

TOWARDS MEETING A COMMITMENT

Achievements Under Education for All

A Status Paper

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Ministry of Human Resource Development
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“India is now in the midst of major economic restructuring. We have realised that promotion of education and literacy holds the key to the success of our economic reforms programme..... At the Education for All Summit in New Delhi last December, I had announced that we are committed to the goal of allocating 6 per cent of our GNP to education by the turn of this century. To meet this objective, the nation as a whole must assume the responsibility of providing resource support for basic education. That this can be done is best illustrated by the saga of Total Literacy Campaigns. It is the zeal and dedication of these millions of participants in the National Literacy Mission that has brought about a sea change in the public perception of adult literacy. Universal adult literacy is no longer perceived to be a hopeless dream but an achievable task. The same zeal is to be sought for universalisation of elementary education. This would involve massive social mobilisation: the grand alliance of the government, NGOs, volunteers and learners; the confluence of folk culture, communication and education and the linkage between other developmental issues.”

P.V. Narasimha Rao

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA
(Keynote address at the meeting
of ‘The Educated Child-Towards
Fulfilling a Promise’ organised by
Rajiv Gandhi Foundation and
Jawahar Bhavan Trust)

November 14, 1994

EDUCATION FOR ALL
The Indian Perspective

EDUCATION FOR ALL - THE INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

With Independence, we inherited a system of education which was not only meagre in its reach but it was also marked by the persistence of a large intra and inter-regional as well as structural imbalances. Only 14% of the population was literate and only one child out of three had been enrolled in primary schools. The low levels of participation and literacy were aggravated by sharp regional and gender disparities.

Mahatma Gandhi, the architect of India's Independence, considered education as a tool for the development of consciousness and reconstruction of society. Stress has accordingly been placed on reform and restructuring of the educational system as part of state intervention.

The need for a literate population and universal education for all children in the age group of 6-14 was therefore recognised as a crucial input for nation building and was given due consideration in the

Constitution as well as in the successive five year plans. This has resulted in manifold increase of spatial spread, infrastructural facilities and increased coverage of various social groups.

Though the parliament is empowered to legislate on education, the Centre has been relying on a consensual process to promote educational development. The concept of concurrence was given an operational meaning by the National Policy on Education, 1986. This policy envisaged concurrence as a "meaningful partnership between the Centre and the States" and placed on the Union Government, a major responsibility with regard to the national and integrative character of education and improvement of quality and standards.

Accomplishments since Independence in 1947 in terms of literacy, spread of institutions, participation and equalisation of educational opportunities have

been quite significant. Literacy rate has nearly trebled; number of teachers has gone up five fold and number of schools three fold. The outlay on education in the eighth plan is 128 times that of the first plan expenditure.

Despite impressive achievements the goal of providing basic education to all has not yet been achieved. In this context the historic EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA) Summit of Nine High Population Countries was held in New Delhi on 16th December 1993 which adopted the Delhi Declaration and Framework of Action.

The declaration calls for ensuring a place for every child in a school or an appropriate education programme according to his or her capabilities, consolidating efforts, towards basic education for children, youth and adults from public and private sources, improving and extending literacy and adult education programmes within the context of an integrated strategy of basic education for all people, for eliminating disparities of access to basic education, for improving the quality and relevance of basic education and in all actions to

accord to human development the highest priority at national and other levels, ensuring that a growing share of national and community resources is dedicated to basic education and improving the management of existing resources for education.

An important landmark at the Summit was the announcement by the Prime Minister Shri P. V. Narsimha Rao that the country would redeem the pledge to spend 6% of the GNP on education before India enters the next century.

The National Policy on Education (1986) (NPE) and the Programme of Action (1992) (POA) had in fact in essence anticipated the provisions of the Delhi Declaration and Framework of Action. The NPE resolved to ensure that free and compulsory education of satisfactory quality is provided to all children upto 14 years of age before the 21 century. Action for intensification of the NPE/POA implementation programme is already on. Some of the specific steps taken in pursuance of the Delhi Declaration include developing a collaborating mechanism for Distance Education among the nine

countries, periodic consultations among the nine countries with a view to sharing experiences, introduction of decentralised management of structures in education with a view to giving greater authority to communities and parents and making the school more accountable to the community for its performance, development of performance norms and code of conduct for teachers and development of district specific District Primary Education Programme.

The Prime Minister convened a Special Conference of Chief Minister of all States and Union Territories on February 15, 1994 to consider the follow up of the Education For All Summit, Literacy and Decentralised Management of Education. The Chief Ministers decided that coordinated and concerted action will be needed on the part of local community, State Governments and the Central Government in the mobilization of resources for education and to accord higher priority to primary and adult education.

The NPE, 1986, as updated in 1992, provides for several key strategies. These include:

- (i) decentralisation with the District as the unit of planning for implementation of elementary education and adult literacy;
- (ii) increasing reliance on social mobilisation to promote basic education and
- (iii) integration of adult literacy and non-formal education programmes with vital national concerns such as small family norm, health care, environment and nutrition.

In elementary education the focus now shall be two fold: firstly, achieving universal access through opening of new schools in unserved habitations, expanding the non-formal learning centre network to cater to those who cannot attend formal schools. Secondly, universal retention and achievement by improving the school environment through better infrastructure and activity based, child centred, competency-oriented teaching learning process.

The existing institutional framework is to be reformed and made fully functional to work at a higher level of efficiency. Given the centrality of teacher training the focus would be on operationalizing District Insti-

tutes of Education and Training, and other teacher training institutions as quickly as possible and ensure that they are manned by professionally sound and highly motivated personnel. The scheme of Operation Blackboard is being implemented in right earnest. Location of NFE centres, monitoring and supervision of their functioning would be given attention so that the disadvantaged groups derive maximum advantage from the scheme.

A two pronged approach of Universalisation of Elementary Education and Universal Adult Literacy is being adopted for achieving total literacy. District specific programmes have been evolved both in Primary Education and in Adult Education.

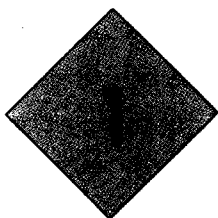
A major new initiative to achieve UEE is the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) launched in 1990-94 which seeks to operationalise the strategy of district level planning. The programme takes a holistic view of Primary Education development and lays great emphasis on participatory planning and management. It has a marked gender focus and seeks to enhance school effectiveness through inputs in

teacher's training and decentralised management. The programme emphasises capacity building at all levels, be it national, state or local, and seeks to evolve strategies which are replicable and sustainable.

The National Literacy (NLM) which was launched in May 1988, seeks to impart functional literacy to 100 million illiterates in the 15-35 age group by the year 1997, the end of the country's VIII Five Year Plan. It is a societal mission whose success rests on the mobilisation of the social forces and in securing people's participation. After experimenting with successive and alternative models of adult literacy and education programmes, we have now settled down to the campaign approach.

The task of bringing millions of out of school children and adult illiterates within some form of learning process is a daunting challenge. However, the progress so far and the programmes under implementation for achieving UEE and total adult literacy makes us confident that the goal of EFA would be achieved by the year 2000 or at the earliest possible.

**UNIVERSALISATION
OF ELEMENTARY
EDUCATION**



ACCOMPLISHMENTS SO FAR

ACCESS : GROWTH OF FACILITIES

There has been a spectacular increase in elementary education during the post-Independence period. The elementary education system of India has expanded into one of the largest in the world. The number of primary



schools increased from 209,671 in 1950-51 to 572,923 in 1993-94; the corresponding increase in upper primary schools was from 13,596 to 155,707. These 728,630

schools together with 2.7 lakhs non-formal education centres enrolled 150 million children as compared to 22.3 million in 1951. Universal provision of education has been substantially achieved at the primary stage (classes I-V). According to the Fifth All India Education Survey (1986), 94.5 per cent of the rural population had schools within a walking distance of 1 km. and 83.98% of the rural population have an upper primary school within a walking distance of 3 km. The survey estimated that there were 31,815 habitations in the country which had a population of 300 or more but did not have a primary school within the walking distance of one kilometer. Most of these habitations are situated in educationally backward states such as Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.

ENROLMENT

Since Independence, there has been a substantial increase in enrolment at all levels of education. Enrolment at the primary stage increased about five fold from 19.2 million to 108.2 million in 1993-94; the increase in the upper primary stage is far higher from 3.1 million to 39.9 million.

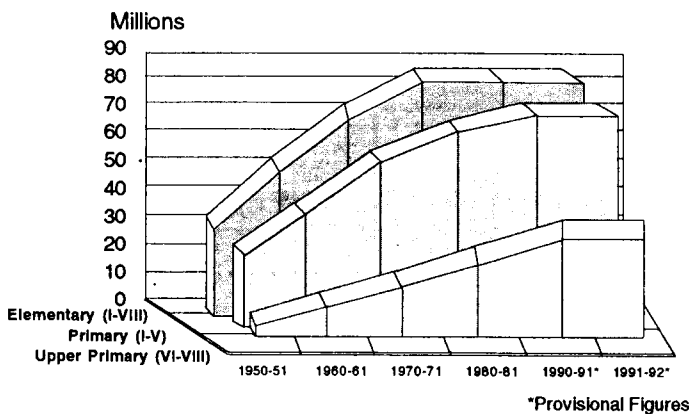
The gross enrolment ratios of children in the age group 6-11 increased from 42.6 per cent in 1950-51 to 104.5 per cent in 1993-

that the population of children moving up from the primary to upper primary stage has been increasing steadily, from 16.3 per cent in 1950-51 to 36.72 per cent in 1992-93.

While the gross enrolment ratios (GER) at the primary stage in the country as a whole and in most of its states exceed 100 per cent there are quite a few states where the ratio is considerably lower. These include Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, and Meghalaya. At the upper primary stage these states and in addition, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Sikkim have GERs lower than the national average. Most of these states have literacy rates lower than the national average. There is thus a strong regional dimension of UEE.

The problem gets more complicated as the drop-out rates, though declining, continue to be high. Nearly half the children who entered Class I drop out before reaching Class V, and two thirds of the children dropout before reaching Class VIII. Regional disparities also

Progress in Universalisation of Elementary Education
Enrolment of Boys and Girls



94. Likewise, the gross enrolment of 11-14 age group increased from 12.7 per cent in 1950-51 to 67.7 per cent in 1993-94. An analysis of the enrolment data reveals

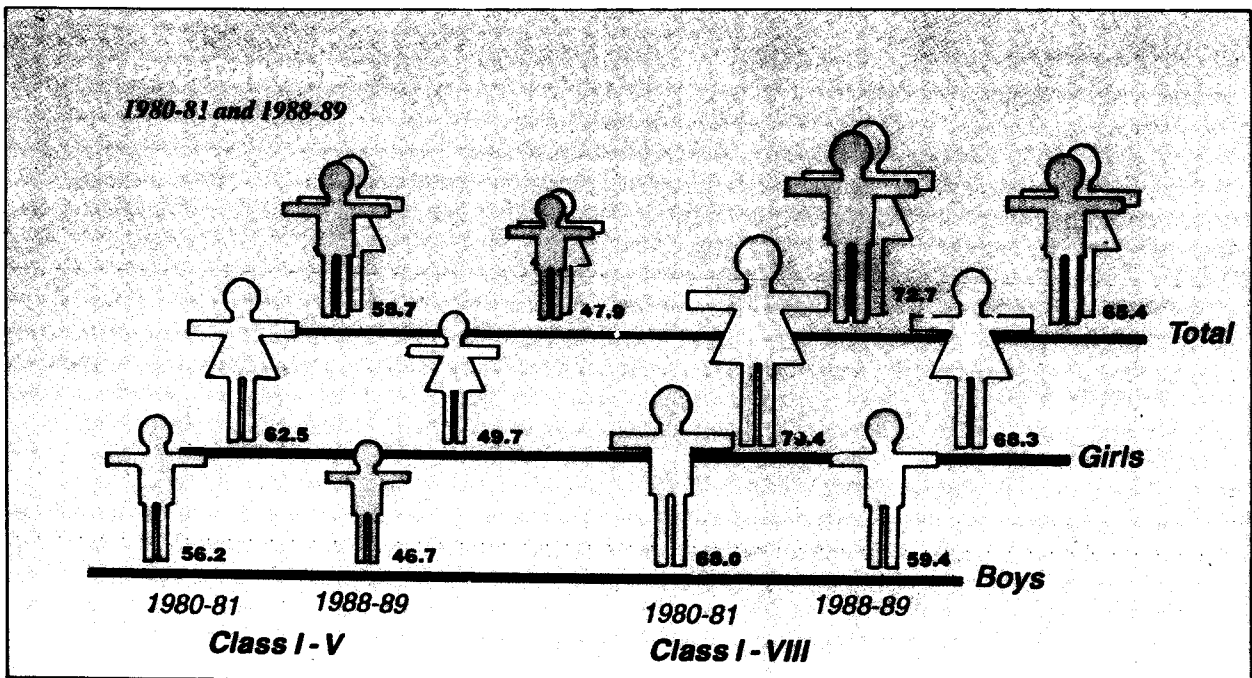
abound in rates of the dropouts.

GENDER DISPARITIES

As with any educational indicator, gender disparities are conspicuous in regard to enrolment and retention. Girls' enrolment has grown at the primary stage from 5.4 million in 1950-51 to 46.4 million in 1993-94 and at the upper primary stage from 0.5 million to 15.7 million. The rate of growth of enrolment of girls has been higher than that of boys but disparities still persist - girls still

account for only 45.7 per cent of the enrolment at the primary stage and 37.73 per cent at the upper primary stage. The dropout rates of girls at the primary as well as the upper primary stage are higher than those of boys.

Regional disparities are also conspicuous. High female literacy states (above 50 per cent) have by and large universalised primary enrolments among girls. Even in regard to upper primary enrolments Kerala, Goa, Pondicherry and Lakshadweep fare very well. In states with



REASONS FOR CHILDREN DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL

The 42nd round of the National Sample Survey (July 1986-June 1987) provides valuable information on the reasons for non-enrolment and drop-out. Nonavailability of schooling facilities seems to account for only about 10 percent of the "never enrolled" in rural India and about 8 percent in urban India; the difference between the sexes is very small in rural areas but somewhat larger in the urban sector.

However; nearly 30 percent of the persons surveyed, both in rural and urban India, gave the reason for "never enrolled" as being "not interested". The difference between the sexes here is large: a larger proportion of "never enrolled" females gave this reason in comparison with the males. The reason for being "not interested" could be considered as a demand side constraint to access: some authorities however, consider it as a supply side constraint rooted in poor facilities and quality of education.

DOMESTIC RESTRAINTS

About 52 percent of urban males and 29 percent of urban females could not avail of the educational services because of participation in household economic activity and other economic reasons. Attending to domestic chores restrained around one percent of the males, both in rural as well as urban India, from ever enrolling as students. Nevertheless, this reason was one of the major demand side constraints on access to education for the females: for 9.9 percent of them in the rural and 10.7 percent of them in the urban sector. Most of the young females are denied access to education because they look after their siblings besides performing a variety of domestic, housekeeping chores. Significantly, the proportion of currently "not enrolled" decreases with the increase in per capita household income.

A little over one-fourth of all "drop-outs" in rural as well as urban India gave "not interested in education/further study" as the reason for discontinuance of education - with the proportion among females being somewhat higher - 33.3 percent as against 26.5 percent for males in rural areas. Another 16.3 percent of rural and 20.3 percent of urban "dropouts" cited 'failure' to pass examinations as the reason for discontinuance. Again, it is a moot point whether this is a supply side constraint due to the poor quality of education services or a demand constraint, or a combination of both.

medium female literacy status (40-50 per cent) enrolment of girls appears to be satisfactory at the primary level. The situation in low female literacy states (20-40 per cent) causes concern. These states have more than half of the country's population, with just four of them (Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan) accounting for 40 per cent of the country's population.

SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES

According to the 1991 census, the population of Scheduled Castes (SCs) was 138.2 million (16.33 per cent) and that of Scheduled Tribes (STs) 67.8 million (8.01 per cent) of the country's population.

Both SC and ST populations are not homogeneous target groups in all respects. There are wide variations between different SC and ST groups regionally. Thus SC girls in Kerala are likely to be better placed than non-SC boys in some of the more backward states and districts.

Because of the affirmative

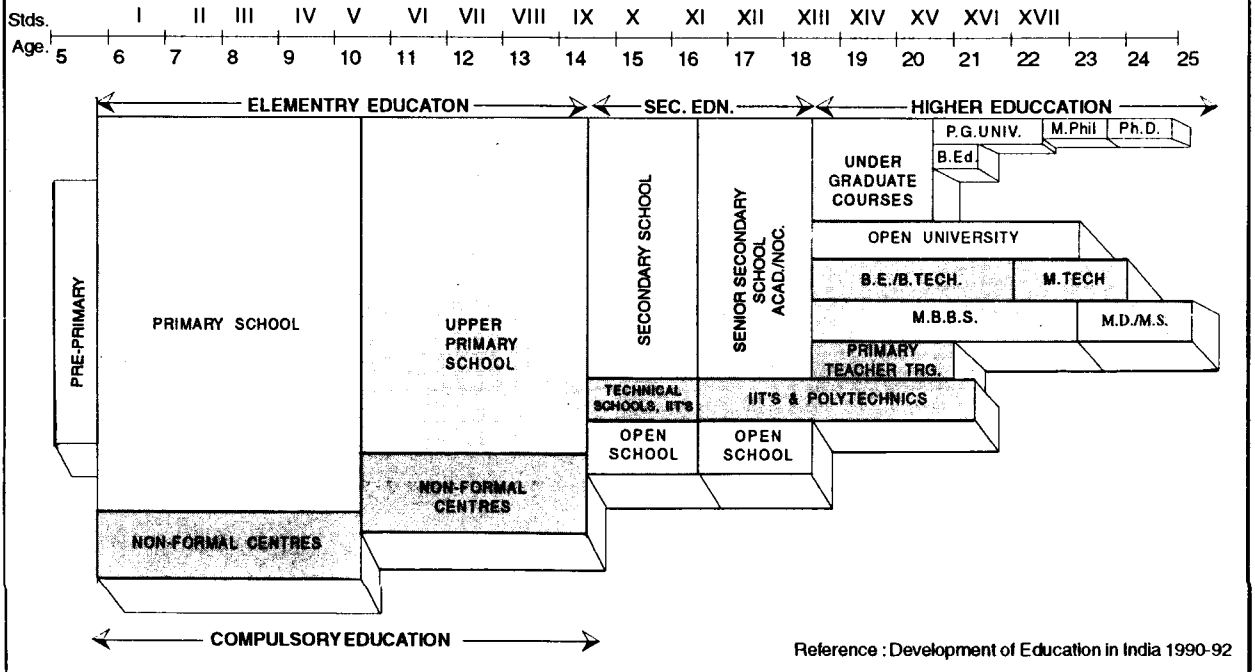
policies of the government, the enrolment of SCs and STs has increased considerably at the primary stage. The participation of SCs and STs is now more or less in proportion to their share in population at the primary level. Drop-outs, though declining over the years, are significantly large. Gender disparities are very conspicuous among SCs and STs also.

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Handicapped children are a distinct target group where basic learning needs have to be catered to by special programmes. Handicapped children would include those who are orthopaedically handicapped, those with hearing impairments, visual impairments, the mentally handicapped and others. NPE, 1986 called for integration of "the physically and mentally handicapped with the general community as equal partners to prepare them for normal growth and to enable them to face life with courage and confidence."

The POA, 1992 estimates that

Structure of Education in India



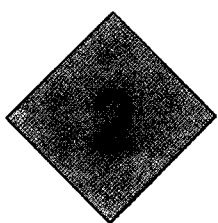
about 10.39 million children with disabilities are to be provided education in the school system.

Out of these, about half a million require vocational training.

The statistics on participation of these children are not firm. At the end of 1991-92 about 30,000 disabled children were availing of special benefits under the scheme of Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC). In addition, about 60,000 children with mild disabilities received resource support without special benefits. A large number of children with disability are also receiving education in 1,035 special schools.

LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT

If the fact that half the children drop out before reaching Class V is shocking, far more disturbing is the level of learning achievement of those remaining in school. A sample study of learning achievements of students was conducted in 48 districts as part of the DPEP. In the final year of primary schooling, in none of these districts the maximum average score for reading skills was higher than fifty two per cent; the achievements in arithmetic were worse.



CHALLENGES AHEAD

In spite of the substantial accomplishments since Independence, India has about 19 to 24 million children in the age group 6-14 are out of school of whom about 60 per cent are girls; about 110.9 million are adult illiterates in the age group 15-35 of whom 62 per cent are women.

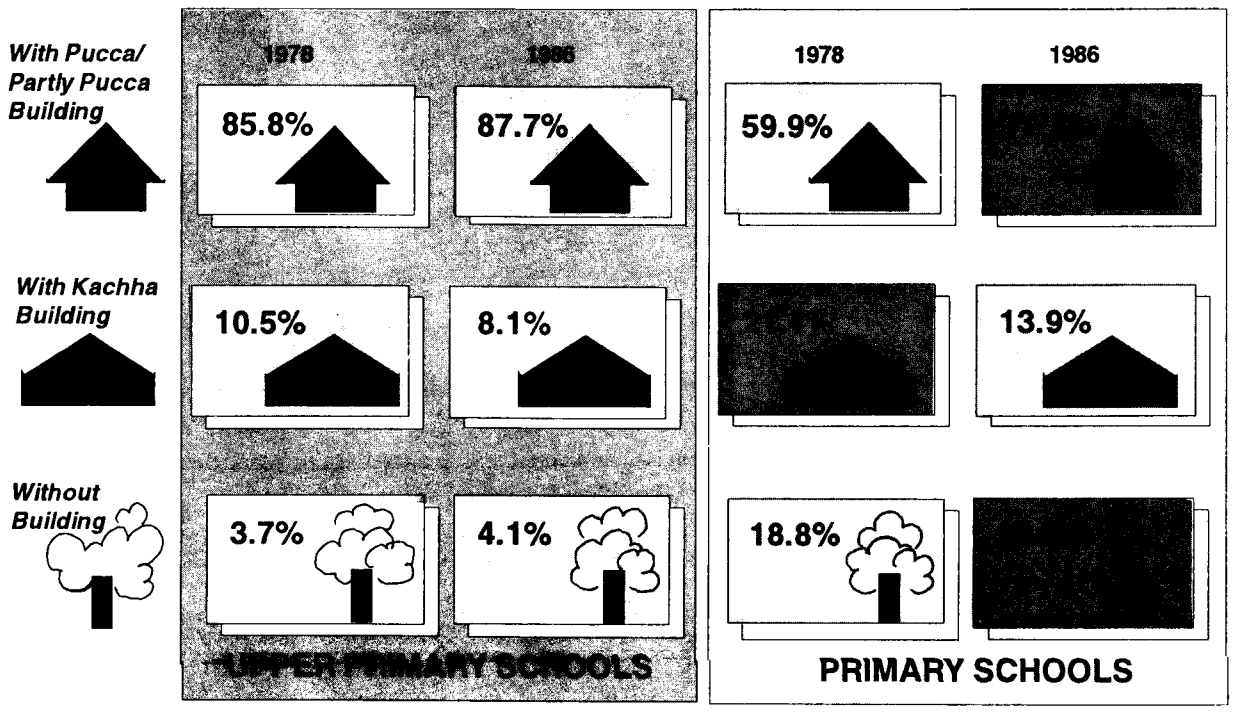
The benefits of investing in basic education, both for its intrinsic value in enhancing human capabilities, as well for its instrumental worth in contributing to social development and economic growth, greater efficiency and better functioning of democratic institutions are well established. Of equal significance is the ability of education to empower women and men to acquire greater control over the circumstances that dominate their lives. It is now recognised that fertility regulation cannot be a matter of mere promotion of

contraception but has to strongly promote the socioeconomic factors which strongly influence fertility behaviour such as female literacy and education. The low level of social indicators such as fertility rates, Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), sex ratio are related to the failure to achieve Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE). If the East Asian experience has any relevance the criticality of UEE for the economic reform process cannot be over emphasised.

It is evident from the above that UEE has strong regional and gender dimensions. The Indian experience encompasses the entire Third World experience.

We also have state such as Kerala which has achieved universal literacy as well as UEE in terms of school participation - though not in terms of learning achievement- with social indicators as good as the best

Kind of building for primary and Upper Primary Schools in India (1978 and 1986)



among the Third World, To the extent that gender disparity is pronounced UEE is the problem of the girl child.

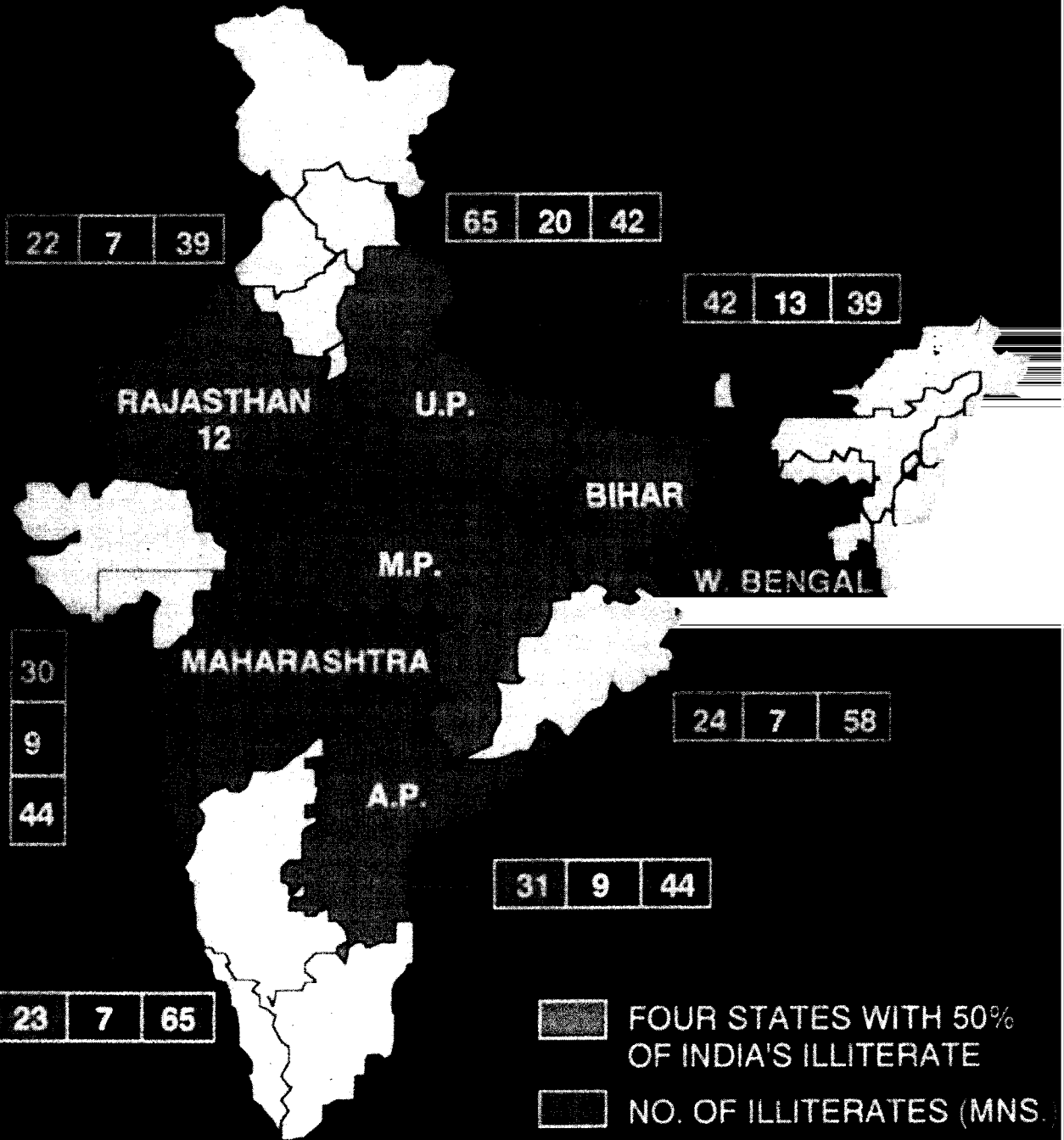
Teacher competence, motivation and performance are areas which require greater attention. These are crucial inputs in UEE. Whatever policies may be laid down, in the ultimate analysis, these have to be interpreted and implemented by teachers, as much through their personal example as through teaching-learning process.

Except in a few places where the ethos of Panchayati Raj system has been internalised the school remains rather isolated from the local community.

Experience in India and elsewhere has established that universal participation cannot be delinked from the operations of quality and relevance of education and from learning achievement. The challenge before the nation is to enhance universal participation and universal achievement of certain minimum levels of learning. In terms of numbers alone this is the greatest challenge that human society had ever faced - more so if one were to adhere to the goal set up in the National Policy on Education, 1986 of universalising elementary education before the commencement of the twenty-first century.

THE CHALLENGE

7 STATES WITH 70% OF INDIA'S ILLITERATE

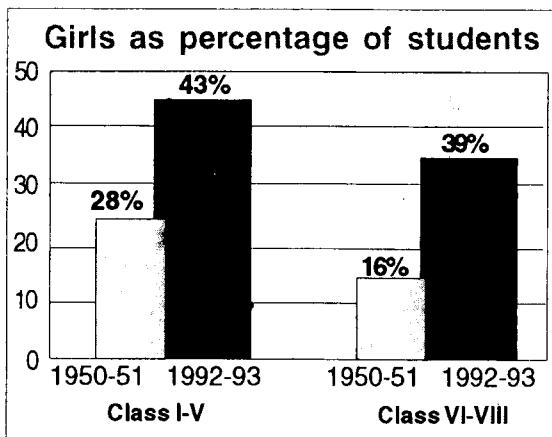


- FOUR STATES WITH 50% OF INDIA'S ILLITERATE
- NO. OF ILLITERATES (MNS)
- % TO TOTAL ILLITERATES
- LITERACY RATE (%)



LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Several articles in the Constitution of India bring into focus the general principles governing educational development in the country. These articles are rooted in India's struggle for independence. Basic education was one of the important goals of the freedom struggle and Mahatma Gandhi, even while leading the epic struggle against colonial power,



evolved an alternative education system. The Directive Principle contained in Article 45 of the Constitution enjoins that "the State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from

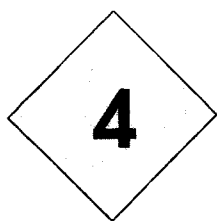
the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years." The expression "the State" which occurs in this Article is defined in Article 12 to include the Government and Parliament of India, the government and the legislature of each of the states and all local or other authorities within the territory of India or under the control of the government of India.

Article 29(1) of the Constitution provides that "any section of the citizens, residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same." Article 29(2) lays down that "no citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of

them." Article 30(1) enjoins that "all minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice," while Article 30(2) lays down that "the State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language." Article 350-A lays down that "it shall be the endeavour of every State and of every local authority within the State to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups."

Special care of the economic and educational interests of the underprivileged sections of the population is laid down as an obligation for the State under Article 46. As per this Article, "the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation."

Till the 42nd amendment of the Constitution when it was brought into the Concurrent List, education was in the State List except for certain specified items in the Union List like determination of standards in institutions for higher education or research, establishment and maintenance of central universities as well as specified institutions for scientific or technical education and research. The objective of incorporating education in the Concurrent List was to facilitate evolution of all-India policies in the field of education. Though the parliament was thereby empowered with the authority to legislate on education, the Centre has been relying on a consensual process to promote educational development. The concept of concurrency was given an operational meaning by the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986. This policy envisages concurrency as a "meaningful partnership between the Centre and the States" and placed on the Union Government a larger responsibility in regard to the national and integrative character of education, quality and standards, manpower planning, research and advanced study, and international aspects of education, culture and human resource development.



POLICY PRIORITIES AND GOALS

POLICY PRIORITIES

The late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi called for a comprehensive review of the existing educational system and the National Policy of Education (NPE) came into effect in 1986. Within the comprehensive framework enunciated by the NPE (1986), the developments and experiences since then were incorporated into the NPE in 1992 and a revised Programme of Action - POA (1992) was formulated. Along with its Programme of Action (POA), the NPE provides a comprehensive framework to guide the development of education. Overall, the NPE is committed to:

- a) address all aspects of education: equity, efficiency, relevance, quality, content and process, linkages with culture, values, society, polity and economy, resources and management.
- b) emphasize the organic unit of early childhood education, primary education, non-formal education, adult education and post literacy and life long

continuing education.

c) tilt the balance away from quantitative expansion of institutions towards quality and equity.

d) give unqualified priority to UEE, adult literacy and education for women's equality; this priority is reflected in the budget allocations during the current Five Year Plan (1992-97).

e) Shift the emphasis from enrolment per se to enrolment as well as retention and achievement.

NPE, 1986 also broke away from stereotyped confines of thinking and promoted thoughtful introspection and key strategies such as:

- i) the shift from the States to the district as the unit of planning for implementation of elementary education and adult literacy;
- ii) social mobilisation to promote basic education; and
- iii) integration of adult literacy and non-formal programmes with socially relevant themes such as small population norms, health care, environment and nutrition.

THE GOALS OF EFA IN INDIA

UNIVERSALISATION OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION : THE CUTTING EDGE

Against the background of the demographic implications and the complex ground realities of the Indian scene, the goals of Education for ALL (EFA) in India constitute :

- 1. EXPANSION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES** especially for poor, disadvantaged and disabled children, through a multi-pronged effort involving families, communities and appropriate institutions.
- 2. UNIVERSALISATION OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (UEE)** viewed as a composite programme of :
 - a) access to elementary education for all children upto 14 years of age;
 - b) universal participation till they complete the elementary stage through formal or equivalent non-formal education programmes;
 - c) universal achievement of at least minimum levels of learning.
- 3. DRASTIC REDUCTION IN ILLITERACY**, particularly in the 15-55 age-group, bringing the literacy level in this age group to at least 50 per cent in each gender and for every identified disadvantaged group, besides ensuring that the levels of the three Rs are relevant to the living and working conditions of the people.
- 4. PROVISION OF OPPORTUNITIES** to maintain, use and upgrade education and provision of facilities for development of skills to all persons who are functionally literate and those who have received primary education through formal and non-formal channels.
- 5. CREATION OF NECESSARY STRUCTURES**, and the setting in motion of processes which could empower women and make education an instrument of women's equality.
- 6. IMPROVING THE CONTENT AND PROCESS** of education to relate it better to the environment, people's culture and with their living and working conditions, thereby enhancing their ability to learn and cope with the problems of livelihood and environment.

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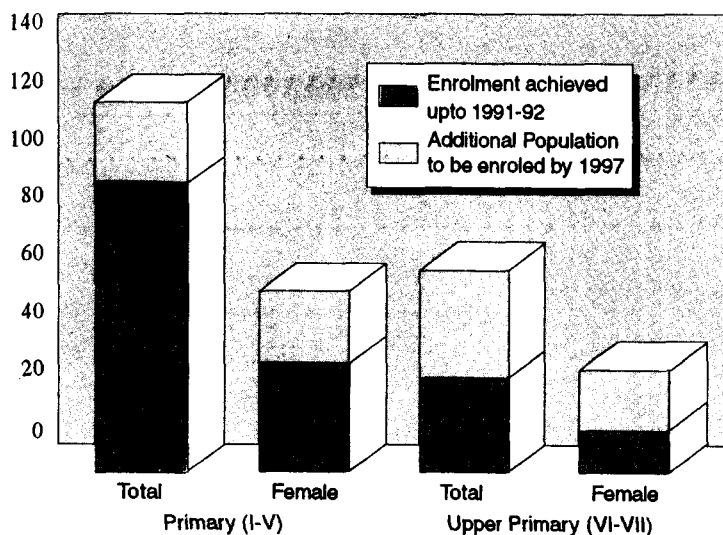
LARGER ROLE FOR VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

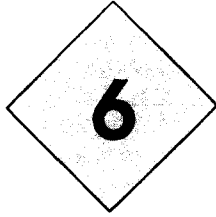
The NPE recognises that Voluntary Agencies or groups of public spirited individuals could provide a useful supportive framework for promoting universalisation of elementary education. After 1986, schemes are in place for enlisting NGOs in elementary education.

Voluntary agencies can contribute significantly to universalise elementary education through a number of measures such as:

- a) implementing non-formal education programmes and alternative school programmes in more people - friendly and innovative ways in terms of pedagogy, instructional materials, training, organisation and management.
- b) providing resource support to teachers, schools and continuing education.
- c) training of teachers, local functionaries, Village Education Committee members and others.
- d) establishing linkages between education and other social services such as health nutrition etc.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION: PROJECTED ENROLMENT FOR EIGHTH PLAN (1992-97)





MAJOR INTERVENTIONS SINCE 1986

Major interventions in the years since 1986 include :

1. OPERATION BLACKBOARD

This programme is designed for improvement of primary schools and provision of support services. It envisages conversion of all single teacher schools into double teacher schools ensuring that at least one of the teachers is a woman and provide all such schools at least two reasonably large rooms.

Under this scheme 1,16,000 teachers (of them 49 per cent were women) have been recruited and 1,45,330 classrooms were constructed. This scheme has been expanded to cover upper primary schools and also provide a third teacher to primary schools with enrolment more than 100.

2. NON-FORMAL EDUCATION (NFE)

This has become an important

alternative channel for children who cannot attend full time schools. Although the focus of the centrally sponsored scheme of NFE is still on the ten educationally backward states, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, it covers urban slums, hilly, tribal and desert areas and areas with concentration of working children in the other states as well.

Financial responsibility is shared by the Central and state Governments in the ratio of 50:50 for co-educational centres and 90:10 for girls' NFE centres. Assistance to the extent of 100 per cent is provided to voluntary agencies for running NFE centres for experimental and innovative projects.

The number of NFE centres

increased from 126,000 in 1986 to 255,000 by March, 1994 and the enrolment from 3.65 million to 6.4 million. During this period the number of girls centres has increased from 20,500 to 96,766. Over 425 voluntary agencies are participating in this programme. Alongside, around 50 experimental and innovative projects and 22 district resource units are in operation for in-depth work. Though the coverage has expanded a major challenge is the development and scaling up of effective NFE models that can help the learners to learn at their own pace.

3. MINIMUM LEVELS OF LEARNING

The NCERT has developed the National Curricular Framework and within this framework the minimum levels of learning have been laid down for primary level and concerted steps are being taken to achieve these levels.

The strategy to improve learning acquisition in school focuses attention on what is happening in the class room, and seeks to bring the principles of equity, quality and relevance to

bear upon it. The strategy aims to lay down learning outcomes expected from basic education at a realistic, relevant and functional level, prescribes the adoption of measures that would ensure that all children who complete a stage of schooling achieve these outcomes. These outcomes define the Minimum Levels of Learning common to both school and equivalent NFE programme.

The main steps by which MLLs are being introduced in schools are:

- i)* an assessment of the existing level of learning achievement
- ii)* a definition of the MLLs for the area and the time-frame within which it will be achieved
- iii)* reorientation of teaching practices to competency based teaching
- iv)* an introduction of continuous comprehensive evaluation of student learning
- v)* review the text-books and revision, if required
- vi)* the provision of inputs as necessary including provision of physical

facilities, teacher training, supervision and evaluation, etc., to improve learning acquisition to the MLLs.

The endeavour is to monitor learning achievement, to direct greater resources where levels of learning are lower, and to consciously accelerate the pace of development in the needy areas, thereby to reduce disparities, equalise standards and govern inputs for quality improvement in the performance of the system.

4. TEACHER TRAINING

The NPE perceives teacher education as a continuous process and its pre-service and in-service components being inseparable have been incorporated in the new restructured programme of teacher education initiated in 1987. Setting up of District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) is a significant institutional mechanism in this direction. Eventually DIETs are expected to provide academic and resource support to basic education and also to engage in action research and innovation. As of now, DIETs are being set up

in 386 districts out of the 462 districts in the country; in 190 districts DIETs are already conducting training programmes. It is proposed to set up 425 DIETs by the end of the eighth plan (1997-98). Efforts are afoot to strengthen the SCERTs so that they can provide the resource back up.

5. THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHER EDUCATION (NCTE)

NCTE has been setup as a statutory body for determination and maintenance of standards of teacher education. This is expected to improve the quality of pre-service training, and upgrade the syllabi and curriculum of teacher training programmes.

6. BIHAR EDUCATION PROJECT (BEP)

The Bihar Education Project (BEP), was launched in 1991, to operationalise, a broad based Education For All programme in the state of Bihar, known for having the highest drop-out rate and a very low educational status. As India's first basic

education project, BEP aims to cover 20 districts in the State by 1995. It seeks to improve the content and process of education; establish an elaborate system for training teachers and communities; work out wide ranging partnerships with political parties, activists, voluntary agencies, teachers and others; create conditions to maximize the involvement of teachers; make the village school and nonformal system accountable to the community served, and create a process for review, critical appraisal and innovation. BEP represents the first attempt in India to include a broad range of EFA issues and concerns in one large operational programme. The project is supported by UNICEF. The outlay of the project is Rs. 360 crores over the period 1991-96.

(7) LOK JUMBHISH

The Swedish International Development Agency supports the innovative Lok Jumbish : Peoples' Movement for Education project in Rajasthan. Lok Jumbish seeks to achieve the goal of Education for All by the year

2000 AD by focusing on Universalisation of Elementary Education, womens' education, Post literacy and continuing Education. Begun in five blocks in 1991 the project has extended its reach to more than 25 blocks in 13 districts. Phase I of the Project had an outlay of Rs. 18 crores over the period 1992-94. Phase II of the Project is under consideration with an outlay of Rs. 10 crores upto 1998.

(8) SHIKSHA KARMI

The Shiksha Karmi Project assisted by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) has been working in Rajasthan since 1987 to revitalise and expand primary education, especially in remote and backward villages of the State. With teacher absenteeism being identified as a major problem area, the project aims at substituting teachers in single teacher schools with a team of educated local residents, known as *Shiksha Karmis*. As of September 1993, the project had established 740 schools in 64 block units in Rajasthan in which over 90,000 children have

enrolled. The project has an outlay of Rs. 208 million in Phase I (1987-94) and Rs. 240 million in phase II (1994-97).

(9) UTTAR PRADESH BASIC EDUCATION PROJECT (UPBEP)

The Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project, funded by the World Bank covers ten districts in the State. Among its other objectives is the attempt to operationalise the concept of the 'school complex', and to provide research and other support to primary schools. The State Institute of Management and Training, in collaboration with NIEPA and NCERT is expected to contribute significantly to the training component of the project. The project envisages an outlay of Rs. 7280 million over a period 1993-2000.

(10) ANDHRA PRADESH PRIMARY EDUCATION PROJECT

The APPEP was begun in 1989 to improve primary education in the State of Andhra Pradesh, with a two-pronged strategy of intervening through improvements in teacher training and through school construction activities. The project has trained an estimated 80,000 teachers. More than 3,000 Teachers Centres have become operational. During its next phase the project is expected not only to continue with on-going interventions but also to develop further into a District Primary Education Programme which will take on selected districts. The project is assisted by the Overseas Development Administration (ODA). In phase-I the project had an outlay of £1.3 million for the period from 1983-87 and in phase-II the project has an outlay of £27.90 million for the period from 1989-94.



DISTANCE EDUCATION

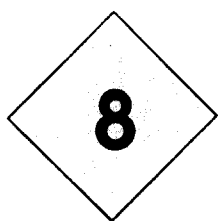
Distance education has a vital role to play in promoting basic education in high population countries as it can reach out to populations not served by the formal education system. Distance education also has the potential for making vast improvements in the educational system by offering training and skill upgradation opportunities to teachers and

administrators dealing with education.

Several initiatives have been taken in India since the 1993 Summit to extend the scope and reach of distance education. The National Open School has formulated an innovative project aimed at providing alternative schooling to:

- a) Neo-literates who have acquired functional literacy skills from the Total Literacy Campaigns.
- b) Early school drop-outs with rudimentary literacy skills.
- c) Drop-outs from the non-formal education system who have literacy skills.
- d) Learners who have attended non-formal programmes and whose literacy skills are marginally better developed.





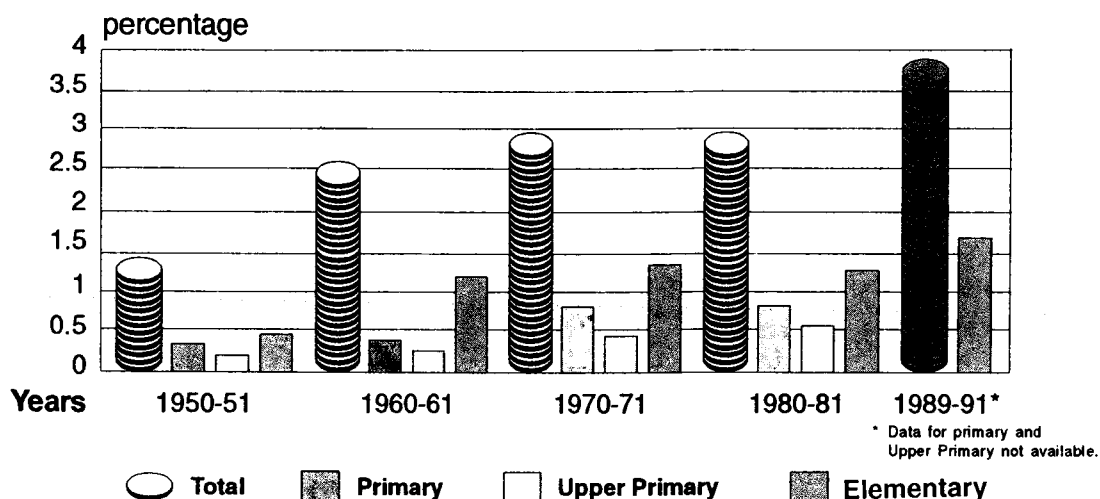
RESOURCES

Education is funded largely by the central and state governments. Elementary education is funded almost wholly by the Government. After the inception of planning in 1950-51 spending on education as a proportion of GNP has steadily increased from about 1.2 percent to about 3.5 percent. While the increase is significant, because of financial constraints and competing priorities resource availability was not adequate. Nor was it possible to fulfill the aspiration articulated

time and again from 1966 onwards, that the public expenditure on education should be at least 6 per cent of the GNP. Now the nation is committed to achieve this goal by the turn of the century.

While public expenditure is below the articulated aspiration, at a macro-level, India's expenditure on education as a proportion of GNP compares favourably with that of the peer group of Asian developing countries. Public expenditure on elementary education has

Public Expenditure on Education as a share of GNP

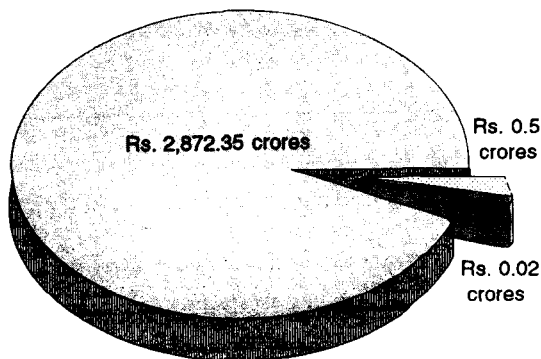


increased significantly during the post-independence period. Expenditure on elementary education increased from 0.46

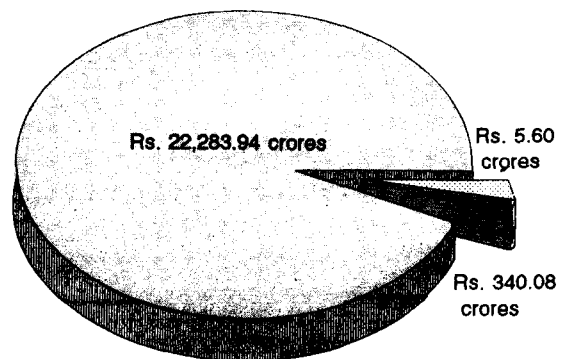
education enshrined in the Constitution. With the launching of centrally sponsored schemes to promote non-formal education

Budget Expenditure on Education by Education and other Departments 1992-93

Centre



States & Union Territories

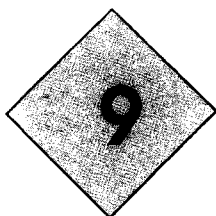


■ Revenue ■ Capital ■ Loans and Advances

per cent of GNP in 1950-51 to 1.72 per cent in 1989-90. During the 1980s alone, the public expenditure on elementary education increased by 4.5 times from Rs. 15,373 million to Rs. 68,883 million in 1989-90. The share of elementary education in total public expenditure on education is about 45 to 46 per cent. A significant and welcome feature is the pronounced trend of a higher share of plan expenditure in the total expenditure on elementary education.

In the past, Elementary Education in India was largely funded by the state government. NPE, 1986 gave an operational definition to the concurrency of

and the quality of elementary education, the central government's share in plan expenditure on elementary education has increased substantially. Education in India has been largely a budgetbased system where efficiency is rated by ability to "consume" budget and to demand more. Performance at delivery point has not been an important criterion. The on-going economic reforms and structural adjustments would, therefore, demand a shift from inputs to performance and outcomes-considerations of cost effectiveness should inform all levels of educational administration and planning.



DECENTRALISATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

With the enactment of the 73rd and 74th Amendment Act (Panchayati Raj Act), 1992, the focus is now on democratically elected bodies at the district ; sub-district, Panchayat and municipal levels. These Panchayati Raj bodies, which are to have adequate representation of women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, minorities, representatives of parents, educationists and appropriate institutions, will have the responsibility of preparing development plans and implementing educational programmes besides dealing with those subjects closely related to education such as health, Social welfare and women and child development.

Detailed parameters for a decentralised management of education have been worked out by a CABE committee on

Decentralised Management of Education. The committee's recommendations indicate how educational structures should be set up at the district, *taluk / mandal* and village levels in pursuance of the Constitutional Amendments. The recommendations of the Committee have been endorsed by the CABE in its meeting held on 15 October, 1993.

State governments have initiated the process of establishment of structures for decentralised planning and management and are in the process of drawing up appropriate legislation which provides for Panchayati Raj Committees for Education.

The breadth and scope of the Panchayati Raj Act provides an exceptionally 'enabling' framework for viable strategies and interventions that would

play a commanding role in promoting universal elementary education. The responsibilities vested with the district level body, for instance, cover planning, which includes, inter alia, area development, spatial planning, institutional planning, administrative and financial control and personnel

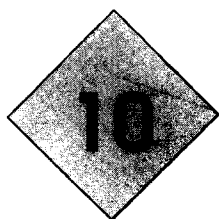
Besides, it will draw upon the expertise of DIETs and other institutions for substantive curricular and pedagogic inputs into district level programmes of Elementary Education (EE), Non-formal Education (NFE) and Adult Education (AE). From the district level, the process of decentralisation percolates down to the village level.



management with respect to primary, middle, secondary and higher secondary schools and educational programmes.

The district level body will also implement, supervise and monitor all educational programmes, including non-formal and adult education.

The Panchayati Raj Act envisages the formation of Panchayats for a village or a group of villages. These panchayats will have elected representatives. Each panchayat would constitute a Village Education Committee (VEC) which would be responsible for the administration of education programmes at the village level. The major responsibility of the VECs would lie in operationalisation of micro-level planning and school mapping in the village through systematic house to house surveys and periodic discussions with parents. Ensuring participation in primary education of every child in every family would be one of the prime aims of the VECs.



DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME

A major initiative, entitled District Primary Education Programme, was started in 1993 in the area of elementary education to replicate what the Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs)



have been accomplishing in the field of adult literacy. The DPEP seeks to operationalise the strategy of decentralised planning identified by the POA, 1992 to be the main strategy for achieving UEE.

It builds upon the national experience in the pursuit of UEE as well the experience gained in the implementation of projects like the Mahila Samakhyas, a programme of women's empowerment, the Bihar Education Project, the Lok Jumbish and the UP Basic Education project.

Central to DPEP are the following concepts:

(i) UEE is contextual. The contextuality varies widely across the country. Even in States like Kerala where participation is near-universal much requires to be done in respect of quality and achievement. In such States the pursuit of UEE would be mainly in the areas of quality, facilities and achievement. In other States participation and demand aspects need more attention.

(ii) Contextuality entails local area-planning with disaggregated targets and decentralised planning and management. Planning for UEE had hitherto been mainly at the national and state level. Barring some States and Union Territories, these entities are too large and heterogenous for effective planning; they cannot provide contextuality. Ideally the planning should be from below, right from the village upwards but given the objective conditions, a beginning has to be made with the district as the unit of planning.

The district plans are to be prepared through an intensive process of interaction with the local bodies, teachers and NGOs so that it is "owned" by all who are to be associated in implementation and it reflects the ground-level realities.

(iii) Resources are an important but not sufficient condition for achieving UEE.

A host of measures both financial and non-financial, both on the supply side and on the demand side, need to complement higher allocation of resources.

(iv) The strategies for UEE have hitherto emphasised mainly

access in terms of construction of class rooms and appointment of teachers. This has been inadequate and **needs to be augmented by:**

- (a)** a holistic planning and management approach which goes beyond implementation of a disjointed set of individual schemes, perceives the task of UEE in its totality, integrates all the measures needed for achieving UEE in the specific context of the district;
- (b)** this holistic planning should incorporate a gender perspective in all aspects of the planning and implementation process and be an integral part of all measures needed to achieve UEE.
- (c)** addressing the more difficult aspects of access, particularly access to girls, disadvantaged groups and out of school children
- (d)** improving school effectiveness
- (e)** strengthening the alternatives to schooling, particularly the non formal education system
- (f)** Stressing the participative processes whereby the local community facilitates

- participation, achievement and school effectiveness
- (g) toning up teacher competence, training and motivation
 - (h) Stressing learning competence and achievement
 - (i) stressing the need for improved teaching / learning materials and
 - (j) overhaul of planning and management in respect of both routine and innovative areas.

- (k) Convergence between elementary education and related services such as ECCE and school health.

The programme would be implemented in a mission mode. A National Management Structure is being set up on the lines of NLMA which would oversee the implementation of the programme through out the country and provide the necessary technical support to states and districts.

Implementation at the State level would be through registered autonomous societies with CMs as exofficio Presidents of the General Council and Chief Secretary/Education Secretary as Chairman of the Executive Committee.

NGOs, Teachers, Educationists and Women are represented in these Committees. VECs play a key role in the implementation of the programme at the village level.

The loftiness of the objectives, the nature and intensity of the planning process, the integration of professional inputs, participative planning and management, and the emphasis, on capacity building have



together rendered DPEP an exciting idea not only in the country but all over the world. DPEP has broken new paths in international cooperation, in that it belongs to the new genre of developmental cooperation which emphasises sustainability, equity, local ownership and execution and is supportive of national policies in the education sector.

DPEP is a homegrown idea, in keeping with CAGE guidelines, and its distinctiveness lies in that inspite of diversity of sources of funding, it is a national programme intending to achieve UEE in a contextual manner with emphasis on participation and capacity building.

The programme has been developed in 42 districts of the States of Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The objective is to gradually expand the coverage of the programme to all districts which satisfy the twin criteria of:

- (a) educationally backward districts with female literacy below the national average and
- (b) districts where TLCs have

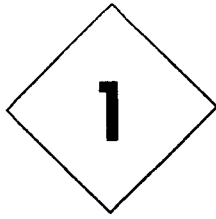
been successfully leading to enhanced demand for elementary education.

Five districts each in West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh are in the process of developing their district plans and would be ready for programme appraisal shortly.

The District Primary Education Programme has generated interest amongst several multilateral and bilateral funding agencies. The European Community has already committed approximately Rs. 585 crores (150 million ECUs) as programme support for DPEP. Negotiations have been completed with the World Bank/IDA for a credit agreement amounting to US \$ 260 million for six States.

The ODA of United Kingdom has pledged support for DPEP in Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. In fact, DPEP appears to be emerging as the main vehicle in the development of elementary education in the country and is likely to develop at the national level as an intermediary technical and resource organisation for primary education development in the country on the lines of the IDBI of HDFC.

**ADULT AND
CONTINUING
EDUCATION**



THE NATIONAL LITERACY MISSION

While there have been programmes of adult education since independence, a major initiative was taken in 1978 with the introduction of the National Adult Education Programme (NAEP). The programme was based on the establishment of adult education centres, where learning was imparted in groups. The programme created a base for adult education, but given the magnitude of the problem its intensity and spread remained limited. Till 1988 the programme

was essentially 'centre based'. An assessment of the centre based programmes showed that the results were not commensurate with the investments made, with the result that only marginal improvements in literacy rates were recorded.

The breakthrough came with the launching of the National Literacy Mission (NLM) in 1988, and the establishment of National Literacy Mission Authority (NLMA). The NLMA is an independent and autonomous

FUNCTIONAL LITERACY IMPLIES

- * achieving self reliance in literacy and numeracy
- * becoming aware of the causes of deprivation and moving towards amelioration of condition through organization and participation in the process of development
- * acquiring skills to improve the economic status and general well-being
- * imbibing the values of national integration, conservation of the environment, women's equality, observance of small family norm, etc.

wing: of the Government vested with full executive and financial powers in its spheres of work. The creation of a Mission for literacy represented a national political commitment on the need to harness all social forces and channelise the energies of the people towards meeting the ultimate objective of effecting a qualitative change in their own lives.. The autonomy of the NLMIA gave it the freedom to innovate, experiment, reach out to peoples' groups and work with them in partnership.

The NLM has made it possible for the country to adopt a systematically planned campaign approach. The strategy for Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs), which envisages coverage of the entire adult population by literacy of well defined level through instruction by a volunteer teacher, is a departure from the traditional centre-based approach, which was honorarium based, centralised and largely bureaucratically managed. The years 1989 and 1990 saw the launching of a number of experimental

programmes, among them the mobilisation of Gandhian and Sarvodaya agencies through the Gujarat Vidyapeeth and Banwasi Sewa Ashram, and environment building efforts through the Bharat Gyan Vigyan Jatha and Paidal Jatha, as also the Kottayam and Ernakulam Literacy Campaigns in Kerala.

Starting with Kottayam City in Kerala in 1989 and Ernakulam District in 1990, the campaign approach for eradication of illiteracy has taken firm roots and has given rise to the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) approach. The TLC model is now accepted as the dominant strategy for eradication of adult illiteracy by almost all States / UTs. TLC concept is area-specific, time-bound, volunteer-based, cost-effective and outcome-oriented. Apart from these characteristics, which make it distinctly different from the earlier centre based approach, the other important factor is that it envisages the joint responsibility and commitment of both the Central and the State Governments.

The lessons learnt from these

programmes have been incorporated, and further assimilated in the TLCs currently under implementation in 336 districts. Out of these, 134 districts are in the post-literacy phase.

By the end of the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97), it is proposed to cover 100 million illiterate persons including all the illiterates in 15-35 age group in at least 345 districts through literacy campaigns.

The Ernakulam Campaign was marked by a close cooperation between the district administration and voluntary agencies, the foremost among them being the Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP). On the basis of the Ernakulam experience, an organisational structure for a district TLC has evolved. The structure rests on the three pillars of (i) participatory peoples' committees, (ii) full time functionaries and

area coordinators, (iii) a support system provided by government officials. In itself, this may not seem significant, but it exemplifies an interactive and a communicative process of management and implementation. The Ernakulam campaign also led to the development of appropriate strategies for 'use' of folk media in TLCs for developmental purposes, conscientisation and delivery of relevant and progressive messages relating to health, women's equality, universalisation of primary education, national integration etc.

DEMOGRAPHIC SCENARIO

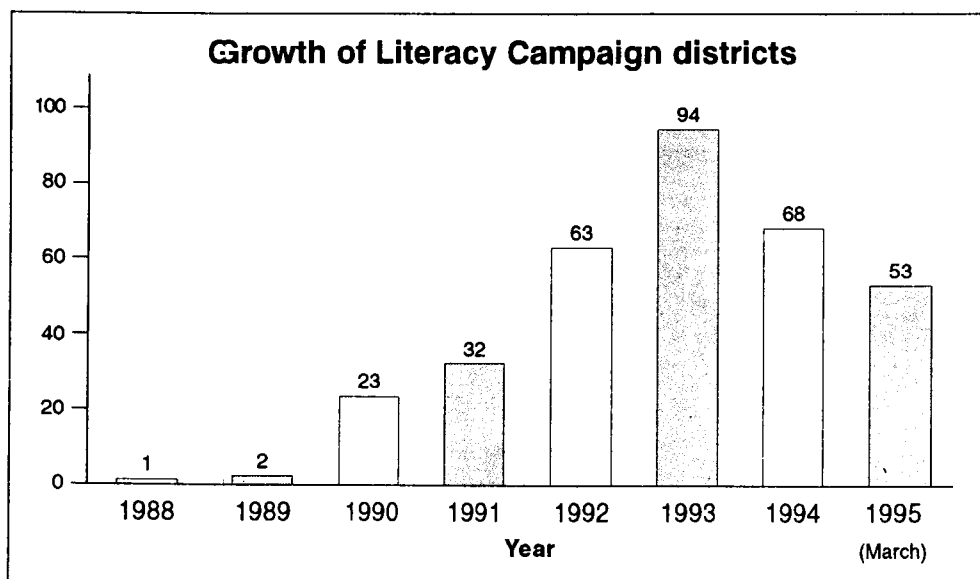
In 1991, India's population was 846.3 million, accounting for 16 per cent of the world population with just 2.4 percent of the total land area. It is the second most populous country in the world.

POPULATION PROFILE

	Age (yrs.)	Proportion (%)	No. (million) (Projected)
Composition/ Structure	6-14	18	153
	15-35	30	254
Literacy Rate(%)	Persons	Male	Female
		52.21	64.14

COVERAGE UNDER NATIONAL LITERACY MISSION

- * TLCs extended to 336 districts
- * PLCs extended to 134 districts
- * Illiterates identified by name - 121 million
- * Total enrolment 74 million
- * Persons made literate 46 million
- * Volunteers involved - 7.5 million
- * Literacy Campaigns sanctioned in 26 tribal districts including Jhabua which has the lowest literacy rate in the country
- * Pace of Literacy Campaigns accelerated and focus shifted to the low literacy and high population states in the Hindi belt
- * 125 Literacy Campaigns sanctioned in four major Hindi-speaking States



2

THE APPROACH AND THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

The campaign approach to literacy is characterised by large scale mobilisation of persons from all walks of life through a multifaceted communication strategy, which highlights the vital link between literacy and the basic problems of life. Integrated with systematic plans for learner and volunteer identification, training, materials production and distribution, and periodic monitoring and evaluation, the campaign approach represents a time bound and area-based approach for achievement of pre-determined levels of literacy laid down by NLM (see box on page 42).

In one of its significant initiatives, the NLMA introduced the Improved Pace and Content of Learning (IPCL) technique, which provides for clearly spelt out levels of 3Rs, a reduced duration of learning, an improved

motivation of learners and volunteers, and an in-built mechanism for evaluation, including self evaluation by learners. Following this approach, a set of three multi graded, integrated primers corresponding to functional competencies defined for each level have been designed to organise teaching / learning activities which promote acquisition of literacy practice and concurrent assessment of gains of learning.

The initiation of TLCs together with complementary efforts towards UEE has resulted in the emergence of a staggeringly large mass of children, youth and adults with varying interests and aspirations.

Since the launching of TLCs itself, it is estimated that approximately 46 million persons would have achieved neo-

literacy. With intensified efforts through TLCs during the VIII five year plan, it is expected that approximately 100 million persons in 15-35 age group would be covered and helped to achieve NLM levels of literacy. Added to this are the number of children passing out of non-formal education centres, completing Class V, or dropping out at Class III or IV itself, for whom diversified choices must be made available for personal growth, social participation and economic advancement. It will be noted that whether it is a campaign for total literacy or

programme of education for children, the clientele for post-literacy and continuing education would include:

LEARNERS' PROFILE

AGE WISE

- Children between 9-14 of age
- Adults mainly between 15 and 35 years of age

LEARNING COMPETENCY WISE

- Those who have completed some stage of primary education
- Drop-outs from the school system
- Neo-literates from the literacy programme
- Products of the NFE system
- Persons with limited literacy skills.



EXPECTED LEVELS OF LITERACY BY NLM AT BASIC LITERACY STAGE

READING

- * Reading aloud with normal accent simple passages on topic related to the interest of the learners at a speed of 30 words per minute.
- * Reading silently small paragraphs in simple language at a speed of 35 words per minute.
- * Reading with understanding road signs, posters, simple instructions and newspapers for neo-literates, etc.
- * Ability to follow simple written messages relating to one's working and living environment.

WRITING

- * Writing with understanding at a speed of 7 words per minute.
- * Taking dictation at a speed of 7 words per minute.
- * Writing with proper spacing and alignment.
- * Writing independently short letters and applications and forms of day-to-day use to the learners.

NUMERACY

- * To read and write 1-1000
- * calculations without fractions, involving addition, subtraction up to three digits and multiplication and division by two digits.
- * Working knowledge of metric units of weights, measures, currency, distance and area and units of time.
- * Broad idea of proportion and interest (without involving fractions) and their use in working and living conditions.

3

CURRENT SCENARIO: ACCOMPLISHMENTS SO FAR AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

The National Literacy Mission launched on 5th May, 1988 had a breakthrough in 1989 when Ernakulam district in the Coastal state of Kerala became the first literate district in the country. The campaign approach established its immense potential and soon grew into a massive people's movement.

During this period, the Mission has made spectacular achievements. Campaigns which have been taken up in a large part of the country today have not merely been campaigns for literacy but have also been campaigns for family welfare, immunization, maternal and child health care, conservation of environment, peace and communal harmony, cohesion and national integration, universalisation of enrolment, retention in the formal school system etc.

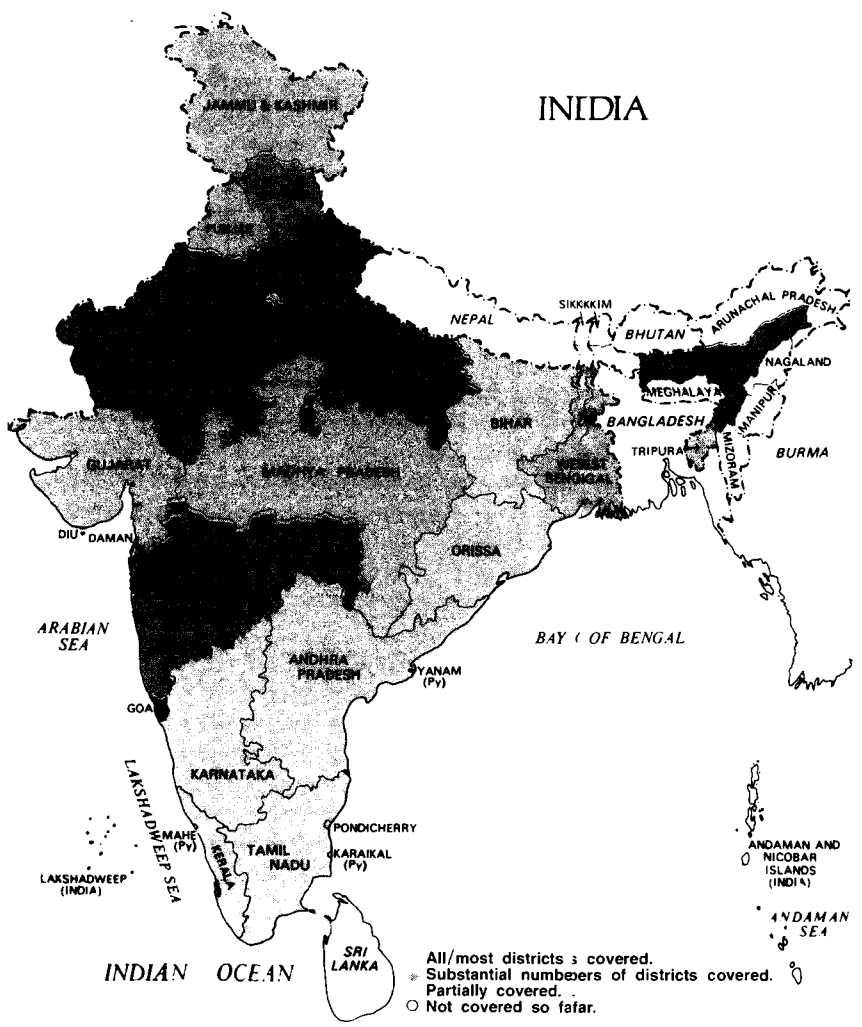
Some of the most important characteristics of these campaigns are that they are area-specific, time-bound, volunteer-based, cost-effective and outcome oriented.

The Literacy Campaigns are currently being implemented in twenty States and four Union Territories.

Out of the existing 50 districts in the country 336 districts, (fully partly) are implementing literacy campaigns.

According to present estimates nearly 121 million learners in different age groups are identified proposed to be covered. Out of 74 million enrolled learners, 46 million learners have already achieved the prescribed levels of literacy and 28 million learners are about to cross the basic literacy stage.

INDIA



All/most districts covered.
 * Substantial numbers of districts covered.
 Partially covered.
 ○ Not covered so far.

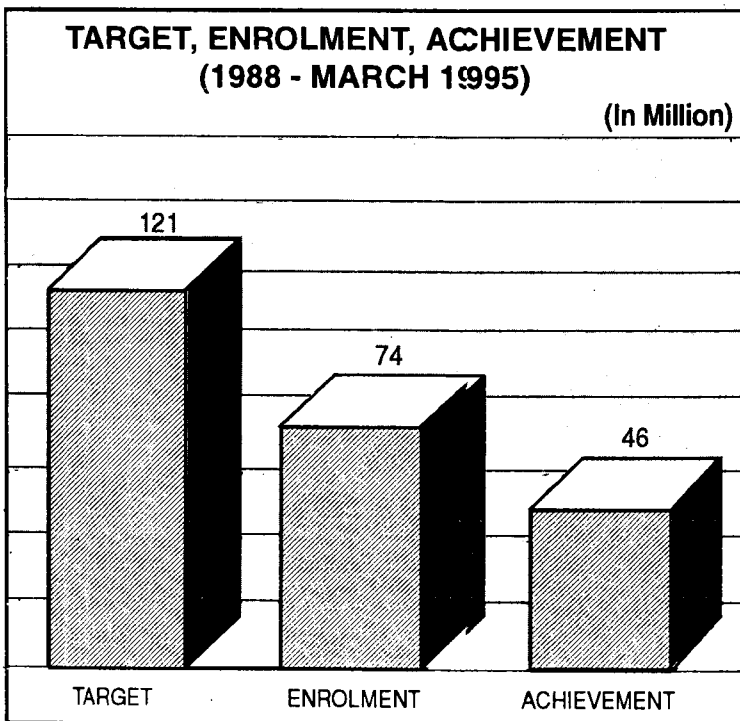
There has been a tremendous response from women learners. Nearly 62% off the learners are females. The coverage of socially disadvantage groups like the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is approximately 21% and 10% respectively.

More than 7.5 million volunteers are involved in the programme and display great enthusiasm, dedication and commitment. Although the literacy campaigns are being implemented with varying degrees of success, it is certain that a lot of good and innovative effort has gone into them and

remarkable progress has been made. Now that the process has begun, the goal of EFA appears closer.

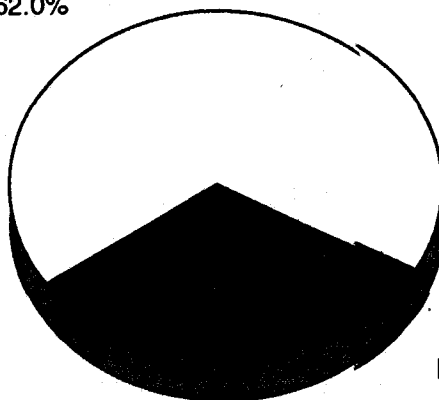
Any literacy programme planned without a corresponding plan for post literacy and continuing education will not be fruitful unless on the completion of basic literacy, the neo-literates are encouraged and motivated to participate in the post literacy phase. The post literacy phase has emphasised linkages with socio-economic development programmes and vocational education apart from consolidation of literacy and numeracy skills.

Besides, a lot of thinking has gone in the direction of evolving an appropriate equivalency and continuing education programme. A large number of children in the age group of 9-14 participating in Post Literacy Phase will be facilitated to enter the formal school system. Those neo-literates who wish to proceed in the NFE stream, will be helped through the National Open School (NOS). In addition to these institutions 'Jana Shikshan' Nilayams (Village Learning Centres) are facilitating the neo-literates by providing appropriate reading materials.



**COVERAGE OF LEARNERS
(Estimated)**

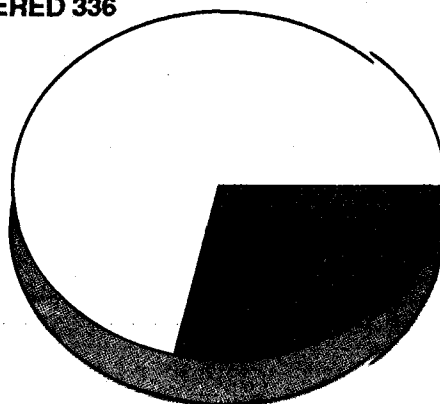
FEMALES 62.0%



MALES 38.0%

**NUMBER OF DISTRICTS
COVERED TO BE COVERED**

COVERED 336



TO BE COVERED 214

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE REPORT OF THE EXPERT GROUP ON STATUS-CUM-IMPACT EVALUATION OF TOTAL LITERACY CAMPAIGNS - 1994

- * Literacy has been placed on the national agenda as never before, and the transparency of this programme has been greater than for any other government programme. That has been a positive feature of the TLC.

- * The NLM has emerged not as purely a literacy mission. That has been its basic strength. The stated goals of the NLM have been literacy, skill formation, functionality, social awareness, and organisation for participation in development. The NLM has thus attempted a holistic approach.

- * The NLM's 'TLC approach has been among the best things promoted by the government since independence. The 'other' outcomes - what has been called the qualitative impact or the transformational effect - have more than justified this project, with the added bonus of better performance than the old centre-based adult literacy programme in creating neo-literates with reasonable competence in the 3Rs. There have been numerous examples of not merely 'organisation for literacy' but of 'literacy for organisation', finding expression through literacy efforts initiated.

SIGNIFICANT STRIDES & FALL OUTS OF TLCs

- * The campaigns have benefited women more and promoted the cause of women's equality since they are the major participants in the programme.
- * Higher enrolment and retention of children in schools has been witnessed.
- * Significantly enhanced participation in Family Welfare programme noticed in several successful TLC districts.
- * There is greater acceptance of the message of immunization and substantial improvement in its actual implementation resulting in decline in infant mortality rate.
- * The campaigns have promoted social, cultural and linguistic integration and communal harmony.
- * Abominable social evils like dowry, child marriage, beggary, alcoholism etc. are getting minimised and better civic and environmental awareness like promotion of 'green cover' have been witnessed.
- * The campaigns have helped to operationalise grassroot level structures like Village Education Committees for effective mobilisation and participation of the community in literacy programmes, which have also been taken advantage of for other developmental programmes/activities.
- * The 'kala jatha's (cultural caravans) and programmes of folk songs and dramas, use of audio-cassettes for songs, community singing etc., have resulted in a cultural revival which will go a long way in revitalising folk traditions.

It is in recognition of these social transformational effects of the campaigns that during four successive years (between 1990-1993) the literacy efforts got International recognition and commendation.

4

INNOVATIONS

The NLM pursues a strategy of encouraging innovations and a policy of decentralized campaign management. Some of these innovations relate to the following :

- * Environment creation and demand generation
- * Pedagogy of adult learning
- * Continuing education
- * Equivalency programmes

ENVIRONMENT CREATION AND DEMAND GENERATION

While the mass campaign is for mass literacy, it is not a scattered or uncoordinated effort but an organised and systematic attempt to achieve the desired object in a particular area within a prescribed time frame.

Districts are identified as viable units for achieving the task. District literacy Committees comprising people from political parties, elected representatives of Parliament and Assemblies, elderly people who are experienced and interested in adult education formulate a district plan. These committees also direct, coordinate, monitor and help in evaluating the implementation of the programme. The whole programme is implemented with the involvement of teachers,



students, women, youth, writers, educationists and social activists. They help in identifying and mobilising millions of volunteers and facilitate in training them also.

Literacy teaching is done by the volunteers who are involved in the programme not due to compulsion or for any cash incentive. The very fact that most of the volunteers conduct literacy classes in their homes shows their interest and involvement in the programme.

Environment building is an important activity in a mass campaign. In fact, no mass campaign can be implemented without the right type of climate in which a difficult task like literacy essentially meant for influencing the human mind can be conducted with ease. The objectives of environment building for literacy are:-

- to mobilise public opinion for literacy
- to dispel misgivings or wrong notions about literacy
- to highlight the positive aspects of literacy
- to awaken the social

conscience of literate people that they also owe to the society a social and morale obligation.

The essence of environment building effort is to generate a positive demand for literacy as a tool for social change. It cannot be a one time effort but has to be repeated and its momentum sustained as long as necessary. In other words environment building does not merely precede but should pervade throughout the campaign.

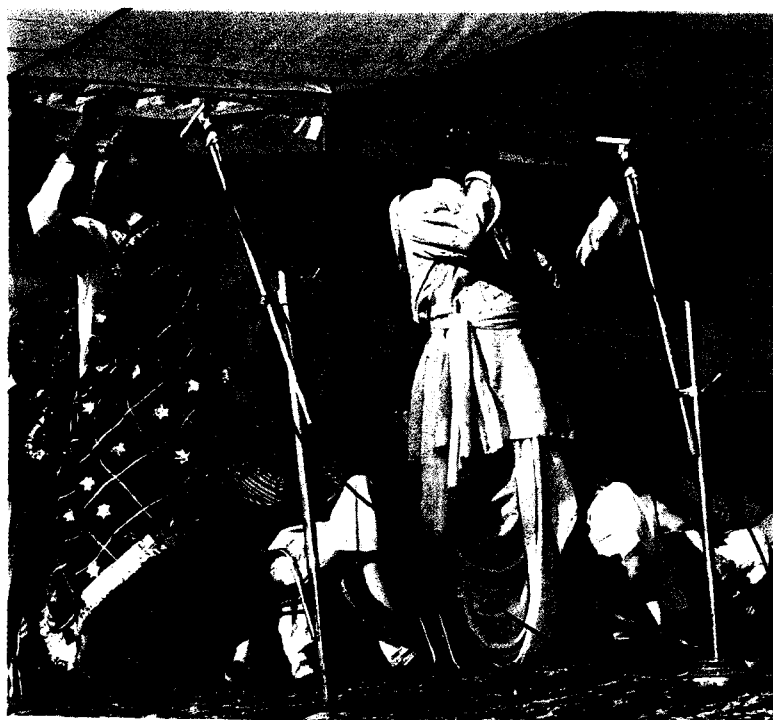
A mass campaign for total literacy is essentially a campaign for social mobilisation which means arousing and awakening the people from all walks of life. The task before the campaign is to:-

- Sensitize the literates who are well placed in life and can spare their leisure time for the unlettered and under privileged
- Mobilise and motivate the illiterate persons and inject the idea into their mind that it is important and desirable for them to be literate.

'Bharat Gyan Vigyan Jatha'

(BGVJ) was a massive effort to create nationwide awareness about literacy to generate an effective demand for literacy and to build up a people's movement to deliver it. The main objectives of the 'Jatha' were:

- Reach every corner of the country and spread the message to stamp out illiteracy.



- Communicate to the broadest possible audience.
- Create a demand for literacy.
- Nucleate, motivate and

inspire local level groups, voluntary organisations and individuals to take up literacy campaigns.

- Instil enthusiasm among activists
- Develop an informal machinery for rapid information transfer and mutual reinforcement among literacy workers
- Strengthen and consolidate the work of the existing groups and voluntary organisations to build a favourable climate for literacy.
- Interlink informally all the literacy efforts both governmental and non-governmental for achieving the task.

Today, literacy has been put firmly on the agenda of the nation and the people. An intensive public awareness about the need for and relevance of literacy has been established. People's movement to deliver literacy too has been created in the states.

Different kinds of media and

art forms - radio, television, posters, banners, hoardings, wall paintings, cinema slides, newspaper write ups, songs, slogans, exhibitions, interviews, role plays, and simulation exercises are utilised for dissemination of the message that literacy is necessary and desirable and also that it is achievable through individual and collective efforts.

At the macro level, a systematic mass media campaign has been developed. The focus of the campaign is directed to the

and TV to draw the educated as organisers and volunteers in the programme and the unlettered as learners. Imaginatively conceived and attractively produced spots are mounted on prime slots (so that a large section of the people view them) on powerful electronic media intensively. Simultaneously, well designed and easily understandable newspaper advertisements are also released covering not only national dailies but also the dailies/magazines published at the district level.

At the micro level, in the districts, environment is being built by wall paintings, leaflets, posters, hoardings, caravans, street corner plays, songs and above all through district specific folk/traditional art. The campaign authorities use the local talents for the same. The cultural groups travel to each and every village and perform the art for which arrangements are made by the local people.

NLLM, as part of media support to literacy efforts has developed video films which are used mostly for creating environment, training and also for actual instructional purposes.



Hindi speaking states where large percentage of illiterate population is concentrated with an intensive exposure on radio

Success stories of district campaigns are video documented and are telecast and distributed. It becomes a guide for other districts which take up campaigns.

NEW PEDAGOGY FOR ADULT LEARNING

One of the major strategies devised by the NLM for achieving the goal of EFA through adult literacy efforts has been to evolve a rapid literacy learning approach called the Improved Pace and Content of learning (IPCL). This innovative approach recognises that

- adult learners can sustain their interest in learning for a short duration, i.e. 5-6 months only, and
- it is possible to acquire the expected levels of functional literacy in about 200 instructional hours

Teaching-learning materials based on this approach reflect the needs and interests of the learners. These materials are given to the learners through a primer prepared in three parts.

Each successive part of the primer is progressively higher in content. Each lesson of the primer integrates reading, writing and numeracy, exercises, drills and tests. The periodical tests serve as tools of self-assessment and indicate the learning outcome. The quality of material is further enriched by incorporating national values, e.g. national integration/communal harmony, conservation of environment, empowerment of women, population education/small family norm, creation of scientific temper etc. Regional/local concerns are also adequately integrated in the material.

The IPCL technique is considered as an innovation in so far as teaching-learning process and methodology are concerned. It helps in sustaining learners motivation, checks wastage and reduces the dropout phenomenon considerably and enables the achievement of NLM norms in a much shorter span of time.

The Mission works through a chain of State Resource Centres for Adult Education and several non-governmental agencies

which have developed basic literacy materials in all the national languages and some local dialects. All these materials have been standardised by helping the SRCs and Districts through a national level Expert Group set up for the purpose.

The materials prepared by the State Resource Centres and a large number of voluntary agencies and Zilla Saksharta Samitis (District Literacy Societies) have been scrutinized to conform to the IPCL approach. These teaching-learning materials contain subjects of local relevance and include folk tales, folklore and local stories so as to become area and situation specific and are able to sustain the interests of the learners.

CONTINUING EDUCATION - CONTENT AND SCOPE

It will be evident from the foregoing account that after experimenting with successive and alternative models of adult literacy and education programmes, the NLM has now settled for the mass campaign approach for total literacy as its

principal strategy for promotion of literacy. However, literacy just provides an entry point to the world of letters and through the world of letters to the world of effective communication and information using print form. It is a basic step in the direction of life-long learning and it cannot be a terminal point.

Obviously, with the successful implementation of TLCs in several districts all over the country, a situation is fast emerging whereby millions of illiterates after acquiring basic literacy skills are joining the stream of neo-literates each year. Without a meaningful post-literacy programme, many of these persons may relapse into the old world of illiteracy. NLM is, therefore, trying to evolve and develop systematic post-literacy programmes, as part of continuing education efforts. With this end in view Post-Literacy Campaigns (PLCs) have been started in the districts where the initial phase of basic literacy has been completed. The post literacy stage comprises of a two year programme which includes about 50 hours of guided-learning as a bridge

towards taking the learners to a self-reliant level of learning. The subsequent phase comprises of self - directed learning through library service, newspapers for neo-literates, charcha mandals and other activities such as vocational training and skill development. This phase



addresses itself mainly to the goal of consolidation and application of the literacy skills to improve the actual living and working conditions of the neo-literates.

The literacy campaigns have resulted in a positive change in attitude, a new confidence

among the learners to upgrade their skills and adopt it for individual development and eventually for social action. The enthusiasm and confidence generated among the learners in the districts which have successfully completed both the TLC as well as the PLC phases, clearly points towards the need to sustain the educational process and to provide learning opportunities on a continuing basis. The access to the world of letters and skills acquired by the neo-literates need to be further reinforced and widened so as to enable them to fully play the crucial role for their own personal, social and economic upliftment and for the development of the country. In the face of persistent social and economic problems, application and utilisation of literacy skills acquired by the neo-literates often remains a difficult proposition. The literacy processes have, therefore, to be continued so as to result in the release of creative energies of the people, which must be sustained to enable the people to realise their potential, to help themselves and achieve

self-reliance. Hence, the crucial importance of creating satisfactory arrangements for continuing education of all learners.

Continuing education is also an indispensable aspect of the strategy of human resources development and of the goal of creation of a learning society. Many of the third world countries and the developing countries are now recognizing that socio-economic planning alone is not enough and that human resources development is a key enabling factor in development. All these countries are aware that education and human resources development will play a key role in the 21st century. What is more significant is the realisation that expansion of formal education alone, which is only a small component of lifelong learning, cannot lead to human resources development. Formal education as an instrument of human resource development is not really effective in remedying the structural inequalities in the society. Continuing education, which provides a second chance

to those who missed formal education and is responsive to learners' needs, directly addresses itself to structural inequalities. Only continuing education can bring about full development of human resources. Since continuing education is the opportunity to engage in lifelong learning, it is now emerging as the main component of the broader view of education as a whole.

Continuing education includes post-literacy for neo-literates and school drop-outs - for retention of literacy skills, continuing of learning beyond elementary literacy and application of this learning for improving their living conditions. But continuing education goes beyond post-literacy. Continuing education includes all of the learning opportunities all people want or need outside of basic literacy education and primary education. In continuing education, human resources development becomes the focus of attention. Thus, continuing education is also an essential extension of literacy to promote human resources development.

THE CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMMES ARE DIRECTED TO

- Provide facilities for retention of literacy skills and continuing education to enable the learners to continue their learning beyond basic literacy.
- Create scope for application of functional literacy for improvement of living conditions and quality of life.
- Disseminate information on development programmes and widening and improving participation of traditionally deprived sections of the society.
- Create awareness about national concerns such as national integration, conservation and improvement of the environment, women's equality, observance of small family norm, etc. and sharing of common problems of the community.
- Improve economic conditions and general well-being as well as improvement of productivity by organising short duration training programmes, orientation courses for providing vocational skills and by taking up linkage activities for establishing direct linkage between continuing education and development activities.
- Provide facilities for library and reading rooms for creating an environment conducive for literacy efforts and a learning society.
- Organise cultural and recreational activities with effective community participation.

The central aim of CE Programmes is to ensure that a comprehensive range of appropriate and effective opportunities for life-long learning are available to all adults everywhere. This means that there should be ready access to various types of activities and that these should be locally available. Establishment of any infrastructure for continuing education therefore, also necessitates establishment of CECs to enable local people to learn either through individually unstructured activities or through the activities of local providers.

Continuing Education Centres are coming up as permanent centres for continuing education to broadly function as providers of the following facilities:

- Library - A repository of learning materials.
- Reading Room - A place which encourages people to read.
- Learning Centre - A provider of CE programmes
- Training Centre - For short duration training programmes to upgrade skills.
- Information Centre for securing information on various development programmes.
- Charcha Mandal - Community meeting place for sharing ideas and solving problems.
- Development Centre - For coordinating services of Govt. agencies.
- Cultural Centre - A place for cultural activities.
- Sports Centre - For recreation and healthy living.

EQUIVALENCY PROGRAMMES

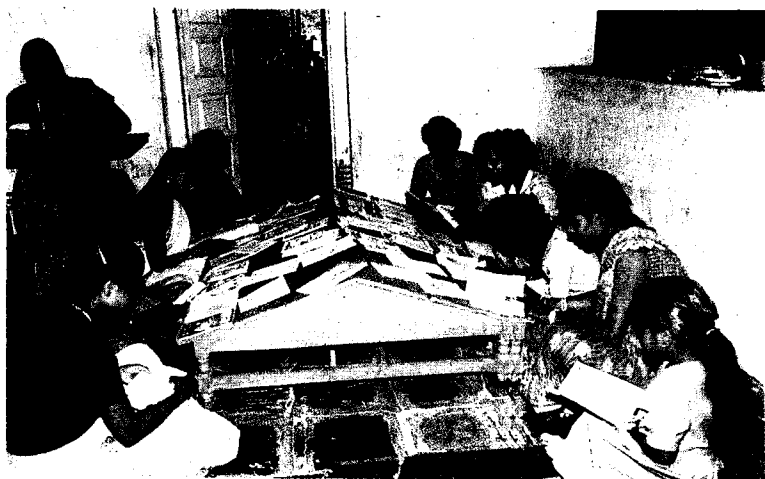
Equivalency Programmes are one type of continuing education programmes which provide an opportunity to adults and out-of-school children who have acquired basic literacy skills or who have completed primary education and who are willing to continue their education beyond elementary literacy for acquisition of competencies equivalent to primary or secondary levels of the formal system. EPs are, therefore, designed as alternative education programmes equivalent to

existing formal, general and vocational education.

National Policy of Education (1986) recognises that formal education system alone cannot be adequate to achieve universal elementary education. It, therefore, calls for mobilisation of all possible alternative systems of education - formal, non-formal, open schooling, distance education, etc. to create opportunities for wider access to all the major target groups, especially women, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other disadvantaged groups. EPs designed with sufficient flexibility and innovativeness can offer a cost-effective alternative to enable the neo-literates and all others who dropped out of primary and secondary formal education to

continue education of their choice at their own pace.

Unlike the formal education system which offers general education programmes, non-formal alternatives in the form of EPs have several variants to provide an integrated, general and vocational educational programme. Such programmes are also more real and life-oriented. Though the content areas in EPs are broadly the same as in formal education, these are re-written in the form of modules or do-it-yourself learning materials with option to choose one vocational skill for earning a living out of a series of skill booklets or courses that may be made available. EPs developed as non-formal alternatives can also draw upon all three types of delivery systems simultaneously i.e. learning centres, self-paced learning, distance education and open learning systems. Implementation of EPs is being attempted through collaborative efforts of Zilla Sakharata Samitis (District Literacy Societies), State Resource Centres, National and State Open Schools and a variety of other institutions.



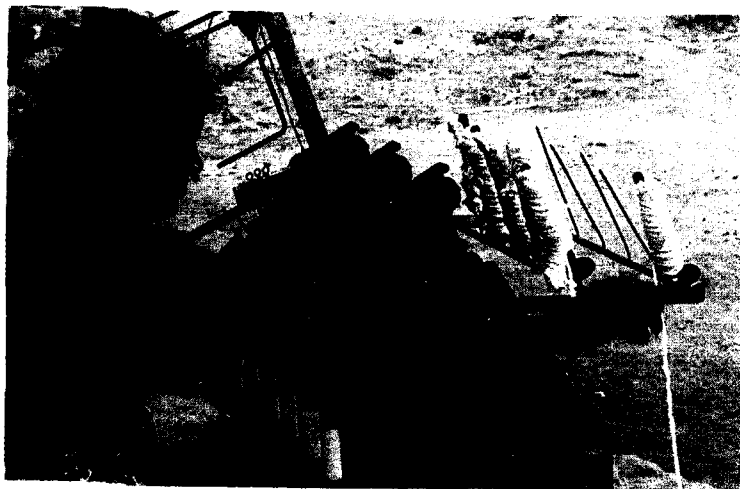
5

FUNCTIONAL LINKAGES WITH SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SECTORS

VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMES AND INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES THROUGH SVPs

'Institutions devoted to workers' education is the literal meaning of 'Shramik Vidyapeeths' (SVP). The scheme

educational, vocational and occupational growth of the workers and their families employed in various sectors, industries, business concern, mines, plantations, manufacturing and servicing units : and other organised and unorganised sectors in urban, semi-urban and industrial areas.



of Shramik Vidyapeeths started by the Ministry of Education symbolises the growing awareness of the need for

The basic idea behind the multi-dimensional or the polyvalent approach to the education of workers in Shramik Vidyapeeths is to meet the various inter-related needs of workers with specifically tailored programmes. The polyvalent multifaceted approach to adult education of workers represents an attempt to provide knowledge and impart skills simultaneously in an integrated manner. The approach is based on the principles that an adult worker

should have continuing access to education and training throughout his/her working life, that the educational experiences should be functional, integrated and designed to meet each individual's specific needs and learning requirement and therefore, each programme



should be need-based. The programme offered to workers are determined by their specific educational, vocational and other needs and aim at skill formation/skill upgradation leading to the horizontal/vertical socio-economic mobility with due stress on functional literacy for illiterate workers.

More specifically, the objectives of the programme for which the

Shramik Vidyapeeths are established are:

- to enrich the personal life of the workers and their families by providing opportunities of adult education, physical culture and recreation
- to enable the worker to play a more effective role as a member of the family and as a citizen
- to improve the occupational skills and technical knowledge of the worker for raising his efficiency and increasing productive ability
- to organise programmes of vocational and technical training with a view to facilitating horizontal/vertical mobility and employability
- to widen the range of his/her knowledge and understanding of the social, economic and political systems in order to create in him/her a critical awareness about the environment and his/her own predicament

One of the primary responsibilities of the Shramik

Vidyapeeths, is to explore, innovate and try out new and alternative methodologies in the field of non-formal education for urban and industrial workers so as to meet the needs of different groups of workers. Research work in the field of polyvalent adult education is also taken up through Shramik Vidyapeeths, in



the country so as to strengthen their performance further. The programme of Shramik Vidyapeeths, envisages active involvement of a large number of employers, public sector undertakings and the support of workers' organisations. Each Shramik Vidyapeeth is not expected to have its own infrastructure with its own full

time staff and heavy capital equipment. It is a nucleus of competent organisers with an educational goal in order to mobilise community talent and community resources as catalysts to meet the training and educational needs of the workers and their families in factories, offices and homes leading to their total development. For this purpose the Shramik Vidyapeeths seek participation of development agencies, industries, trade union, educational institutions and other community resources, as may be relevant in addition to that of the guest faculty members and other resource persons.

Population Education for better quality of life

Studies conducted in various parts of the world have established that there is a direct and functional relationship between literacy and productivity on the one hand and literacy and over-all quality of human life represented by better health, hygiene, sanitation and family

**POLYVALENT ADULT EDUCATION
CENTRES
(SHRAMIK VIDYAPEETHS)**

(1993 - 94)

Courses Organised	5510
Types of Courses	223
Activities Organised*	3150
Participation Level	MALES: 1,27,660 (36.99%) FEMALES: 2,17,455 (63.01%)

*** OF LESS THAN THREE DAYS DURATION.**

welfare: on the other. It is also known that literacy is an important factor in bringing about improvement in the quality of life of individuals and their families. It also leads to modernisation through better awareness of issues and problems and ways to find rational solutions to them. On the contrary, the nexus between illiteracy and underdevelopment causes several forms of distortions, deprivations and disadvantages in society like mal-nutrition, infant mortality, high fertility, child marriage, high birth rate, high death rate, superstition and beliefs. In the ultimate analysis illiteracy

adversely affects the quality of life of the people.

In view the above, at the time of setting up of the National Literacy Mission (NLM), it was realised that along with literacy we should address ourselves to inculcating, among the masses, the values of small family norm national integration, empowerment of women, conservation of environment, etc.

It is in this context, that a Project on Integration of Population Education with Literacy Programmes has been in operation in the country as part of NLM activities. The Project has been in operation

since 1986 with financial support from United Nations for Population Fund (UNFPA)

The modalities of integrating the component of population education with literacy may take several forms. The teaching-learning materials designed for use in literacy programmes and at post literacy stage incorporate essential and crucial messages of population education and when these materials are used in teaching the illiterates, their level of awareness, knowledge, attitudes and behavioural patterns are gradually influenced in favour of small family norm. Since the transaction of instructional process has to be done with the help of instructors and volunteers, their training in the techniques of imparting this information and organising discussions around topics related to population education assumes importance and this aspect is receiving the attention of the Literacy Campaign organisers and Post Literacy efforts currently being organised in different parts of the country. During environment building phase for literacy also, adequate

emphasis is laid on designing multi-media packages which focus on issues connected with population education and population-related matters. Thus, wall writings, posters, slogans, audio and video spots, street corner plays, etc. help in generating greater and deeper awareness about issues such as the measures necessary to increase child survival rate, practices connected with safe motherhood and child care, reduction in conception frequency by explaining the advantages of marriage at the right age, spacing and ideal family size. Values attached to the preference for the male child are also being tackled by exposing the learners to stories and episodes depicting that a girl child is as good for the family as a boy.

Thus, along with literacy promotion, the learners are getting the knowledge about population issues. Evaluation reports indicate that the project has been helpful in contributing to the goal of reaching the message of the small family norm

The project covers all the major

States of the country and is being implemented by the Directorate of Adult Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India. All the 336 Literacy Campaign districts in the country and 134 post literacy projects use the teaching learning materials.

Such projects are being supported by UNFPA and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India for the School sector and Higher Education sectors also - the former being implemented by National Council of Educational Research & Training and the latter by the University Grants Commission.

EDUCATION FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY AND EMPOWERMENT

Provision of educational opportunities for women has been an important part of the national endeavour in the field of education since India's independence. Though these endeavours did yield significant results, gender disparities persist with uncompromising tenacity,

more so in rural areas and among disadvantaged communities. The National Policy on Education, 1986 saw education as an agency that could bring about basic change in the status of women. To quote, "In order to neutralize the accumulated distortions of the past, there will be a well conceived edge in favour of women. The National Education System will play a positive, interventionist role in the empowerment of women.. the removal of women's illiteracy and obstacles inhibiting their access to, and retention in, elementary education will receive overriding priority through provision of special support services, setting of time targets, and effective monitoring". Formulated in pursuance of the National Policy on Education, 1986, a programme called "Mahila Samakhya" or Women's Equality through Education, was designed.

A Dutch-assisted project, Mahila Samakhya, which literally means women's equality through education, is a women's empowerment project which does not aim at service delivery but

seeks to bring about a change in women's perception about themselves and that of society in regard to women's 'traditional roles'. It endeavours to create an environment for women to seek knowledge and information in order to make informed choices and create circumstances in which women can learn at their own pace and rhythm. The centrality of education in the struggle to achieve equality is an important focus of Mahila Samakhya.

The nodal point around which the programme devolves is the village level "Mahila Sangha" or women's collective, which constitutes an easily accessible forum for women to discuss problems relating to their daily routine such as child care, health, fuel, fodder, drinking water, education; problems related to their status, role within the society and in the family; and problems related to their self-image as women. These village women's groups set out their agenda for education and collective action. They try to seek solutions to their problems by initiating action and pressurising

the block and district structures to respond.

At least two women from each village work as activators with the women's collective, and help to catalyse discussion and action. The process is helped along by a 'sahayogini' or facilitator who is a local woman trained through programmes to facilitate and coordinate the activities of about 10 'Sanghas'. Their primary functions are tuned to the needs of these collectives by way of providing information, support and guidance when required, and to act as a link between village level activities and the district implementation unit of the programme. The district unit shoulders the overall responsibilities for the programme at the district level and comprises women with experience in the field of women's development. It also provides resource support for specific inputs like education, child care, health, etc.

At the state level an autonomous registered society has been set up. An empowered body, it takes all decisions on the

management and financial aspects of the programme. A State Project Director oversees the programme at the state level. The state office provides a facilitative atmosphere for the conduct of the programme, the necessary resource support for the functional areas of the project and arranges for the inter-district linkages of the programme so as to create a wider network for the women's movement. At the national level the programme is co-ordinated by the Project Director. Guidance from a national resource group of eminent women constituted at this level, is provided to the programme.

Presently, the programme is being implemented in 14 districts, spread over four states of Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh. Mahila Samakhyas have played noteworthy roles in the total literacy campaigns in the districts of Gujarat and Karnataka and is engaged in providing alternative avenues of education like 'Non-formal Education' in Uttar Pradesh. The programme has developed

innovative and relevant learning and teaching materials at local levels. Above all it has spurred women to demand better educational, health and child care facilities by enhancing their confidence, self-image and abilities for collective action.

Several social organisations have taken up the cause of women, by organising Jathas and Camps during literacy and post-literacy phases. These are directed to:

- Create an environment where women demand knowledge and information, empowering themselves to change their lives.
- Inculcate in women the confidence that change is possible if women work collectively
- Spread the message that education of women is a precondition for fighting against their oppression
- To highlight the plight of the girl-child and stress the need for universalization of elementary education as a way of addressing the issue.

THE MOON AND THE THUMB PRINT

LITERACY IN PUDUKKOTTAI

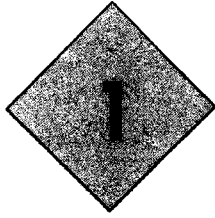
If district Ernakulam (Kerala) was the culture-bed of India's mass-movement for literacy, Pudukkottai (Tamil Nadu) was an important episode in the prime strategy of TLC (Total Literacy Campaign). The Pudukkottai TLC covered 18 million learners, but its significance rests in the social churning the literacy movement generated.

The district campaign, aptly named ARIVOLI (Light of Literacy), created an unprecedented excitement in the village. The people quickly realised that this was no routine 'government' programme despatching poker-faced officials to visit habitations, ask laconic questions and collect incomprehensible statistics. Literacy was something which they had subconsciously sought for, and which was happening to them. Literacy centres sprang up everywhere, on the tiny porch of humble mud-and-thatch hut, under the banyan tree, the open verandah of public office after it closed for the day, or even a place of worship. Commercial banks pitched in with easy loans to women learners to buy bicycles, and the village women on bicycles became empowered women. The employees of a bank adopted a village and donated blackboards and lanterns.

The lady Collector viewed the campaign as going beyond literacy and numeracy. She persuaded the District Rural Development Agency and a bank to organise for training her women clientele in gem-cutting and fashioning mats and baskets and a range of articles with plain palm-leaves available in plenty, thus ensuring their self-employment.

The District is administering the Post Literacy Campaign with the same vigour as was evident in the TLC.

E F A
IN RETROSPECT
AND PROSPECT



FUTURE DIRECTION : THE ROAD AHEAD

Education for All is a daunting task but it is a mission to which the nation pledged itself when India made its "tryst with destiny" forty-six years ago. It is a legacy of the freedom struggle, a dream cherished by Gopalakrishna Gokhale, Mahatma Gandhi and the founding fathers of the Constitution. Ever since planning began, India has been striving towards universalisation of elementary education. Though the goal is still full of challenges, to miss what has been accomplished, in terms of spread of institutions, participation and equalisation of educational opportunities, is to "consider not the beam in thine own eye".

The nation as a whole must keep on striving to complete the mission and erase what Mahatma Gandhi once called a 'national shame and a curse.'

NATIONAL WILL

The basic and adult education system has to bring into its fold areas and social strata more difficult to reach; what is ahead is a marathon race along a tortuous path strewn with socio-economic barriers and impediments. That business 'as usual' would not do, is the moral of successful Total Literacy Campaigns. It is not the State apparatus alone but the whole society that needs to be mobilised for the cause of UEE.

Perhaps the greatest challenge before the country today as it strives to universalise literacy lies in this area of perceptual change. The common perception that the government alone must bear the sole responsibility for providing education needs to

change. While the Union and the State Governments have their full share of responsibilities, in the final analysis, it is people's involvement in educational reconstruction which will make the crucial difference in meeting the challenge of achieving education for all in India. While the task and the challenge are formidable and daunting, they are achievable. The onus of action now rests both individually and collectively on teachers and educators, NGOs, the industrial sector, other sectors, the media, politicians, panchayat leaders, grassroots workers, on each and everyone. A grand alliance - an interactive combination of local, voluntary and state initiatives coupled with an assortment of productive, result oriented approaches and strategies holds the key to EFA in India. Herein lies the challenge. As the experience with the Indian economy has shown, an overreaching crisis can provide a fillip to reform. The failure to achieve education for all is no less a crisis - the adverse impacts on demography, productivity and

status of women and disadvantaged groups are too well known to bear repetition - but it is a crisis with a difference, a silent crisis lacking the immediacy of a default on international commitments and as such devoid of that momentum to spur action. Therefore the 'National Will' to achieve EFA has to be periodically renewed so that it does not flag and shrivel.

HOLISTIC VIEW NEEDED

Educational administration has long tended to be too pre-occupied with provision of facilities schools, school buildings and appointments of teachers to the neglect of the processes required to make the system work. There is enough empirical evidence on the mismatch between access and enrolment and to cast doubts on the propriety of this institutional pre-occupation.

This is said not to belittle the importance of such facilities in schools but to emphasize that the construction of school buildings and lower pupil teacher ratios are not the be-all and end-all of UEE. The education system, the state

and the civil society at large should internalise a broader functional view of education, a view which conceives education as a dynamic, cumulative lifelong process, encompassing a wide diversity of learning opportunities, applying to all people, but laying stress on girls, children and youth, particularly those belonging to the disadvantaged groups. Strategies are needed to bring about the perceptual change. Innovation and dissemination are important components of any such strategy. Nothing can bring about the perceptual changes faster than the development and dissemination of viable and scalable models of non-formal education. Regional and international cooperation can facilitate innovation and dissemination.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The importance of financial resources cannot be exaggerated. As the economy is reformed, as state intervention gets re-focused and as public expenditure is restructured more budgetary resources will flow to education,

particularly for universalisation of elementary education. To this end educational reform needs to be fitted into the "architecture that our (economic) reforms seek to create". The Prime Minister has already stated at the EFA Summit that the country was determined to achieve the goal of allocation of six per cent GNP for education during the Ninth Five Year Plan.

MANAGEMENT

While economic liberalization and the consequent financial restructuring can be expected to facilitate greater resources flow to education far more difficult is the management of change. The system, as of now, barely works and hardly discharges even the routine functions effectively. There is hardly any accountability. To transform such a system to one which can take on the unfinished task of UEE with élan and a new mindset is no mean task. There is no better way to ensure accountability than an awakened and "demanding" community, for the creation of which the 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendments hold great promise.

ABBREVIATIONS

AE	Adult Education
AEC	Adult Education Centre
AIEP	Area Intensive Education Project
APEID	Asian Programme for Educational Innovations for Development
APPEAL	Asia Pacific Programme on Education for All
APPEP	Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project
BEP	Bihar Education Project
CABE	Central Advisory Board of Education
CIEFL	Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages
CIET	Central Institute of Educational Technology
CIIL	Central Institute of Indian Languages
CIVE	Central Institute of Vocational Education
CTE	College of Teacher Education
DAE	Directorate of Adult Education
DIET	District Institute of Education and Training
DRU	District Resource Unit
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EFA	Education for All
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GNP	Gross National Product
GOI	Government of India
HRD	Human Resource Development
IASE	Institute of Advance Study in Education
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services
IDA	International Development Agency
IEDC	Integrated Education for the Disabled Children
IGNOU	Indira Gandhi National Open University
IPCL	Improved Pace and Content of Learning
JSN	Jana Shikshan Nilayam
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resources Development
MIS	Management Information System
MLLs	Minimum Levels of Learning

NAEP	National Adult Education Programme
NCERT	National Council Of Educational Research and Training
NCTE	National Council of Teacher Education
NCD	National Development Council
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIEPA	National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
NIH	National Institute of Handicapped
NLM	National Literacy Mission
NOS	National Open School
NPE	National Policy on Education
NPEP	National Population Education Programme
OB	Operation Blackboard
ODA	Overseas Development Agency
PIED	Project on Integrated Education for the Disabled
PL	Post Literacy
POA	Programme of Action
PREAL	Project Radio Evaluation in Adult Education
PROPEL	Promoting Primary and Elementary Education
RCE	Regional College of Engineering
SC	Scheduled Caste
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SIET	State Institute of Educational Technology
SRC	State Resource Centre
ST	Scheduled Tribe
TLC	Total Literacy Campaign
TV	Television
UEE	Universalisation of Elementary Education
UGC	University Grants Commission
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UT	Union Territory
VEC	Village Education Committee

GLOSSARY

Anganwadis	Centres for delivery of package of services under ICDS in a village/urban slum
Ashram school	A residential school in a tribal milieu
Bal Bhawan	Literally, a 'Home for children'
Balwadis	Day care centres for pre-school children
Block	A spatial unit for developmental planning comprising about 100 villages and about 80,000 to 1,20,000 population
Doordarshan	Indian Television
Gram Sabha	An assembly of all citizens of a village
Gram Shikshan Kendra	Literally, Village Education Centre'
Jana Shikshan Nilayam	Centre for People's Education serving a cluster of about ten villages with a population of about 5,000
Kachha	Temporary
Kendriya	Central
Lok Jumbish	People's Movement: Project aimed at Education for All in the state of Rajasthan.
Mandal	A spatial unit of developmental planning comprising about 15-20 villages and about 10,000 population in the state of Andhra Pradesh
Mahila Samakhya	Women's collectives: Project on education for women's equality
Panchayat	Elected body responsible for local government of a village or a cluster of villages
Panchayati Raj	Generally a three tier structure of local self government in rural areas at the village, block and district levels
Puduvai Arivoli Iyyakam	An NGO in the Union Territory of Pondicherry
Rashtriya Sansthan	National Institute
Shiksha Karmi	A local educational worker
Taluka	A sub-division of district
Zila Parishad	District Council

NIEPA DC



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