFE Programmes.

The implementing agency in NAEP was mainly the voluntary agencies. State governments were to step in only where none of the agencies like universities and colleges, anganwaris of ICDS Programme, NYKs, employers, PRIs were available. The implementation agencies, with government sanction, could take up any one or more of the following programmes:

- (a) Literacy with assured follow-up;
- (b) Conventional functional literacy;
- (c) Functional literacy supportive of a dominant development programme;
- (d) Literacy with learning-cum-action groups;
- (e) Literacy for conscientization and formation of organizations of the poor, as spelt out the Outline of NAEP document, and strictly in keeping with the spirit as in the Programme Outline (Anil Bordia, 1982: 18).

It was held as inconceivable that there could be a uniform programme in respect of adult education throughout the country. Therefore, *in design*,

NAEP was to seek to combine the learning components in the various adult education programmes, including agriculture, health and hygiene and family planning, cooperatives and credit, etc., by harnessing the cooperation of the extension functionaries of those departments (Anil Bordia, 1982: 27). This was also true in respect of pedagogy.

A *Catalogue of Literacy and Post-Literacy Materials* was brought out by the Directorate of Adult Education, New Delhi, in 1978. The Catalogue and the actual materials as well as the new materials developed by the State Resource Centre (SRC), specially created for this programme, were put on an exhibition, exclusively organized for this purpose, in the launching ceremony of NAEP on October 2, 1978. *The idea was that, based on the guidelines of Central and State Government, SRCs and DAE, the implementing agencies could adopt or adapt, or prepare new materials based on those already available* (Anil Bordia, 1982: 27, 32).

From the point of view of curriculum and content as well as in terms of the society that NAEP wanted to fashion, it may be seen as a weak case, of using the content and curriculum envisioned for the conventional adult education programme, to create a society without exploitation, of equality, of empowerment to fight for their rights by the exploited, poor illiterates. The most critical break with the past for such curriculum and content perspectives, conscientisation of those engaged in design and development the content and curriculum should at least have been made a pre-condition.

With respect to the implementation of NAEP, there is a basic dearth of literature about the curriculum and contents transacted in the adult education centres. At any rate, this promising programme had to endure an unfortunate premature end within 2 years of its commencement. The understanding and perceptions of the Review Committee on NAEP in 1980 is positioned here as, perhaps, the most momentous, in respect of curriculum and content and also in respect of the vision of the resultant society, which the NAEP envisioned.

The Review of NAEP, headed by D.S. Kothari of the Education Commission fame, premised that national development comprises economic, social, political and cultural development. Over-emphasis on one facet of development leads to imbalances and aberrations. This implies that a *national plan of development should include fuller employment and higher productivity, reduction of economic and social inequalities, a concerted*

*attempt at family planning and welfare, and revitalization of our rich cultural heritage.*

Like Preambles in the Constitution, these critical aspects of national development are identified and underscored so that these become the preambles for curriculum and content for the primers.

A few aspects dwelt by the Review Committee are discussed and its curriculum and content implications premised as implicit are seen here, *with the premise that these continued to serve, for nearly 3 decades thereafter, at best in theory, as milestones and benchmarks for curriculum design in respect of the development perspective and the society envisioned.*

### **Employment and Productivity**

Programmes of fuller employment and higher productivity in the economy involve intensification and modernization of agriculture and allied activities and rapid industrialization. Improved productivity in agriculture and industry depends essentially on a literate and trained work-force, besides learning of new skills and upgrading of traditional ones.

### **Social Justice**

Social Justice is proper distribution of benefits of development to reduce social inequalities and to raise the standards of living of the common people. The legal, administrative and economic measures intended to secure social justice should be strengthened by extending meaningful education to the illiterate and the neglected so that they may responsibly organize themselves in their struggle against gross social inequalities and injustices.

### **Family Planning**

Perhaps no problem is more urgent than the containment of the population growth. The rate of the country's development gets partially neutralized by increase in population. This was the perception in those days. The size of the family also has a bearing on the status of women and the family's economic condition. Inclusion of population education in adult education programme would help observance of the small family norm which helps the family, and also is in the interest of the community.

## Health-care

Primary health care for all is the foundation for an adequate national health service. This would need education in nutrition, sanitation, better awareness of use of indigenous remedies for common ailments and physical exercise, including yoga for physical and mental health. Health care is an important aspect of people's education.

## Revitalization of Cultural Creativity

Development must aim at meaningful and effective tapping of the massive unutilized reservoir of skills and creative social and cultural energy of the poor and socially neglected majority of our people. Nurturing of the folklore and cultural expressions of the urban and rural poor, the tribals and other peasants is an investment in social capital and also a motivation for participation in adult education (MHRD, 1980: 7).

Following are some of the reference points in designing content and curriculum and the T-L processes that include awareness-oriented interactions, lectures and demonstration. The purpose behind benchmarking these reference points is to treat them for a reality check of their reflection in the literacy movement during the 90s and thereafter in programme design as well as in pedagogy.

The perspective towards national development, the society envisioned and the requisite elements of adult education were viewed as a basic human need and also a part of the right to education. It is a necessary basis for the nation's striving for democracy and development, and a necessary part of any Basic Minimum Needs nation-wide programme. This entailed a number of implications for curriculum design and pedagogy in the wider sense.

## Presaging NPE, 1986 and POA - An Adult Education Movement

The Review Report recommended that the programme of mass adult education has to be a national movement, in which all official, non-official, educational and development agencies are closely involved. It should receive full support of the Government – at the Centre, State and local levels. It should enjoy the goodwill and support of all political parties and the various mass organizations of workers, peasants, women, youth, etc. The educational institutions, the teaching community and students have a special

responsibility towards the programme. A large section of the potential learners are workers in industry, mines, plantations, etc. It would, therefore, be essential for employers to make their employees and their families literate and to provide appropriate incentive to them. The media, both traditional and modern, will have to play a far bigger role than at present. There are in the country voluntary organizations devoted to social uplift established under the inspiration of our great leaders. They have a very significant role to play, in promoting innovation and in reaching areas and sections of the population which generally tend to be neglected (MHRD, 1980: 15).

As would be evident later, the points were repeated in NPE, 1986 and its POA. Taking note of the successes scored and weaknesses remained in NAEP, the views of the Committee about the future of the programme in scope and organization served to inspire and guide the vision of adult education along the same lines, as borne out, firstly, from the perspective of NPE, 1986 and POA and NLM and the literacy movement through the 1990s and beyond. In respect of *widening and deepening of the content*, the Committee urged that a programme of adult education should include, besides higher level of literacy to guard against relapse, integration with formal education and to include knowledge of the basic principles of the Constitution, promotion of national integration, and a deepening of the cultural background and awareness about health and family planning, the importance of conservation of environment, the relevance of science and scientific temper for shaping the future. These, as can be seen below, constituted the fourth objective of the NLM.

## Functionality

The aim of functionality is improvement of vocational skills and for more productive use of time. Functionality should also include acquisition of skills to supplement one's income through village industries and activities such as poultry farming and dairying (MHRD, 1980). In the immediate future, these objectives served as guides for curriculum and content to the MPFL as well as other ongoing programmes of adult education (R.Rajan, 2003: 83).

## Awareness

Not easy to define, its scope was seen to depend much on the perception, competency and commitment of instructors and supervisors. Awareness

means that the poor should become conscious that, to a great degree, they can shape their own future through the interlinking of learning, reflection and concrete action; understand the reasons for their deprivation as embedded in the unequal socio-economic order, and laws and policies for protecting them against such deprivations, and organized action to secure the benefits of such laws (MHRD, 1980).

The assertion in the policy statement that (i) the illiterates and the poor can rise to their own liberation through literacy, dialogue and action; (ii) adult education should emphasize the imparting of literacy skills to persons belonging to the economically and socially deprived sections of the society; and (iii) motivation also depends on awareness among the participants that adult education programme will lead to the advancement of their functional capability for the realization of liberation. These assertions, policy premises and assumptions, first of all, neither did get converted into such liberation - igniting curriculum and content, nor it actually led or was even capable of leading to liberation from socio-economic oppression. Literacy is too feeble an instrument, bereft of other socio-economic transformational changes, to lead to liberation.

During the early 80s, there were a number of programmes in operation under different agencies – such as (i) Rural Functional Literacy Projects (RFLP), (ii) State Adult Education Programme (SAEP), (iii) Adult Education Through Students and Youth (under UGC); (iv) Nehru Yuvak Kendras; (v) Non-formal Education for Women and Girls; (vi) Shramik Vidyapeeths; (vii) Central Board of Workers' Education; (viii) Functional Literacy for Adult Women (FLAW); (ix) Post-Literacy and Follow-up Programme; (x) Adult Education through Voluntary Agencies, (xi) Mass Programme of Functional Literacy (MPFL), etc. Doubtless, every one of these programmes must have had its own primers, specifically aligned to the needs of its learners.

### **Curriculum Implications of Policy Postulates and Strategies: NPE, 1986 and POA, Bear out Perspectives Envisioned in 1980**

The *National Policy on Education* (NPE) 1986 and its *Programme of Action* (POA), 1986, made clear that "all existing Adult Education Projects would be reviewed and re-organised", as presaged in 1980. In the context of the strategy for re-organisation and making the existing programmes more effective, the NPE and its POA felt that in respect of certain specific group

of beneficiaries, as covered in IRDP, NREP programmes, specific learning inputs would be needed. But, in respect of all other beneficiaries, there would be no change in the curriculum and content (GOI, 1986: 131-32).

However, it needs to be noted that some strategies declared also had the scope and possibility of being reflected as learning and awareness inputs and potential: (i) "active cooperation will be sought from political parties and the mass organizations of workers, peasants, women, youth and students", and "the district, tehsil and thana level administrative machinery will be involved in National Programme of Adult Education (NPAE) to ensure the support for awareness-oriented adult education programmes — these are examples of such "strategies", advocated in NPE, 1986 and its POA (GOI, 1986: 131-32). The POA was convinced that adult education is both a process through which effective delivery mechanisms are created for the deprived sections of society, and a forum through which such sections secure information and understanding regarding the processes of development. Hence, it delineated the ways to establish effective linkage between adult education and the various development programmes, like IRDP, NREP, ICDS, FLAW, NYKS, etc (GOI, 1986: 128-29).

### **NPE 1992 Acknowledged National Involvement in Literacy Movement**

Six years after its initial formulation, at time of its revision in 1992, the NPE and its POA acknowledged how the whole nation, as well as its different agencies within and outside the government, as pledged by NPE, 1986, indeed got mobilized and involved itself in the Total Literacy Campaigns of NLM. The NPE came up for revision in the wake of the post-Mandal agitation and Babri Masjid demolition. It was concerned about the erosion of essential values and an increasing cynicism in society, which "has brought to focus the need for readjustments in the curriculum in order to make education a forceful tool for the cultivation of social and moral values". Vividly reminiscent of the 1980 Review Committee's recommendations about the future of adult education, the NPE argued that in "our culturally plural society, education should foster universal and eternal values, oriented towards the unity and integration of our people", so as to "eliminate obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition and fatalism" (MHRD, 1992: 36). In the same vein, it went on to assure that NLM will be geared to mount the TLCs to the achievement of national goals such as alleviation of poverty, national integration, environmental conservation, observance of small family norms, promotion of women's equality, universalisation of primary education, basic

health care, energisation of cultural creativity of the people and their active participation in the development process (MHRD, 1992: 15).

The POA (1992) reiterated the NPE's conviction to forge adult education as a means for reducing economic, social and gender disparities. But, it reminds that previous experience has brought out the fact that programmes of literacy can become meaningful only when they come along with package comprising practical information and skills relevant to day-to-day needs of learners. Therefore, the POA articulated the main features of the implementation strategy to include, among others:

Application of science & technology, and pedagogical research for improving the pace and environment of learning,

Establishing linkage between adult education and the developmental programmes, and

A distinct slant in favour of women's equality, and taking of all measures in pursuance of this resolve.

These are strong opinions and policy statements that used to get reflected in the curriculum of adult education programmes, as before.

The promotion of literacy became an important "national mission", as postulated and declared by the NPE, 1986 and its POA. It is important to remember that the "functional literacy" articulated in the NLM was what was conceptualized in NAEP and further endorsed in the NAEP's Review in 1980. The functional literacy implied: (i) achieving self-reliance in basic literacy and numeracy; (ii) becoming aware of the causes of one's deprivation and moving towards amelioration of conditions through organization and participation in the process of development; (iii) acquiring skills to improve the economic status and general well-being; and (iv) imbibing the values of national integration, conservation of the environment, women's equality, observance of small family norms, etc. These were again reiterated in the revised NPE, 1992 and its POA (MHRD, 1988; MHRD, 1992). This expanded concept of functional literacy can be viewed as literacy in rights, empowerment, development and improvement, requisites for the all-round development of individuals and the country as a whole, in the same way as the NAEP's Review envisaged and recommended, and as formed the staple of literacy primers in TLCs and other learning materials developed

for PLP and CE programmes all over India during the 1990s and until 2007 when the NLM lasted. Brevity considerations preclude details of their curriculum and contents.

### **National Curriculum Framework for Adult Education, 2011**

A recent example of the assertive demand about the desired vision for adult education and its curriculum and contents as put forth by the Expert Group on National Curriculum Framework for Adult Education (NCFAE) is worth recounting.

*A nation that is literate is one where its citizens are empowered to ask questions, seek information, take decisions, have equal access to education, health, livelihood, and all public institutions, participate in shaping one's realities, create knowledge, participate in the labour force with improved skills, exercise agency fearlessly and as a consequence, deepen democracy. Systems are to be in place to build a nation that builds citizenship which is truly informed and literate ... It is only when there is a credible, and institutionalized effort on a long term basis that the learner would take the programme of adult education seriously. The first step, therefore, is to understand adult education programme as a continuous and lifelong education programme, with all structures and institutions from national to habitation levels, on a permanent basis, as part of the education department. The principles of curriculum framework for adult education would need to be much more than literacy and post-literacy; it is the convergence of education, democracy, cultural practice, developmental practices, gender empowerment and much more ([www.jkeducation.gov.in](http://www.jkeducation.gov.in)).*

### **Evolution of Global Trends in Adult Education**

#### **Fundamental Education (1945-1964)**

Literacy as a fundamental human right is one of the central tents of the covenants of Unesco in its formation. But Unesco quickly abandoned the traditional concept of literacy, referring simply to reading and writing skills as an end in itself and the term fundamental education was adopted as it served as the starting point to promote personal development and community progress. Fundamental education was eventually merged with the perspective of "community development", imparting community development messages to adults (Lind and Johnston, 1990: 31-32). At the

international level, with Unesco as the ideational spearhead, the values behind fundamental education as was seen to be co-terminus with community development ideals and this to be imparted through the vernaculars. Use of vernacular languages was perceived to be a more effective method of imparting values of community education.

A series of studies about the effectiveness of the use of vernacular language as medium and more effective method, sponsored by the Unesco gave rise to the realization of the need to leave it to local contexts, with respect to the language and method. Fundamental education approach was found to be a weak strategy in eradication of illiteracy or even as vehicle of community development values and ideals (Lind and Johnston, 1990: 70-71).

### **Functional Literacy (1965 – 1974)**

The World Conference of Education Ministers on the Eradication of Illiteracy organized by Unesco at Teheran in 1965 declared that rather than an end in itself, literacy should be regarded as a way of preparing man for a social, civic and economic role that goes far beyond the limits of rudimentary literacy training, consisting merely in the teaching of reading and writing. It said that the process of learning to read and write should be made an opportunity for acquiring information that can immediately be used to improve living standards; reading and writing should lead not only to elementary general knowledge but to training for work, increased productivity, a greater participation in civil life, a better understanding of the surrounding world and should, ultimately, open the way to basic human culture (cited in-NCERT, 1971: 782).

In pursuance of this, especially in developing countries, national development was viewed as more economic than social. Relieving shortages of domestic skilled manpower and equalizing economic opportunities for all citizens; training adult population to become more productive in economic development — such were the purposes of adult education. Producing skilled manpower in adequate number for various schemes of economic development, such as dams and factories — this was the purpose of adult education. It also became evident that the purpose of adult education depended on the level and type of economic development of the country — industry in the case of Western countries and rural and agricultural development in respect of third world countries.

Thus, rural development became the special focus of adult education in the 1960s in the face of impoverishment of rural areas and the need for agrarian reforms. Training the adult farmer in new techniques and attitudes and training in cooperation and management of credit. Agriculture tended to lag behind other sectors of the economic in practically all the under developed countries, but still absorbs the greater part of their population (Unesco, 1972:15-16). Spearheaded by Unesco, the Experimental World Literacy Project (EWLP) was implemented in 11 countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

During the decade of 1960-1970, the adult education programme was mainly geared to economic objectives. Especially in countries like India, Ceylon, Burma, etc., "the Green Revolution and the upliftment of the conditions of the peasantry" was the practical strategy in pursuance of the economic objectives of adult education. Implemented as part of the EWLP, the early success of the Farmers Functional Literacy Programme, as evident in its evaluation, pointed to the need for similar functional education programmes wherever a new technological breakthrough occurs in a economically backward country with a high agricultural potential (Unesco, 1972: 17).

### **A Turning Point for Literacy and the Conscientisation Approach (1975-1980)**

The Declaration of Persepolis in 1975 positioned literacy as an instrument of critical consciousness-raising in relation to political, human and cultural process in general and the condition of illiterates, and leading to their liberation through a process of organization. This turning point was influenced by the assessment of the EWLP made by UNDP/Unesco and by the Freire-inspired radical pedagogical movement in the early seventies. During this period it was agreed in international discourse that functional literacy must be conceived and lead to broader objectives, set out in the programme.

The evaluations of functional literacy was critical of the approach and objectives which viewed its outcomes in narrow economic terms, and excluding women from participation in many cases of production skills taken up. It was seen as an attempt to market a pre-packaged product of literacy-linked to productive skills as the means for development and well-being. The evaluations were critical of leaving out other facets of life of individuals and selected groups from the purview of functional literacy (Lind & Johnston, 1990, 75; Unesco 1985:39).

The Conscientisation Approach to Literacy: Paul Friere was the major spokesperson positioned literacy and practice as an instrument to make it possible for the oppressed illiterates to become aware that they can change their own situation (Freire, 1972 a & b). The conscientisation approach implied that the main task of adult education is to bring about a process of critical reflection that leads to action and change. Education is seen an element in the necessary process of human liberation (Lind and Johnston, 1990: 79).

Paulo Freire did not provide any theory of how to organize a literacy project administratively nor of its evaluation. His ideas about pedagogy and training and motivation, mobilization and engagement of learners in the T-L process and the content served as the basis for emulation across the world. His influence in shaping the view and objective of literacy in the International Conference on Adult Education was unmistakable. The first nationwide Adult Education Programme in India was inspired by his views and objectives.

### **Mass Literacy Campaign Approach**

The mass literacy campaign (MLC) approach that India adopted in 1990s was late in coming, which had a fairly good run across many different countries starting from the 1960s, through the 1970s and 80s cutting across Vietnam, China, Cuba, Nicaragua, Burma, Brazil, Tanzania and Somalia. Even while the EWLP was in full swing in the late 1960s, and Paulo Freire's ideas were inspiring adult education programmes in many countries, and there was an attempt by Unesco to study the MLC approach (by HS Bhola, studying 8 MLCs, such as USSR, Vietnam, China, Cuba, Burma, Brazil, Tanzania and Somalia), and through an International Conference in Udaipur in 1982, and draw up a blue print for emulation of the MLC approach by many Third World countries with a heavy burden of illiteracy. The Udaipur Seminar adopted a Literacy Declaration for massive literacy efforts:

*Only specific campaigns with clearly defined targets can create the sense of urgency, mobilize popular support and marshall all possible resources to sustain mass action, continuity and follow up: It is not enough merely to teach skills linked to general economic development if the poorer classes remain as exploited and disadvantaged as before. A literacy campaign must be seen as a necessary part of a national strategy for overcoming poverty and injustice (cited in Lind and Johnston, 1990: 86-87).*

India did not opt for the MLC approach, but opted for Mass Programme of Functional Literacy (MPFL), using the students of schools and colleges as an additional component of their educational dimension. The MLC approach had to wait at least till the close of the 1980s.

### **Education for All**

The provision of basic education for all children and adults became a concern of the international community in the 1980s. Initially the mood of the late 1970s led to the promotion of mass adult literacy campaigns for the purpose of "eradicating illiteracy by the year 2000". As a result of the onset of the grave economic recession in most of the Third World countries, there was a state withdrawal of commitment and involvement in all levels of education, more particularly, basic education of children and adults. In trying to re-assure the commitment for EFA, the Third World countries which were reeling the crisis of economic recession and consequent structural adjustment, either totally withdrew from the education sector or paying attention only on formal primary education, to the neglect of adult education. Even when the EFA momentum returned with huge foreign aid, it came with severe conditionality.

The result was the skewed priority within EFA to UPE and UEE, at the cost of adult literacy and adult education, and thus, pushing the EFA target deadline in respect of literacy and adult education farther and farther, from the initial deadline of 2000 to now 2015.

India, however, had a peculiar turn of events, viz., combining the EFA wave with an MLC approach in respect of literacy, and connecting it with the primary education as part of the EFA agenda. Even though India did not come under the revolutionary environment, it adopted the MLC approach with a radical content as in other countries, undergoing socialist transformation through the literacy campaign.

In the case of India, there was an attempt to interlink literacy with primary education as part of the EFA, and also all other development departments so that the illiterates get the benefits of all anti-poverty programmes of the government. What is noteworthy is the radical content even in the absence of a revolutionary milieu, which gave a lot of hope both to the learners and the activists involved in the campaign implementation, and connected the fervor to push for UPE.

## Conclusion

Some of the salient points that pervaded the survey of perceptions about objectives, knowledge, awareness and skills related learning components in the content and curriculum of adult education through the different decades could be abstracted. One is the centrality and continuity of certain core dimensions of knowledge and values of adult education. Second is the precedence of certain focus of the components at certain programme format phases, at least in theory, not negating all other dimensions, but generally sidelining them, in the context of predominance given to certain specific aspects – the focus of adult education during different thematic and programmatic phases are cases in point. These two facets of the profile of adult education also corresponds to the trends at the global level – the focus of adult education in India could be seen as a window to the trends in the world in the area of adult education, at least at certain phases. These continuities and changes are highlighted through the prism of curriculum and content focuses rather than as history of organization and management of the adult education programme in different phases.

Literacy and adult education was a political strategy of social mobilization to participate in the nationalist movement and hold the nation in highest esteem in respect of unity and diversity, and the desire for democracy as the vision of the nation. There was no mistake about this focus of adult education during the nationalist movement; besides these, adult education was to serve as the channel of social cohesion, solidarity, fellowship, etc. Adult education spans across all facets of life and should address all the learning needs of all these facets. Adult education is not complete only with learning materials, howsoever comprehensive and all-inclusive. Its pedagogical scope includes, besides the curriculum and content contained in the syllabus, also awareness and learning by demonstration and hands-on.

The efficacy and versatility of this approach was variously demonstrated through the various programme formats and the broadening of the vision of adult education and how to make it more effective. However, the basic core and crux of adult education has always revolved around health and hygiene, knowledge, awareness and skills to improve in economic condition and addressing other forms of socio-cultural, political and gender inequalities. However, its proactive conversion into reality in any substantive degree always eluded.

The pre-occupation of social education, was an education in citizenship, democracy, community development. Values of democracy was the burden of adult education while the development perspective was on modern development, on building factories, dams and roads and formal education from lower to higher level, with specific emphasis on higher and technological education. This dualism on the part of the leadership was not in sync with the illiterate adults with respect to their life and its needs – the reason why social education did not even touch 3% of India's target population in respect of their participation (SY Shah, 1999).

Adult education had certain crux in respect of real emphasis in the lives of non-literate adults in rural and urban areas – literacy, health, livelihood and socio-political participation without exploitation and oppression. Whenever all these concerns were addressed effectively, there was no problem about learner response – the much dreaded prospect of lack of interest and motivation in adult education: the Gram Shikshan Mohim and the literacy movement during the initial years in the early 1990s are cases in point.

It is interesting to see that India dabbled for a time to validate the human capital approach that suffered in India from lack of sincerity with respect to the constituency it sought to address – the poor, landless and the rural illiterate adults. It also serves to remind about the fringe nature of the programme with reference to the concerns and needs addressed in India. The Farmers Functional Literacy Programme is a reminder in this regard. It must also be said that the FFLP was a classic example of the efficacy of learning and application as more effective and improvement-oriented. Adult education is a cross cutting by nature: it suffered on this score all through for lack of sincere effort.

This paper's pre-occupation with policy intentions and pronouncements served as the benchmark in designing curriculum and content and topics for learning. It must have been ideal to show and demonstrate the continuity and change in curriculum focuses from actual lessons through the primers and different programme forms over last 6 decades – for scarcity of time and paucity of materials, only the lessons of primers from two States during TLC could be marshaled; but that illustrates the continuity of central concerns in adult education in a development milieu like India. The transition from national focus in aspects of learning to locally relevant and diversified content, as seen during the NFE phase was a slow build up to its centrality in policy

perspective during the TLCs, especially in the PL and CE phases. More importantly, the FLAW programme was the harbinger of women needs-specific learning components in content and curriculum. It is another matter that it was a highly stereotypical gender reinforcing focus.

India was no Vietnam, China, Tanzania, Cuba or Nicaragua in respect of a society under a socialist transformation. Yet under the NAEP, there was a breath of fresh air about literacy becoming a hope for the exploited, oppressed poor illiterates in rural and urban areas as an instrument of liberation. The channel was critical pedagogy through dialogical process, organization and active participation in the development process to secure the benefits of the anti-poverty laws and schemes. NAEP stood out, with an agonizing briefness, as a hope, soon to disappoint, by its supersession by other programmes with only lip service in the content and intent of curriculum and pedagogy.

As an internal reiteration and benchmarks for organizing adult education in an incrementalist milieu and perspective, a few key points underscored by the Review Committee on NAEP have been portrayed such as development with social justice, family planning, health care, cultural creativity, etc. In hindsight and retrospect, one could appreciate how such stresses continued to guide and pervade curriculum and content in adult education ever thereafter.

At least in respect of adult education, what is seen as the bible in policy domains, the NPE, 1986, its POA and even its revision in 1992 and the corresponding POA, seem to follow the perspective – knowledge, awareness, values and skills domains chartered in the Review Committee in 1980. It was shown to be a reiteration of the convictions of the Review Committee in terms of broadening and deepening of the content in respect of awareness and functionality.

It is also a reminder about the policy premise in a non-revolutionary milieu like India that the illiterate poor can rise to their own liberation. The idea behind highlighting and dilating policy premises and operational elaborations is remind how these were guideposts for curriculum and content in the primers and other learning materials later on. The eternal values of these incremental benefits in terms of aspirations of the oppressed non-literates about the vision of India, and also of the educated who design the vision of India through adult education are shown from the NCF AE. The comparison

of India's literacy movement through the TLCs with the MLCs highlights the Indian engagement with the exploited and deprived non-literates on the agenda of the scope and possibilities of at least partially addressing and redressing the impediments they face. It also shows that even the extremely limited success and scope in this direction is a deliberate and considered alternative to the status quo and fatalism of the non-literates – this and direction as ethically and morally edifying engagement in behalf of the poor and the pedagogy for a better India.

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# Challenges of Working with Non-literate Drug Addict Adolescents

Mridula Seth

## Introduction

Drug addiction among adolescents is a leading cause for them to indulge in crime and anti-social activities. Their social background is a contributing factor for their lack of education and life skills. The drug treatment & rehabilitation process becomes difficult and non-sustainable because majority of them are school dropouts who relapse into illiteracy and do not have vocational skills to engage themselves in productive and economic activities. Thus, while they need a treatment and rehab programme, it is equally important for them to become functionally literate for sustainable development. Reading and writing are very important for neo-literates to retain their literacy skills. Even those who attend school for a few years relapse into illiteracy due to poor quality of teaching in government schools and non usage of literacy skills by adolescents who belong to poor and marginalized groups lacking a learning environment. A Library in the de-addiction centre, with reading materials relevant to the needs and interests of the adolescents, can go a long way in retaining their literacy skills and promoting a learning environment.

## The interventions

Sahyog drug de addiction Centre, managed by the Society for Promotion of Youth & Masses (SPYM), provides drug treatment and rehabilitation for adolescents with problems of substance abuse. Efforts are being made to encourage adolescents to engage themselves in constructive activities and acquire employable skills. The adolescents who have problems of early substance abuse are referred to SPYM by the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB). The Sahyog project, started in December 2010, added the non formal education component, incorporating literacy and library activities, in October 2011. The name given to the project "*Padai Ka Maza*" (PKM) meaning 'Fun of Learning' is indicative of its edutainment value. The objectives of the PKM

project are: to impart functional literacy skills to non-literate adolescents; to sustain and improve the literacy skills of neo-literates through reading materials in the library; and to build life skills of learners through participatory activities around books. The adolescents are motivated and counseled to learn to treat this 90 day confinement as an opportunity to give themselves a second chance in life - building anchors of literacy and vocational skills.

Participatory activities around books enhance life skills of the adolescents and can be empowering processes for them. The following activities are being organized:

### • **Literacy classes**

More than 70 percent of the adolescents in Sahyog are functionally non literate. Literacy classes are held daily in the mornings from 11.30 to 1.00 pm. After lunch break for 2 hours, it is optional for the boys to participate in the activities. Once a week, the entire day is dedicated for literacy and library activities.

### • **Library and Recognition to book readers**

Ms. Nadira Chaturvedi has set up "Aseem's library" in memory of her son. The library has over 500 books that have been selected keeping in mind the interests of the boys, relevance and their levels of learning. Activities around books such as storytelling, quiz, drawing/ painting are being organized for pleasant association with books and promoting a learning environment. Aseem's library mission is to Enliven, Enlighten and Enable. The library has been started to introduce the children to WHAT is inside a book – some of them have never held a book in their hands, and think that it is a complete waste of time or a luxury for the upper classes! So, when we let them hold or own a book, it is in itself an enlightening experience! Many do not see the point of reading or writing as their lives hold no space for anything academic.

This is where we explain to them that academic or literacy capabilities are a tool to help them improve their skills for better employment. Reading books also takes away their mind from addiction and can be a source of joy for them. Every week those who are reading books are given recognition – persons who have issued maximum number of books are given small prizes (chocolates/ sweets) as incentives which they value. At the time of leaving the centre, each child is given two books as parting gifts which are selected

by them. Some of them show interest in taking books that will be read by their siblings.

### • **Art and Craft**

One day in a week, the participants are engaged in art and craft activities enjoyed by most of them. Puzzles using numbers have been found to be very useful especially for numeracy. Even though they are adolescents, some of the activities enjoyed by them are what would normally be done in primary classes in a good school e.g., joining dots to make an animal figure or colouring pictures of animals. Since these children come from deprived backgrounds, they have not experienced the joys of experiential learning and fun associated with books.

### • **Real Comics**

Adolescents have shown a lot of interest in making and reading comics based on real life situations close to their background. Over a period of time, making comics has become a regular activity in Sahyog. All of them have powerful stories that they want to share – many by making comics themselves, even if they are unable to read and write!! A teenager facilitator enables a few of them to write their stories, illustrate them and then share them with others. Two workshops were organized to select a few of the comics made by the adolescents and develop them as reading materials for neo-literates.

### • **Games**

Physical activities interest the boys and they actively participate in games. In November 2012, games were organized with Sahyog children competing with other organizations and taking pride in winning in many events. This promoted team spirit and enhanced their social skills.

A literacy game has been evolved for learning the alphabets. Traditional words associated with alphabets are most prevalent. Through brainstorming process, words related to substance abuse, occupation, and health were listed for each alphabet. While words related to substance abuse were easy to list, some prompting had to be done for health related words. The word “Kamandar” made some of them enact the way they filled up empty cigarette cases (kamandar) available in all kiosks. Suitable visuals were made on

words starting with alphabets. While playing the game, on throwing the card, the player has to talk about the word. Initially the game was in the form of playing cards. The boys enjoyed playing the game. However, some of them suggested that the format be changed so that it is not associated with gambling – a weakness they remembered!! Therefore, the size of the cards was changed. For occupation related word, the player has to tell how literacy can help to improve job performance.

Example, 'K' for "Conductor"; 'G' for "Guard" etc. etc. Occupations familiar to them which they can aspire for were identified. Interestingly, many of them were rag pickers and for 'K' – kabariwala, they shared the work done and high remuneration for this work. For health and substance related words, very meaningful and interesting discussion takes place while playing the game. Example – 'K' for "Cancer"; 'G' for "Gutka" 'N' for "Nasha" etc. etc. The process of developing the games helped to build life skills – thinking and social skills.

The game of "Antakshri" played in teams is quite popular. Thinking out a word beginning with the last alphabet gives a quick assessment of those who are unable to recognize and write alphabets in the group. Asking someone from the team to write the word on a whiteboard also indicates their self confidence and writing skills.

### • *Storytelling*

Once a week, each reader who has issued books from the library shares a story of his choice with the group and asks questions related to the story. This is followed by group discussion facilitated by the field staff. The reasons for selecting the book/story are given by the presenter. This builds their thinking and communication skills.

### • *Newspaper reading*

This activity has been introduced recently in the afternoons. While non literate boys are unable to read the news, they are interested in some of the news especially related to crime and entertainment. In the weekly review session, newspaper clips pinned on a board are shared with others. The potential of this activity as a skill building exercise is being explored by the field staff.

## Reflections: Achievements and Learning

### • *Relevance of literacy for drug addict adolescents*

The incidence of crime and anti social activities is on the rise in India and there is evidence of adolescent involvement in these activities. The recent gang-rape of a 23 year old Delhi girl and the role of a teenager in the brutal attack has highlighted not only the problem of minors being involved in criminal activities but the issue of drug addiction among school children leading to their discontinuation from school and involvement in anti social activities. In fact the gang-rape has heated up several issues related to juvenile justice for children under 18 years and whether there is need for them to be treated as adults for punishing them in cases involving rape charges. Data shows that poverty and drug addiction is a leading cause for involvement of children in criminal activities.

The need for early intervention is being realized by policy planners and educationalists not only for children but also for teachers and parents – societal change is required to deal with the menace of drug addiction and resulting crime. The “*Padai Ka Maza* (PKM) project as an experimental model to learn the modalities of working with drug addict children is emerging as a meaningful experience for the volunteers and functionaries of the Society for Promotion of Youth and Masses (SPYM). Experience gained through the project is being shared with other groups and networks.

Motivating drug addict boys who have never been to school or are school dropouts is very challenging. However, coming to Sahyog and undergoing the rehabilitation process, many of them are realizing the missed opportunities and are now keen to learn. This is evident by the number voluntarily participating in the literacy/library project. Their attendance has increased. Initially many of them joined when it was nearly time to leave – now some of the newcomers are joining as soon as they come giving more time for learning.

A period of three months is very short for making an impact in terms of literacy skills especially for those who have never been to school or have relapsed into illiteracy. Initially, some of them have withdrawal symptoms and are not motivated to join the literacy classes. However, it is noticed that there seems to be a positive change in the environment which is gradually becoming conducive to learning. There is need for positive reinforcement to

sustain the motivation of the learners. Giving recognition to those who make slogans and comics can promote a positive environment. Storytelling based on book reading is showing good results and needs to be strengthened.

Managing a library, even with few books, requires time and systematic organization. A learning environment needs to be created where issuing books is possible. An environment needs to be created where the organization can trust the readers to use the library facilities readily and responsibly. Many of the learners show interest in taking books from the library for reading. However, till a few months back, they were not allowed to do so due to their irresponsible behaviour.

They were tearing pages and misusing the books. There is a visible change being reported with the number of boys issuing books increasing and others allowing them to read without disturbing them. The involvement of boys in activities related to books and newspapers is increasing. Even though a three-month period is too short to make a difference in their thinking and behaviour, nevertheless the efforts must go on.....

#### • *Mapping the profile*

The problem of youth illiteracy is not recognized and is overshadowed with the technological advancements in the country. While the need for skill development is being emphasized for sustainable livelihood and quality of life, non literate youth are at a great disadvantage for skill acquisition. Mapping the drug addicts' profile shows that majority of them were unable to read with comprehension. Only 14 out of 80 (17%) boys undergoing treatment at Sahyog centre were able to read simple text with comprehension. Forty percent (32 out of 80) of them were totally illiterate and were not even able to write their names. Nearly one third (35 %) boys had never been to school. Nearly half (45%) had been to school for less than 6 years.

Majority (86%) of the boys are between 16-18 years. The family background of boys coming to Sahyog clearly shows that their parents were unskilled and unemployed. Only fathers of 9 out of 68 boys (13%) were engaged in skilled work. An almost equal proportion of fathers were engaged in semi skilled (38%) and unskilled (43%) jobs. Nearly half (51%) of the mothers were not working outside the house. Those who were employed were in unskilled and semi skilled jobs. Not even one mother was engaged in skilled work.

### • *Follow up with schools and communities*

There is a visible improvement in the learning environment of the centre. The boys are learning to respect books (they used to tear pages, scribble on them) and are allowing interested readers to issue books for reading in the evenings. While in Sahyog, some of them show a lot of enthusiasm to continue learning. However, going out of the centre into the same environment, forces them to relapse. Follow up is important requiring personal contact with them and providing opportunity to remain in touch with the programme. It is equally important to work with the communities, parents and schools, for creating awareness on the problem of drug addiction. As an experiment, 100 government schools have been identified in Delhi by SPYM for creating drug awareness and action programmes through the order of the Delhi High court to MCD schools. Training will be provided to two teachers from each identified school. SPYM has taken the responsibility of this initiative and inputs from the PKM project will serve as a model for sharing and providing field experience. The training of teachers will be conducted in four batches, the first two-day training being in January 2013. This will be followed with action programmes in each school forming engaged youth clubs to take the process forward.

### • *Methodology for imparting literacy skills*

For a whole year before the PKM project was formally started, we were in a dilemma whether to involve all the children in Sahyog or work with only those expressing felt need for literacy. Those not interested tended to disturb the serious ones and the teacher was unable to manage the serious and non serious learners together. However, through experience we have learnt that involving the non serious boys, who were also the rowdy persons, was very important to create a learning environment in the centre. The library has played an important role in building a learning environment. The centre supervisor has given feedback that now in the evenings some children are found sitting quietly reading books!

Within a short span of 3 months – the period for which the children are sent to Sahyog de addiction centre - imparting basic literacy is very challenging! Motivating them is not easy and the initial few days are spent just in building their confidence that they can achieve success within the short time frame. The newcomers intently observe the gains made by other children participating in the PKM project. The children being at different

learning levels, teaching in a multi-grade environment requires high facilitation skills, appropriate methodology and meaningful teaching-learning materials.

The Eclectic method of teaching has been found to be quite relevant for imparting basic literacy skills. Eclectic method is a combination of the analytic and synthetic methods. In the Analytic method, words, phrases or sentences become the units of learning. These are then analyzed into the smallest unit of the language i.e. individual letters or sound symbols. The analytic method used in adult literacy, based on Freire's philosophy, uses meaningful words or sentences for learning alphabets. In the Synthetic or alphabetic method, commonly known as 'phonic' method, structure of the symbol is reinforced with the sound. Learner is encouraged to identify words beginning with the symbol to be introduced. This method is culturally acceptable and has been used in traditional method of teaching Hindi.

The primer "*Padho aur Jano*" developed by the Directorate of Adult Education was initially used. However, the primer "*Padhe aur Jaane*" developed by the Lady Irwin College was found to be more useful because of its use with the talking pen.

- *Use of Talking pens*



The Multimedia Print Reader (MPR) technology is a giant leap in

educational technology. It allows people to hear the text while reading along. MPR technology uses a digital pen which has inbuilt speaker. For non-literate and neo-literate learners, the MPR pen can assist not only the learners but also the teachers and volunteers who are unable to provide personal attention in a multi-grade group situation. In the talking pen primer, Multimedia Print Reader (MPR) technology is used. MPR technology uses a digital pen which has an inbuilt speaker, head phone, re-chargable Lithium Ion Battery, recording function, 2 GB memory, a USB cable for downloading the files and a charger.

The Lady Irwin College has developed a literacy primer – part 1 of which has been converted into a Talking Book using the MPR technology. Sustaining the motivation of learners is a big challenge in adult literacy that can be addressed through an audio-visual literacy primer. Managing a multi-grade group in non-formal education is not easy for the volunteer teachers. Simple

technologies such as MPR pen can help in building an interactive environment for making teaching learning situation enjoyable and meaningful. It can ensure minimum loss in transfer of learning and reaching out to a large group.

In India, Aadarsh publishers in Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh) are printing books for children using the MPR technology. Using the technology for basic literacy is an innovation that is still in an experimental phase. Two different models of pens have been developed by Aadarsh printers. The old MPR model which has been modified to reduce the cost has additional features like recording that are not available in the new model. Our experience of using both models of pens, on a limited scale, has been that the boys in Sahyog are misusing the old model pens with recording facilities and getting distracted therefore, they have been withdrawn and the printer requested to replace the pens.

The talking book primer developed by LIC has been targeted for women and girls and has twelve lessons in three units. Unit 1 is focused on mother's role, importance of iodized salt, diet in pregnancy, and supplementary feeding. Unit 2 is focused on crime against women, rights of women, gender discrimination, and civic responsibilities. Domestic violence, personal hygiene, fears & superstition and mental & physical fatigue are highlighted in Unit 3. Very meaningful discussions are held on these topics using the visuals in the primer. Even though the primer is being used as a tool for teaching because of the MPR technology, the need for adapting some of the portions to make them specific to the adolescent boys is being felt.

### • **Building life skills**

Drug addict adolescents lack self esteem and are low on many of the important life skills indicators. Building their life skills is the main aim of the PKM project. This is achieved through participatory activities around books.

WHO defines life skills as the abilities for *adaptive* and *positive* behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. In 1994, WHO identified ten core set of life skills for children and adolescents: Problem-solving and decision-making; Critical thinking and creative thinking; Communication skills and interpersonal relationship skills; Self-awareness and empathy; Coping with stress and coping with emotions. These skills can be simply classified as thinking skills; social

skills and emotional or self-management skills. For negotiating effectively, a combination of thinking, social and emotional skills is important. PKM project aims to enhance the life skills of adolescents through various activities that are meaningful, participatory, transparent and reflective. The various activities offer opportunities for improving life skills.

It is important to understand that a session buzzing with activity does not necessarily enhance life skills. While interactive methods contribute to building life skills, it is essential to identify the actual life skills that will be enhanced through the activity and the content to be focused. Each method has advantages and constraints and the facilitator can judiciously use a method or a combination of methods to achieve the desired results. Building life skills is a lifelong process. In enhancing life skills of learners, the facilitators also build their own life skills – the abilities to find spaces to experience satisfaction and happiness in actions taken through choice or compulsions within the given constraints!!

### • **Opportunities for Reflection and Sharing**

Weekly sessions on Storytelling and newspaper reading based on activities conducted during the week are aimed to enhance thinking skills and reflect on contemporary issues of concern. By sharing their views, their communication skills are improved and self confidence built. The recent gang-rape of a 23 year old Delhi girl has angered everyone including the boys at Sahyog de addiction centre. This was evident in the discussions held and the newspaper clips that they shared in the group as a part of the library activity.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2013, a rapid survey was done to find out their views on rape and gender violence. A total of 22 boys participated in the survey. After the newspaper reading session which had highlighted the news of gang-rape, they were told in simple language that we would like to find out their views on some of the aspects related to eve teasing (*Chedchaad*) and rape (*balatkar*). The difference between eve teasing and rape was explained by one of them in that Eve teasing is passing remarks and whistling while Rape is forced sexual relationship against the consent of the person.

Following the discussion, a pledge was read out by one of them and the boys were asked to sign if they agreed with it. While 18 out of 22 signed the

pledge, 4 others working in the canteen/ kitchen also signed it. Following was the pledge:

Crimes against girls and women are increasing. Involvement of minor boys in these crimes is on the rise. We pledge:

Will not misbehave with girls and women (“dushkarm nahi karenge”)

Prevent other boys from misbehaving

If someone is involved in crime, will protest against it.

Respect women.

#### • **Comics based on real life experiences**

Generating Comics is an activity that is attracting many of them to narrate or write their own stories. These are not only therapeutic but are also providing opportunities for improving literacy skills and enhancing their life skills. Nearly 50 comics have been generated in the past nine months. An analysis of the stories reveals 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. The stories and drawings depict influence of peer group in taking drugs; police action and going to jail for crimes committed. The stories show the circumstances leading them to commit the crimes and their resolve to stay away from crime. Interventions of the counselors and NGOs are also reflected. Influence of “bad company” is predominant in most of the stories.

The stories reflect that 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 the 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. A negative image of police officers is projected. The correctional facility of PRAYAS or SPYM or any other at first was unwelcome, but soon they understood its benefits. Stories show their present state of mind – never to go back to drugs. Resolve

to stay away from drugs is reiterated in some and help from organization in overcoming drug addiction is 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 the way we used to be." The audience nodded their heads!

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 jatā ha*" (feel light at heart).

Making and sharing comics has become an interesting activity. The authors are taking pride in their creations and proudly displaying them to others. Some of them are changing their names to maintain anonymity in the stories. Reading the stories by themselves or their peer group enhances their communication skills and builds their confidence and self esteem. For the annual day exhibition, the comics displayed had photographs of the authors.

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.

Converting the comic-stories into a talking booklet (under print) has been a unique experience both for some of the boys and the field staff. Rehearsing their roles and going to a studio for recording was enriching!!

#### • **Assessment of progress in literacy**

The group comprises of boys at different levels of literacy. Monitoring learners' progress in a multi-grade environment with children from diverse background is difficult. Individual and group methods are being used for assessing their literacy level and sustaining their motivation to learn. In group testing exercise, each person was asked to write his name affixing an adjective that he would like others to know about him. Example, "*gusaila*

(angry) Shaban; "*pareshan*" (troubled) Sonu; "*khushkismat*" (lucky) Puneet; "*Shararti*" (naughty) Sunil; "*vinamr*" (humble) Rahul etc etc. More than 60 percent of them were unable to write beyond their own names – some could write own name in English also. The facilitator wrote on his behalf. This way, the literacy status of individuals and the group can be assessed in a non-threatening and transparent way. Doing it at regular intervals can also show their mood swings and self-esteem.

Assessment tests have been prepared for Numeracy and Reading skills. A system is being evolved wherein the achievement level of all the learners is assessed every month. Group photographs are taken for each level – in numeracy and reading skills. This gives visibility to the progress made by the individuals. Assessing life skills is recognized as a big challenge due to methodological constraints and non availability of readily available instruments

#### • ***Institutional collaboration***

Students and faculty from Delhi University colleges - Delhi School of Social Work and Lady Irwin College have provided valuable inputs for supporting the field staff of the project. They have contributed in profiling the participants; building the capacities of facilitators and learners for making comics; editing and audio recording the comics for making the first talking booklet. Collaboration between academic institutions, NGOs, corporate sector and the government can result in a multiplier effect for creating models for learning and strengthening programmes for people with special needs. This requires building an environment where several stakeholders can take pride and ownership of the programme.

#### **Case studies of some participants of the PKM project**

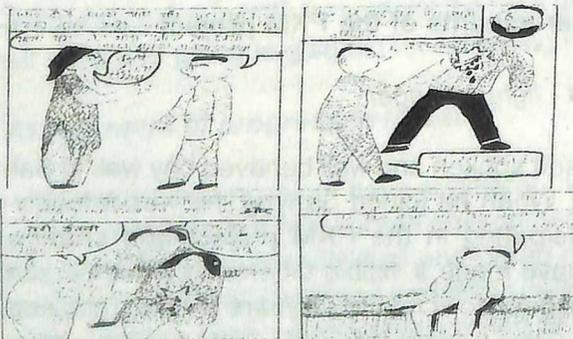
##### *Case Study 1: Islaam - fighting anger*

Islaam, a 17 year old soft spoken and well behaved boy was in Sahyog for a period of 3 months. When he joined Sahyog, he was a lonely and withdrawn person. Participating in the PKM project and sharing his experiences seemed to have made a visible difference in his personality and behaviour. Islaam had been to school for 4 years but had relapsed into illiteracy. He was a very active participant in the PKM project and made good progress. He was given the responsibility of being 'head' of children for

one month – a position many of them aspired for in the rehab centre! Taking up this responsibility improved his self image and self confidence. He was on drugs (Ganja) but felt confident at the time of leaving Sahyog that he would be able to control his anger and cope with pressure without taking drugs.

Islaam's parents were working in a cement factory as unskilled workers. He had 9 siblings – 5 brothers and 4 sisters - all living together. His family belonged to a village in Aligarh (Uttar Pradesh) but they had been living in Delhi for many years. Islaam was in Sahyog on a murder charge. He narrated his story of how he committed the crime in a fit of anger – a story also depicted through a comic which he learnt to make in the centre.

### जब मुझे गुस्सा आया



### *Comic made by Islaam*

When Islaam's elder brother Salim got married, initially everything was satisfactory but within the first year, Islam's *Bhabhi* became very abusive and started quarreling even on small issues. Islaam's elder brother supported his wife and together they created a very unpleasant atmosphere at home. One day something unusual happened when Islaam was going to work. He saw a crowd at the shop near his house. His elder brother Salim was arguing with his father demanding a sum of Rs.50,000 which he claimed he had given for his sister's marriage and house construction. Now when he wanted to stay independently, he needed that money.

When Islam reached the spot and found his brother abusing his father, he got very angry with him. Elder brother asked his father to stop Islaam interfering between them. Salim's father tried to stop Islaam who was in a rage of fury. Holding Islaam by his neck, Salim threw him on the ground and slapped his father. This provoked Islaam who took out his belt from his pant and started beating Salim who ran towards his house shouting and abusing. He asked his wife to call the Police and brought out a kitchen knife to teach his brother and father a lesson. Father tried to escape but got wounded. Seeing his blood oozing, Islaam was really furious. He took a big stone lying nearby and hit his brother who became unconscious. He then snatched his brother's knife and wanted to kill him when suddenly his brother's wife Mumtaaz came in between them. She got stabbed losing her life. The Police was called and Islaam was taken into custody on murder charge. Islaam has a sense of regret even to this day and regrets his action. He feels very sad for the children who had lost their mother.

### **Case Study 2: Nadeem – without Roots**

Nadeem, a 16 year old boy at Sahyog, did not remember his family as he got lost in a train when he was only 6 years old. He did not even know which place he belonged to or if he had any siblings. He was not literate and was one of the most diligent and genuine learners in the PKM project. Initially his progress was very slow but after two weeks, he made steady progress. Boys often made fun of him, teasing him as "*budiya*" (old woman) because of his missing front teeth which he had lost after falling from a motorbike. He was taking smack, ganja and alcohol and was in Sahyog on theft charges.

Nadeem had unpleasant memories of his childhood – after getting

separated from his family in a train, he remained hungry for 3-4 days and lost all hopes of ever meeting his parents. He started feeding himself on throwaway food on roadsides. Living on New Delhi railway platform, he became friendly with some boys who taught him the art of stealing. He started using drugs and became skillful in pick pocketing for survival. Railway station became his home.

Raju, an older boy who kept track of his activities befriended him and invited him to stay with his family. Nadeem readily accepted and started working for him in a shop. Already inducted into drugs by his earlier friends, now with regular income, he got introduced to ganja and started injecting himself. Raju tried to dissuade him but instead of reforming himself, Nadeem left him and his job and started sleeping on footpaths. He recalled an incidence when he got into a fight at night with some street boys and was severely injured. A nail was poked into his head making him unconscious. His friends hospitalized him. Next day, when Raju learnt about it, he came over and took complete care of him. Nadeem considered him as an elder brother. However, soon after Nadeem realized that he was losing his memory which made him very depressed. Out of frustration, he started harming himself with blade cuts on his own body. He was not ashamed of showing blade cut marks all over his body including head.

His addiction to drugs led him to theft activities with other street boys. When he was caught red handed stealing from a shop an amount of Rs 2 lakh 20 thousand rupees along with some friends, he was sent to Seva Kutir by the Juvenile Justice Board. After staying for one month in Seva kutir, he was sent to Sahyog as he was not eating and was craving for drugs. He had lost weight and was behaving strangely and seemed to be in depression.

In Sahyog, initially, he had withdrawal symptoms but gradually came out of it – the “Just For Today” (JFT) sessions in Sahyog were especially helpful. Joining the literacy classes gave him a lot of confidence. He not only learnt to write his name in Hindi and English, he is now aspiring to take the 3<sup>rd</sup> class examination through the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS).

One day when a facilitator was himself bitten by a stray dog, it was an opportunity to initiate group discussion in the class on ‘Rabies’ and sharing experience on dog bites. Interestingly, out of the 14 boys in the group, 13 had been bitten by stray dogs at some time or the other but only 7 had taken injections. They all narrated their experiences. Sharing his experience,

Nadeem said that the doctor could not find his vein as his whole body had been pricked with needles while injecting drugs. He narrated his experience that was illustrated by another boy in the form of a comic giving it a title "Haath Mein Nahin Thi Nasain" meaning hand did not have veins. The comic shows that after dog bite he goes to a *dhaba* (local restaurant) to ask for chilies to apply on the wound – a common practice by people belonging to the lower income group! At the hospital, the doctor informs him that he is unable to find veins in him which according to Nadeem was the result of injecting drugs. In the story, he has shown that after 3-4 years of treatment, the veins reappeared. When he learnt about injection to prevent Rabies, he went to the hospital with a friend wondering if after so many years he could still take the injection!!

*Comic story narrated by Nadeem illustrated by Rahul*

## हाथ में नहीं थी नसे



During his 3-month stay at Sahyog, Nadeem learnt cooking and worked for some time in the kitchen as a volunteer. After completing his term at

Sahyog, he was sent to an orphanage from where he escaped and has come back to Sahyog requesting them to allow him to work as a volunteer. The reasons given for coming back are - he feels safe; likes the food; and wants to continue studying. The Executive Director of Sahyog is inclined to provide him shelter till he feels confident to overcome his vulnerability!

### ***Case study 3: Rohit – aspiring motor mechanic***

After completing class 5<sup>th</sup>, Rohit Varma, a 16 year old boy, got inducted into drugs by his school friends. Brother of 5 siblings, his truck driver father turned him out of the house when he found that Rohit was addicted to ganja, alcohol and smack. Living on the roads, one day under the influence of alcohol, Rohit got into a fight with a friend who was accidentally stabbed by him. He ran away from the spot.

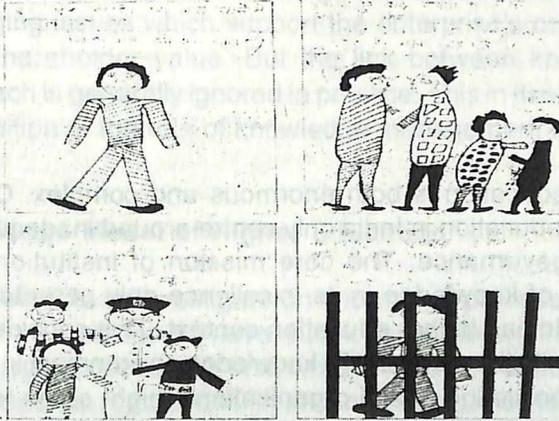
The police came home and wanted to take his father to the police station. Mother telephoned Rohit and asked him to surrender to the police. In police custody, he was badly beaten up and sent to Seva Kutir by the Juvenile Justice Board.

After a month's stay in Seva Kutir, Rohit was sent to Sahyog for treatment and rehabilitation. He liked the environment at Sahyog and started taking interest in the PKM project reading books of his interest. He was interested in learning English and actively participated in the Quiz programme and reading newspaper. His most significant memory was narrating a story in front of all the boys.

Rohit got his name registered in the motor mechanic course being conducted by Kirloskars at Sahyog for imparting vocational skills to drug addict adolescents. Initially, he did not like it very much but somehow completed it encouraged by his mother who was keen for him to acquire some skill to become independent. Electric repair work interested him especially repair of appliances, tube lights, fans etc. He performed well in the test conducted after completing the course. He was happy to receive a certificate and tool box.

After completing his 3 month period, Rohit is now volunteering at Sahyog. His work mainly involves maintaining discipline in the centre and accompanying the boys to the court for hearings.

## मुझे ही फँसा दिया



*The author acknowledges the support of the SPYM PKM project team, Aseem's library, Lady Irwin College, department of Development Communication & Extension and Fred Foundation, Netherlands.*

# A Knowledge Model to Assure Quality in the Higher Education Landscape of India

*Raju Narayana Swamy*

## **Abstract**

Indian system of education is both enormous and complex. Current discussions on higher education in India only centre around inadequacy of funds or infirmity of governance. The core mission of institutionalised education, the pursuit of knowledge in its excellence only perpetuates a state of imminence in Indian higher education context. This considers the challenges associated with the creation of a knowledge environment in higher education. Although knowledge based organizations might seem to have the most to gain through knowledge management, effective knowledge management may require significant change in culture and values, organizational structures and reward systems. This paper adopts a Knowledge Model for multi-level coordination required to address genuine concerns in the Indian higher education on a long-term.

## **Introduction**

Analysis of higher education and its different manifestations clearly presents a perplexing variety of institutions of higher learning as well as of universities. They may be: non-profit; or for-profit; they may be closely regulated by the government or are free from such detailed accountability; they may be formal or non-formal or informal; they may be single faculty or multi-faculty; they may be only teaching or research-cum-teaching; etc. In other words no particular format or a set up can be accepted as a universal role model.

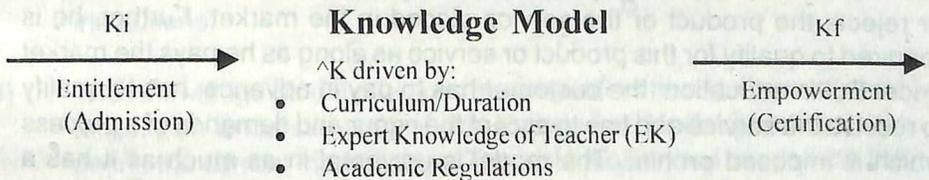
Only thing that can be stated with certainty is that they are fundamentally knowledge enterprises with contextual and historical difference in their mission and chosen obligation to knowledge (Mitra, C.R., 2005, p.55.). Knowledge is the vibrant force in the rapidly changing global economy and society. Quality and quantity of highly skilled human capital decide their ability

in the global market. Emergence of knowledge as dynamic strength results in both challenges and opportunities.

With the arrival of the knowledge based economy, universities were expected to play a part in the shaping of the new mould of education for the society. An enterprise's strategy assists in identifying the knowledge managing issues which support the enterprise's competitive position and thus shareholder value. But the link between knowledge running and approach is generally ignored in practice. This in itself plays a key role in the recognition of the role of knowledge management at the higher education level.

### Knowledge Model of Higher Education

To be able to investigate on knowledge processes in higher education institutions, we should have a look at the determining success factors of knowledge processes at first, which include students, curriculum, teachers and academic regulations. In any institution, knowledge is the precondition and output. Synthesizing these informations, we conclude that the model of Mitra, C.R. (2005) can be perfectly interpreted to higher education institutions concerning knowledge processes and the elements of it.



Source: Mitra, C.R. (2005), *Higher Education in Changing Scenarios*, Samskriti, New Delhi.

### Knowledge Model

Students enter the institution with an initial prescribed knowledge  $K_i$  and leave with a final expected knowledge  $K_f$ . " $K = K_f - K_i$ . It is the additional knowledge acquired by the students in their pursuit of studies. To drive the process of transmission/acquisition of " $K$  expert knowledge EK of teachers has to be placed in the system. At the time of admission the student receives

only an entitlement whereby he agrees to be taught and evaluated by his teachers. When a student completes his studies as stipulated by the institution he receives a certification which pronounces in the metaphor of knowledge the extent to which he has been thus empowered. By reality of circumstance and also by tradition this certification issued by any institution needs to be always validated by a third party, which could be another institution of higher learning or the employer in the market or the larger society. Thus Kf fulfils the demands of two relationships, namely (i) academic equivalence when these graduates move from one institution to another or to a higher level of studies in the same institution and (ii) exchange relationship in the market when they compete for a job in the market against graduates from all institutions (Ibid.).

The institutions are never shielded from the market. Even if it were to remain unconcerned about the employment prospect of its graduates it has to go with the market in order to hire the teachers to provide the expert knowledge (EK). The model clearly establishes that higher education or university education can never become a commercial venture in the sense one understands this word in market terms.

The customer of any other enterprise (manufacturing industry or commercial service) is always at the end of the production line and accepts or rejects the product or the service placed in the market. Further, he is required to qualify for this product or service as long as he pays the market price. But in education, the customer has to pay in advance, has to qualify to receive the service and has to accept the rigour and demands of a process which is imposed on him. The model is universal in as much as it has a predictive power. For instance, if a teaching institution wants to do research along with teaching, this new requirement can be incorporated in the model and further details can be worked out (Mitra, C.R., 2005).

### **Guidelines for implementing a Knowledge Model**

Adopting and valuing Knowledge Model in higher education lies in focussing performance on maximum individual and organisational benefits. The following are some ideas that will enhance the implementing of Knowledge Model at a higher education level:

- (1) Higher education Institutions face a world that is more interconnected, one in which knowledge, creativity and innovation are the essential

elements of thriving societies (Birgenean, R., 2005). Understanding the value of knowledge in the higher education institutions and its competitive advantage should first be understood by educational institutions with first priority.

- (2) The major problem with an organisation might be the lack of means of sharing knowledge among members. The expertise of people is one of the greatest assets of a learning institution. Therefore Universities should embrace knowledge as an asset that creates value when shared, ensuring a high level of efficient performance (Zita, Krajcso, year not mentioned).
- (3) Economic restructuring has created most of the new jobs in occupations dominated by highly skilled managerial and professional workers (Donna, Desrochers, year not mentioned). Along with increased educational requirements, new skill requirements have also emerged. General understanding, problem solving and interpersonal skills have all become supplementary in today's service spaces. With Knowledge Model intellectual resources and individual competence can be developed in the university. It also ensures knowledge-enabled workforce who can supply value-added decisions towards attaining the objectives of the higher education institutions.
- (4) The Knowledge Model practices of competitors need to be examined to gain an understanding of the Knowledge Model practices that define the current market edge. The institutions need to examine the following questions (Steyn, G.M., p.627.):
  - How do Knowledge Model skills of the higher education institutions compare to those of competitors?
  - How does the commitment of top management of Knowledge model compare to that of competitors?
  - What unique aspect of the university allows it to enhance or sustain high quality Knowledge Model practices?
  - What Knowledge Model practices have to be enhanced or sustained to capitalise on these unique aspects of the university?

- (5) The Universities should understand the role of Knowledge Model function in building capability for the future. New visions can be developed to articulate a theory of higher education where societal, organisational and economic theories are only enabling factors.

### **Indian Higher Education and Knowledge Model**

Indian higher education does not adequately address the quality of educational provision in the colleges. It does not adequately deal with the issues of the organizational cultures of Indian universities and colleges, which, after years of neglect, are widely known for their outmoded approaches to curriculum and pedagogy. These dilemmas have their origins in both the historical construction and the contemporary organizational practices in Indian higher education (Fazal, Rizvi & Radhika, Gorur, 2011). The public spending is low inspite of 10 fold increase in the XI Five Year Plan with Rs. 2.2 trillion deficits for planned expansion of higher education as estimated by the Planning Commission The sectors suffers from imbalanced growth across the country.

The rural areas, which represent about 65 % of total population, have just 20% of the total professional colleges. R&D spending is low at 0.8% of GDP compared to 1.13% in China & 2.60 % in U.S. India so far adopted only inward looking approaches, concerned primarily to meet the domestic demand for higher education. With the integration of the country with the rest of world and the growing trade, investment and mobility of people, there is a need for outward looking approaches in higher education. Our education not only should be able to meet the domestic demand but also the international demand for qualified and trained manpower (Agrawal, Pawan, 2006).

The National Knowledge Commission constituted in 2005 prepared a blue print for reform of India's knowledge related institutions and infrastructure. It maintained that 'to respond to the global challenges more strongly than ever before, India today needs a knowledge-oriented paradigm of development to give the country a competitive advantage in all fields of knowledge. Its recommendations for reform are structured around five key dimensions of knowledge:

- (1) Enhancing access to knowledge;
- (2) Reinvigorating institutions where knowledge concepts are imparted;

- (3) Creating a world class environment for creation of knowledge
- (4) Promoting applications of knowledge for sustained and inclusive growth;
- (5) Using knowledge applications in efficient delivery of public places (Bhatia, Kareena & Manoj Kumar Dash, 2010). Knowledge model protect the joint and individual knowledge within the university in the most favourable way.

In India higher education institutions have to move from collegially networked institutions with limited international learner's base towards the making of a collective, wide-ranging comprehensive knowledge base. This has implications for state's role, the partaking of knowledge as base of learning and the funding of higher education across national boundaries.

## Conclusion

The Indian Education System needs improvement at many levels – from primary schools to higher education and research institutions. There are financial and organizational challenges to be addressed. At the bottom of knowledge pyramid the challenge is one of improving access to the primary education. At the top there is need to make our institutions of higher education world class. The Knowledge Commission has come with creative suggestions to encourage the 'knowledge base' of Indian economy and to exploit the immense dormant potential. If these initiatives are effectively implemented the youth will be able to realize their full potential in the global economy.

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# Transformative Learning: Indian Perspectives on a Global Partnership

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## Introduction

The main objective of this project was to investigate the link between Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) in the UK; and Goodwill Children's Homes (GCH) in Tamil Nadu. Mutual, intercultural learning activities have been in existence between teachers of UK-India since 2000. The idea of a joint study came from the fact that no systematic research had been carried out that aimed to understand intercultural exchange learning processes in a globalized world.

A number of student groups from CCCU and their tutors have been visiting Southern India as part of their education and field work for periods of three weeks for the last ten years. As part of this visit, the groups stay at GCH Thandgudi for 8 – 10 days to interact with staff and children. In 2008, while interacting with the visiting groups it was suggested that a systematic research could be undertaken in order to find out what changes occurred among the visiting and host groups, for both students and teachers, as a result of their stay and interactions. This formed the basis of the study we now report.

This is a kind of interpretive or explorative research that involves a study tour, group discussion, and interaction with children, teachers, students, staff and administrators. As educators ourselves, we were interested to understand the dynamics of changing behaviour, attitude of the teachers, house mothers, children and society through intercultural and mutual learning

## Background information: India and Tamil Nadu

### India

Officially the Republic of India, India is a country in South Asia. It is the seventh-largest country by geographical area, the second-most populous country with over 1.2 billion people, and the most populous democracy in

the world. The Indian economy is the world's tenth-largest economy by nominal GDP and fourth largest economy by purchasing power parity (PPP). Following market-based economic reforms in 1991, India has become one of the fastest growing major economies, and is considered a newly industrialized country; however, it continues to face the challenges of poverty, illiteracy, corruption and inadequate public health. India is a federal constitutional republic governed under a parliamentary system consisting of 28 states and 7 union territories. It is a pluralistic, multilingual, and multiethnic society. Four of the world's major religions—Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism—originated here, whereas Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Islam arrived in the 1st millennium CE and also helped shape the region's diverse culture.

### **Tamil Nadu and Goodwill Homes**

Tamil Nadu is one of the 28 states of India with a population of 72,138,958 (5.96% of India's population, census 2011). Its capital and largest city is Chennai. Tamil Nadu is the eleventh largest state in India by area and the seventh most populous state. It is the third largest contributor (as of 2010) to India's GDP and ranks tenth in Human Development Index as of 2006. Tamil Nadu is also the most urbanized state in India. Its official language is Tamil. Tamil Nadu is home to many natural resources, Hindu temples of Dravidian architecture, hill stations, beach resorts, multi-religious pilgrimage sites and eight UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Tamil Nadu is the seventh most populous state in India with a population of 72,138,958. The state has registered the lowest fertility rate along with Andhra Pradesh and Goa in India in year 2005–06 with 1.8 children born for each woman, lower than required for population sustainability. Goodwill Children's Homes is located in Tamil Nadu in the Dindigul district. It provides homes and education for orphans and semi-orphans from the SC and ST communities. Two homes are situated in the plains area: the home for girls above the age of 11 in Pattiveeranpatti, and the home for boys above the age of 11 in Sannarpatti. Children between the ages of 4-11 live in the home at Thandigudi, in the Palani Hills, where there is also an on-site primary school. In the nearby village of K.C.Patti there is the Goodwill Tribal Outreach Project (TORP) which supports children's education and welfare through outreach work.

Visiting groups from CCCU stay at the home in Thandigudi and visit the TORP project as part of the field experiences there.

## Research Questions in Indian Context

The main research question guiding the study was: What impacts do the North-South study visits courses have on teachers' understanding of development issues and how does this inform their understanding of, and practices in global partnership? In order to investigate this question the study was conducted in three phases during which we aimed to find out:

1. **Phase - 1:** How has the CCCU-GCH relationship developed and what context does it provide for educational study visits?
2. **Phase - 2:** What do teachers and staff from both CCCU and GCH learn from their involvement in the study? What are the key factors that prompt any changes in knowledge?
3. **Phase - 3:** What is the impact of this learning over a longer period of time?

In this article we focus on phases 1 and 3, which gives an overview of the partnership and the learning over a period of time.

### Methods of data collection

The study area in India is Goodwill Children's Home, Thandigudi. The sample group was members of staff of GCH at Thandigudi and KC Patti, members of the GCH management committee in Tamil Nadu, and former members of GCH. At the same time the UK research team gathered data from CCCU students and staff, but in this article we focus on the findings from the Indian respondents. Findings from the UK respondents have been published elsewhere (Martin & Wyness, 2013; Martin & Griffiths, in preparation).

Data were collected through a variety of mixed methods including: biographical questionnaires, photographs, informal interaction, research diaries, discussion, conversations, semi-structured interviews, longitudinal questionnaires, and in-depth follow-up interviews.

Many of these research tools were developed in the UK by the Principal Investigator and Research Fellow. They were then adapted and implemented in ways appropriate to the local context of GCH and Tamil Nadu. For example,

the questionnaires were administered in person, with the research consultant providing Tamil-English translations. Some questionnaires were administered in group form, and some interviews conducted as group interviews. Where appropriate, interviews were conducted in English or Tamil according to the language preference of the respondent. Where interviews were conducted in Tamil, they were translated into English by the Indian Research consultant.

The researchers took a participatory, collaborative approach. As such they took part in the study visit activities as participant observers, and thus understanding their behaviours from within gave new insights right from the beginning.

## Findings

The findings are presented in this section. In the final section these are then discussed with reference to the theoretical frameworks we have used to help us make sense of the findings in the broader contexts of global partnerships and intercultural learning.

The objectives of the relationship between Canterbury and Goodwill, and the yearly study visits by the Canterbury students, teachers and the relationship deepened over the study period. On the basis of the data one can understand the changes take place among the children, field level functionaries, teachers, office manager, warden, administrators and community.

## Phase - 1

This focuses on the research question:

How has the CCCU-GCH relationship developed and what context does it provide for educational study visits?

*How did the relationship begin and develop over time?*

In order to answer this question, it is necessary to focus on two phases in the development of relationships between Canterbury Christ Church, UK and Goodwill Children's Homes, India. In the early 1970s Goodwill Children's Homes was established by a UK man as a UK based charity that would

offer support to orphans and semi-orphans in the Thandigudi area of Tamil Nadu. The focus of the charity was *To help the poorest children and at that time, ... to give some education to the poorest...like orphans, or who had one parents. ... Then, it was going on from 74 onwards. (Farm manager interview, 2011)*

This established a charitable relationship between Goodwill UK, represented by the board of trustees, and Goodwill Tamil Nadu, represented by the local management committee. The relationship was mediated by a field officer, employed by GCH UK who, at the time of the research, was an English woman with a long history of working in India. In the earlier days of the CCCU study visits the field officer was a local Tamil man who became the main point of contact when arranging the study visit schedules between 1999-2006. Both field officers have taken part in interviews.

About 15 years after GCH was founded, a UK independent secondary school made a number of educational visits to GCH in Thandigudi.

*Some 30 years ago, it all started with Canford School visiting us with their students and staff groups, and later other groups also have joined. So we are happy with the groups and spending that time interacting with their own students. I think on the other side also, it is equally rewarding all these years. (Secretary GCH interview, 2010)*

This paved the way for other educational visits, including those from Canterbury, the first of which was in 1999. The purpose of this first visit is explained thus:

*The activities undertaken by Goodwill UK, and the Chairman, the Goodwill Chairman's position in Canterbury University, Canterbury Department of Education College planned to make a visit to the developing country to understand the reality. So, it was thought that a visit to a developing country like India could be useful to Canterbury students to know the multi-cultural situation. (Former Field Officer interview, 2011)*

*Probably they wanted to have some overseas experience for their students. First they must have started visiting some of these African countries, and later on some Asian countries, and pitched upon India as a favourable destination for exposing themselves to Asian conditions and Indian conditions. (Secretary of GCH interview 2010)*

The primary purpose was therefore to provide an overseas experience for Canterbury students. An important secondary purpose was that this brought Canterbury into direct contact with Goodwill and provided an opportunity for increasing sponsorship of Goodwill children.

*Because of their visits we expect their help for Goodwill Children's Home. Even though Goodwill welcomes supporters, we love to receive them .... We learned from that, so it's quite natural for us. They also really like to support because they love our children. They understand that the sponsoring help is really needful for the Goodwill children. So, the relationship is like sons, daughters, fathers and mothers. (Child Welfare Office interview 2011)*

At the same time, respondents were keen to emphasise that the nature of the relationship as it developed was not limited to gaining through sponsorship and other kinds of donations. There was an equally important emphasis on mutual learning and the improvement of education on both sides.

*He asked the students to explore their visits to find out the possibilities of mutual learning and understanding the multi culture. Actually, both these organisations aim to promote education. Goodwill Children's Homes started for promoting poorest illiterate children, because, that was the basic aim. So the University College student and teachers are also working for the children. So, the aims are the same. (TORP co-ordinator interview, 2011)*

Over time, as the relationships continued and became cemented, the objective of education and mutual learning became the main focus, which in turn contributed to the strength of the friendships that developed.

*Mainly the relationship was educational relationship between the students. When the students from the Canterbury group came here they joined with our children and they were really happy. Naturally the relationship helps their education also. Whenever they come here, they went to the school and they talked to the children about their UK experience, because the children don't know the western culture. ... The children had been observing that the students from Canterbury were going to different places to see the schools. So, the students saw what the Goodwill Children need, and the Canterbury people were meeting our committee members. They understand our needs and we understand their needs mutually. (Former head teacher, Thandigudi, interview 2011)*

## Phase – 2

This answers the research question:

What do teachers and staff from both CCCU and GCH learn from their involvement in the study? What are the key factors that prompt any changes in knowledge?

In this respect, the goals of both organisations were shared and benefits equally felt. The importance of relationships was stressed by almost every person interviewed. These were seen to be the foundation for the learning and mutual exchange of ideas that followed, as is expressed here.

*First we started with the human relationships and human bondage. It is an understanding between individuals to start with. Later on, if necessary, we can formalise it, but the formalisation of the relationship to start with, may not be the starting point. The relationship starts and what they call... it is a question of the exchange of ideas for action, in these two groups. Later on organisations come into the way. (Secretary of GCH interview 2010)*

*What were the expectations from both sides?*

When partnerships are formally created, there is often the assumption that the two organisations should be clear about their expectations from the beginning, and that this should form part of a formal agreement. In the case of the GCH-CCCU partnership this was *not* what happened.

*We don't expect anything for forming a relationship. True friendship does not expect anything from the other side. Let us have friendship, let us exchange our ideas, and let us strengthen our bondage. Then if we have something to share mutually, let us go by that. Interpersonal relationship comes first and the organisation comes second. ... Sometimes it is not measurable, sometimes one party gives more than the other, without expectations. ... Perhaps we may have one or two objectives, but that doesn't mean that you expect something out of it material or something. But a strong relationship, that's the mutual understanding and a strong relationship for the future is very important. (Secretary of GCH interview 2010)*

The nature of the partnership is clearly expressed here as a friendship, and that as a friendship it exists without expectation or condition other than

sharing mutually as the occasion arises. This is perceived as a particular strength of the partnership and as a feature that contributes to its endurance for 14 years to date. In this way, the relationship has not been formally documented in any way. There are communications by letter and email between visits, which focus on a mixture of organizational matters preparing for a visit and personal communications between friends. In this way the relationship continues across time and space and is not limited to the 1-2 weeks that a group from Canterbury stays at Goodwill each year.

However, as the secretary notes, this research project itself provides a useful means of documenting the relationship which could be useful for both organisations in the future. In this way the relationship has started and been consolidated at a personal, human to human level, and is followed by interaction at a more formal organizational level.

*So far, no serious efforts have been made [to document the relationship]. Perhaps this project of documenting the visits, using the research methodology as a tool, is the first attempt. ... So serious documentation starts only from now on, let us see. Perhaps at a later stage we may have it, for official purposes. So it is something like going by MOUs. MOUs are welcome, but you don't start with an MOU. Even before that the relationship starts and what they call.... it is a question of the exchange of ideas for action, but in these two groups. Later on organisations come into the way. (Secretary of GCH interview 2010)*

*Documents, I think, the children are writing letters. The relationship is what we want. The children make relationship between through letter correspondence. ... Whenever they come here they are writing and making records. Every member, wrote what was in their mind and what they saw. I've got personal diaries. Yes, I wrote over the years. (Former head teacher, Thandigdui, interview 2011)*

*What context has this provided for the yearly study visits?*

It is clear from the evidence above that the overall ethos of the partnership is one of family and friendship, and that this is prized above all other things. The partnership creates opportunities for visiting groups and hosting groups to learn about each other at a personal and cultural level. Since Goodwill Children's Homes provides the geographical site for this learning, the ethos of the organisation, as well as the fact that it is wholly reliant on charity, are

the two key elements of context. The ethos is also one of being open to welcoming the other – hence a number of visiting groups come each year, not just a group from Canterbury. In this way, Goodwill staff and children have access to the wider world even though they do not themselves travel. This exposure in turn provides a broader outlook of mind that benefits subsequent groups and so becomes a mutually beneficial process.

*Good relations and good interactions, and goodwill. Goodwill, not as in the organisation, goodwill. ... See, it is not a question of material growth, but that's what I told you at the beginning, that we do not expect....expectations are there....but at the same time, even without your knowledge certain things happen and grow. ... Anyway I should call it, whatever I call it, the result of their exposure, even though they do not go out of Goodwill camp and all that, others come, and through that they see the world. I call it an advantage. How many school campuses and how many...you know inner city campuses have that advantage. (Secretary of GCH interview 2010)*

As a charity, it has been successful in providing homes and education for a large number of orphans and semi-orphans from the local Adivasi tribal communities, and from some other disadvantaged groups. This provides a further context of a success story that, for Goodwill, it is important for them to share and that, for the Canterbury students, it is important for them to hear. In the UK media representations of India often perpetuate an image of a country that has extreme poverty and that is unable to provide its own solutions to, for example, problems such as street children. It is with these images in mind that many UK students arrive at Goodwill. The evident success of Goodwill as an organisation is visible in the environment of the homes and school, in the children who are lively, keen to engage with visitors, and well cared for by house mothers and teachers, and in the staff who talk about the success stories of children who have 'graduated' from Goodwill, and the projects they are working on to continue to improve the lives of those who are in need of support. This acts as a powerful counter-narrative to the deficit narrative that dominates in the UK.

*In 2002 we'd been taking survey around this area, only 5% of tribal children went to lower level schools. But now 95% of children are in the schools and 20% are there in colleges. ... So, this is a very big achievement. We have lots and lots of records. I have to prove it. Many people have benefited from this project. ... The aims of TORP [Tribal Outreach Project]*

*is that we don't separate children from their situation. They must grow in their own situation. (TORP co-ordinator interview, 2011)*

*We have many students having a good job. This is an achievement. ... The beneficiaries are five engineers and nurses, teacher training, computer programmer, mechanics and some degree holders, like me. So this is an achievement. (Central Office staff interview, 2011)*

In summary, the aims of the partnership and context provided for study visits are succinctly expressed by the former field officer (interview 2011)

*I think to a great extent, what Goodwill wanted was a partnership in the development of it. I think they have achieved the maximum in the relationship. They have brought a good understanding, in sustainable development for the tribal children, the tribal development programme. They have involved with the team and achieved.*

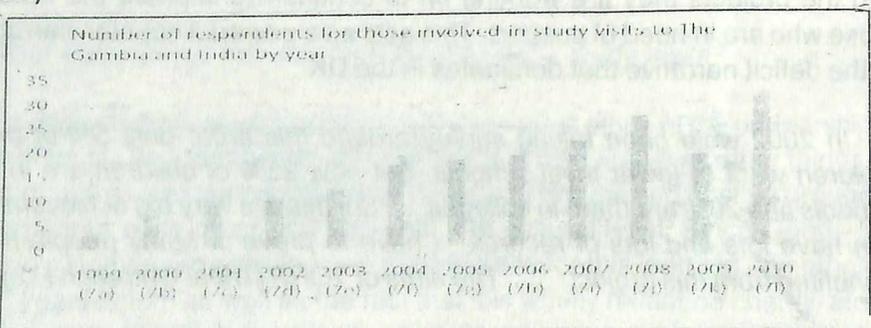
### Phase - 3

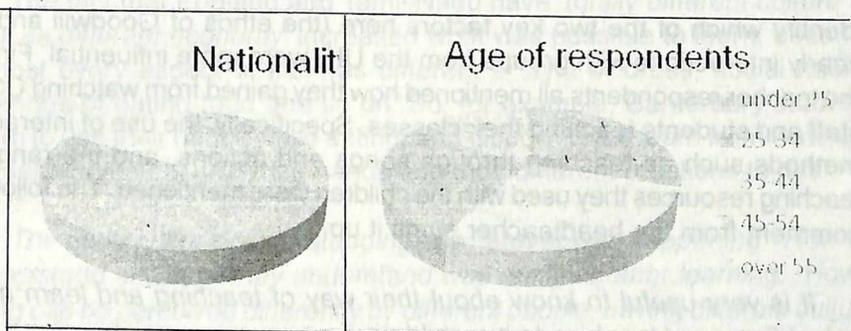
This answers the research question:

What is the impact of learning from study visits over a longer period of time?

Respondents from all three countries completed a total of 77 questionnaires. Tables 1 and 2 show the number of respondents analysed by year, age and nationality.

**Table – 1: Number of questionnaire respondents for each year's visit (n=77, but some respondents took part in more than one study visit)**





**Table - 2: Distribution of age and nationality of respondents**

Of a total of 77 completed questionnaires, 12 respondents (17%) were Indians who were working, or had previously worked with, the Goodwill Children's Homes. The questionnaire asked respondents to comment on what they had learnt from being involved in study visits, and what impact that had on themselves and their colleagues. Many similar learning gains to those in phase two were identified, including that interactions improved their English and that they looked forward to the visits each year. However, when asked about the longer term impact three new areas were mentioned and with a high frequency:

Improved quality of life	9
Respect for each other	6
Teaching methods	10

The improved quality of life was in part due to the nature of Goodwill Homes as an organisation. Respondents wrote about job security, and the feelings of being part of a family. This quality of life was enhanced by their interactions with CCCU because they were shown kindness, and there was equality between men and women in the ways in which the groups interacted. One respondent expressed this as 'love without difference'. In the context of India, where women do not always enjoy the same freedoms as men, and the additional context of Goodwill providing support for lower castes and tribal communities, the equal way in which all members of staff (whether kitchen staff, house mothers or teachers) and children were treated was highly valued. This, it could be argued, led to mutual respect and in turn was felt in the respect Goodwill staff showed each other, although it is hard to

identify which of the two key factors here (the ethos of Goodwill and the yearly interactions with groups from the UK) were more influential. Finally, the teacher respondents all mentioned how they gained from watching CCCU staff and students teaching their classes. Specifically, the use of interactive methods such as teaching through songs and actions, and the range of teaching resources they used with the children were mentioned. The following comment from the headteacher sums it up:

*It is very useful to know about their way of teaching and learn about scientific way of teaching to our children*

#### *Findings from in-depth interviews.*

In-depth interviews were conducted with six people who had been involved in the GCH-CCCU study visits for a long period of time. Of the six interviewed, two had been with Goodwill since childhood. The findings are organized under three headings: Mutual Learning; Ambassadors for Goodwill; and Learning to Relate.

#### **Mutual learning**

Mutual learning is a term that is used in the title of the research project. This was not initially a phrase that was part of the vocabulary of staff at Goodwill, but over the three years as there were more and more interactions between the research team and staff it came to be used to describe a practice that was already taking place – namely that the relationship between GCH and CCCU was founded on the principle that there would be benefits for both in terms of their common mission – education.

Mutual learning is understood in this context to mean both an exchange of ideas and knowledge, and an exchange of feelings and friendship.

*The goal is to have a cultural exchange from UK Canterbury as well as Goodwill Home. They shared their feelings and taught English language to the Goodwill Home children. English was difficult for our children to understand earlier. Really it is a chance to learn the culture of Canterbury and also they learn something while they are sharing. That was how the mutual learning has developed since their arrival. They are from England some time using fork and spoon, but in Tamil Nadu Goodwill Home is different. (Farm manager interview, 2011)*

The fact that England and Tamil Nadu have '*totally different culture as well as different economy*' increased what was possible to learn, because almost every aspect of life was different – style of dress, social habits, methods of eating food and so on. So, for example, Canterbury students learn to use their hands while eating, and Goodwill staff learn from watching students try to eat with their hands and their different reactions to this!

*The multi-cultural understanding of whatever was happening. How we understand and how they understand was really another learning. How a thing can be perceived differently by different people, having different cultural background. (Former field officer interview, 2011)*

It was mentioned by all of the respondents that the ongoing nature of the relationship, with yearly visits, was a key factor contributing to the sense that changes were not fleeting, but long-lasting.

*We've changed ... ourself, I told that our children are changed, you know. Languages and then their lifestyles at the student level, and staff level. They change; you know culturally, they change large side. (Child Welfare Officer interview, 2011)*

If the visit had taken place on maybe one or two occasions, the potential for learning would have been significantly reduced for Goodwill staff. It takes time to build the trust and confidence needed to interact across cultures and, as the secretary notes, this does not happen overnight.

*Changes do not occur overnight. Do you think that a group of students visiting for 15 days can change their behaviour, they can't do that? (Secretary GCH TN interview, 2011)*

*Once our teachers have hesitated....when the first two years, our staff and children didn't involve with the Europeans, because they are very scared, how to express their talents? How to talk English? They're very scared. Now it is changed. Now they are very happy ... hi sister, hi brother, where are you going, what you are doing, now ... Yes, very big self confidence. (TORP coordinator interview, 2011)*

Some specific learning gains were noted that have already been mentioned above, such as teachers developing new teaching methods, and increased expertise in English, cultural knowledge and understanding. Both

Canterbury and Goodwill were able to dispel stereotypes about each other. Learning solely through secondary sources and the media may create a distorted view of life in another country. Through the visits, all were able to develop a more realistic idea of lifestyles based on first hand experiences.

*I can very clearly say that the approach, the teaching methodology at Goodwill primary school has changed positively to my knowledge, to my experience, more particularly there has been an effort to make it more participatory. The teaching is more participatory. The teacher student relationship has had positive changes. (Former field office interview, 2011)*

*Everytime new students are coming and learning new things and exchanging their experience. If they [GCH children] are watching in England they may not get the real feeling similarity our children will not understand the English culture without interacting with the students of Canterbury. Therefore, the exchange and experience takes place in person. (Farm manager interview, 2011).*

The English habit of strict time-keeping, planning was mentioned as before, but there was mention of deeper learning that was more about beginning to understand and appreciate different perspectives on psychological as well as sociological aspects of life.

*Yes. One thing, a kind of openness in your culture, ... people are free to express, wanted to express freely without any inhibitions, whatever they like. ... they don't have any inhibitions. Also an openness, that kind of openness to different ideas, a different ideological, especially in the category, higher and lower category, if you want to call a student and teacher division or something like that. Openness to different views is more familiar, is more acceptable in your situation than here. I haven't been ... I can't strongly say that it's there in our environment. Although there are areas or situations where people can ... really, it's not common. (Former field officer interview, 2011)*

This difference has the effect of holding up a mirror to Indian culture in Tamil Nadu, and the learning is taken from the psychological openness and from seeing how this openness is expressed in practice – for example there not being such an evident teacher-student division in the Canterbury group, which is extended to their relationships with Goodwill staff.

*Psychological findings between us. The friends from UK and Canterbury group treat us equally and allow us to sit with the group whereas our teachers are not like that. (Farm manager interview, 2011).*

Connected to the frequency of the visits and the yearly opportunity to renew friendships and develop new ones, came the sense of responsibility towards each other. Each acts as a role model for the other, but there is also the commitment to continuing the relationship and not letting each other down.

*The children must have learned certain words, etiquettes and all that. There are cultural changes. That is why I used to say the visiting team also must be careful because they are, sometimes they are emulated. A role model, in other words. (Secretary of GCH Tamil Nadu interview, 2011) A few of them are coming twice or thrice, because they have more expectation and wonderful experience and having more interest. That's why they are coming again. (Farm manager interview, 2011).*

In this respect, it was evident in the interviews that Canterbury group had a function beyond that of intercultural learning, and this was to act as **ambassadors for Goodwill** in the UK.

*Goodwill was an institution who saw the team, especially the teachers, or would be teachers for Canterbury College, could be the ambassadors for spreading the messages of Goodwill in UK. (Former field officer interview, 2011)*

Being ambassadors was directly connected to the need to raise funds in the UK for the charity, in order for Goodwill's activities in Tamil Nadu to continue and for the organisation to develop and not stand still. All of the interviewees have a stake in the success of Goodwill, whether as current or former employees, friends of employees, or as former children who have gone on to work for the organisation. This raises the stakes of developing excellent relationships between Canterbury, as a sponsor group, and Goodwill to a high level, and is a further factor adding to the responsibilities each feels for maintaining those good relationships.

*The relationship depends on how you react to the situations? How you manage to get into the relations with? How you have appreciated the situations. (Secretary of GCH Tamil Nadu interview, 2011)*

*Goodwill needs help from UK. So, we connect with the children of Goodwill and to the children of UK. The relationship is going on. That is very good, because the main thing for Adivasi people, the government is helping. But the government will not love as the Canterbury people do. Only through education you make a change in the society. (Former headteacher interview, 2011)*

Learning to relate to each other across two diverse cultures, in ways that go beyond surface learning and that create long-lasting bonds based on strong ethical principles was therefore of central importance to both groups.

### ***Learning to relate***

The interviews revealed two orientations towards the relationship, a global orientation and a family orientation. It should be noted that these orientations are seen to be complimentary rather than mutually exclusive.

### **A global orientation**

Two respondents showed evidence of a global orientation.

*It is like global man or global citizenship. It is not only the experience I have got, but I feel that specifically an orientation that we are part of the global, multi-cultural global situation. Personally I have got very good friends who are far away, but who are really good friends. That is the thing I have learned because of this programme. (Former field officer interview, 2011)*

*They have an opportunity relating to people from a different country, especially they have...they felt a kind of sharing, a friendship, and international friendship, like that it develops. (TORP coordinator interview, 2011)*

It is interesting to note that both respondents had visited the UK as part of this partnership. The former field officer visited on an occasion in 2006 as part of an awareness raising campaign for GCH, and the TORP coordinator visited in 2011 to attend and contribute to the research project's interim conference at the University of Exeter. It is possible to argue that this extended experience had given them a clearer understanding of what it meant to be part of a global / international relationship. Nevertheless, it was the family

orientation that most stressed, which is consistent with the findings from phase 1 and 2 data.

### **A family orientation**

The findings have already made it clear that the dominant orientation towards the relationship was that of a family. In the phase 3 interviews, respondents provided additional dimensions to this as they discussed how being part of an extended, intercultural family was felt by them. For example, the former headteacher told how the feeling of family existed across time and space, and that even between visits each remembered the other and held them in mind.

*Yearly he comes back there. We never forget that day till now we remember. We are like family members, we never forget. We are one family. This is a big family. We are always thinking about it. Canterbury group is like our family. So the two families joining together is the main thing. (Former headteacher interview, 2011)*

The yearly visit was looked forward to by all, and likened to another family event:

*We have to psychologically prepare that this time Canterbury people will visit us. For example, every year I will go and give chocolate for my birthday. It is the birthday for Mayee, The process looks like a festival when the foreign students and teachers come to Goodwill Home. (Farm manager interview, 2011)*

With the strength of feeling being expressed as enduring love,

*When they finished their tours the students from UK, when they returned to their home, they cried, really because of love, strong love between the children and their children. These children love them and they also love the children. So the love is the main thing we see directly in the programme, it is a very long relationship, so it is a continuous one. ... I also feel I am one of them as a member of this family. (Former headteacher interview, 2011)*

And the sharing of important family events,

*All the staffs are very close to everyone. Sharing our feeling is a good thing, for example, I have a newborn baby, I share my feelings to all friends and abroad also. It's really good. And also, we have a ...we lost a ... Jonathan son, you know. It makes me really unhappy. (Farm manager interview, 2011)*

This brings with it another type of responsibility – not only is there a need to continue to link between organisations, but also to enable and support individuals within those organisations to continue to be a part of that link. Staff interviewed made it clear how much importance they attached to this global family. If they were moved to another part of the organisation where contact during the yearly study visit was less likely, there was an accompanying loss of relationship that was deeply felt

## Summary

It is understood from the data that the mutual learning ultimately helps the society through the children, from children to parents and from parents to community/society. The community also gets benefit out of the visits and sharing of information, knowing new culture, caring and sharing of knowledge and funds for the societal development.

To quote from the respondent "I feel happy to enrich of my knowledge. Chance to interact with foreigners, exchanged ideas and information with each other. Taking care of them, take them for field visits; make them to understand the ground reality". This process helps the organisation to access the work and needs of the people and plan for the future. When we meet every one in the field people are all feel happy to be with foreigners and feel excited to interact their problems and local culture.

## Discussion and conclusion

The purpose of the research in the first place was to investigate a global partnership and the yearly study visits from the perspectives of both the UK and India. In this report we have focused on Indian perspectives, specifically those of people involved in Goodwill Childrens Homes at a range of levels from managerial to kitchen workers. From an Indian perspective, the reason Goodwill exists as an organisation is to enhance the lives of children who are orphans, semi-orphans and those from tribal communities who find it difficult to access education and care any other way. For this reason, the

benefits of the study visits are seen to be about developing both staff and children's abilities to live together with difference.

1. The main finding is that the relationship between the two organisations, CCCU and GCH, is characterised without exception as a family. Family is a powerful orientation which is evident in many of the other key findings which follow.
2. The interpersonal relationships have been deepened because of the number of staff working in Goodwill is also taken in by the organisation as children.
3. The donations are essential for Goodwill but more than this is the value placed on the trust, friendship, self-development, security and commitment towards the organisation displayed by staff, together with their commitment to the up-lift of the Adivasi community which they serve.
4. The participants revealed about the relationship a more relational understanding than the UK participants. When discussing the learning from the relationship they started with others rather than self, and the focus on self was more in relation to how it benefited others. This is in accord with the principle of the oceanic circle. The focal point starts from the centre of the circle, with the interpersonal relationship, and from there functional activity spreads out in an ever-widening and never ending circle as represented in Sarvodaya philosophy. In this way the relationship expanded from local family to global family in terms of the frame of mind, culture and love and sharing of knowledge.
5. The enduring factors contributing towards the sustainability of the partnership are mutual learning about education, respect for each other, and improved quality of life.
6. In the interpersonal relationship travel makes an extraordinary opportunity for the transformative learning. In this relationship the opportunity to travel is only possible for the CCCU and not for GCH. In this regard, and only in this regard, the imbalance that exists between UK and India is reflected in the partnership.

"Vasudev Kutumbakam"

"To us all towns are one, all men our kin.  
 Life's good comes not from others' gift, nor ill  
 Man's pains and pains' relief are from within.  
 Death's no new thing; nor do our bosoms thrill  
 When Joyous life seems like a luscious draught.  
 When grieved, we patient suffer; for, we deem  
 This much - praised life of ours a fragile raft  
 Borne down the waters of some mountain stream  
 That o'er huge boulders roaring seeks the plain  
 Tho' storms with lightning's' flash from darkened skies  
 Descend, the raft goes on as fates ordain.  
 Thus have we seen in visions of the wise! –  
 We marvel not at greatness of the great;  
 Still less despise us men of low estate."

Kanniyam Poongundran in Purananuru,

Poem 192 - Source(s): <http://blog.balancedspirituality.com/ric...>

The following is the explanation for the above poem which has been written by Kanniyam Poongundran, a great Tamil poet, 2500 years ago but it is still very much relevant to the context of mutual learning and understanding for the Global Partnership.

'Vasudha' refers to the Earth or to the entire Creation, meaning the vast cosmos. 'Eva' means "certainly" or "verily." 'Kutumbam' means a family or blood relations, and kutumbakam technically means a little family. So here the Vedic sages are saying that the entire world is truly just one family. The world is like a small, tightly knit, nuclear family.

Similarly another important component is "**Unity in Diversity**" which means whomsoever it may be either Hindu, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist or any other religions are all different but we are all one and together we are human beings. When think we are all one and though there are differences but yet we try to understand and live together for harmony and peace.

Every time the Goodwill Home children and teachers/workers are experiencing visitors from different parts of the world. But the CCCU team

makes a difference among the students and teachers in Thandigudi. This is in part due to the length of their stay (up to 10 days each visit), and in part due to the length of the relationship that has developed over time.

Thandigudi experiment is a unique one but at the same time the children are learning a lot from the students and teachers from CCCU. There are students who cannot even think like this chance to interact the children. This should be protected and developed for the sake of the children and people in Thandigudi and K.C.Patti area.

The government that could not do this type of work is being done by the Goodwill Home for several years. This has to be appreciated and helped properly. The learning outcome is always better if the approach is good. The good involvement is there in Goodwill Homes, (the tribal people seem very happy with Goodwill Homes), and further exploration of what 'a good approach' in terms of the relationship has emerged from phase 3 data. The interactions with Goodwill staff over the years have given CCCU students insights into how a group of disadvantaged children is cared for in this area of India. These interactions have given the GCH staff – teachers and field officers – the opportunity to develop their English, their skills in communicating what the work of the organisation is about, and to develop their own understandings of their work as a result. This has been therefore a mutual learning experience and one that is much valued by both parties, which is why the relationship continues even in difficult economic circumstances.

As such, the global partnership that has evolved over the last ten years and more is a model for others on how a partnership might develop in ways that are ethical, that have a clear focus on education and that work towards the ultimate goal of deeper intercultural understanding.

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# Nutritional Awareness and Dietary Pattern of Pregnant Women of Hathras District

*Shalini  
Bharti Singh*

## **Abstract**

Motherhood is bliss. To give birth to a healthy child is the ambition of every woman. Nutrition and food are vital social factors, for the health of mother and their children.

A woman, whose diet is adequate before pregnancy, is usually able to bear a full-term viable infant without much modification of her diet. The weight of the infant is a powerful predictor of infant growth and survival.

To meet out the requirements extra nourishment is necessary than normal condition. Under-nutrition and over-nutrition can affect the same individual and have trans-generational impact viz-a-viz maternal under-nutrition and anaemia as well as hyper-tension during pregnancy, which can led to the under nutrition of the foetus in the utero.

To assess the ground situation, a study was carried out amongst the 80 pregnant women of second trimester of Hathras District. The main objective of the study was to evaluate the awareness about the diet during pregnancy and to gauge their dietary patterns. A pre-tested, self-structured questionnaire was used for the collection of information. Further, the haemoglobin values were collected from the hospital or from their doctor's prescription slip. Awareness about dietary requirement during pregnancy was negligible and it was found that food intake was not up to RDA, especially green leafy vegetables and pulses.

**Key words** pregnancy-awareness-dietary pattern-anaemia

## Introduction

In pregnancy there are many physiological changes in the women, requiring increased intake of certain nutrients. To meet out the extra requirements arising during pregnancy, supplementary nourishment is necessary, as compared to the normal condition. But in India the nutrition of women is neglected, as a result of which macro and micro nutrients deficiencies have become prevalent in our country [Prema 2009].

The prevalence of anaemia in India is among the highest in the world. Anaemia is seen even among high-income and educated segments of the population. India contributes about 80% of all maternal deaths due to anaemia [NHS 3]. Studies around the world have shown that lower birth weight is associated with an increased risk of wide range of health problem in adult life, including type-2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome, chronic lung disease, osteoporosis and mental illness [Carolino 2009].

Energy and protein deficiency in mother is also associated with intra-uterine growth retardation. Size at birth is strongly related to maternal mass index. Under-nutrition of the mother during her own foetal life and childhood growth limits the growth of her foetus. Effect of the mother's current nutritional status is therefore influenced by her own past nutrition. In spite of the availability of adequate food in India, the lack of the awareness is causing malnutrition among women.

## Objective

Even though a number of nutritional surveys have been conducted in various parts of India, to assess the extent of nutritional deficiency among pregnant women, but still no viable information is available regarding dietary awareness about pregnancy and the food pattern of the pregnant women, particularly of Hathras district.

Keeping above facts in mind, the present study is planned with the following objectives:

1. To assess the health status of pregnant women.
2. To assess the awareness about dietary requirement during pregnancy of the selected pregnant women.

3. To find out the dietary pattern of the selected respondents.

## Materials and Methods

Hathras district is situated in the western region of Uttar Pradesh, which is also known as Brijbhumi. It is located in the middle doab of Ganga and Yamuna rivers, right between the districts of Agra, Mathura and Aligarh. This particular district was selected as the focal point of this study. The sample consisted of randomly selected 80 pregnant women of second trimester, those who came to government hospital of Hathras district. In this hospital, pregnant women come from the adjoining areas, through ASHAs (Accredited Social Health Activist) and majority of them belongs to weaker section of the society.

The collection of information regarding their age, education, occupation, family structure, family income, parity, special food taken, food avoided, consequences of anaemia, supplementation and assessment of dietary intake was done by 48 hour recall method, based on 'NIN dietary survey schedule'. This data was collected through self-structured pre-tested questionnaire.

Primary as well as secondary data from other sources were used for the study. Secondary data chiefly included haemoglobin percentage collected from their doctor's prescription or from the hospital's record.

The study followed the WHO 2001 standard of haemoglobin; 11g/100ml for normal, 9.01-11g/100ml as mild anaemia, 7.01-9g/100ml as moderate anaemia and 5.01-7g/100ml as severe anaemia. ICMR guidelines were followed for comparison of food-items intake. BMI was classified into three categories namely low (<20), normal (20.01-25) and overweight (25.01<), using the formula  $\text{weight (Kg)}/\text{height}^2(\text{m})$ .

## Result and Discussion

The data were obtained from 80 expectant mothers. Ages of the respondents were 18-30 years. Only a single respondent was below 19, and none of them were above 30.

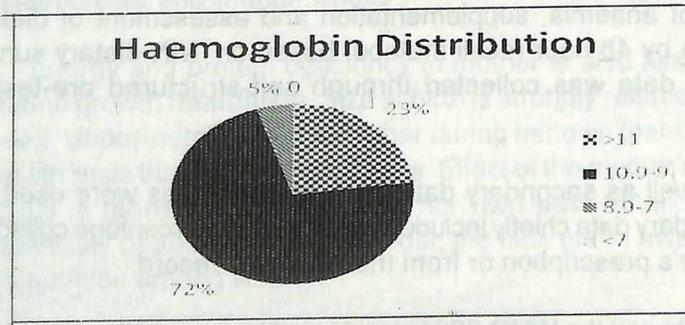
One-third (33%) of the respondents were illiterate, and only 15% had education higher than senior secondary. Mostly (79%) were housewives,

15% were working and only 6% of them were self-occupied doing sedentary work such as splitting seeds of cucumber or tucking buttons or laces on garments at home.

Mostly respondents (67%) were from joint families and only 37% were from nuclear families.

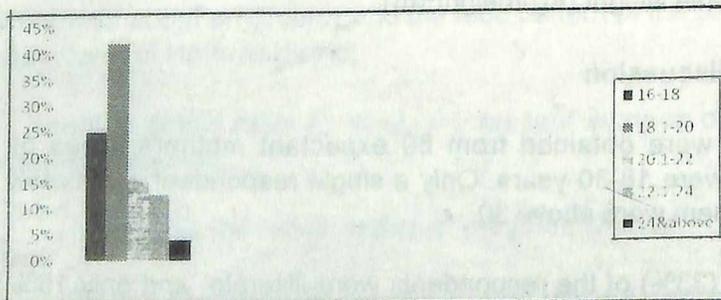
Again most of the respondents were from the weaker section of the society, so only 28% of them had a per-capita income of more than Rs. 1500/- per month. Majority (50%) of them were in the range of Rs. 501-1000/- per month.

First time pregnant women were 39%, 34% were having 1 live child and 28% had more than 2 living children, in spite of having access to family planning facilities.



**Illustration 1: Distribution of Haemoglobin**

72% women were either mild or moderate anaemic and only 23% were non-anaemic.



**Illustration 2: Distribution of BMI**

Two third of women 67% had a low BMI, 16% had a normal BMI and only 4% had more than normal BMI.

On account of Iron and Folic Acid, 100 tablets were provided to the pregnant women from Anganwadi or hospital, but only 55% of the respondents admitted having the iron and folic acid tablets.

Majority (75%) of the respondents were not even aware of this fact that they should eat more food than their normal condition and should eat special food (green leafy vegetables, fruits, pulses, and milk) during the pregnancy.

Mostly respondents (68%) did not believe in the food fads and fallacies.

Regarding awareness about the consequences of anaemia, 48% were unaware about the consequences, 8% had wrong information and only 44% had the right information about anaemia.

**Table 1: Food Intake of pregnant women based on 48 hour recall method, N= 80.**

Food Item	RDA		Mean	S.D.
	Veg	Non-Veg		
Cereals	400	400	264.68	74.41
Pulses	70	55	48.81	29.81
Leafy Vegetables	150	150	48.23	52.94
Roots And Tubers	75	75	107.68	52.98
Other Vegetables	75	75	98.43	43.99
Meat and Fish	-	30	4	8.944
Egg	-	30	6	12.87
Milk	325	225	401.56	181.46
Fat and oil	35	40	36.37	7.20
Sugar and Jaggery	30	30	35.18	13.48
Others	-	-	14.72	9.89

## Food Intake

Mean cereal consumption was 264.68, with SD of 74.41, which was much below than RDA. 76% of the respondents were deficit in cereal consumption. The consumption of pulses was also very poor as 72% of the respondents did not consume them even 40g/day with mean consumption of 48.81g and SD of 29.81. 56% of the respondents did not consumed even 25g of green leafy vegetables daily and the mean consumption was found to be 48.23 with SD of 52.94.

However, the intake of other vegetables, roots and tubers and fruits were satisfactory, which was well above RDA. Fat and sugar consumption were either up to the RDA or more than the desired level. Meat and egg consumption were negligible. Mostly women ate pickle or chutney with food.

High value of standard deviation indicates that the consumption was at extremes i.e., either they were eating a particular food item or not.

## Summary and Conclusion

Primary education. They did not know that in pregnancy, one should eat more than the normal condition. They were of the view that a pregnant lady should eat less, because baby will grow big in womb and she would have to bear more pain at the time of delivery.

They also complained the feeling of nausea, and therefore to make it taste good they used to eat spicy and fried food. Mostly were not aware of the consequences of anaemia, even the ASHAs who bring these ladies to the hospital, did not have the exact information about nutritional requirement and anaemia.

Mostly were sceptical about the good low- cost nutritious food, and were doubtful of the existence of such a thing. They thought the expensive foods like pomegranate, apple and fruit juices are good for them. The women from high-income group, highly-educated or Muslims were less anaemic and their dietary intake was a little bit satisfactory.

To combat malnutrition among pregnant woman imparting of nutrition education is very much necessary, in both pre and post pregnancy period. In government hospitals social workers can be appointed so they can advise pregnant women, which type of food they should eat or visits to maternity hospitals can be made compulsory for H.Sc. Graduates. They can advise the non-literate pregnant women about the low-cost nutritious food according to the choice within their resources.

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# Prison Library to Promote Reading Habits of Prisoners: Special Reference to Central Prison Viyyur, Kerala

Misab. N

## Introduction

I knew right there in prison that reading had changed forever the course of my life. As I see it today, the ability to read awoke inside me some long dormant craving to be mentally alive.

—Malcolm X, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

The objective behind establishing prison library is to provide reading environment to the prisoners. It will be helped to change their criminal thinking. Reading has a pro-social effect on the reader because the author creates characters to act and react within a social context. When a prisoner identifies with a character, he or she experiences decisions and choices made in a social context and anticipates the consequences for the character. One aspect of criminal thinking is that they often do not sense consequences for their actions because they do not recognize their own social context. This is one reason why prison authorities or other social workers are passionate about promoting reading among prisoners. The other reason is to provide an invitation to pro-social bonding with the library. The authorities of central prison, Viyyur which is situated in Thrissur in Kerala state of India are running a library inside the prison with number of uniqueness. It is the only prison in the state which has a separate building for a library with an open auditorium. Of the 800-odd convicts lodged here, almost everyone frequents the library.

## Meaning of Reading

Reading is the art of interpreting printed and written words. It is the basic tool of education and one of the most important skills in everyday life. Reading is one of the powerful and everlasting influences in the promotion of one's personal development in particular social progress in general. Regular and systematic reading sharpens the intellect, refines the emotions, elevates tastes and provides perspective for one's living and thereby prepares one for an effective participation in the social and political life. Reading gives a unifying and civilization force tending to unite social group through the dissemination of common experiences.

## Definitions of Reading

Reading is something many, who are literate, take for granted. But if one thinks about it and tries to define it, one may have difficulty verbalizing his/her thoughts. Sybil defines reading as a process of communication through which most formal learning takes place. It involves understanding written language and respond to the author's message. Therefore, this means that when one is reading one has to be thinking, predicting, questioning, evaluating and defining and redefining. Manzo et al defines reading simply as unlocking and constructing literal interpretive and applied meanings from coded message. It is the act of simultaneously reading the lines reading between the lines, and reading beyond the lines. The first part of the definition: 'reading the Lines' refers to the act of decoding the words in order to construct the author's basic message. The next part 'reading between the lines' refers to the act of making inferences and understanding the authors implied message and finally 'reading beyond the lines' involves the judging of the significance of the authors' message and applying it to other areas of background and knowledge.

According to Encyclopedia Americana "Reading involves looking at graphic symbols and formulating mentally the sounds and ideas they present." According to Oxford English Dictionary "The action of Perusing written or printed matter, the practice of occupying oneself in this way. New Standard Encyclopedia tells "Reading as the process of recognizing and understanding the meaning of written symbols".

Unoh (1972) has defined the reading process in terms of language comprehension and information processing activities by the learning human organism. He has said that reading is "essentially cognitive or learning activity" which "appears to consist of perceiving, processing, interpreting, comprehending, and synthesizing information that is conveyed by written or printed language". Harris (1970) has defined reading "as the act of responding with appropriate meaning to print or written verbal symbols."

## Definitions of Habit

According to Oxford English Dictionary "Habit means doing something having a habit or custom of so doing". According to New Standard Encyclopedia, "Habit is a learned action or other form of behavior that is repeated often enough for it to become a largely automatic response to a particular stimulus on situation." Habits can be acquired a by conscious repetition and desire to achieve proficiency in an activity.

## Reading Habits

The reading habit Article 1 of the International Book Year Charter (Barker and Escarpit, 1973) states that "society has an obligation to ensure that everyone

has an opportunity to enjoy the benefit of reading" This reflects the basic concepts in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The rights guaranteed by the declaration include freedom of opinion and expression, including freedom to seek and transmit information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. Thus the right to read is among the inalienable rights of human beings. Reading makes it one of the most rewarding ways of spending leisure time. Consequently, UNESCO has long been concerned with the question of reading.

The plan of action entitled "Books for All," launched during International Book Year 1972, singled out promotion of the reading habit as one of the four principal objectives for worldwide action. The UNESCO World Congress on Books (London, England, June 1982) adopted a set of six targets for the 1980s with the overall aim of moving "towards a reading Promoting the reading habit among the literate in Nigeria 633 society" and emphasized the need to create a reading environment in all types and at all levels of society.

The importance of planning and organization at the national level has been highlighted by Staiger and Casey (1983) who also emphasized that "Efforts to promote the reading habit will be most effective if they involve virtually all segments of society at every level, from the family, community and school through local, intermediate and national levels of government."

### **Promoting Reading Habit**

Promotion of a reading habits aims to publicize reading among members of the general public. It's as an activity that is meant to popularize reading and make it a lifelong hobby. The main objective of cultivating and promoting reading habits is to make reading a passion that is appreciated and loved by citizens.

It is therefore important to create awareness on the importance of reading is to develop reading as a habit and culture. The promotion of a reading habit cannot take place in a vacuum. It has to be initiated. Enabling a population to read requires a publishing industry, which must engage a cadre of appropriate writers and produce their work in a pleasing form. A system of distribution, which may include bookstores, libraries and newspaper deliveries are needed. Educational programs that will teach the young sufficient coding skills and knowledge about subject-matter to enable them learn through reading are also required, (Gordon 2003).

Okundu (2005) points out that inculcating a reading habit should be introduced at an early age among children. This is because reading and reading habit develop over a prolonged period of time and an early promotion will be able to mould them into lifelong readers.

## **Libraries for Promoting Reading Habits in Society**

Libraries play a fundamental role in our society. They are the collectors and stewards of our heritage; they are organizers of the knowledge in the books they collect – adding value by cataloguing, classifying and describing them; and, as public institutions, they assure equality of access for all citizens. They take the knowledge of the past and present, and lay it down for the future.

Libraries face real challenges in coping with the transition to the digital age. To avoid becoming the dinosaurs of the future, they have to adapt, to attract new and young users, and to develop new business models. This implies profound changes, in the organizations, in the skills and sometimes in attitude.

Libraries have a unique role to play in disseminating knowledge about their collections. The information society offers you new possibilities to do this. A library promotes literacy and learning, and also stabilizes and strengthens our community. Pittsburgh is one of the greatest places in the country to live, and our library system helps to make it that way. Libraries are essential to our region's economic competitiveness, our neighborhood vitality and our future.

## **Prison Library for Promoting Reading Habits among Prisoners**

The prison library is at the heart of the prisoners' learning journey by assisting in functional and emotional literacy. Not only can the prison library help to bridge the digital divide and increase prisoners ICT skills, it also can instill a love of books and reading through exciting reader development projects. Through books and audiovisual materials, prisoners can remain connected to the world outside the prison walls. They can make new discoveries that help them spend their time productively while in custody. Ultimately, books and other library resources help them better reintegrate into society after release.

Socially responsible library services are aimed at people who live in disadvantaged circumstances and who need special assistance. The prison library can be considered a special subtype of public libraries in its role to provide access for incarcerated people to informational materials.

## **Central Prison Library, Vyyur**

Central Prison, Vyyur, is situated in Thirissur in Kerala state of India. It is authorized to accommodate 800 prisoners. It is one of the three central prisons other than Thiruvananthapuram and Kannur, situated in Kerala. The prison has a separate library building and a well stocked library which has around 10,000 books from English, Hindi and Tamil languages besides newspapers and periodical. It houses an open auditorium also.

None of the prisoners comes here as a book-lover, but the confinement in prison attracts many to books available in our library. Most of them spend their free-time in the library reading books and discussing social issues with others at the auditorium. Though confined in the prison, almost all the 800-odd convicts lodged at this prison have developed the habit of reading and almost everyone pays visit to the library.

The collection here includes novels, short stories, biographies, etc, mostly in Malayalam, as only a few prisoners are able to understand English and other languages. They have stocked a good collection of English, Hindi and Tamil novels too. The library is open from 9 am to 5 pm every day and those willing to take books to their cell are allowed to do so. The entire management of the library — allotting books to inmates and register procedures — is done by prisoners. The prisoners are happy that they can effectively use their free time for improving their knowledge and thinking. Impressed with the reading habit of its inmates, the Kerala State Library Council awarded the Viyyur central prison library with the first prize in b-category libraries in the district in 2009-2010. It also sanctioned a sum of Rs 2.22 lakh to the library. For adding to the stock of books, furniture and for providing computers in the library, as per a project submitted by the prison authorities. Last year too, the library was given Rs 50,000, four computers and shelves. Viyyur central prison library is the most utilized library in its category in the district of Thrissur.

Although short duration convicts do visit the library and scan through the daily newspapers and periodicals, life term prisoners are found to be keener in utilizing the library facility in the prison. The library also houses text books and reference books for the benefit of prisoners who study for various educational programmes. About 50 prisoners use reference volumes available in the library.

## Conclusion

The value of the prison library cannot be underestimated. At the Central prison library Viyyur, a large percent of the prison population use the prison library. The library is one of the few places they can feel human again and where they are not just a number. In the library they are free to make their own choices and do not have to follow orders. A library book is one of the few things allowed in a cell, and many prisoners try to acquire more than their allowance to furnish their cell and personalize it. The library plays an important role to promote reading habit among prisoners. Recreational reading, however, is equally important for self-development. The prison libraries guidelines call for the libraries to be connected to their local library authority, in order to facilitate stock and reservation access. The library should be a neutral space where prisoners can feel safe and where their informational needs are dealt with in an effective and professional manner.

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**INDIAN JOURNAL OF ADULT EDUCATION****FORM - IV**

1. Place of Publication Indian Adult Education Association  
17-B, Indraprastha Estate  
New Delhi - 110002
2. Periodicity of Publication Quarterly
3. Printer's Name Dr. Madan Singh  
Nationality Indian  
Address 17-B, Indraprastha Estate  
New Delhi - 110002
4. Publisher's Name Dr. Madan Singh  
Nationality Indian  
Address 17-B, Indraprastha Estate  
New Delhi - 110002
5. Editor's Name Dr. Madan Singh  
Nationality Indian  
Address 17-B, Indraprastha Estate  
New Delhi - 110002
6. Name and address of individuals who own the news paper and partners or share holders, holding more than one per cent of the total capital.  
Indian Adult Education Association  
17-B, Indraprastha Estate  
New Delhi - 110002

I, Dr. Madan Singh, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Dated: 28-02-2013  
New Delhi

(Sd/-)  
Dr. Madan Singh  
Signature of Publisher

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Vol. 74 No. 2

ISSN 0019-5006

April-June 2013

# Indian Journal of Adult Education



(Estd. 1939)

Indian Adult Education Association

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## INDIAN JOURNAL OF ADULT EDUCATION

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Published quarterly by the Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA), 17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi – 110 002. Phones : 23379282, 23378436, 23379306 Fax : 91-11-23378206  
E - Mail : [iaedelhi@gmail.com](mailto:iaedelhi@gmail.com),  
[directorია@gmail.com](mailto:directorია@gmail.com)

Contents of IJAE are indexed in Current Index to Journals in Education, New York; Content Pages in Education, Oxfordshire, England and Guide to Indian Periodical Literature, Gurgaon (Haryana),; and microfilmed by Unversity Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA.

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ISSN 0019-5006

Subscription: Inland Rs. 250.00 p.a., and

Overseas US\$ 60.00 p.a.

Printed and Published by Dr. Madan Singh for Indian Adult Education Association,  
17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi – 110002.

Printed at M/s. Graphic World, 1686, Kucha Dakhini Rai, Darya Ganj, New Delhi – 110 002.

### 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 [iaedelhi@gmail.com](mailto:iaedelhi@gmail.com)

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# INDIAN JOURNAL OF ADULT EDUCATION

ISSN 0019-5006

Vol. 74, No. 2

April-June 2013

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## Editor's Note

Every year International Women's Day is celebrated all over the world on March 8<sup>th</sup> to project their achievements in the economic, social and political sense and also calls for their rights, equality and awareness. On this occasion a number of functions are organized in India also. Are these functions having any meaning in India and really help-in the advancement of women in various spheres? Over the years participation of women in social, political and administrative fields have increased but not to the desired level, it may be because of lack of support and women's own lack of initiative. In many communities they are still in weaker position and not able to forcefully put forward their claim. Unfortunately, in the recent past sexual harassment of women in work place, educational institutions and on the road have increased a lot and their projections in the newspapers and electronic media have almost created a fear psychosis in their mind. In recent time sexual harassment not even spared the children and small girls.

The theme of International Women's Day 2013 is "The Gender Agenda: Gaining Momentum" and the themes for the last five years were (from 2008 to 2012) "Investing in Women and Girls", "Women and Men United to End Violence Against Women and Girls", "Equal Rights, Equal Opportunities: Progress for all", "Equal Access to Education, Training and Science and Technology" and Empower Rural Women – End Hunger and Poverty. Did we really create awareness on these themes and what are their achievements? Mere celebration has no use unless it is converted into action. Hence, society in general, family in particular should now realize the importance of women and start supporting them like a rock which will give not only confidence but also energy for women to progress and achieve new heights.

Dr.V.Mohankumar

# Best Practices in Open and Distance Learning - Experiences at the Student Services Centre of Indira Gandhi National Open University

*Sampat Ray Agrawal  
Chinmoy Kumar Ghosh*

## Abstract

A distance learner undertakes his study generally after attending to various other crucial activities at home and office. Moreover, he follows a system of teaching-learning transaction which is vastly departed from the usual classroom teaching. Such a distance learner is often confronted with serious problems most of which are of bureaucratic nature. The solutions to such problems get delayed or even denied due to the insensitivity of the staff handling the service related matters at the three tiers of operation, i.e. the study centre, the regional centre and the headquarters. In fact, there is a great need not only to sympathise but to empathise with the learners and solve their problems. In this paper several direct experiences of providing learner satisfaction by way of proactive attitude of the Student Services Centre of Indira Gandhi National Open University have been narrated. These also bring out some of the good practices followed at the SSC of IGNOU.

We would be taking up two vital issues in respect of the support services as under:

- Providing satisfaction to distance learners by empathising the learners about their problems
- Training of staff towards their effective utilisation in providing support to distance learners

**Key Words:** empathize, distance learners, student services centre, good practices

## Introduction

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Indira Gandhi National Open University has a wide network of 67 Regional  
Indian Journal of Adult Education, Vol. 74 (2); April-June 2013, pp. 3-25

Centres, 3347 Learner Support Centres (LSCs) covering the length and breadth of the country, offering 489 academic programmes, 3500 courses catering to around 2.7 million active students on its rolls. It has also spread its wings in 43 countries with 82 overseas Partner Institutions.<sup>(1)</sup>

It started with learners in the tune of some thousands and with the registration of 2012 it has reached to 9.9 lakh. More importantly, its learners hail from all walks of life – e.g. different age groups, working, non-working, married, unmarried having varieties of jobs – localized or mobile, rural based, urban based repeatedly having change of addresses and so on. As such, it is quite natural that such a huge establishment having such a huge enrolment is not free from problems faced by the learners during completion of their studies through distance mode.

### **The Three Tier System of IGNOU**

The universities functioning through the ODL system, in general, follow the three-tier system comprising of the headquarters, regional centres and study centres. For example, in case of IGNOU, at the headquarters there are various schools of studies, divisions, centres and units controlling the academic, administrative, financial activities, training and other operations of the university. IGNOU has one specific wing i.e. Staff Training and Research Institute of Distance Education (STRIDE) which organizes orientation and training programmes, capacity building workshops from time to time for all the stakeholders.

The functionaries at the headquarters, specifically the faculty members get the opportunity from time to time to get oriented towards the use of electronic media in teaching. For example, in IGNOU, a National Centre for Innovations in Distance Education (NCIDE) is housed at the headquarters for promoting, supporting, re-engineering and disseminating innovations in ODL. The innovative applications in ODL like Virtual Training Lounge (VTL), a web-based platform that enables trainers to provide training and capacity building of the ODL functionaries online, the Innovation Management System (IMS), a web-based platform to manage new ideas and innovations in the ODL system are also organised for strengthening the academia to be acquainted with the modern technologies and innovations.

The regional centres are effectively the regional headquarters. At IGNOU, the jurisdiction of each regional centre is a cluster of districts in a state. The

regional centres are the interface between the headquarters and a study centre. It is the monitoring unit for all the administrative, academic and financial activities at the study centres, starting from their establishment to various other functions such as:

- Engagement of study centre functionaries
- Appointment of Academic Counsellors and the Evaluators
- Assignment evaluation
- Organization of Coordinators' meeting
- Organization of Induction meetings
- Orientation of Academic Counsellors
- Conduction of Term-End Examinations
- Coordinating local governmental agencies for various activities

The members of staff at the study centres who are engaged on part-time basis have to face the learners all along the duration of their study tenure, which ranges beyond their admission as well as appearance at examination. So they should be properly acquainted with the rules and regulations, like, how to exercise the option for choice of courses, how, when and where to submit the assignments, examination and re-registration form and so on. The questions from the learners are unending. They have to handle the accounts of all the financial transactions at a centre. They have to maintain a small library. They have to prepare the counselling schedules/sessions, organise the classes, handle the assignments, and conduct the examinations, arranging for the invigilators and so on.

### **Learner Support Services**

Teaching in ODL is vastly different from that of conventional system. In ODL, the teacher is absent, but he is made omnipresent through learning materials such as self-learning print materials, self-assessment exercises, home assignments, library and audio-video support.

To compensate for clearing of doubts and the peer group interactions, counselling through radio and teleconferences and academic counselling sessions are being conducted for theories and practicals. The assessment is done through continuous evaluation and term-end examinations. During all those periods the learner support services hold the centre stage of the ODL system.

## Student Services Centre

The Student Services Centre (SSC) was created in 1999 and was dedicated to the memory of Late Prof. G. Ram Reddy, the founder Vice-Chancellor of IGNOU. The idea was to create an enabling mechanism for providing support to the students who may come from different parts of the country with several issues, problems and grievances related to their studies. The Students' Handbook and Prospectus does provide them with a list against the title '**Whom To Contact for What**'. It is meant for providing them necessary guidance about whom to contact for any particular service. Many students do not follow that and are found running from pillar to post to get the required service. Again, it has also happened in number of cases that a learner has contacted the concerned as per the list given in the Handbook but has failed to receive the desired service. The genesis of the problem needs little more elaboration.

## Providing Satisfaction to Distance Learners by Empathizing the learners about their problems

### Empathy Vs Sympathy

According to the Compact Oxford Dictionary, 'sympathize'<sup>(2)</sup> is the feeling or expression of being sorry for someone whereas 'empathize'<sup>(3)</sup> means understanding and sharing the feelings of another.

Now let us analyze the comparison from the point of view of a student. A typical situation is like a student coming to the service centre with lot of desperation. He might have applied for a job and all formalities for himself getting the job might have got fulfilled except for production of his Grade Card and the Certificate authenticating the Degree which is the prescribed qualification for the job. In spite of his appearing at all examinations there may be lot of reasons for his not receiving the documents which are as under:

- a) Non-declaration of the result of the last examination the student appeared at.
- b) Result has been declared but not for all the courses of the academic programme concerned.
- c) Result declared but not updated in the Grade Card.
- d) Continuous Assessment:

- Non-evaluation of tutor-marked assignments
  - Assignments have been evaluated but grades have not been transmitted by the Regional Centre to the Student Evaluation Division.
  - Assignments have been evaluated and also transmitted by the Regional Centre but not incorporated in the grade card
- e) The registration for the courses in which the learner appeared for examination has got lapsed.
- f) The Grade Card/ Provisional Certificate might not have reached the learner due to postal failure

The action point for none of the above issues is at the service centre. The action point lies with other different organs of the University. However, the service centre is supposed to coordinate with those organs and get the problem resolved.

Now the service centre can take one of the two following approaches:

- A. It realizes the problem of the learner, provide necessary information to him about different units whom he need to tap and direct him to the concerned officials.
- B. The service centre absorbs all the problems and tells the learner, "You leave your worry with us. We shall coordinate with all the units and thereby resolve your problem and get back to you." It also politely tells the learner to have patience as the resolution of the problem may be little time consuming.

The first approach is having sympathy for the learner, while the second is that of having empathy. The service centre has been thriving for following the second approach.

In this connection, we present an episode<sup>(4)</sup> from the life of Smt. Saradadevi, the holy wife of Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansadev. Sardadevi, the holy mother was the daughter of very poor parents and hailed from a very remote village, Joyrambati in the district of Bankura in West Bengal. The village was struck by a devastating famine in 1864, when holy mother was 11 years old. The condition of the village folk became extremely deplorable. Seeing the people starving, the father of holy mother, Sri Ramachandra Mukhopadhyay, who was poor in terms of wealth but rich in

heart, ordered for getting his entire collection of paddy in his granaries exhausted for the sake of feeding the people of the village. Everyday huge amount of *Khichdi* used to be prepared for feeding the villagers by the family of holy mother. She, at the tender age of 11, observed that the villagers found it inconvenient to eat the food as it used to be served extremely hot. So, she would go to every villager and use a hand fan to cool down the food, thus making its temperature tolerable to the tongue. Feeling about the poor condition of villagers during the famine was an expression of sympathy. What Sri Ramachandra-Mukhopadhyay did was the first act of empathizing with the villagers and the step taken by the holy mother was perhaps an extreme act of empathy for her fellow people. It is the matter of sharing ones sorrow and hardship and doing something extra to give one the desired relief. At the service centre we try to follow the good practices of doing a little extra to provide relief to the students facing any difficulty.

**Next, we present an extract from 'Banker to the Poor'** <sup>(5)</sup> – the autobiography of Muhammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank.

It is about his experience at a village in Bangladesh named, Jobra, which he has entitled as, 'Jobra Village: From Textbook to Reality'.

*"I decided I would become a student all over again, and Jobra would be my university. The people of Jobra would be my teachers.*

*I promised myself to try and learn everything about the village. I thought I would be fortunate if I could understand the life of one single poor person. This would be a big departure from traditional book learning. By attempting to equip the students with a bird's eye view, traditional universities had created an enormous distance between students and the realities of life. When you can hold the world in your palm and see it from a bird's eye view, you tend to become arrogant – you do not realize that when looking from such a great distance, everything becomes blurred, and that you end up imagining rather than really seeing things.*

*I opted for what I called the 'worm's eye view'. I thought I should rather look at things at close range and I would see them sharply. If I found some barrier along the way, like a worm, I would go around it, and that way I would certainly achieve my aim and accomplish something.*

*I tried to overcome the feeling of uselessness by redefining my role. I*

*explained to myself that I might not be able to help many people, but I certainly could make myself useful for a day, or just a few hours, to one other human being. That would be a great accomplishment for me. This idea of providing small-scale yet real help, not just theory, to at least one living person gave me enormous strength. I felt alive again. When I started visiting the poor households in Jobra, I knew very clearly what I was looking for, and why. My motivation had never been clearer."*

We also tried to adopt the 'Worms Eye View'. In other words we approached each problem from the point of the learner. We empathised with him and asked him to leave his worry with us. We first identified the course of the matter. After that, rather than himself being asked to go to different places for seeking redress we undertook the journey on his behalf and in most of the cases came out with a solution. We have described our experience through ten typical Case Studies.

## **Extending Moral Support to the Distance Learners by way of Counselling through correspondence**

### **Case Studies**

We shall be presenting some typical cases of providing learners' satisfaction which have been acknowledged by the learners through their letters. In such cases, we feel that we had gone all out to help the students. In other words we had made some extra efforts to live upto our motto of providing learners' satisfaction by empathising with him/her. This is a facet of observing good practices at the Student Services Centre (SSC).

While presenting the cases we had followed the below-mentioned guidelines:

- a) We have mentioned the problem of the learner in brief preceded by a heading.
- b) We have narrated the steps taken towards arriving at a solution.
- c) We have provided **Excerpts** from the letter of acknowledgement written by the students (*Nowhere we have mentioned the name and Enrolment Number of the student. We have also not mentioned the names of IGNOU officials who have contributed towards resolving the problem. While presenting the excerpts we have maintained the same text and spellings as used by the students*).

## Case No.1

### Multiple Queries

A learner had sent numerous queries through a post card. He had *inter alia* mentioned there his cell phone number. Supposedly the learner did not receive satisfactory responses to his queries from the Regional Centre and Study Centre. The SSC first took some time to understand his problems, got his study centre and regional centre related problems solved at their levels and talked to the learner over his cell phone. Most of the problems were thus resolved. Again he raised some more queries; SSC took down the queries and this time responded through writing. It was found that there was a lot of grammatical and other nature of mistakes in the original letter sent by the learner. We from the SSC told the learner over and above solving his problem that the mistakes committed by him are too many which are avoidable and care should be taken by a learner to send error-free communication to his *Alma Mater*. To this the response of the learner was extremely significant. He requested us to take the trouble of making necessary corrections in his letter and return the same to him. He admitted that due to his village school background he had always been weak in English. It was appreciable that he mentioned that he would like to learn from the correction of his mistakes. SSC appreciated the honest admission made by the learner and indeed took pleasure in doing the needful as desired by the student.

### Excerpt from a letter of acknowledgement by a learner

*I really like to thank you for your edeavour (sic) & intension (sic) of clearing my those doubts by telephonic conve,sation dated 30<sup>th</sup> Sep 2008 at 10.00 AM (Approx) which I had quarried with you throug letter (sic).*

*I would specially like to thank for saying me that during my written (sic) I have made mistakes a lot & you are going to sent it back after correction...(sic)*

## Case No.2

### Incomplete result of a BLIS Student

The student was attached to a study centre in an extremely rural and remote area. It was a Special Study Centre under the disadvantaged category. But the local people had a commitment towards their village which

produced a large number of freedom fighters. Conspicuous among them were five martyrs who had laid down their lives on the fateful day of 29 September, 1942 during the Quit India Movement.

The officials of the Study Centre had the shown tremendous zeal and enthusiasm towards creating a very small computer lab in spite of the extremely difficult conditions existing at the village. It was made suitable for conducting the library science practical. The result of the student was incomplete for want of practical marks. The learner had already missed the chance of appearing at two interviews for non-receipt of mark sheet.

On probing the matter it got revealed that though the evaluation of the practical was done in due time by the Study Centre the data did not reach the Regional Centre concerned in time. When the data was subsequently transmitted to Student Evaluation Division (SED), it reached them in a time slot for which the result was to be declared in the following six months' cycle. Keeping in tune with the good practices followed at the SSC we absorbed the problem of the learner and took up the issue with the SED on his behalf.

The crux of the problem was that the delay was neither due to any fault of the student and nor due to any lapse on the part of the study centre and that the student should not get penalized for any operational problem at our level. Moreover, IGNOU has a mandate to spread higher education to the masses and take it to the unreached. So it was also a responsibility on our part to give due recognition to the efforts taken by the study centre in an extreme rural set up to organize computer-based practical. Again, it was not possible for the student to come all the way to New Delhi and get his problems resolved.

As a matter of fact his letters, e-mails could not break much ice. So, SSC narrated the whole episodes to the SED and could convince them about getting his mark sheet released during the same cycle.

### **Excerpt from a letter of acknowledgement by a learner**

*Myself Debabrata Malakar, student of BLIS Programme in your institution. (sic) My result showing incomplete result in grade card. I came and personally met for updating. Recently I had missed my interviews because of not receiving my provisional certificate in time and grade card (sic)*

*Finally I came to you and got my provisional certificate and grade card. Without your friendly support it was quiet impossible (sic). So thanks a lot and grateful to you...(sic)*

### **Case No.3**

#### **Problem of Change of Course**

The student belonged to an extremely rural and remote area where the facilities for education, health and general well-being of the people are very scarce. At IGNOU System every academic programme is a combination of courses and B.Sc is no exception. Keeping in tune with the flexibility aspect of the Open and Distance Learning System a learner can exercise free choice of electives. In B.Sc many of the courses have laboratory base. The total number of credits to be cleared in B.Sc is 96 and if a candidate selects X number of credits in a laboratory based discipline then at least 25% of those X credits should be in laboratory based courses.

Among the courses chosen by the learner concerned there were several courses in Mathematics. The learner had at some stage felt the difficulty in clearing some of these courses. So she opted for change to equivalent number of courses in Life Sciences. But in order to give effect to the change, there occurred a problem of numbers. Life Sciences being a practical based programme the learner was supposed to select in such a manner so that the overall selection matches the above-said stipulation regarding the laboratory based courses. In her case the number of credits of laboratory based courses fell short of the requirement. When she got to know about the problem and asked her study centre for help, she was directed to the Regional Centre or the Headquarters. But she got in touch with SSC first over phone, then, she sent a letter. SSC realized her problem and told her that she need not come all the way to IGNOU Headquarters. SSC first took up the issue of 'change of course'. It was resolved without making the student run from her place to IGNOU Headquarters or even to the Regional Centre. Then she faced the real problem that is appearing for the practical examinations.

IGNOU does not have its own infrastructure for holding the practical. It has to depend on outside institutions. There is also a restriction that the total number of students appearing for a particular practical course should be at least five, which was not being fulfilled in her case. SSC took up the matter with all Study Centres concerned in the country activated for B.Sc

and could identify students who are to do the same practical courses. SSC on its own contacted the students and could mobilize five learners to do the said practical. Thus, the threshold number of five could be reached and the practical were conducted. The student was quite committed and performed reasonably well. Thus the student could complete her B.Sc. She wrote back to us in Hindi. We gave given the excerpt in Hindi and also its translation into English.

### Excerpt from a letter of acknowledgement by a learner

*Nivedanpurvak kehna hai ki main B.Sc 62.59% ke sath uttirn hui hun. Main ek sudur gamin chhatra hun. Keval IGNOU ke karan hi B.Sc padh saki IGNOU ka pathya samagri bahut hi achha hai. Mene keval IGNOU duara prapt pathya samagri ka hi adhyayan kiya. Vishay chunav me mere duara galti kar dene ke karan mera result ruk gaya tha. Jis samasya ko dur kar result tayar karva kar mere pas yadha-shighrh bhijwane me ...evam ...ka..... aakalpiye yogdan raha. Inhone meri samasya ko apni samasya samjhkar usse dur karne ke liye har sambahv prayas kiya. Jiske chalte mai M.Sc mein admission hetu form jama kar saki.*

**[Translation into English:** *I am to submit that I have passed B.Sc with 62.59% marks. I hail from a very remote village. I could pass B.Sc only due to IGNOU. The study materials are extremely good. I only depended on the learning material sent by IGNOU. Owing to a mistake committed by me in respect of selection of courses there was a delay in declaration of my result. This problem was resolved and my result got prepared and sent to me in the shortest possible time. This was possibly only due to unimaginable support rendered by ... and ... They handled my problem as if it was their own and did everything possible to get it resolved. It is because of this that I am able to apply for admission to M.Sc].*

### Case No.4

#### Incomplete Grade Card due to want of Project evaluation marks.

In IGNOU evaluation is a package which consists of continuous evaluation, term-end evaluation. Along with that there are Practical/Projects for several subjects. Masters in Political Science has a project component. A learner has to first get the synopsis of the project approved by the faculty member concerned of the discipline and thereafter follow it up by sending the project. The learner complained that she had not received any

communication from the university regarding the project synopsis and so she was unable to work on the project. On enquiring with the School of Social Sciences, we came to know that the synopsis had been duly approved and sent to the learner, who had not received it. SSC followed it up further with the School and obtained the photocopy of the covering letter which was sent to the learner. It transpired that the learner had provided the official address of the project guide. The synopsis had indeed reached there and was lying in the office along with other letters. Since the learner belonged to Ranchi, capital of Jharkhand, where we have a Regional Centre we made our staff from the regional centre follow up the matter and they could retrieve the letter and hand it over to the learner. After that the learner completed the project work, got it evaluated following the usual procedure and finally got her grade card.

### **Excerpt from a letter of acknowledgement by a learner**

*I am highly obliged and grateful to IGNOU for the help they have extended in solving the problems, I was facing, since my synopsis had got misplaced. Sir, I highly appreciate the spontaneous action taken by you in helping me out from the problem. I wish good luck and best wishes to all the staff and members of IGNOU.*

### **Case No.5**

#### **Non receipt of Grade Card due to non-reflection of assignment marks.**

The learner concerned was a headmaster of a school located in a remote place called Kolachi in Mizoram. He was doing Masters in History. He successfully completed all the courses by securing very high marks in assignment as well as TEEs. However, the assignment marks in one of the courses had not got reflected in the Grade Card and thus the computer was consistently indicating the status 'Not Completed' against the programme.

Incidentally there were two sets of assignment questions for the said course in which he had secured 72/100 and 76/100, but these were not available with the section dealing with assignments marks. Normally the assignments are evaluated at study centre and marks are sent physically/electronically to the Regional Centre. The Regional Centre subsequently transmits it electronically to the Student Evaluation Division (SED) of IGNOU Headquarters for uploading in the Grade Card. For a remote place like Kolachi, there was no provision for sending the data by email to the Regional Centre. So they had sent it physically and it got lost in transit. Thus the Regional

centre, which is the administrative office in the region, did not have the marks. Naturally, it was not transmitted to the Hqs.

After getting to know above, the learner intended to act in a proactive manner and obtained a copy of his assignment mark sheet from the Study Centre and himself sent it to Hqs. Quite naturally, the SED at the Hqs does not and cannot accept marks sent by a learner himself.

The learner being a Headmaster of a school should have acted more carefully in such a situation. But perhaps due to anxiety he did not lay much emphasis on the issue of propriety. SSC took up the matter with our Regional Centre at Aizwal and got the marks transmitted to the Hqs following the prescribed procedure which resulted in uploading of assignment marks and subsequent declaration of his results.

### **Excerpt from a letter of acknowledgement by a learner**

*I have honour to thank you that I received my MAH Grade Card ... Sir, I completely (sic) successfully MA (History) degree June 2007 but due to some interaction my assignment of MHI 06 (scored 72 and 76) had not reflected a long time to my grade card status.(sic) Any now due to your kind helps my problem was solved.(sic)*

### **Case No.6**

#### **Non-reflection of Grade due to misplacement of assignment marks.**

The learner was student of B.Com. She had Completed 88 out of 96 credits, and her result was held up of non inclusion of the grade of CTE-03. This had happened because the assignment marks of CTE-03 had not reached the Evaluation Division. On probing the matter, it was found that the assignment marks were not sent by the Regional Centre concerned and finally it turned out that the marks were not sent from the Study Centre to the Regional Centre apparently because those got misplaced at the Study Centre.

It is worth mentioning here that every learner of BA/B.Com/B.Sc has to opt for at least 8 credits of Application Oriented Courses (AOC). These are meant for providing knowledge about real life applications. Several options are available to a learner for selecting the AOCs. CTE-03 and 04 are each four credit courses of the programme Certificate in Teaching of English and

these are available as AOC options for a learner of BA/B.Com. The learner in the instant case had chosen CTE-03.

On making further enquiry it got revealed that CTE-03 as application oriented course option for a student of B.Com was not known to the part time staff at the Study Centre. They had mixed it with the assignment grades of the learners of CTE. By way of intervention of SSC, the marks got recovered and were transmitted to the Regional Centre. Thereafter the usual procedure was followed to get the marks uploaded and finally the learner could obtain the degree.

### **Excerpt from a letter of acknowledgement by a learner**

*... I am writing this letter to you because to inform you that I am very much grateful to IGNOU's Student Services Centre who has helped me a lot when my result of one subject in application oriented course (CTE-03) was pending and due to this my graduation is not completing. ... He took necessary action and declared my result which I needed very much.(sic) I will never forget his kindness forever.(sic) I remember IGNOU, my university forever. Please bless me and take my regards.(sic)*

### **Case No.7**

#### **Discrepancy in tabulation**

The learner was a student of BDP (BA). His result was held up for his not qualifying successfully EPS-12. The learner was quite confident that he had done reasonably well to secure pass marks. At that time the University did not have provision for re-evaluation. On the insistence of the learner the matter was vigorously followed up with SED and it was found that the tabulation of marks was not done properly. The rectification was done duly by virtue of which the student got 'Successfully Completed' status against EPS 12 and his result got declared.

### **Excerpt from a letter of acknowledgement by a learner**

*With respect and gratitude I am to inform you that I was in stress in regard to the announcement of my result of BDP Programme due to the discrepancy in tabulation of mark (sic) for EPS-12. But your kind and prompt intervention in this regard has facilitated me to get the result along with mark sheet and Provisional Certificate.*

**CASE No.8****Non-declaration of result because of apparent non-completion of eight credits**

The learner was a student of BA for successful completion of which one is supposed to clear 96 credits. The candidate had indeed cleared the required 96 credits whereas her grade card was reflecting only 88 credits. On probing the matter it was found that there was a problem regarding the registration of the learner in a particular course of 8 credits. As per records the registration was indeed invalid, but for no fault of the learner. In course of her study, at some stage she had got 8-credit worth course changed. She got the confirmation regarding the change but the matter did not find its way to the Master Records. SSC took the initiative in getting this task accomplished subsequent to which her result got declared.

**Excerpt from a letter of acknowledgement by a learner**

*I really want to thank you people for helping me out in such a critical situation. Just because of this service (SSC) of IGNOU, I am taking admission to do MA in English.*

**Case No.9****Non-declaration of result of BHM (At the time of handling the matter, BHM was housed in the SOSS)**

The learner was a student of BHM and was due to take admission in a Masters programme abroad. So he needed the result within a prescribed date. His result was held up for non-inclusion of marks of the project paper and the assignment marks of another paper. The student had been contacting all possible officials of IGNOU but he was not getting the desired redress. As a matter of fact BHM is a programme with an exception that its support services are not regulated through any study centre. These are handled by a few faculty members of the School of Social Sciences who have other responsibilities. This might be the reason behind the student being not able to contact anyone of them so much so that he got frustrated and expressed his anguish over telephone to SSC. Thereafter, SSC took up the matter, followed it up with the School and got the results declared. The learner could get the result in time for securing admission to the desired Master Programme abroad.

### Excerpt from a letter of acknowledgement by a learner

*I recently passed the B.Sc. (Hospitality & Hotel Administration) from IGNOU would like to hereby express my humble gratitude towards the university that has helped us the ex-diploma holders, to gain a degree and thus prosper in our careers. (sic) But for IGNOU I wouldn't have been able to achieve Graduation while working. Sir, I desperately wish to share my experience while interacting with IGNOU during this period- the only reason being that IGNOU is actually a university meant for people like me, who wish to move ahead in life in spite of the difficulties they face performing their daily chores. To be precise – The Student Support (sic) Centre. The staff there was highly supportive. They seemed to understand the Students' (sic) requirements and were found to put in their best to resolve their queries. The referred matter was about the declaration of my results. I had submitted my Research Project in December and results for all the exams that I had appeared for in December were updated in March. Only marks pending for updation (sic) were the Project and Assignment marks. I tried contacting the Programme Co-ordinator (BHM-MHA) and his office several times regarding the same but never received a concrete response. If at all I received a response it was a mere line "Your request has been forwarded to the concerned section."!!!! I have applied for admission to a PG Programme and desperately needed an approximate date when I shall be able to get my results, thus being able to plan myself better. But to my grief I never received a concrete response from BHM-MHA. (sic) Respected Sir, I request you from the deepest of my heart that please make all your responsible departments student sensitive as the smallest action of their staff carries great significance for the students. Wish all our fellow countrymen were responsible and responsive.*

#### CASE No.10

#### Change in subject (4 credits) offered under special courses of B.Ed

In IGNOU B.Ed a student has to take several core courses and some optional courses. A group of optional courses appeared under the head of Special Courses which includes among others the following:

- ES-362 – Computer in Education (4 Credits)
- ES-363 – Guidance and Counselling (4 Credits)

As per the rules of IGNOU change of course is permissible but for that a student has to apply within 30 days of receipt of the study materials. The learner concerned had opted for ES-362 but by the time she could realize that it would be difficult for her to cope up with ES-362 and that she would be more comfortable with ES-363, the prescribed duration was over. But still she applied for the change and as anticipated the desired response was not forthcoming. The learner had contacted SSC for redress. SSC realized that the learners' feeling of inconvenience in handling ES-362 took more than a month to get crystallized. This is nothing unusual. It has to be taken into account in this connection that the study materials were received late by the students and thus they also had to bear the burden of handling too many courses within a short time. In other words, the circumstances in which the learner was put into were not at all favourable towards giving effect to the time stipulation imposed by the University in its role regarding change of course. This was a matter which was to be realized by putting oneself into the shoes of the learner. So SSC decided to go by the 'spirit of the law', rather than by the 'letter of the law', and thereby it was felt that the learner's plea for change of course should be acceded to even after the expiry of the threshold limit of 30 days.

SSC took up the matter on behalf of the student and convinced the authority regarding the associated problems faced by the learner and could clinch the matter in her favour. Thus her course got changed from ES 362 to ES 363.

### **Excerpt from a letter of acknowledgement by a learner**

*Most humbly I want to state that I applied for the change of elective from ES-362 to ES-363 and I had to fight for near about three months in this regard. When my continuous sending of letters, faxes and phone calls were awarded with failure and despondency and I started loosing (sic) all my faith on IGNOU, then at that crucial moment I received your helping hand which helped me to come out of this problem. Your personal concern and initiativeness (sic) in this regard has really acted as a boon. (sic) I am not getting the proper wounds (sic) to express my gratefulness to you.*

The above case studies along with the reactions of the learners indicate that some exercise on inculcation of values of having empathy towards the learners has taken place at the SSC. Here, we narrate how such value inculcation had taken place. The standard practice followed at different

organizations for the development of their human resources is to hold some training programme or workshop restricted to a couple of days or so. But, imbibing values should be a continuous process. It can not perhaps be ensured through any specific training programme or workshop of a limited period.

Here, we present how we organized training following a different strategy.

### **Training of staff towards their effective utilization in providing support to distance learners**

A Study Centre is hosted by an academic institution, generally an undergraduate degree college or a university department or even a junior college. Special Study Centres meant for the disadvantaged groups such as women, people located in rural and remote areas, physically challenged, scheduled caste, scheduled tribes, other backward classes are hosted generally by NGOs catering to the requirements of such groups. Programme Study Centre meant for providing support services in respect of specific programmes having very significant practical components are hosted by institutions such as hospitals, Nursing Colleges, Engineering and Medical Colleges, Computer Centres, etc. IGNOU does not own the brick and mortar infrastructure of these institutions. It utilizes the infrastructure at hours which do not clash with the working hours of the host institution on the basis of some mutually agreed terms and conditions.

However, a crucial bane of the system is that the members of staff at the study centres irrespective of themselves being academic or non-academic are part-timers. Every study centre is headed by a Coordinator or a Programme-In-Charge, as the case may be, who is generally a permanent faculty member of the host institution. In other words, his substantive appointment is with his host institution, not with IGNOU. So is the case of other members of staff who provide secretarial and multiple nature of assistance. Hence, there exists a question mark regarding their accountability towards the activities of IGNOU.

Some of the inevitable consequences of the above are the following:

- Lack of knowledge about the system,
- Lack of understanding about the system,
- Not keeping pace with the developments at IGNOU,

- Not having adequate knowledge about the operational linkages in the system, and most crucially
- Not considering oneself as a corporate member of IGNOU.

As such, there exists an operational problem. There is need of training of those officials dealing with distance learners of varied status coming with multifarious problems at the learner support centres and the student services centre. The part-time members of staff are engaged to provide the support services to the learners in ODL system but, they have to do undertake all these activities without any training whatsoever. The pretext is, there is no provision in the rules for training the part-timers. And thus, there is no budgetary provision for holding such programmes. Nonetheless, we have established earlier that training should be a continuous process. So on-the-job training fits the need base quite adequately, and while so doing several good practices had emerged. We now present the overall experience in a tabular form. The good practices have been linked with the four pillars of learning i.e. *learning to know*, *learning to be*, *learning to do* and *learning to live together* which are the recommendations of the UNESCO Commission for Education held in Paris in 1996 which was targeted towards giving a direction to the nature of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.<sup>(6)</sup>

**Table-1: Good Practices, Outcomes and their linkages with the Four Pillars of Learning**

Value-based Attributes	Good Practices	Outcome	Linkage with the four pillars of learning	Remarks
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
To be informative	The queries received daily through post/e-mail/face-to-face enquiry were compiled. The routine questions among them were answered but the rest were discussed among the staff members on weekly basis.	A set of Frequently Asked Questions got compiled which is under the process of publication. Quiz on ODL was conducted from time to time and again a compilation in the form of multiple choice type questions was developed. During the annual convocation competitions were held using this compilation.	A very useful exercise on <i>Learning to know</i> .	One of the ways of development of learning at schools/colleges and educational institutions is to acquire answering skills. But here it was a judicious mix of development of first, questioning and then answering skills. The quiz competition aroused tremendous interest.

Oral communication skills	Varieties of issues pertaining to ODL system were chosen from time to time every staff member was asked to pick up a topic randomly and speak impromptu for about two minutes on it.	Development of oral communication skills. It also helped in professional growth of the members of staff by developing in them the capability of facing the selection committees, taking part in group discussion, etc.	An exercise on <i>Learning to do</i>	' <i>Learning to do</i> ' refers to applying the acquired knowledge/skills in real life situations. Development of oral communication skill is an exercise in this direction.
Writing skills	Preparing the draft replies to the letters and official notes drafting was encouraged. The letters received in Hindi were replied in Hindi.	Implementing the official language policy and doing justice to <b>Rajabhasha</b> mandate.	An exercise on <i>Learning to do</i>	With Rajbhasa Parishad becoming pro-active these days, lot of importance is being given about communication in Hindi wherever necessary. But the same practice was initiated much before at the SSC within the limitations of resources.
Listening skills	Time to time, the members of staff were counselled towards having the desired patience for listening to the learners and solving their problems.	Quality of patient listening was developed.	Again, an exercise on <i>Learning to do</i> .	Sometimes the staff members were called by the Head for being counseled when there used to be rush at the counters. This was done purposefully for testing their patience of course by striking necessary balance with the needs of the learners.

Behavioural skills	The staff used to handle learners of different age group and having varied status who would come from long distances having different kinds of problems.	They were advised to behave with the distance learners giving due respect for their age, social status, etc.	An exercise on <i>Learning to live together</i>	The staff members learnt to deal with different varieties of learners.
Belongingness to the system	The staff members were sensitized to take care of the systems, available infrastructure like computers, printers, software, kiosk and cleanliness of the office as they would do with their personal belongings at home.	To own the items at office and maintained properly.	An exercise on <i>Learning to be</i>	They learnt to own the items available with the office in the true sense of the term.
Creation of minimal infrastructure for the learners	Ramp, shade for queuing, writing desk, sitting arrangement, ladies toilet, drinking water facility, a business house for photocopying, scanning, binding, etc. were created.	Strengthening support services for better satisfaction of the learners. Creating a congenial atmosphere.	Again an exercise on <i>Learning to live together</i>	The SSC was established in 1999 but even in 2008 many of the facilities were not in place. Care was taken to create them within the limitations of available funds and resources. The process of creation of such facilities took a period of almost five years, but nevertheless, the facilities are now in place.

The above table provides at a glance the good practices followed at the Student Services Centre and the tangible outcomes which facilitated the learners and also helped the cause of professional growth of the members of staff. We have made an attempt to link the outcomes with the Four Pillars of Learning which provide a broad-based and holistic aggregate of the envisaged nature of learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It is crucial that the emphasis has been on learning and not teaching as the open and distance learning system is supposed to be learner-centric and not teacher-centric. Having said these, we may conclude as under.

## Conclusion

Prof. G. Ram Reddy, the founder Vice-Chancellor, IGNOU used to say that the Regional Centres and the Study Centres are the eyes and ears of the University. Prof. V.C. Kulandai Swamy, the second Vice-Chancellor, IGNOU emphasized that distance education system really functions at Study Centres and Regional Centres; therefore, level of the field staff, their cadre, training functions, their relationship with Regional Centres and School of Studies, their eligibility as academic unit, exchange of experiences with School of Studies deserve a critical study.<sup>(7)</sup> The Student Services Centre at IGNOU headquarters also assumes the role of a learner support centre. Its very location at the proximity of the main gate of the University headquarters is a testimony to the importance given by the University to its learners. A distance learner is away from his teacher and the peer group but he has the hangover of the conventional system where in need or in a situation of desperation he always had a shoulder called 'teacher' to lean upon. The best practices at the Student Services Centre which may also be imbibed by the staff members at the Regional Centres and Study Centres across the country help in creating the teacher element for providing psycho-emotional support to the learner.

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## Community Development Through Literacy Programme in Ri-Bhoi District, Meghalaya.

*Marilyne Kharkongor*

*"If your education is a substantial one, it should spread its odour in your surroundings. You should everyday utilized a portion of your time in service of the people round you" – Mahatma Gandhi*

Many great men and their philosophies have propagated the importance of making the masses literate and educated. They have spoken out on the importance of uplifting the under-privileged, the oppressed, the downtrodden, the silent sufferers through mass literacy programmes be it formal or non-formal education. **Gandhiji** regarded the poor masses in India especially in rural areas as deprived as they are still under the shackles of ignorance, therefore they should be made literate and enjoy the basic human rights. The Gandhian idea on adult education and education of the masses is towards self-development of an individual in body, mind, and spirit and to be self-sufficient for which these two aspects are interdependent. **Swami Vivekananda** when he talked about education of the masses he stated that *if a poor boy cannot come to education, education must go to him*. He is of the opinion that education is monopolized by a handful of men who are in power. Therefore, spreading of education to the weaker masses is important in order to develop their individuality. Hence, it will awaken them to work for their own salvation and this will lead the nation to advance in proportion and rise again. **Paulo Friere** a Brazilian educationist in his book entitled 'Pedagogy of the oppressed' also talked about giving the masses the power by getting them the privilege to basic rights which they deserve. Knowing their own rights will enable them to stand against the oppression they face from the elite and privilege classes and to shun away ignorance and the sign of weakness which the masses possessed. Friere was concern about the illiterate masses and considered them as obstacles to development and creation of a democratic mentality. His philosophy on literacy,

conscientization and dialogue is to awake the illiterate masses, liberate them from the unknown and instigate in them the ability to reason and march ahead. He wanted to provide an alternate education outside the formal system to the million of illiterates of 14 years and above. Thus, Adult Education movement was set up based on his idea and philosophies.

Over the years mass literacy programmes have evolved in many countries especially the under-developed and developing nations. Such countries have brought out the importance of education among the masses and implemented policies and programme to achieve the set goals. India, also has implemented numerous programmes for the illiterate masses who could not get access to education. Thus, Adult Education programmes under the NAEP (1978) and mass literacy programmes under the NLM (1988) have all set certain guidelines to achieve the goals of making the adult illiterates into literates. Mass literacy programmes is a collective approach where, the programme organizers, and community people work together in catering the needs of the weaker section of people who have been deprived of the basic human rights to education.

In mass literacy programmes community plays an important role and its involvement is needed in planning and organizing of such programmes. It is part of the developmental process for the community people and it is simply known as the people's programme. The management of the programme and the community work together in achieving the targets and goals in making the illiterate masses of each community literate. Various studies have signified the importance of community involvement in literacy programmes. These studies attributed that the involvement of the community has brought positivity and helped in achieving the target and goal towards progress and development. Therefore, without the involvement of the community people either in the role as Volunteers, information providers, motivators and providing assistance in infrastructural needs etc., any developmental programme would be a mammoth task if left to the management or government alone. The contribution, involvement, participation of the community is appreciated.

### Review of related literature

**Parikh (1985)** studied on the community involvement in *Adult Education Programme in Gujarat*. The study assessed the level of community involvement in adult education and to find out the effects of lack of the

community involvement and to suggest measures. The findings of the study revealed that the level of the community involvement was far below expectations. There was considerable leeway still to be made up between the ideally sought community involvement and that achieved in reality. The study also found that the instructors were partly responsible for the low level of the community participation. Majority of the community leaders, school head masters, panchayat chiefs, social and political leaders complained that they were neither approached by the instructors for help in organizing and conducting the AEC. However, several village elites were not bothered by the classes taken place in their village and did not show interest towards the programme.

Mass mobilization campaigns, media were suggested by the study in propagating AEP in rural areas and the community leaders needed to be approached in the development of awareness among them. Another study conducted by **Arrien (1999)** studied the *importance of mobilizing local community for literacy and post literacy in Nicaragua*. The study featured the role of mobilization of community as a factor in the victory over illiteracy in the area of Rio San Juan. The first step in eradicating illiteracy in the area was taken in the National Literacy Crusade in 1980. Altogether, 1,348 teachers were mobilizing to literate around 6,279 inhabitants in the area. The illiteracy rate went down from 96% to 36.17%. Another operation was launched in 1985 with an objective of bringing literacy to the 3000 remaining illiterates.

The step was operated in three levels: Territorial, Zonal and Regional levels. Representatives of rural mass were brought together with defining characteristics such as maintaining literacy process, motivating people and resolving the various problems which arose. Thus, the people entered in the realm of education and education entered in the realm of the people. The mobilization efforts encompassed all aspects inherent in the literacy process. A child of 13 years entered the programme and went on to teach her mother to read and write. Having achieved success in seven out of the eight territories, Rio San Juan turned from being a backward geographical area to an area with a future of its own. With Literacy and Education as basic ingredients in the success built upon the involvement of the community.

### Objectives of the study

1. To highlight the general profile of the community people involved in the programme.

2. To study the role of the community people in the literacy programme conducted in Ri-Bhoi district.
3. To find out the opinions of the community representatives on the implementation of the literacy programme.

## Population

The population of the study consists of thirty villages from all the three Blocks of the Ri-Bhoi District of Meghalaya i.e. Umsning, Umling and Jirang respectively.

## Sample

For the purpose of study a total sample of 40 respondents has been collected. Out of 40 sample respondents, thirty samples of community representatives that is the Village Headmen and Sirdars (chiefs) were collected from the thirty villages of all the three blocks in the district. Another 10 samples from other significant persons among the community who acted as adult education functionaries in the implementation of the programme were collected. Altogether, forty samples from the village headmen, sirdars and significant others were collected randomly from all the three blocks in the Ri-Bhoi district.

Descriptive method was used for the study.

## Method and procedure

### Tools used

Questionnaire was constructed for obtaining the required information needed for the study from the sample respondents who were involved in the literacy programme under the study.

### Operational Definition of the Term Used

**Community**- here refers to the village Headmen and the Sirdars of the villages representing the three blocks of the district. Significant others here refers to the Key Resource Persons (K.R.Ps), Master Trainers (M.Ts) and members of the community based organizations.

## Need and Justification of the study

Active participation and involvement of the community people is very vital in a democratic society to understand deeply their needs and problems they are facing in day to day life. Involving the community people to be part of the programme creates a sense of togetherness towards development.

The collective effort made by the community people towards environment building, disseminating of information, motivating the learners and mobilizing volunteers all shows that it is a piece of what democracy is all about. Various studies have highlighted that the involvement of the community people in similar programmes have contributed much to the effectiveness of the programmes and development of the community at large.

This study is important to find out the involvement of the community people and also to know how far they had played their roles in the implementation of the mass literacy programme. During the survey by the investigator no recognized NGOs were found to be involved in the programme.

However, the investigator has come across other significant persons who have been involved either directly or indirectly in the implementation of the literacy programme with their own roles and functions they had carried out.

Before proceeding further to know the roles of the community people, it may be worthwhile to look into the profile of the community people. The tables below will highlight on the background of the respondents relating to age, sex wise, educational level and occupation.

**Table - 1: Age group of the Respondents**

Age group	Total	Percentage
30-40	2	5
40-50	6	15
50-60	21	52.5
60-70	8	20
70-80	3	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

The Table - 1 above shows that out of the total sample respondents, a majority of 52.5% belong to the age group of 50-60 and 20% are in the age group of 60-70. Another 15% falls in the age group of 40-50 years; 7.5% between the age group of 70-80 and only 5% under the age-group of 30-40 years respectively. This shows that a large percentage of 52.5% of the respondents belong to the age group of 50-60 years.

**Table - 2: Gender of the Respondents**

Gender	Total	Percentage
Male	38	95
Female	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

The table - 2 above clearly indicates that majority of 95% of the sample respondents were males and only 5% are females.

**Table - 3: Educational level of the Respondents.**

Educational level	Total	Percentage
Under matric	15	37.5
Matric passed	12	30
P.U./ class XII passed	10	25
Graduate	3	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

In regard to the education level of the respondents the Table - 3 indicates that the highest percentage of 37.5% of the sample respondents are below matriculate and 30% are matriculates. Another 25% have completed the pre-university level or class XII and only 7.5% are graduates. This shows that all the respondents have attained certain educational level and they are considered literates.

**Table - 4: Occupation of the Respondents.**

Occupation	Total	Percentage
Agriculture/ Farming	10	25
Self-employed/business	17	42.5
School Teacher	12	30
Government Servant	1	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

Table - 4 indicates that 42.5% of the respondents are self-employed and engaged in their own business. Another 30% are school teachers; 25% are farmers and only 2.5% work as a government servant. Thus, a majority of 42.5% are self-employed and having their own business.

Based on the background of the respondents, the tables given below will highlight their roles on the implementation of the literacy programme in Ri-Bhoi district of Meghalaya.

**Table - 5 : Involvement of the community people in the literacy programme**

Involvement	Total	Percentage
Yes	40	100
No	Nil	Nil
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

The Table - 5 above indicates that cent percent of the respondents were involved in the implementation of the literacy programme. They had devoted their time and made tremendous effort towards the programme. The following table focuses on the roles that the respondents had performed and participated in making the programme an effective one.

**Table - 6: Role of the Community representatives in the implementation of the literacy programme**

Implementation of the literacy programme	Organized meetings to disseminate information about the programme		Circulation of notice about the programme		Motivating the village people to join the literacy centre		Providing necessary infrastructure for the programme		Mobilizing local educated people for volunteering		Volunteered as a teacher	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Role of the community Representatives												
Yes	30	100	4	13.33	30	100	21	70	21	70	5	16.67
No	Nil	Nil	26	86.67	Nil	Nil	9	30	9	30	25	83.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

Looking at the Table - 6 above it can be seen that cent-percent of the respondents were involved in organizing meetings to disseminate information and generate awareness about the programme. Again, cent percent informed they motivated the village people to join the literacy classes. Another 70% says they provided necessary infrastructure for the literacy centre. Again 70% says they mobilized local educated people for volunteering. Further,

the data shows that out of 100% sample respondents only 13.33% reported they have circulated notices about the implementation of the programme. Whereas, 16.67% out of 100% mentioned they have volunteered themselves in teaching the literacy classes. Thus, the study reveals that cent percent of the community representatives their major roles was in organizing meetings to make the people aware about the programme and in motivating them to join the literacy centre. However, the study shows that a very small percentage of 13.33% of the respondents have played their roles in circulating notices and only 16.67% have volunteered in teaching the learners.

**Table- 7: Role of significant others associated with the literacy programme**

Implementation of the programme	Environment building and spreading awareness		Assisting the organizers in identifying the learners		Motivating the community people and assisted the V.Ts in teaching		Providing necessary infrastructures		Monitoring, Attending meetings and provide training to the V.Ts	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Yes	7	70	6	60	7	70	3	30	6	60
No	3	30	4	40	3	30	7	70	4	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Table - 7 above indicates that 70% of significant others in the district informed they assisted the organizers in environment building and in spreading awareness about the programme. Again, 70% says they motivated the villagers and assisted the Volunteer Teachers (V.Ts) in teaching the literacy classes. Another 60% mentioned they monitor the progress of the programme, attended meetings, and gave training to the V.Ts. Further, 60% says they assisted the organizers in identifying the learners. Whereas, 30% only informed they assisted in providing necessary infrastructures needed in the literacy centre. Thus, the data collected indicates that all the significant others have played their role in the literacy program be it in environment building and spreading awareness, motivating the villagers to join the literacy centres, assisting the V.Ts in teaching the literacy classes, identifying the illiterates and monitoring the programme. Only 30% of the respondents provided necessary infrastructures for the programme.

**Table - 8: Opinion of the community representatives on whether the programme has brought change to the community people.**

Opinion	Total	Percentage
Yes	30	100
No	Nil	Nil
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

Table - 8 above clearly indicates that cent percent of the respondents are of the opinion that the programme has helped in bringing change to the community people.

**Table- 9: Opinions of the community representatives on the changes made by the people**

Changes made by the people	Opportunity to learn the literacy skills		Improve their knowledge and give self-confidence		Changes in mindset and way of thinking		Change in attitude and behaviour of the people		Improve standard of living	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Opinion										
Yes	30	100	30	100	19	63.33	19	63.33	10	33.33
No	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	11	36.67	11	36.67	20	66.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

Table - 9 indicates some of the changes that have been made by the learners after attending the literacy classes. The data collected reveals that cent percent of the community representatives opined that literacy programme is one of the developmental programmes that gave an opportunity to the illiterates to learn the literacy skills. Further, cent percent are of the view that the literacy programme has helped the learners to improve their knowledge and give self-confidence. Another 63.33% stated that the programme has change their mindset and way of thinking and also has helped the learners in changing their attitude and behaviour. Whereas, 36.67% pointed out that the mindset and way of thinking remains the same and that no changes has been observed in the attitude and behaviour of the learners. While the highest percentage of 66.67% of the respondents reported that there was no improvement in the standard of living even after attending

the literacy centres. Thus, the study reveals that cent percent of the respondents are of the opinion that the programme gave a good opportunity to the learners to learn the literacy skills of reading, writing and arithmetic and in improving their knowledge and make them self-confident.

### Analysis of data

To understand clearly the role of the community people in the implementation of the programme, it may be worthwhile to know the background of the respondents. The data collected reveals that out of 100% respondents 52.5% belong to the age group of 50-60 years, and only 7.5% are between 70-80 years of age. A very small percentage of 5% belong to 30-40 years of age. With regard to gender a large percentage of 95% are males and only 5% were females respectively. This shows a very low percentage of female participation in the literacy programme. Regarding educational level the data reveals that only 7.5% are graduates, 37.5% are under matriculates and 25% have passed class twelve. As regard to the occupation of the respondents a majority of 42.5% is self-employed and engaged in their own business; 30% are school teachers and a very low percentage of 2.5% work as a government servant. Thus the study reveals that 52.5% of the community people belong to the age group of 50-60 years where majority of them are males. Most the respondents who were involved in the programme are under matriculate and they are self employed. The study also reveals that the school teachers engaged in the literacy work are those teaching in the lower primary and secondary schools level and very few are in government service.

To understand how far the community people involved themselves in the literacy programme, the data reveals that cent percent of the respondents were involved in the implementation of the programme. In order to find out what are the major roles played by the community representatives in the implementation of the literacy programme, the data reveals that cent percent of the respondents organized meetings to make the people aware about the programme and in motivating them to join the literacy centre. As motivation plays an important role for the programme, cent percent of the community representatives informed that they had motivated the people to participate in the literacy programme in various ways. Some motivated by telling them that the programme will teach the learners to be able to write their own names and not use thumb impressions any more. Others persuaded them to come forward and enroll themselves as the government is giving free

opportunity to attend the literacy classes. Further, the data reveals that 70% mobilized the educated people of the village for volunteering and another 70% were providing infrastructural facilities required for the programme. It was found that only 13.33% of the community representatives involved themselves in circulation of notices and 16.67% assisted in teaching the literacy classes. Thus the major role played by the community representatives was in organizing meetings and in motivating the people to join the literacy classes.

Looking at the roles played by significant others, the data indicates that majority of 70% assisted the organizers for environment building and in spreading awareness about the implementation of the programme. Another 70% have motivated the villagers to join the literacy centre and assisted the V.Ts in teaching the literacy classes. Among all the significant others the K.R.Ps and M.Ts were found to have played a significant role in the implementation of the programme. They were found involved in motivating the participants to join the programme by informing the villagers about the importance of being a literate person especially in villages where different tribes inhabits. They encouraged them to take the opportunity to learn the literacy skills. Their involvement is very significant as they contributed to the success of the programme.

Interestingly, cent percent of the community representatives are of the opinion that the programme has helped to bring change in the people. In order to find out what are the changes made by the learners, the data collected reveals that the literacy programme has helped the learners to improve their knowledge and gave self-confidence. They are also of the opinion that the programme has enabled the learners to learn the literacy skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. However, the data collected indicates the highest percentage of 66.67% who opined that no improvement has been made in their standard of living even after attending the literacy classes.

### Major findings of the study

Following are the findings based on the objectives of the study:

**Objective 1:** Findings related to the General profile of the Respondents. From the data collected it was found that of 52.5% of the respondents belongs to the age group of 50-60 years and only 5% are between 30-40 years of age. Further the data reveals that the highest percentage of 95% were males

who were involved in the implementation of the programme. Thus, the study found that there was a very low percentage of female participation. Looking at the educational level of the respondents the study found that only 7.5% are graduates and a fairly good percentage of 37.5% are below matric. In regard to occupation the study found that the highest percentage of 42.5% out of 100% respondents are self-employed they are either running their own business like grocery shops, trading in supply of raw materials and agricultural products, followed by 30% who work as school teachers in lower primary and secondary schools and only 2.5% work as a government servant.

**Objective 2:** Findings related to the Roles of the Respondents.

In regard to the involvement of the community people in the implementation of the literacy programme, the study found that cent percent of the respondents are involved in the programme. In order to know the roles played by the community representatives the study found that the major role played by them was in organizing meeting to make the people aware about the programme and in motivating them to join the literacy centre. Moreover, the study found that a very low percentage of 13.33% of the respondents were involved in circulating notices and only 16.67% volunteered in teaching the learners. Looking at the roles of the significant others, the study found that 70% out of 100% respondents gave assistance to the organizers in environment building and spreading awareness about the programme as well as in motivating the villagers to join the programme. Again 70% of the respondents were also found to have helped the V.Ts in teaching the literacy classes. Further, the study found that 60% of the respondents played their role in monitoring the programme and conduct training to the V.Ts besides attending meetings related to the programme. During the survey the investigator found that no recognized NGOs were involved in the programme however, only community based organizations were found to have been involved in providing infrastructural facilities.

**Objective 3:** Findings related to the Opinions of the Community Representatives on the implementation of the literacy programme. In regard to the opinions of the community representatives about the literacy programme, the study found that cent percent of the respondents opined that the literacy programme has helped in bringing change to the villagers. In order to know what are the changes made by them in their day to day life, the study found that cent percent of the community representatives opined that the programme has helped the learners through the literacy skills to improve their knowledge on social issues and generated a sense of social

awareness within the family. It was also found that the programme made them to become self-confident as a responsible member in the family and society. Further, it was found that a fairly good percentage of 63.33% opined that the learners has changed their mindset, attitude and behaviour as seen in the increasing enthusiasm of the elders joining the literacy programme and many children could be seen to have been enrolled themselves in schools. However, in spite of these achievements gain through the programme, the study found that 66.67% pointed out that there was not much improvement in the standard of living among the learners even though after attending the literacy centre.

## Conclusion

The implementation of the literacy programme in Ri-Bhoi district of Meghalaya is one of the developmental programmes that have made some impact in the development of the community people of the district. One of the greatest impacts that can be seen through the implementation of the literacy programme was the increased in the literacy rate. It may be mentioned here that in 2001 the literacy rate of the district was 63.67% with a decadal growth rate of 23.75% compared to the literacy rate of 1991 census which was 39.92%. The literacy rate has gone up to 77.22% in 2011 (provisional census) showing a decadal growth rate of 13.55%. This is one of the major contribution and significant role played by the community people for the upliftment and development of the community as a whole. Another factor that led to the improvement of the literacy status in the Ri-Bhoi district was the involvement and active participation of the community representatives and the significant others i.e. the K.R.Ps, M.Ts, community based organizations in organizing meetings, generating awareness among the illiterates about the programme, motivating the villagers to join the literacy centres and giving assistance to the organizers of the programme to identify the low literacy pockets of the district. Other factors that led to the achievements of increasing the literacy rate in the district was the operation and implementation of other developmental schemes like the Post Literacy Programme (PLP), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and other employment generation programmes. As such community participation therefore, plays a very significant role for the community development since the backbone for any rural and urban development depends on literacy and education. Without literacy and education no development can take place particularly in eliminating poverty, prevention in spreading of diseases, improvement in

health care services and removing the darkness from the mindsets of the people.

### **Suggestions for improvement**

For future community development programme the involvement of recognized NGOs, school and college students needs to be encouraged. Moreover, educated people of the village must come forward and take part in any educational programme for the planning process of the district especially women's participation should be given ample opportunity towards community development programmes. In dissemination of information and generating awareness among the community on the programmes conducted in the district, other mediums like radio, television, pamphlets, posters, etc. should also be distributed besides organizing public meetings and convening village durbars to ensure high level publicity. Future community developmental programmes like raising the standard of living, social attitude, mindset of the individual and community as a whole, their rights and duties should be considered as important items. For future developmental programmes to be organized in the district it would be better that the volunteers and educated youths involved in the programme are given a certain kind of honorarium or incentives and issuing of certificates to the trainees of the programme. Such recognition will encourage, motivate them and make them enthusiastic to arouse the spirit of participation in order to ensure their fullest support. Further, for future implementation of any developmental programme, the planners should look back into the weaknesses and failures of earlier programmes implemented in the district. Therefore, involvement of the community representatives as major stakeholders in the planning process in order to gather grass-root need based information of the people before implementing the programme is the need of the hour.

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# Community Radio for Non-Formal Education

*Arpita Sharma*

## **Abstract**

Developing of civilization is closely related to learning and education system obtained in communities and societies. Learning is a continuous process it takes place everywhere and at all times. Learning is the process by which own knowledge is reconstituted by the internalization of individual, groups and communities. In today's fast moving global competitive scenario, we are compelled to develop a knowledge base around us. Dr. A.P. J. Kalam has written, "If you want to leave your footprints on stands of time don't drag your feet. Community Radio is better way to give information education among the rural people for their improvement. Gyan Vani radio networks acts as a cooperative devoted exclusively to education and community development. Present paper describes the radio projects in non formal education, importance of community radio in distance education.

## **Introduction**

The use of radio for non-formal education started with the advent of radio broadcasting in the 1920s and '30s. Together with information and entertainment, education - both formal and non-formal - was regarded as one of the three main services that the new medium would, and should, offer its audience. In the decades following the Second World War, educational radio spread from the industrialised nations of Europe and North America to the developing countries, mainly through colonial broadcasting services. As most of these countries achieved independence in the 1960s they continued to use radio for non-formal education, especially in the areas of agriculture and health.

However, the 1970s brought an increasing emphasis on the educational potential of television and video. The new technology offered sound, visual images, movement and colour, but was also much more expensive; many

societies and individuals, particularly in the rural areas of poorer countries, did not have access to it. In many areas of the world radio is still the only medium through which educators can reach a mass audience, simultaneously and at relatively low cost; although television and video may have overshadowed radio, it was never eclipsed.

The 1970s also brought three major developments that allowed radio to extend the range and scope of its activities, especially at the local and community level:

- ◆ The development of FM (frequency modulated) radio transmission
- ◆ The consequent growth of local and community radio stations
- ◆ The increasing availability of relatively low-cost, portable, AM/FM radio receivers
- ◆ The increasing miniaturization of radio transmitting stations.

Even so, the substantial opportunities for non-formal education offered by these developments were not fully realized over the next 30 years. Although this was partly due to the increasing commercialization of broadcasting during the period, there remains a tendency among educators to focus on newer media - initially television and video, and more recently teleconferencing, the Internet and the World Wide Web - at the expense of older technologies, which can often achieve similar goals very effectively and usually at a fraction of the cost.

Nevertheless, local and community radio continues to make a significant contribution to non-formal education:

In Kenya, the Mediae Trust has recently been supporting the use of radio drama/soap opera, transmitted by a local radio station, as part of a health education campaign in the Meru region

In the Oshakati area of northern Namibia, local radio is part of a non-formal education project entitled "Cattle is our livelihood," to improve cattle keeping practices among local farmers

In the Apac community of northern Uganda, a portable solar or battery powered "suitcase radio station" broadcasts programmes of local and timely interest, in an initiative co-sponsored by the Government of Uganda and The Commonwealth of Learning.

## **Life Long Learning**

Life Long education is not a new concept in the field of education. Permanent education demonstrated by UNESCO can be called lifelong education. Lifelong education can be understood as:

Education is a creative life long activity for the complete personality development of man and aims at consolidating all experiences of learning. It includes subjects like vocational training to correspond with change and development useful literacy, civic and political responsibilities etc. the rapid social changes that have come about in a decade, earlier did not occur even in a century. In future these changes can take place even at a faster pace for which the individual will be required to continue educating himself.

Following two factors are important for lifelong education:

To sustain the inquisitiveness of the learners for life-long learning. The environment should also be conducive to it so that a normal person gains knowledge automatically. For this purpose, libraries, film, television etc. can prove very helpful.

The educational institute's should be progressive so to organize required motivational educational programmes constantly. Swami Vivekanand has called it "Man Making Education". The education which can bring about the all round and balanced development of the personality of an individual is only that which continues lifelong.

## **Non Formal Education**

Is an organized, systematic, educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular sub-groups in the population, adults as well as children according to their needs?

## **Life Long and Non Formal Education through Community Radio**

Development of civilization is closely related to learning and education system obtained in communities and societies. Learning is a continuous process it takes place everywhere and at all times. Learning is the process it takes place everywhere and at all times. Learning is the process by which

own knowledge is reconstituted by the internalization of individual, groups and communities. It can be better described by UNESCO's four pillars of education:

- Learning to know** : Creating knowledge base.
- Learning to do** : developing skills, competencies and capabilities.
- Learning to live together:** developing attitudes, values and approaches essential for living, working, creating, managing, caring and sharing.
- Learning to-be** : continuously evolving, elevating individuals to higher levels of achievements

In today's fast moving global competitive scenario, we are compelled to develop a knowledge base around us **Dr. A. P .J. Abdul Kalam**, former President of India in his inspiring book wings of Fire has written, ***"If you want to leave your footprints on sands of time don't drag your feet"***. Adult literacy empowers the citizens with education and facilities higher order transformation of society. This is ICT era. Information Communication Technologies play a very important role in empowering the adults through giving them education, Information and knowledge on the various aspects. Community radio is one of the powerful participatory medium of communication. Community radio is also referred as rural radio, cooperative radio, participatory radio, free radio, alternative radio, popular radio, educational radio, community FM, association radio and bush radio in different parts of the world. The basic characteristic of Community Radio is that it is owned by the community, to serve the needs of the people. Most significantly, it is participatory in nature. People actively take part in formulating the station's policy, strategy and programme content. Community radio has been used in various fields for development in many countries of the world like health, nutrition, sanitation, women empowerment and also agriculture. Various previous researches have confirmed that community radio empower the adults through giving them platform to participate in the programmes planning, implementation and broadcasting stage. It is truly participatory medium of communication.

### Community Radio

Community radio is a type of radio service that caters to the interests of a certain area, broadcasting content that is popular to a local audience but

which may often be overlooked by commercial or mass-media broadcasters. (UNESCO 2002)

Community radio is an effective tool in protecting and promoting local culture. It is the best way to meet the needs of communication at local level because it helps to create a place where various people in the community including seniors, youths, mothers with small children, students, religious leaders, people with disabilities meet. - Ullah and Chowdhury

The community radio is a form of local radio which defines itself as an autonomous entity and relies on the community for its survival without any commercial aims or objects. It is a medium that gives voice to the voiceless, that serves as the mouthpiece of the marginalised and is at the heart of communication and democratic processes within societies. - Lewis (2007)

So Community radio is a local radio and participatory in nature, owned and run by the community, to serve the needs of the people. Community radio aims to change social conditions and improve the quality of cultural life through meaningful and relevant programme. People actively take part in formulating the station's policy, strategy and programme content.

### **Concept of Community radio**

Community radio is confined to a small geographical area. It depends on low power transmission covering not more than 20-30 km. radius. It serves a community which uses common resources for livelihood, has common development issues and concerns, which are relatively localized, nevertheless connected to national and regional development goals.

### **Strengths**

As a medium for non-formal education, local and community radio is:

**Attractive:** most people enjoy listening to radio, particularly if it is well produced and presented. It's generally regarded as a personal, friendly and reliable medium

**Available:** local and community radio services are common throughout the world. Where they are not available, it is relatively easy and not prohibitively expensive to set them up

**Accessible:** most people, even in the poorest rural areas, have access to radio receivers and a source of power. Since educational radio relies mainly on the spoken word, it can speak to people directly and in their own language - even to those without the benefit of literacy

**Affordable:** educational radio programmes are relatively cheap to produce and to transmit. The costs are dramatically less than those for television or video, and usually lower than print or face-to-face teaching and learning costs.

Local radio stations usually have close ties with the local community; at their best, they are a well-informed, trusted and valued part of the local social structure. They can ask their listeners to tell them what they want and need in terms of non-formal education and training, and can help articulate and promote these views locally. Local radio stations also often have good access to organizations and individuals with the knowledge, skills and experience to respond effectively to local needs. They can enter into partnerships to plan, design and develop non-formal educational projects, and to implement and evaluate them. Local radio stations usually have close ties with the local community; at their best, they are a well-informed, trusted and valued part of the local social structure. They can ask their listeners to tell them what they want and need in terms of non-formal education and training, and can help articulate and promote these views locally. Local radio stations also often have good access to organizations and individuals with the knowledge, skills and experience to respond effectively to local needs. They can enter into partnerships to plan, design and develop non-formal educational projects, and to implement and evaluate them.

In partnership with others, local and community radio producers can present information and instruction in these ways:

- ◆ *Radio talks* can present information and ideas in a carefully structured way
- ◆ *Interviews* allow the lively and spontaneous communication of ideas and opinions from individuals with relevant experience and expertise
- ◆ *Panel discussions* offer opportunities to explore different viewpoints on subjects about which there are legitimate differences of opinion
- ◆ *Documentaries and features* can take listeners to places and situations they may not otherwise experience

- ◆ *Radio drama*, scripted or improvised, can explore culturally sensitive issues in an entertaining, involving and challenging way
- ◆ *Music and song* can convey educational messages memorably and attractively
- ◆ *Magazine programmes* can combine all of these approaches to examine a series of topics linked by a common educational theme.

Using these techniques, radio can provide local news and up-to-date information; it can motivate non-formal education students, and offer tutorial support and resource material to stimulate reflection, discussion and practical learning activities. If necessary it can provide direct teaching and instruction, using the best locally available educational talent.

Local radio can also involve local people in its programming, providing a platform for local ideas and opinions and responding quickly and effectively to listener comments, questions and suggestions - where necessary, even calling local authorities and officials to account through regular "feedback" programmes.

Despite its old-fashioned, low-tech feel, local and community radio has a good deal to offer in the field of non-formal education. However, it's important that you are aware of its limitations and how to compensate for them if you're planning to use radio for non-formal education at the community level.

### Setting-up a Community Radio Programme

The specifics of each project depend on the type of project you are involved in, and on your own local circumstances; there's no magic formula for success, but any community radio programme should have the following general characteristics:

**Skills for effectiveness:** effective, radio-led non-formal education needs people skilled in both radio production and in education. As these are rarely found in one organisation, it makes sense to work in partnership - sharing ideas, expertise and costs.

**Fruitful partnerships:** if suitable organizations are unavailable or not interested, radio stations can involve local educators. Educational organizations can also consider setting up their own local educational radio

station, but remember - running a radio station needs long-term commitment and ongoing management.

**Collaborative planning:** partner organizations and the radio station should work closely together, especially at the planning stage when defining the target audience, deciding the aims and objectives of the project and its general approach.

**Developing programmes:** radio stations should keep in constant touch with partner organizations during the actual process of designing, developing and producing the radio programmes. Partner organizations should especially be consulted on the content and educational structure of the programme or series.

**Developing support materials:** the non-formal education partner organizations should focus on preparing and producing print support materials (booklets, handouts, posters), to add a visual dimension to the radio programmes.

**Listening groups:** partner organizations or the learners themselves can use existing local associations or social clubs to set up a network of listening groups. This offers participants an opportunity to discuss the programmes, apply what they are learning to their own situation, and take part in group-based learning activities and skills development. Partner organizations can also recruit and train local tutors or facilitators.

**Using the network:** if radio transmission times are poor, it's easier to provide cassettes to an organized network of listening groups. Groups also make it easier to distribute printed materials, and to monitor and evaluate the project's progress. Perhaps most importantly, groups are also a focus for social action and a means of social change in the local community.

**Promotion, publicity and feedback:** local radio stations can promote and publicize non-formal education projects. Once the project is underway, stations can offer regular feedback programmes in response to listener comments and questions. They can also report on the activities and achievements of individual groups in local news, magazine and feature programmes.

**Potentialities of community radio** It is expected that the next leap of ICT will be in agriculture sector, together with traditional inputs & interventions farmers:

Radio plays a vital role in passing on information to farming community as quickly as possible. Among various modes of radio broadcasting, Community Radio (CR) is a powerful medium for education and development. CR is 'characterized as a mouthpiece for socially, economically, politically and culturally marginalized people & as a tool for development of society improved' input for agriculture, education and would encourage members of the community to associate together to design, produce and air programmes'.

The experience of a number of developing countries in using community radio for such purposes has clearly demonstrated its tremendous potential. All India Radio (AIR) has been playing a very useful role for decades in providing relevant information to people in the remotest parts.

Even today, radio is the primary source of agricultural information for the farming community of rural India. However, this has to be supplemented by a strong community radio movement to ensure greater involvement of local communities in the development process.

In December 2002, the Government of India announced a policy for granting community radio licenses to well establish educational institutions.

### **Examples of Community Radio Programmes**

Radio and audiocassettes, supported by print materials and study groups with trained tutors or facilitators, have been used traditionally in agriculture, health education and language instruction:

Radio Farm Forums were started in Canada in the 1940s. The idea was taken up in Ghana and India in the 1950s and continued into the '60s.

In the mid-1980s, the Co-operative College in Lusaka - in collaboration with the Zambia Broadcasting Corporation - produced two series of dramatized programmes, with accompanying booklets and a network of study groups, to promote and support the operation of co-operatives.

BBC Radio has been providing courses in major European languages for more than 30 years, with accompanying books and opportunities to join classes offered by local education authorities.

In the early 1990s, the "Let's Speak English" project in Namibia produced a series of 32 radio programmes, with two linked textbooks and school-based listening groups, to help 8,000 primary school teachers improve their spoken English.

These are not the only areas in which radio, and more recently audiocassettes, have been used. In Pakistan, the FEPR project (Functional Education Project for Rural Areas) used the study group approach - with accompanying audiocassettes, flip-charts and illustrated handouts - to teach vegetable growing, animal husbandry and basic electrical wiring, among other things.

In western Tanzania, the HESAWA project (Health through Sanitation and Water) used audio drama, flip-charts and illustrated booklets to encourage 200 village-based groups to improve the quality of their water supply by digging rock wells, and to improve local sanitation by adopting a new type of pit latrine. Similar methods were used by ABEP (the Adult Basic Education Project) at Fort Hare University in the Eastern Cape of South Africa - but this time, to teach poultry keeping and first aid.

### **Community Radio and Distance learning**

A new concept of education has come up which is known as distance learning. The distance education focuses on workers who have little or no access to any other form of continuing education. The learning is for the disadvantaged in the first place, those who are looking for second chance in education. Therefore, it is a boon for farmers or rural youth who get less or no opportunities to go to zonal schools. Moreover, it makes possible for them to learn while they continue to earn or when they work in fields. They do not need to be removed from their productive activities while they study. One opportunity in distance learning is that the learners can choose subjects of their own choice which may be relevant to their routine work. The approaches of distance learning can be effective in changing people's attitude/behavior and in motivating rural communities to undertake action leading to adoption of improved farm techniques and home management practices, which in turn lead to improvement of their socio-economic status.

Community Radio is being used by the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) in promoting education among rural youths. The IGNOU is working on a framework to utilize as a training medium. In one of the UNESCO supported projects IGNOU is making use of the Distance Education methodology in imparting education to rural youth.

### **Major Educational Radio Projects in India**

School Broadcast Project: This project was commissioned in 1937 and the target group was School students. This programme started from Delhi, Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. In the beginning the school programme were not strictly governed by the curriculum. With the passages of time and acquisitions of more experience, the AIR tried to make its radio broadcasts more curriculum oriented, but in absence of common syllabi and time tables in schools, even within the same state, it could not succeed in it's aim.

Adult Education and Community development project (Radio Forum): Commenced in 1956, the Villagers of 144 villages in the vicinity of Poona (in Maharastra state), were the main beneficiaries of this project. This was agriculture-based project, which was originally designed and tried out in Canada. With the help of UNESCO, it was tried in 144 villages of Poona and was named as "Radio forums Project" (defined as a listening cum-discussion-cum-action group). The members of the forum could listen thirty-minute radio programme on some agricultural or Community - development programme, then discuss and decide regarding it's adoption in their own village. This project was a great success. Many action programmes were planned and put into practice.

Farm and Home Broadcast Project: This project was commenced in 1966 and again targeted at Farmers and villagers. These broadcasts were designed to provide information and advice on agricultural and allied topics. The aim was to educate the farmers and provide them assistance in adopting innovative practices in their fields as per the local relevance. The experts also conducted occasional farm radio schools, which proved to be very effective.

University broadcast project: This project for University students was initiated in 1965, with an aim to expand higher education as widely as possible among the different strata of society. The Programme consisted of two types- 'General' & 'enrichment'. The general programmes included topics of public

interest and enrichment programmes supported correspondence education offered by universities in their respective jurisdictions. School of Correspondence studies, University of Delhi and the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad is well known for preparation and broadcast of their programmes through AIR.

Language Learning Programme: The project, popularly known as 'Radio Pilot project' was started in 1979-80 jointly by AIR and Department of Education Government of Rajasthan, with an aim to teach Hindi to School going children as first language in 500 primary schools of Jaipur & Ajmer districts on experimental basis. The project was found useful in improving the vocabulary of children. With its success, similar project was repeated in Hoshangabad district of Madhya Pradesh with some modifications but had limited success.

IGNOU-AIR: Broadcast in collaboration with IGNOU, AIR stations of Mumbai, Hyderabad and Shillong started radio broadcasts of IGNOU Programmes from January 1992. Main target group of this project were students of Open / Conventional Universities. Although Shillong started this but discontinued later on. Therefore presently it is being broadcast from AIR Mumbai (Every Thursday and Saturday from 7:15AM-7:45AM) and AIR Hyderabad (Every Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday from 6:00 AM - 6:30 AM) only. This programme is still popular in the respective region.

IGNOU-AIR Interactive radio Counselling (IRC): Started in 1998 for students of Open / Conventional Universities, this project is also very successful. In order to bridge the gap between Institutions and learners by instantly responding to their queries and also to provide Academic Counselling in subject area, IGNOU in collaboration with AIR Bhopal started this project in May 1998 as an experimental programme for one year (Sharma, 2002a). With the success of the experiment, it was extended to 8 other AIR stations (Lucknow, Patna, Jaipur, Shimla, Rohtak, Jalandhra, Delhi and Jammu). Presently Interactive radio counseling is being provided on every Sunday for one hour (4:00 PM - 5:00 PM) from 186 radio stations of All India radio. This includes two Sundays on the National hook-up. Toll-free telephone facility is available from 80 cities (effective from February 2001) enabling the learners to interact with experts and seek clarification, without paying for their telephone calls. The first and third Sundays of the month, AIR stations of Delhi (Hindi) and Kolkata (in English) broadcast from national hook-up, which 186 radio stations relay either of them. The 2nd and 4th Sunday are slotted for

programmes of various regional centers of IGNOU and State Open universities respectively. The slot of 5th Sunday (if any) has also been given to region-based programmes of IGNOU. This programme is gaining popularity day by day.

Gyan Vani (Educational FM radio Channel of India): This project is recently launched (in year 2001) and again the target group is students of Open / Conventional Universities. Gyan Vani (Gyan = Knowledge, Vani = aerial broadcasting) is Educational FM radio Channel of India, a unique decentralized concept of extending mass media for education and empowerment, suited to the educational needs of the local Community. It is operating presently through Allahabad, Bangalore and, Coimbatore FM stations of India on test transmission mode. The network is slotted to expand to a total of 40 stations by June-2002. Gyan Vani stations will operate as media cooperatives, with day-to-day programmes contributed by different Educational Institutions, NGO's and national level institutions like IGNOU, NCERT, UGC, IIT, DEC etc. Each station will have range of about 60-KM radius, covering the entire city /town plus the surrounding environs with extensive access. It serves as ideal medium addressing the local educational developmental and socio cultural needs (IGNOU, 2001).

Gyan Vani is not only for the conventional educational system but also a main tool in making available the dream of education for all come true. Gyan Vani's main intention is to take education to the doorsteps of the people. Gyan Vani, in addition to giving the hardcore education will also deal with awareness programmes including the ones for Panchayati Raj Functionaries, Women Empowerment, Consumer Rights, Human Rights, the Rights of the Child, Health Education, Science Education, Continuing Education, Extension Education, Vocational Education, Teacher Education, Non-formal Education, Adult Education, Education for the handicapped, Education for the down trodden, education for the tribal and so on. Gyan Vani is available through commercial FM radio set.

Radio-Vision (Multimedia through Digital radio): Pioneered by the BBC, the technique of radio -vision allows the subject matter to be presented through two channels, the audio and the visual. The visuals are presented in the form of still filmstrips, charts, slides, models, etc, while the explanation is given through recorded narration. Educational institutions use this as a substitute for educational television. radio-vision has its own advantages:

- 1) It is economical
- 2) It can cater to different categories of learners
- 3) It is easy to produce such programmes at the institutional level or at the learning centers
- 4) It provides visual support to the concept that is taught.

A small experiment in the use of radio -vision technique was carried out by The National Council of Education Training and Research, India in 1975-76 using it as one of the components of the multi-media package for in service teacher training designed and operated during SITE. A series of charts and picture cards were presented to about 24,000 participating teachers 2400 centres alongwith verbal explanation provided through specially prepared radio broadcasts. The results were found to be encouraging. (IGNOU, 2000) A pilot project was carried out in IGNOU in 2001 under UNESCO support for testing the feasibility of using the new digital technology for cost effective transmission of audio-visual courseware. The project proved that FM radio transmitters and Satellite radio transponders can be used successfully to transmit, downlink and download multimedia courseware, in this case using the Asia Star of World Space.

**Radio -text:** radio has been used along with textual data transfer via computer networks simultaneously to create a 'radio -text' environment. The teaching end is normally a FM radio station having data broadcast facility through a computer network. The main points of the radio broadcast are sent through textual mode to the receiving end via a computer network. The learning end has radio listening facility as well as a computer screen to receive the textual data. Since both audio and text are broadcast simultaneously, the learner at the receiving end gets high quality and low cost teaching. An experiment on the use of radio -text at Yashwant Rao Chavan Maharashtra Open University, Nasik, India resulted in the satisfaction of more than 80 percent the learners. It also used for peer group discussion at the receiving end after the broadcast, which indicates radio text could be used for varieties of objectives.

**Programme formats:** There are so many issues related to agriculture and they will vary from region to region. All these issues can be discussed through different types of formats that are outlined below.

**Drama:** It combines education and entertainment on a specific topic for example a case study of new way to cultivate crop. The duration of the programme can be fifteen to twenty minutes.

**Features:** They are short programmes which approach everyday themes like health or nutrition, pest control or fertilization, in a creative and artistic way. The duration of the programme could be five to ten minutes.

**Interviews:** These are community radio programmes that include a dialogue between a host and a guest expert. The expert could be anybody; a local farmer with specialized knowledge of traditional practices, or an agriculture scientist from the university.

**Panels and discussions:** These are perhaps the most interesting of all the community radio programmes, and involve demonstrating different perspectives on an issue or question. For example organic versus inorganic farming, or traditional versus modern agricultural practices.

**Documentary:** A documentary is an issue based programme that may or may not involve testimonies of people on a particular issue of public interest. It introduces the listener to an issue that is well researched and analyzed before being broadcast.

**Editorial:** An editorial is a broadcast on community radio that presents the opinion of the owner, manager, or the editorial team, and this gives an opportunity to highlight and analyse issues of a crucial import.

**Vox Populi:** This is the 'Voice of people', an expression of popular opinion. It is different from the editorial, in the sense that the recording is done outdoors.

### **Impact of Community Radio services according to Field Researches**

**Myers (2008)** reported that radio is still the dominant mass medium in Africa with the widest geographical reach and the highest audiences compared with television (TV), newspapers, and other ICTs. The author states that radio seems to have proven itself as a developmental tool, particularly with the rise of community and local radios, which have facilitated a far more participatory and horizontal type of communication. Radio can also help bridge the digital divide by providing a powerful tool for information dissemination and access, especially for hard-to-reach rural audiences.

**Shively(2009)** reported that for a highly populated and predominantly rural country like India the edutainment of the masses is essential. This can be

achieved by utilizing the concept of a Community Radio more effectively. Community radio tells the story of the people and helps communities striving to speak out and be heard. Community radio has provided means of empowerment to the community. It has given children the chance to speak confidently

**Bhatnagar (2008)** reported that Government of India announced its Community Radio Policy in December 2002, which was later liberalized in 2006. Community radio gives the people a medium to express themselves, a platform to air their concerns, to be heard, considered and acted upon, thus increasing their dignity and self confidence. People generally come forward to gain skills, to be part of the community group, to share their interest in music, anchoring or to increase their social circle. A carefully planned orientation process is very important to map the potential of individuals and to filter out committed volunteers to form the core team.

**Govindaraju and Kalavathy (2002)** reported that Most of the respondents, according to the study, opinionated that Holy Cross community radio initiative has fostered local participation and awareness generation. 44 per cent of them accepted that the Community radio programmes created awareness on epidemics and child health care in their area, 22 per cent of them agreed that the Community radio programmes created awareness on AIDS/Cancer.

### Limitations

Broadly, the limitations of local and community radio for non-formal education are:

**Technical** - related to the effective transmission and reception of radio signals within a local community

**Institutional** - related to the nature and purposes of radio stations within their local communities

**Educational** - related to radio as a medium for non-formal education

**Economical** - related to the training, equipment, start-up and ongoing or associated costs of radio stations, programming and staff.

Technically, the successful use of local radio for non-formal education depends on a clearly audible radio signal being able to reach all parts of the community that the radio station serves. Listeners within the community also need suitable radio receivers and adequate sources of power to receive the signal clearly. They must know where to find the signal on the radio dial and how to tune in the radio set to get a clear signal.

Depending on the sitting and strength of the transmitter in relation to the local topography and population distribution, a clear signal may not reach all parts of the local community. A community situated in a hilly region or dispersed over a very wide area, for example, may have difficulty receiving radio transmissions.

Similarly, not all members of the target audience for a non-formal education project may have access to suitable radio receivers or sources of power. Their radio sets may be of poor quality; the electricity supply may be unreliable, or there may be a shortage of good quality battery cells. Some members of the potential audience may have difficulty tuning in to the correct frequency.

There may also be institutional issues that limit the effectiveness of local radio for non-formal education. Local radio stations - particularly if they are operating on a commercial basis - may give a low priority to educational broadcasting. They may see themselves as competing for audiences with their commercial rivals, and may feel that educational programmes do not fit the station's image or draw a sufficient audience to attract advertising revenue.

Such stations may be unwilling to broadcast educational materials, or may want to charge high commercial rates that would add substantially to costs. They might agree to broadcast the programmes as part of their public service obligation, but may be reluctant to give the programmes good transmission slots. The educational programmes may only be broadcast very late in the evening or early in the morning - hours that many (if not most) of the target audience would find unsuitable. The stations may also lack the human and material resources to produce high quality educational programmes.

Educationally, radio's exclusive reliance on sound (mainly the human voice) means it can't communicate visual images except in the imagination

of the listener, which is not always adequate for educational purposes. Using radio on its own is very difficult when dealing with subjects that have a strong visual component, such as subject matter involving spatial relationships (carpentry), complex dynamic processes (machine operation) and the demonstration of practical skills (cooking).

Radio gives students very little control over when and how they are going to learn. Radio programmes are usually broadcast at fixed times, which as we suggested earlier might not always be convenient to listeners. Even if the programmes are repeated, finding a convenient time will not always be possible. Programmes can be recorded onto audiocassette for later use, but not all students will have access to this facility.

More importantly, students can't control the pace of the medium. They can't speed it up when the material is familiar, or slow it down when it's more difficult. Its producers determine the pace of the programme, and it's difficult to get it right for all listeners. Students can't stop the programme when they want to think about what they've just heard, or when they want to ask a question or make a comment. Radio is a one-way medium. At best, it offers only limited opportunities for interaction; at worst, it can lead to passivity on the listener's part.

Finally, using radio for non-formal education requires particular focus and attention skills from its listeners. Since the advent of television, radio has increasingly been reduced to a background medium that provides an accompaniment to other activities; it may be heard, but is not necessarily listened to. Many people, especially those who have grown up with "music radio," may find it difficult to concentrate for any length of time on programmes that rely mainly on the spoken word - the basic currency of most non-formal education broadcasting.

### **Overcoming the Limitations**

On the technical side, new advances in solar and wind-up power are helping overcome issues such as unreliable electricity supply, or the limited availability and expense of conventional batteries needed to power radio transmitters and receivers. But radio also has a few educational limitations. How can we maximize its educational strengths and minimize its weaknesses?

At one level, the answers are relatively simple and straightforward:

If radio lacks a visual dimension, it needs to be accompanied by printed visual support materials

If transmission times are inconvenient, listeners should be encouraged and enabled to record them off the air and listen to the cassettes when it suits them

If radio offers too little interaction, the programmes should be regarded primarily as stimulus material. Listeners should be encouraged to form discussion groups around the programmes, to listen, discuss, decide, and act

If listeners lack the skills to use radio effectively, programmes should be designed to develop those skills.

In the real world of non-formal education, the answers are rather more difficult and complicated. We begin to encounter some technical and institutional issues:

What form should the visual support material take - booklets, handouts, charts or posters? Who will produce them? How will they be distributed? What will it cost?

Can the project obtain reasonable transmission times? If not, will the listeners be able to record them off the air? Will cassettes need to be produced and distributed centrally, by whom and at what cost?

Who will organize the listening groups? Will the learners be willing and able to attend them? Will they need tutors or facilitators? How will tutors or groups be recruited, trained, supported and supervised?

Who will plan, design, produce and present the programmes? How many will there be? How often will they be broadcast? What form will they take?

Other considerations are:

Will outside funding be required? Where will it come from?

What would be a reasonable timeframe for planning, preparing and implementing the project?

How will the project be monitored and evaluated? Should you be thinking about preparing a follow-up?

## Conclusion

There are, of course, some areas of non-formal education that are more difficult for the radio format than others. Radio has only a limited role to play in the teaching of basic literacy, although it was used in the Ghana Functional Literacy Project (1990s) to motivate and to raise literacy awareness in adult learners.

Similarly, it's difficult to teach complex technical and vocational skills using radio. But even here, with carefully integrated print materials, adequate tutorial support and opportunities for hands-on experience, radio and audiocassettes may have a role to play. The initial and ongoing costs of a radio station, and of acquiring an adequate and reliable power supply for it, remain issues. But recent advances in solar and wind-up technology, as well as the increasing affordability and availability of small but far-ranging radio transmitting stations, have been helpful here. These advances have been used by The Commonwealth of Learning's suitcase radio project in portable, solar or battery-powered radio stations at locations throughout Africa.

The main limitations to any approach are the number of local and community radio stations willing and able to involve themselves in education, the willingness of educational organizations to explore the technology, and the availability of funding and other resources. Otherwise, the opportunities to use community radio for non-formal education can only be limited by the educator's imagination.

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# Understanding and Applying Logic Models in Programme Evaluation

H. M. Kasinath

## Introduction

The logic model serves as a useful advance organizer when evaluators and others are designing evaluation studies and performance measurement systems. It helps them to focus on the important elements of the Programme and to identify what evaluation questions should be asked and why and what measures of performance are key. The logic model also helps evaluators frame evaluation reports so that findings from the evaluation and measurement can tell a performance "story" and results can be linked to Programme elements and assumptions about them. Evaluators can use this tool when asked to evaluate a Programme during its design phase. The process of developing a logic model helps build shared understanding and expectations among Programme staff and other participants. *A Programme can be described as an intentional transformation of specific resources (inputs) into certain activities (processes) to produce desired outcomes (results) within a specific context.*

Logic modeling is a tool that can be used to unpack this hypothesis in order to understand the underlying assumptions and create strategies to test the hypothesis. Logic modeling can be a useful tool for performing an evaluability assessment. Finally, using the logic model in preparing and presenting the evaluation findings and recommendations can increase the probability that the evaluation results will be used.

## Meaning of Logic Model

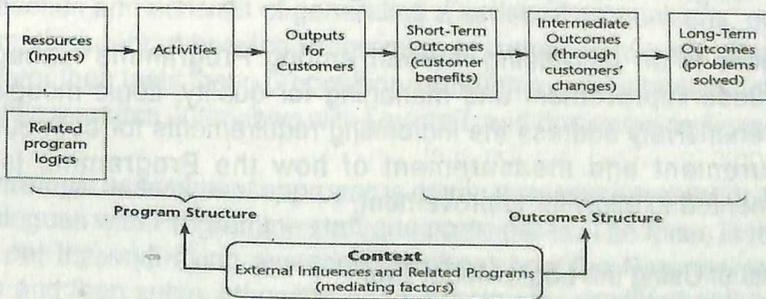
A logic model is a plausible and sensible model of how a Programme will work under certain environmental conditions to solve identified problems (Bickman, 1987). The elements of the logic model are resources, activities,

outputs, short term outcomes, intermediate outcomes, and long -term outcomes (Wholey, 1987). Some have added the customers reached to the logic model, as well as the relevant external contextual (antecedent and mediating) influences (McLaughlin and Jordan, 1999).

A basic logic model is shown in Figure-1. It has three basic parts: *Programme structure*, *outcomes structure*, and *context*. These are consistent with the desirable dimensions of performance measurement and evaluation. The necessary information for explanation comes from performance measurement in the Programme and outcomes structure, and context. Here are descriptions of the elements of the logic model:

- **Resources:** human and financial resources as well as other inputs required to support the Programme, such as partnerships. Information on the type and level of the problem addressed by the Programme is an essential resource for the Programme.
- **Activities:** the essential action steps necessary to produce Programme outputs.
- **Outputs:** the products, goods, and services provided to the Programmemes direct customers or Programme participants.

**Figure-1: Basic logic model**



- **Outcomes:** Changes or benefits to people, organizations, or other Programme targets that are expected to result from their being exposed to activities and outputs. Programmes typically have multiple, sequential outcomes, sometimes collectively called the Programme's outcome structure. *First*, there are short - term

outcomes, the changes or benefits most closely associated with, or "caused" by, the Programme's outputs. *Second* are the intermediate outcomes, which are expected to result from the short - term outcomes. Long- term outcomes or Programme impacts are expected to follow from the benefits accrued through the intermediate outcomes.

- *Key contextual factors* external to the Programme and not under its control may influence its success either positively or negatively and are critical features of the logic model. Two types of context influence the design and delivery of the Programme: antecedent factors and mediating factors (Harrell and others, 1996). *Antecedent factors* are those the Programme starts out with, such as client characteristics, geographical variables, and economic factors. *Mediating factors* are the influences that emerge as the Programme unfolds, such as changes in staff, new policies, a downturn or uptick in the economy, and new competing or complementary Programmes.

## The Utility of Logic Models

Programme managers and evaluators have not been in the habit of using clear, logically consistent methods to make explicit their understandings about Programmes and how those Programmes work to achieve their outcomes given their specific operating contexts.

There is an increasing interest among Programme managers in continuous improvement and managing for quality. Logic models more comprehensively address the increasing requirements for both outcomes measurement and measurement of how the Programme is being implemented to allow for improvement.

### Benefits of Using the Logic Model Tool

- It points to evaluation issues and a balanced set of key performance measurement points, thus improving data collection and usefulness and helping managers and staff to meet performance reporting requirements.
- It helps with Programme design or improvement by identifying Programme activities that are critical to goal attainment, are

redundant, or have inconsistent or implausible linkages to Programme goals.

- It communicates the place of a Programme in the organization or problem hierarchy, particularly if there are shared logic charts at various management levels.
- It builds a common understanding of the Programme and expectations for resources, customers reached, and results, and thus is good for sharing ideas, identifying assumptions, team building, and communication.

## Theory - Driven Evaluation

Assumptions about resources and activities and how these are expected to lead to intended outcomes are often referred to as Programme theory. A logic model is a useful tool for describing Programme theory. The hypothesis, often implicit, is that if the right resources are transformed into the right activities for the right people, then these are expected to lead to the results the Programme was designed to achieve.

Leeuw (2003) provides an excellent review of three approaches to restructuring Programme theories after the Programme has been implemented:

- *The policy-scientific approach* is more empirical than the other approaches and consists of generating a series of propositions, or assumptions, about how the Programme is supposed to work. The evaluator then tests these propositions through a review of relevant scientific research, interviews with key staff, and document reviews.
  - *The strategic assessment approach* is driven through conversations or dialogues with Programme staff and participants. The focus is to draw out the underlying assumptions about how the Programme works and then subject these to open debate among stakeholders and staff.
  - *The elicitation approach* aims at recovering the mental models or cognitive maps that Programme staff hold about their Programme. The various maps are then compared, contrasted, and assessed for their validity through open dialogue and reviews of existing related research.
-

All three approaches make the Programme transparent, allowing the evaluator and others to see how it is thought to be working from multiple perspectives. Logic modeling is a tool that can effectively be used to display the assumption pathways. The arrows connecting the elements (Figure-1) represent the theory or assumptions.

### Building the Logic Model

A logic model is constructed in five stages:

- Stage 1:** Collecting the relevant information
- Stage 2:** Clearly defining the problem the Programme will solve and its context
- Stage 3:** Defining the elements of the model in a table
- Stage 4:** Drawing the model
- Stage 5:** Verifying the model with stakeholders

### *Tips to Consider Before Starting*

- Think of developing a logic model as a process. In general it is important that Programme managers and staff be involved in developing their logic model. They should be able to “do it themselves” after having had training in the logic modeling technique.
- Do not try to do the job alone. It is important to involve a workgroup with a full range of key stakeholders who are associated in some way with the implementation of the model and its results.
- Be careful with jargon. Because logic modeling is often a new way of thinking about the Programme, using familiar language helps others understand it. The format and terminology used in creating the logic model should be adapted to the Programme.
- View logic modeling as part of long-term cultural change. Do not shortcut the process. Make the model an iterative process, updating it as Programme and Programme context change.
- Avoid letting the logic modeling process become a time sink. Leave some elements unknown. Plan costs and a schedule that

can include downstream activities such as choosing performance measures or planning next steps.

### **Stage 1: Collecting the Relevant Information**

Building the logic model for a Programme should be a team effort in most cases. If the evaluation function is external to the Programme, the evaluator, in collaboration with the Programme manager and staff, should carry out the process of creating the model. If the Programme manager does the work alone, there is a great risk that others may leave out or incorrectly represent essential parts. It is often valuable to revisit the underlying assumptions of prevailing practice to explain why a Programme might be working well or might need improvements.

#### *Tips on Collecting Relevant Information to Build a Logic Model*

- Interview people associated with the Programme, starting with those closely associated with its design and implementation and then moving to others either affected by the Programme or having a stake in its results.
- Analyze documents with a small group, perhaps assisted by an independent facilitator, especially for complex, poorly defined of the overall problem and any ancillary problems, of who is involved, and of
- Determine whether the Programme can be modified to address or take advantage of the contextual factors identified.
- Identify possible performance partnerships with other programmes or organizations whose results affect those of the Programme.
- If necessary reflect legislative language, perhaps by adding an additional layer of outcomes.

### **Stage 3: Defining the Elements of the Logic Model**

The next step in building a logic model requires the workgroup to categorize the information collected into "bins," or columns in a table. The manager and other workgroup members review the information and tag each element as a resource, activity, output, short-term outcome, intermediate outcome, long-term outcome, or external factor.

Then the group organizes the elements in the table into chains of activities, outputs, and outcomes.

#### *Tips on Defining the Elements of the Logic Model in a Table*

- As you are categorizing elements of the logic model, define the target audiences and expected effects of the Programme for each.
- Put the outcomes into a sequence.
- Map both forward and backward to develop and check logic and assumptions. Ask questions such as, How do [did] we make this happen? Why do [did] we do this? If this, then that? If that, then what?
- Check up, down, and across for associations with other programmes and partners.
- Combine and summarize Programme elements, limiting the number of activity groups to no more than five to seven. These groupings are the Programme strategies that are expected to lead to results.
- Avoid giving the impression that Programme results occur in a linear process, even though they appear linear in the table format. Showing multiple rows feeding into one outcome and coloring rows to indicate the timing of events are possible ways to do this.

#### **Stage 4: Drawing the Logic Model**

The logic model captures the logical flow and linkages that exist in any performance story. Using the Programme elements in the table, the logic model further organizes that information, enabling an audience to better understand and evaluate the hypothesized linkages. Whereas resources, activities, and outcomes are listed in separate columns in the table, they are specifically linked in the model, so that an audience can see exactly which activities lead to what intermediate outcomes and which intermediate outcomes lead to what longer-term outcomes, or impacts.

There are several ways to present a logic model, but usually it is set forth as a diagram with columns and rows of boxes containing abbreviated descriptions and causal linkages shown with connecting one-way arrows. We place Programme inputs or resources in the far left-hand column and the long-term outcomes and problem to be solved in the far right-hand

column. The boxes in the second column show the major Programme activities. In the subsequent columns the intended outputs and outcomes from each activity are shown, and these boxes may also list the intended customer for each output or outcome. Another common format displays the logic top to bottom rather than left to right, usually with resources and activities at the top and the goals at the bottom of the model.

The final product may be viewed as a network displaying the interconnections between the major elements of the programmes expected performance, from resources to solving an important problem. External factors that influence the success of the Programme may be entered into the model at the bottom, unless the Programme has sufficient information to predict the point at which they might occur. These external factors serve to record the assumptions that went into the development of the model. They are helpful for people not familiar with the Programme and

#### *Tips on Developing the Logic Model Diagram*

- Start with simple forms of the diagram, and then move to more complex diagrams.
- Be patient. Completed diagrams may look as though they were simple to create, but in reality it takes many drafts to successfully describe the essence of a Programme.
- Consider having more than one model. Multiple models can show different levels of detail, different groups of activities, different levels at which performance could be measured, different stakeholder views, and different theories.
- Limit the words in the diagram. Provide more detail in separate charts or a written narrative.
- Limit the number of arrows. Show only the most critical relationships and feedback loops.
- Include outputs to external customers only, collapsing internal outputs such as management plans to one activity group or a separate document.
- Leave organizational charts separate, but use the same activity descriptions in both the charts and diagrams.
- Avoid even the appearance that this logic model is set in stone by dating the model and including the current external influences on the same page. For evaluators and staff when using or revising the model. Remember that the logic model is simply a graphic

representation of the essential Programme elements and how they go together.

### **Stage 5: Verifying the Logic Model with Stakeholders**

As the logic model process unfolds, the workgroup responsible for producing the model should continuously evaluate it with respect to how the Programme works under what conditions to achieve its short - term, intermediate, and long - term aims. The verification process should engage the appropriate stakeholders in the review process. The workgroup will use the logic model diagram.

In addition to *why* and *how* questions, the four evaluation design questions be addressed in the final verification process:

- Is the level of detail sufficient to create understandings of the elements and their interrelationships?
- Is the Programme logic complete? That is, are all the key elements accounted for?
- Is the Programme logic theoretically sound? Do all the elements fit together logically? Are there other plausible pathways to achieving the Programme outcomes?
- Have all the key external contextual factors been identified and their potential influences described?

### **Use of Logic Modeling in Performance Measurement and Evaluation**

Having a logic model in place at the beginning of performance measurement and evaluation is important because it serves as an advance organizer or focusing mechanism for the measurement of key variables and for the evaluation of assumed causal relationships. Logic modeling enables the identification of useful performance measures and sets up a pattern for putting them together to test underlying assumptions. Cooksy, Gill, and Kelly (2001) show how logic modeling can be used to focus data collection, organize data for analysis, and guide the interpretation of findings. In the logical model, boxes are the steps that can simply be counted or monitored, and the lines connecting the boxes are the hypothesized linkages or causal relationships that require in depth study to determine and explain what happened. It is the testing of the linkages, the arrows in the logic chart that allows the evaluator to determine whether the Programme is working.

## Conclusion

This article describes the logic modeling process in enough detail that both evaluators and Programme managers and staff can use it to develop and tell the performance story for their Programme. The logic model describes the logical linkages among Programme resources, activities, outputs for customers reached, and short - term, intermediate, and long - term outcomes. Once this model of expected performance is produced, critical monitoring and evaluation areas can be identified. Because the logic model and the measurement plan have been developed with the Programme stakeholders, the story these tools tell should be a shared vision with a clear and shared expectation of success.

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# The Road to Literacy: A Reality Check

*Albert Abraham  
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## Introduction

Literacy is at the heart of basic education for all and of all human capabilities. It is a fundamental human right and the foundation for lifelong learning. Literacy and Education are indispensable to social and human development and thus to transform the lives of the people. For individuals, families, and societies alike, it is an instrument for empowering themselves, engaging meaningfully with the world and living authentically.

Though there have been massive drives and extensive efforts to eradicate illiteracy, the challenge continues to persist to the planners as well as administrators. Researches and interpretation of statistical data unveil that such long tread attempts have not been so successful to achieve the intended goals.

The United Nations estimates that some 775 million adults lack minimum literacy skills and two-thirds of them are women; 60.7 million children are out of school and many more attend irregularly or becoming drop outs. These findings assert that Literacy efforts up to now have proved inadequate. International agencies engaged in this task admit that 'Literacy for all' is still an unaccomplished goal and an ever moving target. The Indian scene continues to be the most vulnerable, in spite of high decibel claims by various stakeholders.

As usual, we observed International Literacy Day on 8<sup>th</sup> September. Unfortunately this time, the mainstream media didn't give a deserving importance to this event. Certain leading dailies carried only the paid advertisement of 'Saakshar Bharat'. Even the columnists too ignored this vital problem which keeps the growth prospects of the nation at stake. This discouraging attitude of the media and the intelligentsia unveils how this core issue is being casted out from the public discourse.

The year 2012 marks the end of United Nations Literacy Decade. Hence it's a perfect occasion to look back critically at the effectiveness of various literacy campaigns across the globe, especially in the context of India, where one - third of the total illiterates reside.

In this paper an attempt has been made to examine three issues: how the adult literacy have been viewed in its operation at various point of time, how the problem has continued to remained a stiff one and third what made things more difficult in its operationalization.

## Understanding Literacy

Conceptual perception of 'literacy' differs. The criteria and standards of literacy are becoming different worldwide and always in the process of evolving according to the growth of technology and expansion of human potentials. Though this factor remains disturbing in the back drop of ever increasing Knowledge/Information Divide, we follow certain common norms set by international and national agencies to measure the quantum of both literates and adult basic illiterates.

According to UNESCO literacy is not only the "ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute and use printed and written materials associated with varying contexts; but it also involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society." It means 'becoming literate' is not an easy affair.

But in India, there have been deliberate attempts to simplify literacy as the ability to 'to read, write and enumerate with understanding', though the recent 'Saakshar Bharat Mission' tries to comprehend it broadly. Even within this simple spectrum of understanding of literacy, millions of Indians (one fourth of India's total adult population) are still illiterate even after 65 years of independence!

## Literacy in India: Then and Now

In 2011, Literacy rate in India grew to 74.04% from 12% in 1947. Although this was greater than a six fold improvement, the level is well below the international average literacy rate of 84%. Now India has the largest illiterate population of any nation on earth. Despite government

programmes and other voluntary efforts, India's literacy rate increased lethargically. When we enter into globalized and free market economy in 1991- 92, half of our population was illiterate with a literacy rate of 52.21%! According to the 2011 census, the decade 2001 - 2011 witnessed 9.2% growth in literacy rate, but slower comparing to 12.63% growth of the previous decade. Considering 10% average literacy growth rate per decade, India may take another three decades to achieve universal literacy.

Now India has 1.24 billion people. Among them 67.2 Crore people are adults under the age group of 15 to 64. One fourth of the adult population, approximately 17 Crore fall into the category of illiterate! Among the population under 14 years, those who do not have access to schools or any kind of educational means constitute 4 to 6 Crore. Considering the illiterates above 64 years, the total number of illiterates would go high and approximations say it's around 25 Crore!

There are 45 countries achieved 99% literacy and Cuba tops the list. There are 126 nations crossed 84%, the International average. India ranks 137 leaving behind around 60 nations from the under developed sub Saharan Africa and South Asia. The Latin American and Central American countries which are infamous for political instability and insecurity and other eight African countries rank above India in the literacy index! The large population is not an excuse because China the largest populous state could achieve 95.9 % literacy.

Brazil the 5<sup>th</sup> most populous state after China, India, The United States and Indonesia has a population of 19.2 Crore. Believe India's illiterate population is larger than Brazil's population! Now it won't be difficult to understand why India stands 134<sup>th</sup> in the Human Development Index. That is what perhaps led UNDP to note 'India's literacy status provides solid reasons to worry'.

### **Literacy: A Catalyst for Human Development**

Why a literate society is essential to establish a 'nation state' in the fullest sense? What difference a literate individual or community can bring out? A sincere and objective introspection to these questions in the light of present day realities emphasizes the significance of literacy and education in the very human existence. "Why a certain section of the humankind is always prone to exploitation and another section is capable of exploiting the

fellow beings'? The so called 'Divide in Knowledge and Skills' of human beings throughout the history answers this simple but puzzling question.

Illiteracy makes all the social ideals – democracy, freedom, fraternity, justice and equality as well as other human values unattainable. Due to illiteracy, key areas of governance - policy making and administrative practices become exclusive, biased, corrupt and chaotic.

It's said 'ultimately power matters'. Politics is considered as a justifiable means to power in a democratic system. How an illiterate adult can have a fruitful, fair and objective democratic participation? Democracy enables the citizens to participate in governance by choosing their representatives. A citizen has to decide upon the choices. How an illiterate can make right choice while exercising his/her electoral right?

The scope of an illiterate to comprehend the political scene, to assess the realities and to weigh the choices before him/her is very limited. Hence he/she is forced either to follow the trend prevailing in the community or the dictates of the leaders of the community/tribe/religion/caste. Politicians as well as the leaders of the (exclusive) communities exploit this situation to 'buy or sell' votes in bulk. Thus 'vote bank politics' still prevails in our country, the largest democracy. Hence it's futile to search for any other reasons for this 'unjust practice prevailing in Indian democracy'.

We talk much about corruption and lack of transparency in governance. But such deliberations are the luxuries of the literates! Since one fourth of the adult population of the country is illiterate, how far governance can be transparent and free of corruption? The perpetrators of exploitation in the public service are shrewd and educated and belong to privileged sections of the society. It's not wise to think that they would be generous.

It's not a good idea to establish justice at the mercy/generosity of a few and impossible too. Justice has to be actualized through constructive and complimenting dialogue between the 'rights and duties of individuals' irrespective of the ruler and the ruled. For this a totally literate society – aware of one's own rights and duties - should be established. Otherwise all highly campaigned agitations against corruption will become unproductive.

Poverty is miserable in India. Simply increasing agricultural productivity cannot stop poverty. Consistent income, prudence in spending money, fair

savings and investment are key factors to eradicate poverty. Often illiterate workers (most of them belong to Below Poverty Line (BPL) and poorest of the poor) do not get proportionate wages and working conditions comparing to the literates. Employers exploit their ignorance.

A large, illiterate segment of our work force does not know how to spend and save money. So they blink financially while facing even short term unemployment or health hazards. Financial security should come before food security. Along with (instead of) giving food materials free or at highly subsidized price, government should enable the illiterate and the unprivileged sections to earn money and bread together through literacy programmes, adult education and skills development initiatives.

Government spends huge sums for Healthcare, Infrastructure and Employment. We may create big industries, huge buildings, stunning transit systems and other marvelous infrastructure. But, if the people of the country – the beneficiaries of these giant projects do not know how to use and maintain them with care, responsibility, hygiene, order and sensibility to the nature, what would be the use?

How a nation can dream of a healthy generation with more than 200 million illiterate people? At this juncture it's very clear that we can't ensure a healthy population and hygiene atmosphere unless the population is literate. The reasons of population explosion, persisting high rate of child mortality, spreading of dreadful diseases like AIDS, TB and Malaria and other health hazards are due to illiteracy to a certain extent.

Violations of human rights, inequalities, gender bias, female feticide and aggression against nature are occurred due to ignorance and misunderstandings. Knowledge removes the darkness of ignorance. It ignites a light within. Thus one becomes enlightened. Knowledge provides correct understanding of things and it compels the individuals to engage with others as well as the nature with dignity and respect.

Literacy is essential to make an atrocity free society. No one can instigate violence or breaking of law and order in a literate and enlightened society. Those who belong to such an illumined society always prefer to settle problems and differences in a civilized manner, without sacrificing social harmony and peace.

Any conflicting practices can be solved by exercising rights and responsibilities. A society driven by knowledge and wisdom promotes togetherness and sustainable development. 'Knowledge liberates'.

The beauty of human existence is that nobody is born literate, so all are equal by birth. Born with a *Tabula Rasa*, all have equal potentials (If you disagree, you are absolutely free to do so). But unfortunately, the unsupportive and even oppressive situations deviate or kill their possibilities to become whatever they are really capable of. Think of the lost potentials of human resource in our country in the last century due to lack of opportunities to be literate!

Exploitative social systems which are traditionally set, deeply rooted and inherited through generations for a long time make difficult blocks to the potentials of people coming from the unprivileged sections of the society. Often oppression, which is systemic and systematic, has been approved by the privileged segments of the society who enjoys the advantages of all social inequalities and injustices. Remember, the great personalities in history who could come out from their vulnerable social situations and contributed substantially to the society at large, ought to nothing other than their education (formal or non-formal) for their achievements.

### International Literacy Initiatives

There have been several initiatives taken in the international level by various agencies including the United Nations. The literacy campaigns got wider popularity after the Second World War at the wake of a new World order. UNESCO spearheaded the movement assisting the member nations in collaboration with NGOs and could achieve drastic results especially in Latin America. It would not be erroneous to say 'now illiteracy has become a regional problem pertaining to countries in South Asia and sub Saharan nations in Africa' where more than 80% of world's illiterate population inhabits.

The United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD, 2003-2012) is a UN initiative coordinated by UNESCO that provides both a platform and an impetus for achieving the EFA (Education For All) goals. The main target of EFA is increasing literacy rates by 50% by 2015 and thereby achieving the Millennium Development Goals on universal primary education, poverty reduction, and gender equality in education.

Resolution 56/116 adopted by the General Assembly entitled 'United Nations Literacy Decade: "Education For All (EFA)' evokes that literacy is crucial to the acquisition, by every child, youth and adult, of essential life skills that enable them to address the challenges they can face in life, and represents an essential step in basic education, which is an indispensable means for effective participation in the societies and economies of the twenty-first century." It also affirms that the realization of the right to education contributes to the eradication of poverty.

## Literacy Initiatives in India

### Historical Perspective

In fact literacy initiatives in India were started under British Rule along with the modernization of education. In the post independent era, various Literacy initiatives like National Adult Education Programme (NAEP - 1978) and Total Literacy Programmes (TLP) or National Literacy Mission (NLM - 1988) under the ambit of Five Year Plans as well as relatively recent *Saakshar Bharat* (2009) by the government could make a substantial number of individuals literate. Right to Education Act (RTE) 2009 that envisions free and compulsory education for all children in the age group of 6-14, would be a trigger to achieve universal literacy as early as possible.

On the recommendations of Indian Adult Education Association, a subcommittee under the chairmanship of Mohanlal Saxena, the then minister of Relief and Rehabilitation of Government of India was constituted on 15 January 1947 aiming to achieve 50% literacy among the age group 15-45 within a period of five years. In 1952, to tackle the problem of illiteracy, Social Education was integrated with the existing Community Development Programme and budgetary allocations were made within the first five year plan. Social education programme was implemented in the block levels and formed community centers, youth clubs, *mahila manadals*, adult literacy centers and organized training for *grama sahayaks*. But it's evaluated that most of the states failed to utilize the scope of this venture effectively.

From 1950s onwards, India received international support towards the development of literacy campaigns. During next two decades, various functional organizations and movements like *Gram Shiksha Mohim* (Village Education Campaign), Farmers Training and Functional Literacy Project (FTFLP), *Churcha Mandals*, *Mahila Mandals*, *Krishi Vigyan Kendras*,

*Shramik Vidyapeeth, Nehru Yuvak Kendra, Satellite Television Experiment (SITE) and Family and Child Welfare projects were set up.*

In 1978 Government of India initiated National Adult Education Programme (NAEP 1978-1988) with the objective of covering 100 million illiterates in the age group 15-35 and issued a policy statement on Adult Education. The conceptual framework of NAEP laid equal emphasis on literacy, functionality and social awareness and envisioned Adult Education as a means to bring about a fundamental change in the process of socio economic development by enabling the poor to be at its active center as proactive participants. The NAEP was mainly conceived as project pattern with adult education centers, functioning as grass root level units and each of them catering to 25-30 illiterate adults.

With national Literacy Mission (NLM) launched in 1988, promotion of literacy became an important national mission with the objective of imparting functional literacy under a huge set up extending through State Literacy Mission Authorities (SLMAs) and various subsidiaries.

The Prime Minister of India launched Saakshar Bharat, a centrally sponsored scheme of Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India was launched on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2009. It aims to further promote and strengthen Adult Education, specially of women, by extending educational options to those adults who having lost the opportunity of access to formal education and crossed the standard age for receiving such education, now feel a need for learning of any type, including, literacy, basic education (equivalency to formal education) and vocational education (skill development).

### The Achievements

Considering the literacy efforts prior to the NLM for forty years, India's literacy rate had grown to 52.21% in 1991. The Social Education programme covered 4 lakh Villages even in the 1950s. It was estimated that during the first Five Year Plan nearly 35 lakh illiterates became literate whereas during the second plan nearly 40 lakhs attained literacy.

The two decades of NLM efforts could bring forth further 22% growth taking the literacy rate to 74.04 in 2011. By the end of the Tenth Five Year Plan (March 2007), NLM and State Literacy Mission Authorities (SLMA) had

covered 597 districts under Total Literacy Campaign (TLC). As a cumulative outcome of these efforts, 127.45 million persons became literate, of which, 60% learners were females. *Jan Shikshan Sansthas* (JSSs) also have been providing vocational training to non literate, neo literate as well as school dropouts by identifying skills pertaining to the individuals as well as geographical and demographical considerations.

Now Saakshar Bharat Mission is fully operational with its adult education centers across 360 districts giving more emphasis in female literacy. Of the 1.9 crore adults who enrolled for the government's adult literacy programme, Saakshar Bharat, since 2009, an overwhelming 72% were women. Over the past two years, some 1.4 crore adults have been added as "neo-literates". Now the future of literacy endeavours in India depends on the Saakshar Bharat.

### A Critical Analysis of Literacy Efforts in India

In spite of these efforts, still certain backward states continue to trail in the national literacy index. Since from the inception of NLM, there have been extensive media campaigns PR Strategies. For advocacy, Print and electronic media advertisements and popular folk media were utilized. Despite certain accomplishments of the Mission, illiteracy continues to be an area of national concern. Wide gender, social and regional disparities in literacy also continue to persist. This fact prompts to be skeptic that India's literacy programmes also ended up in massive media campaigns, failing to convert the ideas into practice?

The absence of adequate school infrastructure is one of the major factors badly affecting literacy in India. Still there is a shortage of 6 Lakh classrooms to accommodate all the students. The National Sample Survey Organization and the National Family Health Survey collected data in India on the percentage of children completing primary school which are reported to be only 36.8% and 37.7% respectively.

The average Pupil Teacher Ratio for All India is 1:42, implying teacher shortage. In Village and slum habitats, the basic literacy instruction - 'free and compulsory education' has been dispensed by barely qualified 'quasi teachers'!

From the very beginning itself, ambitious targets were formulated forgetting the ground reality, infrastructure deficits and even without understanding the quantum of illiterates in the country. During the literacy programmes carried out with the initial five year plans, no substantial research was done and academic facilities and expertise were not utilized; simply moved by speculations and launched massive literacy campaigns like blind shots into darkness. It resulted in wasting valuable time and resources. Only with the institution of National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) in 1978 and National Literacy Mission (NLM) in 1988, the literacy efforts acquired proper shape and direction.

Furthermore, the expenditure allocated to education was never above 4.3% of the GDP from 1951 to 2002, despite the target of 6% by the Kothari Commission. The allocations have been less than that of Defense and Urban Development! Even within this, the amount meant exclusively for literacy initiatives and adult education have been symbolic and inadequate to address the gravity of the issue. According to the MHRD Annual Report 2011- 12, the allotment for literacy initiatives (for SLMA by NLMA & Saakshar Bharat together for the last three years) is only Rs. 1098.33 Crore from the central pool.

Pitfalls in the methodology like nationally adopted uniform pedagogy to address multi-lingual and multi-cultural target audience is also one of the reasons for unmet targets. The projected propaganda and symbolisms used to generate public perception have not been true. There have been problems with the campaign mode too. The mass approach took away the seriousness, though people participate vigorously in the campaign. Instead from the beginning, a selective approach capable of accommodating the diversities of the Indian population and its different needs would have made things better.

Shift in focus and policy by the government also made harms to the momentum of literacy programmes. While NAEP promoted literacy with awareness, NLM's Total Literacy Campaigns focused more on achieving quantitative results. Saakshar Bharat tries to mix both the priorities incorporating adult training with more focus on illiterate women.

Elements of severe caste disparities that prevented the formal education of the low caste and the unprivileged in the British era as well in the initial decades of post independence (still exist?) were also visible in the literacy

programmes. Still the attitude of the people, of both the literate and the illiterate resembles the ambience where narrow caste considerations prevailed. Complexes of both inferiority and superiority are equally unproductive.

The large proportion of illiterate females is another reason for the low literacy rate in India. Inequality based on gender differences resulted in female literacy rates being lower at 65.46% than that of their male counterparts at 82.14%. If the female population is illiterate, it will certainly affect the growth, education and personality development of their children and thus our brighter tomorrows will become a reality.

## Conclusion

A combination of ambitious goals, insufficient and parallel efforts, inadequate resources, flop strategies, and continued underestimation of the magnitude and complexity of the task are the reasons for the unmet goals. Lessons learnt over previous decades, show that achieving the goal of universal literacy needs not only more effective and collective efforts but also a refreshed political will to implement the strategies differently but efficiently catering the local, national and international needs.

With reference to the emerging knowledge economy, the existing notions and practices of literacy should be redefined to enable each individual to be competent to fulfill his/her social existence with dignity and self-respect. It's never too late.

The Saakshar Bharat jingle 'I too would learn', '*mein bhee padhoongi*' – heralds the explicit expression of determination and aspiration of an entire generation of women (men) who have lost the opportunity of education on account of economics, social or cultural factors. So, all the stakeholders have high held expectations on it, because our hopes about an enlightened and empowered citizenry rely on the success of Saakshar Bharat. We are morally responsible to support these efforts to fulfill the dreams of millions of illiterates in our country to rise into a new literate India.

A literate society is a dynamic community capable of exchanging ideas and participating in debates of social issues. Illiteracy is a scourge and an obstacle to a quality life and breeds exclusion and violence. So making each individual on the earth literate and enlightened is the only way out for the ever persistent problems of humanity.

Finally, what the literate can do to uproot the clutches of illiteracy? Now the literate segments of the society ardently participate in the anti-corruption movements and vigorously endorsing such activisms through social media, why can't they use a portion of their time, energy and the campaign strategies and skills to eradicate illiteracy, the root causes of corruption and other social evils? Why can't a 'mass movement for universal literacy and education' be put up, similar in line with Team Anna's campaign against corruption? Will it happen? If yes when? Or should we wait for another 30 years to see every Indian literate?

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# “De -Mystifying Myths and Interrogating the Facts: A Critical Analysis of Right to Education from Human Rights Perspective”

*Pradip Kumar Parida*

## **Key Words:**

Human Rights, RTE, Children Education, Neighborhood School, Life Skill Learning, Purpose of Education, National Education Policy.

## **Abstract**

*(The passing of the ‘Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009’, marks a historic moment for not only the children of India, but also the whole education system of the country. This Act serves as a corner stone to ensure that every child has his or her right as an entitlement to get an enrolment in elementary education. The State, with the help of families and communities, fulfils this obligation. It is a constitutional mandate for the state to provide primary education to all the children of this country. It cannot deny its legitimate role and duty in any context. As a matter of fact, RTE provides a platform to reach the unreached, with specific provisions for the sub-alterns and the marginalized sections, due to various socio-political-economic reasons as well as inherent inequitable social stratification existing in our society since ages & generations. The specificity of child labourers, migrant children, children with special needs, is extremely important in this context. However due to the widespread existence of poverty, socio-cultural practice and some of the in-built mechanisms in our society, the right to education has not been fulfilled yet. These are creating stumbling blocks in the process of establishing an egalitarian society. In this backdrop various efforts by successive governments at the centre as well as states to develop an educational system, with full access, equality and quality of education has remained not as an unfulfilled dream. Substantial efforts are therefore crucial to eradicate the social disparities and guarantee quality education on an equal basis to all for creating India as a knowledge society. In this scenario, this paper tries to examine the RTE in the domain of education as a system, by de-mystifying the myths with an analytical discussion on the education policy having a critical input from the view point of a practitioner, an educationist, in the public policy domain)*

## Introduction

Education can be defined in a broad sense to imply 'the entire process of social life by means of which individuals and social groups learn to develop consciously within, and for the benefit of, the national and international communities, the whole of their personal capacities, attitudes, aptitudes and knowledge, for the betterment of society'. The essential objectives of education may vary according to the socio-cultural-political context of a nation concerned, but there is a growing consensus under present international human rights law that tolerance and respect for human rights are major characteristics of a civilized society. According to Prof. Radhakrishnan, the former President of India, education is the process which brings transformation in the heart, changes the mind and moulds the character of an individual.

In this context right to education is a human right because of its intrinsic nature and is the only means for understanding and promoting peace, progress which also includes realizing other's human rights. Human Rights common to all humans as members of humanity, are the modern and secular version of the natural rights. All humans being presumably born equal are logically entitled, equally to the human rights without any distinction of birth, sex, race, status, religion, language or nationality. Human rights reflect the concern for social justice, participatory democracy, sustainable development, spread of peace, preservation of ecosystem & growth with human face. Any compromise with violations of the same is not permissible in any form in any given civilized society. These rights which are non-negotiable, non-alienable, and indivisible and recognized an essential worth of a human being, are fundamental for the existence of individuals in a civil society.

Human rights covers the series of often-disparate rights and freedoms asserted by many to be universally accepted and essential prerequisites for people's enjoyment of life based on human dignity. Proponents of human rights regard them as being inherent, inalienable and universal. It is inherent in the sense that they are the birth right of all human beings and people enjoy them simply by virtue of their human existence and as such these rights are not granted to them by any superior or sovereign authority; inalienable in the sense that people cannot agree to give them up or it cannot be taken away from them; and universal in the sense that they do not just apply to individual as 'citizens' or 'groups' but to all persons regardless of

their group identities. These basic ingredients of human rights as proposed by the proponents have inevitably lead us to raise various issues related to human rights.

### **Human Rights Based Approach to Education**

Human rights are those rights which are basic in nature and entitled to every human being because of their humanness, irrespective of his nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other criterion. Such rights would include right to life, equality before the law, freedom of expression, the right to work, right to social security, right to education, collective rights, such as the rights to development and self-determination, etc. Therefore as evident human rights are inseparable, interrelated and interdependent. The improvement of one right makes the progress of the others possible. Correspondingly, the denial of one right has negating affects on the others. The basic right that is protected by the term human right is 'right to life with dignity'. A human rights-based approach to education is therefore necessitated since it assures every child a quality education that respects and promotes her or his right to dignity with a space for optimum development.

The right to education is marked priority on the agenda of the international community since right to education is not only a human right in itself but also is quintessential for the exercise of all other human rights. A number of human rights treaties accepted and recognized internationally, identifies right to education as fundamental for development and social transformation, across the globe. For a successful application of rights-based education two changes need to take place: human rights must be at the core of education policies and the 'universal human rights obligation' in relation to 'the right to education' needs to be clearly defined. The objective of right-based education is to translate globally accepted human rights standards into national education plans, policy and course curriculum. There are three primary actors: the governments as duty-holders, the child as right-bearer and the parents as representatives. *Obligations relevant to education are presented in the form of availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability and affordability.*

**Availability** – that education is free and government-funded and that there is adequate infrastructure and trained teachers able to support education delivery.

**Accessibility** – that the system is non-discriminatory and accessible to all, and that positive steps are taken to include the most marginalised.

**Acceptability** – that the content of education is relevant, non-discriminatory and culturally appropriate, and of quality; that the school itself is safe and teachers are professional.

**Adaptability** – that education can evolve with the changing needs of society and contribute to challenging inequalities, such as gender discrimination, and that it can be adapted locally to suit specific contexts. At the same time, it can be also conducive and adoptive to the local environment- socio-cultural and natural.

**Affordability**- It is equally important to examine the affordability of the child/family in terms of whatever education is provided to them. Affordability here not only in monetary terms, but also in terms of time, space, location, culture specific, need of the society/ community/ family and the education provided to them. Otherwise the whole effort will go in vain. It has to be examined minutely.

As a matter of fact when education is simply seen as a development goal, an increase in school enrolments from 30 per cent to 40 per cent is regarded as a success. However in a rights-based approach, this increase signifies continued denial of the right to education to the 60 per cent total children available, still outside of school. Once a goal becomes a human rights obligation, failure to meet agreed goals by specified means becomes a violation: in the human rights-based approach, governments are held accountable for their promises. People are not seen as 'beneficiaries' but as active 'participants' and 'holders of rights'.

## **Recognition of Education as a Human Right at Global Level**

There are a large number of human rights problems, which cannot be solved unless the 'right to education' is addressed as the key to other human rights. The right to education is clearly acknowledged in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted in 1948, which states: "*Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.*" (Article 26)

Apart from UDHR, right to education is affirmed, protected and promoted in numerous international human rights treaties, such as the following:

### **Convention on Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation (1958)**

The International Labour Organization (ILO)'s Convention Concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation declares as its aim the promotion of 'equality of opportunity and treatment in respect of employment and occupation, with a view to eliminating any discrimination in respect thereof', and calls upon education to assist in securing this. States are required to 'enact such legislation and to promote such educational programmes as may be calculated to secure the acceptance and observance of this policy'. (Article 3)

### **Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960)**

UNESCO member states have adopted two treaties aimed at eliminating discrimination in education. These include the 1960 Convention against Discrimination in Education and the Protocol Instituting a Conciliation and Good Offices Commission to be responsible for seeking a settlement of any disputes which may arise between States Parties to the Convention against Discrimination in Education, which was adopted in 1962 and entered into force in 1968.

### **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)**

The main UN treaty on civil and political rights, the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, defines education as 'directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall enable all persons to participate in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.'(Article 13)

### **Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)**

The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against

Women(CEDAW) obliges state parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on the basis of equality of men and women.(Article 10)

### **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (Articles 28 and 29)**

Articles 28 and 29 of the CRC deal with the right of the child to education. Article 28 is similar to the provisions contained in ICESCR. In addition, it states that school discipline should be administered in a manner consistent with a child's human dignity. Article 29 stipulates that the education of the child shall be directed towards the development of the child's personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential. The right to education has therefore long been recognized by these international treaties as encompassing not only access to educational provision, but also the obligation to eliminate discrimination at all levels of the educational system, to set minimum standards and to improve quality. *India is a state party to the ICESCR, the CERD Convention, the CEDAW Convention and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

At the regional level, the right to education has been recognized in several binding instruments. In Europe, the right to education is established in the First Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. In Africa, the right to education is guaranteed in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. While the Charter is simply providing that "every individual shall have the right to education", the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) reiterates the requirement in CRC to provide free and compulsory primary education. The American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man is similar to the UDHR and it recognizes the right of every person to a free primary education, although the issue of its compulsory nature is not addressed. The Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Protocol of San Salvador) contains an explicit recognition of the right to education. Article 13(1) provides that 'everyone has the right to education' and Article 13(3) (a) guarantees to the child the right to free compulsory elementary education. The Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islamic States mentions that every human being has the right to receive both religious and worldly education from various institutions of education and guidance including the family, the school, the university, and the media.

## Education as Human Right in the Indian Constitution:

The Founding Fathers of our Constitution were committed to the protection and promotion of human rights and incorporated the same as Fundamental Rights in Part III of our constitution. Part IV of our Constitution sets out Directive Principles of State Policy. They embody the goals and ideals for making India a true welfare state in the right sense. Directive Principles are not directly enforceable by any court but are nonetheless 'fundamental in the governance of our country'. At one stage of our constitutional development, fundamental rights (part-III) were given primacy over directive principles (part-IV) which were regarded as subordinate to fundamental rights. It was considered necessary to give as much importance to the positive obligations of the State as to the negative instructions to the state.

The Constitution of India aims at establishment of socialistic pattern of society having welfare orientation. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and several covenants as also in the Constitution of India, which proclaims '*dignity of individual*' as a core value in its Preamble. In spite of all this, it is indeed very disheartening to know that even after sixty years of independence, millions of people in this country live in a state of abject poverty, deprived of basic amenities of civic life, i.e. proper food, cloth, shelter needed for the survival of a human being. If we will consider education, employment, health as the criteria, then ratio goes up. Hence naturally the issue of compulsory primary education was not given much importance by the framers of the constitution, though it was perceived that over a period of time, state will take all the endeavors to make primary education free and compulsory to all. Reason being the state will look after primary education, health care, public distribution system and other necessary public services, as these are the characters of socialistic pattern of society, which otherwise is the one of the basic structure of our constitution.

### Historical Background

Way back in the year 1911, Gopal Krishna Gokhale demanded that Indian people be conferred with the right to education and had even urged the Imperial Legislative Assembly for the same. However, after 100 long years only his dream of free and compulsory education has come true.

Mahatma Gandhi's idea of Nai Talim was based on the philosophy of

learning of education integrated with basic skills of life, which would make the development of body and mind. It was experimented in various places, i.e., wards, Seva gram, Sabarmati Ashram etc. Similarly former president of India, Zakir Hussain's idea of basic education with vocational skills was aiming at giving a holistic idea of education to human being, which was similar to Gandhi's philosophy. At the same time, Rabindranath Tagore was of the opinion that education must be in consonance with nature, culture, dance, drama, song etc., which makes the learning process lovely and lively. Man will learn from his immediate surroundings, ecology, happenings of day to day life. In fact there were number of experiments carried out in our country for success of various types of learning system and education in various parts of the country. Some of them succeeded and many of them failed also. Subsequently the 86th Constitutional amendment making education a fundamental right was passed by Parliament in 2002. *In the year 2009 a law to facilitate the realization of the fundamental right to education was passed by the Parliament by way of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE). The right to education has finally become a fundamental right by giving effect to the Act on April 1, 2010.* The Act mandates the Government to provide education to every child up to the eighth standard, free of cost, irrespective of class and gender or any other social criteria.

In brief RTE Act provides the following:

- Children, who have either dropped out from schools or have never been to any educational institution, will be enrolled in the schools with no school refusing admission to any child.

- Private institutions have to reserve 25 percent of seats from children from weaker sections of society.

- Neighborhood schools will be identified by a system of school mapping, and children of six and above who are not in schools will be identified by local authorities or school management committees.

- All such schools are required to be recognized failing which they shall be penalized for up to Rs. 1 Lakh.

- The Act also prohibits donation or capitation fees and no admission test or interview of the child or parent for admission.

- No child can be held back, expelled and required to pass the board examination till the completion of elementary education.

- It also provides for adequate number of qualified teachers to maintain a ratio of one (1) teacher for every thirty (30) students.

- Schools have to ensure proper infrastructure, which includes a playground, library, adequate number of classrooms, toilets, barrier free access for physically challenged children and drinking water facilities within three years.
- 75 percent members of the school management committees will comprise parents of the students who will monitor the functioning of the schools and utilization of grants.
- The National Council for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) shall monitor the implementation of the act, together with Commissions to be set up by the states.
- Financial burdens will be shared between the Centre and States in the ratio of 55: 45 and 90: 10 for the North-Eastern States of India.

### Critics of the Act

1. It is quiet silent on the rights of children with disability. It does not facilitate the education for children with disability. As per the Persons with Disability Act, 1995, the government should ensure that every child with a disability has access to free education in an appropriate environment till he attains the age of eighteen years and not just up to 14 years as provided under the RTE Act. This is contradictory to the RTE Act.
2. It encourages implementation of its provisions through Public Private Partnership (PPP) model but there is every possibility of the apprehension that might lead to privatization and commercialization of education, which is a reality in the present time.
3. A number of PILs have been filed by various private unaided and minority schools against the Act, contending that the Act violates their fundamental right guaranteed under Article 19(1) (g), 29 and 30 of the Indian Constitution. The matter has been placed before a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court & yet to be finalized.
4. The fundamental right to free and compulsory education has been confined only to education from the age of 6 to 14 and does not provide for the fundamental right to education in the formative years through pre schooling (for children in the age group of 3-6) and beyond 14 years, even if the child happens to be in middle school level.
5. In terms of admission into all types of schools more particularly private schools on the ratio of 75% to 25% for the children's from the socio- economic backwards sections of society. However it is not

clear about the admission procedure. What is the mechanism to choose those 25% students.

## Conclusion

The development journey of the newly independent country 'India' started with lot of initiatives, hopes and expectations in 1947. It was envisioned by the founding fathers of the constitution to have as socialistic pattern of society, where the role of the state in the development domain will be crucial. However after the liberalization process started and with the induction on of Globalization (LPG) in economic sphere, its repercussion in social sphere including education sector is clearly visible. Hence there was a paradigm shift in the domain of public policy, where equal opportunity was provided to the private players. As we know private sectors does not run on the basis of charity, rather on the principle of cost-benefit analysis. Though there is constant demand from the public sphere that in the social sector, particularly primary health, primary education, public transportation etc, and the state should play its role as it used to be. In that context, the right to education is a phenomenal development to address the inequities existing in the education system, particularly at primary level. The right to education is well protected both in international human rights instruments and in regional conventions and declarations. Although instruments use different wording with regard to the nature of education, there is a wide consensus that the core content of the 'right to education' implies that states must guarantee compulsory primary education free to all. The core content of a right can be defined as the *nature* or *essence* of a right, in other words the elements without which it loses its significance as a human right. In order to meet their obligations, states must offer a *genuine* right to all children to compulsory primary education by making it available, accessible and acceptable

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Vol. 74, No.3

ISSN 0019-5006

July-September 2013

# Indian Journal of Adult Education

Special Issue in Memory of  
**Anil Bordia**



(Estd. 1939)

Indian Adult Education Association

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## INDIAN JOURNAL OF ADULT EDUCATION

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Published quarterly by the Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA), 17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi – 110 002. Phones: 23379282, 23378436, 23379306 Fax: 91-11-23378206  
E-Mail : [iaedelhi@gmail.com](mailto:iaedelhi@gmail.com), [directoriae@gmail.com](mailto:directoriae@gmail.com)

Contents of the IAEA are indexed in Current Index to Journals in Education, New York; Content Pages in Education, Oxfordshire, England and Guide to Indian Periodical Literature – Gurgaon (Haryana); and microfilmed by University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA.

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ISSN 0013-0317

Subscription: Inland Rs. 250.00 p.a., and

Overseas US\$ 60.00 p.a.

Printed and Published by Dr. Madan Singh for Indian Adult Education Association,  
17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi – 110002.

Printed at M/s. Graphic World, 1686, Kucha Dakhini Rai,  
Darya Ganj, New Delhi – 110 002.

### 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.

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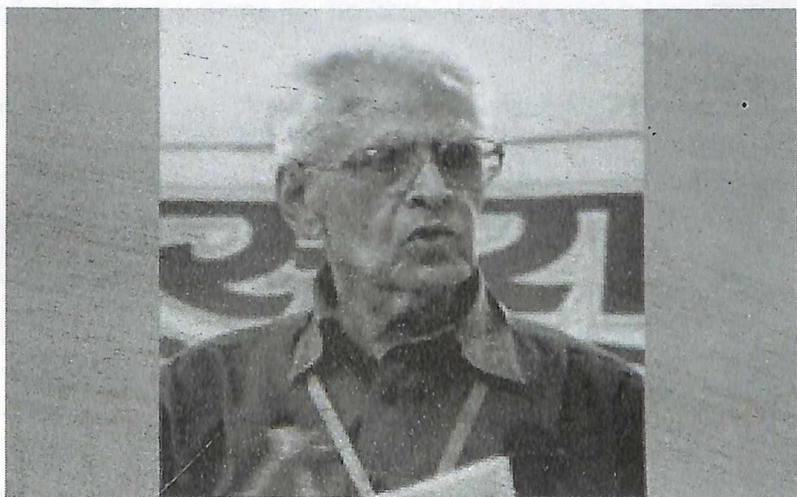
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# *Remembering*

*Anil Bordia*

OF ADULT EDUCATION

July-September 2012



*(1934-2012)*

# INDIAN JOURNAL OF ADULT EDUCATION

ISSN 0019-5006

Vol. 74, No. 3

July-September 2013

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*Shri Anil Bordia was for some Anil and for some others Anil Bhai. But for people like me who worked under him used to call him as Bordia Saheb. He was a sharp person in his observation and comments. He had never taken much time to assess the work of any of his subordinates as he used to watch their work not only through notes and files but also through discussion and dialogue. I remember many used to sneak away from his sight as they knew well that he will immediately ask about the assignments given and the progress made in the same. The persons who avoided seeing him face to face knew very well that they cannot escape by telling untruth.*

*The first time I met him was in November-December 1977 at Literacy House, Lucknow where I was undergoing 21 days induction training for the officers who were in-charge of training in State Resource Centres organized by the Directorate of Adult Education, New Delhi. That time I was working as Head of the Department of Training in State Resource Centre, Chennai. One session he took after dinner (meaning close to mid-night) was an ample proof that he was not simply an administrative service officer but an academician too. The clarity in which he explained about adult and non-formal education and programme planning for the massive adult education programme to be launched soon in the country. I still remember that participants in the training programme were discussing more about him even after he left Lucknow and the session he took at the mid-night.*

*The next time I met Bordia Saheb was in Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi in 1978 when he was reviewing the work of State Resource Centres. Almost all the participants were pulled-up for not organizing training programmes to the NGOs who got adult education programmes sanctioned by Govt. of India. While my turn came I was also pulled-up but not like others I did not keep quite. I replied that the State Resource Centre, Chennai did not even know that NGOs in the state have got sanction orders and hence, could not plan any training programme for them. My answer was quick and many felt that I should*

*not have replied like that to a senior officer of the government (meaning State Resource Centres are under NGO management). The Director of Adult Education, Govt. of Karnataka (an IAS officer) who was sitting next to me even whispered to me that I need not argue. But what had happened during tea time was the indication of magnanimity of the person like Bordia Saheb. He came to me and told that I was correct as the sanction order copy was not marked to State Resource Centres and hence, there was no way of getting information regarding sanctions given by government. He was so quick that on that day itself he issued orders to the officers of the Bureau for marking copies to State Resource Centres.*

*Thereafter, I had many opportunities to meet him at different programmes and at different places and he used to call me mouthful as Mohan and enquire about the programmes in the state of Tamil Nadu. When I was selected as Deputy Director by UPSC in the Directorate of Adult Education he was Additional Secretary in the Department of Education and then he became Secretary. All through he showed the same love and affection eventhough, I was his subordinate officer.*

*This issue of the journal is dedicated to his memory coinciding with the first death anniversary (he died on September 2, 2012). All the authors who have contributed articles are in one way or the other connected to him either as colleagues or worked with him in organizations. Every word they have written is from their hearts. This is the dedication of persons for whom he showed love and affection during his life time.*

*Indian Adult Education Association is proud of Anil Bordia Saheb who was not only the Life Member of the Association from 1969 but also a Member of the Editorial Board and Editor of the Indian Journal of Adult Education for a few years. We in the Association fondly remember him forever.*

*Dr.V. Mohankumar*

# Anil Bordia: Astride the Global and the National, Across Two Millennia

*H.S. Bhola*

## Introduction

Anil Bordia (May 5, 1934- September 2, 2012) as a former Education Secretary in the Government of India, had climbed to the top rung of the ladder of the bureaucratic order; and as the winner of the Award of **Padma Bhushan** (2012) got to enjoy the esteem of the nation. His journey on this Earth had ended but the Legacy he has left behind is sure to enlighten and enrich the work of educators for generations, both at home and abroad.

Most individual identities are formed by socialization within a close or more extended family, and later within a peer group. In the case of Anil Bordia the process of his Being and Becoming was a special case wherein an extraordinary Mentor played an extraordinary role in the shaping of his being. This reality introduces a biographical angle to parts of the discourse that is spun below. As the title of this piece indicates, Anil Bordia's life encompassed both the Global and the National. The Global engagements can be best described as Episodic – as he was invited by International Agencies dealing with "Education for Development" to guide and counsel for short or long periods. His work at the National Level was, of course, long-term almost covering all his working life: encompassing Educational Policy Making, Implementation and Evaluation, at all levels and in all sectors of the educational system in India.

## Of Being and Becoming

Events that shape destinies occur in lives by Happenstance not by design. It is only small things that can be planned and implemented, and even those not always with assured success. It was a Happenstance that both Anil Bordia and this Writer were interested in Adult Education, and shared the conviction that Literacy should always be part of Adult Education projects.

It was utterly by chance that Udaipur – the city where Anil Bordia grew up and recently expired — entered my Consciousness when my older sister got married into a family that had settled in Udaipur after the partition of India in 1947 — Her father-in-law had been appointed the Conservator of Forests for the princely state of Udaipur, and had access to the Maharaja's court. Again, it was by chance that in the mid-1950s, as a Technical Assistant in the Ministry of Education I got to go to Udaipur to do some work for the Government of India, on a project to train a group of village-level workers in adult education for rural development, and got some quick immersion in the Cultural ethos of Udaipur. Several public and private visits, over a period of time, enabled deeper immersion in the culture and better schooling of my Consciousness of the culture of Udaipur. ~

Two decades later, again by happenstances, I found my professional life intersecting with the life of the “Uncrowned King” of Udaipur, Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta, the Creator of the Culture of Udaipur and the Builder of Institutions such as Vidhaya Bhawan that played a truly seminal role in the life of Anil Bordia. Again, it was by happenstances that I found my life intersecting also with the life of Anil Bordia, the admirable son of Udaipur, in several contexts and locations in India, and around the world – in seminars and conferences in East Asia, Europe and Southern Africa.

### **The Canvas and the Brush, to Paint the Portrait**

In mid-March 2013, when I received an invitation from the Editor of the Indian Journal of Adult Education to write a paper on the Life and Work of Anil Bordia, I wandered around in my Study at home in Tucson, Arizona, possessed with the question: What should I say about Anil Bordia and how should I say it? Implicitly, I already knew that I did not want to write a typical Eulogy, a piece of impressive-sounding prose, full of lavish praises and plaudits bordering on bombast. I wanted to go beyond the typical, to catch the essence of the man, locate him in real time and place, recount his visions and values, and in doing all that make meanings of Anil Bordia's Life and Work, to share it with others. Over the weeks and days of ruminations I came to the conclusion that the Life and Work of Anil Bordia can be best understood as a dialectics between his special Individual Identity and a Special Culture of the Place where he spent the most formative years of his life.

In turn, this Special Culture of the Place (and Time) was the creation of a Stalwart that we have referred to above — Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta — who

was from Udaipur (now a city in the state of Rajasthan) but who was by no means confined to any localities within narrow geographical or sociological boundaries. Indeed he had come to combine in himself the grand intellectual traditions of both India and the West. To the good fortune of Udaipur (and personal good luck of Anil Bordia), he had chosen to settle in Udaipur and make it a special place – a Greenhouse for the budding young generations to grow great. The instrument for the cultural transformation of the place was to be Education. Dr. Mehta's new vision of Education was embodied in Vidhya Bhawan – literally the "Abode of Knowledge" – which came to be widely known, and whose fame some eight decades later, has neither faded or been forgotten. He knew, of course, that acculturation and enculturation in new Cultures do not happen by repetitions merely of the Mantras of new cultural ideologies sought to be propagated. The new Culture for Udaipur had to be institutionalized to be pervaded. This led him to create a whole cluster of institutions – Vidhaya Bhawan was at the core of this institutional cluster.

## **Formative Influences on the Life and Work of Anil Bordia:**

### **Culture, Enculturation and Identity**

Having talked of plaudits and bombast of typical Eulogies, I should not be committing the same sin of loading my own discourse with a heap of unfamiliar abstractions. My excuse, however, for introducing the theory-laden language of Individual Identity, Acculturation, and Enculturation is that these terms help explain in depth, the processes that we are all fully enveloped by and are totally immersed in, yet mostly unaware of them. To understand our very Being and Becoming, we do need to use these coins of anthropological-psychological currency.

**Defining Culture:** Anthropologists define Culture as the sum total of the attainments and learned behavior patterns of any specific period, race, or people, regarded as expressing a traditional way of life subject to gradual but continuous modification by succeeding generations. Culture as imbibed is a complex set of habitual and ritualistic behaviors and values that are, first, and most immediately, induced in the person of the Individual at the very moment of birth. A calendar of educating and conditioning then continues until "Independence" dawns on the individual being shaped, if at all! Above and beyond the agency of the family and community wider cultural layers are imposed by ever-widening cultural environments that, in our times, go

from the Local to the Global. In language of Sociology, the processes described above would be called **Acculturation** — the process by which one culture may be affected by another; or **Enculturation** — the process whereby individuals are conditioned by, adjusted to and integrated with the cultural norms of their society.

**Individual Identity Formation** on the other hand is a socio-psychological process whereby Individual Identity — the state of being a specific person and no other, that is, the distinctive character belonging to an individual — emerges. Thus, Individuality is a strikingly distinctive character or personality (Berzonsky 1990).

### Calculus of Identity and Culture

My Narrative on Anil Bordia below begins with the statement of the now obvious: that Anil Bordia was born Lucky — an “Accident of Birth” with great potential of both Body and Mind. The ease with which he went through his college career, at M.B. College in Udaipur, followed by St. Stephens College in New Delhi, and then got into the Indian Administrative Service which skims *crème de le crème* of youthful intellectual capital of the nation, helps us to understand how, over his life-span Anil Bordia was able to self-construct a Personal Identity that made him a celebrated citizen of the Global Village (Berzonsky, 1990).

My next assertion is that Anil Bordia was “Twice Lucky” in that in addition of being born with high intellectual potential, he was born and raised in Udaipur, a very special Culture and Location at that historical time. The Culture of Udaipur that we speak of was created and institutionalized by Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta which in turn played a truly transformative role in Anil Bordia’s life. In the case of Anil Bordia, Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta’s influence was also mediated and reinforcement by his father, K.L. Bordia, who had resigned his appointment in a college away from Udaipur to come home to take over as principal of the Vidhya Bhawan school.

Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta, the maker and keeper of the Culture of Udaipur and the definer of the Content of Culture of Udaipur was indeed a very special person. He was born in a privileged aristocratic family in 1895 (he died in 1985) and learned to excel in both cultures: one that of Udaipur, Rajasthan, India; and the other of London, U.K., one of the top academic citadels of the Western world. He got his PhD from the London School of Economics —

and his earlier research and published writings dealt with Economics. Back at home, he became the Dewan (Equivalent to a Chief Minister) of the Princely State of Banswara; and later in 1947 was appointed a member of the Constituent Assembly of Independent India. He was India's High Commissioner to Pakistan in 1951 where he acquitted himself admirably, in a very difficult political setting.

As he settled back home in Udaipur, his emphasis was on Education – at all levels. In Udaipur, his most favorite project was the establishment and institutionalization of Seva Mandir (The Temple of Service) – where students entered with the sense and solemnity, as if entering a sacred space, and wherein in addition to the education they would imbibe the ideology of serving the poor, and the downtrodden. But he answered the call of Higher Education as well, playing an important role in the establishment of the Rajasthan University and in 1960; and became Vice-Chancellor of that University when his leadership was needed. Last and certainly not the least, he was greatly interested in Adult Education with adult literacy at its core. He was at almost every significant policy-setting group where policies regarding Adult Education in Development were being discussed, elaborated or advanced; and for years he was on the Editorial Board of the Indian Journal of Adult Education, the only journal of adult education in India. Anil Bordia in his later years would also do exactly what his mentor had done in the years before.

### **The Content of the Culture of Udaipur**

India in the pre-independence period roughly of, 1900-1947, was witnessing an increasing awareness amongst liberal thinkers and educationalists of the backwardness and political stagnation of India. Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta was deeply aware of all this too; and had been deeply influenced by the beliefs and writings of people like Tagore, Gandhi, Dr. Kunzru, and Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya. He wanted to put what he had learned from them, and from his own experiences in practice, beginning with his beloved Udaipur. In 1931, his ideas as institutionalized resulted in the establishment of Vidya Bhavan in Udaipur. It would be one of the pioneer co-educational institutions of India, with the philosophy of treating all children as unique individuals; and seeking to mold them into citizens with sound moral character and a deep sense of social responsibility. Voluntary efforts, by individuals and organizations, to harness voluntary effort, were to be passionately promoted.

In 1973, when Vidhya Bhawan was 42 years old, its founder, Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta, looking back at his creation had thus reflected: "Primarily Vidya Bhawan was a bold adventure in the educational field. Teacher-pupil relations, understanding the individual child, closeness to Nature, atmosphere of freedom, spirit of adventure, progressive methods and techniques of imparting knowledge, daring experiments (such as the Open Air Sessions, at one time the Dalton Plan, the Group System, etc.) giving due place to fine arts and handicrafts in the school curriculum, and making it as broad-based as resources could permit – these and similar features characterized the school." This kind of progressive education joined with social rationalism, above the rigidity of caste, was to challenge the arrogance of power. It would respect old traditions while seeking development of the individual in all aspects – physical, civic, social — and of course, using the intellectual treasures of the New Modern age (Mehta 1973).

Vidhya Bhawan, an institution concentrated on formal educational system, was followed by Sewa Mandir in 1974 – in a sense, the Child (Vidhya Bhawan) had been born before the Mother (Sewa Mandir) — dedicated to the area of non-formal education, and rural development and issues for all populations, with focus on the disadvantaged, such as lower castes and tribals. Vidhya Bhawan, over the years, came to be a cluster of institutions that Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta continued to build in Udaipur. An important institution he created was the Vidhya Bhawan *Society* — an Orphanage to serve children who had lost their parents and had no family support. Charity and Voluntarism was indeed the ever present spirit in the institutions he built. We have elsewhere referred to his diplomatic career and the jobs he had held at the apex of Education and policy making. Honors kept on being showered on him. A Road in town was named after him – called Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta Marg, Udaipur. On April 11, 2013, he was posthumously awarded the Padma Vibushan, the second highest civil decoration in India.

### **Triangulation of Three Lives – Mehta, Bordia, Bhola:**

#### **Knowing Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta Up-close and Personal**

Life happens. In January of 1966, when I was ready to return to India with a PhD. from The Ohio State University, my Professor Edgar Dale suggested that I accept the offer from Literacy House (Saaksharta Bhawan), Lucknow — an institution established by Mrs. Dr. Welthy Fisher, a Bishops' wife who had become a committed Gandhian, and wanted to do some literacy

for development work in India, to be shared later with other Asian countries. Her project had attracted the attention of the American Ambassador in New Delhi who had channeled a sizable grant from USAID for Literacy House to conduct Research, Development and Evaluation work in area of Literacy. I accepted the offer to be one of the two Deputy Directors, and was given the charge of "Training and Evaluation", with the additional charge of Head, "School of Social Writing." This School of Social Writing at the time was probably the only such institution that provided orientation and training to interested individuals in writing books for new learners in rural India, written at particular "Levels of Readability" suitable for new-literates. At about the same time Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta had accepted he invitation to serve as a Member of Board of Directors of Literacy House. To share my experiences in Training and Evaluation and particularly in the area of Writing for New Readers with other professionals, I began publishing in the Educational Journals in India and abroad. (The work on Writing for New Readers was widely shared in several international settings and a Monograph on the subject was published: Bhola, 1992). All this work did come to the attention of Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta who had liked my work and let me know about it too.

For personal reasons, the then Director of Literacy House resigned his position to return home to be with his family, and I was invited to be the Acting Director until a position was filled following due process. I showed hesitation in accepting the position of Acting Director offered to me. I had enjoyed my professional work, and I did not want to get in the politics of selection – the other Deputy Director already was claiming to be a better choice, and being loud and dirty about it too. Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta was in town to attend the meeting of the Board to help make the choice of Acting Director and called me to the Office to ask why I had not applied. I told him that I was aware of the wheeling and dealing that had already begun among other staff and I would not like to mess up my academic work that I was enjoying very much. Dr. Mehta took me aside and said succinctly: "Politics is a fact of Life. All important jobs, even in the academia and R&D settings, would require some administrative work. Your research work here need not be affected by my taking the job of Acting Director because I assure you, you would be allowed to hire help both for your new administrative tasks and for assistance in your research and writing projects. So take the job." I did.

Six months later, at a subsequent Board Meeting, Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta game me another big surprise. He privately invited me to his office and told me that he had recommended me to the Vice Chancellor of Rajasthan

University in Jaipur for the then vacant position of Associate Professor and Head, Department of Adult Education at the University. University of Rajasthan was one of the two Indian Universities at the time that did have separate Departments of Adult Education – the first Masters' degree program in adult education had been offered at the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur in the early 1960s. Within a few days the official letter of appointment arrived and I was preparing to take up the new position in another three months.

Unbelievably, another Happenstance! As I was packing and waiting I got yet another surprise. I got a letter from UNESCO, Paris, offering me the job of Senior Adviser on Literacy Training and Evaluation to the Government of Tanzania, East Africa as part of their larger UNDP/UNESCO Work-Oriented Adult Literacy Pilot Project, with 15 different project sites in countries around the world. This time I called Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta to share with him the news and asked what I should do. His answer was succinct: "Go! It is too good an opportunity to let go."

To describe more fully the story of what I have above called "Triangulation of Three Lives – Mehta, Bordia, Bhola — I will use the Frame of Work done by Anil Bordia for International agencies on the Global stage. To explain how I got so often to be inside that Frame, in places where Anil Bordia was, I need to provide some background: I had worked with UNESCO full-time in Africa as a Senior Consultant during 1968-1970, before I accepted a Faculty position at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, USA. While at the University, I had consultative relationships with UNESCO, and half a dozen other International agencies — throughout my academic life.

### **Anil Bordia: As Habitant of the Global Village**

Phenomena like Globalization, can not be assigned an exact date for their coming upon us. But it can be said without disagreement that during the last three decades, social, political-economic and culture conditions of individual nations of the world; and contributions of individuals to Arts, Sciences, Philosophies and Politics are invariably discussed in relation to Global conditions and criteria and then applied to different nations and localities in their particular contexts. To get a full view the Life and Work of Anil Bordia, we need to look at it from two perspectives – Global and National.

## Anil Bordia on the Global Stage

Review of Bordia's Work at the Global level have come from Global Institutions: UNESCO Media Services (2003); and ZoomInfo (2008), a website founded by Jonathan Stern in 2000, scouring information of world's business leaders – business of course is inseparable from politics and policy making at the top levels.

According to UNESCO Media Services, Mr. Anil Bordia had played a significant role in international education, particularly in regard to UNESCO activities. He served as Vice-Chair of the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE), Hamburg from 1976 to 1982, and as Chairman of the International Bureau of Education (IBE), Geneva, from 1980 to 1982. More importantly, between 1980 and 1982, Anil Bordia taught at the UNESCO International Institute for Education Planning (IIEP), Paris – an institute dealing with policy and planning, especially in developing countries.

Anil Bordia never rested on his laurels. He was one of the planners and leaders of the Jomtien Conference on Education for All (EFA) held in March 1990 where his influence was extremely significant in securing the commitment to EFA. He also made an important contribution at the Dakar Conference, April 2000 that had returned to the theme of Education for All for renewed commitments.

For his excellence in the sphere of Education, Anil Bordia was elected Fellow of UNESCO's Asia-Pacific Centre of Educational Innovation for Development (ACEID), Bangkok in 1996 and in 1999 UNESCO awarded to him the prestigious Avicenna Gold Medal for Exceptional Contribution to Educational Development.

Mr. Bordia had dedicated his life to education, and particularly to education for disadvantaged people. His voice matters in international organizations and in the government of his country. It is also a voice which inspires workers and teachers in far flung areas of his large country, India. Along the way, he also taught at the University of Toronto's, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education ((UNESCO UNEVOC, 2004; ZoomInfo 2008)."

## Supplementation and Complementation

To the story of Life and Work of Anil Bordia provided by UNESCO UNVEC

and ZoomInfo above, some supplementation and complementation can be provided from this Writers own experience of being there where Anil Bordia was — in real time and space or by artifice or reference.

During 1980-82, Anil Bordia was Chairman of the Board of International Bureau of Education (IBE) in Geneva. I personally had been associated with the IBE for many years, both before and after Bordia's association. Some years later, IBE published my book: entitled: World Trends and Issues in Adult Education (Bhola 1988) and issued translations of the book in French, Spanish, Arabic and Persian. Surely, this would have come to Anil Bordia's notice.

As previously stated, during 1976-1982, Anil Bordia was Vice-Chairman of the Board of UIE (UNESCO Institute of Education), now renamed UIL (UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning). During those years, I was visiting UIE frequently to conduct, or to participate in workshops and conferences on the subject of Adult Literacy and Adult Education. An important piece of work at that time that I did was to study various aspects of Evaluating Literacy – including in-build process evaluation, and summative evaluation, at various levels. This work was published in book (Bhola 1990). Surely, Anil Bordia was no stranger to me, or I to him.

### **A Momentous Event in Udaipur**

In 1982, I went to Udaipur India on the invitation of the German Foundation for International Development (DSE) and International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) to serve as Technical Director of the International Seminar on "Campaigning for Literacy" to be held in Udaipur, India, during January 4-11, 1982 I earned this privilege having prepared a research-based document, later published as a book: *Campaigning for Literacy: Eight National Experiences of the Twentieth Century, with a Memorandum to Decision-makers (In English and French)*, UNESCO, Paris, 1982. The proceedings of the Udaipur Seminar were later published by a renowned publisher of Germany (See, Bhola, Muller, Dijkstra, 1983). The influence of the Udaipur Seminar proved to be far-reaching indeed.

Dr. Josef Muller of DSE remembers how Anil Bordia himself on several occasions in conversations with German colleagues had remarked on how the Udaipur Seminar had influenced his own thinking and the future drift of policies of adult education and literacy in India generally.

The occasion provided opportunities for being together with Anil Bordia (at the time a Joint Secretary in the Union Ministry of Education, and Director General of India's National Adult Education Program –NAEP); Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta, Dr. Malcolm Adiseshiah (just-retired, Assistant Director General of UNESCO for Education) and several other dignitaries. Participants in the Seminar had come from such far off places as Bangladesh, Botswana, Burma, Cuba, Ethiopia, Germany, India, Kenya, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Thailand, Vietnam, and Zambia – representing countries which had contributed case studies materials and nations interested in planning future campaigns. The delegates were invited by the President of India, Sanjeeva Reddy to Rashtrapati Bhavan. It was a privilege indeed.

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

In 1990, Anil Bordia and myself found ourselves participating in the World Conference of Education (WCEFA) held in Jomtien, Thailand where "Education for All" (EFA) — Education for all youth and adults in non-formal and informal settings – was born (Inter-agency Commission (UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, 1990). Anil Bordia, was a representative from the Government of India. I had been working among many others on the working document and was now in the audience, when Anil Bordia addressed a session and held all present in thrall as he quoted from the Rig Veda: "Let us think together; Let us act together; Let the advice be unanimous ....."

### **In Cape Town, South Africa, 1994**

My most recent memory of working with Anil Bordia on the Global stage was during April 1994 in the newly Independent South Africa. Nelson Mandela had been set Free at last on February 11, 1990 after 27 years in captivity by the Apartheid regime. On May 10, 1994, he was elected President of the new Republic of South Africa. The four years between these two historic political landmarks were by no means eventless, but indeed feverish and relentless as the new leadership got engaged in inventing and constituting a future for South Africa — "One law for One nation", affirming Individual Freedom, Equality with Dignity, Freedom of Religion and Expression.

Education was going to be the great lever for moving to the new future. The Constitution promised everyone the right (a) to a basic education,

including adult basic education; and (b) to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, would make progressively available and accessible. A Center for Education Policy Development in South Africa (CEPD) was set up to promote understands of the purposes and processes of Education Policy. I had the privilege of being invited by UNESCO to write a Background Paper for the CEPD to highlighting the dialectics among Policy Analysis, Policy Implementation and Policy Evaluation in the context of South Africa. On the invitation of Director of CEPD, Professor Trevor Coombes, I went to South to Africa to discuss the Document with his colleagues.

An other opportunity came during October 26-28, 1994, when an International Donors Conference was organized by CEPD in association with the African National Congress (ANC) and African Basic Education and Training (ABET), on the theme of "Human Resource Development in the Reconstruction and Development in Post-Apartheid South Africa: A Policy Discourse," in Cape Town, South Africa, I discovered that Anil Bordia had also been invited for the same event. At the Conference, I talked about "Policy Processes in the South African Context, with particular emphasis of Non-formal Education with components of Adult Literacy, and Vocational Education (Bholia, H.S. 2009)." Anil Bordia's discussed interfaces between "NGO and the State" — something to which he had made a lifelong commitment.

### **Anil Bordia on the Home Front:**

#### **Reconstructing Education; Underlining Adult education**

As Prof. S. Krishna Kumar wrote while memorializing Anil Bordia, "One can hardly think of an educational initiative launched by the Union government during the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century which did not carry Anil Bordia's mark ([www.India.seminar.com](http://www.India.seminar.com))."

#### **The National Policy on Education 1986**

Working with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and the (then) Minister of Education, Narasimha Rao, Anil Bordia succeeded in securing a national consensus on policy issues that had needed attention as seen from the perspective of mid-1980s; and indeed was able to obtain Indian Parliament's endorsement of the policy in May 1986 which then got codified as the National Policy of Education (NPE) — covering policy relating to elementary education

to colleges, in both rural and urban areas. The NPE of 1986 reiterated the objectives of universalizing elementary education as also of adult literacy, requiring attention to universal elementary education joined with universal retention of children up to 14 years of age. A systematic program of non-formal education to address the needs of out-of-school youth, un-served or under-served by schools was another feature of the plan – thereby supplementing formal primary education in the educational backward states. He later played a prominent role in drafting a related Program of Action (PAO) which in several important ways recalibrated the implementation of the 1986 National Policy on Education itself.

By way of a historical perspective, the first National Policy on Education was declared in 1968 under Mrs. Indira Gandhi regime. The second National Policy on Education was announced in 1986 under Rajiv Gandhi which was modified in 1992 by the P.V. Narasimha Rao government. In 2005, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh adopted a new policy based on the “Common Minimum Program” of his United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National\\_Policy\\_on\\_Education#1992](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Policy_on_Education#1992)).

### **The Right to Education Act (RTE)**

Anil Bordia did not stay away from personal commitments and contributions to Education in India after his “official” retirement from the Government. The Right to Education Act (RTE), passed on April 1, 2010, which envisioned to provide free and compulsory education for all children between 6-14 years of age, received his attention as he chaired a group on May 11, 2010, to look at how to harmonize the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) vision, strategies and norms with the RTE mandate; and how to make operational several provisions under RTE, such as teacher education capacity, and mechanisms for admission of 25% children from disadvantaged groups [[http://ssa.nic.in/quality\\_of\\_education\\_rte-reporting-by-anil-bordia-committee](http://ssa.nic.in/quality_of_education_rte-reporting-by-anil-bordia-committee)]. Connections were also made with fulfilling the objectives of DPEP (District Primary Education Programs) – all this coincided with the then emerging Panchayati Raj Institutions.

### **At the University Level**

At the University level consistent efforts were made to encourage the University Grants Commission to require and reward Universities to establish

Departments of Adult Education and pursue research and development in this subject area. Universities were also encouraged to develop programs which would take students out into the communities to offer adult education and functional literacy classes. The 46<sup>th</sup> All India Adult Education Conference held in 1996 declared their satisfaction with the Universities in that they were playing an effective role in continuing education of the masses. But, uncertainty regarding their continuation beyond March 1997 seemed to considerably affect their programs. It therefore had urged upon the University Grants Commission (UGC) to announce its policy regarding continuation of the Departments/Centers of Adult and Continuing Education beyond March 1997 so that adult and continuing education could become a permanent part of structures within the larger university systems.

In 2002, the UGC was the bearer of great news. It had accepted Extension as the third dimension of equal status to teaching and research. Nearly 105 universities in the country were involved in these nationwide programs through departments that UGC had set up. From 105 Departments/Centers, about 12 were offering Post- M.A. Diploma in Adult and Continuing Education, which covered teaching and research in literacy, post-literacy, continuing education, and basic scientific concepts needed to understand environmental problems. Also included were population education, legal literacy and technology transfer so that these ideas could be transferred to others in their communities. Also offered were M.A. in Extension Education, Diploma in Population Education, and Diploma in Distance Education. A few universities also had M.Phil and Ph.D. Degrees on offer.

### **At the State Levels**

States with the large populations of illiterate youth and adults – Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa (now Odisha), Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Gujarat (now Vadodara) got prior attention. Several of these states did indeed create special programs, for example, one in Andhra Pradesh together with a famous NGO called MV Foundation involved the elimination of child labor so as to bring into schools all children up to 14 years of age. Another was the Education Guarantee Scheme of Madhya Pradesh, where the government responded to community demand with provision of minimum essential facilities for primary education. There were pioneering projects concerning the universalization of primary education, in the States of Bihar and Rajasthan. All these

programs were suffused with the values of Partnership between the Government and Non-Governmental and Voluntary agencies. Voluntarism was the key. Commitment to Inclusion of the Excluded – Empowerment for Women through Gender Equity, and Justice for all the Disadvantaged was the essential goal.

### **The National Adult Education Programme (NAEP)**

In our present discourse, NAEP has been kept for discussion last because, to this writer this remains the most significant national project that can be associated with Anil Bordia and which still continued to live in one form or another. Too often the NAEP is associated with its official date of Launch October 2, 1978. But it can be seen to have begun in pretty good earnest decades earlier when the flag bearers of the India's Independence Movement were making declarations for putting Literacy and Adult Education, as instrument of liberation of the masses. After Independence, Policy Commitments were being made both for Formal Education, and Non-formal Education using Adult Literacy. The Education Commission set up by the Government was easily the most emphatic step.

### **Report of the Education Commission, 1964-66**

The Report of the Education Commission of 1964-66 (Ministry of Education, 1966) was indeed a benchmark in the development of the ideology and policy of adult education and adult literacy. To prick the conscience of the nation, the Commission had pointed out that some 20 years after Independence the literacy percentage had still hovered around 28.6 per cent. The Commission, therefore, had emphasized the need for an accelerated program for literacy promotion, using a combination of the selective and mass approaches that could mobilize all men and women in the country including students and teachers. The point was also made that literacy to be worthwhile had to be functional. As a specific recommendation, they had asked for a provision of part-time general and vocational education to the young adults in the age group 15-30. They had insisted that adult education be harnessed to the movement of total national development, to enable peoples' participation not only in improving economic productivity, but also in building democratic institutions — promoting national integration and for realizing the socialistic patterns of a future society. Finally, the Commission had suggested the establishment of a National Board of Adult Education to provide a national focus and direction, both to the state and the civil society institutions.

## **Resonances in the Head: Anil Bordia and Adult Education**

It can be justly assumed that Anil Bordia, was already highly sensitized by his immersions in both Vidhya Bhawan and Seva Mandir, and knew of the Report of the Education Commission, 1964-66 even as he joined the IAS cadre for the Rajasthan Government in 1957. He did indeed demonstrate his interest in Literacy and Adult Education when as Director of Industries with the Government of Rajasthan, he did some impressive work in what could be called "Work-Oriented Literacy" and Adult Education. In a published paper, presented what he had thought and followed in practice, by way of strategy of adult education, in relation to mass education on the one hand and functional literacy on the other hand, giving special attention to staffing in adult education. Staffing, he asserted was more than advertising vacancies, interviewing and issuing appointment letters. Serious work needed to be done in identification and recruitment; defining qualifications for recruitment; conditions of work and their training. The challenges of training were elaborated in regard to all possible stakeholders: part-time workers; participants and collaborators; specialists and technical personnel; primary level adult educators; supervisory staff and trainers; government functionaries; and full-time professionals (Bordia 1974).

It was also in the mid-1970s, that Anil Bordia had come up with the idea of State Resource Centers (SRC's) that would undertake leadership roles at the State level – doing planning, and conducting capacity building and training courses for role performers at State levels. In 2012, up to 33 States and union territories of India already had SRC's.

### **NAEP: *Preparations* for the Launch, and the Launch Itself**

In 1974 when Anil Bordia was assigned to the Ministry of Education as Joint Secretary; and in 1977 appointed to the position of Director-General of India's National Adult Education Programme (NAEP), he was more than ready for the challenge! It was as DG of the NAEP that Mr. Bordia was able to formulate India's overall Adult Education Policy and construct strategies of implementation and evaluation, with significant role provided to voluntary work by individuals and institutions. From a historical perspective, it could be said that the NAEP was Anil Bordia's brain-child and yet Prime Minister Morarji Desai's Political Gift to the Nation.

Anil Bordia looked at Launch not as a sudden Burst into Action on an appointed day, but to have two sequential parts – “Get Set” Day and about a year later “Go Run” when you hear a Shout or a Shot! Indeed, the NAEP Launch scheduled for October 2, 1978, was to have been preceded by almost a year of “Getting Set.” The preparatory year was to include such things as institution building, organizing, and budgeting; programs and materials development; conducting orientations, capacity building and training of trainers; along with other role performers who would undertake motivation and sensitization of those who would come to adult education and literacy classes.

The National Adult Education Program (NAEP) was officially launched on October 2, 1978 during the tenure of Prime Minister Mararji Desai (24 March 1977- 28 July 1979) who to his credit was a committed Gandhian, social reformer and activist in behalf of the poor and disadvantaged. The declared intent of the National Adult Education Program (NAEP) was “to organize adult education programs, with literacy as an indispensable component for approximately 100 million illiterate persons in the age-group 15-35 with a view of providing them with skills for self-directed learning, leading to self reliant and active role in their own development and in the development of their environment” (Bhola 2007).

## **In Democratic Politics New Regimes Supplant the Old;**

### **New Ownership of Policies Lends New Momentum**

Political realities took a turn and Prime Minister Desai’s regime did not last very long and the quick and brief succession of Prime Ministers that followed did not help either. The political turmoil introduced extreme uncertainty. It was not until October 31, 1984 that politics can be described to have settled a bit. As all this was happening, ill winds had started blowing. The Government at one time had practically withdrawn most of the resources allocated to adult education. In 1999-2000, adult education budget was Rs. 113.4 crores as compared to Rs. 3,037 crores for elementary education (a ratio of 1: 0.037). There was no special item for Rural Functional Literacy Projects, even as the overall allocations for adult education had increased to 40 per cent.

One thing was going to be sure. NAEP would from now on be a part of the DNA – meaning self-replication as in hereditary characteristics – without

any regressions or reductions in adult education and literacy programs to come. The National Literacy Mission of 1989; and The Saakshar Bharat Mission: September 8, 2009 would be thriving new delivery systems – missionary role, truly innovative and transformative changes.

### **The National Literacy Mission**

National Literacy Mission was launched on May 5, 1988 by then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. It was indeed one of Five Technology Missions to be pursued. The use of the word “Mission” in the new nomenclature was to assert a missionary zeal to literacy promotion in India. The four broad objectives adopted were to: (i) Impart functional literacy and numeracy to non-literate and non-numerate adults; (ii) Enable the neo-literate adults to continue their learning beyond basic literacy and acquire equivalency to formal education system; (iii) Impart non- and neo-literates relevant skill development programs to improve their earning and living conditions; and (iv) Promote a learning society by providing opportunities to neo-literate adults for continuing education (Bhola 1999a).

### **Organization for Implementation**

The NLM was a significant organizational innovation using the strategy of a nationally funded planned program with the time-bound and participative. Voluntarism was to be the soul of this organization and participants were going to be all committed groups and entities – Non-Governmental associations and activist groups. The mode of planned action was going to be what came to be called Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs) at the district levels, paying special attention to the weaker sections of the Indian society, such as women and scheduled castes, Tribals, Dalits and other marginalized sections of the society (Bhola 2002).

Around 1993, the NLM came up with idea of a Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti (BGVS) which would further strengthen and stimulate the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) strategy. At its peak, BGVS worked in 22 states (out of a total of 35 states and union territories) of India; and had presence in 316 (out of a total of 626) districts of the country. In its more than two decades of work, the BGVS has perfected its use of the Literacy Campaigns ... that continue to play a fundamental role in the mobilization of the political will of the policy makers on the one hand and of beneficiaries of literacy campaigns

in localities on the other hand – in the end to serve the purposes of sustainable development of communities (Bhola 2011).]

Anil Bordia had also dealt with the more concrete problems of delivering Literacy campaigns, programs, and projects. He had indeed dealt with problems of both curriculum development and production of curriculum materials. To set an exemplar to be followed he conceptualized primers based on “Improved Pace and Content Learning (IPCL)” — a set of three primers which would end in mastery of learning to use literacy skills for application to life situations, and for continued further learning.

### **The Saakshar Bharat Mission: September 8, 2009**

India’s Project of Literacy Promotion got added momentum when Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India lunched The Saakshar Bharat Mission on September 8, 2009. Seventy million illiterate adults – 60 million of them women – were to be made functionally literate by 2012, reducing the gender gap from 21 per cent to 10 per cent. This sharp focus on Women’s Literacy can be attributed to Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil, the first female President of India. This has already been noticed at the International level as affirmed the fact that India was chosen as host country for the International Conference on Women’s Literacy for Inclusion and Sustainability, sponsored by the of UN for the E-9 member States during September 8-10, 2011, New Delhi, India (Bhola 2011b).

An even more significant feature of Saakshar Bharat (Literate India) was its interface with the Bharat Nirman (Progressing-and-Developing India). The later Initiative is about building of infrastructures of communication and economic production in the rural areas, where most of India’s illiterate and poor live. Investments will be made in the infrastructures for irrigation, all-weather roads, rural housing, rural water supply, and rural electrification. Rural telecommunication connectivity will also be enabled, beginning with telephones, all of which will be the source for the general development objectives and general educational content embedded in plans of Saakshar Bharat– all in partnership between the Government of India, state governments, and Panchayati Raj Institutions (2009). Equally important was the idea of establishing an Adult Education Center in each village or clusters of villages as appropriate. Under the Eleventh Five Year Plan, 2007-2012 an Allocation of \$1 Billion had been made for this purpose (Planning Commission 2008).

## The Calculus of the Qualitative and the Quantitative: Literacy Statistics 1951-2012

Literacy has become a universal surrogate for recording the progress of Non-formal Adult Education including Extension Education of farmers in rural areas, and Vocational Education of labor in urban settings. The Statistics on Literacy Ratios in India during the period 1951 to 2011 (updated Dec 12, 2012) should serve as a useful supplement to the exhaustive discourse on Adult Education we have presented above:

**Table 1: Literacy Ratios - 1951-2011**

Year	Percentages of Literacy		
	Total	Male	Female
1951	18.34	27.16	8.86
1961	28.31	40.40	15.34
1971	34.45	45.95	21.97
1981	43.56	56.37	29.75
1991	52.11	63.86	39.42
1997	62.00	73.00	50.00
2001	64.83	75.26	53.67
2011	73.0	80.9	64.6

As we can see from the Table - 1 above, India crossed the mark of 50 percent literacy for the first time in 1991; and the 2011 final data for literacy now were 73.0 percent – 80.9 for Males and 64.6 for Females. The proverbial glass is three-quarters full, one quarter empty!

### **Bordia's Retirement, No Retreat**

Anil Bordia was ready to answer the call of duty if the Government he had served for decades needed their Veteran; and as a World Citizen was free to fly to foreign shores to serve the causes dear to him. On his retirement from the Ministry in 1992, he did not become a Recluse but planned and implemented two development initiatives that once again attracted attention both nationally and internationally: (i) Lok Jumbish (meaning Peoples Movement), and (ii) Doostra Dashak (meaning, The Second Decade).

## 1. Lok Jumbish

Lok Jumbish (literally, peoples' movement) was a program for the renewal of primary education in the state of Rajasthan for relevant education and empowerment of persons in the 11-20 age group and to make it a lever of social and economic development. The program was resonant to an earlier program in Vidhya Bhawan first tried in Udaipur. This project was started by Mr. Bordia immediately after his retirement from government in 1992 and he remained its Chairperson until 1999.

## 2. Doosra Dashak

Doosra Dashak (literally, the second decade) was meant to be a program for relevant education and empowerment of persons in the 11-20 age group that would serve as a lever of social and economic development in Rajasthan. Education as delivered to this group, instead of preparing them for life, had resulted in inducing incapacity for productive activity, and in the process alienated them from traditional forms and values (ZoomInfo, 2008). Doosra Dashak wanted to change that.

## By Way of Conclusion

So that was the crux of his life! Born May 5, 1934, departed September 2, 2012, survived by his wife Smt. Otima Bordia, daughter Smt. Maitreyi and son Shri Shreyas. During his time on Earth, he treaded on the world stage, with modesty, yet shining bright. He never betrayed his convictions, his commitments, and his deep compassion for the deprived. He will be long remembered.

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## **Anil Bordia – An Outstanding Adult Educator and Humanist**

*Lakshmidhar Mishra*

Great men and women defy analysis; they also baffle ordinary imagination and ingenuity. It is not easy to do justice to all the outstanding attributes and contributions made by these men & women in the short span of their life and mission. The same will be the case with Anil Bhai (as I have all along addressed him and as he is affectionately known all over Rajasthan). I acknowledge my limitation in writing this piece about Anil Bhai with all humility but never the less venture to do so in deference to the wish of IAEA with which I have been associated for nearly 2 decades.

Anil Bhai joined the Indian Administrative Service at the age of twenty three in 1957. That was a memorable year in Indian polity. It was the tenth year of India's independence, seventh year of the Indian Republic and the first year of India's Second Five year Plan (1957-62). The second election to the Central Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies took place this year and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was elected as the Prime Minister of independent India for the second time. He was a great visionary, statesman of international stature, a great planner and national builder and under his dynamic leadership, a vibrant democracy was in the making. The country, ravaged by war and unabashed exploitation of two centuries of colonialism and imperialism culminating in the trauma of partition and exodus of millions of refugees was indeed in the making. It was in the making through strong physical infrastructure, human resource development, social and economic reforms under the mantle of a welfare State. 1957 was the year of Hirakud and Bhakra Nangal Hydro Electric Projects, Rourkela and Durgapur Steel Plants and a number of thermal power stations. The Community Development Programme, agricultural extension (characterised by training and visit) along with a thrust on industrialization and series of other nation building and social welfare activities had been set in motion.

It is in 1957 i.e. 127 years after the first move (1830) that abolition of the primitive, immoral, unethical and tyrannical Zamindari system became a historical reality. The pernicious system was introduced by the colonial powers and was characterised by rack renting, absentee landlordism and feudalism at its worst (around which veteran film maker Bimal Roy made his much acclaimed 'Do Bigha Zamin'). In the wake of abolition of the system oral and informal tenancies which are the most oppressive were sought to be abolished (they have been fully abolished in Kerala so far), the tiller of the land was expected to become the owner and ownership rights were sought to be conferred on millions of cultivating tenants.

It is through all these path breaking social reforms that Pandit Nehru made bold, determined and earnest efforts to take India to great heights.

1957 was also an equally memorable year when three great movies were made carrying Indian cinema to great heights. They were, 'Naya Daur', 'Mother India', and 'Pyasa'. In Naya Daur with Dillip Kumar and Baijyantimala in the lead roles one sees how India, 'a wounded civilization' in the words of Sri V.S. Naipaul, the Nobel Laureate for literature was being reconstructed. 'Saathi haath milana' was the key note of the milieu as well as the film. If India which was in the ferment for years is to thrive and prosper, it can do so only if Indians, despite multilingualism, multi-ethnicity and multi-religiosity, can sink their differences – more artificial than real and work hand to hand and shoulder to shoulder with 'one energy, one voice, one force and one conscience'. That was the central message conveyed by 'Naya Daur'.

Years later when I was the first servant of National Literacy Mission (19.08.87 to 31.03.93) I had used this message as the esprit d'corps or central spirit of the mission. I used to tell my colleagues, 'if you have the right urge, inclination and commitment to work for the mission, you are most welcome to join us. If instead you are obsessed with the loaves and fishes of office and want to join the mission more as a façade or show, it will be better if you remain away from the mission'. Such a principled stand had undoubtedly the full endorsement of Anil Bhai, to say the least.

Mother India was slightly different in terms of the theme, its portrayal and central message though as a movie it was an all-time hit of Mehmud Khan. The film with Nargis, Sunil Dutt and Rajkumar in lead roles shows all the ills of a highly stratified society where the eternal values of an average Indian family and community – simple, affable, hospitable, self-abnegating,

self-effacing, taking everybody in its fold, assimilating diversity without sounding authoritarian is swiftly giving way to a bizarre set up. In this, everything is fiercely aggressive and aggressively acquisitive – heartless, ruthless and soulless. Voluptuous greed, rapacity and acquisitiveness has put an end to all the finer sensibilities and sensitivities of human nature. The compact and integrated character of the family and the community is being torn asunder with poverty, hunger, starvation, malnutrition, migration, dislocation of home life with untold misery & suffering staring us in our face on the one hand and individual jealousy, rancour, violence, pettiness and meanness on the other. The pristine purity and sacrosanctity of human life gets lost in the quagmire of lust, greed, violence and all that is stifling & repulsive.

Pyasa in English means desire or longing. In the hands of Guru Dutt, the legendary producer, director and actor it became an all-time hit. It is inimitable in term of portrayal of the finer sensibility and sensitivity of human nature. What is the central message in 'Pyasa'? The central message is sacrosanctity, dignity and beauty of life in its myriad forms which tend to get lost in the relentless search for mammon or God of wealth. They get lost in the mindless violence, greed, jealousy and anguish caused to human mind which is reflected in the following couplet of the English poet.

'Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge  
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information  
The cycles of twenty centuries have brought us farther from God  
and nearer the dust'.

Or

### Goldsmith in village school master

Ill fares the land hastening ills a prey  
where wealth accumulates & men decay'

Or

### T-S Eliot's Wasteland

'We are the hollow men  
We are the stuffed men  
Leaning together  
Head pieces filled with straw'.

The film begins with a romantic poet addressing a bumble bee, 'O bumble bee! Why are you moving from flower to flower? How much fragrance of the foliage you will be able to suck in course of your long sojourn?'

That is riotous imagination and romanticism at its peak. The next moment, as the fragile bumble bee is resting on a blade of grass, supremely happy and contented, it is trampled and rendered lifeless under the weight of an invader who is remorseless for his gruesome act. That is also the end of all beauty and romanticism associated with the bumble bee.

The three great movies present three altogether different facets of human character and situation even though they were made in the same year. 'Naya Daur' breathes hope, faith and conviction in the making of a young nation with fellow feeling, camaraderie, rapport and bonhomie. 'Mother India' depicts both loftiness and idealism of human character on the one side and degradation and dehumanization on the other. It also shows the pernicious practice of usury at its worst which debases the money lender to the level of devourer of human flesh and reduces the victim of debt bondage to a servile and sub-human status devoid of the dignity and self-esteem associated with every human existence a non-being. 'Pyasa' which is far more subtle and sensitive in terms of handling than 'Naya Daur' and 'Mother India' depicts the quest for all that is good, and beautiful and perfect even though the quest remains unfulfilled amidst the 'slings and arrows of an outrageous fortune'.

The purpose of my sharing these thoughts with the readers is an humble attempt on my part to convey the different dimensions of humanism on the one hand and the extent to which Anil bhai joining the most coveted and highest paid govt. service of the day would have been influenced by the tenets of humanism underlying the three great movies depicted in the previous paragraphs.

Humanism in its true purport and essence is genuine love of one human being for another without any axe to grind. To understand the true meaning and essence of humanism I would like to start with the following couplet from Bheesmaparva of Mahabharat. As the story goes, Bheesma Pitamaha fell on the tenth day of battle of Mahabharat and was lying on a bed of arrows, writhing in physical and mental anguish. The Pandav brothers led by Yudhistheera approached him and asked 'O Pitamaha! What could be message for us at this hour of your life?'. Quick came the reply:

'I shall share with you that Supreme truth, O Yudhistheera!  
 Man is the finest and best in creation.  
 There is nothing greater than (love) of man'.

The characters in the great epic Mahabharat i.e. Bheesma and Pandav brothers may be imaginary once of poet Vyasa but the essence of humanism underlying such an utterance as above is valid for all times. This means that human beings are supreme objects in God's creation and if damaged or destroyed or mutilated cannot be recreated & restored to their original form. Human life is, therefore, required to be promoted, protected and preserved at all costs.

Humanism has been the reigning note in the poetry and philosophy of all great thinkers, writers, artistes, social reformers like Confucius, Gautam Budha, Jesus Christ, Abraham Lincoln, Nelson Mandela, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Mother Teresa, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, to name only a few. They were outstanding humanists of the time who had abundant empathy and sensitivity for the poor, deprived and disadvantaged alike for the sick and suffering. They acknowledged the importance of kindness, compassion, universal brotherhood, love and peace. This, to illustrate, found a clear and lucid expression in Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore's 'Sadhana'. To quote:

'Civilization must be judged and prized not by the amount of power it has developed but by how much it has evolved and given expression to by its laws and institutions, the love of humanity'

Sadhna.

In poem 'Pran' of the anthology of poems 'Kadi and Komal', Gurudev Tagore gives vent to his unbounded love of humanity in the following words. To quote:

'I do not wish to die  
 (but) I want to live in this beautiful planet  
 I wish to live in the midst of human beings  
 Amidst the rays of the (rising and setting) sun  
 Amidst the verdant green  
 Of this multi-coloured garden of beauty and fragrance  
 How fervently I wish  
 I could secure a place amidst hearts of living beings'.

The advocates of the theory of evolution led by Charles Darwin prefer the importance of human struggle to the importance of human relationship based on love, kindness, compassion and commiseration. According to them, those who are weak are bound to get defeated and wither away in the struggle for existence. It is only the fit who will survive. The evolutionists denounce the concept of help to the poor, weak, deprived as well as oppressed. By this, they contend, we will be only promoting and encouraging them to tolerate social injustice.

This appears to be a flawed thinking which does not have many takers. This is on account of the following reasons:

- Mother earth does not belong only to a favoured few but to all denizens;
- Those who are weak, deprived and oppressed are not responsible for being so;
- There are a number of external impediments on account of which different human beings of different endowments are not able to harness the natural resources or reap the fruits and benefits of progress & development in equal measure;
- The poor, deprived and disadvantaged are always in need of a helping hand to have access to their just and fair entitlements.

All human beings have a natural and spontaneous yearning for food, light, air, water, health, long life, a clean and congenial existence. To quote from Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore again:

'I look before me a deep dark world  
 A world writhing in anguish  
 A world caged & cabined by narrow, dark and empty cells  
 I need food  
 I need life  
 I need light  
 I need strength  
 I need health, bright long life and delight'

'Ebar Phirao More' by Rabindranath Tagore.

Those who are 'dumb, mute and expressionless', who have passed through many trials and tribulations of life and have suffered many reverses may not have easy access to these entitlements; they would have to be

enabled and facilitated for this purpose. This is no charity or catholicity but what a better endowed person is obliged to do for the less endowed. By doing so, the reservoir of endowments will not be depleted; it will instead acquire a new meaning. Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, therefore, comes out in a full throated voice to arouse and awaken critical consciousness in the 'dumb, mute and expression less', to instil dignity and self-esteem in them. To quote from 'Kadi & Komal' once again:

'into the mouths of these  
Dumb, pale and meek  
we have to infuse the language of the soul  
Into the hearts of these  
Weary and worn, withered and forlorn  
We have to minstrel the language of humanity'.

Adulthood represents 'the best years of our lives'. It also represents a period of stress and strain and painful struggle for sheer survival. Adults are at the peak of their physical and mental powers, strong, virile, aware, agile, alert and alive to the situation in which they are placed. Society accepts them as full-fledged members and offers them an opportunity to make their contribution.

But adulthood is also a phase of doubts and uncertainties. An adult sometimes unsure of his/her own potential may swing like a pendulum between pairs of opposites 'to be or not to be'. It is not easy to be decisive and yet right decisions must be made at the right time in the right manner if life is to be make meaningful and worthy of living. Sometimes the decision making process is as much painful as the decision itself.

Adulthood nevertheless is one of unsuspected possibilities and potentialities. The potential needs to be tapped productively and optimally so that the unbounded energy and elan vital of the best part of a man or woman's life are not frittered away but are fruitfully harnessed for the making of the individual, the family, the community, the society and eventually the nation.

Education is the most potent weapon for such tapping/harnessing as also in the making of a complete woman or man or both. Education develops abilities, enriches knowledge, improves professional qualification and brings about changes in attitudes & behavior. These in totality contribute holistically

to personal development on the one hand and social, economic and cultural development on the other. Viewed in this sense, adult education is neither an independent entity nor an end in itself; it is an integral part of the process of lifelong learning.

What kind of education we need for an adult who while a young child would have very much liked to attend schools and receive education within the four walls of a class room but was deprived of that opportunity – may be on account of parental poverty, may be social and economic compulsions and may be even on account of non-functionality of the system itself. He/she has grown in years. There is a world around him/her which he/she knows and understands. He/she is otherwise, mature, intelligent, sensible and with a world of earthy wit, wisdom and experience. He/she can recognise objects with which he/she is familiar but has no access to the print medium of communication to describe the object or understand the various dimensions of the object. He/she has a lot of oral literacy, can sing, dance, perform on the stage and communicate. The songs composed and tuned may be some of the finest outpourings of human heart conveying a rare depth, intensity and animation of human spirit.

May of them work and live in a situation which for all purposes is akin to bondage. Neither they are aware of the viciousness of the situation nor can they muster enough strength, courage and confidence to break the shackles and fetters of that bondage. They carry the onerous burden in a spirit of non-challant registration to something which according to them is pre-ordained. This is typically characteristic of the culture of silence and dependence. Those who are ignorant and unlettered are no doubt full of earthly wit and wisdom but viewed purely from a mundane sense, they do not know what they know and do not know what they do not know.

Regretfully such a not-too-happy situation is compounded by bundles of fads, ill perceived notions and obscurantist ideas & practices. Ours is a society which is highly caste ridden, heterogeneous and stratified and where rank, status and position of a person is clearly decided on the lines of caste, community and religion. Preference for worth rather than birth is what ushered in the French Revolution of 1789. That message seems to have left little or no impact on the Indian psyche.

To make matters worse, we have bundles of cynics and skeptics who would say 'is literacy necessary? Is it not dispensable? What is it that literacy

per se can achieve for the poor, helpless and hapless sections of the society where everything is decided on lines of caste and social origin?'. Such cynicism and skepticism does not end here. The cynics and skeptics would further ask:

'An adult has outlived his/her utility for literacy. Why burden him/her at this late stage with a routinized and stereotyped manner of imparting literacy and numeracy? Will he/she be able to retain the skills of literacy? Of what use will it be to an adult's life? Is it not sheer waste of resources?'. There is no end to such illogical, irrational and mindless jibes of the so called literate & educated.

It was let open to Anil Bhai to grapple with some of these riddles right from 1957 when he entered the Indian Administrative Service. Totally unorthodox and unconventional in his attitude and approach he had identified himself with the joy & sorrow, laughter & tears, hopes and aspirations of the common man right from his student days. He was greatly influenced by the philosophy of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. As a matter of fact, his intense love for the common man was shaped by the latter. He was an ardent believer in and advocate of what both had said. 'Man', Marx wrote in Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts, 1844, 'is first of all a natural being. As a living natural being he is endowed on the one hand with natural powers, vital power..... these powers exist in him as aptitudes, instincts. On the other hand, as an objective, natural, physical and sensitive being, he is a suffering, dependent and limited being ..... i.e. the objects of his instincts exist outside him, independent of him but are the objects of his need, indispensable and essential for the realisation and confirmation of his substantial powers'.

Elaborating this further, Marx said that living in a capitalist society man is not truly free. He is an alienated being, not quite at home in this world. As he perceives, the more the worker produces the less he has to consume and the more value he creates, the more he devalues himself as both his product and labour are estranged from him. The life of the worker depends on things what he has created but those are not his, so that, instead of finding his rightful existence through his labour he loses it in this world of things what are external to him. Under these conditions, labour denies the fullness of concrete man. Nature, his body, his spiritual essence becomes alien to him. Man is made alien to man.

Functional literacy as perceived by Anil Bhai was to be designed as a tool for removal of such alienation. It was to enable every unlettered adult perceive and internalise the causes and factors responsible for his/her plight and predicament and provide the where withal for liberation therefrom. It was to transcend the narrow and restricted contours of alphabetical literacy. It was, as most appropriately put by Paulo Freire, the outstanding Brazilian adult educator and revolutionary thinker, to be used as the principal instrument to read the world and not merely to read the word.

Additionally functional literacy was to act as a tool of liberation from the following:

- Liberation from dogmas, mindsets, obscurantist ideas and practices and their replacement by a rational, secular and scientific temper;
- Liberation from the culture of acquiescence and submissiveness, trepidation and diffidence and its replacement by a new culture of objective and dispassionate professional scrutiny of issues based purely on hard facts and their relevance and appropriateness;
- Liberation from the culture of mute silence and helpless dependence and its replacement by a new culture of self-esteem, self-assertion and self-efficacy;
- Liberation from the culture of unprincipled segregation, differentiation and discrimination and its replacement by a new culture of complete equality and equity;
- Liberation from the culture of arrogance, impatience, intemperance, intolerance, mindless hatred, wanton cruelty and violence and its replacement by a new culture of tolerance of dissent, a touch of humility in expression, action and conduct, infinite patience, love, kindness, compassion and commiseration;
- Liberation from the culture of hegemony, tyranny, injustice and oppression and its replacement by a new culture of civility, courtesy, consideration and decorum.

'Much rather India remains illiterate than Indians imbibe and assimilate the tenets of fatalism, make beliefs, dogmas and superstitions from a scripture oriented alphabetical literacy acquired through a rote method of memorization is what Anil bhai used to say with a lot of conviction.

The first hand evidence of functional literacy being used as a tool for removal of alienation of man from his surrounding & fellow beings came

before me in course of one of my visits to Mahbubnagar district in Andhra Pradesh in 90s. It was the story of a widow belonging to the SC community attending one of the learning centres which had been opened in the area as part of total literacy campaign launched in that district. On being asked by me as to what had prompted her to come to the learning centre, she replied with a lot of pride: 'After I became a widow I was an inauspicious object in my community. I was alone in this world. Today with the slate, primers and the exercise book, I feel a window to the outside world has been opened up for me. I am no longer alone'. When the National Literacy Mission document was getting ready for approval of the Union Cabinet soon after Anil Bhai had assumed charge as Union Labour Secretary in March 1987 there were divergent views as to what should be the programme objectives. Anil Bhai was, however, clear, unequivocal and decisive about the same and the document bears the indelible and inimitable stamp of his craftsmanship. As he put it in the Mission document:

'Functional literacy in the context of NLM implies achieving self-reliance in Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (numeracy), becoming aware of the causes of ones deprivation and moving towards amelioration of their condition through organisation and participation in the process of development.' This single paragraph which sums up the philosophy of the why of making an unlettered adult functionally literate also epitomises the essence of functional literacy as a tool of social action. In a sense, it also tries to recapture the spirit of education as a potent tool of emancipation of man as it occurs in Paulo Freire's classic 'Pedagogy of the oppressed'. This needs elaboration:

Classroom teaching in Freire's hands becomes an exercise in the development of critical consciousness. Apart from reflecting on important issues it gears students to take action. The teacher and the students are not subjects and objects. Both of them as participants of the teaching learning process learn, question, reflect and participate in the making of meaning of a number of issues. Education in Freire's hands became a lived experience capable of naming or using a vocabulary that dismantles received notions and stirs the critical consciousness of the students towards more innovative thinking. Teaching and learning means working together, not the teachers breathing down the neck of students. Through a new approach and methodology which is fully conversational both the teacher and the learner respect each other's point of view. Dialogue between the two becomes a tool of humanizing individual and social consciousness and leads to informed

action. The latter becomes the ultimate object of the entire teaching learning process.

The million dollar question which remains: How do we translate such a laudable objective to social reality? Can government do it through conventional methods? These were the burning questions before Anil Bhai, his colleagues and coworkers (the author was one amongst them) after the NLM document received the approval of the Cabinet. A picture of firmness, of resolve and decisiveness of action, Anil Bhai had also the candour and humility to acknowledge that (a) social action rests on social mobilisation (b) social mobilisation is the task of a confluence of creative forces and energies such as thinkers, writers, artistes, play wrights who are unconventional and unorthodox in their attitude and approach and certainly not of government which is wedded to soulless rules, regulations & procedures.

Such candid acknowledgement of the limitation of Govt to go in for a massive social mobilisation for literacy on the part of Anil Bhai paved the way for emergence of Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti as a nucleus of powerful forces and energies in Aug. 1989. The BGVS as an umbrella organisation had distinguished educationists, scientists, social and educational activists of the stature of Dr. Malcolm. S. Adisesiah, Prof. Yash Pal, Dr. M.P. Parameswaran, K. Krishna Kumar, Vinod Raina, Prof. Sundararaman, Ms. Shudha Sundararaman, Late Prof. K.M. Narayana Menon, Late Prof. EK Narayanana, to name only a few. Through a relentless search it succeeded in identifying creative thinkers, writers, artistes, play wrights – who can compose, sing and perform on the stage, arouse and awaken critical consciousness of masses in favour of their becoming literate and truly empowered.

It has, therefore, to be acknowledged that without Anil Bhai's firmness tinged with humility, BGVS would not have come into being, without BGVS, the principal catalyzer of TLC experiment of the type as it took shape between late 50s to late 80s in Cuba, Nicaragua, Myanmar, Ethiopia and Vietnam would have remained inconceivable and the history of adult education in India would have been quite different without such TLCs. Anil Bhai knew that India is not the same as Cuba, Myanmar, Ethiopia, Nicaragua and Vietnam. There is a vast difference in terms of their geographical area, landscape, population and culture. In those countries, there was a revolution and campaigns for total literacy were an off shoot of that revolution. The campaigns were a one shot expedition which were carried out with a sense

of urgency and belligerence backed by tremendous political will, total ideological commitment and determination.

In India which has a population which is 6 times the combined population of the above five countries and which is wedded to the culture of democracy, secularism and egalitarianism, a different course had to be adopted. In addition to TLCs which was the most preferred strategy & which was a very well structured mobilization effort, any one and every one who had the urge, inclination & commitment to work for literacy without any expectation of awards, rewards & incentives was welcome to carve out an alternative strategy & work for the mission. This is how Mrs Rajni Kumar, Former Principal, Springdales School (now Chairperson Springdales Education Society) was roped in to launch Delhi schools literacy project with involvement of all the 78 Public schools of Delhi and thousands of teachers and students as volunteers and coordinators to work for that noble cause. The school managements, teachers and young student volunteers proceeded with this task in a very systematic manner with a lot of natural & spontaneous enthusiasm, excitement and dedication. Late Prem Bhai, President, Vanavasi Sevashram of Sonbhadra and a well-known Gandhian was roped in to work for the cause of total literacy in the Bhadoi-Varanasi-Mirzapur-Sonbhadra carpet belt. The same was the case with a number of other NGOs (Bhagabatulla Charitable Trust, MG Foundation, JP Institute of Education), a number of University Departments of Adult & Continuing Education and universities like SNDT University, Mumbai and individual animators like Dr. Vandana Chakrabarty, Rajammal. P. Devadas, Ila Patel, *Sheela Rani Chunkath*, Qudsia Gandhi, Late Chitra Naik, Late Satyen Maitra, Late Ramlal Bhai Parekh, Vimala Ramachandran, Prof S.Y. Shah, Prof Anita Dighe and Prof. CJ Daswani, to name only a few.

Anil Bhai was a visionary who always had a peep into the past and future. He derived inspiration from the past to mould the future of his dreams. What he had prophesied while writing about objectives of functional literacy in the NLM document came true only 5 years later. It started in a small village called Dobigutta in Nellore district. There was an instructional lesson in a Telugu primer which was based on a true life story which ran like this. A landless agricultural labourer of the district is addicted to liquor and becomes a spend thrift. He squanders away all his limited earnings in liquor. Even the earnings of the woman of the home are not spared. All the entreaties of the woman of the home are of no avail. The woman is finally driven to desperation and commits suicide. Such was the power of the narration in the primer and

such was the force with which it was delivered by the volunteer teacher that the women learners of the class are moved to depth. They resolve to teach their drinking husbands a lesson. Thus was born the anti arrack agitation which spread like wild fire to all the 23 districts of the State. Men who were addicted to liquor were driven out of home, ostracized from the community, were tonsured and paraded in the streets. Such was the tremendous unity, integrity and force of the movement led by women and for the empowerment of women that it forced the government of the day in Andhra Pradesh to go in for total prohibition w.e.f. 02.10.92.

The need perceived was need internalised. Women succeeded in identifying the causes & factors responsible for their predicament, mobilised themselves and mustered courage, self-confidence and strength to grapple with and overcome the same. It was a remarkable movement which has few parallels in world history and no force on earth could break it. Through this movement Anil Bhai's vision in the NLM document was fully translated to action at the ground level.

Anil Bhai was a firm behavior in 'Aparigraha' or non-possession, the principal tenet of Jainism. He had a natural and spontaneous love for the unlettered adult. He imbibed this love from his father-late Sri Dadabahi Bordia who was a distinguished educationist of the time, Sri Mohan Singh Mehta or Bhai Saab as he is affectionately known all over Rajasthan and from out of his long association with Seva Mandir, the doyen of NGOs in the field of Adult Education in Rajasthan. An unlettered person according to him is not a goof, certainly not dunderheaded. He/she is also not an empty vessel into which the teacher can pump as much knowledge, information and skills as he can think of as in a banking concept of education. The so called literate and educated have no moral and ethical right to look down upon an unlettered being who is certainly not responsible for what he is or for his plight & predicament.

I would like to conclude with a quotation from Srimad Bhagavad, the original of which is in Sanskrit and which translated into English would read like this:

'I do not crave the eight jewels. I do not seek rebirth or salvation or any life after death. All that I seek is this:

Let me die one thousand deaths so that posterity can live without sorrow. Today by giving away this last drop of water left with me to this thirsty man, my own thirst, languor and giddiness have all disappeared. I feel I am truly liberated'.

This is the story of the great and magnificent king Rantideva who was without an equal in terms of his munificence. Anil Bhai was no less though, if alive, he would have shunned such comparison with mythical characters whose existence he always doubted. He was of the earth earthly, of the heaven heavenly. Alike in his death as in life he shines with rare brilliance, ever steady, ever consistent, ever unmoved like the pole star with a rare courage of conviction amidst pairs of opposites engulfing existence of ordinary mortals.

# Anil Bhai - A Fond Remembrance

*M.L.Mehta*

Anil Bhai as we endearing called him had become an icon during his life time for all those who were working in the fields of education, rural development, gender equity and empowerment of the underprivileged. When an icon disappears from amidst his admirers and co-workers a big void is created. People feel forlorn and dejected with the feeling of loss of their moorings. This was not the way Anil Bhai wanted his colleagues, associates and admirers to feel like. He was part of our being. Physically, he is no more with us but his work, thoughts and ideals keep guiding all those who worked with him. His dedicated and inspired life is a source of inspiration for us.

I met Anil Bordia for the first time in March 1963 when I was preparing for my IAS interview having successfully cleared the written examination. With a rural background, I was not familiar with the mannerism and life style of senior civil servants and also not met personally any IAS officer before. His maternal uncle Dr. M.L. Sisodia who was my colleague in Physics Department at Maharaja College, Jaipur took me to meet with him on a Sunday afternoon. I was expecting an IAS officer with stiff upper lip and was little apprehensive. On the contrary, I found Anil Bordia courtesy personified. He welcomed us with a smile and put me at ease by making personal enquiries about my family background, academic achievements, subjects taken in civil service examination and the preparations that I was making for my interview. In our first meeting, I found him a very affable and warm person. This meeting generated in me both admiration and attraction towards him which continued all through. In 1969-70, we were Collectors of two neighboring districts of Ajmer and Bhilwara in Rajasthan and often met in meetings and social visits and exchanged notes on what we were doing. I must hasten to add that this was mostly one way traffic. He would hardly speak about his work. Being his 7 years junior, I was not averse to informing him as to what I was doing.

From cradle to his last day, he breathed education, thought about education and worked tirelessly for achieving the goals that he cherished for education in India and the developing world. As son of Dada Bhai Kesri Lal Bordia a renowned educationist and Gandhian who devoted his entire life to Vidhya Bhawan, a pioneering educational institution set up by redoubtable Dr. Mohan Singh Mehta, he got baptized in education right from his childhood. What he saw and heard at home and outside during his childhood mostly related to education, scouting, voluntary work and freedom struggle. Young Anil received holistic and liberal education in the sylvan environment of Vidhya Bhawan. The student centric innovative teaching at Vidhya Bhawan developed a spirit of inquiry and concern for the poor and the downtrodden in Anil's mind. Anil Bhai spoke very fondly of his teachers at Vidhya Bhawan and nostalgically remembered the annual camps that the school organized with meticulous care. In these camps, students lived very close to the nature. Camp activities like nature walks, camp fires, common cooking, identification of plants and birds and the like were designed for holistic development of students. Students grew up learning informally from nature, fellow students and their teachers. After his schooling at Vidhya Bhawan, Anil Bhai moved to Delhi to join St Stephen's College for higher education. His social concern, left leanings and commitment for development of the marginalized groups further deepened at St Stephen's. He successfully competed for IAS in 1957 and was allotted his home State cadre of Rajasthan.

He had a lifelong association both in Rajasthan and the centre with the Department of Education/ Ministry of Education or HRD as it was later called. Except for his field posting as collector, Ajmer and a brief stint as Special Secretary, Medical & Health, his postings in Rajasthan were always in the departments related to education. He worked as Director of School Education, Director of College Education, Special Secretary, Education and Development commissioner in Rajasthan. At the centre, he occupied posts of Director, Joint Secretary and Secretary all in the Department of Education in the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Even his brief stay as Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Labour gave him opportunity to look at ways to strengthen labour education, vocation education and release, rehabilitation and education of the bonded child labour. He went to Paris to study and research on education and also closely worked with UNESCO. He made valuable contributions to the deliberations of various international conferences on education. His was a rich life totally devoted to the cause of education.

He worked with Dr. D.S. Kothari in the Kothari Commission and shaped New Education Policy. The idea of starting Navodaya schools in every district for better education of the talented students from rural areas is due to him. He was the prime mover of setting up the National Literacy Mission. Right from his formative years, he realized that institutional building was key for the generation of ideas, development of human resource and research and became very passionate about it. He helped building and nurturing many institutions at State, national and even international level. He worked closely with renowned educationists and thinkers like Dr. J.P. Naik, Dr. Amartya Sen, Acharya Ramamurthy, Dr Yash Pal and others

His sharp and crisp interventions were always welcome in various national and international forums where people discussed various issues relating to education be it universal access, affordability, equity and quality. Clarity of vision, wealth of field experience from village up to national and international level and ability of logical thinking based on deep analysis added to the quality of his interventions and advice. Relentlessly, he pushed forward the cause of education of the underprivileged particularly, of the children from marginalized groups like SCs, STs, Dalits and Minorities. Empowerment of women was also his focus area. While working as Development Commissioner, Rajasthan he launched the seminal **Women Development Programme** built around trained village women called Sathins acting as change agents. They were to raise voice of women in the feudal social milieu prevailing in the State through mobilization, information sharing and building their collective strength. The famous struggle waged on behalf of Bhanwari Devi against her rapist oppressors exemplifies this. The programme was a great success in giving voice and courage to village women to fight for their rights and against their oppression and marginalization and became precursor to the launching of similar programmes like Mahila Samakhya in other States.

After retirement, he decided to shift base to Rajasthan, his home State for further work. He authored Lok Jumbish (People's Movement) and implemented it with support from SIDA and Government of Rajasthan. The State Government made him Chairman of the Lok Jumbish Perished & gave him ample space to experiment and develop innovative processes for school mapping, need based school location planning, improving quality through training and motivation of teachers, bringing out improvements in the school building design, involving local communities in school support

system and supervision. Soon Lok Jumbish programme became toast of educationists in India and elsewhere and was well appreciated.

In 1999, he moved out of Lok Jumbish to build another innovative programme called 'Doosra Dashak', which focuses on the second decade of a person's life. During this period, the child first becomes a teenager and then grows in to adulthood. In this phase of life, one needs to have negotiating skills, livelihood related skills, social and political understanding, information on reproductive health and awareness about citizen duties and rights. The school dropouts in rural areas generally crowd this age space. However, the traditional school education does not emphasize any of the above stated issues. Devoid of life skill education, the school drop outs that are mostly in the second decade of their life face major problems in life. With help from philanthropic organizations like SDTT and Action Aid, Anil Bhai implemented this programme in few blocks of Rajasthan as pilot experiment. Socially oriented idealistic village youth were picked up as field workers and efforts were constantly made to build their strength through training, giving them enriched work experience and by exposing them to thinking of social activists, professionals and social workers. Well planned annual camps were regularly held Mount Abu/Pushkar for training and capacity building of the field workers and the staff. These were hugely successful in inculcating social ethos and generating a spirit of inquiry in the participants. For accelerated education of the youth, 6 months residential camps, forerunner of KGBVs were held where inmates received holistic education in tension free atmosphere. Many of the learners later got mainstreamed i to regular schools. To build their collective strength, young men and women were organized in groups of Yuwa Sanghs and Mahila Jagori groups for developing their collective strength, making them aware of their rights available under various laws and their duties and ways to fight for these. Libraries and Science centres opened in the project area functioned as resource centres for continuing education of the project staff and youth associated with the programme with focus on the capacity loading of change agents and preparing them for leadership role. It is a measure of success of the programme and Anil Bhai's contribution in developing such an innovative programme that the programme is as vibrant and vigorous today as it was when he was alive.

For strengthening civil society, he built up and nurtured many non-government organizations. Earliest was Bikaner Adult Education Society and csame Ajmer Adult Education Society during his posting Collector, Ajmer. Rajasthan Adult Education Association was founded with the involvement of

educationists like Dr. M.S. Mehta, Dr. Chhagan Mohta, Tej Karan Dandia and Vishnu Dutt Sharma to name a few. Then he formed Sandhan in early 1980s in association with people like Prof. Yash Pal, Gopi Arora, Dr. P.K. Sethi and Dr. G.P. Paliania and remained its guiding spirit all through. On his command, I too was sucked in Sandhan in 1987 when I became its Secretary. My association with Sandhan has continued since then. He also supported SWRC, MKSS, Sankalp and many other NGOs.

Anil Bhai felt equally at home in the company of villagers as also that of senior dignitaries of national and international organizations. He was an unassuming person. There was nothing artificial about him. He had courage of conviction and carried himself with confidence. He was a multi-faceted person. In the company of social workers, he was a social worker, a bureaucrat among bureaucrats and an intellectual in the company of intellectuals and men of letters. He was a dignified person who had no malice towards any one and enthusiastically helped the needy. He steadfastly held to the principles he held dear and did not compromise. He was a visionary and tirelessly worked for converting his vision in to reality. Even with failing health, he agreed to chair a committee on RTE for harmonizing and operationalizing provisions of RTE with ongoing educational programmes and brought out a very useful report.

His advice was sought by Nelson Mandela. He travelled to South Africa quite frequently to meet with him and his advisers. In recognition of his work, UNESCO honoured him with prestigious Avicenna Award and as a result he joined galaxy of Heads of State and other distinguished recipients of this award. President of India recognized his outstanding contribution to the cause of literature and education in India and abroad by conferring on him Padma Bhushan award in 2010.

Anil Bhai has left behind a rich legacy and a legion of admirers who seek inspiration from his personality and deeds even when he is no more in physical frame with them. He would continue to inspire them in future as well. Even while missing him, we feel his presence.

# Anil Bordia – A Visionary Bureaucrat

**B.S. Garg**

Shri Anil Bordia was born in an illustrious family of Jains. His father was Shri Dada Bhai Bordia who was a close associate of Shri Mohan Singh Mehta and Shri Kalu Lal Shrimali. Originally, Shri Dada Bhai was from Indore but due to his close association with Shri Mehta he came and settled in Udaipur and played an important role in the establishment of Vidya Bhawan, an educational institution with a lot of difference. It introduced new trends in education, particularly for social upliftment of under privileged based on the policy of '*Buniyadi Shiksha*' of Mahatma Gandhi. Shri Anil Bordia got his school education at Vidya Bhawan and that may be one of the reasons for his devotion and concern for the development of society through education and particularly adult education. Eventhough, he was in the Indian Administrative Service, which was famously called the "Iron Frame", he was equally an academician whom I personally could see on many occasions in the meetings, seminars, conferences, lectures and in his writings.

I know Shri Anil Bordia for long and people fondly called him Anil Bhai and hence, I also started addressing him in the same way right from the first meeting. He was second to none to show love and affection to others. He started calling me as Garg Saab and it continued till the end.

Shri Bordia was one of the successful Education Directors of Rajasthan. When he was Director of Secondary Education, he took initiative to start a journal namely "*SHIVIRA*" in Hindi to provide platform for the teachers to express their views freely with regard to education. Soon the journal became popular among the teachers and educational administrators. He also introduced the concept of Social Education in which he made non-formal education and other co-curricular and extra-curricular activities an integral part.

As a person from Rajasthan he was deeply concerned about the low literacy rate of the state, particularly the female literacy. Hence, as Union Indian Journal of Adult Education, Vol. 74 (3); July-September 2013, pp. 49-51

Education Secretary while helping the low literacy states to implement durable education/adult education programmes, Shri Bordia supported a lot the state of Rajasthan also. In 1987, he initiated the "*Shikshakarmi*" Programme in Rajasthan which addressed the issue of absenteeism and defunct schools. This helped a lot to achieve universalization of primary education in the state.

When Shri Bordia was a senior officer in the Union Ministry of Education/ Human Resource Development, he was instrumental in bringing a number of forward looking programmes for educational improvement of children and adults which have formed an important part of the educational history of India. To mention a few the Bihar Education Project (BEP) to improve primary education in the educationally backward state of Bihar, '*Mahila Samakhya*' for empowering women through education, District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) to improve the quality and content of primary education in educationally backward districts all over the country, National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) and National Literacy Mission (NLM) to educate the adult non-literates who have left the main stream of education for one reason or the other.

In the International forum also Shri Anil Bordia was recognized as an administrator blended with academic abilities. He had the opportunity to serve as Educational Advisor to Government of Nigeria and South Africa and during his tenure he laid strong foundation for the education system of both the countries. When South Africa got freedom in 1994 he was specially invited by Mr. Nelson Mandela to draft the education policy of South Africa. It was a great honour not only to him but also for the whole community of educationists and educational administrators of India.

In 1992, after his retirement from government service, he launched the people's movement for education and named it as "*Lok Jumbish*" and again in 2001 another programme was started by him called "*Doosra Dashak*" with the objective of promoting education and development among the youth.

Every person working in the field of education felt proud when Shri Bordia was conferred Padma Bhushan by the President of India in the year 2010. Infact, Unesco recognized his services in 1999 itself by conferring the prestigious "*Avicenna Gold Medal*" for exceptional contribution to educational development.

When he died on September 2, 2012 the entire country felt that the champion of educational development had left this materialistic world with a deep impression of his yeoman services for the common people. However, the flame he lighted is still there and will continue to drive away the darkness of ignorance forever.

## अनिल बोर्डिया: एक जीवंत शख्सियत

मन के घाव पर मरहम जैसा था वो

शुभू पटवा

किसी ऐसे व्यक्ति के बारे में, जो एक खुली किताब हो, कुछ कहना कठिन होता है, तो सरल भी। कठिन तो इसलिए कि अगर आप उसे ठीक से जानते हैं और किताब का हर पन्ना (पृष्ठ) पढ़ने का धैर्य रखते हैं, तो दिक्कत यह आती है कि आप कहां से शुरू करें और कहां ले जाकर अपनी बात समाप्त करें। यही बात आपके लिए सरल भी हो सकती है कि आप कहीं से भी शुरू करें और जहां मन आये अपनी कही बात को संपूर्ण मान लें। सच मानिए कि आपके कहे को न अपूर्ण माना जाएगा और न ही संपूर्ण क्योंकि सम्पूर्ण तो कुछ होता ही नहीं है। जिनका मैं जिक्र करना चाहता हूँ – उनका व्यक्तित्व कुछ-कुछ ऐसा ही था। यह व्यक्ति नहीं – समाज था, संस्था थी। आपको बता दूँ – यह व्यक्ति था, स्वनामधन्य (स्वर्गीय ) अनिल बोर्डिया।

वे भारत में और बाहर भी उच्च प्रशासनिक अधिकारी रहे थे। जो लोग दूर से, केवल नाम भर से जानते थे, वे भी यह मानते थे कि एक उच्च प्रशासनिक अधिकारी होते हुए भी वे सर्वप्रथम अपने को एक इंसान मानते थे। एक सच्चा, संवेदनशील इंसान।

वे लोग जो उनसे परिचित थे और साथ-साथ काम कर चुके थे, वे भी यह मानते थे कि अनिल बोर्डिया भले अपने मन में कोई बात संजो कर रखते हों, पर दूसरे की बात को सम्मान भी देते थे और आदर भी। सुनना और पूरे धैर्य के साथ सुनना व इसमें पूरी सहिष्णुता रखना उनके स्वभाव में था। बशर्ते कि सामने वाला आदमी बे-सिर-पैर की बात न कर रहा हो, सिलसिलेवार अपना पक्ष रख रहा हो और कृतर्क नहीं, तर्कपूर्ण रूप से कहने की क्षमता रखता हो। ऐसे किसी भी व्यक्ति की बात वे न केवल सुनते थे बल्कि गौर से सुनते थे और अनेक मर्तबा उसकी बात को हृदय से स्वीकार भी कर लेते थे। ऐसे व्यक्ति के लिए फिर किसी भी स्तर पर सहकार-सहयोग के लिए वे किसी भी तरह की हदबंदी के बंदी वे नहीं बन सकते थे। तब उनके लिए हद-बेहद कुछ नहीं होता

था। ऐसे अनेक किस्से और अनेक लोग आज भी उपस्थित मिलेंगे जो मेरे उपरोक्त कथन की पुष्टि कर रहे हैं।

वे लोग जो राज्य प्रशासन में उनके साथ रह चुके हैं — चाहे छोटे चाहे बड़े या फिर अधिकारी के स्तर के। योग्यता व क्षमता के आधार पर उनको काम की पूरी स्वायत्तता वे देते थे। बात-बात में ही अपनी मंशा बता देना और बात ही बात में सामने वाले की मंशा को भांप लेना उनके लिए कभी कठिन नहीं रहा। स्वायत्तता का पैमाना भी वे इसी आधार पर तय करते थे।

भारतीय प्रशासनिक सेवा के शुरुआती वर्षों की बात का मैं स्मरण दिलाना चाहता हूँ। वे बीकानेर में राज्य स्तर के शिक्षा निदेशालय में सन् 1964 में अतिरिक्त शिक्षा निदेशक होकर आए थे। तब उनकी सहधर्मिणी श्रीमती ओत्तिमा बोर्डिया बीकानेर की जिलाधीश (जिला कलेक्टर नहीं) होकर साथ-साथ आई थीं। उन्हीं दिनों श्री शिवरतन थानवी नाम के एक शिक्षक (लेखक भी और प्रछन्न पत्रकार भी) राजस्थान के शिक्षा विभाग में कार्यरत थे और बोरुंदा (जोधपुर जिला) में उनका पद-स्थापन था। न मालूम कैसे थानवी जी पर उनकी नजर पड़ी, वे बोरुंदा आ धमके। और तो और वे उस विद्यालय में उनकी ही कक्षा में जा बैठे, जहां थानवी जी छात्रों को अंग्रेजी पढ़ा रहे थे। तब शायद समझा गया होगा कि निदेशक के नाते नए-नए अधिकारी उत्साहवश ऐसा करते ही हैं। पर, ऐसा नहीं था। लगा होगा कि अनिल बोर्डिया शायद उनको पढ़ाते देख लेना चाहते थे। जानकारी तो थानवी जी के बारे में संभवतः अपने स्तर पर पहले से ही उन्होंने पा ली थी।

फिर क्या था, उन्होंने सांयकाल थानवी जी को वहां बुला लिया, जहां वे ठहरे थे। श्री शिवरतन थानवी खुद इस घटना का बयान इस तरह करते हैं—'घोर आश्चर्य ! राजस्थान की शिक्षा का एक मालिक एक मामूली शिक्षक को उसके गांव (वह गांव, जहां उनकी नियुक्ति थी) आकर पूछता है कि वह बीकानेर आने को राजी हैं कि नहीं ?'

स्वर्गीय अनिल बोर्डिया उन दिनों नौजवान थे। शायद तीसरे साल की उम्र रही होगी उनकी। वे भारतीय प्रशासनिक सेवा में सन् 1957 में आ गए थे। 5 मई 1934 को इंदौर (मध्यप्रदेश) में जन्में स्व. बोर्डिया ने सन् 1964 से 1968 तक राजस्थान के अतिरिक्त शिक्षा (स्कूली) निदेशक के रूप में कार्य किया था। 2 सितंबर, 2012 को इस

धरती से विदा लेने वाले स्वर्गीय अनिल बोर्डिया केंद्रीय शिक्षा सचिव के पद पर भी रहे और यहीं से भारतीय प्रशासनिक अधिकारी के रूप में सन् 1992 को सेवा निवृत्त हुए। यहीं रहते हुए सन् 1986 में बनी **राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति** के निर्माण में उन्होंने अपना योगदान दिया और साक्षरता और प्रौढ़ शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में भारत की आपकी पहचान बनी। संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ ने आपकी अप्रतिम सेवाताओं के लिए विश्व विख्यात **'एविसेना सम्मान'** (1999) प्रदान किया। यूनेस्को ने 10 फरवरी सन् 2010 को जब **'गांधी सेवा मेडल'** प्रदान किया तो न केवल स्वयं बोर्डिया, संपूर्ण शिक्षा जगत में यह घटना आदर व सम्मान के साथ देखी गई। तब बोर्डिया जी शासकीय सेवा में नहीं थे। राजस्थान के एक गांव में शिक्षा को ही लेकर एक कार्यक्रम (दूसरा दशक) में उपस्थित थे। किसी को कानों-कान खबर न थी। अनिल बोर्डिया भी बेखबर ही थे। उसी गांव (फलौदी तहसील के क्षेत्र का एक गांव बाप) में यूनेस्को के प्रतिनिधि (महानिदेशक) पहुंचे और चलते 'जलसे' में जब **'गांधी सेवा मेडल'** सम्मान से उन्हें विभूषित किया गया तो वहां उपस्थितों के लिए वे क्षण अविस्मरणीय हो गए। इसी साल (सन् 2010) में उनको भारत सरकार ने भी **'पद्म भूषण'** से सम्मानित किया। वे यूनेस्को शिक्षा संस्थान के अंतर्राष्ट्रीय अध्यक्ष भी रहे। विश्व की कई सरकारों के शिक्षा सलाहकार भी रहे और अनेक अंतर्राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा सम्मेलनों में भी सम्मिलित होते रहे, पर उनकी पहचान सन् 1964-68 की अवधि में बीकानेर के माध्यमिक शिक्षा निदेशालय के काम-काज से ही स्थापित हुई। इस पद पर रहते हुए शिक्षा निदेशालय के संपूर्ण कामकाज को व्यवस्थित करने से लेकर गुरुजनों की गरिमा और समाज तथा शासन में शिक्षकों का सम्मान बढ़ाने जैसे कार्य वे करने लगे। स्वर्गीय अनिल बोर्डिया के उस कार्य को आज भी उल्लेखनीय और स्मरणीय माना जाता है।

इसी अवधि में उन्होंने राज्य शिक्षा निदेशालय से एक मासिक पत्रिका **'शिविरा'** और एक अन्य त्रैमासिक **'नया शिक्षक/टीचर टू डे'** का प्रकाशन शुरू किया। श्री शिवरतन थानवी को इसी हेतु वे बोरुंदा से बीकानेर लेकर आए। इन पत्रिकाओं के माध्यम से स्वर्गीय अनिल बोर्डिया राज्य भर में फैले शिक्षक समाज को एक ऐसा मंच देने को उत्सुक थे कि जहां उनकी रचनात्मक प्रतिभा निखर कर सामने आ सके। शायद उनके मन में यह कल्पना रही हो कि शिक्षक समुदाय में भी एक रचनाकार छिपा रहता है और उसके लिए उसका अपना एक 'मंच' होना जरूरी है। पर, प्रकारांतर से वे इतना भर ही नहीं चाहते थे। वे संभवतः चाहते थे कि शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में इस तरह से नवाचार आए। सच में, यदि शिक्षा में ही नवोन्मेष नहीं होगा तो समाज में नव ऊर्जा, नव चेतना और नव तेजस्विता की कल्पना ही कैसे की जा सकती है? यही उन्होंने सोचा होगा

और ऐसा ही सोचकर उन्होंने 'शिविरा पत्रिका' शुरू की होगी। इसका प्रकाशन राज्य की प्राथमिक और माध्यमिक शिक्षा निदेशालय, बीकानेर की ओर से अनवरत हो रहा है। जून 2013 में इस मासिकी का तिरपेनवां साल पूरा हो रहा है और जुलाई, 2013 का महीना इस पत्रिका के प्रकाशन अवधि का चौवनवां वर्ष कहलाएगा।

यह 'शिविरा पत्रिका' पहले एक साल तक 'विभागीय गजट' की तरह ही प्रकाशित होती रही। फिर कालांतर में इसे 'शिविरा पत्रिका' का नाम दे दिया गया। श्री शिवरतन थानवी ने इसका संपादकीय उत्तरदायित्व सम्हाला और लगातार तेरह वर्षों तक शिविरा (मासिक) और नया शिक्षक/टीचर टू डे के संपादक रहे। आजकल यह दायित्व श्री ओमप्रकाश सारस्वत सम्हाल रहे हैं। हमें मानना होगा कि जब तक 'शिविरा पत्रिका' रहेगी, अनिल बोर्डिया भी रहेंगे ही।

बीकानेर में ही पदस्थापित रहते हुए बोर्डिया जी का दूसरा काम रहा शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में समाज का सहयोग लिया जाना और इसके लिए समाज को उपयुक्त मंच उपलब्ध कराया जाना। मैं नहीं जानता कि शासन की ओर से तब अपनी नौकरशाही को ऐसा करने की कोई स्वतंत्रता भी थी क्या? हां! मैं यह जानता हूँ कि देश के आजाद होने से पूर्व जो कार्य समाज की पहल पर सरलता से हो जाया करते थे, स्वाधीनता के बाद उन्हीं कार्यों के लिए यह समाज शासन का मोहताज बनने लगा था, या बना दिया गया था। पर, स्वर्गीय अनिल बोर्डिया शायद शुरू से ही जानते थे कि समाज से ऊपर या बढ़ कर कोई हो ही नहीं सकता है। ऐसा इसलिए भी माना जा सकता है कि वे जिस कुल में पैदा हुए थे वह स्वर्गीय केशरीलाल बोर्डिया का कुल था। स्व. के.एल. बोर्डिया उनके पिता थे, जो शिक्षा व समाज-कर्म में तत्समय में अग्रणी माने जाते थे। उनकी प्रारंभिक शिक्षा-दीक्षा उदयपुर (राजस्थान) में हुई थी और उदयपुर उस समय भी राजस्थान में इस क्षेत्र में अग्रणी शहर था।

तो जैसा मैंने कहा, उनका दूसरा महत्वपूर्ण कार्य समाज का सहयोग प्राप्त करना रहा और इसके लिए समाज को उपयुक्त व सम्मानजनक मंच प्रदान करना रहा। इस काम की शुरुआत उन्होंने अत्यंत सुचिंतित, सुविचारित व वर्तमान समय के हालातों को समझते हुए की। यह कार्य था - एक सार्वजनिक संस्था (स्वैच्छिक संगठन) की स्थापना। 'बीकानेर प्रौढ़ शिक्षण समिति' के नाम से जुलाई 1965 में ही एक संस्था का अस्तित्व में आ जाना इस बात का प्रमाण है कि एक उच्च प्रशासनिक अधिकारी न केवल अपने समाज के प्रति सजग हैं, अपितु वह यह जानता भी है कि समाज ही

सर्वोपरि होता है और इस तरह सामाजिक उत्तरदायित्वों का निर्वाह करना प्रकारांतर से समाज का जो ऋण व्यक्ति पर होता है, उससे मुक्त होने की ही क्रिया है। बीकानेर के तत्समय के सभी क्षेत्रों के विचारशील व सामाजिक कार्यों में सक्रिय, सजग रहने वाले लोगों के साथ गहन विचार-मंथन के बाद 'बीकानेर प्रौढ़ शिक्षण समिति' (स्वैच्छिक संस्था) का गठन किया गया। स्व. अनिल बोर्डिया इसके संस्थापकों में से थे और जीवनपर्यंत इस संस्था के साधारण सदस्य रहे। 'बीकानेर प्रौढ़ शिक्षण समिति' पहला बिरवा था, जो सार्वजनिक संस्था के रूप में उनके हाथों रोपा गया और इस संस्था ने न केवल बीकानेर जिला बल्कि राजस्थान में भी अपने काम की पहचान बनाई। यह संस्था आज भी अस्तित्व में है।

संस्थाएं उनके हाथों और भी स्थापित हुईं, पर 'बीकानेर प्रौढ़ शिक्षण समिति' ऐसी पहली संस्था है जो उनके हाथों स्थापित हुई थी। फिर तो राजस्थान प्रौढ़ शिक्षण समिति (सन् 1973), संधान (सन् 1983), राजस्थान ऐजूकेशन फाउंडेशन (सन् 2000), के जनक भी अनिल बोर्डिया ही रहे। ये सभी संस्थाएं आज भी अपने-अपने क्षेत्र में उल्लेखनीय कार्य कर रही हैं।

**लोक जुंबिश** नाम से जिस संस्था ने राजस्थान में शिक्षा के उन्नयन का काम किया, उसके जनक भी स्वर्गीय अनिल बोर्डिया ही थे। यह संस्था एक स्वायत्त संगठन था और भारत सरकार के शिक्षा सचिव के पद से मुक्त होने के बाद वे इसके अध्यक्ष मनोनीत हुए। **लोक जुंबिश** के लिए भारत सरकार, राजस्थान सरकार तथा किसी विदेशी वित्तीय संस्थान ने वित्तीय संसाधन जुटाए थे पर, इसके कल्पनाकार बोर्डिया जी ही थे। लोक जुंबिश के कामों को, शिक्षा में इसके नवाचारों और प्रयोगों को आज भी स्मरण किया जाता है और एक मिसाल की तरह उन कार्यों को गिनाया जाता है। **लोक जुंबिश** सन् 1992 में ही अस्तित्व में आया, जब स्व. बोर्डिया भारत सरकार की सेवाओं से मुक्त हो गए थे। **लोक जुंबिश परिशद** के अध्यक्ष के रूप में आपने 1 जुलाई 1992 से 30 जून 1999 तक कार्य किया और फिर इस पद से मुक्त हो गए।

स्व. अनिल बोर्डिया चुप होकर बैठने वाले शख्सों में से कभी नहीं रहे। वे मानते और समझते रहे कि सामाजिक विषमता को दूर करने का कोई कारगर अहिंसक अस्त्र हो सकता है तो वह 'शिक्षा' ही हो सकता है। इसीलिए शिक्षा के माध्यम से जनजागरूकता के लिए वे सतत प्रयत्नशील रहे। अगस्त, 2001 में उन्होंने 'फाउंडेशन फॉर ऐजूकेशन एंड डेवलपमेंट' नामक संस्था का गठन किया तथा इसके अध्यक्ष और

प्रबंध न्यासी के रूप में मनोनीत हुए। इसी के माध्यम से दस से बीस साल तक के किशोर-किशोरियों और युवजनों के लिए शिक्षा और आजीविका का काम राजस्थान में शुरू किया। इस परियोजना का नाम दिया 'दूसरा दशक'। इसके माध्यम से बोर्डिया जी ने राजस्थान के कई क्षेत्रों में जो कार्य शुरू किया वह युगांतरकारी माना गया। वर्तमान में दूसरा दशक का कार्य राजस्थान के सात जिलों की नौ पंचायत समिति क्षेत्रों में जिस तरह से संचालित हो रहा है, उससे पता चलता है कि एक 'प्रतिबद्ध टीम' किस प्रकार से परिवर्तन के लिए अग्रसर हो सकती है। 'टीम' बनाना और साथी कार्यकर्ताओं को जुटाना उनकी ऐसी विशिष्टता और कला रही है, जो अन्यत्र विरल है। वे कार्यकर्ताओं के बीच एक सामान्य कार्यकर्ता की तरह अपने कार्य-व्यवहार को ढालने में सिद्धहस्त थे। इसीलिए हर छोटा-बड़ा कार्यकर्ता आदर व सम्मान के साथ उनको 'अनिल भाई' नाम से पुकारता व संबोधित करते हुए अनहद गुमान महसूस करता रहा है।

ऐसे अनिल बोर्डिया ताजिंदगी लोगों की जिंदगी को संवारने में लगे रहे और 2 सितम्बर 2012 को रात दस बजे अंतिम सांस ले इस धरती से विदा हो गए।

उनकी स्मृति में 8 सितम्बर 2012 को एक 'सर्वधर्म सद्भावना सभा' जयपुर में हुई। आठ सितम्बर का दिन विश्व साक्षरता दिवस है। यही दिन स्वर्गीय बोर्डिया को याद करने का दिवस बन गया तो लगा कि जिस व्यक्ति ने शिक्षा और साक्षरता को अपने जीवन का हिस्सा जो बना लिया था, तो ऐसे व्यक्ति की स्मृति में यही दिन सर्वथा उपयुक्त कहा जा सकता था और सायास-अनायास यही दिन चुना गया।

8 सितम्बर 2012 के 'सर्व धर्म सद्भावना सभा' में न किसी प्रकार का विलाप था और न किसी ने यह कहा ही कि उनकी क्षति 'अपूर्णीय' है। कुछेक लोगों ने उस मौके पर जो कहा वह स्मरणीय अवश्य रहा। जिन और जैसे कामों में स्वर्गीय बोर्डिया का रुझान देखा गया था, उन्हीं सबसे गुफित वह कार्यक्रम – जिसका यह लेखक स्वयं एक साक्षी है – आज भी याद किया जाता है। वहां उपस्थितों को लगा कि अनिल भाई यहीं-कहीं, उनके आजू-बाजू में बैठे हैं। उनकी अलग-अलग छवियों (चित्रों की झलक) के साथ फिल्म की तरह उस कार्यक्रम के प्रारंभ में पार्श्व में ही एक गीत चल रहा था –

बहती हवा सा था वो

उड़ती पतंग सा था वो

कहां गया उसे ढूंढो...  
 सुलगती धूप में छांव के जैसा  
 रेगिस्तान में गांव के जैसा  
 मन के घाव पे मरहम जैसा था वो

हमको तो राहें थी चलाती  
 वो खुद अपनी राह बनाता  
 गिरता संभलता मस्ती में चलता था वो

सच ही ! अनिल भाई के दुर्लभ चित्रों के साथ उपर्युक्त गीत के बोल सजीव ही हो उठे थे। हर किसी को लगने लगा कि सचमुच ही मृत्यु पर विजय पा लेने का यह एक 'उत्सव' था। एक मरणोत्तर जीवन का असली स्मरण। वे मृत्युंजय होकर रह गए। उनकी याद सदा बनी रहेगी।

सही अर्थों में वे उन गिने-चुने लोगों में से एक थे जो कभी एक कार्यकर्ता, एक 'सोशल एक्टिविस्ट' के रूप में दिखाई देते थे तो कभी 'घाघ' नौकरशाह के रूप में नजर आने लगते थे। विश्व ख्याति प्राप्त नेल्सन मंडेला के साथ उनकी करीबी थी और चर्चा-परामर्श होता था, तो गांव में रहने वाली धापू दादी भी उनकी बलाईयां लेती दिखाई देती थी। शमीम भाटी और विभा जैसी अनेक नव युवतियां आगे बढ़ने के लिए उनसे प्रोत्साहन पाती थी। वे शिक्षा में ही ऐसी क्षमता देखते थे जो व्यक्ति की अस्मिता का रक्षक हो सकता है। इसीलिए शिक्षा के माध्यम से ही वे 'निर्मय मन और सिर ऊंचा' जैसा लक्ष्य हासिल करना चाहते थे।

बच्चों और किशोर-किशोरियों की शिक्षा, कामगरों और स्वैच्छिक कार्यकर्ताओं के लिए स्वाभिमान का जीवन जीने की हिकमत पैदा करने वाले विरले लोगों में वे एक थे। महिला सशक्तिकरण के लिए देश-प्रदेश में उजास फैलाने वाली वे ऐसी ज्योति-सम प्रतीत होते थे, जिसकी प्रकाश रश्मियां चहुं ओर देखी जा सकती हैं।

पर, कोई यह न समझे कि इन प्रकाश रश्मियों के मार्ग में दुस्वारियां कभी नहीं रहीं। अनिल भाई के जीवन में अनेक दुस्वारियां भी थीं, पर यह उनकी ही फनकारी थी कि उन सब से वे पार पा गए। मुझे निदा फाजली की ये पंक्तियां - 'मन बैरागी तन

अनुरागी कदम-कदम दुस्वारी है, जीवन जीना सरल न जानो बहुत बड़ी फनकारी है' - उन पर सर्वथा सही चरितार्थ हो रही लगती है।

उनका अवसान समय का चक्र है और ताजीवन इस समय-चक्र को वे अपनी तरह चलाते रहे। पर, कभी गुमान नहीं रहा। उनकी पार्थिव देह हमारे मध्य नहीं है। वह कब किसी के मध्य रही है, पर उनका प्रेरक व्यक्तित्व सदा हमारे सम्मुख रहेगा।

मुझे कविगुरु रवीन्द्रनाथ ठाकुर का यह पद याद आ रहा है -

सांध्य रवि ने कहा मेरा काम लेगा कौन  
रह गया सुनकर जगत सारा निरुत्तर मौन  
एक माटी के दिए ने नम्रता के साथ  
कहा जितना हो सकेगा मैं करूंगा नाथ।

## श्री अनिल बोर्डिया : एक चुम्बकीय व्यक्तित्व कुछ संस्मरण

कैलाश चौधरी

श्री अनिल बोर्डिया से मेरा प्रथम परिचय भोपाल में हुआ जब वे भारत सरकार के शिक्षा मंत्रालय में संयुक्त सचिव थे। भोपाल में राज्य संसाधन केन्द्र का दायित्व म. प्र. प्रौढ़ शिक्षा संघ को सौंपा गया था और उसी के द्वारा एक राज्य स्तरीय संगोष्ठी का आयोजन किया जा रहा था। संगोष्ठी के दो समूहों में से एक के अध्यक्ष श्री अनिल सदगोपाल थे। दूसरे समूह का अध्यक्ष मैं स्वयं था जिसे प्रौढ़ शिक्षा कार्यक्रमों में स्वैच्छिक संस्थाओं की भूमिका पर अपनी रपट देनी थी। हमारा प्रतिवेदन लीक से हटकर था जिसमें स्वैच्छिक संस्थाओं की भागीदारी पर बल दिया गया था। संगोष्ठी में प्रतिभाग कर रहे सरकारी अधिकारी इसके प्रति उदासीन थे। पर प्रतिवेदन प्रस्तुत कर जैसे ही मैं मंच से उतरा श्री बोर्डिया मेरी पीठ थपथपाने लगे जो स्वैच्छिक संस्थाओं के प्रति उनके जीवन भर चले अडिग विष्वास व स्नेह का प्रतीक था।

भारतीय प्रौढ़ शिक्षा संघ द्वारा प्रकाशित इण्डियन जरनल ऑफ एडल्ट एजुकेशन के वे मानद सम्पादक रहे जिसके सम्पादन के लिए वे सायं काल के समय संघ के कार्यालय में स्कूटर से आकर सम्पादन कार्य करते थे।

1977 में उदयपुर में अखिल भारतीय प्रौढ़ शिक्षा सम्मेलन का आयोजन हुआ। इन्टरनेशनल कौंसिल ऑफ एडल्ट एजुकेशन का अधिवेशन भी इस सम्मेलन के साथ ही रखा गया था जिसका आयोजन राजस्थान विद्यापीठ उदयपुर द्वारा किया गया था।

उदयपुर श्री बोर्डिया का गृहनगर है। वहां आयोजित सम्मेलन में मुझे न केवल श्री बोर्डिया को वरन उनके पिता श्री केशरीलालजी बोर्डिया के परस्पर विरोधी विचारों को भी तर्कसंगत रूप से सुनने का अवसर प्राप्त हुआ। जहां दादाभाई बोर्डिया स्वैच्छिक संगठनों और प्रौढ़ शिक्षा आंदोलन का पक्ष तीखे व अत्यन्त सशक्त रूप से रख रहे थे वहीं श्री बोर्डिया, सरकारी पृष्ठभूमि से आने के कारण अत्यंत संतुलित रूप से अपनी बात कह रहे थे।

भारतीय प्रौढ़ शिक्षा संघ द्वारा आयोजित प्रौढ़ शिक्षा सम्मेलनों में श्री बोर्डिया नियमित प्रतिनिधि रहे। अपने व्यस्त कार्यक्रमों में से वे संघ के सम्मेलनों के लिए न केवल समय निकालते थे वरन शिद्वत से परिचर्चाओं में भाग लेकर अपने विचार भी रखते थे। उनके विचार न केवल प्रतिनिधियों के लिए वरन संघ के लिए भी दिशासूचक होते थे।

भारतीय प्रौढ़ शिक्षा संघ ने नवम्बर 1978 में कोयम्बटूर (तमिलनाडू) में अखिल भारतीय प्रौढ़ शिक्षा सम्मेलन आयोजित किया था जिसका मूल विचार विषय था "राष्ट्रीय प्रौढ़ शिक्षा कार्यक्रम : आरंभिक चरण की उपलब्धियां"। श्री बोर्डिया ने इस अवसर पर जाकिर हुसैन व्याख्यान 'दि विजन ऑफ ए लर्निंग सोसायटी' विषय पर प्रदान किया। वे संघ की कार्यकारिणी के भी नियमित सदस्य थे तथा बैठकों में सक्रिय रूप से भाग लेते थे।

संघ की स्वर्ण जयंती के अवसर पर मई 1989 में दिल्ली के हिमाचल भवन में एक सम्मेलन आयोजित किया गया था जिसमें कुछ अपरिहार्य कारणों से उपस्थित न होने के कारण श्री बोर्डिया ने खेद व्यक्त किया था। इस सम्मेलन का उद्घाटन तत्कालीन केन्द्रीय मंत्री श्री वसन्त साठे ने किया था जिसे प्रधानमंत्री के तत्कालीन तकनीकी सलाहकार श्री सैम पित्रोदा ने भी सम्बोधित किया था।

श्री साठे अपनी बेबाक राय रखने के लिए सदैव प्रख्यात रहे। उन्होंने प्रौढ़ शिक्षा आंदोलन और राष्ट्रीय प्रौढ़ शिक्षा कार्यक्रम के बारे में वे तमाम बातें कह डाली जो सरकार की नीतियों और कार्यक्रम से सर्वथा भिन्न थीं। यदि और कोई

अधिकारी होता तो शायद ही श्री साठे द्वारा की गई इस आलोचना की परवाह करता किन्तु श्री बोर्डिया ऐसे नहीं थे । उन्होंने आरोपों को गंभीरता से लिया और दूसरे दिन के प्रथम सत्र में उपस्थित होकर लगभग आधे-घण्टे तक अपना पक्ष रखा । उन्होंने न केवल भ्रातियों का निराकरण किया वरन प्रौढ़ शिक्षा आंदोलन का पक्ष और भी सशक्त रूप प्रतिभागियों के समक्ष रखा ।

श्री बोर्डिया अपने पूरे जीवन काल में प्रौढ़ शिक्षा आंदोलन के सच्चे हितैषी और स्वैच्छिक संगठनों के प्रबल समर्थक रहे । वे एक निष्ठावान मित्र, कुशल प्रशासक व मार्गदर्शक रहे । उनकी दार्शनिक दृष्टि का अभाव सदैव ही खलता रहेगा ।

## Anil Bordia: The Bureaucrat with an Academic Mission

J.S. Rajput

“Why do you wish to come to a Babu Job, leaving academics?” was the first question put to me by Anil Bordia in the UPSC interview, in 1989 once the Chairperson had handed over the ‘candidate’ to the expert. After having served as a full Professor for over 15 years, I had decided to move out of the NCERT and this was my first interview as a candidate after I had become a full professor in August 1974. My response was simple: I intend to gain experience of the government functioning. In the NCERT they have assigned me an area in which I could only handle files. There was no use of my experience and expertise. So why not handle files on a larger canvas and understand the significant aspects of policy formulation and implementation! We discussed science education, teacher education, institutional management and a couple of other things. Using a well known interview technique he put me to a situation that would have resulted in my contradicting what I had said at the beginning of the interview. It did not occur to me at that moment what he was doing, and forgetting that I was being interviewed, I retorted instinctively “you are contradicting yourself”. “Thank You” was the response and the famous Bordia laughter followed. The interview was over. When asked on return about how was the experience of appearing in an interview after having interviewed people for over fifteen years, my response was: no chance, I told the expert he was contradicting himself and in return I earned a big Thank You. A candidate is supposed to remain respectful in academic circles at least. The manner I retorted would never earn an appointment. I had trained prospective candidates on how to prepare for the interviews and in my own case, I forgot all about it.

Without my knowledge, things moved fast. One morning, the then Director of the NCERT rang up to say that I have been appointed as a Joint Secretary (designated Joint Educational advisor; JEA) in the MHRD and I did not extend the courtesy of even informing him! I told him that I know nothing about the selection and he is the first person to inform me. Anyway

I had applied through proper channel! To my utter surprise and shock, I got my relieving orders on deputation to MHRD in the evening! The NCERT relieved me without myself getting a letter of appointment and conveying my consent to accept it! I refused to accept these orders. The concerned functionaries were apologetic, did their best to unsuccessfully persuade me to join MHRD next day. I needed to take my own time to decide whether to join or not. In the meanwhile, after about a week, Anil Bordia invited me to the ministry for a discussion "I am keen that you join early but you seem to have some second thoughts; why" was the first sentence that greeted me. On his insistence I told him why I was reluctant: usually the JEA's are given the Bureau in which I am not interested as I have no expertise in the area. Further I would like to retain my house in the NCERT as shifting would be inconvenient to my wife who was an academic over there. "I cannot assure you but would take note of these, but please do join at the earliest." I was allowed to retain my house in the NCERT and allotted the Bureau of my liking. Further discussions that day made me realize that he is indeed sincere to bring about genuine changes and would like academics in the ministry. He particularly mentioned about the pending proposal to give statutory status to the National Council for Teacher education (NCTE). I too was keenly interested in that. As the head of a renowned teacher education institution, I was well familiar how the system was being destroyed in the name of correspondence courses and sub-standard B.Ed Colleges throughout the country. After joining the MHRD, the Bureau of Elementary Education which dealt with teacher education also was assigned to me. I came to know only later, that it had raised several eyebrows amongst senior bureaucrats in the MHRD.

I like everyone working in the field of education, had heard about Anil Bordia much before I moved to Delhi from Bhopal. Anil Bordia acquired a lasting stature and an august presence not only in the ministry but also amongst institutions, state agencies and individuals. To comply with his hints or indications was considered a rare privilege. I took my own time to realize how he bestowed respectability and stature on the position of the secretary of the ministry through his total dedication to education, particularly the education of the weak, deprived, deficient and depressed. One particular day, he discussed the treatise of Phillip Coombs World Education Crisis and the World Education Crisis Revisited. The next two days I devoted to reading these and in the subsequent discussion realized how well-read he was on various aspects of education. He would, in the evenings walk in to my room, chat for few minutes, convince of the urgency of completing so

many pending tasks. Often, he would pick up a book from amongst a couple of which found a place on my desk. He expected me to bring to his notice any significant publication in education and that kept me pretty alert on this cunt. He was a rare bureaucrat who fell in love with education. That became his mission of life. He often explored the ways and means how to make resource materials available to teachers. Teachers' welfare and up gradation of their knowledge and skills always remained very high on his priority list. It is these discussions that prompted me to initiate publication of a large number of books for teachers and teacher educators during my later tenures as the Chairperson of the NCTE and Director of the NCERT.

The World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) held in Jomtien, Thailand in March 1990 had a clear and dominant impact of Anil Bordia, Its declaration appeared vastly impacted by the contents of the National Policy on Education 1986 which was given a shape by Anil Bordia. This policy was authored during the time PV Narsimha Rao was the minister of human resource development. After Rajiv Gandhi lost elections and a series of new governments came to power, the education policy change was on cards. A Committee under the Chairmanship of noted educationist Shri Ramamurthy was appointed. He was a noted Gandhian and his report had clear impact of the Gandhian philosophy of education. Not much could be done as the VP Singh government went out of office within few months. A rare crisis situation emerged before the MHRD came when PV Narsimha Rao became the Prime Minister. The 1986 Policy was 'his' policy and Anil Bordia was the acknowledged author of all the formulations it contained. Everyone expected Rao, himself an author and educationist, to ask for the progress Report! We had several transparent discussions within the ministry and Anil Bordia was very clear that the dilemma was indeed daunting. A view, emerging out of his ingenuity was finalized: MHRD had dexterously ensured that the main features of the 1986 National Policy on Education were retained in the Ramamurthy Committee Report. Further, to make things more responsive and contemporary; the Prime Minister may kindly approve a proposal to have an in-depth review of the 1986 policy and its implementation. When the education Secretary called on the new Prime Minister, he returned 'triumphant' with the approval of his proposal to appoint the Janardhana Reddy Committee! It was the Report of this Committee that resulted in the 1992 National Policy on Education. The National Policy on Education is often referred to as the NPE 1986/92 and bears a distinct mark of the vision of Anil Bordia who tried to implement it in a missionary spirit. He encouraged innovations and was probably amongst the rare species of top bureaucrats

who endeared themselves to NGO's and Voluntary Agencies with equal ease. His liberal approach and generosity was not always fully and truly understood and utilized by all of the beneficiaries. However, most of them who could appreciate his deep commitment really worked with far greater enthusiasm and sincerity after coming in contact with him. He firmly believed in strengthening of institutions. The Scheme of restructuring and strengthening Teacher Training Institutions that envisaged establishment of DIETs, CTE's and IASE's was his creation. He could manage huge central funding not only for these institutions but for so many other initiatives. *Mahila Samakhya*, women's empowerment was one of such schemes that received his considerable attention. The Indian Institute of Education in Pune, established by the great J.P. Naik received his full support when he was in office and also after he relinquished his position in the central government. He had tremendous respect for Dr. J.P. Naik and Dr. Chitra Naik, the two most distinguished of the luminaries in education who devoted their life time to the cause of education of the weak and particularly of the girls.

I learnt it only after joining the ministry that joint secretaries enjoy pivotal position in the government and could make a difference if they have the desire and the acumen for the same. This is generally not the case as every joint secretary devotes considerable time to 'perspective plans' of his/her career in the years ahead. It detracts. Not everyone who comes to ministries like MHRD is keen to remain there as there some identified ministries that are considered more attractive and hence remain high on the preferred list for a shift. Exceptions, like Anil Bordia, are rare. Their approach and understanding of the tasks before them becomes very different; as would be evident by the brief narration of the two of my experiences. During my stay in Bhopal as the Principal of the Regional Institute of Education for eleven years (1977-88), I got acquainted with an Indo-FRG project; often referred to as the GTZ project; for preparation of science equipment for primary schools of the states of UP and MP. Two workshops, under direct state government control, were set up at Allahabad and Bhopal. Equipments, machines and Experts came from Germany. There were regular visits o Germany of experts from the NCERT and the state government departments of the two states. This project was opposed by Indian scientists in the initial stages on several genuine grounds. Many of them were well known to me personally because of my earlier background of research work in the area of superconductivity. This project was a complete failure and all they could do was to purchase some equipment from market, put it into boxes and send it to a couple of hundred schools which never

made any use of them. In the MHRD, dealing with several of such projects was my responsibility. Within weeks of my coming to the ministry, the representative of the embassy called on me and wanted me to visit Germany for two weeks or more. They wanted to renew the project and extend it to nine states. Even the officers and academics from the two SCERT's and the NCERT were keen that I plan a visit to that great country. After examining their new project proposal, I discussed it with Anil Bordia and told him how futile it would be to even continue such a project which, fortunately, was nearing its expiry date. Such were the occasions when one could personally witness his personal acquaintance with every relevant detail of every programmes and projects being undertaken in his ministry. He did not give any inclination of agreeing with me as issues of international collaboration were involved and these have ramifications beyond what is written in the texts of the formal MOU's! We had a second session next day. I presented to him a publication on the experiments that were 'designed' under this project. The anomaly that arises from the varying socio-cultural and environmental contexts was clearly visible and instead of helping the teacher, the 'resource material' was likely to cause more confusion than clarity. This clinched the issue. He guided me how I could ask them to revise their proposal. He knew they would not agree and the entire thing can be politely allowed to lapse. The project was dropped; I felt a sigh of relief. Yes; I never availed of the opportunity to visit Germany under that context.

Such was not always the case. The era of liberalization began with the arrival of Narsimha Rao as the Prime Minister and Dr. Manmohan Singh as his Finance Minister. This was the time when the World Bank entered the primary education sector in a big way. We were supposed to design projects that had provisions for funding from World Bank and other external agencies. As the Bureau of Elementary Education was under my charge, I was supposed to deal with it. Within my limitations, I was not convinced that India needs World Bank experts and advisors for the extension and expansion of its elementary education to all. Funds may be welcome but how could an external expert commissioned by World Bank for fifteen days really guide what should be the curriculum of a primary school in Koraput or Jhabua? My assessment of the developing scenario was that Indian academics would be expected to receive guidance from 'international experts', totally unfamiliar with the socio-cultural and even environmental and economic contexts of the region concerned! My international experience gained before joining the MHRD had convinced me that so far as universal elementary education is concerned, it must be, fully and totally, the sole

responsibility of the national/state governments, as also of the society and the community. They must work in tandem. At this stage the most important aspect is the 'local element of the curriculum' and the continuity of the home and school environment. No international agencies that were already fishing for opportunities in developing countries ought to be allowed to enter this sector. In higher education, the collaboration could take different shapes and formats. Once fully convinced of my personal perceptions, and the difficulty I was facing in handling initiatives on which I was not convinced, I decided to apprise Anil Bordia of my predicament. It was a pretty long discussion, he listened to so many of my experiences in rural schools, in training colleges, about approach of Indian academics to the presence of even a single 'foreign' expert; and much more. Without giving his view, he asked me to put up detailed note listing all the reservations and apprehensions I had. He did say that some of these were really worth serious consideration. We met again after a few days. That discussion was indeed very revealing; how the governments function, how the external influences work; how the ministries have to accept decisions and how bureaucrats implement these even if unconvinced on their individual understanding! This was the period Bihar Education Project and the UP Basic Education Project was under discussion and preparation. He would not like an academic to work like a bureaucrat and hence these were shifted to another Bureau. I was asked to attend meetings and deliberations and provide my 'uncensored' inputs. I was indeed much relieved and grateful. The subsequent formulations of DPEP and even the SSA had used the experiences of the earlier projects, within, of course, the limitations of globalizations. What I have witnessed during the last two decades, I am now far more convinced that the elementary education sector should not be opened to external agencies.

My first tour from MHRD was to Orissa (now Odisha) and a Deputy Secretary accompanied me. During the discussions the state education secretary pointed out that they were supposed to purchase a Globe of 32cm diameter under the centrally sponsored scheme of Operation Blackboard and that what they are getting from a renowned firm is of 30 cm only. Could they be permitted to change these specifications? My instinctive response was: why should such permission be necessary; please go ahead!? The Deputy Secretary, very politely, pointed out that all the specifications in the Operation Blackboard (OB) Scheme are approved by the Union Cabinet and have to be strictly adhered to! It was a new learning for me. On my return, I expressed a sense of shock to Anil Bordia and wondered why should central government not trust the state government on such counts? Why

should the central government expect every primary school in the country to purchase a 'Harmonium?' Together, we examined the list together and a list over 35 specifications was reduced to nine items indicating different areas as suggestive. Technicality demanded that it goes to Union Cabinet and the change is approved there! It took more than a year to notify the change to the state governments.

Anil Bordia was convinced that good quality education alone could take us near the promised social justice, equity and equality of opportunity. It was evident from his innovative ideas of Shiksha Karmi project in to Lok Jumbish, both initiated in Rajasthan. He had firm faith in the Concept of Common School System and/or Neighborhood Schools. During my subsequent tenures, I often scrutinized my initiatives and action with a sharp query; how Anil Bordia would have reacted. It also helped me. He made lasting contributions, gave international credibility to Indian initiatives and brought about visible changes in an otherwise complacent system of education.

## Anil Bordia: The Subtle Revolutionary

*Sharad Behar*

### A. Prologue

Reminiscing our time together will be cognitively an easy task to accomplish although emotionally it will be a mixed bag. The happiness of remembered togetherness mingled with sadness and pangs of separation is not a very inviting proposition. Anil that I knew of would not like me to embark upon a task that is not very challenging and really tough. I learnt this from him. He did not teach me but like a true teacher he set an example and created conditions in which I learnt to emulate without being aware of the learning that was taking place.

2. I wish to be audacious enough to explore his deeds, to attempt, with whatever limited success, to enter the inner recesses of his mind to have a glimpse of the inner springs that propelled him tirelessly, to the amazement and envy of all. With this almost unachievable objective set for myself, I will now proceed to present to the world at large my understanding and interpretation, however imperfect or disputable, of the phenomenon that Anil was. I believe that this is the kind of daredevil task he would assign to me.

3. I propose to take up the task, intermixing three elements. My memoirs not in chronological order but by bringing together those that illustrate one theme. My reflections and interpretations will form the second element. Finally I will strive to leave some plug- points for the reader to further reflect and explore, if need be, even imagine what is being left unsaid and complete the picture of this lovable missionary and crusader.

4. Anil was four years senior to me. I therefore initially interacted with him with that ting of respect due to a senior, addressing him as Mr Bordia. He did not allow this even for a minute and very sharply asked me to call him Anil. Until I got used to this, I would slip into the respectful address and he would not leave any occasion to correct me immediately. It is therefore in fitness

of things that I continue to refer to him in this informal manner that was my habit and had become so strong as to justify the saying, had become second nature.

## B. The Enigma

5."Bordias and Behars in the government are very problematic and illusion-inducing (*bhram paida karnewale*) " (or words to that effect), said to me, Anil Sadgopal, a common friend who was an educational and social activist, in utter desperation. He was dramatically expressing the contrast between the person Anil was and the system he was working in. This was the time before I had met Anil in person. I had only known of him. Today, almost 35 years after the statement was made, with my understanding of its context and of the extremely remarkable person Anil was, and with the hindsight of today, let me proceed to interpret the statement in my own way, also attempting to incorporate what he did mean.

6. Sadgopal was not linking us together only on the basis of common initial alphabet of our surnames nor on account of often wearing identical coats of Harris Tweed. Incidentally, both of us had coat—Harris Tweed — of the same colour combination and pattern and on a number of occasions, we would come to a meeting wearing the identical coats attracting jocular comments of being in uniform, from our colleagues. He perceived something much more in common which made us know of each other much before we met in person. That is why, despite the best possible efforts I can make and the stress I can put to my memory, I cannot recall when, where and how, did we meet in person for the first time. Whenever we met, it never felt like meeting for the first time, which explains why I am unable to recall that lucky moment of my life when I had the pleasure of coming face-to-face with, Anil which instantaneously blossomed into friendship. This was made possible by his genuinely friendly and informal approach completely disregarding the usual bureaucratic requirement of maintaining distance based on seniority in service, as described earlier. Recalling this friendship at first sight, I'm tempted to say that this happened, as if friendships are made in heaven which is only an idiomatic manner of expressing the inevitability of such a friendship between two persons but I would strongly desist from any such statement in the context of a strictly secular person like Anil in whose dictionary ' heaven ' cannot have a place. For the same reason, I cannot even say that it was destined. His unwavering secularism which was in the core of his being is something every individual in the service

of the government of a secular democratic country has to emulate. If this part of idealism were common in the government, all communal riots would be nipped in the bud.

7. Sadgopal's statement was an extremely creative way of admiring the style of functioning of Anil. To begin with, let me explain in my own way, how this seemingly negative statement amounted to admiration and what he was really conveying. Anil was idealistic and very progressive in his thinking. He had the same social vision, commitment and educational perspective, spoke the same language and therefore he promptly and fully supported all innovative and progressive ideas and projects, issued necessary orders without delay, sanctioned funds required to all those who approached him with proposals for innovative education and change for the better. It was all a smooth sailing. As the saying goes, 'Well begun is half done'. This bubble of euphoria or enthusiasm had to be short lived because the government system which had to be dealt with at every level did not, and does not, operate at the same wavelength giving rise to reaction of disappointment that would not be there if Anil was not Anil and had not raised the expectation at a very high pitch.

8. Anil was also just the opposite of what bureaucracy stands for in popular image, the anti-thesis of the system. There was no red tape; all green, all-line- clear for everything desirable, for all innovative and progressive ideas proposed to be implemented. In the impersonal system of bureaucracy he was the epitome of sensitivity, informality and a humane approach. He believed in equality, challenging the hierarchy- conscious system he was working in. Instead of precedents, he believed in innovation. These are the characteristics that made the noted development economist Devaki Jain give the title 'The Reluctant Administrator' in her tribute to Anil published in the Mainstream weekly on September 15, 2012. She, in the article, goes on to describe him as a 'distant administrators' 'never wanting to be seen as an officer'. I would like to add 'never behaving or functioning like an officer.'

9. Anil loved transcending artificially imposed bureaucratic boundaries, despised beaten path, preferring to wander off the beaten path to explore unchartered territories. As Education Secretary, he conceived of and effectively implemented a programme of empowerment of women christened as the 'Mahila Samakhya', a programme that should have been more appropriately with the Department of Women and Child Development. If one were to look at the wide spectrum of the numerous projects he sanctioned

to various social organizations, one would realize how widely he had cast his net relating all of them for the purpose of rationale and justification to education which was so easy for his creative mind. Social activist Rajesh Tandon was probably highlighting these traits of Anil in his tribute published in the Economic Political Weekly (October 6, 2012) when he very aptly called it ' Testing the Limits of the System '.

10. To an outsider not familiar with the tiresome red tape, unyielding rigidities, blind and strict adherence to ritualistic forms with complete disregard of substance, predetermined hierarchical channel of communication, interaction with him created a false impression that the larger government system will also be somewhat like what Anil represented, while the ground realities presented dramatically contrasting picture with the usual characteristics of the system in all its nakedness. This comment of Anil Sadgopal, who at that time was the coordinator of Kishore Bharti, was only an expression of the contradiction between the working style of Anil and the rest of the system he had to deal with while working at grassroots for implementing the Hoshangabad Science Program, perpetually coming across impenetrable and insurmountable hurdles at every stage and at every level down below. While interacting with everybody, from the headmaster of the school to the joint director of education, Anil Sadgopal was confronted with a typical bureaucrat. This was the story almost every day, week after week, month after month. The loud and clear message he received was that Anil did not represent the educational system or bureaucracy and working with the government, in the school system on the assumption that he does, is misleading. This is the exasperation and learning that our friend was expressing. I fully empathise with him. In that sense Anil was surely problematic and gave a wrong impression of what is in store for a social organization or a person like Anil Sadgopal who had to work with the government with creative ideas and on innovative projects.

11. This statement had yet another meaning for another group of people; those working in the government with him, who were unable to understand him and were unable to be a part of a different non-bureaucratic, sensitive, people oriented, mission driven (much before the concept of formal missions in the government system was sold and concretized by Sam Pitroda), objective achieving, fast moving culture Anil was trying to establish, cultivate and promote. These hardened bureaucrats, completely socialized into the extant bureaucratic culture also found him problematic as also deceptive because to outsiders and others he was projecting an image different from

what these persons would wish their boss to be. In their perspective his attempts to 'impose' a non-bureaucratic culture was 'oppressive'. They 'suffered under the oppressive regime' of Anil and would express their anguish by calling their tea club 'Bordia-sufferers-tea club'.

12. The particular episode that prompted the aforesaid comment from Anil Sadgopal concerns these Bordia-sufferers administrators. Anil as the joint secretary in charge of adult education had sanctioned some amount to Kishore Bharti. After he moved from the assignment, the typical administrators found frivolous objections on the expenditure incurred leading to endless correspondence. Finally, Kishore Bharti decided to refund the grant rather than deal with the typical bureaucratic administrators who were ruling the roost after the departure of Anil.

### **C. State Voluntary Sector Collaboration**

13. It is a measure of the determination, deep commitment and clear conception and conviction of Anil that the reaction expressed by our common friend Sadgopal above in desperation was transient and short lived. Anil was fully conscious of the limitations and the strengths of the State and how and where genuine committed social organisations and voluntary agencies could help transcend these limitations and bring in their own strength to achieve the objectives of educational change for a better society. This perspective permeated all his pet ideas that got converted into a variety of projects, programmes, campaigns. He was abundantly clear that such collaboration should not be limited to only time bound, short lived projects but must extend to institutions in running which the government is likely to be weak and faltering, or in which continuous sensitivity, innovativeness and social commitment are required. It was this courage of conviction that made him assign responsibility to dependable voluntary agencies for establishing and running institutions of a permanent nature like State Resource Centre for adult education, non-formal wing of District Institute of Education and Training that no other administrator would have even dreamt of, let alone have courage and conviction to do so.

13. Even today this is the attitude and approach of administrators. Recently I had suggested the establishment through full financial support of the government by specialised social organisations of State Resource Centre for education of physically and mentally challenged who have to be admitted and educated in the neighbourhood schools following the policy of inclusive education and the provisions of the Right to Free and Compulsory Education

Act. While the idea was found compelling, instead of establishing the centre in the manner suggested, attempt is being made to have a cell within the government for the purpose. Exactly this would have happened even in the context of adult education if Anil were not in the driving seat then.

14. Collaborative work between the government and the voluntary sector was a strategy Anil successfully adopted and achieved some spectacular success not usually recognised or attributed to him. Adult education is one of them. After the success of literacy programme jointly implemented by the government and the Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad in Ernakulam, he facilitated the establishment of the Bharat Gyana Vigyana Samiti that spearheaded the remarkable literacy movement so well documented by Denzil Saldanha. Incidentally, I was a part of the meeting in which the BG VS was born.

15. He was able to transform the culture of the bureau, the Department or the ministry he headed to make it voluntary sector- friendly and the right platform for mission- oriented action to make a difference in the world. When Devaki Jain states that Anil was always a ' part of movement, of endeavours by civil society, by academics, by citizens, but always as a friend ' she is absolutely right but what she does not mention is that so long as he headed a setup, he was able to make it friendly for the civil society and social activists. Those who have worked in the government or perpetually had dealings with the government would readily grant that this in itself was a great achievement, irrespective of the fact whether the culture continued or not after his departure. His personal charismatic ability to inspire confidence was buttressed by such transformed culture of his organization resulting in very willing and forthcoming co-operation from the social organizations, voluntary agencies and activists he found worth collaborating.

#### **D. Educational Perspective**

16. Anil considered J. P. Naik as his guru. I am editing a volume containing reminiscences of the number of eminent persons on Mr Naik. Anil in his contribution has explained how he was initiated and made to learn education by him. The way Mr Naik, who was then the member secretary, associated him with the Education Commission — Kothari Commission has also been narrated. In those initial years, he had imbibed the culture in which ' education and only education ' 'being the instrument of change at a grand scale' had become almost a matter of faith. Naik, an admirer of revolutionaries, had

participated in the freedom struggle, worked underground and was incarcerated for two years on that account missed the social and economic revolution the freedom struggle could not achieve. His writings are replete with the word 'Revolution'. He was therefore working for a different kind of revolution, which he quite often put as educational revolution for social revolution.

17. Anil was broadly — only broadly — an educational thinker, planner, administrators and activist of this tradition. Both in his thoughts and action, the distinctive stamp of his own personality, experience and understanding was also unmistakable. He also aimed at social revolution but not through education in the conventional sense but through empowerment or better to call it empowering education. Like Naik he meant by education not just the formal institutional education but the combination of formal, informal and non-formal education. Those who want to understand his brainchild and love — Lok Jumbish and Doosra Dashak— will have to understand this concept of empowering education and ultimatum goal of social revolution. Another element that was integral to it — like Naik again — was the faith in the people. In both those programs mobilization of the people has been a significant strategy. People's empowerment is the goal as well as the means. Education in the broader sense, on the one hand, was perceived by him as an instrument of empowerment of the people. Empowerment of the people, on the other hand, is the strategy and instrument for ensuring quality education for all. This conviction made Anil adopt the strategy of making the local community own the school and ensure its functioning, if need be by various measures of agitation like locking the school in case of teacher absenteeism. People's empowerment along with empowering education was also for him the surest route to social transformation. While visiting, at the invitation of Anil, the camps in Doosra Dashak, I was delighted to get a glimpse of the microcosm of the classless, casteless, secular, equitable and humane social order of his vision which I fully share.

17. Our friendship rested on a shared social vision and mission, goals and objectives, the role and concept of education, the role of the State — its potential and limitations in ensuring empowering education and social transformation, the need to transform style of functioning and the culture of the government, the role of civil society and social organisations — their strengths and weaknesses, the essentiality of state civil society partnership, the critical role of the community, to name only a few. Instead of listing the commonality, it would be more useful to look at the differences through

which I propose to explore a little further the Anil, I knew, loved, admired and miss acutely. Let me make a paradoxical statement. We never worked together but always worked together. His involvement in education started much earlier than my own. From mid-70s, I started dabbling in education and soon enough we got to know of each other with glimpses of the commonality. Then onwards by and large we were both fully immersed in education, despite changes in formal government assignment. In that sense we were always working together thereafter. However we were never together part of the same organization, never formally got posted and worked together. The differences therefore did not surface or became sharp. They had to be inferred from the differences in the strategies adopted by us and from the views expressed in committees, conferences, meetings etc. Let me proceed to narrate the nearest we came to working together not formally but in actual practice which provided me an opportunity to identify the differences we had and learn in the process.

### **E. Working Together**

18. It was December 1989 or January 1990, a few months before the International conference on 'education for all' at Jomtien in Thailand. I was on leave in Madras, now called Chennai, staying in a room of the Apollo hospital attending to and nursing a close friend, Om Prakash Mehra who had been admitted for bypass surgery. The reasons for my accompanying him were twofold. His children being too young, I had taken the responsibility to take decisions (heart bypass surgery, those days, was considered to be risky) and look after him, and nurse him back to sound health. The other reason was that the then government, the chief Minister and the Chief Secretary, being unhappy with me had transferred me to a very trivial and routine job which I did not like. These were not the days of mobile phone. It was therefore not possible for anybody to contact me who did not know my whereabouts and the telephone number of the hospital including the number of the room I was staying with my friend. It was therefore very amazing to be told by the telephone operator of the hospital that the Education Secretary from Delhi wanted to speak with me. This was particularly so because I had not said anything to Anil about my unpleasant posting nor how I was making better use of the opportunity. He asked me very briefly why I was there, and realizing that I could not be away for any length of time, suggested that I should go to Delhi the next day just For the day.

19. This led to my appointment as consultant of the UNICEF for preparation

of the approach, strategy and plan document to be presented in the Jomtian conference on behalf of India. I do not believe that I was the most, or the only, competent person for this task. Anil thought of me for the task, made efforts to contact me in the most unlikely place was very touching. He had learnt of the unpleasant job I had assigned and wanted to cheer me up by entrusting the task I would love. This was his style of doing something for me without making it appear that he was obliging me, without adversely impacting on my self-esteem and pride. This indicates his deep understanding of my psyche as also extreme sensitivity on his part. When the task was completed, he complimented me profusely and expressed gratefulness in a very genuine manner, again, I believe, to make me feel that I was really needed for the job and he had done nothing unusual in calling upon me for the task.

20. During the preparation of this document based on all India perspective, he floated the idea that the principles, strategies and plan proposed in this document should also be applied to a specific situation. He argued that the most challenging area where the task is the toughest should be selected for the purpose so that their applicability is beyond question. He suggested that the state of Bihar, which at that time was considered to be the most backward educationally and in many other ways, should be taken up for this. Despite his own preoccupations with his onerous duties as the union education secretary, he offered to prepare such a detailed Project. UNICEF was persuaded to finance such a project. Accordingly accompanying the document I had prepared ' Education For All by 2000: Indian Perspective ', he prepared the ' Bihar Education Project ', concretizing the Indian perspective in the context of Bihar, the most challenging and tough task. Both these documents were presented in the Jomtian conference on behalf of the country. The Implementation of the project was later supervised by him personally to make sure that in the most difficult and trying circumstances what we planned could be achieved. I was also associated for some time in actual implementation of the project but that is another story.

21. The involvement of the World Bank in the education sector in India, by now, is well known because of the District Primary Education Programme funded by it and implemented extensively in the country. Not many, however, are familiar with the history prior to that. It may surprise all those not familiar with the history to learn that in the late 1989 and in 1990, the World Bank was keen to initiate financing the education sector in India, while Anil was

not only ignoring their overtures but also telling them in plain words that we do not need their financing for elementary education. This approach of Anil was based on his experiences and a study of financing of education sector in other developing countries. He felt that once they enter the education sector of a country, they almost takeover the sector, drive their own policy ignoring the policy of the host country. Their experts also help in this and in addition dominate and almost control the implementation which is facilitated by the colonial legacy of respecting the white man which continues to be strongly entrenched in the functionaries at the sector, who therefore, exhibit willing obedience.

22. I remember participating in a meeting attended by a select few in which he clearly asked the representatives of the World Bank why they are so keen to finance us when we are not seeking finance from them. The reply was that even one state in this country is much larger than all the countries they were financing put together. Also they were being questioned in many countries as to the reasons of absence of their involvement in India. To cut a long story short, finally it was decided that we may try implementing a project with their assistance with two clear caveats. The first was that the project will be prepared by us in India and presented to them, which may be financed by them if they like and if they don't then the matter could end up there. The second condition was that we will not accept involvement of any experts of the World Bank because we have enough expertise in your own country and if we do need foreign experts, we will select and invite them at the financial cost of the World Bank. Both conditions were agreed to by them.

23. It is indicative of our shared vision, mission, objective and goals and educational perspective that he asked me to prepare the project and persuaded the state government of Madhya Pradesh to spare me for the work as Consultant in the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration. The Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project was born in this manner. The project prepared by me was accepted by the World Bank for financing after an international conference attended by global experts of our choice and hosted by us at their cost in which certain suggestions were made for modifications which we found acceptable. The Project was financed by the Bank and implemented in 10 districts of Uttar Pradesh. This has the distinction of being the first educational project financed by the World Bank in this country and the only one completely on our terms and conditions, not of the Bank.

24. During the preparation of this project and also the Indian Perspective on Education for All by 2000, we interacted very closely and as I have said above these are the two occasions when he came nearest to working together.

25. Anil did want me to continue to be with him because both these experiences confirmed our understanding that we in fact shared so much that if we were to work together for a length of time in critical positions, we will move faster towards the desired educational change. That is why a search committee in which Anil was a member and which was chaired by Prof Yashpal, who had known me from the days (1983 — 87) when I was working as the founder vice chancellor of the University I was setting up at Bilaspur, recommended me as the first choice in the panel submitted by them for appointment as Director of the National Council of Educational Research and Training. Why this recommendation was not accepted is a very interesting, in fact amusing story but let me skip it. One of the reasons however was that I belong to the Indian Administrative Service and it was apprehended by the professors in the Council and similarly placed persons in the educational field that my appointment may become a precedent and may lead to cornering of this job by the dominant Service closing the doors or at least making it difficult for even their eminently deserving candidates to be appointed to this position in future.

26. Such an apprehension cannot be ruled out as paranoid reaction. There is surely a dominant position of the IAS and the apprehension was based on the general impression the action of the service in the past has created amongst other services. The Service, I belong to, does deserve to be feared and suspected in this manner because as a Service, we have failed to provide democratic leadership that treats other services equal and that acts more in the interests of other services than its own. However, remembering and missing or the intellectual and emotional bond I enjoyed with Anil, I do feel that the history of Indian education would have been different if we were to work together in this manner. I dare say this at the risk of being accused of having a bloated self-image because the comment does not arise as much from my understanding of my own capability as from the competence, abilities and the style of functioning combined with emotional and intellectual bonding between the two of us, the chemistry of which it is not easy to express in language which according to the post-modernists is a highly imperfect medium for expressing and understanding the reality— even if

one does not agree with them, I believe that they are right at least in such situations.

27. Anil thereafter wanted me to join the University Grants Commission as the secretary for which I was unwilling to undergo the formality required prior to the appointment. I also did not find it exciting and attractive enough since even this important role in the regulatory body, to my mind, did not offer the kind of potential I was looking for, to move towards our shared goal. He also realised this.

28. Anil was not the one to give up. He found another way for us to work together jointly. He requested the Government of Madhya Pradesh to let me continue for another year as consultant in the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration. This, however did not work out. By then a close friend had become Chief Secretary of the state who persuaded me to be back in the state where she offered me an assignment of my choice which could allow the pursuance of our shared mission. While Anil agreed to this for this reason but also because he was so enthused and happy by the conception and formulation of the World Bank Project for Uttar Pradesh that he wanted me to prepare another project for the tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh to be supported by the UNESCO, even when I would be working in the state. The weight of the newly appointed Minister Human Resource Development Mr Arjun Singh, who belonged to Madhya Pradesh and who had an interest in getting his own home district included in the proposed project, was also lent behind this. Deviating from the pattern and approach adopted for the World Bank project, a project, the product of divergent thinking focusing on the vastly different tribal situation that proposed to revive and use the indigenous tribal institutions of cultural education, following their pedagogy and their management system was prepared by me as Principal Secretary Tribal Development. This was discussed thoroughly, initially between Anil and our group and thereafter with the UNESCO that approved it and obtained financial Support of the European Commission for implementation in seven eastern tribal districts of Madhya Pradesh. The project was not destined to see the light of the day because of a queer turn of events.

29. Soon after the sanction of the project, the economic situation, particularly the foreign exchange position, in the country deteriorated so badly as to make it obligatory for the Government of India to seek support of the IMF and the World Bank tilting the balance of power dramatically in favour of the

Bank that started dictating and offered support for education in its usual style. This changed dynamics was reflected fully in the conception and implementation of the District Primary Education Programme. Our tribal culture based innovative project entitled 'Dhumkuriya', to the regret of all who had seen the project, became the casualty of this shift in balance of power because under the pressure of the World Bank, the European Commission agreed finally that while it will continue to finance these districts, the financing will be for the District Primary Education Programme of these districts on the specious ground that the DPEP also aimed at quality improvement. Our efforts to persuade the head office of the European Commission whose India office was with us did not succeed because they felt that says they did not have expertise in education sector, it'd be better for them to depend upon The experts of the World Bank. Anil, however unhappy he was with this development, was not in a position to intervene, in view of the financial crisis the country was facing.

## **F. Towards Silent Revolution**

30. Despite my initial remark and resolve to keep reminiscences to the minimum, I was tempted to be liberal above in this regard because I wanted to elucidate, through this narration the paradoxical statement that we never worked together but always worked together. It also goes to emphasize or rather provide proof of our shared vision, mission, goals and objectives etc. It is important to highlight these since I now want to proceed to discuss the few differences that we had which will serve to highlight certain aspects of his educational thinking generally missed and also demonstrate in the process that the differences were more illusory than real.

31. His extraordinary focus which I call obsession on adult education was at the root of the differences. I believe in looking at education in a holistic manner not fragmenting into adult education, non-formal education and formal education, or creating a hierarchy in terms of elementary education, secondary education and Higher education. I believe that while hierarchical organisation has a long history and too staunchly rooted in tradition to be challenged, the creation of parallel vertical structure from top to bottom of adult education, non-formal education and school education is unwarranted, undesirable and counter-productive. After all, all the three artificially created segments are aimed at providing what is now internationally called basic education. It is also my conviction that bringing them together will improve the quality as well as coverage of all of them.

32. The school teachers, I suggest, should also be responsible for providing non-formal education to those adolescents who have missed elementary education and basic education to the adults of the community. Education of the illiterate parents, non-formal education of the elder siblings who have missed elementary education and school education of the school going children can reinforce one another. It will be the entire family learning creating a very different ambience highly conducive to education of all in the family. Once this approach is accepted, separate instructors for non-formal or adult education and the separation of the supervisory staff into three hierarchical structures would become redundant. Such a model, I advocated, will improve the quality, be more cost-effective and will also expedite education for all — literally all.

33. This was totally unacceptable to Anil. He was strongly in favour of separation of adult education and non-formal education from the formal education, arguing and firmly believing that if they are integrated formal education will completely sideline the other two resulting in their complete neglect and being thrown to the backburner. He would also emphasize the need for considerable flexibility compared to a rigid formal education system and also requirement of different strategies, reading material, pedagogy, learning hours, to educate adults and adolescents. His unshakeable belief was that formal education of children and non-formal education of adults and adolescents are two different domains and mixing them is neither conceptually possible nor feasible in practice. Their forced integration, he thought, was to impact adversely both.

34. None of us succeeded in convincing the other. Being convinced of my own stand, I attributed his unwillingness to modify his position to his bias in favour of adult education from very early days of his love with education which was a continuing one. In other words his upbringing and initial socialization in the fold of education was in the area of adult education creating a lasting and indelible stamp on his perspective on education. Even a cursory look at his writings will indicate his immersion and complete fascination with adult education. Let me list some of them.

Issues in planning and implementing national literacy programs, adult education in India: book of readings, adult education in Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe: a diagnosis of an educational system in a rapid change, research trends in adult education: agenda for adult education, farmers training and functional literacy, planning and administration of national literacy programs: the Indian

experience, training of local level administrative personnel in national literacy programs: methodological report of a training.

35. The fact that we have so much of common ground and almost identical perspective on almost every aspect of education, this difference has been bothering me very much and I have been trying to ponder over it. Considerable reflection for trying to fit the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle seems to have been enlightening. This overemphasis on adult education is the key to the correct understanding of his educational perspective and the subtle strategy he was adopting for seeding the process of social change, not necessarily mediated by the much awaited and highly elusive educational change.

36. In this manner Anil had introduced a critical corrective in the strategy adopted by his guru JP Naik for achieving the aim of social revolution through educational revolution. Naik cannot be faulted for not giving due importance to adult education. Adult Education definitely occupied a very significant place in his educational thinking and strategy. In fact in his last remarkable work 'The Education Commission and After', he expresses great satisfaction over launching of 'a major programme of adult education' at the initiative of the then education ministers Mr PC Chunder. (Page 93, The Education Commission And After, A PH Publishing Corporation, 1997). However, Anil's strategy departed from Naik's in two significant ways.

37. In the first place, for Naik educational revolution was to precede social revolution. Even in his last days, when he realized that educational transformation alone cannot lead to socio economic change that had different dynamics and Modified his position he believed that radical educational transformation and social and economic transformation have to be attempted simultaneously. The relationship between a holistic radical transformation of education and socio economic change, in his formulation were too interlinked to permit conceptual separation for him. In a way, he was so strongly entrenched in the position of Education Commission that educational revolution continued to be the focus.

38. His true disciple Anil with experience of close to 2 decades after the Commission probably realized more clearly that radical educational transformation is very difficult and time-consuming process particularly because the highly conservative, intricately complex and multidimensional, multi-staged mammoth system is resistant to change. He therefore found a way of bypassing the stage of educational revolution and quietly entering in

to the society with agents of social change. That explains his desire and rigid stand on separation of the system of adult education and non-formal education of adolescents from the former system so that these parallel channels are not bogged down by the complexity and heavy burden of the formal system and can be used for developing change agents.

39. The second difference in the strategy of the two was the centrality of elementary education versus adult education. In Naik's strategy of educational revolution for social revolution, elementary education was the focus and the kingpin. Like Anil, Naik also had the continuing influence of his early days when free and compulsory education had been the major demand starting from Gopalakrishnan Gokhale and down to his role model Parulekar. As a result adult education only had a side role in the context of social transformation.

40. Anil thought otherwise. For him adult education occupied the central place. The products of elementary education can become agents of change in the society after a considerable lapse of time while if the adults could be equipped to question the existing social order by understanding and analyzing the inequalities, structural violence on women and the downtrodden, superstitions, and other social ills, the wind of change will start sooner than later and can be further reinforced when the educated children come of age. Anil's desire for swift social change was at the heart of his excessive focus on adult education. If one sees carefully, one can easily see the pattern and fit, as I said earlier, the jigsaw puzzle.

41. The other part of this puzzle is his considerable attention, almost equal to though not appearing so prominently as adult education, on the education of adolescents. During office, this was subsumed in his concept of non-formal education. With hindsight, I now ardently wish that he ought to have named it as adolescent education like the nomenclature Doosra Dashak and made it clear that he was targeting on the adults and adolescents who could become change agents almost immediately. The other parts of this puzzle are other programmes focusing on the empowerment of adolescents and adults. Mahila Samakhya was designed to empower women to function as agents of change. Through Nehru Yuvak Kendras, the youth outside the educational institutions and non-formal education were being made to play their role in the process of social change. In Lok Jumbish one could easily discern the empowerment of the adult community including the youth. In the last stage of his life through Doosra Dashak, he made a very loud and clear

statement of the significance of the adolescents in his paradigm of change. Unfortunately his over-emphasis on adult education and not so strong presentation of the other parts of the puzzle made the educational community miss the subtle revolution he was ushering in.

42. After considerable deliberation, I have chosen the title, the subtle revolutionary because he did not clearly spell out his strategy of social change through adult and adolescent education. He also strongly did not highlight the need for critical pedagogy in this. If the products of the adult education program and adolescents passing out from the non-formal education channel were to be change agents, Paulo Freire's pedagogy and life-based curriculum should have been critical an integral components of the two programs. I wonder why he did not pay adequate attention to these elements. Was it the realization that in the large programme like adult education and non-formal education based on volunteers or scantily trained, inadequately paid instructors such pedagogy would be impractical and any emphasis on them prove to be rhetoric.

43. It appears to me that he was avoiding the strong and radical statements like educational revolution and social revolution, not only because of the official position he was occupying but as a deliberate strategy. Radical statements can make the reactionary forces alert. The most successful strategy therefore is to work towards revolution silently. Without flaunting his revolutionary intent and zeal he was in a very subtle way working for a revolution which has made me call him ' the subtle revolutionary '.

## **G, MY Learnings**

44. There were other minor differences which we were able to gradually resolve or understand each other's point of view and their rationale. To mention only one of them, while both of us strongly believed in decentralization, I always favoured also decentralization of curriculum while he believed that this was an impractical concept. In the project on Lok Jumbish, I wrote an appendix outlining how decentralization of curriculum would be implemented in the project area. He accepted that this should be the ideal situation, but being familiar with the ground realities and the absence of necessary competence for curriculum framing at decentralized levels — districts and blocks, he convinced me that this should remain a long-range goal only.

45. A variety of strategies was adopted by us for understanding each other in case of these minor differences. Irrespective of whose point of view prevailed or the compromised position was close to whose point of view, resolution of each issue was a great learning experience. It also made me understand that in his approach to education and society, he was as idealistic as I am but was much more pragmatic and practical, something I learnt with great benefit to myself because without a touch of pragmatism and practical approach, idealism remains an empty rhetoric without yielding results. It's a great tribute to the personal qualities of Anil that while I can reflect on the learning now, while the learning was actually taking place, I never realized that he was making me learn. I was always his equal. It always appeared that the exchange of views was for mutual benefit and learning and we are co-learners but I have no doubt that I was the primary beneficiary. In that sense he was an ideal teacher.

46. My learnings are too many to be recounted. However let me make some brief mention. The first lesson was, as I have said earlier, to take up the most challenging task. Secondly, not to remain satisfied with generalities, however sound and unexceptionable, but work out details to test and demonstrate feasibility. Thirdly, while all India generic thinking is important in the context of policy formulation, significance of varying local conditions needs to be recognized for action. Fourthly, in the domain of education, while holistic understanding and approach is an essential background, clear and sharp focus on certain dimensions, is extremely critical for measurable results. Subtle quiet action for radical results is more important than radical rhetoric.

47. There are a few advises he directly gave to me. Their validity is beyond question and I value the advice very greatly but have not been able to translate them into practice. After noticing how easily I am drawn into a variety of useful looking activities and movements wasting my valuable time, he advised me to learn to say no. I'm still trying that. I'm confident that the day I am unable to say no to pressing invitations for a number of diversionary activities, I'll become much more productive and pursue our common mission more sharply. Similarly, looking at my financial position post-retirement, he advised me to charge consultancy fee but I have not yet been able to implement that, although it does adversely impact on my financial position. This very sound advice has been unacceptable probably because this is against my grain.

48. There can be no end to what I would like to say about Anil. Let me however conclude with a few general remarks that come to my mind from a holistic understanding of his thinking, life and work.

49. The conventional wisdom that calls upon to think globally and act locally was challenged by his deeds. He not only thought globally, but also acted globally as well as locally. So also he not only acted locally but also reflected locally to derive general principles from local action for action globally. His exemplary work in Lok Jumbish and Doosra Dashak bear testimony to this. These were local actions based on both global and local thinking and resulted in general principles applicable to a large number of developing countries.

50. All his life, whether during the service in the government or after superannuation, he plunged into adventurous enterprises few will dare to. Now that the series of incessant hazardous ventures have come to a full-stop so far as he is concerned, it is time for me and for all those who loved him and admired him to reflect on his life and achievements holistically, not simply by recounting the numerous policies, he was instrumental in framing, even more numerous programmes, projects, campaigns he initiated, undertook or inspired but to understand and unravel the strong invisible thread — the unwritten storyline — behind all of these. A highly inadequate attempt has been made in this tribute. Probably volumes will be required to do justice to the task.

51. At the end let me make a suggestion to the Academy of Administration Mussoorie that trains civil servants and the Department of Personnel and Training, Government of India to get authentic biography focusing on the unusual achievements as a civil servant of persons like Anil so that they really learn to test the limits of the system and how to transcend the traditional, in many cases self-drawn, boundaries and become reluctant administrators and subtle revolutionaries – change makers. The case studies of such persons will be a much better method of training. Undoubtedly, this will prove to be very controversial issue because on the criteria for selection of the civil servants worth emulating, there can be and is likely to be widely different perspectives based on one's understanding on the nature and the role of civil service in society. Quite naturally, the members of the 'Bordia sufferers tea club', will opt for a different breed of bureaucrats for case studies in the Academy. Notwithstanding this possibility of raising a hornets nest, I still feel that it's an extremely worthwhile exercise that will enrich the current paradigm of training civil servants.

## Remembering Anil Bordia

*C.J. Daswani*

The first time I met Anil Bordia was in Mysore in August 1978. The Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) in Mysore had organized a multi-disciplinary seminar on Adult Education. There were a large number of participants – linguists, social scientists, writers, adult educators, government functionaries, all gathered to address the concerns and ramifications of the National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) which was launched by the government in 1977. Anil Bordia was then the Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Education, in-charge of the adult education programme. Attending the seminar with him was Professor Dr. A.K. Jalaluddin, the then Director, Directorate of Adult Education, (DAE), GOI, which was the technical and implementation agency for the NAEP.

In retrospect, I realize that this first meeting with Anil Bordia and his colleague was surely predestined, for it led to a career change for me! Between August and December of that year fate had taken charge and in December 1978 I joined the DAE as one of the four Consultants who were appointed to assist the Director, DAE in the implementation of NAEP. From then on I got to meet and work with Anil Bordia quite regularly.

This was an exciting time. There was planning, mobilization, mid-course corrections, coordination among all the ministries, visualizing new initiatives, writing reports for national and international consumption, and innumerable other angles to work on. Most of all, there was materials development and training of functionaries with which I was directly involved. The DAE was in the thick of everything. And, Anil Bordia was driving the entire operation. He was in his office till late every day. On second Saturdays, when the ministry was closed, he would be in his office all day. On several second Saturdays I was with him helping with reports and proofs and similar tasks.

These work meetings gave me an insight into the personality of Anil Bordia.

Most people who knew him well called him "Anil Bhai". I don't remember having addressed him or referred to him as Anil Bhai. Taking down notes during meeting, I always identified him as 'AB'.

He had an easy and pleasant demeanour. He spoke with a slight lisp. He walked with a barely perceptible limp. I once asked him about it and he told me that it was the result of a major accident. His favourite colours seemed to be light blue and khaki. More often than not he was in a blue shirt and khaki trousers. He was reasonably tall and well-built without being fat.

He came across as a very sophisticated and confident person. He was a good conversationalist, often indulging in banter, always with a twinkle in his eye. His command over both Hindi and English was exceptional. On one of the Saturdays, I took him a copy of "Hobson Jobson" which he seemed pleased with. He laughed easily; often his laugh was a guffaw, and giving the impression that he was enjoying himself. Most people must have thought him to be convivial, but underneath the cheerful and pleasant behaviour, I often detected a very private person who kept a conscious distance in his interaction with people. He was very indulgent with people he knew well or liked; and he could be quite brusque with others, cutting them to size.

AB was extremely knowledgeable about the adult literacy and adult education scenario both in India and other countries, especially the Asia-Pacific region and the programmes of UNESCO. He was deeply committed to making the NAEP a success. Not only adult literacy and adult education, he was fully conversant with the Indian educational system. He was a member of the Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA) and had, in fact, at one time been associated with the publications of the IAEA.

Through AB, I had the honour of meeting some of the leading lights of Indian Education. Among these leading lights was Dr D.S. Kothari, of the Kothari Commission fame, and Dr J.P. Naik, who was the then Member-Secretary of ICSSR (Indian Council of Social Science Research). I had had the privilege of meeting Dr Kothari when he was Chairman of the University Grants Commission in early 1960s, and I had met Dr Naik in several contexts. Both these 'greats' of Indian education thought very highly of Anil Bordia, who, on his part, was always very deferential towards them. In fact when the NAEP Review was set up, both Dr Kothari and Dr Naik had lead roles as Chairman and Secretary of the Review Committee respectively.

In winter of 1979, a three-week inter-country UNESCO workshop on adult literacy was held in Udaipur, Rajasthan. I was nominated as a member of the Indian delegation. AB was also at the workshop off and on. During the workshop, the participants went on a visit to Sewa Mandir, a well-known NGO that had pioneered a movement in education of the underprivileged, and adult education. There we met the legendary Dr. Mohan Sinha Mehta and AB's father, Shri Kesarimal Bordia. During the visit I perceived, once again, AB's attitude of reverence towards his father and Dr Mehta. I was particularly touched by his use of the word 'Hukum' (meaning roughly "yes Sir") in response to any utterance made by the two seniors. This was not unusual, for in Rajasthan that seemed to be the acceptable term of address for elders. AB was obviously steeped in the Rajasthani culture. Almost every day I became aware of a new facet of his personality!

In early 1980, Dr. Jalaluddin had to go on a UNESCO assignment for over six weeks and he took the unusual step of getting AB to agree that during his absence I should be made responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the DAE; a very unusual decision, because I was only a consultant and not a part of the regular staff! However, because of that reason I could not be given any financial responsibilities. To overcome that procedural hitch AB agreed to come to the DAE once a week to sign the relevant files and papers that I was to keep ready for him. I daresay, the entire arrangement was unique, especially for a Joint Secretary to agree to come to a subordinate office every week for this purpose. I don't believe any other senior IAS officer would have even entertained the thought of entering such an agreement. Yet another facet of his unique personality!

By the beginning of 1980, there were far-reaching events, signaling a change in the political equations in the country. These events cast their shadow on all projects and programmes. The future of NAEP, too, seemed to hang in balance. In the meantime, the Review Committee was assessing the status of the programme, evaluating the successes as well as the gaps in the programme. Soon, it was clear that the new political dispensation was unlikely to support the NAEP in its original format. I decided to return to the university system in July 1980. Dr Jalaluddin also returned to his parent department. AB too returned to his home State, Rajasthan.

As Professor of English Language and Head of the Department of English in the University of Poona (now University of Pune), I was deeply engrossed

in my responsibilities. NAEP and adult education seemed to belong to a distant past. But I was destined to be drawn back into concerns very different from English Language! While I may have thought that my association with adult education was over, fate had other plans.

Dr. J.P. Naik had also returned to the Indian Institute of Education (IIE) in Pune. I felt deeply honoured when Dr. Naik formally invited me to be Consultant to the IIE, an invitation I had no hesitation in accepting. I have fond memories of my interaction with Dr Naik and his colleagues on a variety of educational issues – the educational system, primary education, language education, curriculum framework, and of course, adult education. In fact, in the winter of 1980, I was invited by UNESCO, Bangkok as resource person for training of adult educators in Thailand. I wondered then whether this was pure destiny, or had somebody, AB perhaps, recommended my name to UNESCO.

During the early 1980s I had no contact with AB, except once (perhaps in 1984?) when he had come to attend a seminar in the IIE. I attended as Consultant to the IIE. There were several delegates whom I had met during my stint at the DAE. It seemed to me then that things were happening in Delhi and the IIE seminar was by way of a brain-storming activity. There was no surprise that AB was in the thick of it! Soon, it became clear that a new education policy was on the anvil.

Sometime in 1985 I received an invitation to attend a meeting in New Delhi in the office of EDCIL. I did not know anything about this organization, never having heard of it. I later learned that EDCIL was the acronym for Education Consultants India Limited, set up to assist the Ministry of Education. In New Delhi I was pleasantly surprised to find AB orchestrating the meeting of several academics, specialists and activists, all charged with the task of providing inputs in the construction of a new policy on education. I was put on two committees – one on languages, and the other on non-formal education. In 1986, the National Policy on Education (NPE) was adopted. In 1987 AB took over as Secretary of Education in the newly formed Ministry of Human Resource Development.

During one of the meetings in New Delhi, AB asked me how long I had in my university job before I retired. I told him that I had ten more years to go. He then remarked that having spent nearly thirty years working at the tertiary stage, would I like to devote the rest of my working life to the education of

children, especially out-of-school children. In fact, he urged me to think positively about it. As in 1978, I was greatly astonished, and felt that my destiny was being shaped by this proposition. True, I had spent nineteen months with the DAE, but this was a new challenge.

Events moved very fast from then on. A new full-fledged department of Non-formal Education was created in the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), and in July 1987 I joined the NCERT as Professor of Non-formal Education (NFE).

I worked in the NCERT for nine years until the middle of 1996, and for the first five years, until 1992, AB was the Secretary of Education. I received tremendous support from him. Under the NPE, a national scheme of NFE had been launched and the new department in the NCERT was given the responsibility of providing technical support for the scheme. The department planned a training programme for NFE instructors, supervisors and project officers. Manuals of training were developed and used in a cascade model of training. Over three lakh (3,00,000) instructors were trained with the help of manuals in the State languages. AB had put faith in this project and helped the department with the requisite funds.

An interesting occurrence in connection with the NFE training project provided me with an insight into AB's mind, and incidentally into bureaucratic functioning. AB had asked me how long it would take to put the training programme into effect; I told him that the manuals would take about ten months to develop and pre-test for the programme to begin. He was not happy with that and asked me to try and finish the preparation in three months. I told him that would be impossible. I felt, at that time, that he was a bit miffed with my not accelerating the process.

I met with a similar bureaucratic reaction much later when an education secretary of a state asked me to help the state develop a set of text-books for the primary schools. I agreed and told him that it would take six months to do so. He said he wasn't sure he would be in that office for six months, and that some other 'expert', was willing to achieve the task in six weeks! I told him that I would not be able to do the job in less than six months. He had the books written in six weeks. Some time later, he had the honesty to tell me that the books were not OK and had to be withdrawn, and junked! I wondered why bureaucrats want things done in a hurry!

While the NFE department at the NCERT worked day and night to implement the government scheme of non-formal education, I was given a number of other responsibilities by AB. One of these was working on the Committee which was set up to develop Minimum Levels of Learning (MLLs) for Primary School children. This was a pet project of AB. The report of this committee was widely disseminated and for some time it had remarkable impact on the system. Sadly, in some time the basic principle of MLLs became dimmed and the entire process became rigid and ritualistic. Basically, what was meant to be tool for teacher training was used wrongly for writing textbooks for children.

In 1988, the government set up the National Literacy Mission (NLM) and initiated the well known programme of Total Literacy Campaign (TLC). It was not forgotten that I had been associated with NAEP, and AB drafted me for some of the activities of the NLM. One of these was the Improved Pace and Content of Learning (IPCL) approach to writing adult literacy primers in various languages. This was another pet project of AB. I worked as a member of this committee and was also its Chairman for a short period.

A couple of years before he was to retire, in 1992, AB made an attempt to create a research institute. To this end he wished to enlarge the functions of the already existing DAE. As a result the National Institute of Adult Education (NIAE) was actually established in January 1991. It was housed in a building in the Indraprastha Estate which had for long belonged to the NCERT. It was now taken over for the NIAE. The faculty for the NIAE was appointed. I was interviewed by the redoubtable Dr Malcolm Adisheshaiyah and appointed as Professor. Several scholars actually joined the Institute, but before I could formally join as Professor, a number of complications had surfaced in the formation of the Institute. As it happened, on account of numerous technicalities, the NIAE could not begin to function as initially envisaged. I remember having remarked to AB at that time that the choice of the building for NIAE had sealed its fate. No department of the NCERT had ever flourished in that building. It was generally believed that the building was jinxed. Of course, AB would have nothing of the 'jinxed' myth!!

Another interesting event took place in my life at this juncture where AB indirectly helped me decide my course of action. Dr Chitra Naik, who was at that time Member, Planning Commission, invited me to take up the position of Director, IIE in Pune. She, in fact, sent me a formal appointment letter, for one year initially. I went to Pune on a reconnaissance and would probably

have seriously considered the offer. When I told AB about this, he advised me against it.

AB retired in 1992 and returned to Jaipur, Rajasthan. He may have retired from his formal position, but he continued to work in the realm of education of the underprivileged and education of girls. Until 1999 he was Chairman of Lok Jumbish (literally, "People's Movement") an NGO that had been actively involved in the Shiksha Karmi (Education Worker) project in Rajasthan. Later, from 2001 AB set up the Doosra Dashak (Second Decade) project for the education of adolescents. During these years I met AB off and on. Twice he invited me to Jaipur to a couple of meetings. There I had the pleasure of meeting Dr Sharada Jain, Director, Sandhan, an NGO engaged in educational research, with whom AB was working in close collaboration.

Following the 2009 Act on Right of Children to Free & Compulsory Education, AB was appointed Chairman of a committee to prepare a report on the Right to Education (RTE) and on revamping of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). A comprehensive report was submitted by the Committee in 2010.

In 2010, AB was awarded the Padma Bhushan for his contribution in the field of education and social work. Earlier in 1999 he had been decorated with the Avicenna Gold Medal by UNESCO. Before that, in 1996, he was elected as member of the Asia-Pacific Centre of Educational Innovation and Development, Bangkok.

AB's association with UNESCO extended over a long period. He contributed greatly to the famous Jomtien Report, and in fact, many of the concepts in the Jomtien Report find an echo in the NPE. Even SSA is based on the concept of Education for All (EFA). AB's association with the UNESCO Institute of Education, Hamburg is well known.

AB is justifiably recognized for having defined the country's new education policy. His concern for the education of underprivileged children, especially girls, and adult education was his passion. While many career bureaucrats are reluctant to stay in the same department over a long period, AB returned to the department and ministry of education repeatedly. Many of his contemporaries and juniors in the bureaucracy looked upon him as an educationist rather than as a bureaucrat.

There is no denying the fact that Anil Bordia will always be remembered as someone who fashioned the country's educational policy and worked for its implementation. But more than that, his name will figure in the list of great Indian educational activists like Jyotiba Phule, Maharishi Karve, Dr K.L. Shrimali, Dr Mohan Sinha Mehta and Dr J.P. Naik and many others, all of whom had devoted their lives to the education of girls and underprivileged children.

# Right to Education of Children of Lesser Gods

## Non-Formal Education in India

*R. Govinda*  
*A. Mathew*

In our life time, there may be hardly any parallel to Anil Bordia in respect of his contribution to the field of education from national to grassroots levels. While he presided over and steered the education establishment in its entirety, his heart and soul was in the non-formal approach and means of reaching education to all, and especially, children of deprived and vulnerable sections. He sought to further strengthen this abiding faith and conviction in non-formal approach by forging the community and the people as equal stakeholders and guardians of this pursuit. This paper is a small effort to trace the trajectory of the (now defunct) non-formal education programme in India, an eminent example of this approach, and as **our tribute to Anil Bordia for his lifetime contribution to education.**

### Introduction

India rightly recognized that a large section of children of the rural and urban poor which included largely the socially disadvantaged SCs, STs and especially girls, continued to be denied of formal school education by way of left outs and drop outs. The remedy it devised for them such as part-time and/or non-formal education, since the late 1970s, had always turned to be a poor substitute in respect of standard and quality as compared to the formal education system. What was required in their case was an approach akin to positive discrimination – more attention, priority, resources and quality inputs in their case as compared to the formal education system, because the latter benefitted the relatively better off sections of society. The acid test of Indian conscience is what has been the quality and standard of education envisioned for them as compared to those availing the formal education system? This is notwithstanding what might seem as unexceptionable appropriateness of the variety of ungraded transitional educational programmes devised for out of school children of migrant families, other working children and those in remote and inaccessible areas, in accordance with the specific needs, and all of it, as in the rights and entitlement perspective. All of these transitional programmes were discontinued from 2011-12 with a promise of Special Training to such groups, but by their being enrolled in regular primary schools, in deference to the RTE requirement of providing universal, free and compulsory education of good quality to all the 6-14

age children. The real question is: has RTE placed a lid on the only opportunity and option for at least a rudimental level of education available to the out of school children?

This is a study of the Non-Formal Education (NFE) Scheme and programmes in India from mid-1970s to the present, as an engagement with out of school and drop out children of socio-economically marginalized groups in difficult areas. It seeks to study: (i) how national perception and approach evolved and what changes were introduced in NFE design and delivery and the underlying reasons; (ii) the reasons for change of NFE, in its hey days, from being viewed as an *integral* part of national strategy for Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) to an *alternative approach* to the formal school education, and secondly, to the winding up of the NFE approach and scheme altogether and adoption of formal school education as the only credible and legitimate approach for UEE in the emerging RTE context; (iii) how has the reality of unreached and drop out children's educational needs/rights are addressed now with the Right to Education (RTE) provisions coming into force; (iv) draws attention to the discontinuation of the myriad state and group-specific Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE) initiatives. These groups accessing the AIE initiatives have not disappeared. They continue to exist; and (v) while the physical access to primary and elementary education may have been achieved, the social and equitable educational access (with respect to the motivation and competency gaps of the first generation learners of the poor) still continues to be a grave issue, hampering and impeding their learning achievement, and the study examines whether adequate sensitivity to those issues and effective measures are in place in the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan.

### Structure of Article

Broadly, four phases could be identified during the course of the NFE programme in India. The first section traces the emerging perception both within India and at global level about NFE and the launching of the experimental and pilot phase of NFE programs in mid-70s and the NFE Scheme in VI Plan, where its viability and feasibility was being tested. The second phase, as presented in the second section, could be identified with the large-scale expansion, during the post-NPE period which also coincided with the growing credibility and acceptability of the scheme – what we call as romancing with NFE approach - and also its up-scaling in non-Educationally Backward States (EBSs) as well as urban slums. The third phase could be associated with the continuation of the NFE scheme although the partisan attitude was eroding its image and credibility. This was in the 90s, in spite of the political and government priority accorded to EFA. The fourth phase could relate with the Planning Commission's evaluation of NFE in 1998 and its recommendations to close down the NFE scheme as it was not making any substantive contribution in achieving UEE, and the forthright advocacy that formal education through the formal schools is the only legitimate and credible method to achieve UEE. This phase is also marked by the revision of the NFE scheme from 2000, by bringing in the Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and AIE programmes under NF, but following formal primary school

curriculum. The fifth phase coincides with the supersession of the AIE programmes with the promise of organizing Special Training to the target groups earlier covered under AIE programmes, in accordance with the state's commitment to the RTE mandate. The conclusion focuses on what is the current state and status of the children who were addressed through the NFE channel.

**A Caveat:** This is a first attempt to capture the trajectory of NFE, in what turns out to be as a partisan outlook and approach. Its partisan and discriminatory approach needs to be captured more authentically with scholarly writings, which seem to be very sketchy and difficult to access. Therefore, in the first instance, it is aimed at capturing and portraying the actual trajectory of NFE, as it unfolded over 35 years, based largely on government records. The second enterprise could wait for feedback from scholars, and also greater reflection in our own case.

### India's Initial Perception about Non-Formal Education

The engagement with non-formal education in India in the 1970s, was a product of two problems that were encountered in the journey to Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) as the Constitutional mandate. One was the enormous amount of wastage and stagnation seen in the formal school system – wastage as a result of dropouts of more than 50% at the primary level and above 75% at the elementary level. The reasons were both socio-economic as well as deficiencies within the education system. The other problem was that more than 20% of school age children were left out of formal school system on account of their living in inaccessible areas and for socio-economic and geographic and topographical reasons. Initially, i.e., till the 70s, it was perceived that expansion of formal school education should solve at least the problem of access. But, as regards wastage and stagnation, i.e., those who left the school prematurely for socio-economic reasons of their household as well as for educational reasons, especially the irrelevance of curriculum and the un-inspiring teaching-learning (T-L) processes, part-time education suited to their life situation was perceived to be a judicious response in the UEE journey.

The Education Commission (1964-66) was the major proponent of this approach. It suggested that part-time education of one and half to two hours per day for 3 days a week for about 1 year to the 11-14 age such children, to make them functionally literate. It discerned from experience of experiments of part-time education by some local institutions that the timings were elastic, determined by local conditions such that attendance should not interfere with the work they do for their families (NCERT, 1971: 280). The Education Commission felt that this part time education could easily be organized on a national scale, essentially by primary teachers, in the schools, and in the evenings, with a small honorarium to the teachers, and a total cost of not exceeding Rs. 40 per child. It also advocated part-time education at higher primary stage for those who completed primary education, but were unable to afford and continue on a full time basis, for economic reasons. It had the premonition that this large segment of children will continue to be neglected and

hence advocated that as matter of deliberate policy, this programme should be provided to as large a number of children and on as large a scale as possible. While the content and curriculum for the part-time functional literacy was suggested to be elastic, and according to the local conditions and needs and aptitudes of the children, for those intending to use it as a spring board to continue at higher primary level, the same curriculum as used at formal primary level was suggested (NCERT, 1971: 280-81).

The Education Commission had clearly indicated a dual system of part time education viz., functional literacy of a one year course with 2-3 hour learning time, laced with some modicum of their work and life situation needs, meant for large majority of out of school children, given their socio-economic condition. The other was meant for the relatively small segment which would use it as a spring board to move into higher primary level, and hence, following the course of primary schools (NCERT, 1971: 281).

### **NFE as Alternative to Iniquitous Formal School Education System**

Historically and internationally, there were voices against the formal education system's rigidities and resistance to more open and participative ways. Non-formal education and non-formal learning strategies were advocated to equip the learners with the ability to "learn to learn" on a lifelong basis. In this regard, at the international level, two developments lent a powerful impetus to NFE.

One was the report of the International Commission on the Development of Education, known as Edgar Faure report *Learning to be: World of Education – Today and Tomorrow*. The report which was based on a critical assessment of the educational situation in 1972, found that "traditional formulae and partial reforms cannot meet the unprecedented demand for education arising out of the new tasks and functions to be fulfilled." But, at the same time, it rejected the "de-institutionalising" education and "de-schooling" society solution as propounded by the radicals (Unesco, 1972: xxxii-xxxiii; 20). It admitted that "certain kinds of school and certain forms teaching must be strongly criticized, and many aspects of school education called for thorough-going reappraisal and reformation". It is also true that "education systems too often favour the members of the socially and economically privileged classes and the children who are academically most gifted, and by this destroy or compromise the future for large numbers of pupils" (Unesco, 1972: 85). It felt that "none the less, abandoning the idea of school as an essential, if not exclusive, element in education would be tantamount to surrender in the struggle to introduce hundreds of millions of human beings to the kind of education which involves systematic assimilation of knowledge. And, while human culture may not be limited to knowledge, knowledge remains today an integral and indispensable part of it" (Unesco, 1972: 20).

It is evident that the Edgar Faure report was not in favour of abandoning the school, but was in favour of reforming it, and this regard, laid stress above all on “two fundamental ideas: lifelong education and the learning society”, as “learning involves all of one’s life, in the sense of both time-span and diversity.”

As if to support the NFE movement, the Commission adduced the example of the “functional literacy campaign” that “has many innovative aspects and has produced positive results, and therefore deserves to be considered as a very constructive contribution to the reform of educational system”. It also clarified that “the idea of lifelong education has gathered great strength over the past ten years, although there is nothing new in the idea of the continuity of educational processes ... Especially preconceived ideas about instruction – it was for the young and took place in schools – prevented people generally from conceiving of lifelong education in normal educational, terms”. It explained that initially “lifelong education was scarcely more than a new term applied to a relatively old practice: adult education not to say the evening courses. Then, progressively, the idea was applied to professional training, following which it came to cover the multiple aspects of personality – intellectual, emotional, aesthetic, social and political – within an integrated vision of educative activity. Now, finally, the concept of lifelong education covers the entire educational process, from the point of view of the individual and of the society”. The Edgar Faure report summed up that “lifelong education becomes the instrument and expression of a circular relationship comprising all the forms, expressions and moments of the educative act”, and thereby demystified schools as the exclusive instrument of cultivating knowledge, skills and values (Unesco, 1972: 141; 143-45).

The other development that we alluded to earlier relates to a publication of a multi-country study on *Attacking Rural Poverty: How Nonformal Education Can Help*, by Philip H. Coombs with Manzoor Ahmed in 1974. This study traced the genesis of NFE. It discerned that the development efforts from mid-1950s had followed a lopsided pattern, with the main thrust centred on the modernization of urban areas, particularly on industrialization. While notable progress was made in many countries, the great majority of the people – those living in rural areas – had benefited relatively little. As a result, the social and economic gap between the modernizing urban sectors and the poverty-ridden rural sectors was widening ominously. Imbalances in the pattern of national development threatened further progress, even in the cities (Coombs and Ahmed, 1974: 3).

Education was part of this imbalance. It was believed that rapid expansion of existing education system would equalize opportunity and generate human skills and leadership needed for general development. With this kind of lop sided development pattern, as the developing nations entered the 1970s, they found themselves in deepening educational crisis – a crisis of maladjustment with many forms, affecting rural people more. The incompatibility between what schools were teaching and people needed to learn were more severe in rural areas. Education policies equated

education largely with formal schooling, hence the importance learning needs of children and adults outside formal school, who constituted the majority of the population were being seriously neglected. This set of circumstances, in much clearer focus by 1970 than earlier, prompted a strong new interest by policy makers in nonformal education (Coombs and Ahmed, 1974: 4).

Coombs and Ahmed explained the nature and type of nonformal education as used in the study: Nonformal education as used here is any organized, systematic, educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular subgroups in the population, adults as well as children. Thus, defined, nonformal education includes, for example, agricultural extension and farmer training programmes, adult literacy programs, occupational skill training given outside the formal system, youth clubs with substantial educational purposes, and various community programs of instruction in health, nutrition, family planning, cooperative, and the like (Coombs and Ahmed, 1974: 8). This is a study of only such NFE programmes expressly taken up to increase rural employment, productivity and income in rural areas, among farmers, rural artisans and craftsmen and small entrepreneurs.

### **Experiments and Action Researches in NFE**

It was in the 1970s that a new realization emerged in Indian educational discourse that creating an institutional approach and providing part-time education on a regular basis, side by side with the formal school education, could be an effective solution to wastage and stagnation as well as the vast segment of school age children left out of education system for socio-economic and educational reasons.

The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) passed a resolution in 1974 stating its conviction that the goal of UEE cannot be achieved through exclusive reliance of the formal system of education with its single point entry, sequential character and fulltime professional teachers. Therefore, it recommended a radical reconstitution of formal school education system to permit multi-entry system and a large scale programme of part-time education to all the children who cannot attend school for some reasons or the other, to be started in the very next academic year (NCERT, 1993: 6). Many State Governments like Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, etc., started part-time education programmes almost immediately after the CABE recommendations (NIEPA, n.d.; NCERT, 1986: 1).

The issue with formal education was kept up. Addressing the CABE in 1975, the Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi said "we do relies now that numbers could be reached only by changing the rigid methods and adopting new and more flexible ones. Education cannot be confined to institutions and must be replaced by a programme of part time education, supplemented by non-formal education, some form of work and self-study." And the Union Education Minister was happy to announce in the

same meeting that within 1 year of CABE's recommendations, that there was increasing interest in NFE and some experimental programmes in almost all States (MOE, SW & C, 1976: 6). But, in terms of Central initiative, the agenda had to wait a while longer.

Meanwhile, a series of Action Research Projects in 1975 were undertaken by the NCERT in States like Bihar, Delhi, Gujarat and UP which proved the viability of the concept of non-formal education for the out of school children. These served as the precursor to the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Non-Formal Education (NFE) introduced in 1979-80 in the nine educational backward States (EBSs), viz., Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, J & K, MP, Orissa, Rajasthan, UP and West Bengal – precursor in respect to the approach, i.e., survey of out of school children, preparation of learning as well as training materials, and identification, selection and training of the NFE instructors (NCERT, 1993: 1; Govinda, 1991:1145; Majumdar and Kaul, 1979).

### **Beginnings of State Recognition of NFE's Urgency**

The agenda of fulfilling the Constitutional mandate of UEE received the most unprecedented and momentous boost and priority when a new government was voted in the Centre in 1977. The Union Education Minister announced in Parliament on 5 April 1977 that UEE would be attained within a definite timeframe of not more than 10 years through universal elementary education for all children of 6-14 age-group and adult education to the 15-35 age adults. With regard to UEE, to prepare a feasible plan, a Working Group (WG) was set up at the instance of the Planning Commission in 1977 and in its Interim Report (1978), it estimated 452 lakh non-enrolled children to be brought into the school system by 1982-83 to achieve the UEE goal. The WG proposed a feasible target of covering 320 lakh children by 1982-83, i.e., 50% of which through NFE programme and of the remaining 160 lakhs, 120 lakhs through new enrolment at the primary stage and 40 lakh through the upper primary stage. The Working Group also pointed that the 8 EBSs accounted for nearly 74% of the non-enrolled children and recommended them to be associated through special Central support (MOE&SW, 1978: 3; 17).

In accordance with the guidelines of the Working Group and the resolutions adopted by the Conference of Education Ministers in August 1977 and July 1978, and at the instance of Union Education Ministry, the States and UTs prepared their Master Plans for UEE which were discussed in a series of meetings by the Union Education Secretary whereby these were revised as the medium-term plan for 1978-83 and submitted to the WG on UEE. The Master Plans of UEE of all States and UTs, as finalized by the WG, by design, had two components, viz., expansion and improvement of formal schooling, covering all habitations, and a massive programme of non-formal part-time education, covering the needs of various target groups and various backward areas of all States/UTs. The Master Plans also indicated the

target coverage on an annual basis, both in respect of formal and non-formal education (MOE&SW, 1978: 17).

The common features of both strategies included overhauling of the curriculum and making it more meaningful and relevant to the life situation of the children. The strategies had two significant features. One was the Report of the Review Committee on the Curriculum for the 10 Year School (Ishwarbhai Patel Committee, 1977), which recommended reduction of formal instruction for Classes I-IV/V to be not more two and a half to three hours a day. This – 3 hour school - was accepted by the Working Group (MOE&SW, 1978: 10). And the other was the innovative project on Comprehensive Access to Primary Education (CAPE) that the UNICEF was experimenting in collaboration with NCERT in various States for strengthening all teachers training by adding in-service training to their pre-service training and to that end, decentralizing the preparation of curriculum (NCERT, 1993: 77; Govinda, 1991: 1146).

Before finalizing its Interim Report, the Working Group considered the recommendations of a sub-group on NFE which identified three broad groups of clientele for the NFE programme. The first consisted of the children of weaker sections like SC/ST, those in hilly and tribal areas, urban slums and other economically backward rural areas who were either never enrolled or prematurely withdrawn to help the family in a number of ways from very young age itself. This was also the case with the second group of children – boys and girls – who were employed in occupations like carpet-weaving, beedi industry, etc. In both cases, they were unable to attend full time schooling and school timings also did not suit them. The WG felt that given the facility of schooling at a suitable timing, place and relevant curriculum, they may avail of the schooling facility. The third group was that of girls of 6-14 age who remain un-enrolled or prematurely withdrawn. Besides socio-cultural barriers among certain communities, in case of poor households, girls get engaged with sibling care and care of household and other occupations of the family. The WG felt that the girls would need an educational programme which would suit their future needs as mothers, wives and citizens (MOE&SW, 1978: 10).

The WG was convinced that “considering facts like the above which are obtaining in varying degrees in different parts of the country and in different sections of our society, the content, methods, place and timings of elementary education have to be suitably modified or adapted to suit the needs of such groups. It is this conviction which is the basis for searching an answer to some of our problems in the area of non-formal education. Non-formal education by its very nature is *flexible* in character. It lends itself to as many adaptations as there might be situations and needs” (MOE&SW, 1978: 12).

The programme of NFE that was introduced in India was based on the Madhya Pradesh Model (popularly known as the “MP Model”). The MP model condensed the five year course of primary curriculum into a 2 year curriculum. This condensed

course was offered to the non-enrolled and drop out children of 9-11 years in MP by teachers who were paid Rs. 50 per student passing the V Standard examination. This was the main model of NFE with respect to levels of learning "that is going to be adopted in parts of the country" (NCERT, 1993: 77; Govinda, 1991: 1146).

### **Experimental Projects for NFE Scheme in VI Plan 1978**

In the Scheme of NFE formulated by MOE, the objective was to help the EBSs to develop and implement the NFE programmes for 9-14 aged un-enrolled and drop out children; develop institutional structures at various levels for quantitative expansion and quality improvement of education; and develop group-specific and local-specific curriculum and instructional packages. The Scheme made clear that the entire programme would be implemented, especially academic inputs and instructional packages, by the normal administrative machinery already available at the Central and State levels, but with suitable strengthening, wherever required, such as strengthening of State Directorates of Education, setting up or strengthening SCERTs, improving teacher training institutions and supervisory structures at district and block levels (NCERT, 1993: 78).

The role of Ministry of Education at the Centre in NFE programme would be overall administration of the scheme and coordination of State Department/Directorate of Education and the SCERT in the State. The academic aspect of NFE programme, involving preparation of curriculum and prototype learning materials were to be handled by NCERT, group-specific materials by SCERTs and making them local specific by the Teacher Training Institutions (TTIs). The training of NFE instructors and Supervisors would be taken care by NCERT and NIEPA at national level, SRC and SCERT at State level and DIE at district level (NCERT, 1993: 78).

The NFE Scheme as per the final Master Plans, as finalized by the Union Education Ministry was introduced in the last quarter of 1979-80. Two years into the VI Plan, there were already 1,28,905 NFE Centres with 34.80 lakhs children enrolled in 1980-81 (GOI, 1981: 81-82).

In its second year of its operation, and as envisaged in the Scheme, regarding the role of coordination and supervision, the MOE, through NCERT, convened a conference of officers-in-charge of implementing NFE programmes in 9 EBSs was held in June 1981 at NCERT. The objectives were to: review the implementation of the programme in the states; examine the difficulties in implementation; indicate modifications based on experience; and identify approaches, strategies for early achievement of Constitutional mandate of UEE. Based on the experience shared by the implementing officers, NFE was seen "as an effective alternative strategy for UEE." The conclusions emerging from the conference which served as objectives in the future, implied that in initial stages, NFE should be developed as part-time school education to help the non-school going and drop out children to enter formal school

at different points, and for this purpose rely on curriculum of formal school education, condensed for NFE, so that it could facilitate re-entry into formal system. Formal school education should be made, through government order, more flexible to facilitate re-entry of NFE children. Instructional materials and strategies must take into consideration the needs and aspirations of the children attending NFE centres who have somewhat different motivations and attainment levels than those in the formal system (NCERT, 1993: 95). Based on experiences of implementation and the recommendations of the National Conference in 1981, certain new measures were introduced during 1982-83, such as increase of Central assistance for strengthening academic inputs (GOI, 1983: 6).

The Sixth Plan marked a phase of "further development and expansion", gaining from experience. It included more focused targeting in regard to the target groups and decentralization in regard to their contents, course duration, place and hours of learning and pattern of instructions ([www.planningcommission.nic.in/planannualplan](http://www.planningcommission.nic.in/planannualplan) Ch. 21: paras 21.12-13; 21.18-19). However, the VI Plan Mid-Term Appraisal (MTA) showed that while 80 lakhs children were envisaged to be covered under NFE, as against 160 lakhs envisaged by the WG for the medium term plan, 1978-83, only 35 lakhs was the coverage and, therefore, it was emphasized that steps should be taken to diversify NFE programmes with a variety of options to suit diversified needs of village children (GOI, 1983: 92).

Commissioned by MHRD, the NFE Programme was brought under evaluation jointly by NCERT and NIEPA in 1985. The evaluation was warranted as the VII Plan proposed to enroll 390 lakhs under NFE as compared to 40 lakhs in VI Plan (GOI, 1983: 92). The NCERT evaluation showed that although the programme was well suited to the life situation of the children and their parents, the learning levels was seen to be very deficient (NCERT, 1988: 2). The State level evaluations brought out revealing findings about NFE. The evaluation of NFE in West Bengal showed that: 97% of parents of NFE children were manual workers, including cultivators and labourers; about 77% of the parents had more than 3 children. Most of the parents (76%) sent only one child to the NFE centres; only 5% parents reported withdrawing their children from formal school, and the remaining were fresh entrants into NFE centres. It also became evident that out of the three areas, viz., knowledge, skills and attitudes, little attempt was made to develop attitudes and skills. The curriculum recommended use of different types of teaching aids and media of communication to improve learning. But in practice, only one small size black board in each Centre was available and no other teaching facility (NCERT, 1986: 94-97).

Although the curriculum and learning materials were to be specifically related to the needs and interests of learners that would vary across States and districts, the condensed course materials of the formal primary education was what was adopted in most of the States. The overriding intention was to make it as a spring board to transit to formal education at upper primary level. And, although the Working Group

identified three categories of target groups who were out of school and for whom a variety of strategies and non-formal and part time educational programmes were to be organized, in practice, the NFE programmes organized related predominantly to children of weaker sections like SC/ST, those living in hilly and tribal areas and urban slums and other economically backward sections in remote rural areas. Programmes for children engaged in occupations involving child labour were relatively minor and left to the Voluntary Agencies (VAs).

### **The "New" Programme of NFE: NPE Vision**

The National Policy on Education, 1986 (NPE) and its Programme of Action 1986 (POA) indicated the broad outlines of the "new programme of Non-formal education". The new features included the use of "modern technological tools like solar panels and lights, AV aids, radio-cassette players and Learning Materials (LMs) of high quality. The NPE and POA endorsed and reiterated the Scheme's core features such as: (a) flexibility in timings, and diversity in curriculum and LMs and activities linking it with learner needs; (b) continuous evaluation and certification to enable NFE pass outs to re-enter formal school system; (c) NFE's special features to maintain quality such as learner centred approach with instructor as facilitator and with emphasis on learning rather than teaching as well as peer learning and learning at fast pace through proper lighting and use of equipments, (d) extension of all facilities given to girls and SC and ST children to also NFE children; (e) selection of local person as NFE instructors who are motivated and acceptable to the community, preferably from weaker sections of society and women as far as possible; (f) 30 days pre-induction and 20 days recurrent training in subsequent years for NFE instructors, and similar training to Supervisors and other functionaries, as the pre-requisites for NFE's success; (g) variety of agencies, flexibility and variety of NFE programmes and specified minimum learning levels at least up to V Class levels to facilitate re-entry into the formal system, and provision of NFE at higher primary level as well as through the Open Schools (OS) or Open Learning System (OLS) system; (h) the NFE project duration to be for a minimum of 3-4 years; (i) the financial pattern of 50:50 for mixed centres; 90:10 for girls' centres, subject to a maximum of 25% of the mixed centres; 100% assistance to NGOs as well as academic institutions doing innovative projects and research; and, most importantly, (j) besides the 9 EBSs, inclusion of backward regions even in non-EB States as eligible for NFE such as hilly tracts, predominantly tribal areas, urban slums, and projects for working children and disadvantaged social groups, (GOI, 1986: 17-18; 20).

### **Fast Expansion in NFE in VII Plan and Revisions Effectuated**

During the 6<sup>th</sup> Plan, it was estimated that 8 million would be enrolled in NFE, but the 6<sup>th</sup> Plan Mid-Term appraisal revealed 3 million enrolments (the Working Group for VII Plan reckoned the target as 290 lakhs). During the Seventh Plan, 25 million were expected to be enrolled, and NFE in VII Plan was required to be expanded a fast

pace and made acceptable with a variety of forms so as to suit the needs of target groups, and made flexible and appropriately linked to the formal system. The strategies underwent a change in the middle of VII Plan with adoption of the NPE, 1986, and the Scheme was revised with new thrusts. Besides EBSs, Central financial assistance was extended to educationally backward regions and client groups in the educationally advanced States, such as hilly tracts, predominantly tribal; areas known for educational backwardness, urban slums and projects for education of working children (GOI, n.d.: 182).

The other revisions effected in the NFE Scheme from 1987-88 included: (a) Area specific project approach in planning and implementation of NFE programme: compact and contiguous area, co-terminus with a CD Block was advocated with adequate administrative and financial powers; (b) There was to be no insistence on the MP model, and autonomy was given to adopt any model so long it adhered to the national core curriculum; (c) The NFE age group, was open to 6-14 instead of 9-14 age group; (d) Provision of funds for NFEC supervision increased from Rs. 180 to 400; (e) Special emphasis was on the training of instructors and supervisors. (f) Funds for 30 +20 days training made available and DIETs were entrusted with training of NFE personnel; (g) Govt. run NFE projects could also be transferred to PRIs.; (h) Beyond earlier Central grants to administrative strengthening at Directorate, SCERT and TTI levels, provision for staff at district – one Project Officer and 3 support staff were sanctioned and motor cycle was allowed for supervision; and (i) The proportion of girls centres to mixed centres was raised to 25:75% and “girls centres” could be those where girls were accounting for 80% of the enrolment (Kapoor, 1992: 190-93). Towards the end of VII Plan, there were 2.72 lakhs NFECs.

### **Romancing with NFE: Legacy of NPE**

In the post-1988 situation, NFE as a concept and the scheme, in terms of its coverage, seemed to enjoy an air of a flagship programme, like the National Literacy Mission. It seemed to presage the importance accorded for EFA, with its focus on non-formal education and adult literacy, as an integral part of the EFA's in 'meeting the learning needs of all children, youth and adults'. The importance enjoyed by NFE as a concept and approach was such that the country was prepared to introduce elements of non-formal education in the formal system and incorporate the benefits of the formal system in NFE, and by non-formalisation of formal education. Some of the proposed programmes and activities of NFE as well as of non-formalisation of formal education, as illustration of the possible range of programmes, include:

- (i) The formal primary education system would be made more relevant and child-centred by the introduction of non-formal characteristics such as:

- (a) Adjustment of the school calendar and vacations according to the convenience of pupils;
  - (b) Giving environmental orientation and learners' need orientation to the content and process; and
  - (c) Making it possible for local women with lower qualifications to serve as teacher.
- (ii) The introduction of Shiksha Karmi pattern: involving entrusting a primary school to 2-3 specially selected local persons, and imparted short term pre-induction training, to serve as teachers, in habitations without school, and also as replacements in remote rural schools, not preferred by teachers. They would also organize NFE and adult education in the evenings. This is an amalgam of formal and non-formal education.
  - (iii) Night schools for primary education, particularly in urban areas, where there is a demand for it from children of migrant workers and slum dwellers, running for 2 hours, and following a regular syllabus of formal primary school.
  - (iv) Condensed primary education through NFE centres, following the MP model of condensed course of primary education, through one to one-and a half hour duration daily for two years. This was the predominant model adopted in India.
  - (v) Pre-primary-cum-lower primary centres — balwadis — as run by voluntary agencies for the 3-4 to 8-9 year olds (NIEPA, 1990: 54-55).

NFE as a better alternative to the formal education system could be traced to 1978, with the Working Group for the medium term plan (1978-83), with its open admiration of the NFE characteristics, and *flexibility* and adjustability according to the needs and situation of the learners and the area. This was based on the report a sub-group on Non-formal Education under the chairmanship of S.K.Mitra, which the WG had endorsed. To this, the writings of influential thinkers like J.P. Naik on *Non-Formal Education*, and *Equality, Quality and Quantity: The Elusive Triangle in Indian Education* added a social equity and the democratization of education edge to the educational development which went well with the current international criticisms of the rigidities of formal education. He contended that the pursuit of the goals of Equality, Quality and Quantity were riven with the inevitable conflicts among the three and it did not help in forging education as an instrument of egalitarian society. J.P. Naik argued that given the rigidities of formal school education system, a large scale programme of non-formal education to the un-enrolled and drop out 9-14 age

children and adult education to cover the illiterates above 15 years, to be achieved in a time bound manner within another 10 years, were the only options to achieve the Constitutional mandate with respect to education. But, he felt that "the major difficulty in the successful implementation of this programme seems to be the fact that the well to do classes in power is not interested in bringing about the radical changes necessary in the formal system of school education if elementary education is to be provided to the millions of poor people who live below the poverty line" (Naik, 175: 210). But, he persisted on his advocacy of NFE which lent a powerful impetus to the NFE approach in the Indian education landscape.

### Partisan Attitude and Treatment to NFE

The Committee for Review of NPE, 1986, constituted by the Deptt. of Edn, of MHRD in 1990 (also known as the Ramamurti Committee) took note of the NFE Scheme as one of the major Centrally Sponsored schemes in the area of elementary education. It also noted the extension of the NFE scheme to cover urban slums, tribal areas, hilly and desert tracts and special projects for working children.

The Committee approvingly cited NFE characteristics, as adduced in a NIEPA study of 'Education For All by 2000': In terms of cognitive learning, NFE is comparable with the corresponding stage in formal education; It has flexibility to adjust curriculum and textual materials to the needs and interests of the learners; Its total duration is generally shorter than in formal education; The programme can be organized at the time convenient for the learners, generally in the afternoons for girls and in the evenings for working children; It is not dependent on highly paid professional teachers, but is organized by local persons who are specially trained for it; and there is the possibility of migration between the formal and non-formal systems (Deptt. of Edn., 1990: 163). It took note of the scale of NFE programme: 2.4 lakhs centres, with about 65 lakh learners. Save in the case of a few Voluntary Agencies (VAs) which adopted innovative techniques and need-based learning materials, the Committee noted that Government-run NFE centres (90%) were beset by serious deficiencies, as brought out in the NIEPA study on Evaluation of NFE in 1987 as well as another document of NIEPA on 'Education For All by 2000: Indian Perspective'.

- There is generally a lack of conviction. The state governments are not willing to commit resources for NFE, the administrative system gives it a step-motherly treatment, and there is generally a lack of faith among functionaries and the families of the children who are supposed to benefit from it. The States' unwillingness to commit resources was recognized as "one of the major problems in the full implementation of NFE programmes" (GOI, 1990: 22).

- Although there is scope for adjusting the syllabus to the special needs of the learners, in fact, hardly any attempt has been made in this direction;
- The quality of instructors and their training leave much to be desired. For all practical purposes, routinely selected persons serve as instructors and the training is so inadequate that the instructor follows the methods by which he/she was taught rather than a genuinely non-formal method;
- The management system is totally deficient for the needs, and there are unconscionable delays in remittance of funds to instructors for their honorarium and lighting arrangements. Sometimes learning materials reach weeks after the start of the centre;
- Funds provided for NFE are far short of the needs. The instructor is under-paid and enough learning materials are not available. Lighting arrangements and instructional equipment are below the acceptable level (cited in Deptt. of Edn., 1990: 167; for state-wise position of deficiencies, see SNS Unit, NIEPA, n.d.; Kapoor, 1992).

Based on this unenviable position of the NFE scheme in operation around 1989, the Committee reacted to the NPE perception and the strategies outlined for improvement of the NFE. One was what it considered the "almost an arbitrary reference" to the use of modern technical aids to improve the learning environment and quality improvement, implying thereby the lack of satisfactory learning environment was due to lack of modern technological aids, and the assumption that provision of such aids like radio-cassette player would necessarily lead to quality improvement. It suggested that it is better that such premises are really and reliably tested and proved before embarking upon a major programme of investment on technological aids.

The Committee dwelt on the status given to NFE instructors in the programme. It recalled the NPE expectation that talented young men and women from local community will be chosen and particular attention paid to their training, as NFE's success depends on their quality and training. They were also expected to locate the learners through household survey, arrange the venue with community support and adjust the centre's timings to the convenience of girls and working children, and create and sustain a learning process based on the principle of learner-centred approach, in order to overcome the barriers that prevented working children from

attending school education. But, in their absorption in formal school, NPE restricted it to only "deserving cases" and did not propose and provide opportunities and avenues for professional upgradation of their qualification and become "deserving" for absorption. The Ramamurti Committee recommended that the NFE instructors should be absorbed in the formal education system after two years of satisfactory service provided they upgrade their educational qualification by passing at least their Matriculation. This dichotomy in the cadre system between NFE and FE robbed NFE instructors of the necessary motivation due to low emoluments (Rs. 105 for lower primary and Rs. 150 for upper primary level NFE centres). There was no intention of higher remuneration or professional upgradation. The intention was clear in the structure and system, NFE's management would remain parallel with formal education system (Deptt. of Edn, 1990: 169).

The Ramamurthy Committee's impressions about the NFE programme were clearly indicated in its (i) concern about deficiencies noticed in the image and credibility of NFE programme and policy dichotomies about stress of equivalency in learning levels but inferior status of NFE instructors, and (ii) the policy intention about the NFE's parallel system and intentional non-provision of qualification upgradation and absorption of its cadres into the formal school education system. However, besides exposing this dichotomy in the policy, the Committee did not unequivocally propose measures to strengthen and improve NFE system, as suggested in the national document on *Indian Perspective of the Education for All by 2000*. It became a convert and advocate of the NIEPA perspective on EFA with respect to non-formalizing the formal education system, as elucidated above, more than strengthening or improving NFE system. However, as would be evident in the Revised NPE's POA (1992), the government was not prepared for any changes in the formal school education system, besides following the same old NFE system.

The POA of NPE (Revised), 1992 took note of the revision in content and emphasis in NFE introduced in 1987-88: besides its focus on 10 EBSs, its extension to urban slums, hilly, tribal and desert areas and areas with concentration of working children in other States as well. It also took note of the increase in the NFE Centres from 1.26 lakhs in 1986 to 2.72 lakhs in 1992, with the enrolment increasing from 36.45 lakhs to 68 lakhs (GOI, 1992: 66).

But, in respect of NFE, and in spite of the somewhat critical view of the Ramamurti Committee's views, the POA of NPE (Revised), 1992 declared strategies to strengthen NFE such as: sanction of NFE centres based on micro planning for UEE, clearly focusing on the children who are not able to or who cannot attend the formal school; community to be involved in setting up and supervising NFE centres, and in identifying and selecting NFE instructors, preferably women; adequate training and retraining of NFE instructors, the responsibility being shouldered by DIETs and DRUs at district levels, SCERTs at state level and NIEPA and NCERT at national level; arrangements for testing of NFE children's equivalence in learning levels vis-à-vis formal education

system, with specific instruction to formal education system to permit lateral entry to NFE children; linking NFE at upper primary level with Post-Literacy and Continuing Education phase in the TLC districts, and Open Schools, public libraries, Jana Shiksha Nilayams. The POA proposed that in the revised scheme, consequent to NPE-POA's policy postulates, an increase in the Central Assistance to States @ 75:25 for mixed Centres (GOI, 1992: 74).

The other improvements suggested included: Improved selection of NFE instructors and their pre-induction training as pre-requisite to start NFE Centres (NFEC); Increase in their remuneration to Rs. 200 pm and Rs. 50 increase after 2 years of satisfactory service; increased funds for more good quality TLMs, *need to continue NFE programme till all out of school children are covered in the area*; 25 children at an NFEC; strengthening administrative and technical resource support; increase in number of women instructors and supervisors and administrators; and enlarging involvement of NGOs in NFE (GOI, 1992: 73).

The idealization of NFE turned out to be a short lived one. The NPE's POA (1992) did not buy any feature of non-formalising the formal education system as suggested by the Ramamurti Committee. It sought to strengthen the linkage of NFE system with formal primary education and linking NFE's upper primary level with National Institute of Open Schooling's programmes of vocationalisation and National Literacy Mission's Post-Literacy and Continuing Education Programmes.

### **EFA Decade of 1990s: NFE not Inching Close to Target Size**

The VIII Plan declared that the NFE system will be expanded, improved and strengthened in the matter of supply of TLMs, instructional delivery and achievement, and innovative programmes like Shiksha Karmi which had given good result in an experimental project in Rajasthan would be expanded (GOI, n.d.: 287).

Mid-way through VIII Plan, certain changes were introduced in NFE: NFE instructors' remuneration was raised to Rs. 200 pm; assistance to mixed centres was increased from 50% to 60%; ratio of girls centres (with 90% Central assistance) to mixed centres was raised from 25% to 40%; expenditure per NFEC increased from Rs. 5500 to Rs. 8725 per annum; investment was enhanced on TLM, training and equipments and contingency of Rs. 250 to an NFEC per annum was introduced; cash incentives to NFE instructors linked to the number of learners qualifying to enter upper primary level. However, during the entire plan period, the scheme inched from 2.72 lakh to 3 lakh centres and the enrolment from 63 lakh to 75 lakh children, while the expectation was 1.3 crores (GOI, 1996:126).

### **Introspection, Revitalization and Cautious Expansion of NFE in Ninth Plan**

Around 1996, and in the context of the Working Group's deliberations for the IX Plan, the approach and strategy towards NFE in the IX Plan appears to have sparked

off introspection about the 17 year old NFE programme. For instance, the Working Group (WG) on Elementary and NFE for the Ninth Plan felt that NFE as an instrument for providing primary education to out of school children in EB areas has been by and large accepted and validated. "But," it felt bad that NFE was "unfairly subjected to criticism as a low cost inferior and ineffective alternative for full time school and it seeks to legitimize child labour, as it is based on the assumption that poor and deprived children must work and therefore cannot attend regular school." The WG held that, it cannot be denied that despite several shortcomings, NFE provided access to millions of children in remote and inaccessible rural areas and urban slums, and especially girls and the disadvantaged sections of society. NFE was seen as an evolving model emerging from existing socio-economic realities, and when effectively and properly implemented, it has been a stepping stone to formal schooling. Primary schools and NFE can together enroll all the 6-11 age children. Moreover, parents and community recognize it as an alternative (GOI, 1996: 77).

This did not go unchallenged. Reviewing the scenario, a senior administrator (Anand Sarup, 1996) commented:

*Looking at the plans for 'non-formal' education, one finds that it is assumed that, with a band of 'committed and selfless', informally trained part-time 'teachers' and practically no infrastructure except non-official motivators, millions of pupils can be educated at a fraction of the cost of school education. These assumptions need to be examined with utmost care through randomised sample studies as well as documented records of performance. If so much more difficult task of educating out-of-school children can be performed so cheaply, should we not review the entire system of school education?" (Ramachandran, 1997).*

Probably conscious of such pessimistic view of the prevalent NFE scheme, the WG was forthright in identifying certain shortcomings and difficulties faced by NFE: (i) it has not emerged as a credible alternative to primary school system because of its insufficient funding, inappropriate organizational structures, inefficient operationalisation, inadequate involvement of local community and unrealistic expectations of completion of primary schooling in 2 years by working children through part-time instruction imparted by under-equipped and low paid para teachers (Govinda and Josephine, 2004); (ii) development of appropriate curriculum and suitable TLMs for NFE children and recurrent training of instructors and supervisors had not received adequate attention; (iii) earnest and effective implementation by States was lacking; (iv) NFE had to operate in most difficult conditions. Aimed at out of school children, it addressed 1<sup>st</sup> generation learners who come from economically and socially backward sections with no educational or literacy background at home. NFE had been implemented in remote rural regions, especially in tribal areas, and it had not always been possible to provide essential facilities, the pre-requisites for its success; (v) it was also difficult to retain functionaries because of the paltry honorarium: even this small sum did not reach them on time, leading to discontent and disruption of

NFE centres, and resulting in discontinuity and wastage; (vi) Training of NFE functionaries was inadequate and sporadic; and (vii) Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL) based local specific NFE curriculum has not been developed in most States/UTs (GOI, 1996: 77). The first national evaluation of NFE by NIEPA found exactly the same situation in 1986-87, and there was no difference in 1989-90, as observed in NIEPA's report on EFA in 1990. However, it is sobering to recognize a government document openly recognizing the socio-economic exclusionary character of formal education and the NFE as ensuring the much needed inclusiveness in the school education system. It also recognized it as the only option in the emerging socio-economic realities, implying thereby, realities unleashed in the wake of liberalization, globalization and privatization. It is also sobering to see the recognition that pending RTE, NFE at least as an alternative, and perhaps, the only alternative to the large number of out of school children.

The WG endorsed the major recommendations of National and State level Workshops in 1995 to address specific issues for improving NFE: *it should be perceived as a long term strategy to achieve UEE* and needs better advocacy and awareness; need to create autonomous bodies at State level for efficient delivery; substantial enhancement of remuneration of instructors and supervisors; providing at least 2 instructors per NFEC, one of them necessarily a woman; delegating powers to appoint instructors to panchayats and VECs; increasing NFE duration from 2 to 5 years to ensure attainment of MLL; increasing daily duration of NFE timings from 2 to 3 hours; extending incentives like noon meals (Mid Day Meals [MDM]) to NFE children; enhancing funding to NFECs on par with formal schools and also funds for TLMs, training and supervision; streamlining fund flow to ensure regular payment of honorarium to instructors and supervisors and timely purchase of TLMs; and allowing flexibility for incurring expenditure by States within approved budget (GOI, 1996:78-80).

While the NFE programme saw a major expansion during the Seventh Plan, it had been extended and consolidated during the 8<sup>th</sup> Plan. At the end of VIII Plan, in 1996, there were 2.79 lakh NFE centres covering about 70 lakh children in 21 States/UTs. The major strategies for revitalisation and expansion of NFE in 9<sup>th</sup> Plan included: Redressing the perception of NFE as inferior system of primary education through strong advocacy, and better environment building (EB); higher investments, rigorous implementation, coordination, monitoring and review of all parameters of NFE. NFE should not be considered as low cost model of primary education, its *unit cost ought to be comparable with formal schooling*. Other strategies proposed included: provision of enough flexibility in duration, nature, content and management of NFE while ensuring achievement of MLL; revamping the organisational structure of NFE at National, State, District and Project levels; creating autonomous societies at State level to attend to all aspects of NFE programme; stress on consolidation and limited expansion to improve efficiency and quality; providing adequate remuneration and career advancement opportunities for Instructors, Supervisors and other functionaries

of NFE; ensuring pre-induction training for NFE functionaries and strengthening of in-service training through DIETs; and developing learner and area-specific NFE models for girls, working children, tribal children, first generation learners, minorities, slum areas and street children (GOI, 1996: 80-81).

On the programme front, the WG suggested 50,000 new NFECs to be added in IX Plan, taking total number to 3.3 lakh centres; the focus to be on children of migratory labourers at work site, nomadic tribes, street children and children in urban slums, remote rural areas and difficult and inaccessible areas; Increase in expenditure from Rs. 8725 in VIII Plan to Rs. 23,670 for primary, and from Rs. 14,150 to Rs. 34,670 for upper primary NFE centres, with flexibility left to states. A system of testing and certification of NFE learners to be introduced. At state level, NFE did not get the attention it deserved, and being handled by the Directorates of Primary or Adult Education, it tended to get marginalized and neglected. An autonomous society at state and district level, like for SLMA, MS, LJP, DPEP, etc., with sufficient flexibility in financial and academic matters would be essential for NFE's success (GOI, 1996: 82-88).

While the IX Plan document did not fix any target, and, merely took cognizance the programme as currently existed, the Mid-Term Appraisal of the IX Plan indicated the coverage achieved in NFE's expansion and consolidation: more than 22,000 EGS centres established in Madhya Pradesh during the previous few years, more than 12,000 Rajeev Gandhi Swarna Jayanti Pathshalas in Rajasthan, large scale recruitment of para teachers in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, M.P and UP (Govinda and Josephine, 2004). The NFE centres in 2000 was 3 lakhs and it covered about 75 lakh children in 24 States/UTs. The Appraisal also referred to the problems facing NFE, as brought out by the evaluation undertaken by the Planning Commission (Planning Commission, 2000: 201).

### **EGS&AIE as NFE: 'Paradigmatic Shift in Approach' in Tenth Plan**

*The end of NFE* was due to the evaluation of the NFE programme undertaken by the Programme Evaluation Organisation of the Planning Commission in 1998 which revealed that both the Centre and States were slow in release of allocations and flow of funds to NFECs was erratic. Lack of accommodation and poor lighting facilities were major problems. The programme was fraught with many lacunae – poor quality, lack of enthusiasm of teachers, poor quality of training, ambiguity in curriculum and text books, lack of community participation, weak management system, insufficient outlay, non-emphasis on mainstreaming, etc. Moreover, most of the NFE centres were in habitations already served by formal schools. Therefore, the evaluation advocated immediate closure of the NFE centres, and adopting the approach of UEE through formal education through fulltime schools as the only legitimate and valid approach. This evaluation of the Planning Commission led to the revision of the scheme in 2000. The Working Group for the Tenth Five Year Plan in 2001 as well as

the final Plan document endorsed the approach and rationale as explained in the Planning Commission's evaluation of the NFE scheme (GOI, n.d. 29).

Thus, the programme was "revised" as "Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education" (EGS & AIE) in 2000 to improve access in education, with flexibility to cater to diverse needs of out-of-school children. The new scheme provided for opening EGS schools in un-served habitations where there were no schools within a radius of 1 km. The revised scheme of EGS&AIE undertook to support diversified strategies for out-of-school children including bridge courses, back to school camps, seasonal hostels, summer camps, mobile teachers, and remedial coaching. The investment cost per child per year was increased from Rs. 375 to Rs. 845 at primary, and from Rs. 580 to Rs. 1200 at upper primary level NFE centres. All the other pre-requisites connected with the earlier NFE programmes, were applicable for the revised scheme of EGS&AIE as well: (i) quality of non-formal education will be upgraded to a level matching the formal education system; (ii) the community will be involved in the implementation of the scheme; (iii) instructors will be paid enhanced honorarium; (iv) an elaborate school mapping exercise will be undertaken; and (v) *the scheme will be part of the large, more holistic programme for UEE, viz., the SSA* (Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, 2001: 32-33).

In the name of "revision", the on-going NFE Scheme and programmes were closed down, and in its place, the new EGS schools [a mini primary school], with a single teacher was introduced, using the funds earmarked for the NFE Scheme. The NFE Scheme and programme, as known since 1979 and till 2000, was replaced by the EGS, calling it as 'paradigmatic change in approach' which was actually an euphemism for the demise of NFE. But, without appearing to be such an abrupt abandoning of the NFE constituency, all the innovative and alternative initiatives of education at the primary level undertaken under DPEP, including the EGS, became part of the new NFE programme under a new nomenclature, viz., EGS&AIE. The constituency that these programmes sought to serve remained unchanged (Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, 2001: 33).

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the national programme of elementary education, launched in 2000-01 had certain specific objectives, including: All children in schools or EGS Centre/Alternate School, by 2003; and all children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007. Following the NPE, 1986 and POA, 1992, the Eighth and Ninth Plans set their targets and devised strategies to meet the national goals in respect of UEE. In spite of ambitious targets set and the multi-pronged approach through a number of programmes, success achieved was far below the target envisaged while launching the plans. The problems of access and low universal enrolment remained while the problems of drop-outs still continued un-dented, especially for the difficult to reach groups such as girls, working children, tribal children, urban deprived children, and children with special needs. The learning

achievement was also not up to the desired level. Further the gender, social and regional disparities remained to be bridged (Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, 2001: 7).

The Working Group for the Tenth Plan, therefore, felt that a 'newer approach' was needed to achieve the goal of UEE. The need was to have an all-comprehensive programme having a holistic and convergent approach, covering the entire country, and SSA, was such a programme. Special focus was proposed to be given on children who were never enrolled or those who have dropped out without completing eight years of elementary schooling, and specific strategies devised for difficult to reach groups so that the reasons for their staying away from school system were identified and steps taken to provide them quality elementary education (Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, 2001:7).

### **Scale of Out of School Children and NFE's Chronic Minimal Coverage**

To prove a point about the woefully inadequate coverage of actual out of school children, a little digression from chronological trajectory of NFE may be in order.

Out of the population of approximately 20 crores in the age group of 6-14 in 2000, the number of children not attending school was 4.2 crores, which needed special focus in the Tenth Plan. In the context of the proposed strategies in respect of different categories of out of school children, the case and profile of working children (wage earning) could be relevant.

Much like the case of other groups of out of school children, the scale of child labour (5-14) fluctuated and grew between 1.07 crore to 1.26 crore in the decades between 1971 and 2001 (GOI, 2012: 71). This is only in respect to child labour groups engaged in many major occupations. Nearly 85 per cent of child labourers in India are hard-to-reach, invisible and excluded, as they work largely in the un-organised sector, both rural and urban, within the family or in household-based units. The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act 1986, aims to prohibit the entry of children into hazardous occupations and to regulate the services of children in non-hazardous occupations, but still a significant portion of children in the country are engaged in such activities. These include: Agriculture, where children work for long hours and under severe hardships on the fields; they are also exposed to the hazards of working with modern machinery and chemicals; Hazardous industries/occupations like glass making, mining, construction, carpet weaving, zari making, fire-works, etc; Small industrial workshops and service establishments; On the streets - Rag pickers, porters, vendors etc.; Domestic work: largely invisible and silent and hence face higher degree of exploitation and abuse in the home of employees (GOI, 2012: 71).

Thus, even by 2001, there were 1.26 crore children, but the NFE centres would fall far short of the five year plan targets and coverage. The coverage in VI Plan was

3.5 million out of 8 million proposed; 6.3 million out of 29 million in VII Plan; the VIII Plan pitched 1.3 crores as the target, but its coverage was a little above 50%. The story was the same during the IX Plan also. The best way forward would not be to position the proxy for NFE, viz., EGS & AIE, vis-à-vis its target, but in relation to certain specific groups. Thus, certain specific strategies were suggested for different groups, for the Tenth Plan, which included:

*Out of school girls:* Special camps and bridge courses for mainstreaming girls and adolescent girls; setting up alternative schools exclusively for girls, providing formal schooling facilities in centres of religious instruction viz., Maktabas and Madarasas, boarding schools and ashram schools for girls in extreme circumstances and Balika Vidya Peeths in every block with provision for general and vocational education with residential facilities. Open school, distance education systems and other innovative programmes to reach out to girls. Rural girls are doubly disadvantaged by non-availability of educational facilities and by the work they have to do relate with fuel, fodder, water, sibling care and paid and unpaid work. Provision of support services and child care facilities would enhance their participation and performance would be seen as a necessary and integral adjunct of UEE (Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, 2001: 8-9).

*Working Children:* Successful strategies and innovations tried out in the country were to be up-scaled, such as, Back to School Camps, Summer Schools and Bridge Courses. Besides, once children were brought to school, giving continuous academic and emotional support was to be through community teachers, orientating primary school teachers inside the school and through remedial teaching outside the school (Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, 2001: 10).

*Urban Deprived Children:* Opening of new schools and EG schools based on the need of the area in cities. *Other hard to reach groups:* Setting up seasonal schools at the site of work of migrants such as sugar schools, brick kiln schools, etc.; ID cards to children of migrant families to facilitate their entry into schools at different work sites; bridge courses, seasonal hostels and mobile schools based on the local needs; permanent Community Based Schools, Residential Camps and Multi-grade centres for very small un-served habitations.

*Strategy for Dropouts:* For those children who have already dropped out suitable alternative education systems would be provided such as bridge course, remedial teaching, back to school camps, etc., so that they can be mainstreamed into the formal system (Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, 2001: 11).

As recommended by the Working Group, the Tenth Plan proposed that EGS&AIE scheme will support diversified strategies for out-of-school children including bridge courses, back-to-back school camps, seasonal hostels, summer camps, mobile teachers and remedial coaching (GOI, n.d.: 29). Surveying the progress, the Mid-

Term Appraisal of the Tenth Plan (perhaps around 2006) took cognizance of the Seventh All India Education Survey (2003) that the coverage of children under NFE at 12 million [in 2003] would reach 19 million by 2004-05 [This figure of 12 million would remain inexplicable because the Ministry's own figure never went beyond 7 million till the end of IX Plan, and even if enrolments under Lok Jumbish and Skisha Karmi Projects included, it cannot come to 19 million]. The Appraisal observed that:

*contrary to the general perception, alternative schooling efforts under EGS/AIE, Lok Jumbish, Shiksha Karmi, residential and non-resident bridge courses under DEPE and SSA were not lacking in quality. These evolutionary schools are best suited for the transition period for mainstreaming a large proportion of out-of-school children and should be treated as an interim arrangement. These schemes should be merged with the SSA and states will have to plan for the sustainability of these schools. Although a substantial proportion of out-of-school children have been covered under the non-formal and formal streams, the interim arrangement is likely to continue for quite some time so as to net the groups that are very hard to reach... (Planning Commission, n.d.: 53).*

### **Alternate Schooling Initiatives as RTE: Metamorphosis of NFE in Eleventh Plan**

Such a favourable pre-disposition about the alternative schooling efforts as observed during the course of the Tenth Plan was no accident. During the IX plan itself, as indicated by the Mid-Term Appraisal of IX Plan, as during the X Plan, there was this practice of sanctioning EGS centres at all India level, as well as in the minority concentration districts. During the Tenth Plan, the EGS enrolled 120.9 lakhs and 11.3 lakhs children under AIE centres. Besides, Maktabs/Madaras were also taken up under EGS/AIE, for providing all facilities like free textbooks, etc (GOI, 2008:5).

Endorsing the official view of the EGS itself as a transitory measure to be replaced by a formal primary school within 2 years, but teaching formal curriculum, and extending all incentives as in formal schools, the Eleventh Plan had set up the target of converting all EGS centres into regular primary schools, and thus achieving universal enrolment of 6-14 age group children, including the hard to reach segment (GOI, 2008: 9). In 2007-08, the very first year of 11<sup>th</sup> Plan, 95,493 EGS centres were upgraded to primary school. This trend was kept up. In its annual report for 2009-10, MHRD reports progress in respect of EGS and AIE:

#### **Progress in EGS & AIE**

##### **EGS**

- Primary: Rs. 1535 per child/annum
- Upper Primary: Rs. 29660 per child/annum

### **AIE Centres**

- Non-residential centres: Rs. 3000 per child/annum
- Residential: Rs. 10,000 per child/annum

### **Till September 2009-10**

- 23.24 lakh children were enrolled in 25961 EGS centres
- 14,83,561 children were enrolled in AIE centres
- 1,06,136 EGS centres were upgraded to primary schools
- 2559 residential bridge courses opened
- 4126 centres opened for urban deprived children and 90 centres for children belonging to migrating families (MHRD, n.d.: 26).

With respect of EGS & AIE, lot of changes was introduced during the XI Plan. With the adoption of the RTE Act in 2010, the position with respect to EGS rapidly changed. In deference to RTE provision, there was to be no alternative for formal fulltime 8 years of schooling for all children. As per the requirement of RTE Act, all EGS centres have to be converted into formal primary schools and such category of converted/upgraded primary schools would have different norms, somewhat closer to the normal primary schools.

Under the AIE component, flexible strategies were implemented for education of children who could not be directly enrolled in a school/ EGS centre. With a view to ensuring that quality education is provided in the EGS and AIE centres, the following parameters were laid down:

- EGS/AIE centres are required to function for at least four hours every day.
- Preparatory activities prior to starting the centre include: identifying and engaging Education Volunteers [para teachers, contract teachers, in place NFE instructors]; and ensuring their 30 days initial training, LMs and equipments are provided for the children in the centre;
- Head Teacher of local school is to be involved in regular supervision;
- Evaluation of children's learning is required to be carried out during quarterly monitoring of EGS/AIE component (MHRD, n. d : 27)

The Mid-Term Appraisal of XI Plan recounted SSA's achievements: SSA has ensured almost universal access to primary education, with following achievements, such as rural habitations with access to a primary school increased from 87% in 2002 to 99% in 2008, and in respect of upper primary school, from 78% to 92% in the same period. The drop out rate at primary level declined from 39% to 25.55%, and at upper primary level, from 55% to 43.03% from 2001-02 to 2007-08. The Mid-Term Appraisal also noted a critical element of the Eleventh Plan strategy, "a paradigm shift from access to quality", with over 12 lakhs teachers posts sanctioned and 10.22 lakhs recruitment reported (GOI, 2011: 121-22).

The Eleventh Plan marked a clear metamorphosis in the proxy for NFE, viz., EGS & AIE – conversion of EGS into formal primary school and AIE, imbued with all flexibility as in NFE before. But, AIE addressed only a fraction of the clientele. The Government were inclined to feel that with provision of schooling facility, at least on paper, to all habitations, UEE was achieved, almost rendering NFE as redundant.

### **Special Training for Mainstreaming Out-of-School Children**

The RTE Act makes specific provision for age-appropriate admission for out-of-school children through Special Training: (i) Special Training for never enrolled children or those who dropped out before completing elementary education requires *immediate enrolment in school*; (ii) organization of Special Training of flexible duration to enable the child to be at par with other children, (iii) actual admission in age-appropriate class on completion of Special Training, and (iv) continued support to the child, once admitted to regular school.

The SSA Framework of Implementation provides that the duration of Special Training may be flexible, varying from 3 months to 2 years, depending on the child's needs. It could be organized, preferably in schools, or elsewhere where alternate facilities are available, taking care the child's safety and security and accessibility. At the end of Special Training, an assessment could be made for appropriate Class admission. SSA will provide support for Special Training, as per RTE Act for out of school children, and Rs. 1642.28 crore was provided in 2011-12 for Special Training to 26.06 lakh out of school children (MHRD, 2012: 25-26).

*Residential and Transportation facilities* are provided for children of sparsely populated or hilly and densely forested areas with difficult geographical terrains, and also for urban deprived children. Free Uniforms and textbooks, etc., to all children, and particularly to the socially disadvantaged SCs, ST, minorities, would need to be adhered to by State Governments (MHRD, 2012: 26).

From 2011-12 onwards, provision of Special Training of flexible duration for all categories of out of school and drop out children seemed to be the position. *All the*

*different alternate schooling arrangements in vogue till 2011 seemed to have been superseded by the Special Training provision for such children. What is the scale of this Special Training and how has this been received by the target group of children could be known only next year.*

*The one unmistakable change seen in respect of the out of school children covered by EGS/AIE programmes is the requirement to show them as enrolled in formal primary school, or through other such provisions, as per RTE requirement. This is the onus on the State Governments. How far such Special Training is organized to cover all such children could become evident only in course of time.*

## **Conclusion**

The pervasive trends informing the trajectory of NFE during the three and half decades, as dwelt in the paper, could be summed up. As explained in the first section, historically and internationally, non-formal and part-time education emerged as an alternative to the rigidities of the formal education system. It had also its limitations in reach to children of rural, remote and sparsely populated areas, hilly terrains and densely forested areas as well urban slums inhabited by socio-economically disadvantaged SCs, STs, minorities and other poor sections. It was also beset by substantial wastage and stagnation due partly to socio-economic difficulties of children of poorer sections and also due to irrelevance of curriculum and uninspiring teaching-learning processes.

The NFE which emerged from late 1970s in India as an alternative to the formal school education, imbued with flexibility and adjustability in place, timings, duration, pace of learning, but parity in standards with formal education, enjoyed for about 2 decades, credibility and acceptability among the target groups. As shown in the second section, this was evident not only from pitching the increase in NFE target from 40 lakhs to 250 lakhs from VI to VII Plan, but more importantly from the 'romancing with NFE' by the advocacy of introducing NFE characteristics in formal school like adjustment of school calendar and vacations according to the convenience of learners, adopting child-centred approach like reduction in school hours and increase in learning hours, introducing shift system with written tradition in the mornings and oral traditions, games and cultural activities in evenings, 'drop-in' system at any time in the day for working children, etc.

India was never honest about covering all out of school children under NFE; in most five year plans, it would target to cover about just one fourth of out of school children and would end up covering less than half of the set target: 3.5 million out of 16 million proposed in VI Plan (this was out of an estimated 45.2 million out of school children and the target of 32 million set up for UEE during VI Plan); 6.3 million out of 29 million in VII Plan; 50% of 1.3 crores proposed by VIII Plan, and so on (From the X Plan, as evident from Working Group Reports, final Plan documents and Mid-Term Appraisals, the Government was not forthright in indicating the target

in quantitative terms, in respect of formal schools, NFE and Open Learning. Targets for the X, XI and XII Five Year Plans were shifted to qualitative dimensions and percentage terms, about UEE or EFA, such as "all children in school, reduction in gender disparity, completion and achievement", by such and such year. And even with respect to the limited scale of the target undertaken, as seen in section three, the state and bureaucracy were lacking in faith, unwilling to nurture NFE's development and ill treated it with neglect in adequacy in resources, neglect in management and uncertainty about programme continuity from one five year plan to another and unconscionable delays in release of even the paltry honorarium to the instructors and Supervisors, and provision of physical facilities and academic resources. So much so, NFE was continued to be treated as a low cost and low quality education meant for children of socio-economically disadvantaged poor and marginalised in rural areas and urban slums. This was despite the 1990s being treated as the EFA Decade, when the NFE target did not inch anywhere close to the size of out of school children, and it merely continued with very minimal improvement as against substantial reforms advocated, not only during the 1980s by national evaluations and national and state level conferences and workshops of NFE personnel, but also by the Ramamurti Committee, the NPE's (Revised) POA in 1992, the evaluations of NFE in different states through the 90s, the Working Group for IX Plan in 1996, etc., as portrayed in section four.

The institutionalisation of this low grade education meant for rural and urban poor – the brand equity image of NFE - emerged through the revision of NFE in 2000 by including the EGS schools and later the various ungraded programmes of AIE under the rubric of NFE in lieu of the old NFE centres. But all such initiatives followed the curriculum of formal primary schools, through large scale recruitment of para teachers, and thus the demise of NFE, as an alternative approach was sealed.

With the pressure for RTE mounting from the Tenth Plan (2002-07), the focus shifted to upgrading/converting the EGS into regular primary school. With the promulgation of the RTE Act in 2010, as seen in section five, the ungraded AIE programmes which addressed the educational needs of children of various occupation-specific groups were also replaced from 2011-12 by promise of Special Training as part of RTE mandate.

The MHRD reports assert that against an estimated child population of 192 million in the 6-14 age group, 195 million children were enrolled at the elementary stage in 2009-10. Having achieved near universal enrolment at the lower primary level, the task now, according to the Working Group for Elementary Education for 12<sup>th</sup> Plan, is to turn the focus on the poor levels of learning outcomes. Thus, the targets for the Twelfth Plan include improving attendance and reducing dropout rates at the elementary level to below 10% and lowering the percentage of out of school children at the elementary level to below 2% for all socio-economic and minority groups and in all states, besides of course, ensuring universal access and providing

good quality free and compulsory education to all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years, as per RTE mandate, and improving learning outcomes (Planning Commission, 2013: 51).

It is hard to believe that the out of school working (wage earning) children, reckoned to be in varying number, have ceased to exist. Un-official assessments reckon that there are over 60 million child laborers in India (<http://www.indiatribute.com/index.php?>). Non-governmental agencies assert that the figure is more than 6 crore (60 million) including agricultural workers; some claim that the number could be 100 million, if one were to define all children out of school as child labourers. Government statistics say that there are 2 crore child labourers in India. But, the supersession of NFE by EGS as well as the closure of all AIE initiatives (see a comprehensive list in table 1 at the end), closed the option and opportunity for education for the out of school children at their convenience.

There is another facet about India's social conscience about NFE worth noting. At policy level, we remonced with the scheme's vision, design, its peculiar flexibility, adjustability and suitability to the target groups' life situation and needs; endowing the NFEC with modern technological tools like solar panels and lights, AV aids, radio-cassette players and LMs of high quality; selection of local youth with idealism, and investing in them best training for learner-friendly pedagogy. But, in actual practice, most NFECs did not have anything other than a small black board, and LMs reaching very late; the entire onus of surveying, motivating and mobilizing the learners, finding a location for Centre, with or without community help and involvement and running it, fell on the Instructor, who was under trained, under paid and never really enjoyed any respectful image within the system or in the society. Both before 2000 when it enjoyed a distinct identity as well as after 2000 when EGS & AIE were brought under its rubric, NFE did not enjoy even one-fourth of the resources given to formal primary education, despite repeated pleas for parity in resource allocation for the scheme and remuneration of its instructors and Supervisors.

What Anil Bordia observed in 1992 could serve as a reality check for NFE. He observed:

*For a number of reasons, a large percentage of children in India cannot benefit from primary schools. They are working for wages, assisting their family in agriculture, or looking after their younger brothers and sisters at home. For these children, as well as for those in small habitations where schools cannot be set up, the only alternative available is to set up nonformal education centres. Such centres, which are an essential part of the strategy of universal access and universal participation, are run at times that are convenient for the children ... (Bordia and Kaul, 1992: 155).*

The RTE might have rendered the low cost and ineffective alternative of EGS and AIE programmes as violation of provisions of RTE Act, but its discontinuation deprives the only option for at least the rudimentary level of education that these out of school children have had.

Indian conscience may have been pricked badly, but it continues to acquiesce with it. These are children of lesser gods, after all.

### **Table – 1: AIE Programmes under SSA at a Glance**

#### **For Girls and Adolescent Girls**

- Alternative schools for girls,
- Formal schooling facilities in Maktabas and Madaras,
- Boarding schools and ashram schools for girls in extreme circumstances
- Balika Vadya Peeths in every Block with residential facilities.
- Open School, Distance Education systems, etc., to reach out to girls.
- Support services and child care facilities, so that girls burdened with domestic work and sibling care are release for education

#### **Working Children**

- Back to School Camps,
- Summer Schools,
- Bridge Course

#### **Urban Deprived Children**

- New schools and EG schools based on area needs in cities.

#### **Hard to Reach Groups**

- Seasonal schools at migrants work sites, e.g. salt farms, sugar farms, brick kilns, etc.'
- ID cards to migrant family children, facilitating their entry into schools at work sites;
- Bridge courses,
- Seasonal hostels

- Mobile schools and Mobile teachers based on the local needs,
- Permanent Community Based Schools,
- Residential Camps Multi-grade centres for small un-served habitations

### Strategy for Dropouts for Mainstreaming into Formal System

- Bridge course,
- Remedial teaching,
- Back to school camps, etc., so as

These groups – children of lesser gods, continue to exist, if anything, in more hard to reach conditions in this era of urbanization, globalization and market economies. There is no evidence of these groups being reached under RTE. There is no account of the scale of these transitory initiatives being made RTE-complaint either.

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# In Memoriam: Anil Bordia 1934-2012

Krishna Kumar

ONE can hardly think of an educational initiative launched by the Union government during the last quarter of the 20th century which did not carry Anil Bordia's mark. As a civil servant, he distinguished himself by identifying with the cause of educational reform, and then by redefining what governance in education might mean. He was an endearing man, exuding passion for his work and always keen to find ways to get things moving. He wore his status lightly, so lightly that a stranger might well feel confused on being told that Anil Bordia was a civil servant. There was nothing awkward or assembled about his modesty. One knew instantly that he cared. One of my vivid memories of him is from Kathgodam station. We were waiting for the Ranikhet Express and he was worried about the fact that the side berth I had been allotted would be too short for me. We spent the evening discussing how the railways cheat by charging the same price for a shorter, narrower space as they do for the longer, wider inner berths. He thought it would be a splendid case to fight in a consumer court, loss of sleep and convenience being the tip of the plea against a discriminatory fare policy.

Anil Bordia's personality and vision become somewhat graspable if we construct the ethos of Udaipur in the 1930s. Mohan Singh Mehta and K.L. Srimali are names that anyone familiar with the history of rural education in India would know. Anil Bordia attended the Vidya Bhawan school which was set up by Mehta and Srimali and of which his father, K.L. Bordia – who had joined after resigning from a college – was the headmaster. The school was symbolic of nationalist resistance to colonial education. It also represented the spirit of voluntarism that Gandhi had nurtured as a form of politics. Bridging the chasm between villages and towns, removal of social ills, spread of literacy and the dissemination of modern ideas and values were aspects of this legacy. Within the legacy however, there is a latent tension between western modernism and indigenous wisdom. In Rajasthan, the voluntary movement grew, so to say, on the strength of this tension. Adult education,

\*Originally published in 'Seminar' (issue No.638) and reprinted in this with the permission of the author.

in particular, provided significant popular ground for debates on what the term 'development' might mean.

Anil Bordia's outlook, his considerable international experience, and his stature shaped these debates in a manner that suggests how much farther his life's work went beyond his role as a committed civil servant. That society itself must visualize and articulate how it wants to change was axiomatic to the ideology of voluntarism; the state's role was to facilitate the social forces involved in transformation. Details were important – and they often sharpened existing contradictions – but they were never perceived as important enough to be allowed to slow down or impede social fermentation. Between the National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) that coincided with the Janata rule and the aftermath of the Emergency, and Lok Jumbish that encountered a crucial regime change during the 1990s, Anil Bordia's efforts to channelize the state's resources towards supporting social osmosis never flagged.

Many civil servants cherish the dream of reforming the system, but coping with its maintenance usually takes up all their energies. Anil Bordia had the rare privilege of putting the stamp of his vision on the system. This he did by shaping, first, the National Policy on Education and, a little later, reshaping it at some depth while drafting the Programme of Action (POA, 1992). The openings that both documents offered to non-formal initiatives in education brought a vast number of organizations – christened rather heartlessly, in the climate of the 1990s under a globally recognized label, as NGOs – into the fold of the state's responsibilities, releasing fresh energies but also enabling the state to withdraw. The Shiksha Karmi project in Rajasthan was meant to strengthen the rural school's relations with the local community, but the model soon mutated itself into a preference shown by state after state for para-teachers.

More than fifteen years later, Anil Bordia attempted to set the balance right by drafting a remarkable document which shows the way forward on the Right to Education (RTE) Act. The complexity involved in this task needs an explanation. The confidence that the enactment of an ambitious law like RTE required came from the success of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and its predecessor, the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP). These programmes coincided with the emergence of Panchayati Raj institutions. DPEP and SSA greatly increased the system's enrolling capacity, but eroded the status of the teacher while leaving the old colonial outfit of the directorate

untouched and isolated. RTE has now revived the hope that a new normative order shall prevail over chaos. How SSA – which is now its final stretch, or so it seems – might be harmonized with RTE is precisely the subject of the document that constitutes Anil Bordia's last major contribution to policy making. His health was failing, but he worked on this arduous, complicated task with the same indefatigable spirit that had inspired so many in the late 1970s, when he had guided NAEP, and in the late 1980s when he was shaping POA.

He joined the Indian Administrative Service in 1957 and the peak of his career coincided with an era in India's political economy which witnessed the rise and maturation of new kinds of social currents and forces. He recognized the change and harnessed the new social forces, partly out of his personal history but perhaps mainly because he had the imagination to assemble the alliances that could make a systemic difference in his chosen field. Quite often it was not easy to distinguish the civil servant from the activist in him. The term 'activist' itself came into currency when the state's own character came under popular pressure following the 'emergency' the state had felt and promulgated in the mid-1970s. Like J.P. Naik, whom he admired, Bordia believed that the kinds of reforms education needed couldn't be imposed from above. He helped create inner spaces in the state for voluntary energies to be absorbed and new voices heard to make interpretive progress possible in the policy. He enabled non-state players to feel at home on the official turf by offering, in meetings and file notes, a playful, bold nudge to inertia.

It was not just his integrity and eye for detail that gave him unusual confidence to act on new ideas and to persuade others – including his political masters – to accept such ideas; it was also his personal association with an impressive number of individuals and groups whom he had involved in the task of shaping the new policy scenario of education. Of course, not everything worked out the way he wanted, especially in higher education. As secretary, he had to endure a prolonged strike by Delhi's college teachers and its outcome disturbed him. The statutory version of the National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) did not work. But in other areas, such as adult education – especially that of women – and the school system, Anil Bordia tirelessly encouraged a mind-boggling range of ideas and initiatives. Many of them, indirectly and often invisibly, allowed deeper creative forces that the system was used to ignoring, even crushing, to be released and accommodated.

## Anil Bordia is No More But The Fight Will Go On

*M.P. Parameswaran*

Was it in the end of 1977 or beginning of 1978 that I met Shri Anil Bordia for the first time? I had gone to Delhi to meet him. He was Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Education in charge of National Adult Education Programme – NAEP. We, in the KSSP were involved in the programme both emotionally and practically. Earlier in 1977 October the KSSP had organized a Statewide Sastra Samskarika Jatha (Science and Culture jatha) from Kooveri in Kannur District to Poovachal in Trivandrum District. One of the five slogans (Themes) of the Jatha was “Make Literacy a People’s Movement”. In that Shri. C.G. Santhakumar, the captain of the jatha who was later to become the king pin of the successful Ernakulam District Total Literacy Campaign in 1989, wrote:

*“No programme will succeed without people’s support. This is so for a simple panchayat road or for an entire Five year Plan. In all countries which had achieved universal literacy one can see the support of the entire people for the movement. It is the failure to attract the attention of the mass of people that was the cause of the lack of success in the literacy programmes in our country. Often it gets degenerated into an ordinary official activity, carried out for the sake of the government. It should be possible to convert literacy work into a big people’s movement. That is the guarantee for success. People should understand the ill effects of mass illiteracy. They should become convinced of the necessity for mass action. Newspapers and other media have an important role to play in this. In fact there is no other activity like this; in which each and every one in the society can participate. The literates and the illiterates, individuals and*

*organizations, school students and vice chancellors – all can participate in this.....”*

But the NAEP was soon becoming an arena for nepotism and corruption. There was a State Adult Education Council and Shri. C.P. Narayanan was the representative of KSSP in it. KSSP took the program very seriously and prepared an elaborate plan to make 20 blocks fully literate in a campaign mode and prepared a project accordingly. The project was never forwarded to Delhi. Instead, they were forwarding projects prepared by NGO's of dubious antecedents. Soon KSSP realized that NAEP in Kerala is a game in which it should not play. However before withdrawing from the programme, after paying back the little initial fund it has received, KSSP wanted to appraise those responsible for NAEP in Delhi, of the situation in Kerala and possibly elsewhere too. That is why I went to Delhi to meet Shri Anil Bordia. There was one more objective: to get some allotment of white printing paper at concessional rates for our book production.

On reaching his office I sent in my name. He called me in immediately. I had to introduce myself. I began. He interrupted me: "Parameswaran, you need not introduce yourself or KSSP. I know you" I was perplexed. Looking at my face, he pushed to me a daily newspaper in Hindi, name don't remember now, published from Jaipur and showed me an article written by him. That was a fairly detailed description of the history and activities of the KSSP. He knew KSSP. He had studied it. He was already a friend of KSSP even before we knew him. When I explained the situation and purpose of my visit, he placed before me a list of organizations recommended by the Kerala State Government and asked me: "Can you indicate from among these which you are not comfortable with." I pointed out a few. The list from Tamil Nadu too was not a comfortable one. I suggested that he may send back the list to the state governments requesting them to look into the antecedents of the organizations which they have recommended and re-recommend those which they are satisfied with. He later told me, that the state governments dropped many of them in the second list. However KSSP withdrew from the State Adult Education Programme.

The later events that took place in the field of adult education, at least in Kerala, proved that the decision taken by KSSP at that time was perfectly correct.

Though KSSP withdrew from the programme at that time, it continued to develop its own teaching and learning materials and instructors' guides. When the draft of the new education policy was subjected to Nation-wide discussion in 1985, literacy was again taken up right in earnest by the KSSP. It agreed completely with the view expressed in the National Policy on Education that, "the whole nation must pledge itself to the eradication of illiteracy.... The central and state governments, political parties, and their mass organizations, the mass media and educational institutions must commit themselves to mass literacy programmes of diverse nature."

Anil Bordia directed me to another Joint (or Deputy?) Secretary Prasanna Patnaik, for concessional papers and one of his assistants took me to him. We got an allotment for a few tonnes which helped the KSSP publication programme considerably.

That was how I met Anil in 1977-78. Later we began to meet more frequently. One occasion was to discuss the draft of NEP 1985. Minister Kishan Panth was organizing the meeting. There was one thing which I found particularly objectionable in the programme. That was the concept of Navodaya Schools. I remember Anil suggesting to me to be mild in my presentation. That was the day before the meeting. On the day of the meeting Mr. Anand Swaroop, who was then the Secretary for Education, whispered to me "Parameswaran, I understand that you are advised to tone down your critique – Don't do that. Tell whatever you feel." And that is what I did. I expressed my fear that the Navodaya School will become yet another set of schools for the elites at state expenses. Further the NEP-85, for the first time explicitly indicated the necessity of large scale involvement of the private sector in education. This, later, became the policy under neoliberal dispensation and education became increasingly a commodity to be purchased at a price. It was the fight against this which led to struggles for RtE and later passing of the RTE Act. However this Right is far from being realized. The fight has to be continued with many folded vigour.

Regarding Navodaya Schools, Mr. Kishan Pant explained to me personally at lunch time that they are not introduced either for the elite or for the city folk, but for the village poor, to provide them with good quality education albeit for limited numbers. I became partly convinced. The experience of the past two decades and over showed that they are not schools for the elite.

That was the period of Technology Missions, conceived by Shri Sam Pitroda. There was the Telecom Mission, the Oil Seeds Mission, the Immunization mission, the Drinking Water Mission and also the Literacy Mission. I had been meeting Anil of and on in one meeting or another either organized by him or others. During the period 1986-1987 I was totally immersed in conceiving and later carrying out the major science popularization event – the BJVJ. During that period Anil showed me and my friend from KSSP the first draft of the programme of a literacy campaign. At that time it was called Technology Mission for Eradication of Illiteracy. That was the hay day of “Technology Missions”. He asked me “MP, go through it critically. If KSSP find any objection to any formulation I am ready to change it.” He had great respect for the KSSP. However we did not find any serious objection to anything. True, we felt that literacy campaign cannot be a “Technology Mission” that it has to be a Social Mission. We suggested a name change from TMEI to SMEI (Social Mission for Eradication of Illiteracy). The final name was given by Anil himself – National Literacy Mission. The document had a definite ideological under current in it which attracted us very much. It is not about simply teaching the letters, but also helping them to understand why they were kept illiterate so long and by whom?

The BJVJ converged at Bhopal for a grand finale. It generated widespread enthusiasm throughout the country. It was a national *manthan*, a big churning process. Anil Bordia conceived a similar, much more massive national *manthan* to place literacy as an agenda before the people of India. Several evaluations have taken place, about the failure of earlier programmes for illiteracy eradication. All have come to the same conclusion: lack of motivation and absence of people’s participation as the main reason for failure. People had to be motivated in a large way. Learning should become a festival of the people. He has seen how the PSM, especially the KSSP had been successful in mobilizing large, very large, number of people under the banner of science. He was able to convince Sam Pitroda the powerful confidant of the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi that involving the KSSP and the Science Movement in a very large way in the literacy programme can be very useful. And so, in March 1988 when he visited Kerala for some Telecom meeting Sam Pitroda sent word to me in KSSP that he would like to meet me. I had no notion of what it was about, at that time I met him at Hotel Luciya in Trivandrum. Shri Jairam Ramesh was with him. He was OSD to Sam Pitroda. They placed the demand: KSSP should help them in running a campaign in the low literacy central Indian area to place literacy as an agenda

of the people. We agreed to meet next month when I was to go to Delhi for another meeting.

In April I met them – Sam and Jairam. I remember that meeting which took more than one hour. Sam told: “Parameswaran, let us decide, we **will** make India totally literate in one year” I retorted “that require another **will** a political will”. He replied that it is there Prime Minister is fully supportive. I said: “No, that is not enough. People won’t believe him. Several promises have been broken. Peoples are not going to believe, unless something out of the way is done. Let me suggest one thing. The PM should call a meeting of all CM’s and leaders of all political parties and arrive at a consensus: that they are ready to adopt an unheard of action program for literacy. All the high schools and colleges including, public, private and elite schools like Doon Schools, AIIMS, IIT’s etc. will observe one **holy-year**. Millions and millions will get involved in helping the illiterate to become literate, the entire nation being, learning-teaching festival mood. That one year will be deducted from their age for all service purposes. This should be applicable to the prestigious ‘Public Schools’ like – Doon school, Lovedale school etc., to IIT’s, to medical colleges – to all institutions. Such an action from the government will instill within the people a feeling of confidence in the government, will churn the society and induce it into great actions. Of course, this was too much to ask. However we parted in high spirits. In the Ministry, the senior officers like Laxmidhar Mishra, Anil Sinha and Anita Kaul were waiting for me. Anil Bordia had, however, more practical plans. We had a long discussion on that evening and the next day. When the NLM Council was formed, Anil inducted me not only into the Council but also into its Executive Committee.

Anil wanted the Council to be a really ‘visible’ body. He wanted senior political leaders to be involved in it. That will give a message to the country. He wanted either EMS Namboodiripad or B.T. Ranadive in the council as the representative of CPI (M). I arranged a meeting for him with EMS. He placed his request before EMS and also suggested that he is ready to go out of the way to help West Bengal or Kerala where he expected greater success. EMS too seemed to be convinced of the potential of a Literacy Campaign. However neither he nor any other senior leader was deputed to the NLM. The history of Total Literacy Campaign later showed that while the CPI(M) was sympathetic to TLC, it did not consider the Literacy Campaign as something political. So it deputed a comparatively junior person to the NLM, who did not get either emotionally or intellectually involved in the campaign.

June same year the first Council meeting was held. It was in that meeting that I was persuaded to undertake a major environment creating event, to churn the entire country. It took several months for the AIPSN to digest the request and formulate an action plan. This was much larger than the BJVV organized by the PSM in 1987. It became necessary to devise an instrument to carry out the churning project which had an estimate of about Rs. 2 crores. The programme was named a Bharat Gyan Vigyan Jatha. The term Gyan was specially introduced to connote both **wisdom** and **Akshara** – that which does not have **kshara** or decay. The Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samithi was formed for this purpose. Registered as a charitable society, at that time it was not eligible to receive any government funds. But Anil and his colleagues considered BGVS as its **own** informal arm and decided that the minimum “three year” stipulation is not to be applicable to BGVS. It was unusual for a government secretary to take unconventional decisions. When I presented the overall plan, budget and organizational structure of the BGJV, to be organized in October-November 1990, before a panel which included Anil Bordia, Sam Pitroda, Laxmidhar Mishra, Jairam Ramesh, Anil Sinha etc. Pitroda exclaimed “Parameswaran, you are trying to make a parallel NLM.” I replied. “Yes a parallel NLM with a difference: this is the arm of the official NLM, to reach to the villages of India.” The relationship that got established between NLM and BGVS was quite an unorthodox one. Anil never used to fix NLM EC meeting without confirming my convenience. Even in the seating arrangement for EC, he put the Secretary of BGVS on his right side and DG, NLM on the left side. This protocol conveyed a message, not always appreciated by the junior officers.

Anil had immense faith in the KSSP, the PSM and also personally in me. I had tried my level best to live up to the faith he had bestowed on me. Soon, we became a family friends. Often when I go to Jaipur I used to stay in his home. After retirement when he got involved in Lok Jumbish, he used to invite me to interact with his colleagues. Gradually however, he began to realize that he is fighting for a cause not easily attainable. But fight one mast, and he did. It is a fight that has been going on for several generations. Marx and Gandhiji fought for the same cause. Like them, Anil too played his innings and is gone. True, it is a loss. But nothing can be done about it. Those who are still alive and has the urge to continue the fight will continue to fight. That, however, will not lessen the grief of his family, Otima and the children...only time can heal it.

# Anil Bordia- An Ardent Advocate of Adult Education: Some Reminiscences

S. Y. Shah

Shri. Anil Bordia was a distinguished civil servant who played long innings in the field of education and made several significant contributions to Adult, Non-Formal and Elementary Education through his ideas, interventions, initiatives and leadership. His manifold contributions were recognized by national and international organizations. He was honored with the prestigious Avicenna Gold Medal of UNESCO in 1999 for 'exceptional contribution to Education' and Padma Bhushan by Government of India in 2010. After his retirement as Education Secretary to Government of India, Shri. Bordia conceptualized a highly acclaimed initiative for alternative education for adolescents, "*LokJumbish*" (people's movement for education) in Rajasthan and headed it till 1999. Later in 2001 he formulated an innovative project "*Doosra Dashak*" (second decade) which laid emphasis on promotion of education and development among youth. He played a pivotal role in designing the *Mahila Samakhya* (Women's Equality) project and was instrumental in crafting the Bihar Education Project which attempted to combine formal and non formal approaches to learning for children and adolescents. Although he chaired several committees and brought out reports, his role in the preparation of the *Report on Right to Education (RTE)* was highly acclaimed. He had an academic bent of mind and took keen interest in academic matters far beyond the demands of his job. He made several presentations in national and international conferences and published a number of papers. His book on the *Administration and Planning of National Adult Education Programme* published by the International Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (IIEP), Paris is considered to be an important work in the field of Adult Education.

Bordia played a key role in international education, particularly in UNESCO activities. He served as the Vice-Chair of the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE), Hamburg from 1976 to 1982 and Chairman of the International Bureau of Education (IBE) Geneva from 1980 to 1982. He taught at IIEP during

1980-82. He was elected as a Fellow of UNESCO's Asia-Pacific Centre of Educational Innovation for Development, Bangkok in 1996. He was one of the planners and leaders of the Jomtien Conference on Education for All in March 1990 where his influence was extremely significant in securing international commitment to EFA. He also made an important contribution at the Dakar Conference, April 2000.

Bordia's interest in and commitment to Adult Education is well known. His tenure at the Ministry of Education as a Joint Secretary and later as Secretary bears testimony to his keen interest in the promotion of Adult Education as a field of practice and discipline of study. Not only did he take the initiative in setting up the National Institute of Adult Education (NIAE) but also strengthening other institutions like the State Resource Centers. A large number of adult educators who had a chance of interacting with him at official as well as personal levels and listen to his ideas and presentations at several meetings strongly feel that he championed the cause of Adult Education much beyond his official mandate notwithstanding the view of certain individuals that Bordia only discharged his duties as a civil servant and in a routine manner. Since his tenure at the Ministry coincided with the launching of significant education initiatives, viz; the National Adult Education Programme (1978), National Policy on Education (1986) and National Literacy Mission (1988) Bordia had an unique opportunity to demonstrate his genuine concern for eradication of illiteracy and strengthening Adult Education as an important programme of Government of India. He not only devoted considerable time and energy to streamline the planning and management of National Adult Education Programme but also in strengthening the institutional infrastructures. He took keen interest in interacting with several national and international experts but also sought their active support in strengthening training, research and evaluation in Adult Education. A perusal of his speeches, writings and interactions with activists, academicians and administrators bears testimony to his deep understanding, scholarship and genuine concern for Adult Education. Although his manifold contributions to the field of Adult Education cannot be studied without consulting personal papers and other primary sources, this article attempts to examine some of his ideas and initiatives mainly based on the authors personal experience and interactions with him during the period 1988-1993 which coincided with the first phase of the National Literacy Mission and the setting up of the National Institute of Adult Education (1991). During this period, the author got several opportunities of attending official meetings chaired by Bordia

and listening to his ideas and also interacting with him as a member of several committees.

During the 1980's, the University Grants Commission had launched a scheme to involve the universities and colleges in the eradication of illiteracy under Point No.16 of the 20 point programme of the Government of India. Apart from organizing literacy programmes in and around the campus with the active involvement of university community, the universities were also expected to initiate teaching programmes at Diploma, Master's and Doctoral levels. Following the UGC Scheme, Jawaharlal Nehru University, where I was working as an Assistant Director initiated the process of developing a Masters Programme in Adult Education and accordingly developed a proposal which was placed in the Advisory Committee meeting of the Adult Continuing Education of the university for discussion and approval. While the then Director Dr. Anita Dighe strongly argued for the introduction of Masters programme, the Vice Chancellor felt that the main focus of University Adult Education should be on Extension and not on taking up teaching programme like other university departments. Bordia being a member of the Advisory Committee not only endorsed the view of the Director but also strongly argued the case for initiating a teaching programme at Masters Level. He felt that due to the absence of a good Masters Programme in the country, there was a dearth of professionally qualified manpower without which the quality of Adult Education would suffer. He was of the opinion that the role of University Adult Education should not only be confined to Extension but also teaching and research. In fact the UGC had brought out a policy on "Extension as the Third Dimension of Higher Education" which laid equal emphasis on extension, teaching and research. It seems that Bordia had a much broader knowledge of University Adult Education, probably because of his earlier overseas travels and visit to the Department of Adult Education at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education affiliated to Toronto University and interactions with distinguished Canadian Adult Educators like Professor Robby Kidd and James A Draper. In fact during 1960's when Bordia was serving as the Commissioner of Bikaner, he had several opportunities to discuss role of University Adult Education with Canadian Adult Educators who were helping the University of Rajasthan to set up the first University Department of Adult Education in India in 1962.

While Bordia could not convince the Vice Chancellor to initiate teaching programme in JNU, he continued to champion the cause of training of adult education personnel through the Directorate of Adult Education. He

encouraged the then Director of Directorate of Adult Education, Shri. Anil Sinha to design a series of capacity building programme for different categories of adult education functionaries in collaboration with JNU. Following a series of meeting between JNU and DAE, it was decided to organize a six week residential programme for the Directors of State Resource Centers. Bordia was keen that the training programme should provide high quality reading materials to the participants. Accordingly DAE held a series of workshops in collaboration with JNU and commissioned a number of scholars to write on various themes which were published by the DAE. Bordia believed that the success of Adult Education programme depended on the team work of administrators, academicians and activists and maintained very friendly and informal relations with them. With a view to encouraging them and recognizing their contribution, Bordia invariably nominated them as members of international delegations which often remained as the monopoly of officials.

Bordia's interest in Adult Education was not confined to providing administrative guidance and academic support to Adult Education programmes but also encouraging scholars to conduct researches and bring out publications. In the light of Bordia's idea, DAE drafted the guidelines for granting funding support for research and invited research proposals and sanctioned funds to a number of scholars. As a part of the research project on History of Adult Education, I wanted to consult the documents available at the Record Room of the Ministry of Education. I knew that permission was not easily available to scholars. However, I felt that Bordia might be helpful and when I approached him, he was very supportive and granted me special permission to consult the documents available in the record room of the Ministry. Subsequently, when I completed the research project on the History of Adult Education, he appreciated it and approved its publication by the DAE.

Apart from these piecemeal initiatives and programme specific support, Bordia felt the need for a national level academic institution to serve as an umbrella level organization for undertaking systematic professional development programmes for adult education functionaries, conducting interdisciplinary researches, evaluations and documentation. He took personal interest in the preparation of the Memorandum of Understanding of the proposed National Institute of Adult Education and identifying promising youngsters, experienced adult educators and scholars to serve as faculty members of the institute. He had an eye to identify good scholars and

invariably invited them for an informal meeting. Subsequently he would encourage them to apply for a suitable faculty position at the NIAE. While I was serving as a Joint Advisor in the Planning Commission and working on the preparation of the report of the NDC Committee on Literacy, I met Bordia on several occasions and he came to know of my interest and experience in Adult Education. During the course of our meeting held in the room of late Dr. Chitra Naik, the then Member Education of Planning Commission, he told me that "a person like you should be in an academic institution like the NIAE". Later, he invited me to meet him at his office and after a long discussion, persuaded me to leave Planning Commission and join NIAE as a Senior Fellow to take up professional development programmes and undertake researches. In view of his active interest in setting up the NIAE and liberal financial allocations to it and continued support, some of the Adult Educators consider the NIAE as the "pet child" of Bordia.

As Bordia attended several international conferences and UNESCO meetings, he was in touch with a number of distinguished scholars. With a view to enhancing the status of the newly set up NIAE, Bordia invited Professor R. H. Dave, the then Director of the UNESCO Institute For Education to serve as Honorary Director and provide academic guidance and leadership to the faculty members. He hoped that NIAE would in course of time establish links with international institutions and able to undertake collaborative researches. As a first step, the UNESCO Institute of Education assigned NIAE a study on "Research Trends in Adult Education in Asian countries". In spite of his multifarious commitments at the Ministry of Education, Bordia attended all the meetings of the Executive Committee of the Institute and played an important role in shaping the character of the Institute in the formative years. Not only did he pass on a number of international publications on Adult Education collected by him during his overseas visits but also showed great interest and took special care in developing the Library of the NIAE. His vision was to develop NIAE as an international institute with a team of competent faculty members undertaking collaborative projects and bringing out high quality publications.

Bordia knew the importance of funding support to education and did not leave any opportunity to plead for an increase in allocation to education sector in general and Adult and Elementary Education in particular. He was also very liberal in sanctioning funds to literacy programmes. In some of the meetings of the Executive Committee of the National Literacy Mission which I attended, I observed that Bordia invariably approved the requirements of

funds demanded by the District Collectors for Total Literacy Campaigns in their respective districts. Bordia did not leave any opportunity to plead for an enhanced allocation to education especially in the meetings of Planning Commission. The Central Sector budget allocations are finalized in a Planning Commission meeting attended by the Minister for Human Resource Development and the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission along with the Secretary, Additional Secretary, Financial Advisor of the Education Department and Secretary of the University Grants Commission and all the Members of the Planning Commission, Special Secretary, Advisor (Education) and Advisor (Plan Coordination). Since, the Education Secretary makes the presentation on programmes and budget requirements; he/she can play a key role in influencing the allocations as was observed by this writer during the Eight Plan discussions. The then, Education Secretary, Shri. Anil Bordia started the presentation with the programmes of National Literacy Mission and the Eight Plan target of raising the literacy level from 52 to 75% unlike his predecessor, who began with higher education. In his presentation, Bordia argued for increased allocation for Adult Education with great conviction and passion which is rarely the case with senior bureaucrats who often tend to make presentations in a matter of fact and detached manner. Commenting on Bordia's presentation Shri. M.R. Kolhatkar, the then Advisor (Education) Planning Commission observed that the proposals of Education Department shows a "bias in favor of adult education" and pointed out that while the relative weightage (as per the Working Group) of Elementary and Adult Education was 18:1, the Department's presentation showed 2:1, giving an extra-ordinary push to Adult Education. The presence of an eminent adult educator, Smt. Chitra Naik as a Member of Planning Commission also lent considerable support to Bordia's plea for enhanced allocation to Adult Education which benefitted by an increased outlay during the Eighth Plan. Bordia's strong bias towards Adult Education was too evident in all his activities.

Bordia was a bureaucrat who was easily accessible and had a large number of close friends among academic community and activists. He strongly believed that the success of Adult Education depends on the team work of administrators, academicians and activists. Hence he maintained a non bureaucratic attitude and had very friendly relations with all. He had an informal association with some of the leading nongovernmental organizations like Bengal Social Service League, Bharath Gyan Vigyan Samiti, Literacy House, Indian Institute of Education and Indian Adult Education Association and stalwarts like Dr. J. P. Naik, Chitra Naik, Mohan Sinha Mehta, Malcolm

Adeisheshia, M.P Parameswaran, Mushtaq Ahmad, H. S. Bhola, Satyen Maitra, He regularly visited Indian Adult Education Association and edited the *Journal of Indian Adult Education* in spite of his busy schedule. In his condolence speech delivered on the occasion of the demise of the then General Secretary of IAEA - Dr. S.C. Dutta, Bordia recollected his long association with IAEA and the contributions of Dr. S. C. Dutta to the development of Adult Education in India. Bordia was a rare combination of an administrator, academician and activists. In view of his long years of work in the field of Education and manifold contributions, it would be quite appropriate to designate him as an eminent Educationist who understood the importance of Elementary and Adult Education and did not leave any stone unturned to promote them.

## **Bordiaji: A Pioneer and a Mentor**

*Varsha Das*

Here was a man who sat on the chair of a senior bureaucrat in Shastri Bhavan, held meetings to develop new policies and took important decisions for the future of better education for all. He also walked on dusty roads of Borunda (a village near Jodhpur), sat on a thin mat, listened and encouraged folk musicians of Rajasthan. He was invited by Mr. Nelson Mandela to advice on South Africa's education policies and programmes. He was honored by the UNESCO. This simple and smart looking extra ordinary man spoke fluent Rajasthani, literary and colloquial Hindi, Urdu with amazing intonations, chaste Bangla, and was a great orator in English. A stranger would find it difficult to figure out which one of these was his mother tongue!

Yes, I am talking about Shri Anil Bordia. I consider myself very fortunate to have met him and had the opportunity to work under his guidance. His hearty laughter and soft talks, strict instructions and constructive criticism are still ringing in my ears.

My first encounter with Bordiaji was in the year 1979 at the National Book Trust, India (NBT) at its Green Park office in New Delhi. NBT was preparing for its 4<sup>th</sup> international book fair. It was known as the 4<sup>th</sup> World Book Fair, New Delhi. Bordiaji was a Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Education. NBT, an autonomous organization under the Book Promotion Division was under him. The World Book Fair was going to be held from 29 February to 11 March, 1980. I had joined NBT in November 1972 as an Assistant Editor in charge of Gujarati publications. I was also expected to help out in organizing seminars and book fairs in Gujarat. However, I was always given additional responsibilities which did not pertain to my language or region. One such additional task was to assist the Editorial Head in the organization of an International Seminar on Publishing for Rural Areas in Developing Countries. This topic was the need of the hour as rural illiteracy rate was much higher than illiteracy in urban areas. It was Bordiaji's idea. I

was extremely impressed with the way he was conducting each preparatory meeting. His knowledge and understanding of the problems faced by the people living in rural areas was evident.

Bordiaji was a man with his feet firmly rooted in the soil. Education was his passion and also life time commitment. He had a dream and a vision for a rural literate society. To make that dream a reality he used to come up with various programmes, schemes and activities which no one had taken up in the past the way he did.

Bordiaji was quite aware of innumerable Non Government Organisations and dedicated individuals working in different parts of the country. Voluntary organisations have been doing valuable work in the areas of literacy, health, income generation, vocational training and so on. Bordiaji had created much needed network amongst them, and also implemented various government programmes through them. He also created new organizations by introducing new schemes and programmes. National Book Trust benefited in more than one way.

The international seminar I mentioned above was held from 1 to 4 March, 1980. Bordiaji had identified resource persons and speakers from India and abroad. They were educationists, social activists, development workers, academicians, writers, publishers etc. Bordiaji was also instrumental in arranging financial assistance from the UNESCO to meet the expenses of the seminar. Personally for me, the organizational aspect of the seminar, and the content of the contribution made by all the speakers based on their knowledge and first hand grass root level experience was a great learning. Prior to this I was not aware of the hardships one has to face as a catalyst in the rural areas.

The seminar papers and recommendations were published in a book form by the NBT, but that was not the end of the journey. Rather a new journey in the new direction began as a follow up of some of those recommendations. It has been often seen in India and also in some other countries that once the seminar is over all the papers are kept in a folder; the file is tied on a file board and is safely kept on a shelf somewhere never to be opened again. But for us at the NBT this seminar widened our horizons, created and opened a new door that never existed before.

One of the recommendations of the seminar was to publish scientifically developed reading material for neo-literates residing in rural areas. A new kind of literature had to be created and published in various Indian languages. None of us at the NBT was remotely qualified to take up this task. Bordiaji had introduced us to an eminent educationist Dr. A. K. Jalaluddin. He was the Director of the Directorate of Adult Education (DAE) on deputation from NCERT.

Ministry of Education gave a pilot project to NBT to bring out books for neo-literates. It came with a special budget. Bordiaji was still in Delhi. . One Mr. G. Venkataraman had joined the NBT as the Director in January 1980. He, after consulting the Ministry and the Editorial Head at the NBT asked me to take charge of the new project. I was still an Assistant Editor in-charge of Gujarati publications! As advised by Bordiaji NBT invited Dr. Jalaluddin to guide us from taking the first step to the last!

We decided to initiate our first programme in two phases in the South of Gujarat in collaboration with a local voluntary agency. During the first phase we surveyed the reading need of our prospective beneficiaries, and in the second phase we invited local writers and illustrators for a ten days' workshop. This was a new experience for the participants and also for the organizers. All of us were sincere and happy about the fact that we were doing something new, and that it is going to be very useful for creating a learning society in rural areas.

Manuscripts were written, rough illustrations were made, and both were pre-tested, and after revising them as per the feedback they were published by the NBT. This methodology of developing reading material for neo-literates was found scientific and practical, as if tailor-made! The books were received very well in the field. After this first successful experiment we conducted similar surveys and workshops in various other States. NBT created a new genre, and also gave to the programme and the country a set of trained writers in practically all the major languages. What was given to NBT as a Pilot Project stayed with the NBT as an important series. Moreover, each and every State where we had conducted such workshops started publishing books for neo-literates following the same methodology.

For becoming a trailblazer in this field NBT will always remain indebted to Bordiaji and Dr. Jalaluddin.

In 1981 Bordiaji and Dr. Jalaluddin encouraged me to join the DAE on deputation as a Deputy Director in charge of publications. I was looking forward to receiving more training in the field of Adult Education, but unfortunately for me, by the time my deputation formalities were completed by the Ministry and the NBT Bordiaji went back to Rajasthan and Dr. Jalaluddin to NCERT! After completing my term at the DAE I returned to NBT. My joining DAE was not in vain. I met great adult educators at various seminars and workshops, learnt scientific method of developing Primers in various languages, understood certain terminology like 'hard spots', 'from known to unknown' and so on. I also decided to do Ph.D. under Prof. Eswara Reddy of the Osmania University whom I happened to meet during one of the programmes of DAE organized in Anugul, in Orissa. For me it was a big leap forward, because I had done my Masters in Sanskrit from Bombay University, and then after a gap of almost 20 years I was doing research in the field of Education! Bordiaji was very happy to learn about it. I returned to NBT in 1984. Although Bordiaji was no longer in Delhi he involved me in some programmes held in the interiors of Rajasthan which exposed me to grass root level activities.

Once again I left NBT to work as a Deputy Secretary Programmes at the Lalit Kala Akademi. I do have deep interest in visual arts and have been writing on it since 1965. I returned to NBT in 1988. My each sojourn outside NBT was on a higher post, and each time I returned on the post of Assistant Editor Gujarati. This did not disappoint me because I knew that for those who work sincerely and have the attitude of learning always gain from each good or bad experience.

Bordiaji returned to Delhi as the Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Education. He created Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti (BGVS) which used street and folk theatre for spreading social and economic awareness. It also inculcated scientific temper in the masses. Kala Jathas were organized. These processions traveled in the interiors of the State, crossing village after village, staged performances, sold very inexpensive booklets to the viewers. Association of BGVS with the NBT proved mutually beneficial

My subject for the Ph.D. research was to ascertain the potentials of traditional performing arts for inculcating scientific temper in the masses. Bordiaji felt that my inclusion in the procession, interaction with the BGVS activists would enrich my understanding of the subject. I did go to Kerala,

traveled from village to village with the Jatha, figured out the issues that made the villagers unhappy in spite of Kerala having high literacy rate.

I always found Bordiaji frank, free and fearless. His attitude of rectifying mistakes and wanting to learn new things influenced many people like me. Once he took someone under his wings he stayed in touch whether he was in Delhi or Rajasthan. After his retirement from the Government service Bordiaji returned to Jaipur. He started an organization called Lok Jumbish, which literally means Peoples' Movement. This was the programme of Rajasthan government, fully funded by them. Its objective was capacity building of school teachers and students, raising the level, the quality of education, and making the process of education joyful. It was to cover all the schools across the State. A number of schools did not have a building, or blackboards, at times there were no qualified teachers, not enough books and so on. Lok Jumbish collaborated with the National Book Trust. NBT sent mobile vans full of books for students and the teachers, supplied them at concession rates, the teams comprising writers, illustrators, puppeteers, story-tellers also went in those vans. The vans went to villages; some of them in the name of a school had just two rooms in a hut. Two classes were held inside, and two in the outside verandah. It is indeed rare to find a man like Bordiaji who connected such village schools with beautiful books and story-tellers all the way from Delhi. His passion for education was contagious. If you met him while he was planning or implementing something new you would become a part of his programme even before you realise it!

My daughter Nandita (Das) was also fortunate enough to meet Bordiaji. She had joined an NGO called Alarippu after completing her Masters in Social Work from Delhi University. It was headed by Lakshmi Krishnamurty. Their focus was education. Nandita closely worked with Lok Jumbish and conducted Teachers' Training Workshops under the aegis of Lok Jumbish at Abu, Tilonia and Jaipur. The focus of the workshop was to make teaching learning process more joyful. The teachers were underpaid; they went for work leaving behind several of their own children at home, and had to manage many more at the school. Obviously there was no joy in their work. Most of them were bored, lacked self-esteem, and often ended up taking out their frustration on the children. Nandita's workshops focused on enhancing teachers' self-esteem, made learning joyful and teaching more creative.

Lok Jumbish though worked locally became famous globally because Bordiaji believed in experiments, and if it became successful at one place it

was implemented at many other places. Today when I think of it I am reminded of Gandhiji's experiments in the field of basic education in his Ashrams, starting from South Africa to Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad. It requires courage to undertake experiments and Bordiaji had it.

Bordiaji had a knack of discovering hidden talents and potentials of the people who worked around him, and also whom he might have met briefly at some forum. He used to give them the opportunity to manifest that unseen treasure, guide them, encourage and empower them, and saw to it that they made concrete contribution to the causes that were so close to his heart. Not only that, he even protected them when they were harassed or humiliated by negative forces in the environment. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Bordiaji for kindling my interest in Adult Education, and nurturing it all through, which over a period of time became one of my passions as it was with him.

I will always remember Bordiaji as a pioneer, and a mentor.

# Mahila Samakhya: A Case Study of a Successful Programme of International Cooperation in Literacy

Anita Dighe

\*This case study was first presented at an International Conference on 'International Cooperation and Networking in Literacy and Adult Education: Experiences, Issues and Policy Implications,' held at University of Duisburg-Essen, Essen, Germany, March 28-29, 2011. The Conference was organized by Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Ekkehard Nuissi Von Rein and Prof. S. Y. Shah. Permission to publish this paper is gratefully acknowledged.

With the enunciation of the National Policy on Education in 1986, Mr. Anil Bordia, as the Education Secretary, Government of India, played a pivotal role in ensuring that the policy directive was translated into the Mahila Samakhya programme. He provided the leadership in conceiving, implementing and nurturing the Mahila Samakhya programme during its initial phase. It was his vision to develop and launch such a programme under the aegis of the National Policy on Education (1986) that resulted in Mahila Samakhya becoming an innovative government programme 'with a difference.' **This chapter is a tribute to his memory.**

## Background

The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) and the Plan of Action (POA) which translated the policy into an action strategy, recognized the need to address gender imbalances in educational access and achievement. The NPE document stated, *'Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women.... In order to neutralize the accumulated distortions of the past, there will be a well-conceived edge in favour of women... This will be an act of faith and social engineering.... The removal of women's illiteracy and obstacles inhibiting their access to, and retention in elementary education will receive overriding priority, through provision of special support services.'* The NPE also recognized that enhancing

infrastructure alone would not redress the problem. Rather, it emphasized that *'the empowerment of women is possibly the critical pre-condition for the participation of girls and women in the education process.'*<sup>11</sup>

Mahila Samakhya (Education for Women's Equality) was conceptualized in 1987-88 in order to actualize the goals of NPE and POA. The principal focus of the programme is women's empowerment through education in order to achieve equality. In Mahila Samakhya, education is not equated with acquisition of literacy skills. Rather, it is seen as a process of learning to enable women to question, critically analyze issues and problems and actively seek solutions to their problems. The programme has focused on processes, rather than on fulfilling targets.

The programme is directed at women from socially and economically disadvantaged groups and marginalized communities. As an educational programme, efforts are made to create an environment for women to learn at their own pace, identify their own priorities, and seek information in order to make informed choices. The processes enable women to bring about a change in their own perception of themselves as well as the perception of the society with regard to women's traditional roles.

Mahila Samakhya essentially works to bring women together to collectively solve their problems and address issues like isolation, oppressive social customs, and struggles for survival. A foundation is laid for empowerment at the grassroots level with the organization of cohesive women's collectives called 'sanghas' that address common issues and problems through collective action. As the 'sanghas' mature and strengthen, they form federations to coordinate activities at the block, district and state levels.

Mahila Samakhya was launched as a pilot project in 10 districts of 3 states of India, namely, Karnataka, Gujarat, and Uttar Pradesh, with assistance from the Netherlands government during 1988-1990. The project was extended to Andhra Pradesh at the end of 1992 and to Kerala in 1998-99. In 2002, after the bifurcation of Uttar Pradesh, a separate programme was launched in Uttarakhand. From 2003-2004, the states of Bihar, Jharkhand and Assam have also been covered under the central scheme of the MS programme. Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh State Societies were registered in 2006-2007.

External funding from the Netherlands government ended in 2005. Thereafter, Department for International Development (DFID) has been providing additional external funding to Mahila Samakhya from the year 2007-2008. This funding will continue until 2013-2014. According to the Report of the Second Joint Review Mission that was undertaken in November 2009, the programme was operational in 102 districts and 468 blocks, covering 31,608 villages, in ten states: Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Uttarakhand, and Uttar Pradesh. It is envisaged that Madhya Pradesh would be added to the ten existing states during the period of DFID support.

### **Experience of the Mahila Samakhya programme**

The Mahila Samakhya experience of over twenty years has offered a unique case of exploring issues of women's education and empowerment and understanding their interrelationships in different regional and rural contexts in India. The experience of the programme has shown how the MS approach can effectively mobilize and organize women to address problems that affect their lives. Over the years, many other sectoral programmes have linked with MS or adopted/adapted MS strategies

According to the XI Five Year Plan document on Mahila Samakhya, the effects of this approach are visible in MS areas and can be seen in the initiatives taken by 'sanghas' in all the states to address issues/problems which range from:

- Ensuring educational opportunities for their children, especially girls;
- Seeking and obtaining literacy and numeracy skills for themselves and their daughters;
- Articulating their concerns and tackling social issues, like violence against women, child marriages, dowry system, *devadasi* system, etc.;
- Entering the political sphere and participating in political activities;
- Gaining control over their bodies and having better understanding about health and nutrition issues;
- Actively accessing and controlling resources;
- Improving civic amenities;
- Meeting daily minimum needs.

The outcome of this empowering educational process of enabling women to question, conceptualize, and seek answers and to collectively act to redress problems have been many. These have included:

- A demand for literacy has been generated
- Women have gained recognition and visibility within the family, community and block levels
- Leadership qualities have been developed in women and a cadre of village level organizers and activists have emerged;
- The strength and ability to demand accountability of government delivery systems has been demonstrated;
- Participation in Panchayati Raj bodies has increased;
- An awareness of the need to struggle for a gender just society has increased;
- An educational environment at the village level through various bodies/committees has been created.

### **Unique features of Mahila Samakhya**

It would be useful to understand some of the unique features of Mahila Samakhya that set it apart from the other government-sponsored programmes and the factors that have contributed to the success of the programme. Some of these are spelt out below:

1. Evolution of the programme through a consultative process: A unique feature of Mahila Samakhya is the manner in which it was conceptualized and planned. There was recognition of the fact that there were enough field experiences that needed to be taken note of while planning and conceptualizing the programme. Initially, two Consultants were hired by the Education Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and their brief was to look at the policy, visit women's programmes (in government and non-government sector) that had tried to move away from a welfare approach to women's programmes, talk to activists, researchers, NGOs and women's groups over a period of forty days. The exploratory report that was prepared by them then formed the basis for formulating a proposal to operationalize the new policy into a project for women's education.

Extensive discussions resulted in special attention being focused on two issues- (i) programme objectives and strategies, (ii) suitable management structures for the programme. Conceptual clarity regarding

the kind of education that was required, the processes involved, as well as the supporting management structures emerged from the process of consultations.

2. Conceptualizing education for women's empowerment: Discussions with the women's groups highlighted the complex set of socio-cultural and economic factors that constrained poor rural women and kept them out of the educational fold. While it was recognized that the issues that affected women's education- a negative self-image, low status, survival needs, and poverty- were essentially outside the educational domain, yet education would be the critical factor that could help women break out of their predicament. In other words, it was felt that the entire range of social, cultural and economic factors that had inhibited women's access to education, information, mobility, justice could not be dealt with through piecemeal interventions. The complex inter-play between the personal and social factors, one reinforcing the other, could not be tackled without the active participation of women in a self-driven and self-motivated strategy for a basic change in the mind set of women themselves and of the society at large. A movement from a passive state where women had accepted their predicament and related to the world around them as recipients of welfare to one where they became active agents in their own transformation, was considered the essence of empowerment (Batliwala & Ramachandran, 1987). In the Mahila Samakhya programme, the empowerment of women was therefore seen as a critical precondition for the participation of women and girls in the educational process. The principal strategy identified for ensuring women's participation was through mobilizing and organizing them into 'sanghas' (collectives). It was thought that the best way to achieve this would be to follow a strategy in which the programme would not lay down either targets to be achieved or specific agenda to be followed but would take its programmatic cues from the women in the 'sanghas.'

3. Evolving facilitative management structures: After deciding on a radical departure from the conventional educational programmes, the issue of an appropriate management structure came up. A Mahila Samakhya document (undated) describes how a review of the then existing management structures for government programmes was undertaken. After a series of discussions on the management of various poverty alleviation programmes, the following management issues were identified as non-negotiable:

- The programme should be built on a partnership basis between the government and non-government organizations;
- The management structures should be supportive and facilitative ones;
- The implementation structure of the programme should draw on the best aspects of the governmental and non-governmental structures, striking a balance between checks and balances of the government structure and flexibility and openness of a non government structure;
- Selection of programme functionaries, trainers and resource support should be made on the basis of commitment, aptitude and quality.

It was decided that the programme would be implemented through autonomous registered societies set up at the state level. The rationale behind this was that an autonomous Registered Society alone could provide the flexibility to administer an innovative programme while at the same time retaining the authority of the Government structure. However, it was realized that the problem of flow of funds needed to be addressed. Experiences of other innovative projects had shown that delay in the release of funds, especially to the Districts and the villages could effectively strangle a programme. Thus, to simplify the procedure and to ensure smooth flow of funds, implementation through a Registered Society under the broad guidance of the Education Minister and the Education Secretary of the concerned State was decided upon. Being a Central Government Scheme, this arrangement was also found to be convenient to the Central Government. In the Executive Committee and the General Council, membership would include representatives of Government of India, the concerned State Government and those from outside the Government.

It was decided to launch the programme on a pilot basis in 10 districts of 3 states. The Department of Education in the Ministry of Human Resource Development, selected the districts after extensive consultations with the state government officials and voluntary organizations. In April 1989, the Government of Netherlands agreed to fund the programme, as envisaged. According to Vimala Ramachandran, the first National Director of Mahila Samakhyas, there was no involvement of the Dutch government either in the planning or in the implementation of the Mahila Samakhyas programme.

Mahila Samakhya programme has shown how a flexible and vibrant structure that is neither Government nor non-Government and which seeks to adopt the best elements of both, is possible. The programme continues to innovate and to evolve new directions based on experiences. There has been considerable streamlining of budgets, plans and procedures. Strategies are continually being reviewed and changed to ensure sustainability of processes. New strategies are being developed in order to make 'sanghas' independent of Mahila Samakhya through the creation of federations at the block and district levels.

4. **Emphasis on processes and not on meeting targets:** As has been mentioned earlier, Mahila Samakhya is different from most Government programmes in that the focus is not on meeting targets or on generating merely quantitative data. Rather, one of the non-negotiable principles is that women's pace of learning has to be respected as well as their existing knowledge, experience and skills (Ramachandran, 2012). Likewise, rather than a 'blue-print' of programmes to be implemented, it is the women's groups at the village level that determine the content of all project activities.

5. **Literacy is demand not supply-driven:** Literacy programmes for women have invariably focused on acquisition of skills of reading, writing and numeracy. Experience has shown, however, that while women have shown enthusiasm in attending literacy classes, their participation rates begin to fall due to various personal, physical, social, economic constraints faced by them. As a result, they acquire low levels of literacy and are prone to relapse into illiteracy. Keeping this international experience in mind, Mahila Samakhya does not impose a literacy programme on women nor does it become the starting point for the programme. Rather, it is the women who, as they participate in various activities, begin to experience a need to become literate and therefore, ask for literacy. Mahila Samakhya experience is showing that when literacy is demand-driven, it is more likely to be valued by women and can even generate a spiral of learning that will ensure that the literacy skills are retained, and even augmented.

6. **Planning for sustainability:** A moot question that Mahila Samakhya, which is a government programme, has raised over the years is, can the state which is basically status-quoist and patriarchal in nature, truly empower poor women? Conceding that the MS programme has provided some space for undertaking an educational programme that is empowering for poor rural women, it was realized that in order to be free from possible government

interference and opposition from various sources, as well as to ensure sustainability of processes that were generated, the focus had to shift to strengthening the women's 'sanghas' at the village, cluster and federation levels and dissociating the 'sanghas' from the MS programme. This is the strength of MS- that it has planned for sustainability and for ensuring that the processes set in motion by the programme, are consolidated and carried forward.

### **Issues for consideration of International Cooperation in Literacy**

Mahila Samakhya is an externally funded project and is regarded as a successful GOI educational project for women's empowerment. Initially, it was a 100% Dutch government-assisted project and since 2007-2008, it is assisted by DFID in 90:10 ratios. A question that needs to be asked is, what critical issues does the MS experience raise that need to be considered in international cooperation for literacy and adult education? While external funding created a special space for MS as a GOI project and has been instrumental in introducing several innovative features, the experience of MS, over the years, has also shown that there is a flip side to these positive experiences. There is therefore a need to weigh the pros and cons of these innovative features.

The Netherlands government provided funding to the MS project from 1989 to 2005. What were the reasons for GOI to seek external funds for Mahila Samakhya? According to Mr. Anil Bordia, the then Education Secretary, the location of the proposed scheme of MS became a contentious issue between the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) and the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). A senior bureaucrat in MWCD, herself an eminent feminist, was insistent that it should be located in the MWCD. On the other hand, the Education Secretary and some of his colleagues, were keen that it should be located in the MHRD. 'I considered the possibility of immediately getting foreign funds to help clinch the issue. These funds were readily available with the Royal Dutch Embassy.'<sup>2</sup>

According to him, the Dutch government provided honorarium to the two Consultants hired by the MHRD to travel in the country for forty days, interact with activists, researchers, educationists and prepare an exploratory report for a proposal to operationalize the new policy into a project for women's education. This proposal was greatly appreciated by the Head of the Cooperation Section of the Dutch embassy but she did not in any way

influence project formulation or implementation. The relationship between the MHRD and the Dutch government was 'exclusively a financial arrangement and they played absolutely no role in shaping or influencing the programme.'<sup>3</sup> The facilitative and non-interfering role played by the funding agency helped in formulating the programme objectives and strategies and in evolving suitable management strategies on the basis of extensive consultations that programme planners and implementers had with various stakeholders. Vimala Ramachandran, the first National Director of MS, recalls that while there was a firm decision to initiate a pilot project in Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, and Gujarat- the three states identified by GOI for Dutch development assistance, 'the formulation of MS started as an open mandate.'<sup>4</sup> According to her, the draft conceptual framework of MS was prepared by August 1987 and was a result of systematic documentation of lessons learnt and synthesizing the experiences of government programmes for women's development as well as experiences of various NGOs in the country. As a result, a few basic principles got enunciated that later became the non-negotiable principles of the programme and provided the foundation on which the programme was built.

A recent document (Ramachandran, 2012) elaborates on the manner in which spaces provided due to external funding were creatively used in making MS an 'innovation with a difference.' The conscious efforts made by her as the first National Director of MS and the core team that was constituted in the initial years, have shown the various ways in which they prepared the ground to plant MS within the government structure.

Mahila Samakhya envisaged a partnership between the Government, NGOs and women's groups. But getting the NGOs on board was not an easy task. The National Director realized that since a government programme generally tends to be viewed with suspicion and distrust by a large number of NGOs, there was a need to communicate the concept of the programme to the NGOs as well as identify their specific roles. A large number of meetings were thus held in order to elicit their support. Likewise, meetings with civil servants helped in understanding how every objective of the programme had to be translated into doable tasks with a clear time frame and budget

The next issue that was dealt with related to flexibility in the criteria for selection of project functionaries. A government programme stipulates paper qualifications or work experience in the selection process. However, it was

realized by the National Director that due to the unusual characteristics of the programme, conventional methods of selection of programme functionaries had to be done away with. Willingness to learn, good communication and social skills, commitment and aptitude for work, boldness and courage, were seen as being critical in the individuals selected for the programme. Selection procedures were worked out accordingly and strictly adhered to. Participatory procedures which provided scope for ascertaining suitability of persons during training/orientation/group activities evolved. As a result, the team was carefully chosen and exposed to a series of training and orientation programmes. The main focus was on developing conceptual clarity among the team members about the programme as well as creating enthusiasm for work. According to Ramachandran (2012), 'investment in development of a core team helped in creating a different work culture.' As a result, monthly meetings, regular interactions and an overall participatory management style have become the norm in MS over the years. But Mahila Samakhya has been embedded in a system that is inherently hierarchical in structure. This has caused innumerable problems and has often been a tight rope walking for the Director, both at the national and state levels.

Another area in which considerable effort was made related to ensuring flexibility in financial norms. In a government programme, success is determined on the basis of the capability of the programme to deliver what has been budgeted for. But in MS, utilization of funds was never seen as a target to be reached. The emphasis being on enabling rural women's collectives to identify and articulate their needs and to work out how they would meet them, the insistence was on processes and not on achieving tangible outcomes. As a result, considerable time and energy was spent by the first National Director and her team in convincing officials of the need for flexibility in 'finance and administration, rules and regulations, sensitivity to the need for a committed team of project functionaries, and patterns of expenditure' (Ramachandran, 2012). Recognizing that programme concepts and objectives had to be translated into financial and administrative procedures, working on administrative rules and procedures and seeking financial approvals was not always easy and often became areas of considerable tension.

When MS was being planned, one important concern was to devise mechanisms to prevent excessive bureaucratization of the programme. According to Ramachandran (2012), 'providing space to NGOs and individual

activists as the conscience keepers of the programme, was a carefully worked out strategy.' Developing meaningful partnerships with voluntary organizations and women's activist groups as also involving them in decision-making forums was regarded as an important component of this strategy. Special efforts were thus made to 'create a cocoon' that would nurture and support this educational programme for poor women. Guarding the autonomy of the programme was crucial or else there was the danger of bureaucratization and of red tapism setting in. However, it was not always easy to find women's organizations at the district levels. Also, even NGOs that worked with marginalized communities were not necessarily gender sensitive. A number of partner NGOs were service delivery-oriented and did not subscribe to the basic tenets and principles of Mahila Samakhya. As a result, the government-NGO relationship was sometimes stressful and even led to ending the partnership relationship in some cases.

The setting up of a facilitative management structure has been commented upon earlier as one of the unique features of MS. But how does this structure interact with the mainstream structure? At one level, the new structure has ensured smooth flow of funds, greater flexibility, genuine decentralization and appointment of committed people. But on the other, the new structure essentially has remained outside the mainstream and has become an 'island of sorts.' At the national level, even though MS is housed in MHRD, it has received hardly any attention from the Department of Adult Education. Ramachandran (1999) has commented on how the Mahila Samakhya Societies have a minimal interaction with the mainline education department even though the Education Secretary is the Chairperson of the Society at the state level. While a different work culture has been created in MS, the very flexibility that the programme has promoted, has led to problems of various kinds. Due to liberal rules, beside the scope for misuse of flexible procedures, the workers in the formal system are often jealous that they are not entitled to facilities/services that are available to the MS workers. 'There have been cases where mainline administrators create financial and other bottlenecks when they feel that the 'goodies' are not shared or believe that proper procedures are not being followed for awarding subcontracts' (Ramachandran, 1999). On their part, the MS workers have an anomalous position in that while they work on a GOI project, they are paid an honorarium and are not entitled to the salary and perks that workers in other departments and programmes are entitled to. A growing wage differential between MS and other programmes has led to a large

number of vacancies at all level, as well as considerable demoralization among the MS functionaries.

As envisaged in MS, literacy is not imposed on women and does not necessarily become the starting point of the programme. Rather, literacy is introduced when women experience the need to become literate and are convinced of its utility. This open endedness has resulted in MS maintaining a rather tenuous relationship with literacy with lack of clarity regarding its vision or its potential in strengthening processes of empowerment. While the MS experience has shown that women's demand for literacy has been rising in different states, this demand is met either through literacy classes, intensive short-term literacy camps or linkages with the National Institute of Open Schooling. But the First Joint Review Mission (2008) commissioned by DFID mentions that the gains in literacy remain limited. While the Second Joint Review Mission (2009) refers to how in several states, the definition of literacy is being broadened to include financial, health, legal, and other kinds of literacies, there is mention of the need to continuously build on literacy programmes so that they respond to the dynamic nature of women's lives. There is, however, a concern that women's literacy is getting sidelined in MS due to the focus on provision of non-formal education for girls. Women's literacy now needs to be addressed centrally in MS. What is also required is to develop innovative materials and educational interventions so that literacy can deepen the process of women's empowerment. According to Bhog and Ghosh (in Ramachandran and Jandhyala, 2012) women's literacy and education are double edged swords. While these can become sites for empowerment, for challenging norms and structures, they can also be the site for reproduction of values and stereotypes. For them, power is the overriding construct that impacts the manner in which transformative literacy or education can be envisioned and worked on. Based on their long association with women's literacy as well as with the MS programme, Bhog and Ghose developed various interventions and literacy materials for the MS programme that convinced them that the literacy process itself is a critical space in interrogating various power relations and that engaging in the literacy process can become an empowering process. Also, the literacy process has the possibility of bringing into the empowerment fold issues that would not normally be taken up by the programme such as issues relating to language, or that of cultural expression. Any educational programme for women's empowerment would need to pay more concerted attention on how literacy can sharpen and deepen processes of women's empowerment.

The Dutch funding for the MS lasted for three plan periods and ceased in 2005. According to a former Consultant to Mahila Samakhya, MHRD, this funding was stopped as part of the overall stoppage of development aid to India after GOI decided that they did not need multiple aid donors and particularly aid from small donor agencies.<sup>5</sup> When this happened, a senior bureaucrat in MHRD looked around for funding that would enable MS to retain its independent status without getting submerged under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, a national elementary education project. DFID had also been seeking to support MS for sometime. The situation seemed opportune for both sides- DFID seeking to expand its gender work and GOI looking for independent funds for MS.

When the agreement was signed, the DFID agreed to all the non-negotiable principles that the MS laid down as per its scheme. But there was one caveat- it insisted upon a results framework against which the programme would be assessed. While periodic Joint Review Missions (JRMs) were undertaken by the Netherlands government earlier as routine monitoring of the programme, the DFID has insisted that as part of the JRM, the results framework would be used against which the programme would be assessed periodically. It is still too early to figure out how this close adherence to the results framework would play itself out but there is a fear that while on the one hand it has pushed the programme to concretize its experiences and understanding on the emerging outcomes and work towards developing indicators, such an insistence might eventually dilute and shortchange the process orientation of MS.<sup>6</sup>

vi. This fear was expressed by both Vimala Ramachandran and Kameshwari Jandhyala.

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In assessing the impact of international aid on Education Policy in India, Colclough and De (2010) conclude that while aid to education in India has had little impact on the establishment or change of Indian policy objectives, it has led to a significant direct impact upon management practice, financial reporting, accounting procedures, and monitoring arrangements. These changes probably improved the efficiency and certainly the accountability of

the educational process. With regard to support from some of the 'smaller' agencies- such as UNICEF, USAID, SIDA, the Netherlands and some international NGOs- they conclude that such support resulted in valuable projects being supported at the pilot stage, lessons from which have been reflected in national programmes. While their observations pertain mainly to aid provided to elementary education projects in India, the experience of aid provided to Mahila Samakhya certainly corroborates the above observations.

Mahila Samakhya has shown that what started as a pilot project in 1987, had gained legitimacy as an innovation within the government by 1992. Over the years, the experience of the programme in different regional contexts has validated the MS approach as an effective means to mobilize and organize women, and in enabling them to take charge of their lives, and those of their daughters/children. This has resulted in many other sectoral programmes seeking to link with MS or adopt/adapt MS strategies. During the 11<sup>th</sup> Plan (2007-2012), the programme is expected to almost double nationally to cover 21,000 additional 'sanghas' in 167 districts of 11 states. The emphasis is now on expansion and consolidation and maintaining high quality of the programme, alongside expanded coverage.

The question that needs to be asked is, will expansion dilute the processes and principles that characterize the programme?

The recent Joint Review Mission reports (2008, 2009), while lauding the overall robustness of the programme and of its varied achievements, have expressed certain concerns that need to be taken note of. Thus, there is mention that the thrust on expansion has started impacting the process-oriented approach of Mahila Samakhya. The target approach is pushing 'sangha' formation as well as the federation process into a fast track mode without time and space for their gradual evolution and maturity. There is also the fear of women's federations being hijacked by political forces for narrow gains, and of being co-opted into larger programmes. With the insistence on convergence and the sanghas accessing resources and services available at village, block and district levels, sanghas are getting into a service delivery mode. MS now feels the pressure to meet the demand for increased service delivery that is leading to compromising its focus on mobilization and empowerment.

According to Ramachandran (2012) with the change in material conditions in present times, there is a need to undertake a re-visioning of the MS programme. With economic pressures mounting, women now want to engage with different livelihood issues but the MS programme has been able to respond to their demand only in a limited manner. While the original conceptual framework laid emphasis on the ability of women to shape the content and direction with changing times, the danger is that, as a government programme, changing and remodeling an existing programme may not be an easy task. Since government programmes tend to fall into a groove, responding to the needs of the changing times would require strong administrative and bureaucratic commitment and leadership.

As Mahila Samakhya expands and moves into high gear and gains national visibility, it needs to take note of these legitimate concerns.

#### Endnotes

- i. The National Policy on Education, 1986, was the result of extensive country-wide discussions on the challenges faced by the education system. The women's movement had focused attention on the social and economic constraints that had prevented women from accessing education. This issue was clearly articulated in the National Policy. The chapter titled 'Education for Women's Equality' was regarded as a radical departure from the conventional approaches to women's education
- ii. A personal communication received from Mr. Anil Bordia, the then Education Secretary, MHRD, GOI. Mr. Bordia as Secretary, Rajasthan Government, was instrumental in initiating the Women's Development Programme in Rajasthan in early 1980s, a precursor of Mahila Samakhya in many ways. With the enunciation of the New Education Policy in 1986, as Education Secretary, MHRD, GOI, he played a pivotal role in ensuring that the policy directive was translated into the MS programme. In this endeavor, he was assisted by a team of activists, researchers and educationists.
- iii. In his personal communication, Mr. Anil Bordia was categorical that but for the timely aid that was made available by the Dutch government for MS, there was no attempt to influence either the policy or the implementation processes.
- iv. Vimala Ramachandran and Srilatha Batliwala were invited by Mr. Bordia to join MHRD as Consultants. After the initial phase was over, Vimala

Ramachandran was asked to continue and subsequently became the first National Director of MS. In a chapter titled 'The Making of Mahila Samakhya' Vimala Ramachandran recapitulates the various efforts made by her and subsequently by her team, in ensuring the survival and expansion of MS as a government programme

- v. A personal communication received from Kameshwari Jandhyala who was one of the team members of MS and subsequently became a Consultant, Mahila Samakhya, MHRD, GOI. She was with the Ministry at the time the DFID funding was sought in 2005.

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Vol. 74, No.4

ISSN 0019-5006

October-December 2013

# Indian Journal of Adult Education



Indian Adult Education Association

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## INDIAN JOURNAL OF ADULT EDUCATION

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Published quarterly by the Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA), 17-B, Indraprastha Estate, New Delhi – 110 002. Phones : 23379282, 23378436, 23379306 Fax : 91-11-23378206  
E-Mail : [iaeadelhi@gmail.com](mailto:iaeadelhi@gmail.com), [directorიაea@gmail.com](mailto:directorიაea@gmail.com)

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

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ISSN 0019-5006

Subscription: Inland Rs. 250.00 p.a., and  
Overseas US\$ 60.00 p.a.

Printed and Published by Dr. Madan Singh for Indian Adult Education Association,  
17-B, Indraprastha Estate; New Delhi – 110002.

Printed at Prabhat Publicity, 2622, Kucha Chelan, Darya Ganj, New Delhi – 110 002.

### 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.

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# INDIAN JOURNAL OF ADULT EDUCATION

ISSN 0019-5006

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October-December 2013

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The Chief Justice of India Justice P. Sathasivam while giving away the best Legal Volunteer Awards at New Delhi on October 26, 2013 said that increase in literacy level in the country has not seen parallel increase in assertion of rights among the masses due to ignorance and lack of awareness about the existing laws and the available remedies in the legal system. This is an important finding as we in India give a lot of importance to reading and writing and not creating an awareness about the important things which common folk encounter in their day-to-day life and take action to challenge by appropriate action to overcome the same or mitigate once and for all.

It is true that the country's literacy level is not simply measured by increase in the number of persons able to read and write but able to use the knowledge gained into action so that not only the individual progresses but also the society in general in which he or she lives and ultimately the country. Unfortunately, both in formal and non-formal system of education acquiring literacy is given much more importance than creating awareness and enabling the persons to turn the awareness gained into action which is famously called functionality or functional improvement.

This is precisely the reason that under National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) launched in 1978 for the first time the adult education policy clearly spelt out awareness and functionality as integral components alongwith functional literacy. This paradigm shift in the policy continued under National Literacy Mission launched in 1988 and Saakshar Bharat in 2009. Unfortunately, the policy concept was and is not understood properly equally by the adult education mangers, supervisors and field functionaries and hence, till date reading and writing occupies a prominent place in adult education programmes. Even the evaluation of adult education programmes tilts more towards assessing the learners gaining literacy skills and not awareness and functionality.

Hence, it is high time that both in formal and non-formal system of education awareness and functionality are also given equal importance alongwith the subject of study and acquiring the necessary literacy skills so that India truly turns into a knowledge society and capable of turning the knowledge into action.

# Community Learning and Development: Approaches to Build Capacities of Communities

*M.C. Reddeppa Reddy*

## Introduction

Community learning and development is intended to develop the capacity of individuals, groups and communities through their actions to improve their quality of life. Central to this is their ability to participate in democratic processes (Scottish Government Guidance for Community Learning and Development, 2004). The present paper illustrates the definitions of community, learning, community learning, community development, community learning & development; the objectives, principles / values for CLD, model of community education, individuals/institutions involved in the process of CLD and their role in Community Learning and Development are discussed. Further, the uses of CLD, various settings for the use of CLD and different approaches & strategies for community learning and development are explained in detail.

## Definitions of Community Learning & Development

Community learning and development constitute the terms such as 'community', 'learning', 'community learning' and 'community development'. Community usually refers to a larger than a small village that shares common values. In biology, a community is a group of interacting living organisms sharing a populated environment. A community is a group or society, helping each other. It is simply something beyond the school or formal educational institution. Schools and colleges link into the very social systems that many see as constituting communities (Bell & Newby 1971:48-53). In this sense, educators can be as much there 'in the community'.

The term 'learning' is a gerund - a word which can stand as a noun or verb - it is used (here) in its active sense. Thus, learning refers to the process of acquiring skills and knowledge, rather than an internal change of

consciousness (Brookfield 1983:15). Learning is deliberate and purposeful in that the adults concerned are seeking to acquire knowledge and skills. It occurs outside of classrooms and designated educational institutions and does not follow the strict time-table of the academic year. Learning in natural settings is confusingly set against the formality of the school; learning and education get substituted for each other. Learning can no longer be divided into a place and time to acquire knowledge (school) and a place and time to apply the knowledge acquired in the workplace (Fischer, Gerhard, 2000). Instead, learning can be seen as something that takes place on an on-going basis from our daily interactions with others and with the world around us.

The term 'community learning', usually unaccredited, is an important part of the wider learning continuum. It can be undertaken for its own sake or as a step towards other learning / training. It covers structured adult education courses taught by professionally qualified teachers, independent study online and self-organised study groups. Some learning will be in very short episodes and some takes place over a term, a year, or longer. It may happen in personal or work time and be delivered by providers in the public, voluntary or private sectors, or organized by people for themselves through the many groups, clubs and societies where people get together to learn.

Community Learning describes a broad range of learning that brings together adults, often of different ages and backgrounds, to pursue an interest, address a need, acquire a new skill, become healthier or learn how to support their children. Community Learning is part of a rich tradition dating back to the early 19th century when it was delivered through family, community, social and religious organizations. Movements for the vote, trades unions, 'mutual improvement societies', cooperative societies, women's suffrage groups, independent lending libraries and non-conformist religious groups all offered opportunities for adults to improve their chances in life. This kind of learning has gone by, and continues to go by, many different names - including adult education, adult and community learning, informal adult learning and personal and community development learning - during its long history.

Community Development (CD) is a broad term applied to the practices and academic disciplines of civic leaders, activists, involved citizens and professionals to improve various aspects of local communities. Community development seeks to empower individuals and groups of people by providing

them with the skills they need to effect change in their own communities. These skills are often created through the formation of large social groups working for a common agenda.

There are complementary definitions of community development. Community Development Challenge report defines 'community development' as: "A set of values and practices which plays a special role in overcoming poverty and disadvantage, knitting society together at the grass roots and deepening democracy. There is a CD profession, defined by national occupational standards and a body of theory and experience going back the best part of a century. There are active citizens who use CD techniques on a voluntary basis, and there are also other professions and agencies which use a CD approach or some aspects of it" (Community Development Exchange).

Community Development Exchange defines community development as: "Both an occupation (such as a community development worker in a local authority) and a way of working with communities. Its key purpose is to build communities based on justice, equality and mutual respect. Community development involves changing the relationships between ordinary people and people in positions of power, so that everyone can take part in the issues that affect their lives. It starts from the principle that within any community there is a wealth of knowledge and experience which, if used in creative ways, can be channeled into collective action to achieve the communities' desired goals".

Community learning and development (CLD) is a distinct sector of education alongside schooling and further and higher education; a discipline using a distinct set of competences that can be utilized by staff in a range of settings across the public and third sectors; and an area of activity undertaken in a wide range of settings that promotes the community learning and development. Scottish Government Guidance for Community Learning and Development (2004) defines community learning and development as: "...a way of working with and supporting communities... to increase the skills, confidence, networks and resources they need to tackle problems and grasp opportunities.

### **Objectives of Community Learning and Development (CLD)**

The major objectives of Community Learning and Development (CLD)

are stated as follows:

1. **Community-based learning for adults:** Raising standards of achievement in learning for adults through community-based lifelong learning opportunities incorporating the core skills of literacy, numeracy, communications, working with others, problem solving and information communications technology (ICT).
2. **Youth work:** Engaging with young people to facilitate their personal, social and educational development and enable them to gain a voice, influence and place in society.
3. **Community capacity building:** Building community capacity and influence by enabling people to develop the confidence, understanding and skills required to influence decision making and service delivery.

**The other objectives are:**

- To **improve the accessibility** of learning opportunities especially for those individuals with special needs or barriers to learning.
- To **provide opportunities** to acquire important foundational skills such as literacy, communication, vocational etc.
- To **address** education, training and learning **gaps** rural and urban communities.
- To **mobilize** community volunteers and other **resources** in support of learning and development.
- To contribute to **solving** individual and community **problems** through learning initiatives, in coordination and cooperation with related organizations.

The overall aim of this work is to develop people's skills, knowledge and confidence, adding to their quality of life and helping to build stronger communities.

### **Principles / Values of CLD**

CLD is based on a clear set of principles /values including participation, equality of opportunity and empowering people and groups to make their own choices. The Scottish Government has introduced the following set of principles of which community learning and development related activities should be based on:

*Empowerment* - increasing the ability of individuals and groups to influence issues that affect them and their communities;

*Participation* - supporting people to take part in decision making;

*Inclusion, equality of opportunity and anti-discrimination* - recognising that some people may need additional support to overcome the barriers they face; valuing equality of both opportunity and outcome, and challenging discriminatory practice.

*Self-determination* - respecting the individual and valuing/supporting the right of people to make their own choices; and

*Partnership* - recognizing that many agencies can contribute to CLD to ensure resources are used effectively. Maximizing collaborative working relationships with the many agencies which contribute to CLD and/or which CLD contributes to, including collaborative work with participants, learners and communities.

*Promotion of learning as a lifelong activity* - ensuring that individuals are aware of a range of learning opportunities and are able to access relevant options at any stage of their life.

### **Wisconsin Model of Community Education**

A philosophical base for developing Community Education programs is provided through the five components of the Wisconsin Model of Community Education. The model provides a process framework for local school districts to implement or strengthen community education (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction). A set of Community Education Principles was developed by Larry Horyna and Larry Decker for the National Coalition for Community Education in 1991 (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction). These include:

a) **Self-determination:** Local people are in the best position to identify community needs and wants. Parents, as children's first and most important teachers, have both a right and a responsibility to be involved in their children's education.

- b) Self-help:** People are best served when their capacity to help themselves is encouraged and enhanced. When people assume ever-increasing responsibility for their own well being, they acquire independence rather than dependence.
- c) Leadership Development:** The identification, development, and use of the leadership capacities of local citizens are prerequisites for ongoing self-help and community improvement efforts.
- d) Localization:** Services, programs, events, and other community involvement opportunities that are brought closest to where people live have the greatest potential for a high level of public participation. Whenever possible, these activities should be decentralized to locations of easy public access.
- e) Integrated Delivery of Services:** Organizations and agencies that operate for the public good can use their limited resources, meet their own goals, and better serve the public by establishing close working relationships with other organizations and agencies with related purposes.
- f) Maximum Use of Resources:** The physical, financial, and human resources of every community should be interconnected and used to their fullest if the diverse needs and interests of the community are to be met.
- g) Inclusiveness:** The segregation or isolation of people by age, income, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, or other factors inhibits the full development of the community. Community programs, activities, and services, should involve the broadest possible cross section of community residents.
- h) Responsiveness:** Public institutions have a responsibility to develop programs and services that respond to the continually changing needs and interests of their constituents.
- i) Lifelong Learning:** Learning begins at birth and continues until death. Formal and informal learning opportunities should be available to residents of all ages in a wide variety of community settings.

### **Individuals/Institutions involved in CLD**

All sorts of individuals and organisations are actively involved in helping to make this kind of 'non-formal' and 'informal' learning happen. Some people

are paid but many others are volunteers. Some organisations are funded by the tax payer but many are not. Lots of local voluntary organisations and community networks deliver and support the non-formal and informal community learning found in libraries, museums, community centres, union learning centres, universities, extended schools, children's centres, colleges and workplaces.

Many people learn in clubs and groups organized by their own members. We call this self-organized learning. There's a dedicated website with lots of guidance, advice and resources to help people set up a self-organized group and keep it going. You can find the resource at [www.selforganisedlearning.com](http://www.selforganisedlearning.com). Some other people are learning through adult education, continuing education and lifelong learning, acquiring required skills through skill development programmes which are being organized by government, non-government organizations, educational institutions including vocational and technical institutions.

### **Role of a Community Learning and Development Professional**

The role of a community learning and development professional depends somewhat on the career path followed. For example, someone working with young people may have different priorities than someone working with adults; however, the outcomes are very similar in a sense that both will be aiming to promote a more socially just and equal society. Community learning and development is a vast field of work and the range of job categories is wide and may include the following: agriculture extension worker, literacy educator, health worker, field assistant SHG leaders etc.

Community learning and development workers should see themselves as working with people, rather than for them. Empathy is crucial to understanding the issues faced by those they work with and it is important that they engage in a way that does not intimidate people or place the worker in a position of looking down on those they work with. Community development practitioners work alongside people in communities to help build relationships with key people and organizations and to identify common concerns. They create opportunities for the community to learn new skills and, by enabling people to act together, community development practitioners help to foster social inclusion and equality (The Competences for Community Learning & Development, 2009). CLD workers can engage those least likely to be involved in other forms of learning. They can also help people in communities

to identify, understand and take action on those issues that are important to them. CLD developers must understand both how to work with individuals and how to affect communities' positions within the context of larger social institutions.

### **Competencies for CLD workers**

CLD is part of the 'Learning' theme. It also contributes to the 'Working', 'Healthy', 'Safe' and 'Vibrant' themes and supports effective community engagement. Competent CLD workers will ensure that their work supports social change and social justice and is based on the values of CLD. Their approach is collaborative, anti-discriminatory and equalities-focused and they work with diverse individuals, communities of place or interest and organisations to achieve change. They can influence or lead people, understanding when this is or is not appropriate. Central to their practice is challenging discrimination and its consequences and working with individuals and communities to shape learning and development activities that enhance quality of life and sphere of influence. They have good interpersonal and listening skills and their practice demonstrates that they value and respect the knowledge, experience and aspirations of those involved (The Competences for Community Learning & Development, 2009).

Competent CLD workers will initiate, develop and maintain relationships with local people and groups and work with people using non-formal contact; informal support, and informal and formal learning and development opportunities. They will also have self-management skills, such as time management and communication, that are appropriate to the level at which they are practicing. While these are not detailed in the competences, they are covered through the SCQF framework and the National Occupational Standards.

### **Critically Reflective CLD workers**

CLD practitioners must be aware of their values and principles and critically reflect on their practice and experience so that they integrate their knowledge, skills, values and attitudes and use these effectively in their work. They use self-assessment, participative processes and evidence of the impact of their work to plan and manage their activities. These are essential to their ability to develop and manage their own practice and identify their own learning and development needs.

## **Uses of Community learning and development**

Community learning and development has the potential to encourage young people to become more interested in politics and helping them influence decisions that affect their lives. It is a key contributor to lifelong learning and plays a significant part in combating social exclusion. Through its commitment to learning as an agent for change, it supports the people to improve personal, community, social and economic well-being. Primarily community education is more a way of working than a sector of education. Its unique contribution is to create learning opportunities within and for communities.

Community based learning opportunities such as schools, colleges and universities are important to the realisation of vision by all age groups. The whole of the education system, other public services and the voluntary and private sectors required to have collaboration to realize it. The capacity of individuals and groups of all ages to participate in developing their own learning is crucial to improving their quality of life. For both individuals and communities, the results of community education can be tangible and lasting. Thus, the community learning and development has become a subject of critical national importance.

## **Settings for the use of Community learning and development**

There are many diverse communities and settings in the country and you have to discover what communities can do for you and what you can do for your community. Ask what your community can do for you and look to see what you can do for your community. The settings involved with you and your communities are:

### **Your Community**

- Community regeneration
- Starting up new community groups
- Community buildings
- Funding
- Supporting clubs and voluntary organizations

### **Getting Involved**

- Community action
- Assessing community needs

- Community development groups
- Community engagement
- Community profiles
- Volunteering
- Voluntary Organizations

## **Children**

Each child is unique and develops in his own very special way. Here are some ideas for the best way to grow a child.

### **Babies and Toddlers**

- Parent and toddler groups
- Parent and baby groups
- Kinder gardens
- Rhyme times and storytelling
- Sure start (work with parents)
- Access all areas

### **Pre-school children**

- Playgroups
- Kinder gardens
- Access all areas

### **Primary age children**

#### **Children's activities and classes**

- Youth clubs
- Access all areas
- Community School Networks

## **Young People**

Some thoughts on how we can make that transition from child to confident, dynamic young person. There is no right of passage to follow to take us out of our childhood. We need to decide when and how to become a confident, dynamic young persons. Here are some thoughts on making that journey.

### **Clubs and Activities**

- Youth Cafe
- Music
- Skate parks
- Outings and excursions
- Consent forms
- Literacies
- Making a difference
- Detached youth work
- Moving on.
- Access all areas

### **Youth Forums**

- Youth Parliament
- Consulting young people

### **Volunteers**

- Young careers
- Volunteering

### **Community School Networks**

- Community School Networks

### **Adults**

Lifelong learning is a reality. There are great ways for adults to develop their potential.

### **Learning**

- Achievements and accreditation
- Confidence building and assertiveness
- English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)
- Everyone included
- Family learning
- Guidance
- Literacies
- Support for parents
- Young parents

## Core Skills SQA Qualifications

### Groups

- Between 15 and 50 years
- Over 50's groups

### Community Based Classes

- Enrolment
- Art classes
- Computer classes
- Family history classes
- Language classes
- Yoga classes

### **Community Centres and Staff**

Establish Community Centres in the rural and urban communities. Each centre is linked to a learning and development. Each centre is managed by a community learning and development team leader.

### Libraries

Provide something for everyone from computer facilities to local studies and much more. Search the library catalogue/ Digital Library Catalogue, renew items on loan, reserve a library book online and find your local library or mobile library details such as library events, new titles available, **e-books or audio books**, of opening hours, contact information and facilities, Joining the Library, Library Membership Information and Charges, how to borrow e-books and audio books.

### **Approaches & Strategies to CLD**

Community Learning and Development (CLD) describes the range of learning and social development work that is provided in communities using a variety of approaches. The role of a Community learning and development worker is largely different to the role of a formal educator such as a teacher. Community learning and development workers do not follow a curriculum, as they allow the people they work with to form their own way of learning and each individual is believed to have the ability to reach their full potential

in life. A community learning and development approach is arguably a more effective way of learning as every individual has their own unique way to learn and community learning and development workers look for the best possible method that suits the individual. Some of the Community learning and development approaches such as Outdoor learning, Interactive Broadcasting, Active learning, Cooperative and Collaborative Learning, Peer education, ICTs in education and Creativity and are described here under:

## **Outdoor Learning**

The 'Outdoor Classroom' is becoming a fundamental part of mainstream education and learning allowing our children to experience the many challenges. It usually refers to organized learning that takes place in the outdoors. Outdoor education programs sometimes involve residential or journey-based experiences in which students participate in a variety of adventurous challenges in the form of outdoor activities such as hiking, climbing, canoeing, ropes courses and group games. From the school grounds to going abroad, there are many locations for outdoor learning. They include:

- School and centre grounds
- Local area
- Day trips
- Residential experiences
- Overseas trips

There are some organizations like Forest Schools which encourage and provide opportunities for outdoor learning. Outdoor education draws upon the philosophy, theory, and practices of experiential education and environmental education.

## **Active learning**

Active learning is learning which engages and challenges children's thinking using real-life and imaginary situations. It is an umbrella term that refers to several models of instruction that focus the responsibility of learning on learners (Renkl Atkinson, Maier, & Staley, 2002). Bonwell and Eison (1991) popularized this approach to instruction. This "buzz word" of the 1980s became their 1990s report to the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE). In this report they discuss a variety of methodologies for promoting "active learning".

We might think of active learning as an approach to instruction in which students engage the material they study through reading, writing, talking, listening, and reflecting. Active learning stands in contrast to "standard" modes of instruction in which teachers do most of the talking and students are passive. Students and their learning needs are at the center of active learning. There are any number of teaching strategies that can be employed to actively engage students in the learning process including group discussions, problem solving, case studies, role plays, journal writing, and structured learning groups (McKinney, 2010). The benefits to using such activities are many. They include: improved critical thinking skills, increased retention and transfer of new information, increased motivation, and improved interpersonal skills.

### **Cooperative and Collaborative Learning**

Cooperative learning is a specific kind of collaborative learning. In cooperative learning, students work together in small groups on a structured activity. They are individually accountable for their work, and the work of the group as a whole is also assessed. Cooperative groups work face-to-face and learn to work as a team. Collaboration is a philosophy of interaction and personal lifestyle whereas cooperation is a structure of interaction designed to facilitate the accomplishment of an end product or goal.

Collaborative learning is a method of teaching and learning in which students' team together to explore a significant question or create a meaningful project. A group of students discussing a lecture or students from different schools working together over the Internet on a shared assignment are both examples of collaborative learning. Learning is frequently most effective when learners have the opportunity to think and talk together, to discuss ideas, analyse and solve problems, without constant teacher mediation.

### *Peer education*

Peer education is an approach where young people are actively involved in each other's learning and an approach to health promotion, in which community members are supported to promote health-enhancing change among their peers. Rather than health professionals educating members of the public, the idea behind peer education is that ordinary lay people are in the best position to encourage healthy behavior to each other.

Peer education has become very popular in the broad field of HIV prevention. It is a mainstay of HIV prevention in many developing countries, among groups including young people, sex workers, men who have sex with men, or intravenous drug users. Peer education is also associated with efforts to prevent tobacco, drug or alcohol use among young people (Kelly, J. A., St Lawrence et al., 1992). A peer education programme is usually initiated by health or community professionals, who recruit members of the 'target' community to serve as peer educators. The recruited peer educators are trained in relevant health information and communication skills. Armed with these skills, the peer educators then engage their peers in conversations about the issue of concern, seeking to promote health-enhancing knowledge and skills. The intention is that familiar people, giving locally-relevant and meaningful suggestions, in appropriate local language and taking account of the local context will be most likely to be able to promote health-enhancing behaviour change. The peer educators may be supported by regular meetings and training, or expected to continue their work without formal supports.

### **Interactive Broadcasting (Radio and Internet)**

The use of interactive broadcasting for community learning by Radio and the internet, and potential models for sustainable development through combined community media/tele-centres. Interactive Broadcasting is an emerging phenomenon which could provide new opportunities for creative radio broadcasting both for entertainment and education, and could create new business models for commercial sustainability. Early examples of interactive broadcasting included telephone chat shows which now extend to text messaging and email as tools to stimulate audience engagement and provide low cost content.

There are some pioneering schemes emerging in which sophisticated interactive broadcasting techniques are a fundamental development platform for radio broadcasting. The Radio with Pictures Show is an example of integrating web conferencing with radio broadcasting to create a rich and interactive audience experience with great potential for educational applications and addressing digital divide issues. Another example is Radio Browsing as used by Kothmale Radio in Sri Lanka - a community radio station which uses the internet to engage it's audience both deterring and creating program content. This presentation describes the Interactive Broadcasting concept and shows examples of how it can be used in practice.

## Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

Education has largely contributed to an increase in developing knowledge, providing an enabling environment for innovation and in building human capital required for a potential future knowledge economy. Global reforms in education and challenging ICT demands have made a remarkable shift in the structure of the enabling ICT environment and the utilization of ICT technologies in education. The convergence of computer, communication and content technologies, being known as ICT, has attracted attention of academia, business, government and communities to use it for innovative profitable propositions. Such technologies have become the key driver of the digital network in an era of technology-driven education. More schools and communities now have access to ICT resources to join the global economy with knowledge workers who have 21st century skills and are inspired by life-long learning. The Dakar Framework of Action for Education for All (EFA), adopted in 2000 as a roadmap to meet the Education for All goals by 2015, highlights the role that ICT has to support EFA goals at an affordable cost and lifelong learning in all communities in developing countries. ICTs have great potential for knowledge dissemination, effective learning and the development of more efficient education services. Much effort has been made towards the advancement of education and multi-literacies.

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) in education mean implementing of its equipment in teaching and learning process as a media. The purpose of ICT in education is to generally make students familiar with its use and how it works. It has permeated in every walk of life affecting the technology fields such as launching satellites, managing businesses across the globe and also enabling social networking. However, in reality the digital divide between the urban and the disadvantaged rural areas is inclined to widen.

## Creativity

Creativity refers to the invention or origination of any new thing (a product, solution, artwork, literary work, joke, etc.) that has value. "New" may refer to the individual creator or the society or domain within which novelty occurs. Creativity is a crucial part of the innovation equation. It requires whole brain thinking, right brain 'imagination' artistry and intuition, plus left brain logic

and planning. It is core competency for leaders and managers and one of the best ways to set your company apart from competition.

Creativity is the quality that you bring to the activity you are doing. It is an attitude, an inner approach – how you look at things. Anything can be creative – you bring that quality to the activity. Activity itself is neither creative nor uncreative. You can paint in an uncreative way. You can sing in an uncreative way. You can clean the floor in a creative way. You can cook in a creative way.

Some of the above approaches are gradually being adopted in schools to some extent and many other agencies are using the community learning and development approaches in their work. The professionals shall be committed to support people's learning by using appropriate approach and help them to find out about the options available and providing resources that they need.

## **Conclusion**

Through community learning, people can come to make a real contribution and develop their own communities. They can participate in local and national democratic processes and build the confidence and capacity to tackle wider social and economic issues, such as health or community safety. Skills can be acquired at many levels through many ways and are applicable in any walk of life. Sometimes these are essential skills, such as literacy or basic life management, which those who have benefited most from the formal education system take for granted. Without them, social exclusion is much more likely. With them, people can increase the opportunities for moving into further and higher education and into employment. Through them, local people can develop productive partnerships with other agencies relating to a wide range of social, economic and health as well as educational needs.

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# A Bird's Eyeview of Problems Plaguing Tribal Women Literacy in India

Raju Narayana Swamy I.A.S.

## Abstract

*India is now having around 8.43 Crores of tribal population. Most of them are poor, illiterate and inhabit the inaccessible forests and hilly areas. They lag behind in all spheres of life vis- a-vis the other sections of the population. The Government of India has launched a number of schemes for their education and welfare. In spite of these efforts, the rate of literacy has not improved substantially. In the case of women, it is still abscymally low. In order to develop the aspirations of these tribal women and to raise their literacy level, additional opportunities are to be provided so that they get encouraged to partake, support and in due course learn to initiate their own programmes of development. Keeping this in view, the study analyses the present status of educational facilities for tribal girls.*

## Introduction

Education is the fundamental factor for the construction of democratic societies. It builds 'human capabilities' the essential and individual power to reflect, make choices, seek a voice in society, and enjoy a better life (Sen, 1999). It is defined as the 'whole process by which one generation transmits its culture to the succeeding generation' or better still as 'a process by which people are prepared to live effectively and efficiently in their environment'. In short, it is one of the most powerful instruments for making a frontal assault on the citadels of poverty and inequality and thus laying the basis for sustained economic growth and effective governance.

As societies develop, educational credentials play an increasing role in the status attainment process. Modern people do mean education as something beyond the 3 Rs- reading, writing and arithmetic. It should enable a person to sharpen his knowledge and develop a pragmatic vision. In fact, modern education can bring many changes in the social, political and economic fields. A major reason for failure of development activities in the

society despite various developmental agendas is the prevalence of acute illiteracy and ignorance. An interactive process of education can enable better participation of citizens in local governance. It is in this context that we need to redefine the kind of education needed for the most vulnerable groups like the indigenous people. This is all the more relevant in the case of the womenfolk among these weaker sections especially in the light of several studies that highlight the social benefits that education can bring about- whether in the context of lower fertility, improved health care of children or greater participation in the labour market.

In India, caste constitutes an enduring form of social inequality despite national legislation that outlaws caste discrimination. Over the years, regrouping of these castes on cultural, socioeconomic and educational grounds has resulted in the surfacing of the present three major social strata, Forward Castes (FCs), Scheduled Castes (SCs) / Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs). We have 573 STs living in different parts of India speaking more than 270 languages and maintaining exclusive identities. The 84.32 million people belonging to 'Scheduled Tribes in India constitute 8.2% of the total population of the country (2011 Census).

Majority of the scheduled tribe population live in rural areas. Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Jharkand, Chhatisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Karnataka are the states having the largest number of Scheduled Tribes. Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal, Dadra & Nagar Haveli are predominantly Tribal States/ UTs where STs constitute more than 60 per cent of their total population. No STs are notified in Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi and Pondicherry. Talking villagewise, one lakh five thousand two hundred and ninety five villages have more than 50 per cent ST population in the country while 3.23 lakh do not have any ST population.

The Tenth Five-Year plan promoted the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Education for All Movement) to meet the goal of education for all by committing to provide useful and relevant elementary education for all children in the age group six to fourteen. The SSA's goal is Universalisation of Elementary Education through a time bound approach, in partnership with State Governments. However, the dropout rate did not come down. It was high - upto 48.71 per cent at the elementary level at the end of the Tenth Plan, a decline of only 5.94 percentage points from 2001-02 (Eleventh Five Year Plan, 2008, p.17.). The Eleventh Plan categorically stated that it would

seek to reduce poverty and disparities across regions and communities by ensuring access to basic physical infrastructure as well as health and education for all and recognizing gender as the cross-cutting theme across all sectors. But the reality in the field remains pathetic as before. So the question that naturally arises is "Is a different approach necessary to make the programme a success for the disadvantaged groups?"

### Literacy situation of tribes

Tribes of India are not considered by the state as nationalities in the established sagacity of the term. To a large extent, this perspective has been subjective by approaches to the national question that have been "top down in nature. Article 45 of the Indian Constitution exhorted for free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14 within 10 years of adoption of the Constitution. But while analyzing the literacy rates of STs, one wonders whether these premises have largely remained to be paper tigers. (please see table 1).

**Table – 1: State wise literacy rate among tribes in India (1961-2001)**

Sl. No.	State/UTs	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
1.	Andhra Pradesh	4.41	5.33	7.82	17.16	37.04
2.	Assam	23.58	26.02	---	49.16	62.52
3.	Bihar	9.16	11.64	16.99	26.78	28.17
4.	Gujarat	11.69	14.12	21.14	36.45	47.74
5.	Haryana	---	---	---	---	---
6.	Himachal Pradesh	8.63	15.89	25.93	47.09	65.50
7.	Jammu & Kashmir	---	---	---	---	37.46
8.	Karnataka	8.15	14.85	20.14	---	48.27
9.	Kerala	17.26	25.72	31.79	36.01	64.35
10.	Madhya Pradesh	5.10	7.62	10.68	57.22	41.16
11.	Maharashtra	7.21	11.74	22.29	21.54	55.21
12.	Manipur	27.25	28.71	39.74	36.79	65.85
13.	Meghalaya	---	29.49	31.55	53.63	61.34
14.	Nagaland	14.76	24.01	40.32	46.71	65.95

15.	Orissa	7.36	9.46	13.96	60.59	37.37
16.	Punjab	---	---	---	---	---
17.	Rajasthan	3.97	6.47	10.27	---	44.66
18.	Sikkim	---	---	33.30	19.44	67.14
19.	Tamil Nadu	5.91	9.00	20.46	59.01	41.53
20.	Tripura	10.01	15.03	23.07	27.89	56.48
21.	Uttar Pradesh	---	14.59	20.45	40.37	63.23
22.	West Bengal	6.55	8.92	13.21	35.70	43.40
23.	Andaman	1.10	17.85	31.11	27.78	66.79
24.	Arunachal Pradesh	---	5.20	14.04	56.62	49.62
25.	Chandigarh	---	---	---	34.45	---
26.	Dadra	4.40	8.90	16.86	---	41.24
27.	Delhi	---	---	---	28.21	---
28.	Goa	---	12.73	26.48	---	55.88
29.	Lakshadweep	22.27	41.37	53.13	80.59	86.14
30.	Mizoram	---	53.49	59.63	82.71	89.34
31.	Pondichery	---	---	---	---	---
32.	Daman and Diu	---	---	---	52.91	63.42
	India	8.54	11.29	16.35	29.60	47.10

**Source:** (i) Census of India, Series-1, Paper-1, Provisional Population Totals 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991 and 2001.

(ii) Ministry of Human Resource Development, Annual Report, 1995-96

(iii) Census 2001

Comparing the literacy rates in the ST population vis-a-vis that of the general population indicates a growing gap. The national average literacy rate in 2001 was 64.8 per cent for the general population while it was 47.10 for the Scheduled Tribes. Add to these the problems of intra and inter-state/district variations in the literacy rates and the picture is complete. The literacy level of STs in comparison to the general population is as shown on the next page.

**Table – 2: Literacy rates of STs and total population (1961-2010)**

Year	Total population			STs		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1961	40.40	15.35	28.30	13.83	3.16	8.54
1971	45.96	21.97	34.45	17.63	4.85	11.29
1981	56.38	29.76	43.57	24.52	8.04	16.35
1991	64.13	39.29	52.21	40.65	18.19	29.60
2001	75.26	53.67	64.84	59.17	34.76	47.10
2011	82.14	65.46	74.04	* 70.7	* 52.1	*61.6

**Source:** *Educational Development of SCs and STs, 1995*, Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, GOI, New Delhi.

Census of India, 2001: Provisional Population Totals, (including ST) Registrar-General & Census Commissioner of India, GOI, New Delhi.

\*2009-2010 data, Selected Educational Statistics, GOI, Ministry of Human Resource Development (2004-05) & NSSO

There has no doubt been a substantial increase in the literacy rates of scheduled tribes during the last five developmental decades (from 8.54 in 1961 to 61.6 in 2011). However, the gap between the literacy rates of STs and of the general population is still alarmingly large. Among the tribal women too, there has been a substantial increase in the literacy rates during the last five decades (3.16 in 1961 to 52.1 in 2011) but the gap in literacy rates as compared to the general female population continues to be a major source of concern.

Tribal women in Indian society have been contributing positively to the local economy by participating actively along with men in the pursuit of economic activities to earn livelihood. In tribal families, the role of women is substantial and crucial. Women work harder and family economy and its management depends on them (Awais, Alam and Asif, 2009). In spite of their significant role in the economy, dropout rates are alarmingly high and literacy rate awfully low. The following section focusses on the issues in tribal women's education.

## Problems with tribal women education

Social groups in terms of caste and religion still continue to stratify the length and breadth of India. In this hierarchical social system, certain historically vulnerable groups have remained at the bottom of the pyramid. The Indian society continues to be like a multi-storeyed building with neither an elevator nor an escalator. The access to education and capacity to stay within the formal education system to acquire education are still limited for the Scheduled Caste / Scheduled Tribe population. The choice of education for these communities is further restricted by gender and location. Discrimination based on gender or social status can lead to social exclusion and lock people into long-term poverty traps. Being a girl living in a remote village in India and belonging to a poor scheduled tribe community ensures that she is triply crippled. The reasons may vary from socio-economic status of the parents to lack of inspiration for education or geographical isolation, lack of communication or social distance. But the reality is that she is discriminated from cradle to grave. "When she takes birth, you become gloomy, when she sits back home, you call her crazy, when she marries you, you burn her, when she loves you, you insult her, but can you live without her? Your daughter, your mother? Your sister? Your wife?" (Dilip Kaur Tiwana)

## Exclusion in education and dropout

The dropout is a critical indicator reflecting lack of educational development and inability of a given social group to complete a specific level of education. In the case of tribes, dropout rates are still very high - 42.3 percent in classes I to V, 65.9 percent in class I to VIII and 79 percent in classes I to X in 2004-05 (please see the details below).

**Table – 3: Dropout rates in 2004-05**

Year	Sex	Classes I to V			Classes 1 to VIII			Classes 1 to X		
		All	ST	Gap	All	ST	Gap	All	ST	Gap
2004-05										
	Boys	31.8	42.6	(-) 10.7	50.4	65.0	(-) 14.6	60.4	77.8	(-) 17.4
	Girls	25.4	42.0	(-) 16.6	51.3	67.1	(-) 15.8	63.9	80.7	(-) 16.8
	Total	29.0	42.3	(-) 13.3	50.8	65.9	(-) 15.1	61.9	79.0	(-) 17.1

**Source:** Selected Educational Statistics 2004-05 of India, Ministry of Human Resources Development.

### **Lack of schools**

The dropout of tribal girls is extremely high compared to the general category and it steadily increases from class I through class X. Opening of more number of schools exclusively for tribal girls appears to be necessary to overcome this gender disparity. The Central Advisory Board of Education Committee Report on Girl's education noted a gross shortage of secondary schools for girls (both co-educational and girl's schools). At the national level, the average number of secondary/higher secondary schools per 1 lakh population is as low as 14 and it is lower than the national average in Bihar (4), Uttar Pradesh (7), West Bengal (10) Jharkhand (4) and Chhattisgarh (12). The national average number of secondary and higher secondary schools per 100 sq. km is only four, and Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand fall below this national average. Consequently, the GER in these states is also lower than the national average of 39.91 percent.

Lack of schools, toilets, drinking water facility etc are some reasons for girl children not attending schools. It has been found that physical/infrastructural facilities are highly inadequate and particularly deplorable in schools accessed by the STs. Buildings are dilapidated with no basic furniture and teaching equipments. The schools are also poorly and irregularly functioning. Reports of neglect, indifference, greater teacher absenteeism from dalit and tribal dominated schools have accumulated, pointing to the grim reality that exists on the ground. However, along with this, there are some other reasons also for the girl children not attending school. With increasing feminization of agriculture, the pressure of looking after younger siblings, collecting cooking fuel, water and maintaining the household, all fall upon the girl child, putting a full stop to her education, nay her development.

### **Poverty and attitude of parents**

Despite state sponsored educational programs like fixed quota seats for scheduled tribes, there have been persistent difficulties in translating inclusive strategies into field realities. The incidence of poverty amongst STs still continues to be very high at 47.30 percent in rural areas and 33.30 percent in urban areas, compared to 28.30 percent and 25.70 percent

respectively in respect of total population in 2004-05. A large number of STs who are living below the poverty line are landless, with no productive assets and with no access to sustainable employment and minimum wages (Eleventh Five Year Plan, 2007-12). With their very livelihood at stake, the importance of education touches only the fringe of tribal life. In this circumstance, education, the necessity of life becomes a matter of exclusion or luxury for them.

True, educated parents more often than not send their children to schools. But where parents are not educated, they send their children to schools only if there are enough incentives to attract and retain the children in schools. With meagre income, many parents with four or five school-going children on an average find it difficult to spend enough for the schooling needs of all children. So the variations of choices emerge, namely educate the boy child and withdraw the girl child.

### **Role of teachers/ curriculum**

According to the report of the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2008), the quality of teaching in elementary schools leaves much to be desired. Widespread absenteeism of teachers, lack of adequately trained teachers, poor quality pedagogy is some of the issues highlighted in the report. Also various studies to analyze the causes of poor educational status of tribes prove that the present scenario of education in remote tribal areas seems responsible for such higher rate of dropout. An understanding of tribal cultures and practices and familiarity with their language are indispensable for teachers in tribal areas. The findings of Sri. Vinoba Gautam, Co-ordinator, UN/ Government Janashala programme as outlined in his study in Assam need special mention in this context. According to him, the major reasons for school drop outs are:

*a. In most states the medium of instruction is the regional language. Most tribal children do not understand the text books which are generally in the regional language.*

*b. Appointment of non-tribal teachers in tribal children's schools is another problem. The teachers do not know the language the children speak and children do not understand the teacher's language. (Vinoba Gautam, 2003)*

The problems with their education also lies in the curriculum and content taught to the students which is often disconnected to their daily life and

irrelevant for them. Content of curriculum and internal operations are thus key issues that need to be addressed. Appropriate school experiences can indeed make a significant difference to the learning and lives of STs. Several languages, especially those spoken by small numbers, are dying out. Loss of a language means loss of an identity – of a certain way of knowing the world. Experiences of schooling of tribal children in Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra have revealed the displacement of Bundelkhandi, Gondi and Warli by Sanskritised Hindi, Telugu and Marati respectively (NCERT, p.30.), uprooting their culture and alienating them from the educational system.

## Conclusion

Tribal girls are largely dead beat at the primary level itself. There occurs an effective physical exclusion of these children or they achieve low levels of schooling, which do not necessarily reflect learning. The value of educating girls is still not recognized fully by tribal communities. The problems of access, quality, content and the devaluing of non- formal education reduce enrolment. But it should not be forgotten that education among tribal women will stand them in good stead in lessening inequalities and ending gender discrimination. It is in this context that the relationship between cultural and educational goals needs to be publicly debated. Regarding the measures to promote inclusion, policy makers need to look at the problems holistically. There is need to identify areas which continue to suffer marked exclusion and neglect and move towards a more focussed implementation of positive discrimination policies. The medium of teaching should be the mother tongue by way of using bi-lingual primers prepared in a decentralized participative manner. A unidirectional approach will only under-prioritize quality concerns.

According to the Country Report of the Government of India, "empowerment means moving from a weak position to execute a power". It is the ability to direct and control one's life (Paz, 1990). It is a process in which women gain control over their our lives of knowing and claiming their rights at all levels of society - at the international, local and household levels (Depth – news, 1992) It means extending choices – choices about if and when to marry, choice about education, employment opportunities, controlling the social and physical enviornment, choice about if and when to get pregnant and ultimately about family size (State of World Population Report, 1994). In promoting a women's empowerment framework, Kart (1995) gives five levels which include welfare, access, conscientisation,

participation and control. Education is the best tool to achieve this cherished goal in the Indian context. But if it is to become a vigorous agent for ending gender discrimination, it requires a new perception and understanding about the origin of women's subordination. It is not classroom transaction only but the combined mobilization of community, political vision and bureaucratic will that holds the key. The bedrock of such a roadmap should be a gender sensitive approach aimed at correcting the imbalance in our educational landscape. But in a country like India wherein the people gave themselves the Constitution but not the ability to keep it, inherited a resplendent heritage but not the wisdom to cherish it and suffer and endure in patience without the perception of their potential ( Nani Palkhivala ), attaining this goal needs proactive strategy, wherewithal and administrative competence.

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# Literacy Situation in India and States (2001 and 2011) A Comparative Analysis

*Prem Chand*

## Introduction

India with a population of 121 crores as per 2011 Census is the second largest populated country of the world after China. It covers an area of 32,87,263 Sq. Kms i.e. 2.4 percent of the world area of 135.79 million Sq. Kms. but has about one sixth (16%) of the world population. Literacy rate of the country in 1951 was only 18.3 percent. It has made impressive gains by raising it to 64.8 percent by 2001 and to 73 percent by 2011. Article 45 under Directive Principles of the state policy in the Constitution directed the State to provide free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14 years within ten years of the commencement of the Constitution. The National Policy on Education (1968) accepted Removal of Adult Illiteracy, as an imperative goal to be achieved through the implementation of broad based, functional and relevant educational programmes. India has been conscious of its problem of illiteracy which was growing mainly due to increase in population. The National Policy on Education (1986) and its Programme of Action expressed national concern by stating; 'Eradication of illiteracy will be launched as a technical and societal mission'. India launched National Literacy Mission in 1988 to provide functional literacy to adult population in the age group of 15-35.

Under the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (2009) notified in April 2010, elementary education (Classes I-VIII) for children in the age group 6-14 has been made fundamental right in India. Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12) set a National Literacy Goal of achieving an overall literacy rate of 80 percent and to enhance the female literacy rate to a level that the gender gap is not more than 10 percent points by 2012. As the 2011 Census indicated that the country achieved literacy rate of only 73% and reduced the gender gap to 16.3 percent points by 2011, the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan has laid the target of reaching 80% literacy rate and to decrease the gender gap in literacy to 10 percent points by 2017. This goal is to be achieved by universalizing elementary education through Sarva Siksha Abhiyan and by providing basic literacy to non-literate adults through Saakshar Bharat Programme. Comparative analysis of the literacy achievement during 2011 over 2001 is given in this paper.

## Population

Overall population of the country which was 102.87 crores in 2001 increased to 121.06 crores in 2011. Growth rate of population declined from 21.5% during the last decade to 17.7% during this decade 2001-2011. Female population which was 49.65 crores in 2001 increased to 58.74 crores. Sex ratio of the country increased from 933 in 2001 to 943 in 2011. Rural population of 83.35 crores in 2011 forms 68.8% of the total population. Urban population has gone up from 27.8% in 2001 to 31.2% in 2011. Scheduled Castes population increased from 16.66 crores to 20.14 crores during the decade and its share in the total population has gone up from 16.2% to 16.6%. Scheduled Tribes population increased from 8.43 crores to 10.43 crores during the decade and its share in the total population has grown from 8.2% to 8.6%. In case of child population of age group 0-6, there has been only marginal increase from 16.38 crores in 2001 to 16.45 crores in 2011. Percentage of children of age group 0-6 to total population has declined from 15.9% in 2001 to 13.6% in 2011. Crude birth rate has gone down during the decade from 25.4 in 2001 to 21.8 in 2011 and infant mortality rate of 66 in 2001 to 44 in 2011. However, population of age group 7 and over increased from 86.48 crores in 2001 to 104.61 crores in 2011. It is observed that the growth rate of population of 7 and over age group is higher as compared to the overall growth rate of population of the country. The following table gives comparative population by sex and by rural/urban areas of all age groups and age group 7 and above for 2001 and 2011.

### Total population and population of age group 7 and above by Sex and Area - 2001 and 2011

in crores

	2001			2011		
	All Areas	Rural Areas	Urban Areas	All Areas	Rural Areas	Urban Areas
<b>Total Population</b>						
<b>Total</b>	102.87	74.26	28.61	121.06	83.35	37.71
<b>Male</b>	53.22	38.16	15.06	62.31	42.76	19.55
<b>Female</b>	49.65	36.10	13.55	58.74	40.58	18.16
<b>Population age group 7 and over</b>						
<b>Total</b>	86.48	61.60	24.88	104.61	71.22	33.39
<b>Male</b>	44.72	31.62	13.10	53.74	36.46	17.28
<b>Female</b>	41.76	29.98	11.78	50.87	34.76	16.11

**Literacy****Literates**

The following table indicates number of literate persons during 2001-2011 and increase in the number of literates during the decade.

**Number of Literate Persons during 2001 and 2011**

Year	Persons	Male	Female	Increase in number of Literates during the decade		
				Persons	Male	Female
2001	56.07	33.65	22.42	20.14	10.70	9.44
2011	76.35	43.47	32.88	20.28	9.82	10.46

During the decade 1991-2001, increase in the number of literates was of the order of 20.1 crores as compared to an increase of 17.6 crore in the corresponding population of age group 7 and over. Increase in the number of literates during 2001-2011 was 20.3 crores and exceeded the increase in the corresponding population of 18.1 crores by 2.15 crores. During the last decade increase in the number of female literates was higher than the increase in the number of male literates. Number of literates increased by 36.2% during 2001-11.

**Illiterates**

The following table indicates number of illiterates in the country during 2001 and 2011 and change in the illiteracy situation over the decade.

**Number of illiterate persons during 2001 and 2011**

Year	Persons	Male	Female	Change over the decade		
				Increase(+)	Decrease (-)	
				Persons	Male	Female
2001	30.41	11.06	19.35	(-) 2.48	(-) 1.78	(-) 0.70
2011	28.26	10.27	17.99	(-) 2.15	(-) 0.79	(-) 1.36

After 1991, educational efforts took over the increase in the population of age group 7 and over. During 1991-2001, decline in the number of illiterates was 2.48 crores despite of 20 crores additional persons becoming literate during that period. During 2001-11, number of illiterates declined by 2.15 crores even though the increase in the number of persons becoming literate was of the order of 20.3 crores. Decrease in the number of illiterates from 1991 onwards is shared both by males and females. Number of male illiterates declined from 11.06 crores in 2001 to 10.27 crores in 2011. Number of female illiterates declined from 19.35 crores in

2001 to 18 crores in 2011. The literacy effort has now exceeded the rate of increase in corresponding population both among males and females. This is a welcome trend. However the number of illiterates in the country is still very high.

### Literacy Rates

Literacy rate of the country has improved over the decade from 64.8 percent in 2001 to 73.0 percent in 2011. The following table shows how the literacy rates have improved over the decade for all persons, males and females during 2001-2011.

#### **Improvement in Literacy Rates during 2001 and 2011**

Year	Persons	Male	Female	Increase in Literacy Rate during the decade		
				Person	Male	Female
2001	64.8	75.3	53.7	12.6	11.1	14.4
2011	73.0	80.9	64.6	8.2	5.6	10.9

The increase in literacy rate during the decade 1991-2001 was 12.6 percent points but it came down to 8.2 percent points during 2001-11. 1991-2001 was the peak period in the growth of literacy. The improvement in female literacy rate during each of these decades has been higher as compared to that of male literacy.

### Gender gap in literacy rates

Gender gap in literacy rates which was 21.6 percent points in 2001, has declined to 16.3 in 2011 as may be seen from the following table.

#### **Gender gap in literacy during 2001 and 2011**

Year	Gender Gap in Literacy	Gender Parity Index
2001	21.6	0.71
2011	16.3	0.80

During 2001-2011, the gender gap in literacy has come down by 5 percent points and indicates that high priority was given to female literacy during this decade. Gender Parity Index for literacy which was 0.71 in 2001 has gone upto 0.80 by 2011 but is still much below the desired level of unity. There is a need to lay more emphasis on female literacy during the current decade.

Rural/Urban disparity in literacy rates

Years	Urban Literacy Rate	Rural Literacy Rate	Difference
2001	79.9	58.7	21.2
2011	84.1	67.8	16.3

There has been a wide gap in the literacy rates of rural and urban areas. It was 21.2 percent points in 2001 and came down to 16.3 in 2011 as may be seen from the following table.

**Rural/Urban differential in literacy rates 2001 and 2011**

Years	Urban Literacy Rate	Rural Literacy Rate	Difference
2001	79.9	58.7	21.2
2011	84.1	67.8	16.3

Urban literacy rate of the country which was 79.9% in 2001 has gone up by 5 percent points during the last decade. Rural literacy has grown at a faster rate during this period. It has gone up by 10 percent points and has risen from 58.7% in 2001 to 67.8 in 2011. Despite of this progress, the rural/urban differential, which has come down from 21.2 in 2001 to 16.3 in 2011, needs further attention.

Disparity in literacy rates by age groups

Literacy rates of younger age groups of 7-14 and 15-24 are higher and that of the older age groups of 25-34 and 35 and over are lower. The literacy rates of these age groups estimated to have improved over the decade are shown in the following table.

**Literacy rates by age groups 2001 and 2011**

Year	7-14 Years	15-24 Years	25-34 Years	35 and over
2001	77.69	76.43	64.52	53.32
2011(Estimated)	90	86	75	58

Literacy rate of age group 7-14 which is directly affected by primary education programme in the country was 77.69 in 2001. By achieving almost universal enrolment in primary education of age group 6-10 through Sarva Siksha Abhiyan during 2001-11, literacy rate of the age group 7-14 is estimated to have gone around 90 percent in 2011 i.e. an increase of over 12 percent points in the literacy rate of 77.69 percent in 2001. Literacy rate of youth population of age group 15-24 was 76.43 percent in 2001. Estimated increase of about 10 percent points during 2001-11 in the literacy rate of youth population indicates the impact of the literacy programmes. It is estimated to have gone upto 86 percent by 2011. Literacy rate of age group 25-34 improved by a much higher rate of about 14 percent points during 1991-2001. It is estimated to have gone upto about 75 percent by 2011. Literacy rate of the age group 35 and over was 53.32% in 2001. It is estimated to have

gone upto 58 percent by 2011. Population below the age of 35 years is estimated to have achieved a literacy level of around 80 percent. However the population above the age of 35 years is still lagging much behind. Of the total number of 28.3 crore illiterates of age group 7 and over in the country in 2011, over 85 percent are from the adult population of age group 15 years and above. There is need to pay more attention to adult illiteracy during the current decade.

### Regional Disparity in literacy rates

Literacy rates among states vary widely from 93.2 percent in Kerala to 63.8 percent in Bihar. Extent of the Regional Disparity among the States can be seen from the following table giving comparative literacy rates for five top and five low literacy states:

#### **Extent of Regional Disparity among States in Literacy Rates - 2011**

S. No.	Name of State	Top Literacy States			Name of States	Low Literacy States		
		Person	Male	Female		Person	Male	Female
1.	Kerala	94.0	96.1	92.1	Bihar	61.8	71.2	51.5
2.	Mizoram	91.3	93.4	89.3	Arunachal Pradesh	65.4	72.6	57.7
3.	Tripura	87.2	91.5	82.7	Rajasthan	66.1	79.2	52.1
4.	Goa	88.7	92.7	84.7	Jharkhand	66.4	76.8	55.4
5.	Himachal Pradesh	82.8	89.5	75.9	Andhra Pradesh	67.0	74.9	59.2

Average literacy rate of the top five states comes to about 88 percent, where as the average literacy rate of the five low literacy states is around 66 percent. In case of female literacy the average literacy rate differs from 84 in case of top five States to 56 in the 5 low literacy States. This disparity needs to be attended to.

The States/UTs fall in the following three categories as per Census 2011 data

#### **(i) State/UTs with literacy rate above 80%**

Eight States namely Kerala, Mizoram, Goa, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Sikkim & Tamil Nadu and six out of seven Union Territories namely Lakshadweep, Daman & Diu, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, NCT Of Delhi, Chandigarh and Puducherry have literacy rate above 80%

#### **(ii) State/UTs with literacy rate between the national average of 73% to 80%**

Nine states namely Nagaland, Manipur, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, West Bengal,

Punjab, Haryana, Karnataka & Meghalaya and one union territory of Dadra & Nagar Haveli are having literacy rate between the national average of 73% and 80%.

### **(iii) State/UTs with literacy rate below the national average of 73%**

Eleven states namely Odisha, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Arunachal Pradesh and Bihar are having literacy rate below the national average of 73%

#### **Increase in Literacy Rates during 2001-2011 among States/UTs**

Sixteen States and Union Territories recorded the decadal increase above the national average of 8.2 percent points. The highest increase of 18.6 percent points was in Dadra & Nagar Haveli followed by Bihar (14.8 percent points) and Tripura (14.0 percent points). Lowest increase of 2.5 percent points was in Mizoram preceded by Kerala (3.1 percent points) and Maharashtra (5.5 percent points) besides five UTs with 4-5 percent points decrease.

In case of female literacy, 16 States and Union Territories recorded an increase over the national average of 11 percent points. The highest increase of 24.1 percent points was in Dadra & Nagar Haveli followed by 18.4 percent points in Bihar, 17.8 percent points in Tripura and 16.5 percent points in Jharkhand. The lowest increase of 2.5 percent points was in Mizoram preceded by Kerala (4.3 percent points), Chandigarh (4.7 percent points) and Delhi (6.0 percent points).

#### **Gender disparity in Literacy Rates 2001-2011 among States/UTs**

Gender disparity in literacy rates declined by more than the National Average of 5.3 percent points in 15 States/UTs. Highest decline of 10.1 percent points was in Dadra & Nagar Haveli followed by 9.2 percent points in Daman & Diu, 7.3 percent points in Tripura and Odisha and about 7 percent points in Jharkhand and Bihar. The lowest decrease was observed in Chandigarh (0.9 percent points) preceded by Punjab (2.2 percent points), Delhi (2.4 percent points) and Kerala 2.5 percent points.

#### **Rural/Urban differentials in Literacy Rates 2001-2011 among States/UTs**

Rural/Urban differentials in literacy rates have come down by more than the National Average of 4.8 percent points in 15 States/UTs. The highest decrease of 12.3 percent points was in Jharkhand followed by 10.9 percent points in Bihar and Tripura. Lowest decrease of about one percent points was in Kerala, Mizoram and Goa. In case of UTs of Daman & Diu and Delhi, the Rural/Urban differential slightly increased during 2001-11.

## Conclusion

The country is progressing towards achieving universal literacy. An overall literacy rate of 73% has been achieved. Children and youth have achieved a self reliant literacy rate of over 80%. Most of the non-literates of the country now are in the adult population particularly of the age group of 35 and over. Adult literacy programme which earlier covered the most productive and reproductive age group of 15-35 have now been extended to all adults of age group 15 and over. Saakshar Bharat envisages not only providing basic literacy to the adult non-literates but it also envisages extending to them equivalency to formal school system and skill development to improve their living and working conditions. We will be able to reach the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan target of 80% literacy by providing more and more basic literacy facilities for adult population. However accelerated efforts are needed to provide equivalency and skill development programmes to non-literate and neo-literate adults of the country so that the country advances towards a learning society which is a goal set by Saakshar Bharat Programme.

# Education, Values and Ethics

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## Abstract

Values are cognitive representations of the important human goals or motivations about which people must communicate in order to coordinate their behavior. Values give meaning and strength to an individual's character by occupying a central place in his/her life. Values reflect one's personal attitude and judgments; decisions and choices; behaviour and relationships; and dreams and vision. Values are the priorities individuals and society attach to certain beliefs, experiences, and objects in deciding how they shall live and what they shall treasure (Hill, 2004). On the other hand, ethics can be defined as the moral values, rules or standards governing the conduct of a particular group, profession or culture. In practice, ethics is essentially concerned about what is right or fair, and focused on what we ought to do rather than describing (Preston, 1996). Work by Kohlberg argues that, learning around values and ethics, should focus on the process of developing moral reasoning and capacity building rather than direct content knowledge (Crain, 1985; Lovat & Toomey, 2007).

In this paper, the authors started with the broader aspects of values and value education from the ancient India to the current scenario of growing global poverty, pollution, hunger, disease, unemployment, unsociability, caste system, child labour, gender inequality, ill-treatment of women, violence, disability, exploitation of natural resources and many such evils have caused value- crisis on the globe, adversely affecting the core human values such as honesty, sincerity, morality and humanity as a whole. While explaining the role of education in inculcating values, the authors felt that, education should - enable children to develop a world-view, promote peace and respect,

should instill ethical values in society, bring out best in each person and so on. The authors also focused on the role of teacher in imparting values among the pupils and on the otherhand, the degradation of teacher's role in character building of the students. Further, inculcation of values through the content of school education is also explained clearly.

While dealing with values and ethics in higher education, the authors pointed out two important aspects i.e. transferring knowledge of established values systems and the capacity to practice such value systems. Finally, the authors concluded by discussing some of the unethical practices in the higher education and certain domains where ethics are degrading such as: Regulatory Bodies like- AICTE, UGC, NCTE etc; Institutes of Higher Education; The society and the People; and The Teachers and the Students and also, certain suggestions were brought into focus at the end.

**Key Words:** Values, Ethics, Regulatory Bodies, Higher Education, Society etc.

## Introduction

Values are regarded enviable, imperative and are apprehended with high esteem by a particular society in which a person lives. Values give meaning and strength to an individual's character by occupying a central place in his/her life. Values reflect one's personal attitude and judgments, decisions and choices, behaviour and relationships, dreams and vision. These values influence our thoughts, feelings & actions and guide us to do the right things. Values are cognitive representations of the important human goals or motivations about which people must communicate in order to coordinate their behavior. The content that distinguishes one value most significantly from another is the type of motivation or goal that it represents. Values are commonly characterized as relatively stable individual preferences that reflect socialization. As such, they might appear useful for describing and explaining individual behavior (Mischel, 1990). An examination of the many definitions of values in the literature reveals five common features (Schwartz and Bilsky, 1987) such as; values (a) are concepts or beliefs, (b) are about desirable end states or behaviours, (c) transcend specific situations, (d) guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events, and (e) are ordered by relative importance (Allport, 1961; Levy and Guttman, 1974; Maslow, 1959; Morris, 1956; Pepper, 1958; Rokeach, 1973; Scott, 1965).

Values are the priorities individuals and society attach to certain beliefs, experiences, and objects in deciding how they shall live and what they shall treasure (Hill, 2004). Our values are an essential part of our self knowledge and our very identity. As such they are integral to the process of 'growing-up', the process of becoming an independent, responsible and empowered autonomous individual. Our values are both an intimate part of our deep and private self-definition and a driver of our publicly observed behaviour. The Working Group on value oriented education has identified five dimensions on value education, these being physical education, emotional education, mental development, aesthetic development and the moral and spiritual domain. The values to be pursued in the moral and spiritual realm, according to them are: Sincerity, faithfulness, obedience to what one conceives to be the highest, gratitude, honesty, benevolence, generosity, cheerfulness, selflessness, freedom from egoism, equanimity in joy and suffering, in honour and dishonour, success and failure, pursuit of the deepest and the highest of the absolute and ultimate and the progressive expression of this pursuit in thought, feeling and action.

### **Value Education: Past and Present**

In ancient India, the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Epics manifested and upheld the values of Indian society. More importance was given to morality, honesty, duty, truth, friendship, brotherhood, etc. They were the themes of Indian culture and society. Imparting value education and reforming the society were the only aims and objectives of the teachers of ancient age. But in the present scenario, due to manifold changes in various aspects of our civilization such as population explosion, advancement in science and technology, knowledge expansion, rapid industrialization, urbanization, mobilization, IT revolution, liberalization, privatization & globalization as well as the influence of western culture, present society has become highly dynamic. Modernization process is accompanied with multifold problems, anxieties and worries to human life, endangering its original simple nature. Growing global poverty, pollution, hunger, disease, unemployment, unsociability, caste system, child labour, gender inequality, ill-treatment of women, violence, disability, exploitation of natural resources and many such evils have caused value- crisis on the globe, adversely affecting the core human values such as honesty, sincerity, morality and humanity and, as such, there is a great transition in human society. To overcome the problems of the present era, inculcation of values among individuals and promotion

of values in educational system, as well as society, is highly essential (Vijayasree, 2006).

The home is the first place to learn and be inculcated with values. The school is the second setting in which one can nurture and celebrate values. The school is a silent revolutionary, bringing about the much needed changes and behavior pattern of students. Since, the residential schools are also called as "a home away from home", the role of the educators become more challenging & rewarding, in terms of the inculcating the values among the learners. This is possible only if we the 21<sup>st</sup> century educators are strong in our sense of conviction and culture and work as a role model for the students. We can certainly reflect back to the ancient times and recall that, the inculcation of values was a deep-rooted function of education. The development of character and personality was an essential objective of education in India. The Graduals provided opportunities for the realizations of simple living and high thinking (Anitha Pathania, 2011). Swami Vivekananda has emphasized that - "Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and lies there undigested, instead education must have a life building, man making and character building role".

### **Role of Education in Inculcating Values**

An important aspect of value education programmes in all countries relates to the development of the spirit of national identity and patriotism in children. This is necessary for the purpose of integrating and strengthening a nation. An important objective of value education is to make children aware of the fact that the whole world is now a community of interdependent nations that the survival and well-being of the people of the world depends on mutual cooperation.

***Children should be enabled to develop a world-view-*** and appreciate the contributions made to the world's progress by different cultures and made to realize that in the case of various countries coming in conflict with one another, the world would be a very unsafe place to live in. Universal access to education is fundamental to a healthy and vibrant society. The principles of justice and freedom for all are hallmarks of a democratic society where people exercise their rights and where their voice is heard. A just society recognizes that education is more than a privilege, it is a right. All students should have the right to learn and grow to their potential. As future leaders

in their families, communities and their nation, youth must feel a sense of corporate social responsibility where they become active participants in strengthening the fabric of their society (Michael Frederiksen, 2010).

**Promoting Peace and Respect-**It is clear that there is a role for education in promoting peace and respect for human values, fostering a spirit of cohesion for social and economic development, and providing the skills necessary for development. Education is a major communicator of attitudes, and can be used to reinforce positive world views, or to discourage and even change negative ones. This process occurs through the formal programme of schools, as well as in the informal, extra-curricular moments, and is conveyed by both content and practice. What teachers teach is as important in this regard as how they teach, and in what circumstances.

**Education should instill ethical values in society-** Education should make us understand that most aspirations are common to mankind. Education should instill an awareness and appreciation of not only an individual's cultural heritage but also an awareness and appreciation of the cultural heritage of the 'Others'. Education should give us knowledge of ourselves as individuals and by extension of those around us. Education should produce 'thinking' persons. Education should produce cultured and wise persons. Education should produce persons who understand their limitations and can learn from those who transcend these limitations. Education should produce persons with respect for 'Others'. Education should produce persons who seek to learn the 'Wisdom' distilled from previous generations and from those of learning and wisdom in their society and the world, at large. Education should help understand the distinction between rhetoric and truth/facts. Education should help us reconcile the duality we see in everything around us and appreciate the whole- the concept of reconciling the opposites. Education is the key to achieving harmony in any society. Education should transform us into an 'Ethical nation', from one that is built on expediency. Swami Vivekananda once said, "Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man". This recognizes that every person has something 'good' within, although some may have it in greater measure than others.

**Bring out Best in each Person-**This implies that education should bring out what is best in each person. Perfection is generally considered a divine attribute. As every person is unique, the lesson should hit a ready target to bring out his/her uniqueness. **Education is the key that opens the door**

**to the riches within man.** Education then would bring out the 'God' in man and not the 'Devil' (Rajasingham Narendran, 2012).

**The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53)** laid special emphasis on the following values in the formation of character of the students: Efficiency, Integrity, Discipline, Co-operation and Good Temper. The Committee of Religious and Moral Instruction headed by Shri Prakash made a special mention of dignity of labour, love of humanity, patriotism and self-discipline. Moral values particularly refer to the conduct of man towards man in various situations in good manners. The Committee of Emotional Integration referred to the mutual appreciation of the various religions in the country i.e. spiritual values, national unity and the unity of mankind. The Education Commission emphasized the inculcation of the values of cooperation and mutual regard, honesty and integrity, discipline and social responsibility. It also stressed the development of scientific temper of mind, respect for manual labour, capacity to put in hard and responsible work, respect for a proper pride in the past faith and confidence in the future, national consciousness, spirit of social service for promoting social and national integration, equally essentials are values which help to make democracy a way of life and thereby strengthen it as a form of government, readiness to appreciate other's point of view and patience (Sindhvani and Kumar, 2013).

**The National Policy on Education (1986)** has laid considerable emphasis on Value Education by highlighting the need to make education a forceful tool for cultivation of social and moral values. The policy has stated that in our culturally plural society education should factor universal and eternal values oriented towards the unity and integration of our people. In the present times of unprecedented changes dislocating traditional values and creating conflict between traditional and new values there is a universal concern in respect of erosion of values, promoting values and culture which fit in with the needs of the modern times. This concern is universal but is more acute for our country which has lead its own distinct culture, worked view and a living value tradition. The process of developing in to a modern nation, with new social, political and economic institutions, and with emphasis on science and technology, has thrown up many new values – challenges in all areas of our national life. It is important that we examine these challenges and prepare our youth to face and resolve them. The main objectives of promotion of Ethics and Human Values in UGC guidelines are as under:

- « To create awareness, conviction & commitment to values for improving the quality of life through education, and for advancing social and human well being.
- « To encourage universities and colleges to undertake academic and other activities pertaining to teaching, research and extension programmes in respect of values and culture like extramural lectures, seminars, conferences, workshops and orientation programmes for teachers and students.
- « To encourage universities to undertake preparation and production of requisite material including books, handbooks, Journals, teaching materials, video CD and films relating to values. The education should aim at making the learners acquire conceptual clarity and develop respect for norms and values of freedom, equality, fraternity and justice with their philosophical, ethical, social, economic and political dimensions.

### Teachers Role in Imparting Value Education

Separate teachers are not provided to impart value education at the school stage. Each and every teacher is expected to help the students to internalize values. The teacher is expected to create an atmosphere of love and trust in the school. The first and foremost function of a teacher is to identify the values he desires to inculcate among children. Then he should follow these in life. The practice of these values should be reflected in his own behavior. Values should not be imposed on the children. This will lead to indoctrination. A teacher needs to sensitize the children for the values. Values are acquired by the children through the environment of school. The activities organized in the school are sources of value education. Therefore a provision of large number of activities - *curricular, co curricular and extracurricular needs* to be provided in the school.

A teacher is a teacher everywhere in the school and, outside of the school. Basically this should be reflected in his behavior. As a subject teacher his behavior should not violate values. It is emphasized that effective value education is based on shared understanding of key concepts as well as a common language for values education in each school. This offers teachers the opportunity to explore the nature of values, the kind of values and what principles they can apply for effective values education.

Teachers might find appropriate to use with their students and which the Values Education Team might adapt for use with stakeholders in the school community.

According to National Curriculum for Primary and Secondary Education (1985), the crisis of values our society is passing through "*demands more explicit and deliberate educational efforts towards value development*". The first term of reference for the National Commission on Teachers (1983) was "*to lay down clear objectives for the teaching profession with reference to the search for excellence, breadth of vision and cultivation of values*". The Working Group to review teachers training programmes in the light of the need for value orientation (WG) set up by the Government of India in 1983 recommended for the inclusion of a value education component in the teacher education programme besides spelling out details of curriculum, methodology and teachers role.

Teachers' role is very vital in molding the future of a country and, as such, it is considered the noblest profession. Teachers are the ideals to their pupils. An educational institute should not be just confined to teaching and learning but it should be considered as a place where consciousness is aroused and illumined; soul is purified and strengthened. It is the place where the seeds of discipline, devotion and commitment are planted and fostered with deliberate efforts. A constructive companionship between teachers and students has to be developed. Gurus like Parshuram, Bhishma and Drona influenced their students by practicing what they preached (Thakur, 2007). In a nutshell, a teacher in real sense is one who himself practices the human values. He should *walk his talk* to leave an ever lasting impression in the minds of students.

But in the modern era, there are number of factors which are responsible for degradation of the status of teachers, for their poor performance and for the decline in teaching values such as changing social attitude, professionalism, poor quality of teaching, non—responsiveness and low level of accountability, political intervention in teachers; selection, ignoring of merit etc. It is recommended there should be congenial conditioning or proper environment in the society which includes parents, teachers, educators as well as administrators for inculcating values i.e. moral, spiritual, religious, social, economic and cultural values, etc. among the students/ youths. Promotion of human values in the society depends on the promotion of good qualities among individuals. In every tradition and in every country the place

of a teacher, not only in the institution but also in society, has been glorified. According to a Japanese saying, a poor teacher tells, an average teacher teaches, a good teacher explains, an excellent teacher demonstrates and a great teacher inspires. To inspire the students, a teacher should discharge twin roles - one to mould himself and other to mould others (Anitha Pathania, 2011).

### **Values through the Content of School Education**

The various subjects at the school level such as language, mathematics, environmental sciences (science and social science), art education, health and physical education have included the content essential to inculcate desirable attitudes, appreciations and values. Also, depending on the age of students, various group activities pertaining to their level could be formulated, so as to encourage the experiential knowledge of values.

For example, mathematics makes direct contribution towards the inculcation of scientific temper, through the development of analytical thinking and reasoning. The content in mathematics also highlights the values like equality of sexes, protection of environment, removal of social barriers, observance of small family norms, etc. Through mathematics, students develop discipline, truthfulness and unity. Languages too have an inherent structure and thus embody discipline. Science also fosters rational thinking and experiential learning. Through Drawing and Painting, students experience the values of harmony and coherence. The spiritual books help students to determine their thoughts, actions and deeds leading towards their self-growth. The school projects are invaluable in the formation of character among students and therefore later of society itself. School personnel and parents should also realize that it is more important to develop positive values and character than merely worrying about academic results.

In schools, values are inculcated with the help of basic educational aids such as books, multimedia and other classroom instructional methods by teachers; however it is essential that, the teacher himself/herself has to live as an epitome of values. As students learn from what they observe in a teacher, than what they actually hear from him/her. Teachers must be the role-models of love and truth as they are the most sacred of values.

For instance, prayer songs and thoughts for the day in the morning assembly foster theological and metaphysical inclinations. Debates and

quizzes, declamation and essay writing can assist in the development of values such as cooperation, compassion, leadership and wisdom. Likewise, nature walks, excursions, camps and sports events provide opportunities to build and experience generous, giving-forgiving and compassionate attitude. Exhibitions and school functions provide a lot of opportunities to learn and inculcate values such as, industriousness, love, cooperation, sincerity and leadership. Even scholastic subjects such as History and the Constitution of India, imbibe values of unity, liberty and fidelity.

### **Ways to Impart Value Education in Schools**

Out of the many values nurtured at home, the most important of all is integrity. Integrity is the experience of exhorting a wholesome personality; than just being fragmented. In school, the learning and inculcating of values is a continuous ongoing process inside and outside the classroom. Every school aim must be an integrated growth in the student's body, mind and spirit, which are the inseparable qualities for the development of a good character and values. Further, values can also be imparted in many ways (Sindhvani, & Kumar, 2013) like;

- « Social and ethical values, examples from day-to-day situations, extracts from sayings of great men, incidents and problems which develop value judgement among pupils, dramas, dialogues, simple poems (Kavya Vachana) and scriptures from world religions could form the major part of the content along with the biographies of great men.
- « Personal, neighbourly and community values should be taught in the classroom and thoroughly discussed with the students.
- « A variety of learning resources can be used for value education ranging from biographies, scriptures, proverbs, hymns and sayings of great men to current social and political events, stories from religion and mythology, moral dilemmas and schools events.
- « Yoga and other activities that develop self-discipline among students could be included.
- « Group activities like cleaning the school camps, visiting slums, service campus, visits to hospitals, visits to places of worship of

different faiths should form part of content in value education. Discourses on the lives of spiritual leaders can bring out values like self-sacrifice, collective happiness, love for truth and ultimate values of life for which the great leaders lived.

- « 'Personality Development Retreats' could be held to enable the students to develop self-control, punctuality, sharing and caring respect for other faiths, cooperation and the value of silence(inner peace).
- « Prayer, meditation and 'Shramadan' could form part of the content of value education. They can help the students cultivate inner poise and an attitudinal shift, and develop the quality of 'dignity of labour'.
- « Observing 'Jayanthis' i.e. birthdays of great national and spiritual leaders and organizing youth organizations for character development can go a long way in the inculcation of values in students.

### Values and Ethics in Higher Education

Halstead and Taylor (1996) define values as 'principles, fundamental convictions, ideals, standards or life instances which act as a general guide to behaviour, or as a reference point in decision-making, or the evaluation of beliefs, or action'. The learning of values systems needs to consider two important aspects; transferring *knowledge* of established values systems and the capacity to *practice* such value systems. On the otherhand, ethics can be defined as the moral values, rules or standards governing the conduct of a particular group, profession or culture. Ethics is a branch of philosophy that deals with morality, it may be defined as "a systematic inquiry into the beliefs we have and the judgement we make about what is morally right or wrong and morally good and evil". Discussion of ethics have a tendency to be more centered on moral values with a greater focus on the application or outcomes of adherence to such moral value systems (Buckeridge, 2002). In practice, ethics is essentially concerned about what is right or fair, and focused on what we ought to do (i.e. actions) rather than describing (Preston, 1996). As Almond (1999) contends that if morality is judging what is good and right then ethics is the reasoning behind such judgment. Facilitating learning around value and ethics presents some considerable challenges and may at times be controversial (Hill, 2004). Work by Kohlberg argues that learning around values and ethics, should focus on the process of developing moral

reasoning and capacity building rather than direct content knowledge (Crain, 1985; Lovat & Toomey, 2007).

Engaging in work integrated learning involves complex learning for students as they are acquiring technical skills, knowledge, soft skills as well as shaping their professional identity and subsequently their own values (Campbell, Herrington, & Verenikina, 2009). Social acceptance in the workplace is a critical element in being able to access learning opportunities (Billett, 2008). Students need to be equipped to navigate the increasingly important ethical aspects of their professions (Bowie, 2005). Sweeney and Twomey (1997) argue that universities need to develop graduates for the workplace that are capable of more than a simple response to change, but are adaptable and transformative. That is, as university graduates, students need to be more than mere acquirers of existing practices and instead they should develop as critical agents of their learning and active in shaping their practice and practice settings (Billett, 2008). The argument by Billett, in essence, presents the notion that in order to be a true professional one must be a reflective practitioner, well aware of the norms of the community of practice, and to be critical moral agents shaping the future norms of that community. This requires students to be vocal when faced with an ethical issue and in order for students to be critical professionals, relies upon the capacity of those involved to be aware, able to identify and judge objectively that an ethical issue is present within their profession setting (Bowie, 2005; Corbo Crehan & Campbell, 2007). Some of the unethical practices being followed by most of our higher education institutes are being listed below though it is not the exhaustive list (Pabla, 2011):

- « How far college education has succeeded in helping students to become integral part of society. How far has the college culture changed the life of the students?
- « Why colleges have failed to bring in the expected standards in values and beliefs.
- « Universities are awarding degrees and certificates to students without ensuring anything related to quality which is affecting the education system in an adverse manner.
- « People pursue a degree for the status it carries.
- « Teachers deliver lectures without employing proper teaching methodologies. Many a times, teachers do not have time to the inclination to ensure whether the student could follow lecture. Teacher

often merely dictates notes, reading out of the text book or the guide of the subject.

- « Evaluation and testing gives more stress upon rote memory. There is no genuine comprehension or critical evaluation. Curriculum design is mere a collection of topics and subjects.
- « The accumulation and presentation of data alone cannot become the criteria for quality education. Does higher education cater for or include acquisition of habit or skills?
- « The colleges are plain enrolment centers and examination bodies.

They are not bothered about quality of teaching and the ethical considerations. Neither there is any procedure to check the kind of teaching that is imparted at the college.

At various levels of the Indian education system in general and the higher education in particular, the ethical considerations have lost its value and place. Indians largely are proud of their roles & professional ethics. In spite of all adverse conditions, they perform their duties with full dedication. However a very large numbers of aberrations and deviations in all walks of life especially in higher education sector are spoiling the professional excellence, ethics, peace and harmony amongst the youth of India today. Some of the domains where the ethical values are degrading (Pabla, 2011) are:

1. Regulatory bodies such as AICTE, UGC, NCTE etc.
2. Institutions of Higher educations.
3. The society and the people.
4. The teachers and the students.

## 1. Regulatory Bodies

- « Large numbers of affiliations are being given without going into the academic requirements for the particular course/discipline e.g. the Chhattisgarh educational fiasco whereas 108 universities came up taking the advantage of regulatory loophole in 2002. Supreme Court had to intervene to correct these anomalies and set guidelines for the future.
- « No check or a monitoring mechanism in place so far as the selection of qualified faculty is concerned. This is left to the whims and fancies

of the management of the institute, thereby becoming party to exploitation of labour.

- « No check on the MOU's being signed by the private institutions with foreign universities. The provisions laid down for the same are being openly flouted.
- « Provisions related to pay and allowances of the faculty are not strictly followed by the Management of the privately run institutions, particularly engineering, management and B.Ed. colleges.

## **2. Institutes of Higher Education**

- « No correlation exists between the salary shown and salary disbursed to the staff of many institutions.
- « Corrupt practices used during exams and sometimes even the faculty are also involved.
- « While selecting the faculty, lot of pressure on top management is exerted which results in compromising the quality of teaching.
- « Increasing fee structure on one or the other pretext under the garb of development charges by the institutions.
- « No correlation between higher increment in salary and performance appraisal.
- « Not concerned with professional ethics such as punctuality, attendance of faculty and students, results achieved, overall development of student's personality, quality research work/ projects undertaken etc. The main concern of these institutes is to make profits by dubious means.
- « Increasing malpractices and plagiarism in the research works.
- « Donations accepted while giving admissions to students as capitation fees and further no accounts kept for these donations.

## **3. The Society and the Parents**

- « Parents allowing their wards to show off their status, wealth and prestige through unethical ways like cars, clothes and jewellery.
- « Non availability of parents in the Parent- teacher meets. No monitoring of the performance of the students by their parents.

- « No checks even when their wards are using the hi-tech services particularly internet as a result of which they fall prey to hacking and other cyber crimes.
- « The working parents hardly have any quality time to spare for their wards.

#### 4. The Teachers and the Students

- « Students disobey the code of conduct during day to day life in the college.
- « Attendance and regularity issues on the rise.
- « Teacher's decreasing commitment towards their profession particularly those teachers taking private home tuitions.
- « Internal assessment of teacher is another subject of debate which is being used as double weapon for and against the students by some of our teachers.

#### Role of a Teacher

- « Help create an atmosphere of love, trust and security in the institution.
- « Relate value education to concrete situations.
- « Organize value education indirectly through a variety of co curricular activities.
- « Remember that, teacher influences the student with his/her total personality.
- « Remember mere emulation is not education. We want student eventually not to do things in blind faith, custom or traditional but after rational deliberations and thought. This is the essence of the ethical education (Sheshadri, 1988).

#### Role of the Student

- « Listening to others with the intention of learning with them.
- « Reflecting intentionally to gain more understanding of the complexities of organizational life.
- « Being open-minded and accepting that there are multiple legitimate and viable perspectives and possibilities in any situation.
- « Understanding that there is no right answer or right approach in an ethical situation.

- « Being proactive in anticipating potential ethical or moral dilemmas and finding different ways to learn from different perspectives about how one might address such dilemmas.

## Conclusion

In the diversity of student populations today we see the whole spectrum of abilities, attitudes and aspirations. Some may be capable of absorbing skills by osmosis from role models and their environment, but students' choices and chances of success are subject to many external variables – both assets and constraints. Enabling all students to realize their potential in line with realistic aspirations is too important to be left to chance or individual choice. Engaging them in formal experiences, using appropriate methods and resources, can result in powerful insights that translate into enhanced skills and attributes useful in all areas of life. There is no doubt that we need to prepare students better for transition into a world where work, life and employment conditions are changing, career concepts have changed, and students themselves have changed. Our practices in higher education must accordingly shift their focus. An emerging new personal and career management culture, and the needs of higher education institutions (HEIs) having to respond to the deteriorating values, ethics and new demands (Kumar, 2007) like; enabling students to learn about learning: to assess their own learning in and through multiple contexts and identities i.e.

- « Bridging across what seem like disparate and competing agendas;
- « Meeting the needs of different stakeholders (staff, students, employers, government);
- « Clearing conceptual confusion, which often acts as a barrier to productive partnerships;
- « Delivering holistic and integrated development to all students, leading to aspirations of lifelong learning and (graduate) employment;
- « Integrating initiatives that engage both staff and students in CPD (continuing professional development) processes;
- « Generating pedagogy and practical learning tools that result in holistic development applicable in all areas of life (Kumar, 2007).

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# A Study of Awareness of CBD Workers about their Job Description

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## Introduction

India is the second most populous country in the world, sustaining 17.4 per cent of the world population on 2.4 per cent of the world's surface area. With the current same population growth rate, India will be the most populous country by 2050 having as many as 1,691 million people (Population Reference Bureau, 2012). Population growth rate of India has really become a matter of concern for national as well as International demographers and population policy and program makers.

The situation of Uttar Pradesh with its population at 199.5 million (provisional data, Census of India-2011) appears to be more alarming. Perhaps, such projections compelled the Govt. of Uttar Pradesh in advance to take lead and become the first State in India to develop its Population Policy. However, in spite of several approaches - Clinical, Extension and Education, Coercion, Community participation, used by the State Government for Health/ Family Planning programs, but the progress towards achieving the goals has been slow. There is a connection with a plethora of factors such as socio- cultural aspects, poverty, lack of access to health facilities, weak health system, deliveries by untrained birth attendants and low contraceptive uptake. Mostly the programs designed to achieve the objectives are target based vertical programs Even when programs designed are integrated, they do not carefully assess socio-cultural dynamics at the house hold level or develop interventions to build on the roles and strategies of other key house holds and community actors.

Moreover, the fact that anything related to procreation of child is often attached with the 'sex' and talking about sex is a taboo in our cultural ethos. Given this situation, family planning and use of contraceptive becomes all the more an issue to be discussed in person and in confidence. This "person

to person" approach wherever tried out has yielded better results in comparison to the medical / clinical or in other words an impersonal approach so far used. "Community Based Service Delivery (CBD)" as an approach has been effectively used in countries like Bangladesh, Indonesia, Tanzania etc. to cater to the unmet needs for Family Planning of the eligible couples. In India, this approach is being tried out by some voluntary organizations in different parts of the country as an alternative to the clinical approach.

Community-based distribution (CBD) is a non-clinical, Health/ Family Planning delivery outreach approach, whereby trained volunteers or salaried community agents who are not health professionals operate with relative autonomy (without day-do-day supervision) to provide low technology, safe services and information. In the case of sexual and reproductive health programs, CBD Workers are usually supported by a clinic-based program/ referrals, which provide access to a broader range of health services. Most CBD workers are selected by and answerable to the community in which they live and work.

The major work done in UP using this approach was by SIFPSA- State Innovations in Family Planning Services project Agency, with the support of USAID. SIFPSA was responsible for managing and implementing the innovations in Family Planning Services (IFPS) projects and had planned a phased manner approach for the projects, i.e.; implementing innovative interventions in selected districts, evaluating the interventions, and expanding successful interventions to other districts in Uttar – Pradesh. SIFPSA sanctioned 30 innovative projects to Private Voluntary Organizations (PVO), covering 3.7 million people in 1,769 rural villages and urban slums. At the village level, CBD workers were the central feature of PVO projects. There were 1,587 CBD workers working in PVO projects.

Recruitment procedures for CBD workers vary from project to project. In general, the woman should be educated through the eighth standard, living in the same village, married, and preferably, a current user of a modern contraceptive method. However, in order to perform their job effectively, awareness of CBD Workers about their job description is very important. Several studies e.g. Gupta and Gupta (1998), Hanifi and Bhuiyia (2001), have indicated that lack of knowledge and awareness of the health workers adversely affect the outcomes of the programs. Without the proper awareness of their job description, they may perform the job but correctness and quality of job performance and the achievement of desired targets may

not be ensured. Keeping in mind the above fact, this study was conducted with the following objectives.

1. To study the Socio-economic and personal profile of CBD Workers
2. To assess the awareness of CBD Workers about their Job Description

### **Methodology**

The study was conducted in Uttar Pradesh. SIFPSA implemented family planning projects in 30 districts in which the performance of family welfare parameters was less than the national as well as state average. To meet the objective of the study, it was decided that respondents shall be selected only from the projects that have completed one year of the project cycle, since by this time the CBD workers must have undergone both, the Induction and Refresher training. It was planned to select 200 CBD workers from 2 districts (100 from each district). On this criteria, there were only 4 districts having strength of 100 or more CBD workers, these were: Agra, Firozabad, Mirzapur and Bareilly. Of the four districts, Firozabad and Agra were selected by random sampling. Thus the study was conducted in Firozabad and Agra districts of U.P.

Respondents of the study were CBD Workers. Firozabad district had 3 projects with a total strength of 229 CBD Workers and Agra had 4 projects with 197 CBD Workers. From each project a list of CBD workers was obtained. Using stratified random sampling, hundred CBD workers were selected from each district. Hence, there were 200 respondents in the research study.

The Training Manual (1996) used for the program had a list of Job Description of CBD Workers. The Jobs were further classified into two major categories i.e. Education & Counseling and Service Delivery. Under each category there were 15 and 13 items respectively as jobs to be performed by the respondents. This way 28 items of awareness. Each item was assigned one score. Individual scores were obtained by adding the score of responses. Thus, the maximum and minimum score that a respondent could obtain was 28 and zero respectively.

## Profile of CBD Workers

As per the project requirement a CBD Worker should be a woman educated up to the eighth standard, living in the same village and married. The researcher found that all the CBD workers were female, 85 per cent were educated up to eighth class or more, 87 per cent were residing in same village where they have been working and 91.5 per cent were married. It shows that only one requirement was full filled by all the CBD Workers. About 9 to 15 per cent CBD Workers were not full filling the other three criteria set in the project.

In Community Based Family Planning Service Delivery programme, CBD Worker is the key for the success of the programme. Hence, their profile was also studied in terms of Age, Religion, Caste, Type of Family, Family Members, Family Income, Number of Children, Husbands/Father's Occupation, Husbands/Father's Education, Attitude towards Family Planning, Attitude towards Safe Motherhood and Total Work Experience. The data pertaining to these socio-economic characteristics of respondents have been presented in Table 1. The description of each variable has been presented in following paragraphs.

1. **Age:** The age range was 17 – 45 years. The mean age of the respondents was found to be about 28 years with a standard deviation (SD) of 6.15 years, Majority of the respondents were between 24 to 34 years (60%) of age,
2. **Religion:** The data revealed that 99 per cent of respondents were Hindus while only 1 per cent were Muslims.
3. **Caste:** The data shows that majority of respondents i.e. 52 per cent were from general category,. The mean caste score was found to be 2.32 with standard deviation of 0.79.
4. **Type of Family:** Data revealed that 60.5 per cent of the respondents belonged to joint families while 39.5 per cent belonged to nuclear families.
5. **Family Members:** The mean of number of family members was 7.33 with the standard deviation of 2.92. The data shows that 60 per cent respondents belonged to family size of more than 6 members.

6. **Family Income:** More than half (57 per cent) of the respondents were such whose monthly family income was Rs. 5000 or less. The mean monthly family income was found to be more than Rs. 4629. The standard deviation was Rs. 2845.56.
7. **Education of Husband/Father:** The data presented on this variable includes husband's education in cases of married and father's education in cases of un-married respondents. The mean score of this variable was 4.01 while standard deviation was 1.27. The majority i.e. about 75 per cent husbands/fathers of respondents had studied above class X level.
8. **Occupation of Husband/Father:** In case of respondents who were un-married the occupation of father and in remaining married cases occupation of husband have been included in this variable. The data reveals that 40 per cent of husbands/ fathers of respondents were in service while 35.5 per cent were engaged in agriculture.
9. **Number of Children:** The data reveals that more than 50 per cent respondents had only up to 2 children. The mean of number of children of respondents was 2.56 with standard deviation of 1.38.
10. **Attitude towards Family Planning:** The minimum and maximum possible scores for respondent's attitude towards family planning were 5 and 25 respectively. The data revealed that 83 per cent respondents scored more than 18. The mean attitude score was 19.11 while standard deviation was 2.40. That means, majority of respondents had favorable attitude towards family planning.
11. **Attitude towards Safe Motherhood:** The minimum and maximum possible scores for respondent's attitude towards safe motherhood were 5 and 25 respectively. Data revealed that about 70 per cent respondents scored above 18. The mean attitude towards safe motherhood was 19.05 with 2.96 standard deviation. That means, majority of respondents had favorable attitude towards safe motherhood.
12. **Total Work Experience:** The range of total work experience of respondents was 10 – 97 months. The mean of total work experience was 18.59, standard deviation 7.53. Eighty three per cent respondents had 12 to 18 months of work experience.

**Table 1: Profile of CBD Workers**

Variable	Category	MMPS	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents	Mean	S.D.	CV
<b>Age</b>		17-45			28.22	6.15	21.79
	17 - 23		42	21.0			
	24 - 34		120	60.0			
	35 - 45		38	19.0			
<b>Religion</b>		1 - 2					
	Hindu		198	99.0			
	Islam		2	1.0			
<b>Caste</b>		1 - 3			2.32	0.79	34.26
	SC/ST		41	20.5			
	OBC / Minorities		55	27.5			
	General		104	52.0			
<b>Type of Family</b>		1 - 3					
	Joint		121	60.5			
	Nuclear		79	39.5			
<b>Family Members</b>		2 - 24			7.33	2.92	39.81
	Up to 4		35	17.5			
	5 - 6		45	22.5			
	Above 6		120	60.0			
	Total		200	100.0			
<b>Family Income</b>		600 - 22000			4629.55	2845.56	61.47
	600-2000		52	26.0			
	2001-5000		62	31.0			
	5000 -8000		75	37.5			
	Above - 8000		11	5.5			
<b>Education of Respondent</b>		1 - 6			3.28	1.09	33.24
	Class V-vii		15	1.0			
	Class VIII		35	17.5			
	Class IX - X		79	39.5			
	Class XI - XIII		43	21.5			
	Graduate/		20	10.0			
	Post Graduates		08	4.0			

<b>Marital Status</b>		1 - 4			5	2.5	
	Un-married		5	2.5			
	Married		183	91.5			
	Divorced/ Separated		1	0.5			
	Widow		11	5.5			
<b>Education of Husband/ Father</b>		0 - 5			4.01	1.27	31.80
	Never attended School		6	3.0			
	Class V		8	4.0			
	Class VI - VIII		9	4.5			
	Class IX - X		28	14.0			
	Class XI - XII		56	28.0			
	More than XII		93	46.5			
<b>Occupation of Husband/ Father</b>		0 - 4			2.36	1.00	42.55
	Unemployed		14	7.0			
	Labour		17	8.5			
	Agriculture		71	5.5			
	Service		80	40.0			
	Self-employed/Business		18	9.0			
<b>Number of Children</b>		0 - 7			2.56	1.38	54.04
	None		10	5.0			
	Up to 2		91	45.5			
	3 - 4		82	41.0			
	Above 4		17	8.5			
<b>Place of Resident</b>		0 - 1					
	Other village		26	13.0			
	Village where work		174	87.0			
<b>Attitude towards family planning</b>		5 - 25			19.11	2.40	12.54
	Low (less than 17)		34	17.0			
	Medium (18 - 21)		134	67.0			
	High (above 21)		32	16.0			
<b>Attitude towards safe motherhood</b>		5 - 25			19.05	2.96	15.52
	Low (less than 17)		61	30.5			
	Medium (18 - 21)		105	52.5			
	High (above 21)		34	17.0			
<b>Total work experience</b>		10-97			18.59	7.53	40.50
	Less than 12 months		06	3.0			
	12 - 18 months		167	83.5			
	More than 18 months		27	13.5			

It shows that the sample of CBD Workers was characterized by the respondents who were Hindus (99%), belonged to general caste category (52%), educated up to VIII or more (85%), married (91.5 %), belonged to joint families (60%) of large to medium sizes (82.5%), having 2 to 4 children (86.5%), local residents (87%) and belonged to low to medium income group i.e. Rs. 600- 5000 per month (57%). Husbands/Fathers were found to be more educated than respondents i.e. above class XII (88%). Ninety seven per cent of CBD workers had more than 12 months experience.

### Awareness about Job Description

The mean score of job description awareness was 16.11 and the mean percentage score was 57.52. This shows that the respondents were not aware about more than 40 per cent of their jobs. Thus the awareness level of the CBD Workers about their job description cannot be considered very satisfactory. The standard deviation and the coefficient of variation were found to be 5.29 and 32.87 respectively. It indicates a considerable heterogeneity in the sample on this account. The details of aspect wise mean scores have been given in Table 2.

Table 2: Mean Awareness Scores of CBD Workers on two Aspects of Job Description

S. No.	Aspects	MMPS	Range	Mean	SD	CV	MPS	Rank
1.	Education & Counseling	0 – 15	2 - 15	7.78	3.26	41.89	51.83	II
2.	Service Delivery	0 – 13	1 – 13	8.33	2.48	29.80	59.50	I
Total		0 - 28	3 - 26	16.11	5.29	32.87	57.52	

The mean score on service delivery aspects was 8.33 and for counseling it was 7.78. MPS of service delivery was higher (59.50) in comparison to the education and counseling (51.83). This shows that CBD Workers were more aware about service delivery jobs as compared to education and counseling jobs. However, even for service delivery jobs the awareness knowledge did not exceed 60 per cent. The awareness of the job description of the workers of any program must be very high (> 80% app.) to perform their jobs effectively. Hence, in this case the awareness of the CBD workers about their job description cannot be considered satisfactory.

## Awareness of respondents on different items of Education and counseling

There were fifteen items about Education and Counseling. The number and percentage of CBD Workers aware about different awareness items have been presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Number and Percentage of Respondents Aware About Various Items of Education and Counseling

S. No.	Items	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents	Rank
1.	Information to couples about RCH services	145	72.5	IV
2.	Information education about Family Planning	171	85.5	i
3.	Information education about contraceptive methods	158	79.0	II
4.	Information education about RTIs, STDs, HIV and AIDS	157	78.5	III
5.	Inform pregnant women and her family members about pregnancy related complications	58	29.0	XIII
6.	Inform the pregnant women and her family members about the name and address of the trained birth attendant in the area	90	45.0	VIII
7.	Inform pregnant women and their family members about five cleans they have to keep in mind during the delivery	88	44.0	IX
8.	Counseling infertile couples for treatment	108	54.0	VI
9.	Counseling for facilitating to choose contraceptive method	144	72.0	V
10.	Counseling pregnant women to take nutritious food	82	41.0	X
11.	Counseling pregnant women for normal rest	44	22.0	XIV
12.	Counseling pregnant women for personal cleanliness	82	41.0	X
13.	Counseling women about child immunization	96	48.0	VII
14.	Counseling women about breast feeding	72	36.0	XI
15.	Tell the importance of engaging trained birth attendant for delivery	60	30.0	XII

The table shows that on one job item i.e. "Information education about Family Planning" the awareness of the respondents may be considered very good as 85.5% of the respondents were aware about this job item.

On another four items which are "Information to couples about RCH services", "Information education about contraceptive methods", "Information education about RTIs, STDs, HIV and AIDS" and "Counseling for facilitating to choose contraceptive method" may be considered good, as more than 70% of the respondents were aware about these 4 job items.

The awareness of the respondents can be considered satisfactory about the job item "Counseling infertile couples for treatment" as 54% respondents were aware about this job item.

On nine job items which are "Counseling women about child immunization",

"Inform the pregnant women and her family members about the name and address of the trained birth attendant in the area", "Inform pregnant women and their family members about five cleans they have to keep in mind during the delivery", "Counseling pregnant women to take nutritious food", "Counseling pregnant women for personal cleanliness", "Counseling women about breast feeding", "Tell the importance of engaging trained birth attendant for delivery", "Inform pregnant women and her family members about pregnancy related complications", "Counseling pregnant women for normal rest" the awareness of the respondents cannot be considered satisfactory as not even 50% of the respondents were aware about these job items.

Of these nine job items on three job items which are ; "Counseling pregnant women for normal rest", "Inform pregnant women and her family members about pregnancy related complications", "Tell the importance of engaging trained birth attendant for delivery" the awareness of the respondents was very poor as only 22-30% of the respondents were aware about these job items.

### Awareness of respondents on different items of Service Delivery.

There were thirteen items about service delivery. The number and percentage of CBD Workers answering these items correctly have been presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Number and Percentage of Respondents Aware About Various Items of Service Delivery

S. No	Items	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents	Rank
1.	Regular supply of condoms and Pills	138	69.0	VIII
2.	Referral for Copper- T Vasectomy Tubectomy	152	76.0	VII
3.	Follow up of Copper T Vasectomy Tubectomy cases	154	77.0	VI
4.	Identify drop out cases and reasons for dropping out	188	94.0	I
5.	Take an appropriate action for drop out cases	182	91.0	II
6.	Identify all pregnant women in the service area	176	88.0	III
7.	Identification, referral of RTIs, STDs & HIV AIDS cases	112	56.0	IX
8.	Ensure pregnant women are registered	161	80.5	V
9.	Ensure pregnant women have undergone three pre natal checkups	162	81.0	IV
10.	Ensure pregnant women has been fully immunized against Tetanus Oxide	46	23.0	XIII
11.	Ensure pregnant women take 100 Iron Folic Acid tablets regularly	61	30.5	XII
12.	Provide safe delivery kit to pregnant women or teach them how to assemble it	70	35.0	X
13.	Refer pregnant women in case of complications	64	32.0	XI

The table shows that on five job items i.e., "Identify drop out cases and reasons for dropping out", "Take an appropriate action for drop out cases", "Identify all pregnant women in the service area", "Ensure pregnant women

has undergone three pre natal checkups”, “Ensure pregnant women are registered” the awareness of respondents may be considered very good as 80 - 94% of the respondents were aware about these job items.

On another three job items which are “Follow up of Copper T, Vasectomy, Tubectomy cases”, “Referral for Copper- T, Vasectomy, Tubectomy”, “Regular supply of condoms and Pills” the awareness of the respondents may be considered good as 69 - 77% of the respondents were aware about these job items. The awareness of the respondents can be considered satisfactory about the job item “Identification, referral of RTIs, STDs & HIV AIDS cases” as 56% respondents were aware about this job item.

On four job items i.e.; “Ensure pregnant women have been fully immunized against Tetanus Oxide,” “Ensure pregnant women take 100 Iron Folic Acid tablets regularly”, “Provide safe delivery kit to pregnant women or teach them how to assemble it”, and “Refer pregnant women in case of complications”, the awareness of respondents was very poor as only 23 - 35% of the respondents were aware about these job items.

## **Conclusion**

Although most of the respondents were appointed as per the requirement of the project but about 9 to 15 per cent CBD Workers were not full filling the three criteria set in the project. Such CBD Workers perhaps may not have performed their jobs efficiently. The awareness level of the CBD Workers about their job description was not very satisfactory. They were not aware about more than 40 per cent of their jobs.

They were more aware about service delivery jobs as compared to education and counseling jobs. Their awareness was found to be poor on six job items and very poor on three job items of Education and Counseling. On four items of Service delivery also their awareness was found to be very poor.

On the basis of study it is suggested that the program implementing agencies must give due care about the awareness of workers about their job description. During the pre-service training or orientation they must ensure that the trainees are well versed with the jobs that they have to perform in the field. It would be better if the trainings are planned keeping in focus the job descriptions of the workers. They should also give more emphasis on the Education and Counseling jobs.

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# A Critical Analysis of Participation and Representation of Women in Indian Electoral Politics

Smita Raut

## Key Words

Political Process, Women's Participation, Political Participation, Representation, Discourse on Empowerment, Global Situation regarding women's participation

## Abstract

*(This paper tries to explore the possibilities of looking into the future of the participative democracy from a substantial political output process rather merely normative process. Though there is considerable space for action oriented programmes for enhancing women's political participation & representation in our country, it is not being reflected in action, rather than only in rhetoric. Though the increasing demand for reservations and the subsequent constitutional provision might provide some impact on the larger space provided to our women folk, beyond household, which might be political as well as apolitical and it will have an impact on reservation for seats for them. However the existing scenario of political participation of women is not encouraging. Comparing to the situation at the global level, it is giving very sad picture. Though in terms of human development indicators, the situation is not encouraging, simultaneous political picture is also equally bad. In this context, the author tries to explore the possible reasons for those conditions as well as looking forward for a possible future course of action to overcome this. Statistics were obtained from international databases, in particular those of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the United Nations Development Programme.)*

## Introduction

The Constitution of India is based on the principles of equality and guarantees equality before law and equal protection to all its citizens. It

not only guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms, but also prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex, and place of birth. However, these rights have remained only in paper and have not been turned into practice in reality. As such, women have been denied social, economic, civil and political rights in many spheres. An important area where women have been inadequately represented is in the political sphere. Articles 325 and 326 of the Constitution of India guarantees political equality, equal right to participation in political activities and right to vote respectively. While the latter has been accessed, exercised and enjoyed by a large number of women, the former i.e., right to equal political participation is still a distant dream. Lack of space for participation in political bodies has not only resulted in their presence in meager numbers in these decision making bodies but also in the neglect of their issues and experiences in policy making.

The government of India, noting the low participation of women in politics; acknowledging the recommendations of the Committee for Status of Women Report, 1974; and drawing from the pioneering experience of Karnataka which provided reservation for women in its three tier Panchayat Raj system (institutions of local self governance) in the year 1983; adopted an affirmative action for providing reservation for women in these institutions in the year 1993. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act introduced not less than 33 per cent reservation for women in the Panchayati Raj Institutions in the rural areas. Similarly, the 73rd & 74th Constitutional Amendment Act introduced similar reservation for women in Nagar Palika and Municipalities in towns and urban areas. With these Constitutional Amendments, over three million women are now actively participating in shaping the policies and programs of the country, though only at the local levels of governance. However, such affirmative action is lacking at the higher echelons of governance at the State and Central levels. Prior to the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments, only the State of Karnataka had reservation for women in institutions of local self-governance.

### **Analysis of Women in Parliament – A Global Perspective**

The trend in terms of women's representation over the past decade has been a slow process. In 1975, at the time of the First World Conference on Women in Mexico City, women accounted for 10.9 per cent of MPs worldwide. Ten years later, in 1985, women's representation had increased by only 1 percentage point, to an average 12 per cent. In 1995, the number of women had actually decreased to 11.6 per cent but a new impetus for

women's participation in decision-making found expression at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, and the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA). By 2000, the number of women in Parliaments had increased to 13.4 per cent of parliamentarians in the lower houses of Parliament. In October 2005, a new global high was reached, as 16.2 per cent of the members of lower or single houses of parliament were women, and 14.8 per cent in upper houses, bringing an overall total average of 16.0 per cent in all parliaments. While steady, the progress has been slow. If current incremental rates continue, it will not be until 2025 that an average of 30 per cent will be reached, and not until 2040 that parity will be achieved. They continue to be in a minority in National Parliament. As per figures compiled recently by the IPU, women constitute only 7.1 per cent of the total MPs (as on 30/4/2007). Data region wise shows a large variation with almost equal participation of women and men in Nordic Countries (41.7 per cent) to just 8.8 per cent in the Arab states. In the other parts of the world, the proportion of women MPs is more or less the same, varying between 15 to 20 per cent.

**Table-1: Global Perspective of Women in Parliament 1945-2005.**

	1945	1955	1965	1975	1985	1995	2000	2005
Number of parliaments	26	61	94	115	136	176	177	187
% women representatives (lower house or unicameral)	3.0	7.5	8.1	10.9	12.0	11.6	13.4	16.2
% women representatives (upper house)	2.2	7.7	9.3	10.5	12.7	9.4	10.7	14.8

### Indian Scenario

In Indian politics women continue to be an 'extinct species'. At least that's what the agendas of all major political parties in the country reveals. The first phase of Lok Sabha elections were on April 16 and women candidates were barely to be found on the contestants' lists. Even principal parties like the congress and the BJP, despite their vociferous commitment to 33 per cent reservation for women in Parliament and state legislature, have not dared to field many from the fair sex for forthcoming elections. That's one area where the two parties seem to agree notwithstanding their otherwise

bitter political differences. In all the elections held since independence, women had the voting rights. The percentage of seats won against the seats contested is showing a declining trend only because the number of women contesting elections has increased sharply. However, it may be seen that voting by women in all tiers of government has always been a feature of the Indian Polity since 1947. Due to the paternalistic family and male dominated political structures which do not provide space for women in decision making bodies, women constituted 3.1% of the total contestants in 1996 election and did not occupy more than 6.10% of the total seats in the state legislative assemblies and Parliament. The number of women contestants in Parliamentary elections has not increased significantly over the years. Political parties are still reluctant to field women candidates at national level. In the early days of the Indian republic, the number of women representatives was a mere 22, which was a lowly 4.4% of the total seats in the LS. The sixth LS in the year 1977 saw an all time of just 19 women representatives. The twelfth LS had 44 women i.e. 8.8% of the total.

Participation of Women in the Parliament – Lok Sabha (Lower House) and Rajya Sabha (Upper House)

Women are poorly represented at higher leadership levels. Even historically, it is observed that women's participation in positions of power in both houses of the Parliament has never exceeded 15 per cent of all seats. Table below presents the participation of women in the two houses of the Parliament.

**Table – 2: Participation of Women in the Rajya Sabha**

Year	No. of Seats	No. of Women	No. of Women %
1990	245	24	9.8
1994	245	38	15.5
1996	245	20	8.2
1997	245	19	7.8
1998	245	19	7.8
1999	245	20	8.2
2000	245	22	9.0
2001	245	22	9.0
2002	245	25	
2003	245	25	10.2
2004	245	28	11.4
2009	245	26	10.7

**Source:** Rajya Sabha Secretariat.

In the Rajya Sabha, their proportion remains constant at about 8 percent of the total seats. The exception has been the 1994 elections wherein their representation was at 15.5 percent. The Table shows that there is increase in the Representation of women after 2000, the trend after has been rising but a little fall in 2009 elections.

**Table.3. Increase in the Share of Women Members of Parliament**

	1996	1998	1999	2004 2009
<b>Total Constituencies</b>	543	543	543	543 543
<b>Total No. of women candidates</b>	491	274	284	355 445
<b>Total No. of women winners</b>	40	43	49	45 60

**Table-4: State-wise No. of Women Candidates in Elections in 2004.**

State/Union Territory	No. of Women Candidates	No. of Women who Won
Andhra Pradesh	21	3
Arunachal Pradesh	0	0
Assam	6	0
Bihar	14	3
Goa	1	0
Gujarat	11	1
Haryana	8	1
Himachal Pradesh	2	1
Jammu & Kashmir	4	1
Karnataka	10	2
Kerala	15	2
Madhya Pradesh	30	2
Maharashtra	29	5
Manipur	1	0
Meghalaya	0	0
Mizoram	0	0
Nagaland	0	0
Orissa	9	2
Punjab	10	2
Rajasthan	17	2
Sikkim	0	0
Tamil Nadu	23	4
Tripura	0	0
Uttar Pradesh	61	7
West Bengal	34	4
Chhattisgarh	12	1
Jharkhand	13	1
Uttaranchal	5	0
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1	0
Chandigarh	1	0
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	1	0
Daman & Diu	0	0
National Capital Territory Of Delhi	15	1
Lakshadweep	0	0
<b>Total (All India)</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>45</b>

While there is the increased participation in grass root political movements; it is not getting translated into a growing share of women in the formal political structure of the country. Amongst the several reasons for such a situation is the growing money power and muscle power required to contest even the smallest of elections in India, the intimidation, violence and slander that a women candidate has to face combined with the traditional male domination that seeks to keep her indoors. Narrow electoral arithmetic and the necessity of fielding a winning candidate makes most political parties shy away from fielding more than a token number of women candidates. And if they are fielded at all, kinship and affinity factors play a major role. It is very common to observe that the relatives of politician are promoted and supported to emerge as politicians. Increasingly, women have stood for elections and got elected as members of State Legislative Assemblies and the Parliament. Some studies of Parliamentary participation indicate that women members participate more actively in 'women's issues' – health, welfare, atrocities against women, crimes like dowry and violations of human rights. This participation is confined to the more articulate women.

**Table- 5: Male-Female Representation in Selected State Assemblies**

State	Latest year's for which data is available	Total	Male	Female	Percent of Female
Andhra Pradesh	1999	294	266	28	9.52
Arunachal Pradesh	1999	60	59	1	1.67
Assam	1996	122	116	6	4.92
Bihar	2000	70	61	19	5.86
Delhi	1998	70	61	9	12.86
Goa, Daman & DIU	1999	40	38	2	5.00
Gujarat	1998	182	178	4	2.20
Haryana	2000	90	86	4	4.44
Himachal Pradesh	1998	68	62	6	8.82
Jammu & Kashmir	1996	87	85	2	2.30
Karnataka	1999	224	218	6	2.68
Kerala	1996	140	127	13	9.29
Madhya Pradesh	1998	320	294	26	8.13
Maharashtra	1999	288	276	12	4.17

Manipur	2000	60	59	1	1.67
Meghalaya	1998	60	57	3	5.00
Mizoram	1998	40	40	0	0.00
Nagaland	1998	60	60	0	0.00
Orissa	2000	147	134	13	8.84
Pondicherry	1996	30	29	1	3.33
Punjab	1997	117	110	7	5.98
Rajasthan	1998	200	186	14	7.00
Sikkim	1999	32	31	1	3.13
Tamil Nadu	1996	234	225	9	3.85
Tripura	1998	60	58	2	3.33
Uttar Pradesh	1996	424	404	20	4.72
West Bengal	1996	294	274	20	6.80
Andhra Pradesh	1999	294	266	28	9.52
Arunachal Pradesh	1999	60	59	1	1.67
Assam	1996	122	116	6	4.92

**Source:** Election Commission of India's Website ([www.eci.gov.in](http://www.eci.gov.in)).

Women's political representation at the state level as gauged by their membership in state legislatures is abysmally low. The latest data from the States show that Delhi (12.86 per cent) has the highest proportion of women members followed by Andhra Pradesh (9.52 percent) and Kerala (9.29 per cent). Other States with relatively high proportions of women in the State Assemblies include Orissa (8.84 per cent), Himachal Pradesh (8.82 per cent) and Madhya Pradesh (8.13 per cent). It is clear from the above analysis that women's participation in the state legislatures is even lower than their participation in the Parliament and the reasons for the variation needs to be analyzed further. What is clear however that in the given situation as represented above, it is necessary to facilitate and create a conducive atmosphere for women to participate in various levels of political activities. In that background, the 85th Amendment Bill seeking one-third reservation for women in the parliamentary and legislative seats becomes an extremely important, particularly for the political participation of women.

### **Impact of Women's Low Political Participation**

Historically women are marginalized in decision making and leadership by a variety of processes, in various parts of the world. In most societies, women lack experience of decision making and leadership in the public

arena because girls, in contrast to boys are advised to submissive and not to be active in various political practices of the governance system due to socio-cultural practices. In most traditional societies girls are kept largely within the confines of the household and family where they are protected and taught to accept the decisions that others parents, teachers or brothers make on their behalf. As a result of this lack of experience in a public context, girls tend to lack self-confidence and skills needed to function effectively in positions of formal leadership. An added handicap for many is their lack of capacity due to discrimination in access to education and training: in most countries, women have higher levels of illiteracy and fewer years of schooling than men. The Beijing Platform for Action for women across the globe also identifies several specific issues that need to be addressed, including socialization and negative stereotyping, which have kept decision making the primarily the domain of men. The Platform calls to create a gender balance in governance and administration; integrate women into political parties; recognize that shared work and parental responsibilities promote women's increased participation in public life; promote gender balance within the UN system; work toward equality between women and men in the private sector; establish equal access of women to education, increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership; and increase women's participation in the electoral process and political activities.

Institutional cultures that are unfriendly to women are not usually the result of deliberate policies but the consequences of their development over a period of time to meet the needs and situations of men, who have for so long dominated the public domain and who have different needs, priorities and concerns from women. Men need to become aware of the ways in which their assumptions, attitudes and behavior are gendered to reflect their own situation, exclude a woman's perspective and thus obstruct women's equal participation. Women and men together must then negotiate a new institutional setting that provides space for both groups in each and every sphere of life, society as well as governance system.

As a matter of fact status of women cannot be improved unless women are adequately represented in decision making bodies. The Committee on the Status of Women in India in its report Towards Equality (1974) recommended 30 per cent reservation for women in decision making bodies." The government has acknowledged the need to increase the number of women in decision-making processes at all levels, as early as in 1976. As a first step to facilitate women's participation in politics, in 1993, it introduced

33 percent reservation for women in institutions of local governance through the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments. It has also provided one-third reservation for women to the posts of Presidents and Vice Presidents in these institutions. While the government has succeeded in facilitating women's participation by providing for reservation at the lower levels of governance, it has failed to do so in passing the reservation Bill for women in the higher echelons of political institutions i.e., in the State Assemblies and the Parliament.

## Conclusion

The prevailing political environment of our country which reflects corruption, criminalization and communalization discourages women from entering politics. It was observed that with the entry of women in the Panchayati Raj Institutions, as a result of the reservation policy for women, the overall atmosphere has visibly changed. There has been a considerable reduction in the incidence of corruption, due to the pressure exerted by them on their male colleagues in creating transparency and accountability in governance system. As a result of which the overall use of money and muscle power and criminalization of politics has reduced to certain extent. There has been an increase in the incidence of violence against women elected representatives and those in positions of power. This has been more as resistance to their entry into politics and a backlash against particularly articulate and politically active women. Violence is used as a means to subdue and silence them. This reveals that the entry of women into political institutions have changed the atmosphere more positively and has made it more transparent and accountable. If affirmative action has a positive influence on the environment at the PRI level, it is all the more reason that the same would happen at the higher levels of governance. The 33% reservation for women has been interpreted in such a manner that it restricts the scope for women to contest the elections in general constituencies to certain extent. It is interpreted by male members of the political parties that women can contest only against the 'reserved constituencies'. This implies that the 'general' seats are exclusively meant for men. This deprives women of opportunities to contest against the general category despite having the potential and aspiration to do so. The lack of vibrant and supportive constituencies has adversely affected women's participation in governance. Where the constituency is aware and informed, they are able to influence and change the quality of governance as well as the reflection of the voice of the women in general. Hence it is of extremely important to look into the

matter of 1/3<sup>rd</sup> representation of women at all level of political bodies, starting from panchayat to parliament and the bill should be passed with massive support and be implemented in letter & spirit.

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# Impact of Self-Help Groups on the Lives of Women

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## Abstract

*The present paper examines the impact of micro-finance and Self Help Group (SHG) for the socio-economic development of women, particularly in Imphal East (IE) district, Manipur. The primary and secondary data were used for the study. The primary data were collected from 40 (forty) selected Women SHGs started at least 3(three) years ago and five members from each selected SHGs. The data were collected from field survey method adopting Interview Schedule on the basis of simple random sampling. The data were presented in tables and analyzed in percentagewise. The result reveals that women can improve their economic condition and living standard as they can generate income independently. The ideal and smooth functioning of the SHGs also results the development of skills- interpersonal relationship among the members, marketing, decision making, motivation, organization etcetera.*

*Key words: Impact, Women, Self Help Group*

## Introduction

Micro-finance is defined as the practice of providing financial service i.e. micro-credit, micro-saving or micro-insurance to poor people particularly to those who performed SHG to raise their income level and improve living standard. The most common micro-finance product is micro credit or loan. These tiny loans are enough for micro entrepreneurs to start or expand small business. The important theme of micro-finance is self-reliance, self sufficiency and self help.

The origin of SHG is credited to an eminent economist Prof. Muhammed Yunus of Bangladesh who initiated an action research project Grameen Bank with the concept of micro credit in a village near Chittagong, Bangladesh in

1976 The Grameen Bank provides loans to the landless poor, particularly women, to promote self-employment and eliminate the exploitation of the poor by money lenders<sup>1</sup>. Grameen bank creates<sup>2</sup> confidence, assertiveness, intelligence, self-reliance and consciousness of their rights. This has inculcated the habit of savings among women supplemented by borrowing, made them free from moneylenders and had given an opportunity to access credit easily in times of need and emergency. At the end of December 2001, it had a membership of 23.78 lakh and cumulative micro-credit disbursements of Tk 14.653 crore<sup>2</sup>.

In India, in 1970, Ilaben Bhat, founder member of Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in Ahmadabad, had developed a concept of 'women and micro-finance'. The Annapurna Mahila Mandal in Maharashtra and 'Working Women's Forum' in Tamilnadu and many National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)-sponsored groups have followed the path laid down by 'SEWA'<sup>3</sup>. In 1987 Mysore Resettlement and Development Agency (MYRADA) conducted several experiments at the Savings and Credit Management Group (SCMG)<sup>4</sup>.

NABARD the first initiator initiated in 1986-1987 followed the path laid down by 'SEWA', MYRADA<sup>5</sup>. But the real effort was taken after NABARD launched the linkage of SHG with the banks in February 1992. At present, different state and central agencies, Government departments, NGOs, etc have involved the movement of SHG.

## Self Help Group

SHG is a viable organized set up to disburse micro-credit for the purpose of making enterprising and encouraging entering into entrepreneurial activities. It becomes a process to empower women socially, politically and economically. NABARD defines it as a homogenous group of rural poor voluntarily formed to save whatever amount they can earn conveniently save out of their earnings and mutually agree to contribute to a common fund to be lent to the member for meeting their productive and emergent credit needs.

## Norms of SHGs

The SHGs have special features with co-operative philosophy which are homogenous membership, no discrimination, Small membership

(may be between 15-20 ),attendance(total participation in regular group meetings lends strength to the effectiveness of SHGs,transparency in functioning, set byelaws, thrifts, utilizing saving for loans<sup>6</sup>..SHGs are self-managed institutions characterized by participatory and collective decision making<sup>7</sup>.

It is mandatory for any SHG to have certain byelaws pertaining to  
 i) Objectives of the groups ii) Meetings - time, periodicity iii) Savings - amount, periodicity, rate of interest iv) Credit - procedure for sanction, ceiling amount, purpose, rate of interest to be charged, repayment period v) Fines - defaulters in attending meetings, savings and credit repayment vi) leadership - election or nomination of leaders, rotation of leaders etc vii) personal social improvement - minimum literacy to be achieved, social work to be done, convergence of facilities<sup>8</sup> etc

### **SHG and Bank Linkage Model**

The micro finance scene in India is dominated by SHG - Bank linkage (SBL). The SBL was established between informal groups (SHGs) and formal financial institutions (banks) for catering the financial needs of the poor. The models of linkage are:

- \* Banks, themselves, form and finance the SHGs.
- \* SHGs are formed by NGOs and other agencies but financed by banks.
- \* Banks finance SHGs with NGOs and other agencies as financial intermediaries.

The second is the most popular model<sup>9</sup>.

'The SHG's became a regular component of the Indian financial system since 1996. These groups have proved as cyclic agents of development in both the rural and urban areas. The SHG's after being formed start collecting a fixed amount of thrift from each member regularly. After accumulating a reasonable amount of resource, the group starts lending to its members for petty consumption needs. If the bank is satisfied with the group in terms of (i) genuineness of demand for credit; (ii) credit handling capacity of the members; (iii) repayment behaviour within the groups; and (iv) the accounting

system and maintenance of the records, it extends a term loan of smaller amount to the group.

Thus, financing through SHG's effects quite a few benefits like; (i) savings mobilized by the poor; (ii) access to the required amount of appropriate credit by the poor; (iii) meeting the demand and supply of credit structure and opening of new market for financing institutions; (iv) reduction in transaction cost for both lenders and borrowers; (v) tremendous improvement in recovery; (vi) heralding a new realization of subsidy less and corruption-less credit; and (vii) remarkable empowerment of poor women<sup>10</sup>.

## **WOMEN AND SHG**

The Women in development paradigm assumes that women have been left out in development process and hence need to be integrated to give benefit; gender and development paradigm recognizes women's triple role i.e. in reproduction, production and community management. Therefore, the main objectives of development programmes in this context may be categorized as (i) sensitize women about their rights, entitlements and legal framework; and (ii) take up capacity building measures. SHG's offer the canvas to conduct social intermediation, provide women the opportunity to acquire the ability and entitlement to their own lives, set their own agenda, gain skills, solve problems and develop autonomy<sup>11</sup>. They change women from housekeeper to organizer, manager and decision makers<sup>12</sup>.

The planning commission has focused on women empowerment issues since ninth and Tenth plan. "Women become the target of Micro-finance service as - 70% of world's poor and unemployment rate is higher in women than men virtually in every country and women are usually in the primary sole family care-taker in many developing countries<sup>13</sup>".

Many studies have shown that, having cash in hand and greater control over that cash led to empowerment of women. Indeed, studies from all parts of the world have consistently have found that increasing self esteem of women is among the most striking impacts of micro-finance. This not only increased self-confidence but also their status at home. Indian women clients of Rashtriya Seva Samiti (RASS) found that their financial contribution helped them in earning greater respect from their negotiating powers with their husbands, avoiding family quarrel over money, and gaining respect from extended families and in-laws<sup>14</sup>. One of the main benefits of SHGs is women

empowerment and this can be seen with the number of women involved in public affairs. On this background the investigator studied the impact of SHG in the study area.

## Methodology

The present study was undertaken in IE District, Manipur. Out of eleven constituencies, from three constituencies – Khurai ( 25 SHGs) and Heingang (5SHGs) under NCUI, Khundrakpam (10SHGs) run by NGO under District Rural Development Agency( DRDA) were selected. From these areas forty women SHGs started at least three years ago and five members from each selected SHG were selected on random sampling. The primary and secondary data were used for the study. Interview Schedule was used for collecting primary data. Secondary data were collected from books, journals, reports of Institute of Co-operative Management (ICM), Imphal; DRDA, IE; Social Welfare Department, Government of Manipur(GOM), State Bank of India(Lead Bank). The data were presented on sample table and analyzed in percentagewise. The data were collected during August –October, 2011.

## Objectives of the Study

The present study was carried out with following objectives:

1. To study the impact of SHG on pre and post SHG status of members in terms of occupation, income and benefit.
2. To study certain skills gained by the SHG members

## SHG in Imphal East (IE) District

IE is one of the nine districts of Manipur. "According to 2011 census, it had a population of 452,661 of which male and female population were 225,130 and 227, 531 respectively, and literacy rate was 82.81%. The male and female literacy rate were 89.86% and 75.92%."<sup>15</sup>

In Manipur as well as IE district, Manipur, the concept of SHG is not a new one for the women. Since time immemorial people of the state has a tradition of mobilizing thrift with view to meet the credit needs of the community. But, the modern form of SHG started in Manipur in around 1995 under the aegis of a NGO, Rural Development Organisation (RDO), Lamsang from

Rashtriya Mahila Kosh( RMK )loan and thereafter by the banks under the guidelines of NABARD.

After RDO, National Co-operative Union of India (NCUI) attached to ICM, Imphal since January 2001, implementation of SGSY (under DRDA) in 2000-2001, and IWEP under Social Welfare Department, GOM since December 2003 took the important role in formation of SHGs. In the study area the main Promoters of SHGs were NGOs, DRDA, NCUI, Social Welfare Department, GOM etc.

As per report of 29<sup>th</sup> State Level Bankers' Meeting, Manipur as on 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2011, the total number of SHG in Manipur was 21,270 of which women SHG was 19045; in Imphal East District total number of SHGs was 2207 of which women SHG was 1793<sup>16</sup>.

### Background of the respondents

The brief background of the selected sample was discussed on the basis of age, educational qualification and marital status. The age-profile of the selected SHG members showed that 37.50% belonged to 40<sup>+</sup>-50 years age-group, 37% belonged to 30<sup>+</sup>-40 yrs, 27% to 50<sup>+</sup>-60 yrs .and 8.50% to 20<sup>+</sup>-30 yrs. The educational profile of the members were illiterate(7.50%), primary level(11.50%), undermatric (36%), matriculate(16.50%), undergraduate (13.50%), graduate (14.50%), postgraduate(.50%).94% of the respondents were married and 4% were unmarried.

### To Study Impact of SHG

The impact of SHGs was discussed on the basis of occupation, income, benefit and skill gained.

**Table-1: Occupational status of the Respondents - Pre and Post SHG Stage**

SL No.	Occupation	Frequency of the respondent at	
		Pre SHG stage (%)	Post SHG Stage (%)
1	No occupation	25(12.50)	Nil
2	Agricultural labor	21(10.5)	19(9.5)
3	Weaving	52(26.00)	55(27.5)

4	Embroidery	25(12.5)	22(11.00)
5	Tailoring	9(4.5)	10(5.00)
6	Kitchen Gardening	20(10.00)	20(10.00)
7	Weaving and agricultural work	37(18.5)	23(11.5)
8	Poultry	11(5.50)	8(4.00)
9	Other Income generating activities (cane work, mat making etc.)	Nil	43(21.5)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200(100.00)</b>	<b>200(100.00)</b>

**Source: Primary data**

Table-1 above reveals that 12.50 percent of respondents were not engaged in any income generating activities in pre SHG stage whereas in the post SHG all the respondents were engaged in one or other. The selected occupation depends on the availability of skill, demand of products in the market and availability of resources and time.

**Table-2: Monthly Income Status of Respondent in Pre and Post SHG**

Monthly income	Frequency of the respondents at	
	Pre SHG Stage (%)	Post SHG stage (%)
No Income	25(12.50%)	Nil
Up to Rs. 500	41(20.5%)	15(7.50%)
Rs.501-700	25(12.5%)	16(8.00%)
Rs 701-900	27(13.5%)	33(16.50%)
Rs901-1100	20(10.00%)	27(13.50%)
Rs 1101-1300	25(12.50%)	35(17.50%)
Rs 1301-Rs1500	20(10.00%)	27(13.50%)
Rs 1501-1700	17(13.50%)	23(11.50%)
Above Rs 1700	Nil	24(12.00%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>200(100.00%)</b>	<b>200(100.00%)</b>

**Source: Primary data**

Table-2 above depicts that before joining SHG 12.50 percent of the respondents had no income of their own and none of them earned above Rs 1700 in a month before they joined SHG. In the Post SHG stage, their income is somehow improving and there is no one without any income.

**Table-3: Opinion of Benefits Received by SHG Members**

Benefit Received	Frequency of the respondent			Total
	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	No Comments (%)	
Rise in Income	178(89.00)	Nil	22(11.00)	200
Regular saving habit	177(88.50)	12(6.00)	11(5.50)	200
Access to resources	135(67.50)	32(16.00)	33(16.50)	200
Better status and decision making power	137(68.50)	23(11.50)	40(20.00)	200
Organization and voice the grievance together	140(70.00)	13(6.50)	47(23.50)	200
Decrease dependence from money lenders	158(79.00)	19(9.50)	23(11.50)	200

Source: Primary Data

Table-3 above highlights the benefit gained by the SHG members that are rise in income (89%) development of regular saving habit (88.50%) decrease dependence from money lenders (79%) etc.

**Table-4: Skill Development of the Members**

Skills developed	Frequency of the respondent			Total
	Agree	Disagree	No Comment	
Leadership Skill	162	Nil	38	200
Interpersonal Relationship	135	Nil	55	200
Communication Skill with higher authority	127	33	40	200
Capability of working official work	130	27	43	200
Develop Other income generating skill	148	27	25	200
Illiterate at least can sign their signature	156	25	19	200
Will to work harder	168	Nil	32	200
Increase self confidence and motivation	134	24	42	200
Increase marketing skill	122	31	47	200
Increase entrepreneurial skills	132	37	31	200
Maintain group work for better service and abiding bye-law	131	38	31	200
Technical and managerial skill	122	32	46	200
Able to express own view	137	31	32	200
Ability to work as resource persons	25	175	Nil	200
Increase social Obligation	138	25	32	200

Source: Interview Schedule

Table-4 above reveals that the members of SHG developed skills- leadership, entrepreneurial, marketing, will to work harder to repay loans, adjustment of interpersonal relationship, different income generating skills, teaching skill, to express their own view, illiterate could sign with the help of other members , etc which they received in their latter part of life.

## **Conclusion**

There were many factors responsible for lowering the effectiveness of SHG- Illiteracy of members, lack of- proper leadership and proper guidance by promoters, promotion of income generating activities, mismanagement of the resources, hurried formation of SHG by political leaders before the election, inadequate knowledge of organizing SHG, time consuming process to get bank loan, etc.

In spite of these problems, the micro-finance and SHG help poor women by providing independent sources of income outside the household work by gaining certain skills and benefit. They can take up and manage on their own production activities to enable to supplement their employment and income. Thus the women folk are not only improved their economic status but also bring changes in their socio-political and cultural life. The continuation and support of micro-finance to SHGs will contribute not only empowerment women but also will bring overall development of the society.

## **Suggestions**

It is suggested to give

1. Proper training in respect of formation and organization of SHG, basic finance and inter-linkage with the banks, promotion of instant income generating activities, etc.
2. Need of establishment of a body formed by different promoters
3. The State government should formulate a state policy on SHG.

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# Reconstructing the Self: Women, Widowhood and Ageing

*Akshiptika Rattan*

## Introduction

Ageing and identity are twin processes which enfold an individual's life-course. These processes are recognized by self and others, internally and externally. Ageing and identity both are manifested in various combinations – dichotomous or synchronous. Ageing and identity can easily be reckoned as phenomena subject to 'ismic' stereotypical labeling. This is also constantly being challenged because at the subjective experiential level identity and ageing remain ever so dynamic and diverse. All this has profound social significance. Attitudinal and behavioural patterns, arising from the varied permutations of identity and ageing create space for theoretical formulations as well as defy any final regimentation, making it impossible to give absolute, generalized evaluation. It is a living phenomenon that theories can only tentatively help perceive but never fully deliver.

Widowhood is a significant experience an individual goes through particularly in later life. However, like old age, widows also get imprisoned in images derived from the myths surrounding widowhood. The overall picture of the lives of older widows is presented as a fairly uniform one and has led to the development of popular 'mythology' surrounding later life widowhood. These myths, as noted by Chambers (2000:127) include:

- Older widows are a homogeneous group;
- Widowhood is synonymous with the acute state of bereavement;
- Widowhood is an experience isolated from the rest of women's lives;
- Older widows are not self-determining;
- Older widows are lonely and isolated;
- Widowhood is a period of decline.

Helena Lopata (1996: 5) points out that the problem with myths is their stereotypical nature. Hunter and Sundel (1989: 21) suggest: 'Myths are dangerous when they result in oversimplified stereotypes that influence personal perceptions, social interaction and social policy.' It has been observed that some of the theoretical perspectives used in the study of later life widowhood have served to reinforce the problem paradigm and thus perpetuate the mythology. Role theory, particularly a decremental model of role loss, has been the theoretical framework for a number of major studies on widowhood (Cumming and Henry, 1961; Zena Blau, 1973). For instance, Zena Blau (1973: 13) looked at widowhood as a 'role less status', lacking any culturally prescribed-rights and duties towards others in the social system. Anne Martin-Matthews (1991: 9) questions the adequacy of role theory and uses instead a symbolic interactionist approach in order to be: 'Better able to ascertain the basis of responses to bereavement and widowhood and to account for factors that role theory cannot adequately consider.' By adopting this approach she looks at the redefinition of the attitudes of others as well as the older woman herself that brings about change in later life widowhood. She begins to explore widowhood from the point of view of older women themselves and the society in which they live. This has the advantage of acknowledging diversity and recognizing the structured nature of widowhood. A body of literature exists which sees widowhood as a major stressful life event. The difficulty with this approach is that it focuses on a particular point in time in which the 'event' occurs rather than on the older woman herself and the continuities and discontinuities she brings to that event. Consequently the event and thus the older widow become pathologized.

In India, elderly widows have to cope up with profound changes and tackle the stormy inner debates. Conflicting pressures are put from all sides and actions are demanded in all kinds of ways. In Indian context, widowhood means a loss of self-esteem, dignity, social position and rights. Besides facing the problems of bereavement, a widowed woman is particularly pushed to the periphery of society. Veena Das's (1979) study on urban Punjabis conducted in 1974-79 points out that widowhood is the worst calamity that a woman may face. The death of a child may be seen as a personal calamity but the death of a husband is seen as altering the social identity of a woman. Widowhood, for the women of in Lamb's (2000) study was a dreaded time of life. Lamb's (2000) compare the condition of widows with that suffering death-separation impurity. As quoted in Leslie's (1989:303) study, Tryambaka writes: "Just as the body, bereft of life, in that

moment becomes impure, so that women bereft of her husband is always impure, even if she has bathed properly. Of all the inauspicious things, the widow is the most inauspicious."

Not denying the suffering of widows within such an ideological system, this study attempts to explore the possibilities of resilience on the part of older widows. It aims at documenting the struggle of women to reconstruct, redefine and rediscover themselves. Experience is not static; it is something that happens but it is also the process of something happening. The emphasis is upon the role of a reconstructed biography as a means of acquiring a new existential equilibrium. Walter (1996:7) describes the process as 'the construction of a durable biography that enables the living to integrate the memory of the dead into their on-going lives. The idea is to look at the movement between 'loss orientation' and 'restoration orientation' (Stroebe 1992). The study asserts the importance of attending to restoration from grief as well as attending to the pain produced by it. These ideas offer explanations of grief and the process of managing it. They bring into their ambit a wider range of variants within the 'normal' and conceptualize the task within it as activities which are inherently part of the emotional, philosophical and spiritual routes to the restoration of balance and equilibrium (Attig 1996).

### **Listening to the Voices**

Ageing and widowhood as a socio-cultural phenomenon cannot but be meaningfully handled qualitatively. The over-all life-course perspective of the study is also best encapsulated with qualitative research methodology. To comprehend the subjective experiences of older widows it was of utmost importance to listen to them in their own voices and for this unstructured interviews and case-studies were conducted. A qualitative approach which uses unstructured interviews seemed an appropriate way of enabling women to talk about their lives. Case-study involves an intensive engagement with a respondent and focuses upon aspects which have been identified as central and significant to the whole research project. In qualitative research case-studies constitute the very epitome of concluding realizations. As Chambers (2000: 128) puts it, 'By focusing on the past as well as the present, it is possible to see widowhood as another passage in the lives of women and to explore the continuities and discontinuities that they bring to this time of their lives.' The use of life-course perspective is significant if these many aspects of experience are to be explored as this allows us to find out about

women's lives from their own perspective. Earlier experiences may account for ways in which major life changes, such as widowhood, are managed. Underpinning this effort is a feminist perspective and practice which aims to both understand and engage with the social reality experienced by older women (Reinharz 1992). Older widows have stories to tell about their lives and we must be prepared to hear their voices. This fresh perspective on the life world of older widows needs to be sensitive to the totality of older women's lives and must be grounded in conversation with older widows.

Next I present briefly two case-studies of two different women – Videya Sharma (86) and Ketaki Singh (80) to understand the various phases and inner debates and storms surrounding women's experience of widowhood (pseudonyms have been used to protect the identities of the subjects). These two case-studies form a part of my field work done during 2010-2012 for my Ph.D research. What begins to emerge through these are the various ways in which these two women challenge the stereotypes surrounding widows and the diverse ways in which ageing and widowhood can be understood. A discussion follows.

### **Case- Study 1: Videya Sharma**

The narrative of Videya Sharma, who is eighty-six, now, is in absolute contrast to what the stereotype of a widow is. She became a widow when she was seventy-four. Her husband was carried away by a sudden bout of pneumonia. He was seventy-six. The couple had had a happy married life for fifty years. Videya had retired as a school teacher when she was fifty-eight. Her husband had a reasonable business as a photographer. They decided to migrate to Chandigarh where both of their sons had settled. But they did not want to be dependent nor did they wish to unnecessarily burden the independence of their sons. They purchased a flat in Chandigarh and had a pleasant retired life as an active elderly couple. Twelve happy years and then this sudden bolt from the blue, recalls Videya Sharma.

Although a teacher all my life, in all family matters however – roles, responsibilities, etc I was what my husband had made me. To him I was ever so grateful for pulling me out of my complex of not being beautiful especially as he was a very handsome man who was not only well-groomed himself but was always keen that my turnout was also neat and perky. For once his death seemed to have taken away the roof over my head, pulled away the ground from beneath my feet.

I could not believe I was a widow. My bangles removed, my *tikka* (red dot on forehead) gone, my *mangal sutra* (a chain worn around neck as a mark of being a married women) taken off, sitting tucked in a corner in wrinkled grey suit I saw in myself a horrible image I had seen of widows in films – an object of pity. What was so far others only and what had been a mere image, was now 'me'. Something seemed to have clung to me. I breathed with effort. Going through the rites of mourning and going to Haridwar to immerse his ashes were actual acts which I performed. But I was not a wife any more, and it was so galling to my soul. *Karwa Chauth Brat* (a day's fast for the well-being of one's husband) came. Being a widow I was not to observe the day fasting. I was not supposed to, nor expected to do so. Outwardly I did not show any sign of doing it. But I did fast, not taking even a drop of water, seeking retrospective merit for my lost husband. Where ever you are my darling I wish you rest in happiness. In your well-being is my whole good. I felt as if my torn half was partly restored to me by this ritual fasting.

A year of bereavement followed, in which many cross-currents tossed me around. Gradually the teacher in me began to teach me and I began taking decisions which I had never imagined I would have to take. My sons wanted me to shift and live with their families. But how could I leave my nest in which my husband had kept me so warmly secure for nearly twelve years? I missed him every moment and yet I could not tear myself away from what was 'ours'. Yearning for him always I yet began to relive. There were many continuing bonds. My husband was present inside me. It was not simply revisiting the memories. There was a persistent connection with my husband though he was not there. He seemed to have become an integral part of 'me'.

In a way bereavement was expected and the loss was not so untimely either. We both used to worry about the one who would be left behind when the other died. He was much more worried about me and had taken all the right decisions for my self-sufficient existence after his death. But taking charge of myself was as difficult as it is for a child to walk without help for the first time.

The great change that Videya Sharma experienced was a greater sense of freedom.

To begin with it seemed to create a degree of guilt. But soon I began to

experience a new lightness of being. I was never a slave but I had always to seek permission of my husband even to do what I wanted to do without my husband's participation. Also I had left many responsibilities entirely to my husband – especially the social expectations of relationship with in-laws – pursuing my own independent interests of reading or travelling. I was surprised at myself to find that I could now decide to go to pilgrimages on my own without any sense of guilt of leaving somebody in sullen mood behind. Something strange and new was happening to me.

Having overcome the sharp edge of bereavement and having devoted herself to finding a new style of life was the process of Videya Sharma's coping with her widowhood.

I had begun to enjoy my new sense of responsibility. I began paying greater attention to my relationship with in-laws now without being forced into any given protocols. To do it all now was not a compulsion, but a choice of my own, and it gave me a great sense of pleasurable self-control which I had never experienced before. I seemed to have become a different person.

In dressing, in eating, in meeting people I can now please myself. To do what you want without being required to do so is an experience of living which I am now having – as a widow. At times our society considers widows inauspicious. I did feel stigmatized thus during the first years of my bereavement but it was never rubbed on me – neither by my sons nor other relatives. In fact, I began to enjoy the status of a highly venerated elder from whom blessings must be sought at all auspicious occasions. I feel confident and assertive – doubly so. My husband is the authority I quote for doing what I decide to do now.

Three years ago I suffered another loss. My eldest son died in an accident. My heart was wrenched to think of my daughter-in-law who had become a widow at the age of fifty. The agony of the days when this label was pasted on me came back to me doubly strong. I felt choked. But then I got up, hugged her and became her mother. I stopped all the horrible rituals. No breaking of bangles, no removal of jewellery, no white duppattas. I was determined that she will not be reduced to a ghostly existence. She will and must live. I will help her transform herself, rebuild herself. This is my life mission now.

For Videya Sharma her family ties, her congregational friends, her

residence, her social responsibilities, her pilgrimages continue to be great themes of her living. Identification with her widowed daughter-in-law is another shared bond in her recreated self-identity. After an initial period of bereavement, her life has continued to develop and grow even in the process of her own bereavement and that of her daughter-in-law. By telling her story Videya Sharma felt stronger and validated. In her eighty-sixth year she is looking forward to the marriage of her grandson in the near future without any hang-over of being an inauspicious widow.

### **Case-Study 2: Ketaki Singh**

Ketaki Singh's story of widowhood is on an altogether different trajectory but equally challenging to the stereotypes given about widows in search of their identity. She came to Chandigarh thirty years ago leaving her doctor husband in Mumbai. Fifteen years of married life had been a period dotted with self-appraisal followed by complete self-abnegation to her husband's social and professional needs. In her own words,

I married because I wanted to be a wife and a mother. Rather than continuing to study as my brothers wanted, and do a job and be self-sufficient, I chose to get married. However, I made it very clear that I will walk alongside my bridegroom when going through the ritual of marriage rather than behind him as is the custom. Also I announced that I would not do any job other than that of a housewife. I became Mrs. Saran and left behind my activities like yoga, beauty culture, writing, theatre, music.

It was the best of times and the worst of times for me now. I was loved deeply but I also got beaten at times. My elder son was 7 and my younger son was 4. The bitter and sweet scenes with my husband began to have a confusing effect on my children. I decided to call off the role of a wife and perform my mothers' role as I thought it should be.

Enough is enough, I decided. I must live my life. I took my sons along and separated from my husband creating even a physical distance by coming to Chandigarh from Mumbai. I refused to accept or demand any help from him. I established a yoga clinic cum beauty centre for women. A period of struggle, almost ten years followed. But I was beginning to bloom once again in my own cultural environment. Doing my deeds, gaining recognition in my beloved fields, my sons growing up into fine handsome young men have

been my great achievements as a solo flier. Being alone has never been my problem.

I never sought a divorce because I did not want my sons to lose all contact with their father. I wanted them to have their choice intact just as I have reclaimed my choice of roles and relationships by walking away from his house and maintaining no contact with him. But how could I deny that he was the father of my sons. In their features and voice I still heard and saw images of their father.

Five years ago – she was seventy-five – the news came that her husband had died.

I was crestfallen. My friends were surprised. They saw no reason for me to cry and grieve as intensely as I did. Yes, I was separated, but then there were my two sons, and there was a period of fifteen years of my loving surrender to him in which my identity was in terms of his identity. I had removed the label of Mrs. Saran from myself and had chosen to be Ketaki Singh after parting ways with him. And yet now when the news of his death came I felt a prop had been withdrawn. I don't know how, but somehow I felt so alone.

I never sat in formal mourning and yet I phoned my friends and broke down telling them about Mr. Saran's death. Socially I had become a widow. I did not attend his funeral nor participated in any last rites arranged by his family. And yet I took my sons to a temple and prayed for the peace of his soul. I felt a little less burdened after performing these rites all on my own. It took me sometime to collect myself. A phase was over and although I had carved my own identity during the last twenty-five years, it did not sound whole as it gradually began to, now. Five years have gone by. Everybody knows me as Ketaki Singh but not as one who had split from her husband but as one whose husband was dead.

I have recovered, gradually though. And yet I miss him strangely enough now that he is dead, as I never did when he was alive. The break is now final. I had to begin from the beginning. It has been my destiny to pick up the scattered pieces of my broken self and reassemble them again and again. I hoped I could do it and I have done it. Risen out of my ashes, being a widow at 75, is now no more a burden. It is better than being a *chhuttar* – a 'left over one' – whom everybody eyes with lusty hunger in our society. The last five years of my life have been far more free than ever before.

I breathe more easily now, I am writing more copiously and socializing more frequently now. A new phase is opening for me, a fresh horizon.

Ketaki Singh's ecstasy in agony was clear in her poetic description of her present state of experience.

## Discussion

The significance of the narrative data collected by the researcher is that it has provided with what Polikingshorne (1996: 82) calls 'the richest and thickest source of explicating their (widows) understanding of their own lives.' The stories heard are very moving and they give some sense, however limited, of the emotional experience of losing one's husband. It has given the researcher a glimpse of widowhood "from the inside" (Birren 1996). These first hand stories have given a sense of wholeness that provides an advantage over surveys and other structured methods of data collection. We learn not only about the important issues of ageing and identity among the elderly widows but also the meaning that an important life-event like becoming a widow has, for the experience even in old age. Their situation has been 'felt' from their own perspective.

Both Videya Sharma and Ketaki Singh acknowledge the initial shock at their husband's death though in the case of the former it was after half a century of togetherness while in case of the latter it was after twenty-five years of separation. It may not be appropriate to generalize their experiences to other widows, the issues these widows raise make us aware to the importance of attending to what widows, themselves feel is paramount to their identity as persons. For Videya Sharma her husband continues to be the authority for the decisions she is taking now while for Ketaki Singh the death of her husband seems to have taken away the negative prop of her being, around which she had created her identity during the years of her separation and that now after his death she has to begin from the beginning to reassemble her shattered self. The dead husband, in any case, continues to be the touchstone of their lives. Most importantly, however, the two case-studies highlight the theme of "the loss of identity at the levels of self... the process of building a new identity, and the transformed identity."

Identifying themselves as wives both Videya Sharma and Ketaki Singh remained hanging on to it despite one having lost all resources to do so while the other had created her resources and yet when she did become a 'widow' the submerged identity of 'wifehood' had to be finally dealt with and foreclosed with as much piquancy as did Videya Sharma. However, distress, disorientation and bewilderment is their first experience when the appellation 'widow' is stuck to them. After a finally lost world the need to build a new identity becomes necessary for the task of going on to live. Their identity, positively or negatively, being derived from their husbands. Widows do not know who they really are. Their 'me' is gone. Although a widow is still a mother, it may be that in her attempt to be both mother and father, she really is not even sure how to play that very familiar role.

A wife is considered an *ardhaangini* in our culture. With her husband's death she finds she is whole no more because she is now half the person without the complementing half of her husband who is dead. The realization that one has become a widow is very painful. "The image is now me", said Videya Sharma. Ketaki Singh existed in binary equation with Mrs. Saran. Ketaki Singh had to find new ways of integrating herself now. Both had to redefine their relations with their own self.

The widows, to go on living as they must, have to redefine their relation with the social reality around them as well. The formal period of mourning being over with all rites performed, a widow has to relocate herself among her friends, families, relations she had known for so long and had taken for granted. The wide range of responsibilities and re-adjustments required now make them discover a hidden potential – a new 'me' making them a transformed person sensitive and courageous in ways not known to themselves before. Widowhood is a process in which an identity is devastated, the need to build a new identity is realized and a transformed identity develops over even the short living span which is one's portion in old age, making them stronger, more self-reliant and independent in terms of quality of life they live. Something never dies in our inner world. An elderly widow also carries the residuals of lost identity within the new self that now keeps her on an even keel. All this needs to be studied despite the great resistance faced in studying the experience of widows even today, submerged as we remain in stereotypes given to us. There will be so many more elderly widows in future. Their experiences will shed light on human condition. Listening to their voices is the step that a sociologist must take now. To acknowledge their diversity is to acknowledge the diversity of humankind.

## Conclusion

We have to recognize the diversity amongst the elderly widows. They do not constitute a homogeneous group. In course of listening to their narratives it was realized how varied and individual the experience of widowhood in each case is. The stereotypical way to define their identity as one of foreclosure and lumped under the same title or label "widow" does not do justice to truth as a factually lived reality. Whatever the circumstances of their husband's death - expected, lingering or sudden - there is a period of grief, loss and confusion as well as a shattered sense of being. However, she does attempt to reassemble her broken bits, as if, and go through a process of recreating her identity. Not that the grief is forgotten, nor that widowhood becomes desirable at any stage, yet life is to be lived on terms which have to be redefined, such is the response of the widows. The researcher found widows to have transformed their identity in terms of new responsibilities and roles that must be undertaken. It is not that any absolute break with the past occurs. In fact, most of the widows retain many residues of their previous identities and yet add aspects and dimensions to their perception of what they must be now. Hitherto latent resources in their personality were seen as becoming manifest. Their restructured biography with continued bonds helped them acquire a new existential equilibrium.

The researcher did not look at widows as a 'problem'. But it was found that sometimes a woman finds it difficult to cast off the "given" social roles of a widow - somebody who must not enjoy life anymore in anyway. Sometimes this gets internalized. In case of Videya - a very resilient 86 years old widow- the pressure to continue to evoke the authority of her dead husband to justify her now being independently taken decisions remains a recurrent refrain - her "new me" continues to remain fraught with the notions of her ideally realized self in the past, her "old me". It was realized that widowhood is not a role-less state. Her identity, therefore, far from being fixed, is essentially a negotiated identity as the relationship between the internal and external worlds require negotiation. Also identity is ever in a fluid/dynamic process, subject to change as the cohorts change. It is not a static fixity. There cannot be stereotypes to imprison individuals in fixed roles for ever. There are continuities but there are changes also; discontinuities are a part of continuous change. But to understand it the researcher must seek their narrative without any lead questions based on pre-conceived notions.

The idea is not to deny the real problems faced by older women in general and older widows in particular but to document the multiplicity of stories and narratives that can be told about older widows. It is about insights gained by those, who, as Moody puts it 'have gone through the descent and returned with a message of hope' (quoted in Andrews 2009: 75). It is about honouring the various ways in which individuals retain their dignity in dealing with the psychological, emotional and functional stresses and changes that come with ageing. To appreciate this perspective we must learn to pay attention to the narrative variety of the individual older women. They, not the researchers, can truly tell us about the dilemmas, struggles and fulfillments of their lives when they weave the web of their life-course. It is at once restorative, constitutive, liberating, revelatory and rejuvenating both personally and reflectively.

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# Female literacy: Problems and Challenges in Kargil, Ladakh

*Kavita Suri*

## **Introduction**

Kargil is the western part of the Ladakh region in the Himalayan border state of Jammu and Kashmir. Once part of the erstwhile kingdom of Ladakh, Kargil district was carved out of it in the year 1979. It is believed to be the first inhabited by the regions early colonizers- the Indo Aryans, Mons from across the great Himalayans range assorted the Dard Immigrants from down the Indus and the Gilgit valleys and Itinerant nomads from the Tibetan island.

## **Area**

About 15,000 sq.kms in area, Kargil district in the state of Jammu and Kashmir is surrounded by lofty mountains of the Himalayas. Its geographical boundaries touches Skardu in POK in the North, Baramulla, Srinagar, Anantnag and Doda in the Southwest, Himachal Pradesh in the South and with that of its neighboring district Leh in the East. The whole area constitutes of high rocky mountains which are devoid of any natural vegetation. The district has high altitude area in the Country ranging from 8,000 fts to 18,000fts.above sea level. The population of the district is above one lakh. Ninety nine percent of population is Muslim schedule tribe. The Buddhists come next with their concentration in Zanskar Tehsil and Shargol block. A few families of Sikhs and Hindus also live in the district. Kargil district has two Tehsils and one sub-division at Zanskar. The district remains cut off from the rest of country from November to May in view of heavy snow fall at the world famous Zojila Pass 13,000 ft. on Srinagar Leh national Highway which is the only means of linking the district from the state and rest of the country through road journey during the five months of summer i.e June to October. For the remaining 7 months, the district remains totally cutoff from other parts due to closure of the pass as a result of heavy snowfall and extreme coldness of temperature at - 40 degree Celsius to -50 degree Celsius. People mostly live in rural areas and only 5.3 percent reside in the town.

## **Population**

As per Census 2011, Kargil has a population of 1,43,388 of which male and female were 80,791 and 62,597 respectively. In 2001 census, Kargil had a population of 119,307 of which males were 64,955 and remaining 54,352 were females. Kargil District population constituted 1.14 percent of total Maharashtra population. There

has been a change of 20.18 percent in the population compared to population as per 2001. The Census 2011 provisional data shows that density of Kargil district for 2011 is 10 people per sq. km. In 2001, Kargil district density was at 9 people per sq. km. During the year 1991, no proper census could take place in J & K state due to disturbance.

### Kargil Population by Sex

S.No	Year	Person	Male	Female	No. of female per 1000 Male
1	1981	65,992	35,609	30,383	853
2	1991	81,067	43,164	37,903	878
3	2001	1,15,227	60,629	54,598	837
4	2011	143,388	80,791	62,597	775

### Kargil an Educationally Backward District

Kargil is considered the most backward district of Jammu and Kashmir educationally in the sense that there is a huge literacy gap between males and females. The region is dominated by highly conservative Shia Muslim society who are influenced by the Agas and Lamas and never believed in educating their daughter in the older times. They used to send their children to the Mullah or Lama of the locality for their religious education. There was only one primary school at Kargil town only before 1947 and it was not possible for everyone to send their children to Kargil town for education.

The literacy rate of the district was 18.96 as per census 1981 ranking on 14 at the last of the list of districts in the state. As the regions witnesses acute winter, during this long period of cold waves and heavy snowfall, the district is void of most of the developmental activities from outside and the people here had to face untold hardships of weather and scarcity of essential commodities, Under such circumstances, the education of children is adversely effected as the schools remain closed for long winter vacations right from 15th December to first week of March. Most of the people remain idle and confined to their homes. Education of the children especially from weaker section of the society is adversely effected. Thus a valuable part of the children's learning time gets wasted.

### Data on Literate Population Literate Population

S. No	Name of the District	Literacy Rate			Total no. of literates			Total child population (0-6 yrs)		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1.	Kargil	86.73	58.05	74.49	61,123	30,481	91,604	10,319	10,088	20,407

Average literacy rate of Kargil in 2011 is 74.49 compared to 0.00 of 2001. If things are looked out at gender wise, male and female literacy were 86.73 and 58.05 respectively. For 2001 census, same figures stood at 0.00 and 0.00 in Kargil District. Total literate in Kargil District were 91,604 of which male and female were 61,123 and 30,481 respectively.

### Girls Education

Educating women was once considered a sin in Kargil but now winds of change have swept the region. Kargil, probably the most backward district in Jammu & Kashmir with respect to education of girls and female literacy at about 40% up to 2001, has shown considerable progress and retention of girls for elementary education. During mid-eighties, the J&K government launched some incentive schemes for enrolment drive especially for girls' enrolment. These incentives included supply of free text books upto 8th primary class, providing of school uniform as free of cost, merit-cum-poverty scholarship, hostel facilities scholarship, girls attendance scholarship, incentive awards of the meritorious students at District level and incentive awards to best teacher for enrolment drive in primary school etc.

#### Status of female literacy in Kargil district

District	Rural / Urban	Population	Literate population	Literacy rate
Kargil	Rural	56,505	26,902	57.00 %
	Urban	6,092	3,579	67.34 %

No of Female literate: total /rural/ urban population in district /Zones, 2001 (latest zone-wise data was unavailable)

S. No.	District/Tehsil KARGIL	Total Rural/Urban population of females	No. of literates	%age of Female literates	%age of Female illiterates
	<b>Zones</b>				
1	Kargil zone	27868	12856	46.13	53.87
2	Drass	6783	2753	40.59	59.41
3	Shargole	5567	2672	48.00	52.00
4	Chiktan	5295	3380	44.96	55.04
5	Sankoo	12400	4300	34.68	65.32
6	Taisuru	4396	1732	39.42	60.58
7	Zanskar	6018	1786	29.68	70.32

### Problems and Challenges in Girls Education in Kargil

The Jammu and Kashmir government has been making initiatives as part of the strategic planning to reduce the gender gap in literacy. Despite this, the female

literacy in the state is only 57.11 % while in Kargil female literacy is just 58 per cent. Gender differentials are high in Kargil. This can be attributed to a number of factors, e.g., lack of access to education, low enrollment of girl child in the schools, conservative Muslim religious society, shortage of teachers, inadequate infrastructure (toilet facilities etc).

During the last decade (2000-2010), as a result of incentives and drives both on the part of government and public, after the launching of Sarva Shikha Abhiyan and followed by special programme of NPEGEL and KGBV schemes under the umbrella of SSA, the picture of girls' education in Kargil district seemingly improved with respect to access, enrolment and teaching learning process. Though much is being done for girls' education in Kargil, yet lot needs to be done.

### **What needs to be done?**

Position of access: Kargil district is spread over in small habitations and hamlets in the laps of mountains far away from each other. It takes a long walk to reach from one habitation to another. Though the population is thin but the area is vast. All such habitations where population is more than 100, primary education should be made available.

Enrolment: The total number of children between 6 – 14 years age group is over 24000 including enrollment in private schools in Kargil. Children are still out of school despite all the measures initiated by the government. Due to the peculiar geographical condition of the district, a considerable portion of the population is in remote and inaccessible areas. According to the prescribed norms of the state education department, all the less habitations have to be provided primary schooling facilities, yet there are a good number of hamlets uncovered by the norms for opening of Schools/EGS Centres. So the children of such hamlets are still outside the schooling umbrella.

Infrastructural facilities: The department of Education in the district has laid emphasis to provide all the primary schools with Govt. building during the last five years but a good number of primary schools are still in rented buildings. These rented buildings are not good for schooling purpose in any way. Out of the total seven blocks of the district only three blocks viz Kargil Drass and Shakar Chiktan are identified as Border Blocks for which the Govt. of India has launched a special programme for their development. Besides, facilities like separate toilets for females should also be provided in all the schools.

Teachers: There is acute shortage of qualified teachers especially in mathematics, Science and Social Science. There is no specific cadre of teacher for primary, upper primary and secondary stages under the state system of education. Both trained and untrained teachers are interchangeable into primary, upper primary and

secondary schools. There are only two cadres of teaching staff both for elementary and secondary schools namely masters and teachers. There is no post of master in primary schools but in upper primary school there is only one post of master to act as headmaster. A teacher must also possess the minimum qualification of 10+2 for teacher and B.A, B.Ed for master.

Teacher absenteeism: Most of the district is mountainous and great and difficult distances are involved. This makes inspection of schools very difficult. Consequently the lack of proper supervision contributes to teacher absenteeism in these areas.

Female teachers: Besides, as Kargil is highly conservative Shia Muslim dominated area, more and more women teachers should be recruited in schools. At present, according to J&K government's Director School Education figures, there are 612 male teachers and 101 female teachers in Kargil.

The government should appoint more women teachers in the institutions in order to attract more girls. Besides, it should provide trained teachers and give special allowances to attract more women teachers to rural areas like Kargil.

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# Role of Library and Information Professionals in Promoting Reading Habits

*Chitranjan Jamwal*

## **Abstract**

Effective reading is the most important avenue of Effective learning. Regular and systematic reading sharpens the intellect, refines the emotions, elevates tastes and provides perspectives for one's living; and thereby prepares him for an effective civilizing force tending to unite social groups through the dissemination of common experiences. A reading habit cultivated early in life helps the child to grow into an independent adult. There are diverse ways of promoting reading habits among children which include programmes such as clubs, book talk, and story hours. Library professionals play a leading role in promoting the reading habits among students. This paper highlights the concept of reading and Purpose of reading .It also examines the role of library and information professionals in promoting reading habits among students. The Challenges to the Promotion of Reading Habits among Children were also discussed.

## **Introduction**

Effective reading is the most important avenue of effective learning. Reading is interrelated with the total educational process and hence, educational success requires successful reading. Reading is the identification of the symbols and the association of appropriate meaning with them. Reading enlightens the mind, makes the intellect sharper and makes an individual travel far without motion (Braunger & Lewis, 2006). Generally speaking, reading has been accepted as an interactive process, a communication process, an active process and a meaning inducing process. Reading is not just about printed matter, but about the ability to interpret anything that is intended to convey a message or that which is to enable communication. Reading can be said to be the bedrock of most forms of learning activities culminating in literacy. One of the most important factors in education is ability to read, understand and critically apprehend the text (Hetting & Knapp, 2001). To be capable of doing these, students must develop their reading

habits on daily basis. Capability of understanding text and reading habits should be developed from early childhood through the whole life (Beck & Mckeown, 2001). Reading habits are also vital part of lifelong learning concept (Raeyaekers 2002). It is therefore not surprising that every nation prides itself in the reading culture of its literate population. A good reading culture in any nation is therefore an enviable virtue.

The impact of reading in people's lives is extraordinarily widespread. A reader can learn new skills, can be introduced to new facts, he can become more knowledgeable about the whole world and he can be stimulated to both thought and emotion. Reading has the unique power of transforming readers. It is sometimes said, "We are what we read". Abraham Lincoln said, "The things I want to know are in books. My friend is the man who will get a book to read". Francis Bacon therefore, rightly said, "Reading makes a full man". Reading is the art of interpreting printed and written words. It is a basic tool of education. According to William S. Grey, reading influences the extent and accuracy of information as well as the attitudes, moral beliefs, judgments and action of readers. 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 him for an effective civilizing force tending to unite social groups through the dissemination of common experiences.

The habit of regular reading, according to Shabi and Udofia (2009), refines the reader; it awakes something inside someone that makes him or her take their own life more seriously. One can only imagine the inspiration and noble feeling evoked after reading biographies of great men and women. This is where the school and public libraries come in.

### **Concept of Reading**

Reading is a process of thinking, evaluating, judging, imagining, reasoning and problem solving.

In the words of Olanlokun (1999), "reading is a complex activity which links the eyes with the mind to come up with the interpretation and evaluation of written symbols" In the light of this, Okoro (2004), posited that it is essential that children be introduced to the art of reading very early in life even before

the child steps in school. When this is done, the end result is that children are linked early enough with the joys of reading as a means of enjoyment, self development, love of literature and learning.

Ganguly (2004) argued that reading habit could be said to be a single aspect of the broad culture where reading for pleasure becomes a natural part of daily existence. He emphasized that over time reading ceases to become the uphill task of reading to pass examination, rather it takes on an intrinsic value, reading for the sake of reading until an inclination to further reading is developed.

In the words of Philip (2009), "reading habit tends to be associated with course work and examinations, rarely with pleasure". Yet it is a known fact that whatever the discipline, students (children and adolescents) cannot fulfill their potential if they do not read widely.

### **Purpose of Reading**

Reading without a purpose leads the child nowhere and his position becomes like such a traveler who is not aware of his destination and keeps wandering here and there purposelessly. Many studies have indicated that the reader's purpose may have a decided effect upon his rate of comprehension. The teacher can train his pupils in such a way that they get used to such a setting where they always keep a purpose before them while reading. It is the purpose which affects the reading speed and comprehension. When pupils are doing study- type reading to gather and retain specific information, a relatively slow rate is necessary. When they seek to get the gist of a selection, to pick out a few specific facts, or when they are reading for pleasure, more rapid rates are possible. Purpose in hand always results in efficient reading.

The government of the United Kingdom has recognized the key role that books can play in giving children a head start in education. It therefore recently initiated "Bookstart", a scheme whereby every 9-month-old baby receives free books when visiting a health service. The scheme is currently being extended to provide packs of books up to the age of three. *"Giving children a free book or two may seem a modest endeavour but it has produced extraordinary results. Children in the pilot scheme outperformed their peers in their baseline assessments, and later in the Key Stage 1 SATs. If books can have such an impact on educational attainment in the UK, where*

*information is so plentiful, the impact is likely to be greater in sub-Saharan Africa, where learning resources are so scarce" (Makotsi, 2004: 5).*

In Fiji, Singapore and Sri Lanka, "Book floods" are used as a strategy to increase the amount of reading materials available. Students are immersed in high-interest books designed to be read, discussed and shared in various ways. Evidence shows that book floods bring dramatic improvements in reading, writing, listening, vocabulary and grammar, especially for younger age groups and where children are learning in a language different from their home language. A pilot project in Sri Lanka provided between 100 and 200 books per school for years 4 and 5. Those in the project schools gained three times as much in reading as those in the control schools, together with parallel improvements in writing and listening comprehension. Positive changes were also noticed in pupils' attitudes towards reading as a valuable resource for learning.

### **Role of Library and Information Professionals in Promoting Reading Habit**

The aim of promoting a reading habit is to get the children and adolescents to read as part of daily life and to establish the reading of books as a habit that would always be needed and enjoyed throughout one's life time. Achebe (2008), described a library as an organized collection of books and other materials (both printed and non-printed) used for study, research and recreation—a repertoire of knowledge. There is no gain saying that knowledge is power and books of course are full of knowledge. The task of encouraging positive reading interest and sustaining a love for reading which will in turn promote a reading habit is not an easy one. This is where the school and public libraries come in. The unique role of school and public libraries is that they are fundamental to the development of literacy which is manifested in a viable reading habit. This in turn provides a background for a lifelong learning process. Philip (2009) has observed that reading habit is the link between libraries and literacy. Once people have developed the reading habit, they will come to the libraries looking for books. By using the school and public libraries they consolidate their reading habit by discovering the new world that links within the library.

*Libraries are a means to stimulate and develop the reading interest. The following are some strategies which libraries must follow in promoting reading habits:*

1. The librarian should develop among the reader's pleasant and positive attitude towards reading. The pleasant and positive attitude of the reader should be developed first before someone is able to automatically form the habit of reading and the love for books.
2. The principal function of the librarian is to serve to course of education formally or informally. When we think of the librarian's role on education, we think first of books and of what she does with books. Librarians have a responsibility and an opportunity to go out and tell the public what they have in their libraries and find out what they want to read, improve and keep improving the set-up of the library to encourage readers to stay and browse.
3. In any effective school library program, the librarian should have definite responsibilities in certain areas of the curriculum and should have an active teaching role. But this role must always be coordinated with what is taking place in the classroom. With his wide knowledge of materials and techniques for using them, the librarian can make a strong partner in the planning and implementing of the educational enterprise.
4. Making the library attractive to public and schools.

### **Effective Methods for Promoting Reading Habit in Libraries**

1. The librarians should organize orientation programmes on utilization of library resources from time to time.
2. Make book available: The librarians should prepare book lists. The information contained in the list should be sufficient to allow for the books to be found in the library and a mere listing of authors and title will always need to be extended either by a brief descriptive note on each book to indicate its particular value or the arrangement of the list under headings which will give such an indication. Inclusion in the list should be selective,
3. Library periods should be included in the time table to improve the reading habits among students.

4. **Book Talk:** A low-cost effective strategy should be organized so that children and adolescents can talk about the interesting books they have read. They could describe characters and bring out similarities in many characters. The librarian could read to them or each child in turn. A librarian could pick a book and talk on it; stimulate interest in the book and ask children to read book and could come back for further literacy analysis of the book.
5. **Story hours:** Story-telling is one of the easiest activities for the library to organize. Traditional tales or short stories of the same type and picture book are the easiest to use. Apart from these myths, legends, fairy tales, stories about animals, things which appeal to the sense of wonder and the sense of humor that stimulate the imagination of spirit of adventure are the most suitable.
6. **Clubs:** The librarian could introduce formation of clubs within the library set up. The clubs could be centered on hobbies of children like stamp collecting. The library's role here, would be, to provide all reference and information materials for the chosen hobby. The club members would then build on the information with the assistance of the librarian. In this way, they get to know the role of the librarian in both their recreational and educational lives. Examples of clubs: Stamp collection club, Friends of the librarian, Literacy club, Picture collecting club. Quality Education for Social Transformation (QUEST 2009), reporting on a range of projects to promote a reading culture among young people in Africa, cited the success of the Minds Across African Schools Club (MAASC). The project promoted reading in English through the distribution of suitable reading materials and the provision of an informal interaction forum which led to improved reading and writing skills among the children. In the course of their interaction, the librarian exposed the children proper to library and information seeking skills.

The reason for all these activities is to promote the objectives of the library which is to bring the library alive to the children and adolescents, and to make them library users; both as a youth, and as an adult in the society. If the library is made to occupy a significant place in life of a child, he or she would grow up with the concept and significance of a library permanently etched into him/her.

## Challenges to the Promotion of Reading Habits among Children

The decline in patronizing books with proliferation of Televisions, Internet, Facebook, Tweeter and video players, it was uncommon to see young men and women carrying books to read. Technology is slowing but very steady taking over the control of children and adolescents lives and cultivation of a good reading habit has gone with the wind. In the pasts, thousand, who grew up reading Educational books, have gradually abandoned them to pursue interests in movie watching and more recently surfing and chatting on the net and face books. Shuaibu A.B. (2008) has described internet as a greatest challenge that has faced conventional books. The decline in the reading culture may just be paving the way for the extinction of books; libraries are closing down and being replaced by internet cafes. There is no reason denying the fact that reading take a lot of energy from someone, but just like any other activity, it pays. It is against the backdrop for the benefit of reading that (Indyer 2009), quoting Charles Jones, makes this remarks, "you meet and the books you read". A lot of the problems the children and the adolescents are facing are tied to the fact that they fail to read.

## Conclusion

The success of children in school depends to a large extent on their ability to read and comprehend which is in turn dependent on the support we give in promoting reading habit. The role of the Libraries and Librarians in preparing students for success in academics is very crucial and cannot be under mind. Availability of the right type of books especially the beginning for the reading stage is very crucial to the acquisition of good reading habit. Information through reading is the life blood of all human activities. Man's existence on earth is meaningless if it is devoid of reading. Thus, reading materials should be constantly made available to children and adolescents. It is difficult to knowledge if one is not in the habit of reading widely and since it is impossible for anyone to trace all the required reading materials, the library fills the gap. The libraries have a role to play in this direction. Librarians should be in the forefront championing new, innovative techniques and advocacy for reading promotion. The variety of books availability to children and adolescents should be expanded to meet various reading needs and levels. The whole network of activities related to promotion of reading habits is a great task. It requires the cooperation of all concerned; but with all eyes focused on the same goal and imbued with the high spirit of service,

success will not be that far. The journey may be long and difficult but the first step has to be made. This is a challenge, we are committed to accept.

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# Continuing Education: Prioritising for National Development

P.S. Chakraborty

## Abstract

*India is one of the fastest growing economy in the world today. But with more than one billion population India cannot become a superpower unless we take care of and integrate our whole population in the process of development. Mere increase in number of millionaires does not reflect the socio-economic health of a nation, neither does it guarantee upgradation in human development index. We need to raise the standard of living for the entire population through a process of equitable distribution of wealth. Empowerment of people to improve employability through education is identified as a major means for wealth distribution. But large scale dropout at various levels of education is an impediment in reality. Properly designed Continuing education programme can be helpful to solve this problem to a large extent. Schedule Caste (SC), Schedule Tribe (ST), Other Backward Class (OBC) and Minorities (especially Muslim) constitute the major proportion of these dropouts rendering them unemployable in today's technology driven society. Continuing education is generally believed to be effective in economic empowerment. However, proper planning to develop prioritised continuing education programme model for this section of the society is essential. Through this paper the author has made sincere effort in analysing the situation.*

UNESCO sub-regional seminar on continuing education held in Canberra, Australia in November 1987, defined "Continuing Education as a broad concept which includes all of the learning opportunities all people want or need outside of basic literacy, education and primary education." (Bhaskaracharyulu et. al. 2009). According to National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986, Continuing Education means Post Literacy programme for neo-literates and school dropouts for retention of literacy skills, continuation of their learning beyond elementary literacy and application of this learning for

improving their living conditions (Yadav 2002). In NPE 1986, considerable attention was given to the need for creation of satisfactory arrangement for post literacy and continuing education centres for adult learners. Promotion of reading habits through libraries and reading rooms; use of audio-visual media for distance education and provision of vocational and technical skill up gradation were regarded as critical factors for a useful post literacy and continuing education programme (Khandai 2002). Singh 1999, observed that Continuing education is the education of a developing society, education of the individual for his bright future and of the nation for renovation. The possibilities of multidimensional development will unfold themselves when all the citizens of this country have access to their desired continuing education programmes. Every individual will become aware of the need to perform to the best of his ability and strength for total progress. Only then can we build a learning society and vigilant nation.

Moreover as our Country is poised to become economic and political superpower in the world, we must achieve comparable Human Development Index. For this economic empowerment through employment in global market or in the present day technology driven social sector is a precondition. Continuing education can be a way out in this regard. For example, recent trends show that we do not have sufficient trained manpower for construction industry though today it provides for the largest volume of unskilled labour. But to provide continuing education programme for such a huge population in a multi cultural, multi religious and multi lingual country is an uphill task. As 92.4% of India's workforce is in the unorganized sectors (National Sample Survey, 61<sup>st</sup> Round, 2004-05), it is important to design and run continuing education programme carefully to meet the need of the society. Moreover, the Country's economic performance depends critically on access to and the adoption of new technology and complementary improvement of the labour skill. It has been observed that the majority of informal workers learn their skills on job, though sometimes that is common to both the formal and informal sector (Chouksey et. al. 2006).

Next comes the question of identifying the target groups and prioritising the clusters. One criterion for affixing priority may be places with dismal literacy rate and/or excessive school dropout percentage. Traditionally we have seen that the places mostly populated by SC, ST, OBC and Minorities (primarily Muslims) shows this kind of trends, this has been very well documented in Justice Ranganath Mishra Commission and Justice Rajinder Sachar Committee reports.

University Grants Commission (UGC) in the XIth Plan guidelines for Lifelong Learning and Extension acknowledged this by way of selecting colleges for support from identified sectors like SC and ST ([www.ugc.ac.in](http://www.ugc.ac.in)). This small but noble step cannot solve this problem unless UGC broaden its scope to cover OBC, Muslims and Universities also need to come forward to do the same.

Justice Ranganath Mishra Commission reported that Religious communities have their own religious educational institutions, such as, Gurukuls by Hindus, Madarsas by Muslims, Seminaries by Christians and Monasteries by Buddhists. Some of these institutions impart general education through national curricula in addition to religious and traditional education. Though a vast majority is engaged in religious education, these institutions follow their own school of thought and there is no commonality in their syllabi and teaching methodology. The general ambience of these institutions is not attuned to the global development in science and technology. Thus the education imparted through formal curricular instruction or through life skill training cannot promote employability enhancement. Madarsas are large in number with focus on religious education though some provide facilities for normal education at par with State Board institutions (Ranganath Mishra Commission). It is clear from this report that even Madarsas which follow equivalent State Board curricula but lacks in training for employment. Here Universities can tie up with Madarsas to provide vocational training for various categories of student, for example school dropouts to College level students. UGC can also declare some support as in the case of ST and SC.

Census 2001 revealed work participation rate (WPR) defined in terms of percentage of workers to total population for all religions in India is 39.1 percent. However, the group of 'Other Religions and Persuasions' has higher work participation rate of 48.4 percent followed by the Buddhist at 40.6 percent, Hindus at 40.4 percent, Christians at 39.7 percent, Sikhs at 37.7 percent. The lowest work participation rate is seen among Muslims at 31.3 percent and Jains at 32.9 percent. Further, work participation rate of 9.2 percent among Jain women and 14.1 percent for Muslim women are the lowest in the country (Justice Ranganath Mishra Commission report). To make matters more complicated Muslims (65.31 percent) are better off in enrolment at primary level of education but their proportion goes down as we go to secondary (10.96 percent) and senior secondary (4.53 percent) stages. Comparatively Christians at the primary level with 45.79 percent enrolment are lower than the national average but are better off at secondary

(17.48 percent) and senior secondary (8.70 percent) stages. Other religions follow almost national average level (Justice Ranganath Mishra Commission report). This shows the urgent need for Continuing Education programme among Muslims.

According to Justice Rajinder Sachar Committee report the low literacy level of Muslims and SC/ST is well documented in research studies. In the mid 1960's literacy levels of both these groups were low, and far lower than that of 'All Others'. In many States however, the position of SC/ST was worse than that of the Muslims. The literacy rate among Muslims in 2001 was 59.1 %. This is far below the national average (65.1 %). If the SC/ST, with an even lower literacy level of 52.2% and Muslims, are excluded from the ambit of national development we can forget about dreaming of a Developed India.

### **Concluding Remarks**

SC, ST, OBC and Muslims constitute the most potent target groups for Continuing Education programmes run by various Universities and colleges. This problem can partially be solved by providing special assistance from UGC to Colleges and Universities taking special schemes for above mentioned categories. XIth plan Guidelines on Lifelong learning and Extension covers ST and SC only. Universities also may collaborate with the Madarsas to impart Continuing Education programmes. Universities can also collaborate with various colleges in ST, SC and OBC dominated areas to undertake Continuing Education programmes. For most effective outcome these programmes can be run from Madarsas or colleges targeting Muslims, ST, SC and OBC category students but students of below poverty line from other categories may also be allowed to participate. Finally we must keep in mind that leaving them behind we cannot progress to become a powerful nation.

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