

SOCIAL EDUCATION



सत्यमेव जयते

Issued on behalf of

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

CONTENTS

I. Introduction	3
II. From Adult to Social Education ..	3
III. Social Education : Why and How ..	7
IV. Methods and Techniques	110
V. Progress and Prospects	112

Pr.

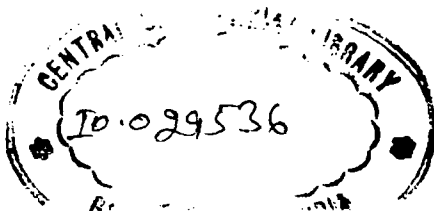
374

Ind - S

IOD- RS

370.1150954

CDC - S, 1959



I. INTRODUCTION

Social Education, or education for life in society, is required in every country wedded to democracy. In India, with its high percentage of illiteracy, the survival of democracy depends largely on a vast programme of social education.

A concept of social education which is confined mainly to the promotion of literacy is far too narrow. In India, the scope of social education is, therefore, extended to (i) knowledge of spoken and written words, (ii) training in citizenship, and (iii) satisfactory adjustment to social life. Knowledge of spoken and written words is essential for communication of one's ideas and for availing oneself of the thoughts expressed in literature. Language is the vehicle of culture, and without adequate understanding of the language, it is not possible to preserve and promote the cultural heritage. It is, at the same time, true that mere presence of illiteracy is not an indication of ignorance, for much information and knowledge is passed on from generation to generation through spoken words and symbols. It is, however, desirable to see that illiteracy is not allowed to come in the way of our progress, more so because every adult is invested, under the Constitution, with the obligations of a citizen. Training in citizenship is therefore essential. In addition, the ability to adjust oneself satisfactorily to social life is necessary for the progress of the country. This adjustment cannot be static. It has to be dynamic in order to meet the needs of technological progress.

II. FROM ADULT TO SOCIAL EDUCATION

The programme of social education in India owes its origin to the Adult Education Movement. The beginning of the twentieth century saw signs of an awakening to the need of education for adults. Historically the movement can be divided into

certain stages. Up to the end of World War I education for adult citizens was confined to a few night schools in provinces like Bombay and Bengal. These schools were mostly attended by adults working in factories. In addition, university teachers who were inspired by the Adult Education Movement in Great Britain tried to arrange a few university extension lecture classes for adults. In the rural areas, a few adult classes were run by co-operative societies. These attempts were sporadic and did not make much impact on the life of the local communities. Libraries, an important agency of adult education, were few and far between. Only Baroda State had a chain of libraries in its villages.

An important development in adult education was the great experiment which Shri M. Visvesvaraya started in Mysore. Nearly 7,000 classes were organised to reduce illiteracy, and a network of libraries was spread throughout the State. The experiment, however, did not continue for long.

Up to 1927, the adult education movement registered fairly good progress in certain provinces such as Bombay and Punjab. Meanwhile, the political movement in the country generated a great desire for education among the people. The progress of the co-operative movement also gave an impetus to adult education. The Central Co-operative Institute in Bombay, for instance, maintained a number of schools in the province. In Punjab, a large number of night schools were run by co-operative societies.

The great depression of the 'twenties adversely affected adult education. Most of the schools were closed down on financial grounds. Nevertheless, the constructive programme of the National Movement emphasised the need for spreading literacy.

The period 1936-39 saw the functioning of popular Ministries in the provinces. The Adult Education Movement got a new life. Leaders like Dr. Syed Mahmud and Shri C. Rajagopalachari actively associated themselves with the programme in their provinces. The provincial Governments introduced schemes of mass literacy. They also appointed Advisory Boards to help them to expand the programme of adult education. Gradually, adult education was accepted as one of the important responsibilities of the State Government. Its syllabus was expanded to include civic education; posters, publications and educational films were used as media of

education. More literacy classes, libraries and reading rooms were opened.

An outstanding development in the field of adult education took place in 1938 with the organisation of the Indian Adult Education Association. The objectives of the Association were to co-ordinate the activities of various provincial organisations and to stimulate the development of the movement on systematic lines. It also acted as a clearing-house of information at the national level. The adult education movement took a definite form and shape with the establishment of the all-India organisation.

In 1941-42, the Bombay Government started the training of adult education workers at the Government Training Institute. The scheme was launched in other provinces also. The National University of Jamia Millia at Delhi started a separate department for Adult Education. It also opened Adult Education Centres which were the first of their kind in the country.

But the outbreak of World War II had already affected the pace of the movement. The political deadlock after 1942 and the increasing communal tension in the country made the situation worse. The number of schools declined. To check the decline in adult education activities, some of the provincial governments introduced the Compact Area Scheme for concentrated effort to remove illiteracy. During this period, various experiments were made in the administrative set-up of the adult education scheme. In Bombay, the Bombay City Adult Education Committee was entrusted with the work of organising adult education with the help of grants from the Government and donations from the public. In Mysore, a citizens' organisation by the name of Mysore State Adult Education Council undertook the work of promoting literacy in the State.

AFTER INDEPENDENCE

The advent of Independence in 1947 marked the beginning of a new phase in the growth of the adult education movement. In the following years the various State Governments launched an extensive programme of adult education.

Side by side, the concept of adult education changed. It was felt that a national system of education should guarantee to all

Indians opportunities to develop the qualities of leadership and those civic virtues which sustain a democratic way of life. The adoption of Basic Education as the ideal pattern of education for children made a corresponding change in the education of adults necessary.

In January 1948 the Central Advisory Board of Education appointed a committee called the Adult (Social) Education Committee. The Committee prepared a scheme known as the Scheme for Social Education. This scheme was brought into operation in 1949. It included a five-point programme to provide (i) literacy, (ii) knowledge of rules of health and hygiene, (iii) training for the improvement of the adult's economic status, (iv) essence of citizenship with adequate consciousness of rights and duties, and (v) healthy form of recreation suited to the needs of the community and the individual.

During this period of change from literacy to adult education and from adult education to social education, various experiments were undertaken to determine an appropriate programme of social education. The Jamia Millia, which had started community centres with a comprehensive programme of education for adults paved the way for development. The Delhi Municipal Committee appointed in 1948 a Social Education Committee under the guidance of Dr. Zakir Hussain and Shafiq Ahmed Kidwai. The Delhi State Education Directorate introduced the innovation of social education through a programme of 'caravan of knowledge'. The various State Governments, enlarged their programmes of social education to a great extent.

The Indian Adult Education Association provided a general platform for discussion through various conferences and national seminars. The selection of subjects for the national seminars indicated the widening of the scope of social education and its orientation to suit national needs. In 1951 a seminar on "the organisation of techniques for the liquidation of illiteracy" was held. The second national seminar devoted its attention to the organisation of community centres, the third to social education literature and the fourth to training of social education workers. Subsequently seminars were held on the organisation of recreational and cultural activities, libraries and reading rooms, etc. in urban and rural areas

Since 1952 the Community Development Movement has made sustained efforts to relate the programme of social education to the life of the community. Thus, for the first time the programme of social education has, on an all-India basis, become an integral part of the Community Development Movement in rural areas. In the following pages the nature of this programme and the method of organisation are discussed.

III. SOCIAL EDUCATION : WHY AND HOW

As stated earlier, social education is essential for every citizen in a democratic society. Every citizen should know his place in society as an individual, as a member of various social groups, and as a member of the community as a whole. As an individual, he has his responsibilities to his social environment from which he draws his nourishment and inspiration; as a member of the family, he has to discharge his responsibilities as a son, a daughter, a brother, a sister, a father or a mother. If he lives in a joint family, his responsibilities extend to other members. As a member of an occupation group, he has responsibilities to his colleagues, to his employer, to his family and to the community. Similarly, he is called upon to fulfil his responsibilities in relation to other social and cultural groups. As a member of a State wedded to democracy, he has a basic responsibility to play his part in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes designed for the well-being of the people. He discharges the latter responsibility by electing representatives to Government at all levels—local, district, State and national. All these answer the “why” of social education.

Social education for an individual begins in the mother’s lap. Her own values and her affection for the child combine together to give the rudiments of social awareness to the new-born. The process continues further in the home, in the family, in the play-group, in the school, in the temple, in the work-place and in other formal and informal associations of a social, recreational and cultural

nature. It is thus a continuous process from birth to adult life. What is attempted through the programme of social education is an *organised* effort to stimulate this process in the interest of the individual, the group and the community.

To begin with, the programme of social education includes the programme of providing information and knowledge to the citizen in order to make his life more interesting and useful. "To the man of trained mind and developed tastes", says Joad in his book *About Education*, "the world becomes literally a large place, larger and more exciting. He is able to see in it more beauty, more variety, more scope for sympathy and understanding than he saw before." This emphasises the importance of education in the life of a citizen in a democratic State. In fact, it is important to recognise that the people's right to education is next only to their right to live.

According to the latest Census, only seven crores, out of a population of 36 crores, are literate in India. The remaining 29 crores, who are only a little less than the combined population of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., must therefore be made literate. The percentage of literacy among women is even lower, for only 79 out of every one thousand women in India can read or write a letter in some language. Literacy is extremely low in certain parts of the country. In Northern and Central India, for instance, the percentage of literacy is less than 11 per cent, and literacy among women in these areas is less than four per cent. To these millions of men and women, the world of the mind is a closed book.

The aim of social education must, therefore, be to give to the illiterate adult the minimum of knowledge required for a purposeful civic life. It tries to endow their lives with meaning and significance. It recognises the right of every individual to develop the resources of mind and improve upon his heritage.

Social education, besides promoting literacy, aims at education for citizenship and democracy and the fostering of social solidarity and cultural harmony in the country. It brings the adults an awareness of their rights and duties, develops in them love for a democratic way of life and pride in their cultural heritage. K. G. Saiyidain in his book *Problems of Educational Reconstruction*, says that "if we give people the capacity to read without giving them

the right literary taste and judgment; if they acquire the habit of reading papers or listening to political speeches or the radio without cultivating the intelligence to examine critically the written and spoken propaganda aimed at them from all sides; if they continue to be at the mercy of every advertising quack—commercial, medical, political, social or religious—then, surely, their literacy is neither a cultural gain nor a means towards building up a sane and well-balanced outlook on life.”

Social education also implies training in the basic principles of personal and social hygiene. Millions of our people live in dirty and unhygienic surroundings. Every year thousands of people die of malaria, smallpox, typhoid, tuberculosis and other diseases. Infant mortality and the mortality of mothers at child-birth are very high. As many as 50 out of every 100 deaths are thus accounted for. If people know how diseases are caused and how to fight them, hundreds of valuable lives can be saved. By emphasising sanitation, balanced diet and nutrition, it is possible to build a healthy nation. What is implied in the process of social education is the education of the individual in terms of his personal and social hygiene as a responsibility towards society.

It is equally necessary to satisfy the emotional and aesthetic needs of adult learners. Painting, music, dramatic performances, festivals, exhibitions and *melas* can be profitably used for the development of aesthetic sensibility in the adults, besides enabling them to demonstrate their creative powers and organisational ability. Group activities and discussions, talks, sport, clubs, educational, cultural and historical tours, youth camps, seminars and gardening have also been found valuable for social education.

The opportunity to improve one's economic condition is one of the prime attractions of education. Hence a programme of social education activities should initiate the adult into ways and means of raising his living standard. The social education worker should, therefore, associate him with the organisations which can teach him improved methods of agriculture or new crafts that can add to his earning capacity. The universities and polytechnics should be persuaded to organise part-time technical and professional courses to help him to improve his economic position.

Finally, social education stands for human brotherhood and universal ethics. It teaches the virtues of peace, and is opposed

to narrowness of outlook of any form, such as chauvinism and racialism. It upholds the dignity of man and attempts the elimination of poverty and backwardness.

Children cannot be left out of a programme of social education. As stated earlier, social education is a continuous progress, beginning from birth. The school and play-ground play an important part in promoting social education among children.

Experience shows that participation in groups and organisations by children, youth and adults is the best method of social education. Through group participation individuals find opportunities to work with others, to express their creativeness, to develop their ability and to qualify for leadership, depending on their ability to perform a given function. In addition, group participation promotes a spirit of co-operation and brotherhood.

IV. METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

This leads to the method of organising the programme of social education. As indicated above, the programme is to be promoted through groups and organisations. The group is formed around some common interests. Members are encouraged to express their interests and formulate a common programme to meet these interests. The members in doing so get to know each other, their activities and abilities. A relationship is developed through interaction. The group decides its objective and programme, and allots to different members their responsibilities for organising the activities according to their capacities. In the early stage, the programme may directly relate to the immediate needs of the members. Gradually, these interests of the members are related to the common interest of the community to which they belong. Thus they are encouraged to relate with other groups and associations, and a community of interests is born. This process of inter-action and inter-relationship contributes to the process of social education of the members.

The programme of the group may be recreational, cultural, educational or economic, or a combination of many of these activities. Efforts are made to expose the members to larger interests and they are helped to relate this multiplicity of activities. The Community Centre in the Community Development Blocks offers the opportunity both of relating one's interest to the interest of the community and of finding self-expression and satisfaction through its recreational, educational and cultural activities.

The method of organisation of particular activities may be considered here in brief. With regard to the activities concerning literary and general education, it is necessary to note that grown-ups are to be taught differently from children. An adult's vocabulary and powers of reasoning are greater than those of a child. He is alert and reacts to his social environment quickly. Further, an adult, however uneducated, has his own outlook and philosophy of life. A child, on the other hand, has no such attitude. The latter is for this reason more receptive. But for adults education has to be attractive, and it is important that social education centres develop a genial atmosphere. Adults have to be encouraged at every stage. They already have much information. Therefore, the diffusion of information or knowledge is less important than the need to arouse them mentally and emotionally. Once enthusiasm is created, an intelligent and tactful worker can lead them to knowledge and culture.

The method of correlation between purpose and activity has achieved great success in the basic schools. Whatever is learnt is learnt at first hand and there is no lapse into illiteracy. This method is now being applied to the teaching of adults, and it has been found that in this manner they can be taught more effectively. By stimulating the adult's interest, the social education worker helps develop in him a scientific attitude of mind and gradually inducts him into useful subjects. Knowledge and information are brought within the reach of adults through popularly written literature and books. Of late, the radio, the film, charts and other audio-visual aids have become popular media of social education in India.

Cultural activities form an important part of the social education programmes. These help the adults to organise various types of recreation for themselves. The participants and the materials chosen are, as far as possible, local. Outside help is sought only

to supplement local resources. Among these activities are : fairs and exhibitions, *kavi sammelans* and *mushairas*, folk dances, musical and dramatic performances and cultural tours.

An important point to remember is that great stress is laid on discussion, which is an indirect method, in social education. As suggested earlier, adults like to meet in groups and discuss problems in an informal manner. The usefulness of this method is all the more enhanced when the discussion centres round problems in which the adults are interested. It is the responsibility of the social education worker to see that the discussion does not become personal or emotional and is directed towards the common solution of a common problem.

In short, the method and technique should be such as to begin with the interest of the participant and relate him more effectively with the demands of his social life. It is through his participation in social activities and in the activities of groups and organisations that the educational process of 'socialisation', of making him a more effective member of the community, is fulfilled.

V. PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS

The programme of social education has made considerable progress since the year 1951. The First Five-Year Plan (1951-56) recognised social education as an integral part of the national reconstruction programme. Since 1952, the Community Development Movement has taken the programme to the villages. In the First Five-Year Plan, Rs. 5 crores were provided for social education. The Second Plan made a similar provision of another Rs. 5 crores. This amount is in addition to the provision made in the budget of Development Blocks. Allotments of Rs. 700,000 (Rs. 40,000 recurring and Rs. 30,000 non-recurring) for the first five years of the Development Blocks (Phase I) and Rs. 560,000 (Rs. 35,000 recurring and Rs. 15,000 non-recurring) for the next five years (Phase II) have been made. Each block on an average

covers a population of 66,000. There are at present nearly 2,000 blocks in Phase I and nearly 500 in Phase II. It is proposed to cover the total population in 5,000 blocks by 1963. In addition, the Education Ministry has introduced, under the Scheme of Intensive Educational Development in Selected Areas, increased activities in the field of social education. In urban areas, another scheme, 'Relief of educated unemployment', launched in 1953-54, helped in employing 1,078 additional teachers in different States.

An important development has taken place in the field of library service. During the last few years, the development of library services and expansion of library facilities has received a good deal of attention. The first step in this direction was taken by setting up a Library Committee to advise the Government in the matter. The Ministry of Education collaborated with UNESCO in the organisation of an International Seminar on Development of Libraries in Asia. The seminar was held in October 1955. The Adult Education Section of the Central Education Library of the Ministry of Education issued 35,710 books and provided facilities to about 70,000 Central Government employees. A bibliography for neoliterates in Hindi has been compiled and published.

In addition, the Ministry of Education has continued its programme of encouraging the production of suitable books for neoliterate adults by holding competitions and awarding prizes to authors of the best books in all Indian languages, and by purchasing 1,000 copies of each of the selected books. During recent years, the Government of India has organised workshops for the training of authors in the technique of writing for children and for neoliterate adults.

The National Board for Audio-visual Education was re-constituted to provide greater representation to Central Ministries, State Governments, and importers and producers of audio-visual aids in the country. An expanded programme of the use of audio-visual aids has been drawn up. Each State has developed its own programme of social education according to its own organisation and the resources available. The responsibility for the execution of the various schemes largely rests with the State Governments. Some of the States have appointed Deputy Directors of Education in charge of Social Education and District Social Education Organisers to promote the programme. The Central Government acts.

only as a clearing-house, providing guidance, co-ordination and financial assistance to the States. The Ministry of Education has started a five months' training programme for the training of District Social Education Organisers at the National Fundamental Education Centre.

PROGRAMME IN C.D. BLOCKS

The Community Development Movement in our country aims at promoting all-sided development of the village community. It tries to develop a spirit of community life among the people by promoting co-operation, and fulfilment by the village community of its responsibilities for the welfare, employment and livelihood of all its members. It aims to make the village self-sufficient in the primary needs of life such as food, clothing and shelter, and to promote the development of each village as part of the development of the area of which it forms a part. It tries to develop self-reliance and initiative in the community so that people are able to manage and run their affairs themselves, and to make the villages self-governing units of the larger Indian democracy.

Social education, as a process of education for life in society, has an extremely vital role to play in community development by relating villagers with their own communities and their social groups. This is in harmony with the current emphasis on the organisation of three vital institutions, namely, the panchayat, the co-operative and the school. Through the programme of social education, various voluntary organisations such as youth groups, farmers' groups, women's groups, recreation groups and cultural groups act as agencies for relating the villagers with the development programme and providing a base for developing leadership around functions. The programme also concentrates on the training of this leadership through participation in various activities. Therefore the Social Education Organiser, who is a member of the Development Team, tries to promote organisation of the groups described above. He organises Community Centres and tries to stimulate and develop leadership around various functions. He organises literacy classes, reading rooms and libraries for the spread of education among adults. He utilises various audio-visual aids including films, film strips, radios, posters, etc. The Community Centre, as

a multi-purpose organisation providing recreational, cultural and educational activities, promoted and organised with the active participation of the villagers, offers an excellent meeting place for children, youth and adults in the community. The Social Education Organiser, in addition, co-operates with other Extension workers in promoting the programme of Community Development. Every Extension worker is an educator in his own subject, and every social group, including the Panchayat and the co-operative, offers the opportunity to promote social education among the members of the community. Thus social education becomes an integral part of the total programme of Community Development in rural areas.

The Community Development Ministry has succeeded in establishing 13 Social Education Organisers' Training Centres for the training of men and women workers. Most of these Centres are run with the co-operation of voluntary educational institutions. In addition, the subject of Social Education is taught in all the Extension Training Centres and Orientation Training Centres offering training to village workers in Community Development.

Although the physical targets are not an indication of the progress made by the programme of Social Education, the following information indicates the extensive coverage of service provided by the programme from the year 1951 to 1958.

1. Number of literacy centres started—87,000
2. No. of adults made literate—29,68,000
3. No. of reading rooms started—45,100
4. No. of youth and farmers' clubs started—84,700
5. No. of Mahila Mandals started—19,000
6. No. of village level training camps organised—20,562
7. No. of villagers trained—10,14,000
8. No. of Community Centres started—1,03,000

CONCLUSION

Although the programme of Social Education has made considerable headway during the last eight years, it suffers from various limitations and difficulties. To begin with, the concept and the process of social education is still not properly understood. During the last few years much ground has been cleared. Still, social education means different things to different people. Besides, the training of the workers is of a limited nature. Most of the training is *ad hoc* and of short duration, organised for a specific job. It is necessary to develop systematically the training programme not only for giving job-orientation to the workers but for preparing them for meeting all situations in the field. The literature for workers is very scanty. The programme requires greater effort both by academicians and by the field workers. In short, there is need for further study and research in the field.

Social education is a dynamic concept and, as such, the need for experimentation and adoption of new techniques will always be there. As a result of the Community Development programme a great awakening has come among the rural population. Though in the beginning the tendency was to pay more attention to the organisation of literacy classes and recreational and cultural activities, the programme of Social Education is now being extended to cover other aspects of community organisation, with a view to creating a more enlightened community life.

