

**FUNCTIONAL LITERACY
FOR
RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Field Studies of

Three Rural Functional Literacy Projects

by

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FOREWORD

One of the most challenging tasks recently undertaken in the field of education, is the attempt to cover within a period of about five years the entire illiterate adult population in the 15-35 age group estimated to be about 100 million. The education imparted under the Adult Education Programme is to be a package, comprising acquisition of basic literacy skills; upgradation of vocational skills for a more productive use of time and raising the level of social awareness of the learners. The Programme is mainly for rural areas and even there, the priority is on the coverage of women and persons belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. A financial provision of Rs. 200 crores made in the Draft Plan (1978--83) for adult education to be shared equally by the Central and State Governments and the inclusion of adult education in the Revised Minimum Needs Programme, reflects the high priority accorded to this programme. A variety of implementing agencies, both official and non-official, have been involved; and a number of sub-programmes or specific schemes have been launched to achieve the success of this Programme.

One such specific scheme is Rural Functional Literacy Projects (RFLP), sponsored and fully financed by the Central Government, but implemented by the State Governments. This is the biggest single scheme under the programme, with financial investment amounting to about 70% of the central allocation earmarked for adult education, and expected to contribute the largest share in the achievement of national targets. More than 240 such projects—ranging from 100 to 300 adult education centres each—have been established at different points of time, in all States and Union Territories during the last two years; and it is proposed to expand it to have at least one project in each district in the next few years. Hence, at a time, when the State

Governments are set to embark upon a substantial expansion of field programmes, it was thought desirable to undertake intensive field-studies of selected projects in different States in order to get feed-back. Shri H. R. Gugnani, Assistant Educational Adviser who has considerable experience in adult education, including international experience as Unesco Expert in Adult Literacy Training and Field-Work, was assigned this responsibility. Shri Gugnani has made detailed field-studies of three Rural Functional Literacy Projects, one each in Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir.

An attempt has been made to present an objective appraisal of the projects studied. The studies highlight both the strong and weak points in each project; the degree to which the projects have conformed to the conceptual frame-work envisaged by the Programme; types of field problems encountered and measures taken or proposed, to overcome the difficulties. It is hoped that the experiences embodied in these field-studies would be fruitfully shared not only by hundreds of functionaries engaged in the implementation of adult education projects, but also by all those interested in this big national enterprise of bringing functional education at the doors of a hundred million illiterate persons : mostly the rural poor, the women, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and other weaker and deprived sections of society.

P. Sabanayagam

*Secretary to the Government of India,
Ministry of Education & Culture*

New Delhi, dated July 4, 1980.

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INTRODUCTION

The National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) launched in India on 2nd October, 1978, with the aim of providing adult education, including literacy, to about 100 million illiterate persons, mainly in the age-group 15-35 within a period of five years, has been visualised as a joint and collaborative effort of the Central Government, 22 State Governments and 9 Union Territory Administrations; hundreds of non-government voluntary agencies; universities, colleges and youth centres like Nehru Yuvak Kendras; and even (cutting across the traditional boundaries of the Education Departments) by various development departments; public and private undertakings, employers, organisations of workers etc etc. The conceptual framework envisaged for the NAEP is to ensure (i) imparting literacy skills to the target illiterate population; (ii) their functional development in order to enable them to actively participate in the various development programmes; and (iii) creation of awareness among them regarding laws and policies of the government with a view to implementing the strategy of redistributive justice.

One of the joint efforts of the Central and State Governments in this direction is through the taking up of model pace-setter projects under the scheme of Rural Functional Literacy Projects (RFLP) financed fully by the Central Government, while the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations assuming full responsibility for implementation. The Central Government are committed to finance at least one RFLP in each district in every State and Union Territory of the size upto 300 adult education centres per project, with an average coverage of 30 adult beneficiaries enrolled in each centre. Thus, each RFLP with 300 centres is expected to cover about 9000 adult beneficiaries in a year. During the first year of the NAEP, the Central Govern-

ment sanctioned a total of about 209 such projects throughout the country, adding 36 more during the current year 1979-80. This number is expected to go up to about 400 projects, which means at least one project in each district of every State and Union Territory. The cost of one project of 300 adult education centres is of the order of Rs. 5.90 lakhs during the first year and Rs. 5.20 lakhs per year during the subsequent years. The Draft Plan (1978—83) made a provision of Rs. 200 crores for adult education to be shared equally between the Central Government and the State Governments. Out of Rs. 100 crores provided to the Central Government in the Draft Plan for adult education it is estimated that about 70% would be invested in Rural Functional Literacy Projects.

Thus, considering the huge financial investment on RFLPs, their nation-wide coverage; their nature as the pace-setter projects, and above all, the anxiety to ensure their functioning within the conceptual framework of the NAEP, the Government of India considered it timely that, at this stage, when the States were already set to embark upon substantial expansion of field programmes, an intensive field-study of 2-3 selected adult education projects in different States should be undertaken with a view to getting a feed-back on these projects. Hence, these three field-studies of RFLPs in Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir.

1

Field-Study of the Rural Functional Literacy Project in Morwah Block, District Samastipur (Bihar)

The present field-study of the Rural Functional Literacy project, Morwah Block (Samastipur District) in Bihar State was in pursuance of the decision of the Government of India to undertake in-depth studies of selected 2-3 Rural Functional Literacy Projects in different States in order to get feed-back on these projects and to be able to take timely and appropriate measures to improve their operational efficiency.

Programme Schedule

Prior to undertaking this field-work study of the project, the programme schedule, including the specific areas of study and the programme of discussions at different levels as well as visits to selected adult education centres was discussed and finalised at two meetings at the State level : firstly in a meeting held on September 19, 1979 under the chairmanship of the Director of Adult Education, Shri R. S. Tiwari along with his colleagues in the Directorate of Adult Education and the State Resource Centres; and secondly, in a meeting, on the same day, with Dr. Sachidananda, Director, A. N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna—the institution which has been designated for evaluation of adult education programmes run in the State by the voluntary agencies. The programme of meetings, discussions and visits to selected project areas and adult education centres included (a) meeting at the project level in the office of the Project Officer in Morwah CD Block, attended by selected supervisors and instructors as well as the block level officers, incharge of some selected development departments ; (b) visit to village Madhopur Digharua

to hold discussions with learners' group; (c) meeting with District Adult Education Board at Samastipur under the chairmanship of the District Collector, Shri Anup Mukherjee; (d) meeting with the village level committee for adult education village, Chakral Sahi—the committee which is responsible for the smooth functioning of three adult education centres in the village; (e) visit to a female adult education centre in village namely, Purshotampur; (f) discussions with the representative of voluntary agencies responsible for adult education projects being run by them in this district; (g) discussion with the Youth Coordinator, Nehru Yuvak Kendra, Patna about the progress of adult education centres run by the Kendra; and finally (h) meeting again at the State level under the chairmanship of the Director of Adult Education to discuss the observations and impressions gathered during the field-study.

Some of the specific areas of study included in the Programme Schedule were the following :—

- (i) the Project Approach;
- (ii) creation of favourable environment for the NAEP
- (iii) involvement of local community, at the block and village levels, in the Programme;
- (iv) problems of the field, including those encountered by field functionaries;
- (v) status of learners' group and their level of awareness, functional development and literacy attainments;
- (vi) contribution of field functionaries of other development departments in the work of adult education centre and
- (vii) Personnel Policy and other allied matters.

The Project Approach

In Morwah CD Block, at the time of visit, 126 adult education centres had been established and were functioning, of which 64 were for women and 62 for men. The Project had thus followed

the "Compact Area Approach" as visualised under the NAEP, which emphasises that ordinarily the area of a project should be coterminous with one or two CD Blocks in the District, and not spread throughout the District. Again, not all the 300 centres sanctioned under the project were established as the State Government wanted to establish the centres in two phases, after having consolidated gains in the first phase. The 126 centres, established in the first phase had, at the time of this study, run for four to six months; and the State Government have since issued instructions for the establishment of the remaining 174 centres in this very Morwah CD Block. The ratio of male and female centres established in the first phase would indicate that due priority had been given to women adult education. The instructional and supervisory responsibility for women adult education centres had been given to women of the local rural areas. Again, efforts seem to have been made to enrol as large a number of Scheduled Caste learners in the adult education centres as possible, thereby giving due attention to another important aspect of "Project Approach" viz. to accord special priority to the education of Scheduled Caste illiterate adults. Both the male and female centres included a fair number of Scheduled Caste learners; but no separate centres have been organised exclusively for Scheduled Castes.

Creation of Environment

The impressions gathered at the project level meetings as well as through field visits to village and adult education centres were that there was generally a good response to the programme from the public although in the initial phases, the project management had to face a good deal of "indifference" and even "resistance" in several areas. The work done in promoting awareness about the NAEP included (a) writing of catchy slogans on walls, aimed at popularising the programme; (b) distribution of specially prepared posters; and (c) publication of a monthly "Vayask Shiksha Samachar" in Hindi from Patna and its distribution through project office to all adult education centres for the dissemination of information to all adult learners. This monthly journal, mainly addressed to the field level functionaries keeps them posted

with policies, laws and developmental programmes of the Government and thus help them to disseminate such information to their learners' groups; as well as publishes reports on the progress of projects taken up in different parts of the State.

Apart from these measures aimed at popularising the Programme and disseminating information about its usefulness to the community, our discussions with the project staff, particularly the Project Officer, Shri Kumar Anand and a band of his workers : i.e., supervisors and instructors showed that they were enthusiastic in making the Programme as popular as possible mainly through activating the village level committee, and even through person-to-person contacts with the villagers. While efforts in this direction have been made and have borne fruits, not much evidence was noticed about the effective use of mass-media (e.g. field publicity units, radio broadcasts, press coverage etc. etc.) in popularising the Programme in this block. There is ample scope of exploiting the various forms of mass-media for this purpose. There is also scope for exploiting different forms of mass contact: e.g. organisation of mass village meetings under the local leadership; innovative activities like "Prabhat Pheries" (special types of processions) organised in some rural areas of Gujarat for popularising the NAEF; etc. etc.

Community Involvement

The project personnel, with the cooperation of enlightened leadership in some villages, have been making efforts to enlist the support of the local community to the programme. However, it was revealed during discussions that the Programme has not been without local resistance from some quarters at least in the initial stages. A strong resistance had to be faced from the village community, particularly in sending the female members of the families to the adult education centres. The Purshotampur Village in the block was one of such villages of local resistance. It was reported by the village level committee of this village that there were two basic problems; firstly, there was traditional opposition from the householders in sending their female family members to the adult education centres; and secondly, even when some householders

agree that their women should participate in the adult education centre, almost all of them insisted that the centre should be at their door, as they were against sending their women-folk at the door of someone else. As the reports came, it was a formidable task to break this resistance from the community; but fortunately, a very active and dynamic lady supervisor, Smt. Shanti Singh was able to break this community resistance by going from door to door to persuade the heads of the families. She did this task even at the cost of her own reputation. There is a local saying which means that "when a woman moves about here and there, she is viewed as though she has been abandoned by her husband". The discussions with this lady supervisor, were amply convincing about her role in breaking this age-old resistance in the community in sending their women-folk to the adult education centres. Another unusual thing done in this village, with the help of this lady supervisor, was that she was able to persuade the village leadership i.e. the Mukhia and some well-to-do people, to build a thatched hut at a common place in the village so that no woman learner had to go to anybody's door for learning. Smt. Shanti Singh's earlier training in handicrafts also helped her in her new assignment, as she was able to persuade many a householder that, along with literacy skills, their women-folk will also be taught handicrafts by her and thereby they could supplement the family income. We had particularly chosen to visit a female adult education centre under the supervision of Smt. Shanti Singh and found that it had been running for the last four months with an enrolment of 32 women, most of whom belonging to the younger age-group between 15-30.

The level of community involvement and participation in the Programme in different villages depends much on the approach of the project staff and especially the front-line workers in the village. In the village level committee, that we attended in *Chakral Sahi* village, a few new problems were raised. These included : firstly, here was a need for a box for each adult education centre to preserve the teaching-learning materials, note-books, pencils, chalks etc. which the learners left with the instructor, after the day's work; and secondly, there was need for some carpet for seat-

ing the learners. In the discussion that followed on these problems the author made the community leaders realise that, unlike the other materials like books, exercise-books, kerosene oil, pencils etc., the expenditure on which is of recurring nature, these two items for each centre were to be purchased at one time only and would last for a few years. The author invoked the feelings of the village leadership that the local community could also contribute to the programme by sharing costs on these two items of non-recurring nature. It would give them a sense of pride that they were active participants in the Programme, if these small contributions in kind came from the community itself. At this moment, the author cited the example of "Gram Gaurv Divas" (Village Pride Day) celebrated by the village community in Maharashtra whenever a particular village community wiped out illiteracy from the village completely. This had the desired inspiring effect as one of the village leaders, Shri Siyaram Sharma came out spontaneously with an offer that, out of three centres in the village, he would undertake to provide one wooden box for the centre, either by himself, or by raising contributions in the village. The other village leaders present in the meeting also assured that it would not be difficult to raise contributions in kind for the provision of boxes and for mattress for the three centres that are functioning in the village.

Field Problems

A few more problems in the field were raised during our discussions in the village committee. These related to (1) the need for allowing children below 15 to avail themselves of the educational opportunities offered at the adult education centres as a very large number of children in the villages were unable to attend regular primary schools, owing to their occupation during the day; and (2) the need for some arrangement whereby the learners, after the completion of 10-months course, could continue to read books on their own. Regarding (1), the author explained that the Government has formulated a scheme of non-formal education for children below 15 i.e. in the age group 6-14; and regarding (2), the committee was informed that the Government was cons-

cious of the need and another scheme of Post-literacy and Follow-up work for this purpose, was under active consideration of the Government and may be launched shortly as part of the NAEP.

A typical problem, encountered by the field functionaries, in one village of Morwah block that came to light related to the selection of instructor for a particular village centre. The Project Officer had to face a strong opposition over the appointment of the instructor from the two rival groups. The one group even went to the extent of threatening that if the designated instructor was appointed, they would not allow the centre to function. The Project Office later found that it was not a rivalry on any political or caste ground, but a rivalry between the two groups of the same family and the instructor selected by the Project Officer belonged to one of these two groups. In any case, this was a field problem of its own type which made it difficult for the Project Officer to establish an adult education centre in that village. The Project Officer decided to leave out that village for the time being, giving the family-feud a time to cool down.

Among the problems encountered by field functionaries mention also was made about the unhelpful attitude of some well-to-do farmers in villages where the adult education centres were started, particularly when the learners (largely landless agricultural labour) were made aware of the provisions of the Minimum Wages Act. In almost all cases, no land owner was paying the minimum wage i.e. Rs. 4.0 per day plus about 1 Kg. of food. The learners were getting between Rs. 2.00 and Rs. 2.50 per day and a ration of about 250 grams. The Project Officer had in fact issued a cyclo-styled circular to all instructors in the 126 adult education centres about the provisions of the Act which made the learners aware of the extent of exploitation being suffered by them at the hands of land owners. While this did create local problems in some villages, such awareness among the earners, in other places, also had the desired impact. In the *Chakral Sahi* village which we visited, one farmer who owned the maximum land in that village, himself offered a wage of Rs. 4.00 per day. The lead thus given by him was followed by small landowners also. In some other villages,

as was reported, daily wages were still low although they had slightly increased from Rs. 2.00 to Rs. 2.50 per day. The overall impressions one gets about field problems are : (i) the problems always arise; (ii) these are of varying nature; and (iii) that there are always solutions to the problems provided positive efforts are made in this direction and those involved in the implementation of the programme at the field level approach the community with faith and understanding. In this task therefore, success largely depends upon the enlightened approaches of field-level functionaries towards the rural communities. By and large, the choice of the Project Officer, Shri Kumar Anand, in the identification of field workers in Morwah RFL Project deserves appreciation particularly about the identification of such outstanding workers, like Smt. Shanti Singh whose work in the field has, indeed, been exemplary.

Awareness

During our field visits, we took special pains to study, in depth, the "awareness" component of the National Adult Education Programme. Some useful work has been done in this respect by the State Directorate of Adult Education and the Project Officer RFLP Morwah Block. As already mentioned, the Project Officer circulated to all 126 adult education centres in his block, a mimeographed circular, giving detailed information to the instructors and supervisors about the Minimum Wages Act with the request that this information should be shared with the learners in the centres. The provisions of this Act were also published in the *Vayask Shiksha Samachar*, issued by the Directorate of Adult Education, copies of which are also circulated regularly to all adult education centres in the block. In addition to this, the State Adult Education Directorate has issued mimeographed notes in the form of "Talking Points" for the use of instructors, on various issues of common interest including information on such subjects like common diseases, common problems of health and hygiene, importance of national holiday like 26th January, 15th August and 2nd October etc.; information about dealing with certain situations like drowning, snake-bite etc etc

While the State Education Department responsible for the National Adult Education Programme, both at the State and the project levels, have been making efforts in promoting "awareness" among the learners participating in the adult education centres, our observations were that the response of this type from the other development departments and agencies in the field has been almost negligible. This field situation is, in spite of the letter issued by Chief Secretary, Government of Bihar to Secretaries/Directors of all development departments in the State, requesting them to give their utmost cooperation in the implementation of the National Adult Education Programme as also spelling out various areas of cooperation expected from their departments/agencies. Our visit to both the adult education centres—one of males and other of females—revealed that during the last 4-6 months of the functioning of these centres, none of the field functionaries of any other departments i.e. Gram Sevak, Gram Sevika, Primary health worker, community health worker, extension worker, field worker of Sulabh Shauchalaya Sansthan, Kalyan Gram Bola Sevak etc. etc. visited any of these two centres, to share with the learners the knowledge and information about the availability of facilities offered by their respective departments and agencies. Our discussions with the learner groups showed that very few learners were aware of a host of programmes/amenities being offered by the Government through various departments/agencies for their benefit.

Owing to the ignorance of the learners about the various programmes facilities offered by development departments/agencies in their respective fields, we also came across some cases of exploitation of the illiterate and ignorant villagers as well as cases of misuse of powers by field functionaries, often in collaboration with some influential people of the areas. Some of these typical cases included the following : (i) the middlemen some time exploit the illiterate adults, by giving them hopes to get loans for them from banks; and in the process, charge them for their services; (ii) the compounders and other staff at the dispensaries who are expected to be serving free, have been reported to be charging for their services; etc. etc. Even, the loans under the Antyodya

Programme, which are sanctioned in kind, on the recommendations of the *Mukhia* to the five poorest families in the village are not always given to the most deserving. The cases of the types referred to above, were mentioned to us in the course of our field visits, but their authenticity or otherwise could not be checked. However, their inclusion in this report, is to show the *possibilities* of exploitation of the illiterate rural poor, or of the misuse of the services offered by the development agencies for their benefit.

The field situation, as observed by us, which reflected indifference or neglect on the part of field functionaries of the various development departments/agencies in not visiting adult education centres as part of their obligation, was indeed a factor that caused us a good deal of concern. This matter was taken up by the author at the meeting of the District Adult Education Board held on 22 September, 1979 under the chairmanship of the District Collector. The composition of this Board includes district level officers such as District Development Officer; Managing Director, Small Farmers Development Agency, Director, Industries; Civil Surgeon; District Agriculture Officer; District Animal Husbandry Officer; District Cooperative Officer; Press Correspondent; PRO; representatives of women and social workers; and the District Education Officer. Unfortunately, except the Civil Surgeon and the District Education Officer, PRO and Press Correspondent, none of the other district level officers of development departments/agencies, who are members of this Board, were present at this meeting. The absence of these district level officers from the Board's meeting itself might show the interest that the development departments and agencies at the district level attach to the NAEP. The author's observation at the Board's meeting was that it was no wonder that the field functionaries of development agencies at the grass-root level have not been visiting the adult education centres, in spite of the national importance attached to the Programme and in spite of the instructions issued in this regard from the highest level in the State *i.e.* from the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar. It was, however, encouraging to find that the new Collector, Shri Anup Mukherjee, fully appreciated the importance of cooperation of the development departments

in this national task and assured that all efforts will be made to ensure that the field-level functionaries of all development departments and agencies would supplement the efforts, of the instructors and supervisors in their important task of eradication of illiteracy, spread of awareness and promotion of functionality. We were assured that the District level officer, incharge of various development programmes and agencies will be asked to issue instructions to all their field level functionaries that they should include their visits to the adult education centres for dissemination of useful knowledge and information as part of their obligatory duties. Some members of the Board, particularly, the representative of women (Smt. Ram Kumari) and one of the social workers felt that if all the Board members could be given copies of the circular indicating their responsibilities and function, they could even individually visit some of the adult education centres from time to time in order to make their own assessment. The Project Officer, was requested to send to each individual member of the Board, copies of the circular issued in this regard giving the composition and functions of the District Adult Education Board. Again, on the proposal made by the District Collector, the meeting also agreed that the membership of the Board should be enlarged to include representatives of voluntary organisations engaged in the implementation of adult education programmes in the district.

Creation of Learners' Groups

At all the meetings held at the State, district, project and village levels, there was general consensus that to make "awareness" an effective element of the NAEP, pressure must also be built from below at the grassroot level where the learners themselves are made not only aware of their rights and duties but also of the various facilities available to them by the Government through various development departments and agencies. At the State level, the author proposed that learners themselves should form into an active group by electing their own management committee consisting of 2-3 of their own representatives along with the instructor for (a) day-to-day management of the centre; (b) to promote awareness among the learners and to build up pressures on the field functionaries of different development departments and

agencies for getting their help. To give concrete shape to this idea the author made a proposal that if each adult education centre, consisting of 30 adults, made a contribution of 30 paise each per month and bought a daily newspaper which the instructor could read for them and discuss the news daily during the first 15-20 minutes of their meeting, this would go a long way in creating *Chetna* among the learners about what was happening around them in their village, block, State capital, in the country and outside the country. This would also give them a sense of participation by way of token contribution from their own pockets every month. When we discussed this idea at the district and lower levels, this was not only enthusiastically received; but suggestions also came that the contribution should be 50 paise instead of 30 paise and the remaining contributions may partly be used by the learners group (with the help of instructor) to write post cards to the Project Officer from time to time about services needed by them from different development departments and agencies and about their day-to-day problems. As part of this idea, a very good suggestion was made at the project level meeting that the old newspaper collected during a month could be used for making *Thongas* (paper bags) by the learners themselves and sold in the market, bringing back the sale proceeds into the common fund of the centre. These ideas were enthusiastically received and the learners unanimously offered to contribute 50 paise each to form a common fund for the above-mentioned purpose. At the male centre visited by us, even the committee of *Kou.* was elected on the spot, which included the instructor and three members elected from the learners' group.

At the female centre visited by us, we found with great satisfaction that the learners had already created a small fund from their own contributions, out of which they purchased raw materials, collected waste materials from the village made some articles of handicrafts like dolls, flowers, trees etc. and sold them in the market at profit. The samples of these articles made by them were demonstrated at the centre. It was made known to us that the lady supervisor who had her earlier training in handicrafts, imparted these skills to the learners in the female centres, under

her cage, and thus had initiated this movement, along with literacy in her centres. The learners at this centre readily agreed to use their fund not only for the purchase of raw materials for making handicrafts but also to purchase newspaper and a few post cards for communication with the project staff.

During the discussions, it was felt that provision of daily newspaper in the adult education centres, through the learners own contributions, may also induce the learners to attain self-reliance in reading the newspaper themselves, without the help of instructor. Besides the learners, after completing the 10-months adult education course at the centre, could also continue reading the newspapers, either at any of adult education centres in the village, or at any of the post-literacy and follow-up centre that would come up under the NAEP.

The visit to the female centre was revealing in some other aspects also. The first thing that we noticed in the group was that excepting one member who was about 55 years of age, the others were in the age group up to 30 and all of them excepting the old woman felt shy in meeting with the strangers and some of them even had their "*Ghunghats*" on. It was difficult for us to overcome these inhibitions on the part of learners to talk frankly with us to enable us to get at the truth of the things. Here, the author had to adopt a novel approach and narrated to the group one of actual incidents connected with his visit to a women adult literacy centre in one of the Bombay City slums on a day that happened to be prior to the *Rakshabandhan* day. Approaching the group as their brother helped in this situation and soon the group members had become so informal and family-like, that on the conclusion of the visit, they tied *Rakshabandhan* on the author's wrist to make him their brother. The narration of this incident had the desired effect; the group-members became somewhat informal and gradually talked to the author as they would talk to their own brothers in their families. The old inhibitions started to break. Eventually, after a few minutes, the atmosphere became so informal that one of the group members said "when our brother has come from Delhi, why has he not brought sarees for us?"

Thus, eventually, the whole environment became free from inhibitions and a free frank discussion followed.

Literacy Attainments

The female centre visited by us had run for 4 months and the male centre had run for 6 months. The literacy attainments at the male centre was quite satisfactory. By and large, the learners were able to do numeracy up to 1000, both at *plus* and *minus*; and could read and write very simple sentences. A group member picked up at random was requested to write a few sentences dictated to him. These sentences were :—

“मैं इस केन्द्र में हर रोज आता हूँ ।
मुझे यहाँ लाभदायक सूचना मिलती है ।
मेरे काम में भी प्रगति होती है ।”

This means “I come to this centre everyday. Here I receive useful information. I also make progress in my occupation.” At the female centre which had run for 4 months, the progress in the literacy attainment was also satisfactory, but here the numeracy acquired was up to 100, both *plus* and *minus*. The reading and writing skills were also lower than that of the male centre, but compared to the durations of the centres between the male and the female centres, the progress in literacy attainment at the female centre was also quite satisfactory.

Functional Development

We have discussed about self-efforts at the adult education centres both of male and female, about the creation of committees and learner's fund for the promotion of activities including making of handicraft items especially at the female centres and making of *Thongas* (paper bags) out of the used newspapers. We have also discussed about the importance of bringing these learners into frequent contacts with the field-level functionaries of different departments to help in the upgradation of their functional skills e.g. field demonstrations and training of extension workers in agricultural occupations, training in the construction of *Sulabh Shuchalayas* by the villagers; imparting training in cer-

tain handicrafts by the functionaries of Industries Department; imparting know-how in tree plantation, kitchen gardening, protection of plants from insects etc. by the horticulture or agricultural departments etc. etc.

As discussed earlier, the functional upgradation of skills has to come from three sources: firstly, from the self-help of learners; secondly, from the active cooperation of the field functionaries of development departments and agencies; and thirdly, by building up pressures from below by the learners themselves to demand the services to which they are entitled as a matter of right.

Special mention must be made of the almost unanimous acceptance to the proposal at all levels about the formation of learners' fund for the purchase of newspapers and the utilisation of used newspapers for the making of *Thongas* (paper bags) by them. The Director of Education at the State level, in the final meeting at the conclusion of the field-study visit, offered that lot of used papers from the Government Departments sold as *raddi* could be diverted to the various adult education centres for making and sale of *Thongas* in order to replenish common fund of the centre. This was indeed an excellent suggestion made by the Director of Education in the meeting; and if this movement of self-management and self-help by the learners' group succeed this will have far-reaching effects in the promotion of the NAEP.

Personnel Problems

During our discussions at various levels, the functionaries at different levels also came out with their own problems. Beginning with the instructors, some of them enquired about their future after 10-months of the adult education course in a centre. It was mentioned that those instructors who had shown good work could continue if there was need for the opening of more centres in the same village or in the neighbouring village. The latter proposal of going to the neighbouring village was found to be impracticable, especially for the female instructors and when the author proposed that certain non-monetary incentives could be offered to good workers in the form of awarding them certi-

ificates at the successful conclusion of the 10-months course and even giving some outstanding instructors an honour at a public function at the block level or at the village level, this was received with cheers. They felt that such certificates might help them in their further progress. This proposal was also agreed to, at the State level committee meeting. Difficulties were also expressed by the female supervisors about their mobility to visit 30 centres under their charge and specially the problems of staying in the villages other than their own. But as one of the lady supervisors, Shrimati Shanti Singh said that out of the few lady supervisors appointed so far, all of them have got a very good rapport with their instructors and learners' groups. They normally stay in the house of instructor in the village during night-halts. This problem about mobility of the lady supervisor was also raised by the representative of women at a meeting of the District Adult Education Board, but she was appraised of the actual field situation about the good rapport between the lady supervisors and the instructors which did not create much of the problem in this respect.

The Project Officer, Shri Kumar Anand, who is an officer of the State Civil Service, has been drafted for this important assignment, requiring lot of field-work. The author's observation is that the choice of the State Government in identifying him for this assignment is really wise. He is young (about 30) and has qualities of dynamism, besides a valuable background experienced of sufficient field-work, as Block Development Officer, prior to this assignment. Both his approach and the quantum of field-work that has been done by him in the establishment and functioning of 126 adult education centres (particularly the female centres, despite local resistance at various places) deserve special mention.

Another name worth mentioning among the project personnel is that of Smt. Shanti Singh, one of the lady supervisors, who has done an exemplary work in the establishment of female learners' centres against initial resistance from the community and virtually converting learners' group into effective production-cum-

learning centres by introducing handicrafts as part of the teaching-learning process.

It would be worthwhile if the field experiences of the selected project personnel at the project level, as mentioned above, are shared at the training courses organised for the Project Officer and the District Adult Education Officers who have to be mainly incharge of the field projects. Breaking the administrative inhibitions, the author may suggest that the Project Officer, Morwah Block, Shri Kumar Anand and the lady supervisor, Smt. Shanti Singh could be invited to the next Orientation Course for the District Adult Education Officers so that they could share their rich and varied field experiences.

Conclusions

- 1) The author's observations on the appraisal of field work done in the Morwah Block of Samastipur district in Bihar under the Rural Functional Literacy Projects, is that effective field-work in adult education is crucial to the success of the NAEP. *The subject of field work in adult education should be one of the important subjects at all the training and orientation courses of all the functionaries engaged in NAEP at all levels.* The field situations in different projects and areas often reveal varying problems, peculiar to areas, and it would be a fruitful experience not only in sharing such experiences at the training and orientation courses, but also to discover solutions to overcome the different kinds of problems that arise in the field.
- 2) Some work has no doubt been done for the creation of environment for the NAEP by the project office of which mention has been made e.g. the writings on house-walls at the block headquarters and in villages as well as production of good posters and other materials aimed at motivating the local population. However, not much evidence has been seen about the

contribution of mass media especially of the field publicity organisation of the Information Department in popularising the NAEP in this particular block. There is also scope for exploiting different other forms of mass contact for popularising the NAEP; e.g. Mass-Meetings under local leadership, taking out processions on the lines of "Prabhat Pheries" as in rural areas of Gujarat, etc.

- (3) As the field level, the field functionaries, their attitude, approach, dedication to work are extremely important for achieving the effectiveness of field-work. While the judicious selection of Supervisors, Instructors and Project Officers is extremely important for field-work, outstanding field-workers need to be given incentives (may be of non-monetary nature) and other forms of encouragements. It should be the endeavour of the District Adult Education Officer and of the Project Officer to continuously spot out the right type of front-line workers *i.e.* the instructors and supervisors. The project in Morwah Block has already come to a point where it could be expanded to reach the target of 300 adult education centres, and hence, the identification of right type of front-line workers, assumes special importance at this stage.
- (4) As the training of the front-line workers *e.g.* teachers and instructors is imparted at the project level by the Project Officer with the help of knowledgeable resource persons available to him, it is extremely important that the training of the Project Officer himself should be very intensive and field-based. Such Project Officers who had shown outstanding qualities of field-work should also be exposed to further training at higher levels say, at the level of the District Adult Education Officers. This exposure should also be available to selected supervisors who had made an outstanding contribution in the field-

work in their respective areas. This induction of selected project officers and supervisors at the training and orientation programmes at higher levels will not only further help them in their field-work, but would be useful to the higher level functionaries in sharing the actual down-to-earth field experiences in different areas.

- (1) Active involvement of the field functionaries of development departments/agencies in the NAEP is extremely important for the programme particularly for raising the level of all-round awareness of learners and for the functional upgradation of their skills. These aspects of the programme of the NAEP have been found to be lacking at all levels from the district down to the field, despite the clear-cut instructions of the State Government, communicated through a letter issued at the highest level *i.e.* by the Chief Secretary of the State Government himself. This aspect needs special attention in Bihar; and for that matter in all States and Union Territories.
- (6) At the district level, there is urgent need for inter-departmental and inter-agency coordination in the interest of the NAEP mainly through the District Adult Education Board. Activisation of the Board, through its regular periodical meetings and follow-up action on the Board's recommendations should be viewed as an important strategy for the total development of the NAEP in the district. In Bihar, the District Adult Education Officers are soon to be appointed and are expected to be in position by the end of October, when it is hoped, they will act as effective secretaries of the District Boards. These District Boards should also have a few representatives of the voluntary organisations who have been given grants for running adult education centres in different blocks of the district: NYK Coordinator; as also the

representatives of colleges and university of the area, if any, involved in the NAEP. However, in Samastipur there is no NYK, nor any programme through colleges at present. The effective coordination at the district level through the District Adult Education Board in Samastipur needs much to be desired.

- (7) At the State level, the coordination of adult education work done through government departments and through voluntary organisations seemed quite satisfactory. A map showing the blocks and villages in different districts that have been covered by departmental project separately in one colour and by voluntary agencies in another colour has been prepared. It was proposed that this map should also have two or three more colours to indicate areas of operation by the NYKs and by colleges and university students as also by other development departments, public undertakings etc. etc. It was agreed that the State level committee should have representatives from all agencies involved in the adult education field work including also representatives of other development departments and agencies. The author's observations about the adult education work being done by NYK, Patna were not very happy. The records of the Kendra showed the existence of 43 adult education centres including 11 for women and the remaining 32 for men; but, most of them seemed non-functional, especially the female centres as the lady supervisor had resigned in July, 1979 and no replacement had been done so far. It was agreed at the State level committee meeting that the adult education work through Nehru Yuvak Kendras should also be effectively coordinated through the State Board.

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Field-Study of the Rural Functional Literacy Project in Hayathnagar Block, District Ranga Reddy, Andhra Pradesh (April 6 to 13, 1980)

Programme Schedule

The programme schedule for undertaking the field-study included :

- (a) visit to 10 adult education centres in 3 villages of Hayathnagar block namely Sahabnagar; Sayathnagar; and Gurranguda. The 10 centres visited included 5 male centres and 5 female centres. These visits were utilised for discussions with the learners; organisers (instructors) and community leaders in the respective villages.
- (b) individual meetings with the State Education Secretary; Joint Secretary (Adult Education); Director of Adult Education and his staff, for discussions on the various aspects of the programme.
- (c) meeting with the project staff including the Project Officer (Smt. L. Sakkubai), the Assistant Project Officer (Shri M. Ganga Reddy), and the two Supervisors (Km. P. S. Kumari and Shri G. Lakshmai) alongwith the District Adult Education Officer (Shri M. Babuna) and Deputy Director, Adult Education (Shri Suryanarayan Murthi).
- (d) group meeting with the extension officers/workers of different development departments working at the block and village levels.

- (e) meeting with the members of District Adult Education Committee under the chairmanship of District Collector, Ranga Reddy district.
- (f) informal visit to Literacy House, Andhra Mahila Sabha, Hyderabad.
- (g) concluding meeting under the chairmanship of State Education Secretary, attended by the Director of Adult Education, District Adult Education Officer and two Project Officers of Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy districts to take stock of the Hayathnagar Project on the basis of the observations during the field study.

Project Profile

The RFLP in Hayathnagar block has established 300 adult education centres comprising 215 for men, 70 for women and 15 mixed. These centres are located in 105 villages of the block. Out of this, 56 centres are exclusively for Scheduled Castes and 13 for Scheduled Tribes. A total of 900 persons are enrolled in these centres in the project which consists of 6851 men and 2149 women. The enrolment of Scheduled Castes is 2397 and of Scheduled Tribes is 460.

At the time of the field-study, all the 300 centres had been functioning for the last 2-3 months—some centres having started in January 1980 and the others in the beginning of February 1980. While the Project Officer, the Assistant Project Officer and all the 300 organisers for the centres had been appointed, only 2 out of the 10 supervisors were working; and 8 were yet to be appointed.

The District Adult Education Committee has been constituted with the District Collector as chairman and the District Adult Education Officer as the Member-Secretary and all the district heads of development departments, MLAs, MLCs and representatives of voluntary organisations etc., as members. Prior to the present field-study, the Committee had met twice; and the third

meeting was held on 8-4-1980 which was addressed by the author.

In the absence of a full contingent of supervisors, a great deal of difficulty was being felt in supervising all the 300 centres. The non-availability of vehicle, so far, for the project was also a serious handicap in effective supervision. Nonetheless, earnest efforts were being made by the project staff in the supervision of the programme and in this work the District Adult Education Officer, the Project Officer and the Assistant Project Officer have divided the work of supervision among themselves in addition to the allocation of centres to the two supervisors appointed so far. It is hoped that with the availability of vehicle for the project and the appointment of full contingent of supervisors, the present difficulty of supervising the centres will be overcome. Action on both these aspects of supervision needs to be expedited.

While the compact project approach in concentrating all the 300 adult education centres in one development block only has been followed, it will be seen that the percentage of women centres to the men centres is much less than what should have been desirable, as envisaged in the National Adult Education Programme. On enquiries, it was found that despite the best efforts, the project staff could not open more centres due to the non-availability of educated women in the villages for taking up the work of organisers (instructors) in the block area. Keeping in view that the coverage by women in the project should be at least 50%, it is desirable that all-out efforts should be made to increase the number of women centres. As regards the centres for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, 69 centres exclusively opened for these communities represented a good percentage and reflected an encouraging response from these communities to the programme.

The project staff found considerable difficulty, in the initial stages, in identifying the organisers for 300 adult education centres. Even after all the organisers have been identified and appointed, it has been found that some of the organisers have not been running the centres as they have left either after seeking full-time

appointments elsewhere or they have left the villages from where they have been selected. While quick action has to be taken to appoint substitutes in such places, the process of identification of organisers must take into account the possibility of the selected organisers being available for a full term of the course duration of 10 months.

Enrolment Trends

The visit to the 10 adult education centres revealed atleast two conspicuous trends in enrolment :

- (i) By and large, the enrolment is confined to teenagers *i.e.* 15-19 age-group; the second category belong to the age-group up to 35 are only few and far between. It is common to see also quite a number of children in the adult education centres, although discussions with the organisers showed that these children were not on the rolls of these centres but accompanied their brothers and sisters when the latter came to the centre.
- (ii) The enrolment trend at the centres further showed that, by and large, the participants belonging to the classes of (a) landless agricultural labour; and (b) unskilled workers employed in factory areas around the villages. The enrolment of landed peasantry especially the well-to-do farmers, was conspicuous by its absence. There were however a few farmers enrolled but these were mainly petty and marginal farmers.

These enrolment trends would show that the centres did not represent the cross-sections of the community, as it also showed that the programme among the adults in the higher age-group *i.e.* between 20 and 35 was not popular. The discussions with the functionaries at the grass-root level and the community leaders revealed that while the well-to-do inhabitants of the villages were conscious of the importance of education and sent their wards to schools, they themselves preferred to stay away from the adult

education centres, due to certain inhibitions : one of them being their social status in the society which prevented them from mingling with the poorer sections of society who dominated these centres. It was however difficult to come to any conclusions, during the short field-study of the project, about the non-participation of the well-to-do sections of rural community in the programme as also of the persons in the higher age-groups. This matter needs a further probe in order to take timely and corrective measures for ensuring participation of all sections of the community and of all age-groups in the programme.

Creation of Environment

One of the causes that, *prima facie*, seemed responsible for the non-participation of certain sections of community in the programme was the lack of concerted efforts in the creation of favourable environment for the programme before its launching. Discussions with the Director of Adult Education and the project staff revealed that except for some coverage on the TV, radio and a few articles contributed in the newspapers, not much work has been done in creating a favourable environment which is so necessary for the success of the programme. There have been no public meetings for establishing mass contacts with the rural communities; no public processions, like Prabhat Pheris in Gujarat, have been organised to highlight the programme; there were no publicity posters or writings of catchy slogans seen on the house-walls in the villages or of the adult education centres. Besides, there have also been no door-to-door contacts and especially no special efforts in bringing the women-folk to attend the adult education centres. It will be seen that the coverage on TV, radio and newspapers has a very limited role to play in the creation of environment. Measures like listed above, have strong potentials for motivating the people and in creating a favourable environment for the programme. It would therefore be highly desirable that concerted efforts are made in this direction.

Identification of Organisers

A profile of the organisers of the 10 centres visited may throw some light about their role and contribution in the programme :

- (1) Smt. A. Kalawati, middle-aged organiser of a female centre in village Nacharan is middle pass (10th class fail), and is working as full-time Balwadi teacher appointed by the Social Welfare Advisory Board on a monthly emolument of Rs. 400/- per month. She had her earlier training by the Social Welfare Department as Balwadi teacher, in addition to the training received by her for her role as organiser of adult education centre. The honorarium received as organiser supplements her income.
- (2) Km. Mary Sarojini—a young Christian lady in Ashok Nagar hamlet of Malapur village is also middle-pass but had earlier training as technical teacher in craft work. She is proficient in tailoring and embroidery work and is taking private tuitions in these crafts. The remunerations as organiser of adult education centre supplement her income from private tuitions.
- (3) Km. Suzana Wesley of Malapur village is 10th class pass and is working as day-time teacher in a school, about 3 kilometers from her home, between 9.00 AM to 3.30 PM. She conducts the centre from 7.00 PM to 9.00 PM and supplements the honorarium received as organiser to her salary as a full-time teacher.
- (4) Shri M. Krishnamurthi—a young Brahmin by caste is 10th class pass and is organising a male centre exclusively for Harijan learners in Malapur village. During the day, he works as an attendant on a salary of Rs. 150/- per month and supplements this income by remuneration drawn as organiser.
- (5) Shri Anjaneyulu, a young man works as peon in the Panchayat Ghar and is 9th class pass. He is the organiser of the male centre being run in the Panchayat Ghar itself and takes his centre at 7.00 PM after finishing his full-time work in Panchayat Ghar from 9.30 AM to 5.30 PM. and, thus, supplements his salary as peon with

the remuneration drawn as organiser of the adult education centre.

- (6) Smt. V. Sharda Devi, a middle-aged Brahmin lady runs a female adult education centre exclusively for Harijan community in the village Sahabnagar. She is the wife of the village Patwari and works as Balwadi teacher in the Panchayat Raj Samiti at an honorarium of Rs. 50/- per month. This income is supplemented by the honorarium drawn as organiser of adult education centre.
- (7) Shri Sudhir Rao, a young man, runs the male adult education centre in the same village viz. Sahabnagar and is 10th class pass. He is not employed on any other work during the day.
- (8) Shri Sadanandan Gaud is a 9th class student and has no other income except the honorarium drawn as organiser.
- (9) Km. Lakshmi Narsama is a young girl having just passed 10th class and has also got training in radio and TV. She is unemployed during the day; runs the female centre in the verandah of her own house during the evening, and enjoys her work as instructor.
- (10) Shri Shankaraji is an inter-final student; runs his own poultry farm with about 200 birds during the day, and takes the male centre at night from 7.00 PM to 9.00 P.M. He also supplements his income from poultry-farm with the honorarium drawn as organiser.

The profiles of the above mentioned organisers would show that (i) none of the organisers, excepting one, is working as teacher in a formal school; two of them (*i.e.* 20%) are students; (ii) 8 out of 10 (*i.e.* 80%) are supplementing their income with the honorarium drawn as organisers; and (iii) 2 of them (*i.e.* 20%) are unemployed youth who have no other income. Another observation about the identification of organisers relates to

their general attitude and approach to the work they are engaged in. The younger organisers who are either students or have just passed the school seem more enthusiastic about their work and exhibited qualities of idealism and social work. By and large, their performance at the centres was also better as compared to other organisers in the middle-aged group. For the middle-aged organisers, the motive of earning extra money to supplement their income seem to weigh more than their desired attitude, or approach for voluntary social work. It has also been observed that the young organisers who had their earlier training in some handicraft are more helpful to their group in imparting skills in handicraft to their learners as, for instance, was the case with Km. Mary Sarojini, the organiser of a female centre at Malapur.

Centres—Their Locations and General Environment

The field-study revealed that none of the 10 centres visited has been located in a primary school. Four of these centres have been located in the village Panchayat Ghar and all these four centres have also the advantage of electricity. Three of the centres were being held in the open with no roof over the head. In times of rain, storm or unfavourable weather, they have no alternative but to disperse the group or not to hold the centre on such days. However, one of these centres which was being run on the terrace of a house with improvised electric light extended upto the terrace with the courtesy of the house-owner, would not close down during the vagaries of the weather, as the instructor would shift the centre to her own hut located nearby. The remaining centres have been located in the houses of the organisers themselves. There was a genuine demand from the organisers of the centres located in the open for a thatched hut or some sort of improvised shelter for the centre. The primary schools, being located away from the present location of the centres, the local inhabitants prefer to organise a centre in open than walking a distance upto the school at night.

Four out of the ten centres visited had the advantage of electricity but the remaining six centres had poor lighting arrangements

as not all the lanterns supplied to the centres were found working. At one of the Harijan Wada centres, the Harijan community requested that if an electric meter is installed in the room provided by the community for running the adult education centre at a non-recurring lump-sum cost of Rs. 200/-, the community in return would meet the monthly electricity charges. Such like adjustments could perhaps be possible within the financial pattern of the scheme especially where there is enthusiasm shown by the village community to get themselves involved into the programme by small offers as in this case of the community's offer to meet the monthly electricity charges.

Similar approaches in dealing with various field situations could also help in providing roof for the centres currently being held in open and for providing electric light in the villages where electricity is available but the centres are being run with lanterns. There is a good scope for the local community coming forward with offers of small help in cash or kind provided a positive approach is made by the project administration.

Apart from the inadequate lighting arrangements in the centres where lanterns were being used, the general environment of all the centres visited also left much to be desired. Apart from the blackboard, there were no wall-charts or posters etc. which could enliven the general atmosphere of the centre. Again, not all the learners in the centre had their primers with them. It was reported that only 5-6 primers have been supplied to each centre as against the requirement of 30 per centre. Similar was the situation in regard to the supply of work-books; the few that were available at the centres, had also been supplied only a week or so before. The centres have yet to be supplied the supplementary readers. This delay in the supply of requisite teaching-learning materials including wall-charts, posters etc. affected generally the fuller growth and development of the centres.

Community Involvement

The level of community involvement and participation in the programme in the villages depends on the approach of the project

staff and especially the front-line workers in the villages. In the villages visited during the field-study, some problems were raised which could best be dealt with the cooperation of the local community. In one female centre, a request was made for the provision of a box for keeping safely the teaching-learning materials, note-books, chalks, pencils which the learners left with the organiser after the day's work. The Vice Sarpanch of the village was requested that such like small things could be made available by the community themselves to which his reaction was that at no stage has he been approached to extend cooperation in the programme. He mentioned that he was not even aware of the objectives and scope of the programme and how far and in what manner the village community's cooperation was expected. However, when the programme was explained to him, he readily agreed to extend as much cooperation to the programme as possible including the provision of box for the centre being run in his village. Another observation that came to light, while visiting the centres, was that the learners were all squatting on the floor without any mattress. In this field also, the local community's cooperation would not be wanting provided a positive approach is made by the project administration both in explaining the programme to them and in enlisting their cooperation. Similarly, local community's cooperation could also be had in locating sheltered places for the adult education centres including the verandah of the villagers' houses. The discussions with the village community amply showed that such cooperation was not wanting. What was needed was concerted effort on the part of project administration to approach the community in a befitting manner.

The trend of discussions in the Directorate of Adult Education showed that the administration was not favourably disposed to enlisting voluntary effort in the implementation of the project. The policy and approach of the Directorate in this regard seemed far from positive and even confused, particularly with reference to one of the oldest voluntary agencies in the State *viz.* Andhra Mahila Sabha. While the Directorate felt that the Andhra Mahila Sabha was no longer an effective organisation for handling adult education projects, yet their application was recommended to the

Central Government for financial assistance for undertaking three projects of 100 adult education centres each. There is need to evolve a clear-cut policy and approach in involving voluntary organisations in the programme so that this important source of involvement of local community, wherever available, is not left untapped.

Literacy Attainments

Considering that the programme had started only a couple of months before, the overall literacy attainments at all the 10 centres visited could not be rated unsatisfactory although there was no uniformity in the rate of progress between one centre or the other. In numeracy, most of the learners in all the 10 centres have learnt upto 100 and were even able to do simple additions upto two digits. In writing, almost all of them could write their own names and simple words of day-to-day use. However, the rate of progress could have been faster if essential inputs have been provided to each centre. The factors that impeded the rate of progress to the desired level included : firstly, the short supply of sufficient teaching-learning material to each centre; and secondly, the use of traditional teaching methods by the organisers. Although the primer has been based on the analytical method, the organisers, by and large, used the traditional primary school methods of beginning with alphabets and then proceeding to the recognition of words and use of sentences. It seems that in the training programme for the organisers, the correct teaching method has not been adequately emphasised and the teachers preferred to use the alphabetical method which they had been used to in their own schooling. None of the organisers has been supplied the teachers' guide which would have helped them in this regard. The teachers' guide was still under print. It is necessary to take early corrective measures in this regard in order to accelerate the rate of progress in the attainment of literacy at the centres.

Functionality and Social Awareness

The visit to the selected centres showed that all of them were growing into mere literacy centres as an effort seemed to have

been made to give to the learners a complete package of adult education including literacy, functional development and social awareness. In a meeting of the extension workers from different development departments, it was obvious that none of them had been involved to supplement and enrich the teaching being done by the instructors. Enquiries from the organisers showed that not a single extension worker from any development department has ever shown his face at any of these centres. In the sphere of social awareness concerted efforts have to be made to disseminate among the learners, the legal, administrative and economic measures devised by various departments and intended to secure social justice through a programme of meaningful education so that they could responsibly organise themselves against exploitation social inequalities and injustice. Again, visits by the extension workers of the Social Welfare, Family Planning and Health Departments have to supplement the instructors' teaching in making the learners aware of the benefits of small family norm, primary health care, including education in nutrition, sanitation, better awareness of the use of indigenous remedies for common ailments and physical exercises etc. etc. There is also an ample scope for extension workers in helping the learners at the adult education centres in creating environment for massive programme in self employment in such fields as improved agriculture, dairying, fisheries, village industries etc. etc. by imparting to the learners new skills and upgradation of traditional ones. While there exists a huge potential for supplementation of organisers' teaching by the grass-root level functionaries of different departments, there is almost nothing that has been done so far in the Hayathnagar project. The need for inter-departmental cooperation was stressed both at the meeting of the local extension workers at the block headquarters as well as at the meeting of the District Adult Education Board. At both these meetings, there seemed sufficient realisation of this very important aspect of the adult education programme and a pledge was taken to adopt concrete measures for such inter-departmental cooperation. In this connection, the role of the District Adult Education Officer was viewed as of crucial importance. It was felt that the inter-departmental cooperation should not be left merely to the expression of pious pledges, but

should be concretised. The District Adult Education Officer, with the help of the District Collector, should play a pivotal role. He must sit down with development functionaries of every department both at the district and block levels and work out a practical "visits schedule" for each functionary to the adult education centres. The District Adult Education Officer would work out these different schedules with his counterparts at the district levels and would ensure their proper and continuous follow-up by the development functionaries at the grass-root level. Such matters of inter-departmental cooperation should be reported periodically to the District Adult Education Committee by the District Adult Education Officer so that the participation of each development department, represented by their heads in the District Adult Education Committee, could be reviewed in the presence of the District Collector. It was also felt that discretion has to be used both for selection of personnel from development departments who would visit and address learners at the adult education centres so that such persons who suffer from certain handicaps like lack of credibility with the villagers may not be allowed to visit these centres and address the learners. Similarly, efforts should also be made to ensure that only relevant subjects are discussed with the learners in the adult education centres. These suggestions were especially made by the State Education Secretary who desired that in seeking inter-departmental cooperation, only right type of persons are identified and only the relevant materials are disseminated to the learners. It is hoped that with the taking of the concrete measures, as discussed in the various meetings held at the block, district and State levels, the adult education programme in Hayathnagar block would receive a fuller package comprising not merely literacy but also other equally important components of functional development and social awareness.

Administrative Culture

In a programme of mass contact like adult education, it is of utmost importance that the role of administration should be more of "enabling" than "enforcing". It has been observed that the administrative leadership and approach provided by the Directorate of Adult Education is typically traditional and bureaucratic

as also non-flexible. The feed-back which is absolutely necessary for continuous improvement of the field programme, is not forthcoming to the Directorate of Adult Education; as the field staff do not seem to enjoy the freedom to discuss freely and frankly the different field situations of day-to-day nature in order to find remedial solutions. The field situations arising out of the non-cooperation of other development departments; lack of sheltered accommodation for the centres; want of adequate teaching-learning materials; absence of measures for creating suitable environment in the villages in including door-to-door visits to the houses; desirability of providing electricity to the centres which are within the reach of electricity; and several other day-to-day matters have to be continuously reported and discussed both at the project level as well as at the level of Directorate of Adult Education. But this free and frank dialogue by the project staff with the Directorate of Adult Education does not seem to take place. For the fuller success of the programme, immediate corrective measures will have to be taken to devise an absolutely new administrative culture appropriate to a programme of mass contact like the NAEP.

Conclusions

The various observations including strong and weak points of the programme were discussed at a concluding meeting held under the chairmanship of Shri M. Gopalakrishnan, State Education Secretary, which was attended by the Director, Directorate of Adult Education, the two Project Officers and the District Adult Education Officer. It was gratifying to note that the State Education Secretary was very much appreciative of the observations made during the field-study and assured fullest support in improving the programme especially in taking immediate remedial measures for correcting deficiencies found during the field-study. Briefly, the following specific conclusions emerged at this meeting :

- (1) All-out efforts should be made to create a favourable environment for the adult education programme in the rural areas. The State Government has recently brought out a folder on the NAEP in Telugu which could serve

as a good publicity material in disseminating information about the aims and objectives of the programme, its scope etc. But much more concerted efforts have to be made in popularising the programme through mass-media; through door-to-door contacts by the project personnel; through public meetings and processions; and through the publication of appropriate publicity posters and their display in the rural areas to motivate the local communities to participate in the programme.

- (2) The motivational publicity material should specifically aim at attracting all the sections of the rural community to the adult education centres, irrespective of the social status or other inhibitions. It should also emphasise that the programme was open to all age-groups of adults, especially the persons in the age-group 15—35, who have missed education in their earlier years.
- (3) The cost on the publicity and motivational material including posters etc. could be met by making marginal adjustments within the overall ceilings of the grant available for each project and also out of the contingencies earmarked in the financing pattern.
- (4) Quick action has to be taken in printing adequate number of copies of all teaching-learning materials including primers, supplementary readers, work-books and teachers' guides and to ensure that each adult education centre gets full complement of such materials. Any further delay in supplying to each adult learner all the learning materials necessary for him is likely to stifle the initial enthusiasm of the learners.
- (5) While a faster rate of progress in literacy attainments may be aimed in adult education centres, the learners must get a complete package of literacy, functional development and social awareness. Towards this

end, a system should be suitably devised which should make possible the continuous cooperation of field level functionaries of various development departments in supplementing and enriching the learning imparted at the centres by the organisers. It was proposed that periodical meetings of field level functionaries should be held from time to time to review this particular aspect of the programme.

- (6) There was consensus on the importance of continuous feed-back about the field situations from the project level up to the Directorate of Adult Education. The project personnel including organisers, supervisors and the Project and District Adult Education Officer should all have an opportunity to discuss the problems and difficulties encountered by them in the field in order to find timely corrective measures. The Directorate of Adult Education may adopt a more open-door policy in encouraging a free dialogue on the field situations and take positive measures in continuously improving the field situation. The Project personnel may make all-out efforts to enlist the maximum cooperation of the local community in solving some of the day-to-day problems of the field. Measures may be taken to explain appropriately the aims, objectives and scope of the adult education programme to the village leadership including Panchayat leaders, voluntary agencies (if any), youth leaders, Mahila Mandals and such other organisers functioning at the local level.
- (7) Project administration could also provide leadership in initiating suitable measures to activate the learners' groups by making the group members not only aware of their rights and responsibilities but also to help them to organise themselves into active pressure groups in order to have access to the benefits and facilities offered by the Government through various.

development agencies and programmes. It would be worthwhile if learners formed themselves into an active group by electing their own management committee consisting of 2-3 of their own representatives, along with the organisers for day-to-day management of the centre; and for organising group activities; from time to time. For this purpose, each learner could make a nominal contribution every month to the common fund of the centre, as this would give each one of them a sense of real participation in the work of the centre. The common fund could be partly used for purchase of daily newspaper for the centre for dissemination of topical news with the help of the organiser and for any of the group activity organised especially on festive occasions.

- (8) The non-availability of vehicle to the project is seriously affecting the progress. Action has to be taken to obtain expeditiously all the vehicles for which orders have been placed by the State Government. In case there is any difficulty, the State Government may write to the Ministry of Education, who in turn, will request the Ministry of Industrial Development to allot the vehicles to the State Government on a priority basis.

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- all other project personnel and a host of others—official and non-official—whose names cannot be mentioned for want of space but who did contribute their best in making the study a fruitful mission.

3

Field-study of the Rural Functional Literacy Project in Kishtwar-Chatroo Blocks, District Doda, Jammu and Kashmir (June 16 to 23, 1980)

Programme Schedule

The programme schedule for undertaking the field-study included :

- (a) visit to 8 adult education centres—6 in Kishtwar block and 2 in Chatroo block, including one centre run by the Government Handicrafts Department in collaboration with the Education Department. The 8 centres visited included 2 male centres and 6 female centres. These visits were utilised for discussions with the learners, instructors and community leaders in the respective clusters of areas.
- (b) meeting at the State level held at Srinagar under the chairmanship of State Education Commissioner. Shri Satya Bhushan which was attended by Shri G. M. Mir, Joint Director (Adult Education), Shri Nanak Singh, Deputy Director (Adult Education), Shri M. A. Dev, Assistant Director (Adult Education) and Shri M. N. Khajuria, Assistant Director (Adult Education). At this meeting, the strategy for undertaking the field-study in the context of difficult, hilly terrains and other peculiar problems of the area was finalised.
- (c) meeting at the project level with Shri Moti Lal Raina, District Education Officer, Doda; Shri G. N. Rishoo,

District Project Officer, Doda; Shri Bashir Ahmed Khatih, Project Officer, Mohr; Shri Raiz Ahmed Tak, Assistant Project Officer, Doda; Shri Nabi Trak, Supervisor, Kishtwar; and Shri Mohiud Din, Supervisor, Chatroo.

- (d) visit to the District Institute of Education, Kishtwar and meeting with the Principal and Senior Master Incharge of Adult Education Cell in the Institute. These discussions covered the programme of the Institute for promoting adult education programme in the district including the running of 10 adult education centres by the Institute as model centres for the district.
- (e) concluding meeting with State Education Commissioner at Jammu on June 22, 1980.

During all these visits and meetings, the liaison officer nominated by the State Government, Shri M. N. Khajuria accompanied the author along with two District Project Officers of Doda and Mohr. In fact, the four constituted a study-team for the purpose of undertaking this field-study of RFLP in Kishtwar and Chatroo Blocks.

Perspective

The presentation of this field-study has to be, in several ways, different from the earlier two similar studies :

- firstly, the first two studies in Morwah Block in Bihar and Hayathnagar Block in Andhra Pradesh were both in the plain areas; while this study of Kishtwar-Chatroo blocks in Jammu and Kashmir was in extremely difficult terrain: the centres having been located in hilly, inaccessible and backward areas of the district. This has its bearing on the efficiency of the supervision of adult education centres;

- secondly, the topography of the area is such that the centres remain cut off from the outside world during winter due to heavy snow-fall and lack of communication links :
- the third peculiar characteristic of the area is that the majority of the population of the district (estimated to be over 60%) move to the highland pastures with their cattle and livestock or go out of the district as labourers with the forest contractors for a period of about 5—6 months during a year. The population that moves to highland is generally scattered, making it difficult for learners of a particular habitation to assemble at a particular point. These people return to their homes after 5 or 6 months. Thus the migratory characteristic of the local population affects the continuity in the learning programme :
- another important characteristic of the learners' population is that hand-work and handicrafts are in their blood, particularly of the women folk. Therefore the handicraft activities form part of adult education centres, particularly at the female centres ;
- bi-linguism is another characteristic of the area of study. Some centres are using Hindi, the others Urdu ; while there are some centres in which some learners are learning in Hindi and the others in Urdu. This feature of bi-linguism has also its effect on the learning process.

The Rural Functional Literacy Project in Kishtwar-Chatroo blocks will have to be appreciated in the context of the above mentioned perspective of peculiar population characteristics, topography and difficulties of terrain : as all these factors have a direct or indirect bearing on the implementation of the project.

Centres' Profile

The problems arising out of the peculiar conditions and characteristics of the learners population and of the topography will be discussed later. Before that, it would, perhaps be worthwhile to go round the adult education centres visited by the study-team :

- (1) Smt. Sushila Kumare, a middle-aged instructor of a female centre in Brahman Mohalla is matriculate and has been running the centre in the verandah of her own house, from September 1979. She is also trained in tailoring at the Industrial Training Institute. She is otherwise unemployed and the honorarium drawn by her as instructor is the only source of income for her. At the beginning of the course, she had 25 learners enrolled but at present there are only 18, as 7 had dropped out; 4 of them were married and the other 3 left and joined the handicrafts centre run by the State Handicrafts Department. As the instructor is ITI trained, the learners have the additional advantage of learning cutting, tailoring and stitching including needle-work from the instructor. The learning material provided to the learners includes the primer "*Jaan Pahchan*", in Hindi which is basically meant for children and adopts the primary school methods of learning from alphabets to construction of words and sentences. The attainments in the literacy skills at the centre were quite satisfactory as the learners could write short simple sentences ; count up to 1000 and do additions and subtractions up to three digits. The reading level was also up to the desired level. As already mentioned, apart from learning literacy and numeracy skills, the learners at this centre were also getting training in needle-work, cutting and stitching of clothes. The learners however were desirous that they should be provided with tailoring machine; the instructor felt that if this was provided, the inte-

rest of the learners in the adult education centre will immensely increase and it would also serve as motivation for increased enrolment. On enquiries from the instructor and learners, it was revealed that, apart from what they were themselves doing in the functional upgradation of skills, no other outside agency was helping them to supplement their efforts. Excepting one visit by the Block Medical Lady Officer at this centre during the 9 months' duration of the course, no other block or village level functionary from any other development department or agency had visited this centre. As most of the learners in this centre came from households owning land, the women folk had some knowledge of different types of agricultural inputs and methods but their knowledge was not sufficient. They were all desirous that if officials from the Agriculture or Extension Departments visited them and gave them knowledge in their respective fields, this would greatly help them to assist their menfolk in their fields. Similarly, the learners were eager to have knowledge about health, hygiene, proper care of their children and for this purpose needed the help of concerned agencies to supplement their knowledge.

- (2) Miss Santosh Kumari—a young girl in Hirayal area is matric pass and has ITI training diploma in cutting and tailoring. She is otherwise unemployed and the honorarium drawn by her as instructor is the only source of income for her. She also runs the female centre in her own house. The learners in this centre have the additional advantage of the tailoring machine, which is provided by the instructor for use of the learners at the centre. The instructor is a very active and enthusiastic worker and seemed to take interest not for the sake of remuneration but for the love of work. Several samples of cut-work on paper and cloth were shown to the visiting team.

along with samples of stitched clothes. Apart from tailoring, the learners' group at this centre had also made certain items of handicrafts including *Chakkla*—*Phoori* or *Binnaa* i.e. the seats made of straws and other locally available floral materials. The attendance at this centre in the register was 21 but the actual attendance as per the instructors' report, was usually 15 to 16 on any day. The centre had run for a duration of 8 months, having started in October 1979. Four of the learners were using the Urdu Primer "*Jaan Pahchan*" while the remaining learners used the Hindi Primer. This was a bi-lingual centre—some learning through the Hindi medium and others through the Urdu medium. While the instructor was conversant with the Hindi medium, she was handicapped in teaching to the learners through the Urdu medium. The instructor was trying hard herself to learn Urdu in order to be able to teach the learners in that language; as her own knowledge of Urdu was, at present, very meagre. While the four learners using the Urdu medium were handicapped, the literacy and numeracy levels of the learners of the Hindi group was fairly satisfactory as they could all write short simple sentences and do the reading at a desirable level of speed and to count up to 1000 including additions and subtractions up to three digits.

- (3) Smt. Nirmala Devi, a matriculate and ITI trained in calico printing, runs the female centre at her own house in Berabata. She has also made available to the learners her own sewing machine for cutting and tailoring work. She has also brought her training in ITI to use by instructing the learners in making handicraft bags and in making *Gabbas* (a thick cloth with inlaid embroidery with different coloured threads). The centre had run for six months at the time of visit and had an enrolment of 20 including

a couple of elderly women 60-65 years old. The level of literacy attainments at this centre was not as satisfactory as in the earlier two centres. The learners could write up to 100 only and could do additions up to two digits. They could all write their own names and short sentences of not more than 3-4 very simple words. Like the other earlier two centres visited, the instructor and the learners have had no advantage of any supplementation to their learning through any other development department or agency. However, the young instructor was doing all her best in imparting literacy and vocational skills to the learners; and had made available to the learners, a room in her own house, her sewing machine and even her own radio for use by the learners. Both the instructor and the learners were all very eager that if, from time to time, persons from the development departments like Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Health etc. visited their centre, they would greatly benefit from their knowledge. The elderly women attending the centre were keen to learn and were coming daily to the centre as they said they were free from all liabilities and enjoyed coming to the centre and learning both literacy and functional skills.

- (4) Miss Pamila Devi—a young matriculate girl with one year of practical training at the handicrafts centre—runs the female centre at Bigana and helps the learners not only in improving literacy skills but also in teaching them handicrafts particularly the *Gabba* work in making cloth bags. The centre had been functioning since January 1980 i.e. for a period of about five months. The learners have acquired literacy in reading and writing of alphabets and construction of short words of 2-3 letters, and could write up to 50. The progress in literacy, as related to the period spent was not up to the desired level.

However, the group, as a whole, had shown keen interest in improving their functional skills in making handicraft articles and had also shown better social awareness than in some other centres visited. Interestingly, the young learners seemed conscious about improving their living standards through planned parenthood, although interviews with the male learners at the male centres visited subsequently have shown that they were neither conscious nor interested in small family norms. The centre had 20 learners on its roll and it seemed that all of them regularly attended the centre.

- (5) Smt. Vijayalakshmi—a young girl having passed matriculation in 1979 and having got earlier training in needle work, knitting and embroidery has been running the female centre at Panditgaon since April 1980. The centre has an enrolment of 20 female learners but usually the attendance does not exceed 15 to 16 on any day. As in other centres the learners are keenly interested in handicrafts and carry on these activities along with improving literacy and numeracy skills. At this centre, the learners could do numeracy up to 50, while their reading and writing skills were quite satisfactory, as related to the period of learning *i.e.* about 2 months.
- (6) The next centre visited was a female centre run by the Handicrafts Department in collaboration with the Education Department at Bandarra. This centre has 25 female trainees out of which 21 are illiterate. The age-group of the trainees is 14-18. Each trainee gets a stipend of Rs. 60/- per month from the Handicrafts Department, out of which Rs. 30/- is paid in cash every month and the remaining Rs. 30/- is deposited in the name of trainee. The only conditions for being admitted in this centre are that the trainee should be in the age-group 14-18 and should

sign an agreement for joining the training course for full one year and afterwards in forming a workers' cooperative society for the manufacture and marketing of handicraft materials. The amount deposited into each trainee's personal account is pooled at the end of the year and this amount (which is about Rs. 8,000 for a group of 25 trainees) is used as the initial investment by the Cooperative Society for the purchase of raw materials etc. for making handicraft goods. The sale of the produce is undertaken by the Association of Cooperative Societies which in turn sell the goods to State Emporia and other outlets. The Cooperatives' Association sometimes also give advance in the form of cloth or other raw materials to the Cooperative Societies for manufacture of goods, on order basis. The daily training period at the centre is from 9.00 AM to 4.00 PM. During this period 1½ hours is set aside for literacy training to the illiterate trainees. The Assistant Craft Master, Km. Nazia Nishad engaged at the centre for craft training at a salary of Rs. 650/- per month acts as the instructor for the literacy training. For this assignment, she gets an additional honorarium of Rs. 50/- paid by the Education Department. The learning materials to the trainees is also provided by the Education Department. The learners are using, as at other centres, the primer "*Jaan Pahchan*" in both Hindi and Urdu as out of 21 learners, four use the Hindi medium and the remaining 17 use the Urdu medium. The instructor is not versed in Hindi medium; and takes the help of one of the four Hindi knowing educated trainees to help the learners using Hindi medium. The literacy attainments at this centre is by far the best of all the centres visited. The centre has been functioning for the last 3-4 months and the learners could read short simple sentences at the desired level of speed. They could count upto 100 and simple additions and subtractions upto two

digits. Their writing skills were also superior to that of the learners at the other centres that the team visited. On the whole, the learners showed as much interest and enthusiasm in acquiring literacy and numeracy skills as in handicraft training. In short this centre run jointly by the Handicrafts and Education departments is a welcome innovation in the field of adult education. The homogeneity of the group and its long term association in a joint economic activity through cooperative, attributed to the rapid rate of progress both in vocational training and literacy skills.

- (7) The next centre visited was that of Seea, a male centre at Chatroo block, run by Mohd. Shahan who is 8th class pass. This centre which has been running for the last 4-5 months has an enrolment of 27 adults, although usually the daily attendance remains at 15-20 adults. The instructor also runs a non-formal part-time education centre for children in the age-group 6-14 in the same habitation which has an enrolment of 19 children. The instructor thus gets a remuneration of Rs. 100/- per month, Rs. 50/- for taking adult education centre and Rs. 50/- for taking the non-formal part-time centre for children. By and large, the learners at this centre were above 35 in age with few exceptions in the lower age-group. On discussions with the learners and instructor, it was revealed that the persons in the younger age-group who were enrolled in the centre were busy in their jobs as they have been employed as labourers by the Public Works Department in road making. The occupational position of the group members who were present at the centre showed that most of them were engaged in Sericulture. They would rear the silk worms on Mulberry leaves for a fixed period and then sell their produce to the Government Department at a fixed price per Kg. Occasionally, the centre is visited

by the technical functionaries of the Sericulture Department to help them in improving the rearing of silk worms. The departmental officers also visit the habitation when the produce is ready for sale. The literacy attainments at this centre were however not satisfactory as compared to the duration of 4-5 months since the start of this centre. Only few of them attained numeracy level up to 100 but could not do simple additions or subtractions. The writing skills were much below the desired level. They have, however, been taught to write their names. So was the case with reading skill. The group members were however aware of their lack of early education and the handicaps they suffered because of that. They were conscious that their habitation with a population of about 150 was neglected as it was cut off from the mainland and they had no earlier opportunity to learn as they had no school within the area of 4 Km. They were also conscious, as some of them explained, that they have been exploited by the money-lenders who charged them exorbitant interest on loans. They all seemed eager to improve their functional skills in the occupations they were engaged in but regretted that no-one visited their centre except from the Sericulture Department.

- (8) The last centre visited was another male centre in Chingam Thana which is an exclusive Harijan centre run by a Harijan instructor, Shri Prem Nath who is 8th class pass and is by occupation a labourer. He finds time for running the centre as he is perhaps the only person available in that habitation who is educated up to 8th standard. Most of the learners in this group were labourers engaged in road construction and repair work. However, some of them are also small and petty farmers having two or two-and-a-half kanals of land.

The centre has been functioning since April 1986, i.e. only for a period of two months. The centre has not been provided primers so far. On discussions, it was found that the Hindi primer "*Jaan Pahchan*" had been supplied to the centre, although the learners at the centre needed the Urdu primer. This has been done through mistake by the project management who promised to rectify this error immediately. No wonder, the literacy level at this centre was poor both in reading and writing skills as well as in numeracy. The centre has not been visited by any field level functionary of any development department or agency except once by a Block Development Officer, whose visit, as reported by the learners, proved very useful and encouraging to them. The learners at the group were also aware of the exploitation which has been suffered by them at the hands of the money-lenders as also at the hands of the shopkeepers. They hoped that their education at the centre would be able to save them eventually from the exploiters.

As will be seen, going round the adult education centres had been a revealing experience in several ways :

Literacy Attainments

While the literacy and numeracy attainments at the female centres has been, by and large, satisfactory the same has not been so at the male centres. The learners in the female centres mostly belong to the target age-group of 15-35, with a few exceptions of elderly women observed in a couple of centres. The male learners' groups consisted mainly of those in the 35-50 age-group, with the younger age-group in 15-35 forming exceptions. One of the reasons for a better rate of progress at the female centres as compared to male centres could probably be due to variations in the age-group of the learners at the female and male centres.

The literacy attainments at the female centres run by the Handicrafts Department in collaboration with the Education Department was better than in all other centres visited. The learners at this centre have formed themselves into an active group from the very beginning, as they are conscious of their long term association even after the completion of the craft training and learning course at the centre. They showed as much enthusiasm in acquiring literacy and numeracy skills as the craft training. The rapid rate of progress at the centre could be attributed to the economic motivation that is in-built into this group, as well as its homogeneity in terms of *age-group* (as all must belong to 14-18 age-group) and *ultimate objective* (as all must form themselves into a workers' cooperative for the manufacture and marketing of their produce; for a period of atleast three years).

Functional Development

By and large, the learners both at the male and female centres were cultivators and had lands of their own, though they could be categorised as only small and marginal farmers. Quite a number of them also keep cattle or other livestock to supplement their income. Again, the majority of them, particularly the women learners, were engaged in some handicraft activities or the other in order to supplement the family income. The assembly of female learners at the adult education centres have no doubt helped them in the upgradation of their functional skills in craft work, as the instructors engaged at most of the female centres have had their earlier training in crafts or other vocational skills at the Industrial Training Institute or at the crafts centres. However, the learners have not much benefitted in upgrading their professional skills in their main occupations *i.e.* either in farming or in animal husbandry. It is partly due to the fact that the visits of the field level functionaries of the Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Departments to the centres to enhance their professional knowledge, have been few and far between. Excepting one male centre visited by Block Lady Medical Officer once, all the centres visited by the study team have been neglected in so far as the programme envisaged functional development of learners with the help of the field level functionaries of development de-

partments and agencies functioning at the village, block and district levels.

Social Awareness

Mainly because of the lack of interest by the development departments and agencies in the field, the general level of social awareness among the learners has not shown much improvement. However, interestingly, the consciousness among the female learners about improving their standards of living and health through planned families seemed higher than among male learners. The male learners interviewed, still seemed to believe in large families as this gave them more family hands to earn. Again, the female learners showed keen interest to learn agricultural methods and inputs as also about the improvement of health of their families and their livestock. They would welcome visits by experts to the centres in these areas who could help them in improving their family health, living standards or in raising their professional competence in their occupations. There was a spontaneous response from the learners at all the centres to the idea of having a daily newspaper at the centre to help raising their level of general awareness. All of them readily agreed to make contribution of 40-50 paise per month towards the cost of newspaper. In the beginning, the instructor would read aloud the important news from the paper. This would eventually help the learners to get into the habit of reading newspapers by themselves.

Teaching-Learning Process

Some of the weaknesses observed in the teaching-learning process at the adult education centres, visited by the team are the following :—

- (i) The physical environment of the adult education centres visited by the team leaves much to be desired. Except for the black-board, the centre did not display any other materials like wall-charts, posters, writings etc. to make the environment of the centre lively and attractive. Besides, at some centres, even

the primers and slates were in short supply; nor was any work-books seen with the learners.

- (ii) The primer used at the centres namely "*Jaan Palichan*" both in Hindi and Urdu—is suitable for children at the primary school level but not for adults. The discussions at the State level revealed that the primer, specially brought out for adult learners, entitled "*Behtar Zindagi*" (Better Life) separately for male and female learners has already been published and was awaiting formal ceremonial release by the State Chief Minister. There has been sufficient delay in the preparation and publication of the primer suitable for adults and it is hoped that soon this weakness in the programme would be overcome.
- (iii) The teaching-learning process at the centre has followed the traditional primary school method of beginning with alphabets and proceeding to the construction of words and sentences; and this teaching method is not suitable for adults. It had its effect on the general rate of progress of literacy attainments by the adults.

Model Centres

In order to improve the pedagogical and operational efficiency of adult education centres, the Government of Jammu and Kashmir have allotted 10 adult education centres to each of the 14 District Institutes of Education set up in each district of the State. One of the District Institutes of Education is located in Kishtwar block. The team visited this Institute and had discussions with the Principal of the Institute, Shri D. C. Sharma and Senior Master Incharge of the Adult Education Cell in the Institute. The Adult Education Cell in this Institute and the 10 model adult education centres had just been started and they were at a stage of infancy. It was not possible to visit any of these centres but discussions in the Institute with the Principal

and members of the Adult Education Cell gave an idea about the planning for making the adult education centres allotted to it as model centres, for the district. The inputs available with the Institute e.g. film projector, film strips; the artists and the art materials, and the facilities available with it in fields of training, workshops, evaluation, research and publications etc. etc. are all proposed to be utilised for improving the pedagogical and operational efficiency of the 10 adult education centres. The Institute has planned to utilise the artists, available with it, in making attractive wall charts, posters and other types of visual aids which related to the teaching-learning materials used at the adult education centres and to display them prominently at each of these centres.

District Resource Consortium

This plan of creating 10 adult education centres under the direct charge of the District Institute of Education is indeed an innovation and is expected to promote the overall operational efficiency of adult education centres in each district. The Adult Education Cell in each DIE is also expected to help all other adult education centres in the district in the training of adult education functionaries, in the production of visual materials and in evaluation and research. In other words, the Institute will virtually act as the district resource consortium for improving the technical and pedagogical efficiency of the adult education centres in the district. The model centres set up directly under the Institute will act as pace-setters for all other centres in the district.

Inter-Departmental Cooperation

Another innovation in the field of adult education in the State is the direct linkage of adult education programme with two other departments viz. Handicrafts Department and the Department of Social Welfare. In the State as a whole the adult education programme has been introduced in more than 400 handicraft centres run by the Handicrafts Department. Similarly, adult education has also been introduced in quite a number of training centres run by the State Department of Social Welfare. As the report on one of the handicraft centres visited by the

team would show that this innovation has proved successful in promoting an effective inter-departmental coordination. The Education Department gets a highly motivated, captive and homogeneous group of learners for promoting adult education among them by providing inputs in the form of honorarium to the craft instructor and the teaching-learning materials. From the report on the progress of centres visited by the team, it is obvious that the adult education centres, set up under such arrangements of cooperation between the Education and the other departments, have shown better progress than the other centres.

Apart from the above instances of inter-departmental cooperation, the other area of inter-departmental cooperation has been observed in the field of training of adult education functionaries by the Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the Education Department. Since the majority of learners in the district own lands although small in size, the District Agricultural Officer, in cooperation with the Project Officer for Adult Education, organised a couple of training courses for the adult education functionaries. The entire cost on training was borne by the District Agricultural Office, thereby resulting a saving in the financial provision made in the RFLP budget. The Agriculture Department also brought a number of resource persons in the field of agriculture, extension, animal husbandry, health etc. to help the trainees acquire a practical knowledge in these areas.

However, the inter-departmental cooperation with the Agriculture Department has only been confined to the training of adult education functionaries. It has not permeated to the grass-root levels, as none of the field level functionaries from either the Agriculture Department or from the Department of Animal Husbandry, Health, Rural Development etc. etc. has ever visited any of the adult education centres, with a couple of exceptions reported above. Perhaps, this neglect has been mainly due to the fact that the District Adult Education Coordination Committee, set up a year ago under the chairmanship of District Collector, has taken least interest in this programme. The Committee has remained on paper, as during its duration

of one year, not a single meeting was held. This is a matter of serious concern and immediate measures will have to be taken to activate the District Adult Education Coordination Committee in order to promote an effective system of inter-departmental cooperation at the district, block and village levels.

Creation of Environment

Steps to create suitable environment for the adult education programme have been taken at two stages : Firstly, at the time of initial surveys for deciding the location of adult education centres when the surveyors made a door-to-door contact and impressed upon the inhabitants the importance of the programme. Secondly, when the project staff actively participated at each of the farmers training camps organised in each block in the district and made use of the presence of the large number of farmers to motivate them to join the adult education centres, set up at various places, in the block. Another activity that has helped in the creation of suitable environment for the programme is the weekly programme entitled "Navilo" (Nai Roshni or New Light) started by the Jammu Station of All India Radio in Dogri language. This weekly programme is relayed on every Saturday between 6.30 and 7.15 PM and covers extensive interviews with the adult education learners of different centres. The field team visits every week one centre and holds discussions with the learners on different matters regarding their motivation, their progress in learning, the benefits derived from the adult education centres and so on and so forth. This radio programme seems to have an impact on creating environment.

Apart from the above mentioned steps taken to create suitable environment for the programme, no efforts however have been made on a continuing basis. The motivational efforts at the time of survey or at the time of farmers training camps have been only a one-time affair. The radio programme "Navilo" also lasted for about six months and then was discontinued. Besides, this programme was in Dogri language only while most of the learners at the centres speak either Urdu, Hindi or Kashmiri language. What is needed is a continuous and sustained effort

through various means for motivating more and more persons to join the programme.

Problems

(1) Owing to the peculiar topography and difficulties arising out of the remote, hilly, inaccessible and backward areas, the operational efficiency of the project is affected in several ways.

Firstly, it is not possible to adopt a compact area approach of locating adult education centres in the district in one or two contiguous blocks. The clusters of habitations are widely scattered in vast areas and the population in any single habitation is too small to allow for opening of more than one centre. The project at present has 175 centres. These are distributed in six blocks excluding 10 centres allotted to the District Training Institute to be established as model centres. The desirability of adopting the compact area approach was discussed both at the district and project levels but due to the extreme difficulties of terrain and topography, the departure from usual compact area approach in the case of this project, would seem inescapable.

(2) Again, the topography and the difficulties of the terrain make it extremely difficult for one supervisor to supervise 30 adult education centres effectively. The public transport system is far from satisfactory. Even when it is available, the bus takes the supervisor to a nearest spot on the road-side and thereafter the supervisor has to trek the long distances through difficult and inaccessible hilly tracks to reach the centre. In areas of such difficult terrain, the standard norm of 30 centres per supervisor would be impracticable. These norms will have to be relaxed as a special case in such difficult areas and may be reduced from 30 to 20 centres per supervisor.

(3) Again, the supervisors, in such difficult remote, hilly and inaccessible areas who have to trek long distances on foot in order to reach their centres, would require additional facilities such as, special types of shoes suitable for mountainous areas. The fixed TA/DA admissible to supervisors at present under the financial pattern would not be sufficient for supervisors of these

areas, and it may be desirable to consider giving hill allowance to the supervisors in these areas in order atleast, to cover the cost on shoes. However, if that is not possible, the purchase of special types of shoes out of the fixed TA/DA might be treated as a legitimate charge on this account.

(4) The migratory character of the population to highlands pastures along with their cattle and livestock for a long period of 5-6 months in a year create special problems in this region. The course at the adult education centre has either to be interrupted for a period of five months or so and then restarted after this period when the population comes back to the low lands.

In some cases however, when the majority of the learners in one particular centre move to the highland pastures to settle at one place and where the instructor also moves to highlands in the same place, he can continue to run the centre at the new place. This has happened in some cases; but, by and large, the continuity of the programme has suffered and there is perhaps no escape from carrying out the programme in two phases of 5 months each with the interruption of five months in between.

Summing Up

As will be seen, this field-study of the Rural Functional Literacy Project in Kishtwar—Chatroo Blocks of Doda district in Jammu and Kashmir show strong and weak points as well as a few special problems peculiar to the area. The weak points of the programme relate generally to the teaching-learning process including unsuitability of presently used reading materials; absence of other teaching aids like teaching charts and supplementary learning materials; indifference of the field level functionaries of development departments and agencies to supplement the teaching of instructors; and inadequacy of supervision and guidance to the centres due to lack of communications and difficulties of terrains. All these deficiencies in the programme will have to be overcome by taking immediate corrective measures as suggested above.

The strong points of the programme are : (i) almost all the adult education centres particularly the female centres are not merely learning centres but are learning-cum-vocational training centres; (ii) the linkages established with the Departments of Handicrafts and Social Welfare make adult education an integral part of the craft and training centre; (iii) the establishment of model adult education centres in the district under the aegis of the District Institute of Education; and (iv) creation of a special cell on adult education in the District Institute of Education to serve as a district resource consortium for improving the teaching learning process at the adult education centres.

The special problems as revealed through the field study would also deserve special attention in order to take corrective measures, as suggested above, in order to improve the operational efficiency of the project.

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