ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Literacy confers a wide set of impacts on individuals, families, communities and nations. Providing an evidence-based account of these is not straightforward. Most research does not separate the impacts of literacy from those of merely attending school or participating in adult literacy programmes. Impacts such as political awareness, empowerment and critical reflection, are intrinsically difficult to measure. With these stipulations in mind, a spectrum of impacts associated with literacy can be identified. The human impacts are deeply tied to an individual’s self-esteem, confidence and personal empowerment. Such impacts bring a sense of greater social space for individual and collective action. Connected to this increased civic engagement – whether in unions, community activities or politics as such is found to be correlated with participation in adult literacy programmes. Similarly, cultural impacts of literacy in broad sense include beliefs, values and attitudes, norms and practices, and roles and relationships, which characterize a people in a particular region or ethnicity. This mean that many of the impacts of literacy to a culture that is, what people believe and how they behave are also the impacts, which can also be categorized as social or political. Therefore in real sense it is difficult to separate out specific categories of impacts. Therefore it is important to recognize the issues, which show that determining various impacts of literacy is a complex endeavor.

The attitudes lifestyles and behaviour are supposed to be cultural impacts yet are also the key elements to consider in relation to improved
health and fertility control which are also social impacts. Rather than attempting to demarcate each impact rigidly to avoid such overlap, in this study, it has taken to discuss similar kind of issues under two or more impacts. Therefore one has to hang on to a holistic outlook on literacy processes, rather than attempting and assessing in terms of demarcation of different impacts. Thus reported impacts need to be analysed in relation to the specific framework of the research, rather than implying that literacy has universal impacts.

The findings of the study are presented below under the following sections.

I. PERSONAL BACKGROUND

This section contains five sub sections. The findings are presented in these subsections.

a) Impact on Education

The reason for joining in the literacy class is very important because the drop out from the class and interest for learning highly depends on the reason for joining in the class. The individual should be aware of the necessity of learning and impact that the learning can make in his life, how day to day difficulties faced being an illiterate can be solved etc. The motivation is therefore important to continue the learning programme. The high the motivation high will be the interest to learn and absorb the things.
When the respondents were asked the reason for their joining/attending the classes, only 10% had said that they joined in the class due to interest. Majority (70%) responded that they joined in the class to spend time and 3% due to pressure from others. However, 13% people stated that they joined both due to pressure from others and also to spend time. Similarly, 1% joined due to interest and pressure from others, while 1% due to pressure from others and to spend time and rest 2% reasoned that they joined the class due to interest, pressure from others as well as to spend time (Table 10).

### TABLE 10

**Data and Result Showing Reasons for Joining in the Literacy Class by the Neo-literates**

(N=100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Reasons for Joining in the Literacy Class</th>
<th>Respondents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Because of interest</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>To spend time</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pressure from others</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Because of interest and to spend time</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Because of interest and pressure from others</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>To spend time and pressure from others</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Because of interest, pressure from others and to spend time</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Janavidhyakendras (JVK) and Aksharasangham (AS) are established to facilitate continuing education for the neo-literates so that the neo-literate can learn more things and continue their education, otherwise whole the efforts taken for making illiterate to literate will be in vein if the neo-literate forgets what they learned through the literacy classes.

The respondents were asked whether they go to Janavidhyakendras and Aksharasangham it was observed that only 11% used to go to such facility centers, the rest (89%) had not availed the facility due to various reasons (Figure 3).

![Figure 3 Reasons for Not Attending Neo-literates in JVK/AS](image-url)
Among those who have not gone to the facility centres, 88% said that they have no facilities such as Janavidhyakendras or Aksharakendras. Others stated various problems such as no female librarian (4%), no interest (3%) and no time (4%).

An attempt was made to find out the performance of neo-literate in reading, writing and numeracy abilities in detail.

The reading Ability of the neo-literates have been tested by administering Reading Ability Test prepared based on the NLM Literacy norm. On the basis of the norms put forwarded by NLM the neo-literates were categorized into five sections i.e., neo-literates with ability to Read aloud with normal accent simple passages at speed of 30 words per minute; with ability to read silently small paragraphs up to 35 words per minute; an ability to read with understanding road signs, posters; simple instructions; ability to read about living environment and neo-literates who could not read any words or letters.
# TABLE 11

Data and Result Showing Centre wise Reading Ability of the Neo-literates

\(N=100\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuing Educational Centre</th>
<th>Reading Ability</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30 words/minute (in %)</td>
<td>35 words/minute (in %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalkulam Girijan Colony</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uchakulam Girijan Colony</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mundakadavu Girijan Colony</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janavidya Kendram, Vellinakad</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vidya Prakashini Akshara Sangham</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ablingal Beach Colony</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelayil Purayil</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konothum Kuzhi</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muttil Purayil</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The analysis revealed that 3% of the neo-literates were able to read up to 30 words per minute and 28% were able to read up to 35 words per minute. However, 26% of the neo-literates could understand simple instructions. Only 1% of the neo-literates have gained fluency in reading simple written passages (Table 11).

Similarly, the writing ability of the neo-literates was tested by administering Writing Ability Test prepared based on the NLM literacy norm. The norm put forward by NLM classifies neo-literates as neo-literates those who can copy 7 words per minute, take direction at a speed of 5 words per minute, write with proper spacing, write applications and short letters and no ability to write.
### TABLE 12
Data and Result Showing Centre wise Writing Ability of the Neo-literates
N=100

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuing Educational Centre</th>
<th>Writing Ability</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Copying 7 words per minute</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taking direction at a speed of 5 words per minute</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing with proper spacing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing applications and short letters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No ability to write</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kalkulam Girijan Colony</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uchakulam Girijan Colony</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mundakadavu Girijan Colony</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janavidhaya Kendram, Vellinakad</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vidya Prakashini Akshara Sangham</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alingal Beach Colony</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelayil Purayil</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konothum Kuzhi</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muttil Purayil</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data on writing ability revealed that, 27% of the neo-literates could copy 7 words per minute and 24% were able to take direction at a speed of 5 words per minute. However, 20% were able to write with proper spacing and 22% could write applications and short letters. Few (7%) had no ability to write at all (Table 12).

The numeric competency of the neo-literates was determined according to the norms of NLM. According to the norm, numeric competencies of neo-literates is classified as read and write numeral 1-100, able to do simple calculations without fraction, working knowledge of metric units, broad idea of proposition and interest, and no abilities.

The data on numeric ability revealed that, many (45%) were able to read and write numeral up to 1-100 and 25% were able to do simple calculations without fraction. Few (7%) were having working knowledge of metric units, none was having broad idea of proposition and interest and 23% did not have any numerical abilities (Table 13).
**TABLE 13**

Data and Result Showing
Centre wise Numeracy level of the Neo-literates

N=100

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuing Educational Centre</th>
<th>Numeracy level</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read &amp; Write 1+100 Numeral</td>
<td>Simple Calculations without fraction</td>
<td>Working knowledge of metric units</td>
<td>Broad idea of proposition and interest</td>
<td>No ability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalkulam Girijan Colony</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uchakulam Girijan Colony</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mundakadavu Girijan Colony</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janavidhaya Kendram, Vellinakad</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vidya Prakashini Akshara Sangham</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alingal Beach Colony</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelayil Purayil</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konothum Kuzhi</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muttil Purayil</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>45</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The motivation to join in the literacy class depends on what is going to learn from the literacy classes. One should have to assess the problems facing due to illiteracy and the gain by attending the class. When the respondents were asked what they had expected to learn from the literacy class, majority (52%) answered that to write letters and 12% expected to read, write and to calculate. However 10% expected had to write letters and to learn to sign (Table 14)

**TABLE 14**

**Data and Result Showing Expectation of Neo-literates to Learn from Literacy Classes**

(N=100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Expectations</th>
<th>Respondents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>To write letters</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Learn to read and write</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Read, write and calculate</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Read, write, read sign board, bus board etc.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Write letters to sign</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Learn more and write letters</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>To write letters, read, calculate, read sign board, bus board, to sign and to learn more</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is found that only 60% of the respondents had received the literacy certificate after the course.
The dropout may happen in the literacy class due to various reasons. The learning atmosphere, the availability of time and other personal problems as a responsible adult may come as major factors in the way of an adult learner. These may cause the learner to leave the literacy class half way through. However in the present study, only 8% of the respondents agreed that they felt to leave the class half way through.

Regarding reading of newspaper, 51% of the respondents were having the habit of reading from various sources. However, of those are having the habit of reading, 4% only were found subscribing for a newspaper (Figure 4). Others use to make use of library (36%), neighbors (34%) and other sources (26%).

FIGURE 4  Source of Newspaper for Neo-literates
It is observed that 51% of persons having the habit of reading the newspapers after attending the literacy classes. Likewise, their reading of number of newspapers also varied. Of the 51% respondents who are having the habit of reading, majority (71%) are found to read more than one paper and 34% are found to read more than two papers (Table 15).

TABLE 15
Data and Result Showing Reading of Different Newspapers by the Neo-literates
(N=100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name (s) of the newspaper</th>
<th>Respondents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Malayala manorama, Chandrika, Mathrubhumi</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Malayalamanorama, Mathrubhumi</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Malayala manorama</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Chandrika</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mathrubhumi</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mathrubhumi, Chandrika</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Responses provided for multiple answers and hence the total does not add up to 100 percent)

The dropout may happen in the literacy class due to various reasons. The learning atmosphere, the availability of time and other personal problems as a responsible adult may come as major factors in the way of an adult learner. These may cause the learner to leave the literacy class half way through. However in the present study, only 8% of the respondents agreed that they felt to leave the class half way through.
The learners are expected to earn greater understanding of the local bodies such as panchayath, village council, district council, panchayathi raj etc., through the literacy class. This will enable the learners to take part in the social development of the area where they live and they can better understand the electoral system so they can be a part of social development as a responsible citizen.

Of the respondents 58% had heard about the Panchayati Raj and District Council. Of these 37.93% were heard about the Panchayati Raj and District Council after attending the literacy class. Others heard about these through various media such as radio and newspaper (37.93%), 20.68% from gramsevaks (Figure 5).

![Figure 5](image_url)  
**FIGURE 5** Knowledge and Source of Information on Local Bodies among Neo-literates
Literacy can make in the learners an eagerness to know the events taking place in the world. This will develop as the literate understand he or she is an integral part of the society. When the neo-literates were asked regarding the awareness on the events taking place in the world, 58% of the respondents were aware of the events taking place in the world. Media for majority of the respondents were radio (30%), TV, newspaper and talks (Figure 6).

Among various subjects of world events such as political changes, war, art and literature as well as sports, majority of the respondents were aware of war (23%), followed by war as well as political change (15%), while the respondents who were aware of sports were comparatively less (Table 16).

**FIGURE 6 Sources of Awareness on World events among Neo-literates**

Among various subjects of world events such as political changes, war, art and literature as well as sports, majority of the respondents were aware of war (23%), followed by war as well as political change (15%), while the respondents who were aware of sports were comparatively less (Table 16).
TABLE 16

Data and Result Showing Awareness on World events among Neo-literate (N=100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Subject on which aware</th>
<th>Respondents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not aware</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Political changes</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>War</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Political changes and war</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Political changes, war and art &amp; literature</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Political changes, war and sports</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Political changes, war, art &amp; literature and sports</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The literate people are supposed to have empathy to people suffering from war, hunger, natural calamities and other miseries. Majority (71%) agreed that the world events such as war and hunger hurt them.

The consumer has the right to know every detail of the product he/ she intends to purchase. Similarly, getting the market value for the producer while selling a commodity is vital. Many times illiterates are exceedingly victims of cheating by various agents especially while buying and selling of materials. Therefore teaching on the customer right is very important through the literacy class. In the present study major part (82%) of the respondents were found not having the knowledge about the customer right. Of the 18% who are having the knowledge on costumer right, 55.55% got the knowledge from
the literacy class. The rest got knowledge on the costumer right from radio (27.77%) and newspaper (6%).

Government is having various schemes for destitute and poor people to assist them by providing the financial assistance. Many people don’t have the knowledge on such financial assistance though they are eligible for such assistance. The people will utilize such financial assistance when they are aware on such schemes. Widow pension, old age pension, agricultural pension etc., are some of such assistance. In the present study only 42% respondents were found to know about such pensions. Of this 21.42% got the knowledge from the literacy class, 38.09% got the knowledge from the officials and 40.47% from the gramsevaks (Figure 7).

![Graph showing knowledge and source of knowledge on various pensions among the Neo-literates](image-url)
Literacy classes are supposed to develop the love to nation and know about the nations relation with the neighboring countries as a responsible citizen. Surprisingly, 10% only were aware about the India’s relation with the neighboring countries. Radio, literacy class and newspaper were the main source of awareness on this (Figure 8).

Similarly, when the respondents were asked whether they know anything about India’s internal problem, 89% said they are not aware only 11% were aware about the internal problems of India. Similarly 89% responded that the problem related to religion make them uneasy.

FIGURE 8  Awareness about India's Relation with Neighbouring Countries among Neo-literates
Discussion

The findings of the study point out to the following conditions for the impact of the literacy class on Education.

The Present study showed that only 10% of the participants joined in the class due to their own interest to learn. Though the majority claimed that they joined in the class to spend time, their presence in all the classes shows that the classes could sustain their motivation. Only 8% wanted to discontinue the class halfway through and the majority never felt so. This is an evidence for the positive impact of the large-scale literacy awareness programme on the people to make them aware of the need for literacy.

Continuing education is equally important for the neo-literate. But the results of the study prove that only 11% used to attend facility centres such as Janavidhyakendras and Aksharasanghams, which are meant for this. The rest did not attend due to lack of such facility centers.

The present study showed that 51% participants developed the habit of reading newspaper available from various sources. The appealing thing is that 4% of participants were found subscribing to newspaper and among this majority were found to read more than one newspaper. Though it is halfway through, this indicates that the literacy programme have made very good impact by developing reading habit among the participants.

The present study shows that 58% of the respondents were aware on events taking place in the world through radio, TV, newspaper and talks. This has even created feeling as a citizen and also they possessed their own
opinion about the things happening around the world by evaluating with whatever knowledge he or she is having. Majority (71%) agreed that the world events such as war hunger etc. hurt them. The knowledge acquired through various media might have created a sense of some kind of involvement in the society and world as a whole, which formed empathy to people suffering from far away due to war, hunger, natural calamities and other miseries. This shows that the literacy programme could create a democratic sense and feeling as a universal citizen among the participants. The study observed low impact of literacy on the participant’s knowledge on India’s relation with neighboring countries and the internal problems of the country. This may be due to participant’s concentration to other news, which is more interesting to them.

This study revealed that 58% of the participants have heard about the panchayatiraj and District council. Of these 37.93% heard about the panchayati raj and District council after attending the literacy class. Others heard about these through various media such as radio, newspaper and from gramsevaks. The awareness about local bodies by majority of the respondents in the present study is a first step towards the political participation. The observation of present study also indicates literacy classes’ impact on such political awareness.

There are examples impacts on such political awareness among the literacy participants. In Kenya, Carron et al. (1989) reported that literacy graduates did better in a wide variety of behavioral and attitudinal changes and participated in elections and local associations. Boggs et al. (1979)
reported that adult basic education participants scored higher than nonparticipants on being registered to vote and manifested higher levels of selfconfidence over time. Similarly, Stromquist (1997) and Purcell-Gates and Waterman (2000) in El Salvador and towns in Mississippi have probed greater political impact of Freire-based literacy programs. Studies by Bynner et al. (2001) on economic and non-economic impacts of adult literacy and numeracy skills found participants are more likely to be active citizens, by voting and expressing interest in politics, and are more liberal and less discriminatory in their attitudes.

The knowledge on consumer rights is very essential for any adult person. In the present study 82% of the respondents were not having knowledge about the customer rights. Of the 18% who are having this knowledge, 55.55% acquired the knowledge from literacy classes. These findings showed that the awareness on the costumer right though less (18%), the literacy classes made impact on some participants by making them aware of customer rights. This may be due to less emphasis given for the subject in the literacy class.

The present study revealed that only 42% respondents were having the knowledge of different financial assistance provided by the government. Of this 21.42% got the knowledge from the literacy class, 38.09% got the knowledge from the officials and 40.47% from the gramsevaks. This shows that though some of the participants were aware on such schemes through the literacy classes the others were not aware and have not benefited from such schemes.
Thus the findings of the study show that the impact of the literacy class on general awareness and on other educational aspects of the participants is in a mixed manner; some showing an impact while the others are not at all touched by the class.

The final conclusion is that the programme could not educate people on the important rights and provisions that directly touch their life.

b) Impact on Health and Hygiene

Illiteracy is a pervasive yet chiefly recognized social dilemma. It threatens the health and well being of millions of people. It is estimated to inflict considerable expenditure on the health care system, yet it has not emerged as a top priority for public policy and government decision makers. Evidence is escalating that literacy has a strong impact on health, acting through both direct and indirect means. Not only is literacy a determinant of health in its own right, it is also closely associated with other socio-environmental determinants of health such as income, employment, social status and social support. The term health literacy has been coined to show the connections between literacy and health to highlight the impact of literacy on health. Simply stated, health literacy is the extent to which individuals can obtain, understand and use basic health information and services to make health decisions. Addressing literacy on health requires strategies that not only focus on improving the readability and accessibility of health information but also on understanding the root of the problems. Efforts must address the interaction of the many social and economic conditions that
influence health including the literacy skills of the population. Raising societal awareness about the nature, gravity and health consequences associated with limited literacy are a first step. Developing effective strategies to address the problem requires assessing current awareness of the health through literacy link within a specific jurisdiction. Therefore literacy programmes are having a major role to play for making the participants on health awareness.

Many times people use to treat themselves for many diseases. This practice exists mainly in the tribal areas. This practice of self-treatment without diagnosing the diseases causes the epidemic of the disease and even death even though there are hospitals and medical facilities. The data showed that 25% of the respondents were found to treat themselves when they are ill the rest were dependent on the doctors though they were not having a family doctor except one respondent. Allopathic medicines are proved to be the best for treatment of many diseases. The data showed that major part (33%) of the population prefers the Allopathic treatment, the Homeopathy was the next preference followed by people preferring both Allopathic and Homeopathic treatment. However, the people preferring Ayurvedic treatment were comparatively less (Figure 9).
However, practice of maintaining a separate account for health care was not found among 89% of the respondents. Major reason cited for not having separate account for health care is poor financial condition. However 11% of the respondents use to maintain a separate account of their health care; of this majority (81%) have started keeping such account after obtaining knowledge on importance of health care form the literacy class.

In India the infant mortality is more due to the lack of sufficient prenatal and postnatal care. The data showed that respondents were highly aware of the importance of prenatal and postnatal care. Majority (87%) of the respondents has opined that the prenatal and postnatal care is a must. Of this
13.79% gathered knowledge on importance of prenatal and postnatal care from the literacy class. However the majority (75.86%) has got knowledge from their parents and 10.34% claimed that they have the knowledge from the radio (Figure 10). Many of the respondents received post and pre natal care during their life. To avoid delivery related complications and medical care the child delivery must be preferred at an hospital with the assistance of well practiced doctors. The data showed that 51% of the respondents delivered their child at home while 9% at hospital and 21% at hospital and home.

Environmental pollution is one of the vital issues of the century. Protection of environment, which includes air, water, earth and its flora and fauna, is the duty of an individual to make the world a better place to live. Adult literacy classes are supposed to discuss on various environmental issues.
especially on the environmental pollution, which in turn create awareness among the participants to protect the Mother Nature form being polluted. Dissemination of environmental information through these programs is reported to help to stimulate action among its participants and such programmes provided evidence that, empowering civil societies to monitor the environment through environmental education and environmental awareness improve the effectiveness and sustainability of environmental awareness. Therefore the literacy programmes are having a major role to play to make aware on the environmental issues to the participants.

In the present study, 71% of the respondents were quite aware of the environmental pollution and some of the sources of pollution. Of these 28.15% got awareness from the literacy class alone. And 11.26% got this awareness from the radio and literacy class. Others got the awareness through awareness camp, awareness camp and literacy class, from parents and literacy class, from life experience, from anganwadi as well as from awareness class, and Madrasa etc. (Figure 11).
When the respondents were asked whether they are having the habit of spitting on the roads/public places, 49 agreed that they are/were having such habit. Interestingly 10.20% of them have stopped the habit due to the knowledge acquired from the literacy class on the bad impact of such habit. Some are not having such habit because they had knowledge on the bad impact of such habit from literacy class as well as from Madrasa.

Consuming of alcohol and smoking are evils, which have dreadfully affected the society. The tentacles of such bad habits have spread even to the schools and colleges spoiling the young generation. The drug addiction; alcohol consumption and smoking have correlations with illiteracy. The
literacy campaigns are therefore supposed to make the participants aware of the bad impact of such habits on the individual and society.

Among the respondents 40% had agreed that they are having the habit of smoking/consuming tobacco. Interestingly among this 10% stopped such habit due to the knowledge gathered from the literacy class on the bad impact of the habit on the health and atmospheric pollution. Similarly, when they are asked about the drinking habit 11% have responded that they are/were having the habit but of this 27.27% stopped the habit as a result of awareness on the bad impact of consuming alcohol.

Hygiene is most important for maintaining good health and thereby avoiding diseases. In rural India, hygiene is mostly neglected by the people, which invite various epidemic diseases especially in children who are more susceptible to food borne and water borne diseases. Daily bathing and washing of hands often keep away many of such diseases. Preliminary knowledge on the hygiene is to be provided by the literacy class to the participants so as to lead a hygienic life and avoid infectious diseases. The rural people who are illiterate does generally not maintain hygiene. However in the urban areas the hygienic condition is relatively maintained. This indicates that hygiene and literacy are highly correlated.

The data showed that most of the respondents were highly aware of hygiene. They all take bath daily. Fascinatingly, 32% take bath even twice in a day. Likewise, washing 83% of the respondents are having the habit of washing the hands with soap. Of these 84% had this habit long before and the
rest (16%) acquired awareness through the literacy class and habituated such practice.

Pets are generally reared in houses. They included various animals and birds. They are either reared as a source of income or for some other benefits for example the dogs are reared at home for keeping away the strangers. Similarly the cats are reared to avoid the menace of rats. Though they are beneficial in one or other way, they are also some times harmful if they are not kept in hygienic condition. Many of the pets harbour the disease pathogens and pests, which are harmful to human beings. The diseases such as scabies and bird flue are such diseases. Keeping a separate living place for the pets is therefore very essential to avoid such incidences. The participants are supposed to obtain awareness on such basic things from the literacy classes.

Among the respondents, 72 % possessed various pets such as cow, goat, dog, cat, rabbit, pig, buffalo, ox etc. at home, and 93.05% of these people have separate dwelling house for their pets. Interestingly, 6% of respondents made separate arrangements for stay of their pets after knowledge acquired from the literacy class.

Similarly, the places for facility of latrine in each house is prime important. The disposal of fecal matters is very important for maintaining proper hygienic condition. The fecal matters if not disposed properly may contaminate the drinking water and even food through different carriers such as house fly, pig etc. Many food borne diseases are coming through the improper disposal of fecal matters by contamination of water and food. Many
times children are victim for such diseases. Proper facility for defecation is hence very important for maintaining the hygienic condition in a community life.

Therefore the importance of latrine in the house is to be made clear to the literacy participants. The data revealed that 54% of the respondents were not having latrine facility and among the 46% who are having such facility very meager (4.34%) have constructed latrine after awareness from the literacy class. Of those who have not having the latrine facility, (54%) used garden, open place or seashore for relieving (Figure 12).

**FIGURE 12**  Facility of Latrine and Place used for Defecation by Neo-literates those are not having Latrine
Similarly, facility of drinking water and its purity is very essential since many of the diseases are water borne. This depends on the well or source of water from which one obtains water for drinking, cooking, bathing, washing and other purposes. Availability of pure drinking water is one of the major problems of rural India. Unlike in other states, houses of rural Kerala depend on well for drinking water. Since many of the general diseases are water borne, the source of drinking water is very important for keeping a healthy life. Many times the rural people are not aware of sources of contamination of drinking water for keeping away the diseases. Such awareness is supposed to attain from the literacy class so that it can be applied in their daily life.

![Sources of Water for Neo-literates](image)

**FIGURE 13** Sources of Water for Neo-literates
Many (63%) of the respondents were not having own well as water source (Figure 13). Among the rest, 2.72% of the respondent made own well after joining in the literary class. Others obtained water from common well (65.07%), neighbour’s well (25.39%), river (6.34%) and common well, river or pond (3.17%).

Likewise, sanitation is very essential aspect of keeping hygienic condition. As stated, many diseases are water borne and during the rainy season such diseases are very common. Proper drainage system is very essential for avoiding the contamination of drinking water. Rural Kerala is not aware on drainage system and hence water borne diseases are major threat especially during the rainy season. The literacy classes are supposed make aware of such common diseases and their cause to curb the epidemics of diseases.

Majority of the respondents (66%) were not having drainage for their houses 38% possessed drainage system for waste, dirty water, for flow less water, latrine out-let etc (Table 17).

To keep a healthy life one should know about various infectious diseases and the causes of such diseases. The awareness on such diseases will help people to take necessary preventive measures. The literacy classes are one of the sources for dissemination of such knowledge, which may in turn be adopted by the learners.
TABLE 17

The Drainage facility in the
Houses of Neo-literates in Malappuram District
(N=100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Drainage facility available for</th>
<th>Respondents having facility (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No drainage facility at all</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Waste</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dirty water</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Flow less water</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Latrine outlet</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Waste and Dirty water</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Dirty, flow less water and latrine</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Dirty water, flow less water, waste</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Dirty water and latrine</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Flow less water and latrine</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data revealed that, among the respondents 71% were aware of infectious diseases of these 56.33% got this knowledge from the literacy class and 29.59% from radio and the rest from Madrasa and their life experience (Figure 14).
Knowledge obtained from the literacy classes have to be converted to action through proper thinking. Many vaccines are available now-a-days to prevent various diseases. There are free vaccinations for many diseases. The knowledge on diseases and utilization of the facilities are therefore important. Of the respondents 58% have taken preventive measures such as vaccination. Of this 50% have got such knowledge on such preventive measures from the literacy classes and others through radio and newspaper (9.79%), from health workers and life experience.

Similarly, many diseases can be avoided by taking proper precaution such as use of mosquito net, keep away house fly, using clean utensils, proper
covering for food, drinking of pure water etc. Majority of the respondents (83%) were aware of the food borne diseases. They took various measures for avoiding such diseases (Table 18).

### TABLE 18

**Awareness and Measures followed by the Neo-literates for Preventing Food borne Diseases (N=100)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Awareness of various methods followed by the neo literates for Respondents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not aware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Destroy stake food, drink purified water, cover food, take precaution for mosquito and house fly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cover food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Drink only purified water and cover food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Destroy stake food, drink pure water, cover food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Destroy stake food and cover food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Drink purified water and cover food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Drink pure water, cover food, take care of mosquitoes and house fly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Destroy stake food, cover food and take care of mosquitoes and house fly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Cover food, mosquito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Drink only purified water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Precaution for house fly and mosquitoes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Responses provide for multiple answers and hence the total does not add up to 100 percent)
The knowledge they acquired about the food borne disease was mainly from the literacy class (36.14%) from radio and life experience.

Food habits cover a number of food practices, which are varied in nature and type. From the health point of view, it is preferred to consume fresh food to avoid contamination and avoid food borne diseases. Regarding change of food habit, the data showed that 11% changed their food habit; among these people 81% changed after acquiring awareness. It has been recommended to take milk products to meet the nutrient needs of the body for proper growth and resistance to the diseases. Also, it is essential that fruits, vegetables and pulses are important sources of supply of vitamins, proteins and fiber besides many other beneficial effects. Therefore these are essential to form a part of the daily food.

The data revealed only 6% used to ensure that their food is nutritious after the awareness from the literacy class. Those who have not changed the food habit reasoned that they are not financially well enough to change the food habit from what they have practiced. However, 94% of the respondents do not ensure the nutritive value of the food what they eat the rest are aware and ensure the nutritive value of the food that they eat and agreed that the awareness on the importance of nutritive value of food they got from the literacy class. Similarly fish and meat are important source for protein and fat. The data revealed that fish was an important part of food of 98% of the respondents. Surprisingly, 41.83% was habituated to take fish even twice in a day, 47.95% once in a day, 8.12% once in two days and 2.04% once in a week. Likewise, meat was also an important part of food of 98% respondents.
Of these, 2.04% use to have it once in two days and 35.71% at once in a week, 25.52% once in a month and 36.73% used to have it only during important occasions. Majority of the respondents (78%) were of the opinion that meat, fish, egg, milk and fruits should be taken along with vegetables as a part of the diet. Of this 48.71% got such knowledge/ awareness from the literacy class alone and others from radio, anganwadi, and health workers (Figure 15).

**FIGURE 15 Source of Knowledge on Nutrient Foods among Neo-literates**
Discussion

Studies have established connections between literacy level and health status and have found strong evidence that low literacy, poor health, and early death are inexorably linked (Grosse and Auffrey, 1989; Clenland and Van Ginniken, 1993; Weiss et al. 1992). Perrin et al. (1989) found that persons with low literacy skills are less healthy due to a number of factors. For example, people with low literacy skills were found to smoke more and exercise less, and were less likely to have had a blood pressure check.

Often people use to treat by themselves for various diseases. This practice exists mainly in the tribal areas. The practice of self-treatment without diagnosing diseases may causes epidemic of the disease and even death, though there are hospitals and medical facilities. The present study showed that 25% of the respondents treat themselves when they are ill, the rest were dependent on the doctors. Allopathic medicines are proved to be the best for treatment of many diseases. In the present study it is found that many (33%) preferred the Allopathic treatment, Homeopathy was the next preference followed by people preferring both Allopathic and Homeopathic treatment. Kerala has a vast knowledge on the natural medicine for many ills and the tribal mainly follow such traditional practices. Such knowledge on many alternative medicines may be the reason to opt Allopathic as a last resort by many. Though there are some evidences that literacy or participation in literacy programmes leads to change in belief in traditional medicines, this transformation in homegrown attitude, and a consequent change in conventional practice, is continued only when reliable health services are
available for the people. (Robinson-Pant 2001, Burchfield 2002a). Therefore, non-availability of medical facility near by may also be a reason for preferring other practices.

The present study shows that 89% of the respondents were not having the practice of keeping a separate account for their health care. However of the 11% of the respondents who use to maintain a separate account of their health care, majority have started keeping such separate account after obtaining knowledge on importance of health care form the literacy class. This shows that the literacy class could educate some of the people on the importance of health care. Many peoples were not having a separate account, which may be due to their poor financial condition.

In India the infant mortality is more due to the lack of sufficient prenatal and postnatal care. The data showed that respondents were highly aware of the importance of prenatal and postnatal care and the majority had given importance to prenatal and postnatal care. Of this 13.79% gathered knowledge on importance of prenatal and postnatal care from the literacy classes. This indicates that the literacy classes clearly played a role to educate the participants on pre and postnatal care. In Kerala, pre and postnatal care is an age-old practice and hence majority (75.86%) has got knowledge from their parents and also, many of the respondent’s received post and prenatal care during their life. Many people were given preference to deliver their child at home, which may be due to the lack of easy accessibility to the hospital. However some of the respondents delivered their child at home while 9% at hospital and 21% at hospital and home. This shows that
knowledge on the facilities at hospital and risk for delivering at home is gradually making people prefer the hospital.

Protection of environment where we live which include air, water, earth and its flora and fauna, is an important duty of an individual to make the world a better place to live. Therefore the literacy programmes are having a major role to play to make aware of environmental issues to the participants. In the present study, 71% of the respondents were quite aware of the environmental pollution and many sources of pollution. The data showed that many of the participants got awareness from the literacy class alone. The knowledge from the literacy class also made the people to listen to the radio on the issue. Similarly, many people agreed that they were having the habit of spitting on the road and public places. Few people changed such bad habit after attending the literacy class, which shows the influence of literacy class on the health and environmental awareness.

Likewise, consuming alcohol and smoking are evils, which have dreadfully affected the society. The tentacles of such bad habits are spread even to the schools and colleges spoiling young generation. The drug addiction, alcohol consumption and smoking have correlations with illiteracy. The literacy campaigns are therefore supposed to make aware the participants on bad impacts of such habits to the individual and society. Among the respondents 40% agreed that they are having the habit of smoking/consuming tobacco, and 10% stopped such habit due to awareness on the bad impact of such habit on the health and atmospheric pollution from the literacy class. This study showed that of the 11% of the participants who were having the
habit of consuming alcohol, 27.27% stopped the habit as a result of awareness from literacy classes. This showed that the literacy programme caused a clear impact on participants’ awareness on such bad habit. Khandekar (2004) observed that acquisition of literacy and participation in the literacy programme provided women the confidence and opportunity for collective action and leadership against alcoholism amongst community men. These cases demonstrate that literacy programmes can have cultural benefit by initiating positive changes by changing attitude against such social evils. Studies of Dighe (1995) also evidenced instances of social mobilisation due to literacy programmes tackling gender issues at a community level on account of the campaign against alcohol in Nellore district of India. However more effective campaigns through literacy programmes are required to eradicate alcoholism. This shows that literacy can make aware and make action against the alcoholism and other bad habits. The present study also shows development of such negative attitude of the participants towards such bad habits through literacy classes.

Hygiene is most important for maintaining good health and thereby avoiding various diseases. In rural India, hygiene is mostly neglected by the people, which invite various epidemic diseases especially in children who are more susceptible to food and waterborne diseases. Preliminary knowledge on the hygiene is to be provided by the literacy classes to the participants so as to lead a hygienic life and avoid infectious diseases. The present study showed that most of the respondents were aware of hygiene and they all take bath daily. Fascinatingly, 32% take bath twice in a day. Likewise, 83%
respondents are having the habit of washing the hands with soap. Of these 84% got this habit long before, the rest (16%) acquired awareness through the literacy classes and habituated such practice. This result indicates that literacy programme directly or indirectly influenced the participants to follow such hygienic condition.

Many kinds of pets are generally reared in houses of Kerala. They are either reared as a source of income or for some other benefits. The literacy participants are supposed to obtain awareness on the need for keeping a separate living place for the pets. This study showed that 72% of the participants does rear various pets such as cow, goat, dog, cat, rabbit, pig, buffalo, ox etc., at home, and majority (93.05%) of these people have separate dwelling house for their pets. Interestingly, 6% of the respondents made separate arrangements for stay of their pets after knowledge acquired from the literacy classes. This showed that the literacy classes made positive impact on the awareness of the participants on the importance of separate dwelling for their pets.

Similarly, the place for facility of latrine in each house is of prime importance. Proper facility for defecation is very important for maintaining hygienic condition in a community life. Therefore the importance of a latrine in the house is to be made clear to the literacy participants. The present study revealed that 54% of the respondents were not having latrine facility and among the 46% who are having such facility very few (4.34%) have constructed latrine after awareness from the literacy class. Of those who have not having the latrine facility, (54%) used garden, open place or seashore for
relieving though the participants have got the awareness from the literacy classes about the importance of a latrine. This shows that the literacy class paid attention to make the participants on the awareness on the importance of latrine in their house. Poor financial condition of the participants may be the reason for not constructing a latrine by many of the participants. Therefore literacy classes also have to make aware the participants on various schemes and financial assistances offered by the Government for construction of toilets for poor people.

Similarly, facility for drinking water and its cleanliness is very essential since many of the diseases are water borne. Many times the rural people are not aware of contamination and source of contamination of drinking water. Such awareness is supposed to be attained from the literacy classes so that the knowledge can be applied in their daily life. The present study showed that though majority (63%) of the respondents was not having own well as water source, they obtained water from the uncontaminated water sources such as common well (65.07%) and neighbors’ well (25.39%). Few made own well after joining in the literacy class. This shows that literacy classes made people aware on the importance of the pure drinking water. Since few (3.17%) still depended on river or pond for drinking water, the literacy classes have to give more emphasis on such issues so as to assure cent percent people take uncontaminated water for drinking purpose.

To lead a healthy life, one should know the cause of diseases. The literacy classes have to play a major role to make the participants aware on such diseases and their cause. The present study shows that 71% of the
participants were aware of infectious diseases and majority has got this knowledge from literacy classes. This shows that literacy class made a notable impact on disseminating knowledge on the infectious diseases. However this knowledge obtained from literacy classes have to be transformed to action through their proper application. Vaccines are now available for many dreaded diseases and the government is providing free vaccinations for many diseases. Knowledge on diseases and utilization of the facilities are therefore important. This study observed that 58% have taken preventive measures through vaccination and this 50% have got knowledge on preventive measure from the literacy classes. This indicates that literacy classes markedly influenced the participants to convert their knowledge in to practice. This is further evidenced from the precautionary measures adopted by the participants to avoid diseases. Studies of Burchfield et al. (2002a, 2002 b) revealed improvements in health-related knowledge and behavior for participants of literacy classes and positive changes included health and hygiene adopting preventive health measures, such as immunisation. The present study also observed similar benefits through literacy to the participants.

Regarding change in food habit, the present study showed that 11% changed their food habit, among these people 81% changed after awareness from the literacy class. The data revealed only 6% used to ensure that their food is nutritious after getting awareness from the literacy classes. Those who have not changed the food habit reasoned that they are not financially well enough to change the food habit from what they are practiced. The present
study shows that though the participants were aware of the importance of the nutritious food, 94% respondents do not ensure the nutritive value of the food they take. The food habit of an individual is mainly dependent on the economic condition of the individual and hence an immediate change in food habit was not possible.

However, fish was found to be the nutritious and cheap food as an important source of protein and fat that 98% of the respondents consumes and many (41.83%) habituated to take fish even twice in a day. Likewise, meat was also found to be an important part of food of 98% respondents. Majority of the respondents (78%) were of the opinion that meat, fish, egg, milk and fruits should be taken along with vegetables as a part of the diet. Of this 48.71% got such knowledge/ awareness from the literacy class alone and others from radio, anganwadi, and health workers. The data reveals that the participants got the knowledge about importance of the nutritive food from the literacy classes and as they take cheaply available nutritive food such as fish and meat, the literacy class could not make significant positive change in food habit of majority of the participants due to their poor financial condition.

This observation on the health and hygiene shows that addressing literacy on health requires a strategy that not only focuses on improving the awareness but also on understanding the root of the problems. Efforts must address the interaction of many social and economic conditions that influence health including the literacy skills of the population. Raising societal awareness about the nature, gravity and health consequences associated with limited literacy are a first step. Developing effective strategies
to address the problem requires assessing current awareness of the health through literacy link within a specific jurisdiction. Therefore literacy programmes have to play more roles for making the participants on health awareness.

On the whole it could be concluded that the literacy programme could make much impact on the Health and Hygiene aspect of life; yet the strategies of the programme should not only focus on improving awareness but also on changing the root causes.

c) Impact on vocation

Having a job ensures the financial independency. By attaining literacy the participants should be motivated to find out ways for earning money for self-sufficiency. This financial independency is the economic returns to adult literacy especially in terms of increased individual income and economic growth. The data revealed that, among the respondents only 8% were having a job. Of those people who are having a job only 25% were having a job before attending the literacy class. Interestingly 83% of the people who are having a job before attending the literacy class have changed their job in order to earn more after attending the literacy class. When they were asked what the reason for change of job is, the answers were “for better future and earn more”. Among the respondents who are having the job 75% of them got sufficient training for performing their job. Those who have found out a job after attending the literacy class agreed that the literacy classes helped to find out the job. Regarding the interest and attitude towards work, 9% agreed that their attitude towards the work changed and interest in work increased after
attending the literacy class and 3% agreed that only their attitude towards work changed the rest (88%) have not changed their attitude or interest towards work.

**Discussion**

Literacy programmes are supposed to motivate the participants on importance of financial independency and motivate the participants to find out ways for earning money for self-sufficiency. This financial independency is the economic returns to adult literacy especially in terms of increased individual income and the country’s economic growth. In fact economic impact of literacy is closely related to the social impact which refers to the processes between people that establish networks, norms and social trust that facilitates co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit, leading to reciprocity and the achievement of mutual goals. The present study reveals that, among the respondents only 8% were having a job. Of these only 25% were having a job before attending the literacy class. Interestingly, 83% of the people who are having a job before attending the literacy class have changed their job after attending the literacy class for better future and earning more. This shows that the literacy classes have changed the attitude of the participants who have a job and they have changed their job in order to earn more. Similarly many agreed that their attitude towards the work changed and interest in work increased after attending the literacy class. Earlier workers observed similar changes on the attitude of literacy participants. (Bynner et al. 2001, Dearden et al. 2002). The present study though observed change in attitude of some participants; literacy classes have to motivate the participants
to learn skills that may help them for self-employment.

Though the programme has made a positive impact on vocation; it should also motivate the participants to learn skills that may help them for self-employment.

d) Impact on Economic condition

As the literacy programmes are supposed to motivate the participants to improve their earnings, the expenditure of the family also have to be made in a economic way by reducing the unnecessary expenditure and investing money for the future. The data showed that the monthly expenditure of only 6% respondents were above Rs. 2000. The expenditure of majority (81%) of the people ranged between Rs. 1000-2000 and 8% between 500-1000, and only 5% had less than Rs. 500 (Figure 16).

![Figure 16](image-url)

**FIGURE 16** Average Monthly Expenditure of the Neo-literates
Almost 90% spent money more than they earn and 10% said that they never spent more than their earnings. 85% responded that their earning is not surplus while 7% responded that their earning is surplus and 8% could not assess that whether their earning is surplus or not. Majority (98%) responded that their earnings are spent for necessities such as food, clothes, house, health and education. However the rest spent their earnings for luxuries and comfort. Interestingly 47% agreed that there is a change in their spending habit after attending the literacy class.

Many of the respondents (73%) were having their own house, 25% were staying in the colony house and the rest were not having own house. Regarding the kind of utensils used, 51% respondents uses the utensils made up of earth, aluminum copper and others. However, 7% of the respondents use only earthen utensils for cooking. Only earthen and aluminum utensils are used by 26% of the respondents. However, 14% used aluminum utensils only and 2% used utensils made up of aluminum and copper (Figure 17).
Regarding the cooking fuel, 99% of the respondents were using the firewood and 1% dependent the firewood as well as biogas. Interestingly only 14% of the responders were heard about the biogas plant (Figure 18). Of those who were heard about the biogas plant 85% got this knowledge from the radio and 15% only from the literacy class.
The data revealed that, 99% of the respondents were not bothered about their future and they were not planning their future, but 52% were having the habit of saving money.

Similarly, the Government have several schemes to give financial help to the poor people. Many times such financial helps are not availed by the eligible poor due to the non-awareness of such schemes. The literacy participants are supposed to get the knowledge and awareness on various financial assistance schemes through literacy class which will in turn help the participants to avail such facilities (Figure 19) to improve their life condition.
The data showed that 64% of them have received such loans and 36% had not received such financial help. Of those who have got the financial helps all got the knowledge on such financial help from the panchayath officials and gramsevaks.

![Financial Assistance Received by the Neo-literates](image)

**FIGURE 19  Financial Assistance Received by the Neo-literates**

The illiterates are prone to various kinds of cheating. The moneylenders often cheat them. The literacy classes are supposed to make aware the participants on the moneylenders and how they cheat by imposing huge amount of interest. The data revealed that 25% agreed that they borrow money from the moneylenders; others (75%) do not since they are aware about the huge interest charged by the moneylenders. The financial assistance
for the development of cattle field is a widely publicized scheme. The data showed that 34% agreed that they received such assistance. The main source of the knowledge about financial assistance for cattle farm was literacy class (56%), followed by officials (33%) and gramsevaks (11%). Others were not having facility (69%) or they did not apply for such loans due to less interest (31%) thinking that it is difficult to repay. Similarly, financial assistance for building house in the form of housing loan has been well publicized. Though 93% of the participants have knowledge on the housing loans only 21% of the participants availed the facility of housing loan. They acquired this knowledge mainly from literacy class (46%), from the officials (21%), Gramsevaks (14%) or from the newspaper (12%). Only 7% were not having the knowledge on the housing loan. Many have not exploited the facility due to no need or due to no land.

Regarding the scholarship for the minorities, 65% were having the knowledge on such facilities, of these 51% of the respondents got the knowledge from school teachers, only 3% got knowledge from literacy class and the rest (11%) got the knowledge from other sources than the literacy class (Figure 20).
FIGURE 20  Sources of Knowledge on the Scholarship among the Neo-literate

Discussion

While the literacy programmes are supposed to motivate the participants to improve their earnings, the expenditure of the family also has to be made in an economic way through proper planning. The economic impact is closely connected to social factors. There is a broadly accepted association between social and economic impact and participation in learning, and on the whole, this association is deemed to be a positive one because strong social networks seem to enhance participation in learning. It is observed that majority (81%) of the people ranged between Rs. 1000-2000 in their monthly expenditure and almost 90% spent money more than they earn. Further earnings of majority (98%) are spent for necessities such as food, clothes, house, health and education. This shows that there is a need to
motivate the people for earning more through self-employment or by engaging in other jobs. Many (47%) participants changing their spending habit after attending the literacy class shows that the literacy class influenced the participants on the spending habits and made them to spend the money more economically. This awareness on the spending may be the first step towards earning more money.

Many participants were found to be poor and hence they stayed in the colony house (25%) and few were not having own house. The poor financial condition is the main factor for not having own house. Self-employment and earning more money only can make the poor people help to construct their own house. Therefore the literacy class have to play a major role to make the participants earn more and to lead independent life. To save energy, the kind of utensils used is very important. Utensils made up of metals are more energy savers. Majority of the participants used the metal utensils. Only 7% used the earthen utensils alone. This shows that these participants need more awareness on the type of utensils to be used and their importance in energy saving. Also it is observed that those who were using metal utensils were also using earthen utensils. This may be due to the use of firewood as fuel used for cooking.

It is observed that, 99% of the participants are using firewood and 1% depended on firewood as well as biogas. This may be due to the age-old practice of using firewood in the rural India and non-accessibility of other kind of fuels due to poor financial condition. It is clear from the fact that though many heard about the biogas plants from the literacy classes as well as
from radio, only 1% used the biogas for cooking. The literacy classes therefore have to give more emphasis to make aware of the participants on renewable energy sources and their benefits.

The Government has several schemes to give financial help to the poor people. Many times such financial helps are not availed by the eligible poor due to the non-awareness of such schemes. The literacy participants are supposed to get the knowledge and awareness on various financial assistance schemes through literacy class which will in turn help the participants to avail such facilities to improve their life condition. The present study revealed that 64% of them have received such loans and 36% have not received such financial help. All those who have got the financial help, got the knowledge on such financial help from the panchayath officials and gramsevaks. The literacy classes are supposed to make aware the participants on the moneylenders and how they cheat them by imposing huge amount of interest. This study revealed that 25% of participants borrow money from the moneylenders; others (75%) do not, since they are aware about the huge interest charged by the moneylenders.

Thus the programme had an impact only on the spending habits and not on other important conditions, which could have helped them in leading a more economically conscious living.

e) Impact on Religion

Communal harmony is one of the slogans of India. People of various religions and casts inhabit in India and the belief in various religions is purely
personal affair. All religions are basically good and one has to take practice the good of those religions for self-development. The belief in religion should not hinder the development of the nation. In the same way no discrimination should be made on the basis of cast of a person. By literacy the participants are supposed to have outlook as the people of whole world as one irrespective of any religion or caste. The development of the society and the nation is dependent on the attitude and outlook of the people.

The data showed that, 97% of the participants were religious and their belief in religion has not decreased with increasing their earnings. Very few (8%) said that the caste and religion influenced studies of their children’s through the presence/ influence of other caste children or by discouraging the girl’s education.

There are many superstitious believes among the peoples. The illiterate peoples always wonder on the miracles without knowing the science behind them. People adhere to activities such as animal sacrifice, witchcraft and sorcery believing that their miseries will be away by doing such things. Sometimes people make money by taking the advantage of absence of knowledge of the people. Therefore the participants of the literacy class are supposed to give away the superstitious believes, should be aware of the facts on such things and therefore should not be fooled by the opportunists who take advantage of the illiteracy.

Majority (89%) agreed that they do animal sacrifice as special offering to god and rest were not having such practice. Likewise, the superstitions such as belief in witchcraft (prethabadha), forest god (kuttichatan), animal
sacrifice and sorcery were found in higher proportion among the neo-literates and agreed that they believe in these things. While 22% believed in all the above four superstitions, others have belief in one, two or three of these superstitions (Table 19).

**TABLE 19**

**Superstitions Believes among Neo-literates**

(N=100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Superstitious belief</th>
<th>Respondents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ghost haunting, Forest God, Animal sacrifice, Sorcery</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Forest God</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ghost haunting, Animal sacrifice, Sorcery</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Animal sacrifice</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sorcery</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ghost haunting, Sorcery</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ghost haunting, Forest God, Animal sacrifice</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ghost haunting, Animal sacrifice</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Animal sacrifice, Sorcery</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Forest God, Sorcery</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Forest God, Animal sacrifice</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Forest God, Animal sacrifice, Sorcery</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Responses provided for multiple answers and hence the total does not add up to 100 percent)

Similarly another superstition prevailed is the giving of special offerings to orphans and widows. The data revealed that 88% of the
respondents agreed that they are having the habit of making such special offering due to faith (Figure 21).

FIGURE 21  Special Offerings Made by Neo-literates

Regarding the influence of the way of dressing, 95% of the respondents stated that the religion did not influenced the way of their dressing. However 5% responded that the religion influences their way of dressing though it is against their interest.

Discussion

The literacy classes should help the participants to prevent and eliminate gender and racial disparity; People of various religions and casts live in India. Belief in various religions is purely personal concern. All religions are basically good and one has to practice the good of those religions
for self-development. The belief in religion should not hinder the development of the nation. In the same way, no discrimination should be made on the basis of religion or cast of a person. By literacy the participants are supposed to have an outlook as a citizen of the whole world. The development of the society and the nation is dependent on the attitude and outlook of the people. The present study reveals that, 97% of the participants were religious and their belief in religion has not decreased with increasing their earnings.

India is a best example of cultural mosaic with various types of religion and culture and hence different kinds of beliefs are there among various religions. Along with this there are many superstitious beliefs among the people. Though many inhumane practices linked with superstitious beliefs are banned in the country, many are still practicing such things. Some people earn money by taking advantage of lack of awareness of the illiterates on such things. More literate people are supposed to keep away from such things. Therefore the literacy participants are to be made aware of such superstitions. The present study shows that majority (89%) does animal sacrifice as special offering to god. Likewise, the superstitions such as belief in witchcraft (*prethabadha*), forest god (*kuttichatan*), animal sacrifice and sorcery were found in higher proportion among the neo-literates and agreed that they believe in these things. Similarly the data revealed that 88% of the respondents are having the habit of making such special offering due to faith. Though acquisition of literacy and participation in adult literacy programmes bring about changes in beliefs and practices, a change may take time as it
interact and challenges the existing beliefs and practices. Therefore it may be difficult for the people to stop many age-old practices, which are linked to their culture and religion. However the literacy class has to disseminate scientific knowledge among the participants, which may help the participants to keep away from being cheated in the name of superstitious beliefs.

Though 95% respondents stated that religion has not influenced the way of their dressing, 5% opined that religion influence their way of dressing and it is against their interest as it causes inconvenience of such dressing in all occasions. This courage to express dislike towards the way of dressing itself is an indication that some day they will raise their voice against such practice and change many existing practices due to religious obligations, which is definitely a positive change due to literacy. However such attitudinal changes are a very slow process.

The religious beliefs and other cultural practices are so deep-rooted that a change in the existing practices may take much time.

II. IMPACT ON FAMILY BACKGROUND

The literacy programmes should also be organized to create consciousness about the realities of life, develop skill to help the participants to increase family income and reduce drudgeries of life and make them literate so that they are put on the path of self earning

Monthly income of majority (81%) of the neo-literates ranged between Rs.1000-2000 and the same was between Rs. 500-1000 for 8% of the
respondents. However the monthly income was less than 500 for 5% and more than Rs. 2000 for 6% respondents (Figure 22).

![Pie chart showing monthly income distribution](image)

**FIGURE 22** Monthly Income of Neo-literates

The size of family may have positive as well as negative impact on the life of the individual. The more is members in the family; the children get more attention from every body. If the family members are less one may not get time for attending the children and time to look after their educational needs. Similarly if the size of the family is big the income should be more to attend the needs of every one in the family.

The size of family is classified into three according to the number of members in the family as 1-3 members as small, 4-6 medium, 7-9 marginal and more than 9 as big. Medium family with 4-6 members was found higher
(42%) while big family with more than nine members was found as 15% (Figure 23)

Regarding the number of family members the members varied from 1-17. Six members were there in 21% of the respondents, which was followed by 8 members in the family (12%) and 7 members (11%). However 2% respondents were having only 1 person in their family and maximum members (17) were there in families of 3% of the respondents.

The literacy classes are supposed to motivate the participants to find out jobs or to self-employment for increase their income and lead a financially
independent life. The data showed that income of very few (4%) respondents increased due to self-employment after attending the literacy class.

Similarly, the participants of literacy classes are supposed to take interest in their children’s studies so that they should not face the difficulties. The data showed that majority (84%) of the respondents take interest in their children’s studies. However 70 % of the respondents were having this attitude of showing interest in their children’s studies before they attend the literacy class. Rest of the people developed such attitude after attending the literacy class.

India has the tradition of women playing an important role in the advancement of civilization. Without the involvement of women in the national development process; if it is social, economic, or cultural, the countries progress will remain stagnant. In fact the status of women in the society is the indicator of progress. In the Vedic age, women enjoyed full respect and honour. They had a dignified status in almost all spheres of life and even scriptures dispensed an important position to women. Nevertheless the position of women declined considerably. A woman was expected to depend upon and obey her father until marriage; her husband during lifetime and her son as a widow. The women’s place was relegated to the kitchen and her main vocation in life was bearing and rearing children. Her prime duty was to serve her husband and family. She was subjected to injustice in an orthodox milieu and had to be content with inferior place in the society. With early marriage and limit in the family size, they lost their youth prematurely. They suffered acute humiliation. Double standard existed with regard to
moral behaviour also. A man could remarry if his wife died or was sterile. Discrimination was shown in providing food, education and even in medical care. The general social status of women particularly of rural women had not changed much through the ages despite being given a very honourable place in the Indian ethos.

A number of steps have been taken to ameliorate women’s condition. The constitution forbids any kind of discrimination against women and they enjoy equal right franchise and inheritance. Efforts are being made to improve the educational and occupational opportunities available to women. The advantage of literacy programme is that, it motivates the illiterate women to functional literacy class and sustains their motivation to continue with the programme. This is mainly due to the realization on their part that better income generating activities require quality control and precision for which education is the minimum pre requisite.

Attention should be paid to social and economic reconstruction problems of women. They should be enabled to get balanced food, good water supply, decent clothing and healthy shelter. They should have good citizenship qualities and liking for culture and arts. Women must be filled with the desire to have a better life. This means creating social awareness, which will lead to realization that improvement in the quality of life can be brought out only through education. The literacy programmes should be also organized to create consciousness about the realities of life, develop skill to help them increase family income and reduce drudgeries of life and make them literate so that they are put on the path of self leaning.
In many countries, girls do not have equal access to education as boys. Adult Literacy and Non Formal Education programs provide a means for girls and women to gain literacy and other functional skills and offer an opportunity to attend schools and to advance their studies. Adult Literacy and Non Formal Education programs provide a woman with the skills and knowledge necessary to provide for herself and her family. In many societies, the woman is responsible for the livelihoods of her extended family. In addition to learning to read, to write and to calculate, literacy classes are supposed to teach women technical and income-generating skills. Such skills help women to gain their economic independence. As mentioned above, Adult Literacy and Non Formal Education programs improve the self-esteem and self-confidence of female participants. Women often face discrimination and violence at home and in their communities. These programs provide the knowledge and means to confront issues of inequality. Knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired through an Adult Literacy and Non Formal Education program allow women to take more active roles in their communities. By familiarizing themselves with communication skills, technologies and social and administrative processes, and by having greater access to information, women are in a better position to defend their rights and to achieve equality.

In the present study it has been observed that, 98% of the respondents have given equal consideration for boys and girls and the rest (2%) only have given special consideration for boys in their family. Those who have not given such special consideration to boys in the family (98%) were of the opinion that the boys and girls are alike. Of this 6% of the respondents
developed such attitude of treating boys and girls equal in their family after
the knowledge from the literacy class. Others developed such attitude from
their life experience or as a family custom.

Regarding the girl’s education, the data revealed that 7% of the
respondents discouraged the girls’ education. The respondents who
discouraged the girl’s education are of the view that the girls should help for
the household works instead of going for education. Nevertheless, majority
(83%) favoured girl’s education. The participants who had favoured girl’s
education were of the view that girl’s education is essential for better future
and many felt that the girls should not be a burden for their family.

Many times girls were not allowed for higher education in the Indian
families and their education was stopped after getting the elementary
education. The data showed that 95% of the respondents were in favour of
higher education for the girls. Of this 70% of the respondents developed such
attitude towards the higher education for girls after attending the literacy
class. Those who are not in favour of higher education for girls felt that, the
girls should help for household works.

Likewise mutual understanding between the husband and wife is a very
vital factor in the family life. The data showed though majority of the
participants possessed (78%) mutual understanding between husband and
wife, 6% had agreed that there is no mutual understanding with their partner.

The data revealed that, 12% of the respondents agreed that they quarrel
with their spouse. Interestingly 2% agreed that they quarrel even publicly.
However when those who were not having the habit of quarrelling were asked why they are not quarrelling, they responded that there is no need for such quarrelling.

Parents are the ideal models for the children therefore the parents attitude towards their children is another important factor for developing children’s personality. And it is the parent’s duty to make their children ideal citizen. A democratic attitude towards the children giving proper controlled freedom and importance and care is very essential. The participants of the literacy class are supposed to develop a democratic attitude towards their children.

The data showed that majority (73%) of the husbands and wives attitude towards their children was democratic (Table 20).

**TABLE 20**

*Democratic Attitude of Neo-literates towards Their Children*

(N=100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Mode of democratic involvement</th>
<th>Respondents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Discussing the problems at home with children</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discussing the problems at home with children and also considering the opinion of the children</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Respecting/ considering the opinion of the children and also giving separate responsibilities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Respecting /considering the opinion of the children</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Responses provided for multiple answers and hence the total does not add up to 100 percent)
Among the parents who were having democratic attitude to their children, 63% use to discuss the problems with their children, and 8% use to discuss the problems with their children and also use to consider their children’s opinion. However 1% use to respect /consider the opinion of the children and the rest (1%) use to respect/ consider the opinion of their children and also use to give separate responsibilities.

Likewise, the girl’s marriage is very vital. In the Indian culture girls were married early even before attending puberty. This system of early marriage still exists in many communities and many part of the country. Many factors are involved in such system. The main thing is the lack of awareness about the ill effect of early marriage.

The data revealed that many participants 75% were aware about the legal age of marriage of girls. They got this awareness mainly from the literacy class (30%), literacy class and from the radio (15%) remaining (13%) from the general knowledge from the life experience, Madrasa, school etc., and 17% from radio alone (Figure 24). Rest 25% was not having the awareness of the legal age of girl’s marriage.
FIGURE 24 Knowledge on the Legal age of Marriage and Source of Awareness among Neo-literates

When the respondents were asked whether they ever felt the need to protest against the marriage of a girl who has not attained the age of marriage, 43% responded that they felt there is a need to protest against such situations. They all agreed that the premature marriage is bad to the health of the girl. All have got this knowledge from the literacy class. However those who said “no” were not aware of the matter.

Regarding remarriage, 87% were in favour of remarriage. Of this 95.40% developed this attitude long before attending the literacy class and the rest developed this attitude after attending the class. Majority (44%) considers remarriage after the death of husband or wife (Figure 25). Rest 13%
respondents who were not in favour of remarriage said that there is no need of remarriage.

The function of literacy education is not merely to provide some amount of knowledge to the learner, but to develop in him desirable habits, interests, attitudes and skills that help him to lead worthwhile life. Many people are succumbed to drugs. Drug abuses and the resultant psycho-socio-cultural impact is nearing an alarming magnitude in the Indian society, which impedes our socio-cultural advancements.

The data showed that 10% of the respondents were addicted to alcohol and only 1% stopped this habit after attending literacy classes.

![Attitude/ opinion Respondents (%).](image)

**FIGURE 25** Neo-literates' Attitude towards Remarriage and Opinion when to Remarry

[a) After death of husband/ wife b) if the character of husband/ wife is questionable c) if the husband has kept a woman d) if the husband/ wife has an incurable disease e) habitual public drunkenness f) disorderly family conduct]
Population explosion is one of the vital problems India is facing. The scarcity of resources, increasing health problems, increased pollution are some of the problems caused due to the population explosion. The Government of India is trying to reduce the population explosion by various awareness programmes. The literacy participants are supposed to know about the population explosion and various impact of population explosion. The data revealed that majority (72%) of the respondents was not aware of population explosion. Of the 28% who were aware of the population explosion, 39.28% have got the knowledge from literacy class alone and others from newspapers, radio and the rest from the radio and literacy class (Figure 26).

![Figure 26: Awareness of Neo-literates on Population Explosion](image-url)
Similarly, small family norm is suggested for preventing the population explosion. The literacy participants are supposed to support/ adopt the small family norms and also to propagate the idea of small family.

The data revealed that majority of the participants (64%) were aware of the advantage of small family norms (Figure 27). Though many (11%) got the knowledge from the literacy class, and radio (12%), majority learned it from the life experience (Figure 28). However the rest of the respondents were not aware of the advantage of small family norms. Interestingly only 39% of the respondents were ready to help for propagating the idea of small family norms.

![Pie chart showing awareness of small family norms among Neo-literate participants.](image)

**FIGURE 27  Awareness on Small family Norms among Neo-literate**
Keeping sufficient gap between the children is very essential while in view of mothers’ and child’s health. The data showed 53% were of the opinion that there should be sufficient gap between the children while others were not aware of the bad impact of insufficient gap between the children is not kept (Figure 29). Of the 53% respondents who were in favour of keeping sufficient gap between the childbirth, 24.52% got this awareness from the literacy class and 33.96% from the health centres. Others got the awareness from the newspaper, radio and from the life experience (Figure 30).
FIGURE 29 Awareness and Source of Awareness on the Gap between Children among Neo-literates
FIGURE 30  Awareness and Source of Awareness on Small family Norms among Neo-literates

Regarding the family planning through external devices, 18% of the respondents were having a positive attitude while 17% possessed negative attitude. Amazingly 41% of the respondents were not having such knowledge on use of external devices for the family planning. However, 24% of the respondents were not having any opinion on the use of external devices for family planning (Figure 31). Of the 18% of those who are having a positive attitude towards use of external devises for family planning, half of them got the awareness by attending literacy class. The others claimed that they got the awareness from the doctors, health centres etc.
The data revealed that none of the respondents considers the children as a burden to their family.

Regarding the members of the family who does not spend money for the family, 4% agreed that such members are there in the family. Of these 50% tried to change such attitude of the family member after attending the literacy class.

With regard to equality of sexes, 59% opined that there should be equality of sexes. Among them 10.16% developed this opinion after attending the literacy class. However the majority (88.84%) developed this attitude through their life experience. However, 1% did not opine on the issue.
Regarding the compulsion on children to work, the data revealed that 28% respondents use to compel their children for doing work. The major reason for compelling children to work was found to prevent crime, to increase income, because the child is not showing interest in studies, and to keep the children from being lazy (Table 21).

### TABLE 21

**Reasons for Engaging Children for Work by the Neo-literates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Respondents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>To increase income</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Children is not interested in studies</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>In order to keep the children from being lazy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>To prevent crime</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Children is not interested in studies, To prevent crime</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>To increase income, in order to make child get overcome shyness</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Children is not interested in studies, in order to make child get overcome shyness</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Children is not interested in studies, In order to keep the children being lazy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>in order to make child get overcome shyness, In order to keep the children from being lazy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Children is not interested in studies, in order to make child get overcome shyness, In order to keep the children from being lazy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>To increase income and child is not interested in studies</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Responses provided for multiple answers and hence the total does not add up to 100 percent)
Discussion

The literacy programmes should be organized to create consciousness on realities of life, develop skill to help the participants to increase family income and reduce drudgeries of life, and make them literate so that they are put on the path of self earning. The economic returns to literacy programme have been extensively studied, especially in terms of increased individual income and economic growth and are reported to have a positive impact on earnings. The present study reveals that monthly income of majority (81%) of the neo-literates ranged between Rs.1000-2000 and only a few (13%) were having an income of Rs. 1000 or less. This low income is mainly due to lack of literacy and skill. The literacy classes have to make aware of the participants on the job opportunities for the literate people and motivate the participants to learn more to take new jobs and self employment increase the income and thereby improve quality of life. The size of family may have positive as well as negative impact on life of an individual. The more family members result in less space to live. Also more members or children in the family may cause less attention to children’s education and their health and deterioration in the quality of life. The present study shows that there are more than six members in the family of majority of the participants. Therefore the need to educate the participants on the small family norms, its advantage, and improvement in quality of life is vital.

Studies of Osunde and Omoruyi (1996) on the implementation of literacy programmes in Benin Metropolis observed that the functional literacy is crucial for the life of participants and was found correlated with the income
generation and participation in the economic activities. Therefore, the literacy classes have to motivate the participants to find out jobs or to self-employment to increase their income and lead a financially independent life. The data showed that few members increased the income by self-employment. However majority have not made any effort for finding out self-employment. This may be due to the lack of proper exposure on the opportunities. The literacy classes have to focus more on the need of self-employment. Also literacy classes have to make aware the participants on various areas where self-employment could be made and also on financial assistance given by the Government for self-employment.

Similarly, the participants of literacy classes are supposed to take care of their children’s studies so that they should not face any difficulties in future. The present study showed that majority (84%) of the respondents has taken interest in their children’s studies. However 70 % of the respondents were having this attitude of showing interest in their children’s studies before they were attending the literacy class. This study shows that 14% of the people started interest in their children’s studies after attending the literacy class. The present study shows that the literacy class made the participants aware on the importance of education for their children, which is an important step to eradicate illiteracy.

In the present study it has been observed that, 98% respondents have given equal consideration for boys and girls and they were of the opinion that the boys and girls are alike. Of this 6% of the respondents developed such attitude of treating boys and girls equal in their family after attending the
literacy class. This shows that literacy class influenced the participants to treat their boys and girls equally without any discrimination. In many countries, girls do not have equal access to education as boys. In many societies, the woman is responsible for the livelihoods of her extended family. In addition to learning to read, to write and to calculate, literacy class should teach women technical and income-generating skills. Such skills help women to gain their economic independence. Regarding the girl’s education, though majority favoured the girl’s education and many were also in favor of higher education for the girls the participants developed such attitude after attending the literacy classes. Of these 70% of the respondents developed need of higher education for girl child and this attitude towards the higher education of girls was developed among the participants after attending the literacy classes. This shows that the literacy programme clearly influenced the participants on the need of higher education for girl child. However few (7%) discouraged the girls’ education in view that the girls should help for the household works instead of going for education. Therefore, more emphasis on importance of girls' education is to be given by the literacy classes.

Likewise, mutual understanding between the husband and wife is a very vital factor in family life. The data showed majority of the participants (78%) have mutual understanding between husband and wife. Parents are the ideal models for the children therefore the parents attitude towards the children is another important factor for developing children’s personality and it is the parent’s duty to make their children ideal citizen. A democratic attitude towards children giving proper freedom, importance and care is very
essential. The participants of the literacy class are supposed to develop a democratic attitude towards their children. The study showed that majority (73%) of the husbands and wives attitude towards their children was democratic by giving importance to children’s views, considering their views and giving separate responsibilities. Therefore family relation of the majority of the participants were found very dynamic and there was very good cohesion in the family relation. This shows that the literacy programme made very good impact to build the family relation among the participants. However few participants use to quarrel with their spouse. This calls for special attention for such issues and make aware on the importance of family relation and its impact on the children.

Likewise, the girls' marriage is very vital. In the Indian culture the girls were married early even before attending puberty. This system of early marriage still exists in many communities and many part of the country. Though many factors are involved in such practice the main thing is lack of awareness about the ill effect of early marriage. This study reveals that many participants (75%) were aware of the legal age of marriage of girls. They got this awareness mainly from the literacy class (30%) and from various others sources. When the respondents were asked whether they ever felt the need to protest against the marriage of a girl who has not attained the age of marriage, 43% responded that they felt there is a need to protest such situations. They all agreed that the premature marriage is bad to the health of girls. These participants have developed such attitude after attending the literacy class. Since many (25%) were not aware of the age of girl’s marriage the literacy
classes have to give more emphasis on such social issues. More focus is needed in the legal matters and the legal literacy also should be an important part of curriculum to motivate participants to react against such illegal issues.

The very objective of literacy education is not merely to provide some amount of knowledge to the learner, but also to develop desirable habits, interests, attitudes and skills that help the participants to lead quality life. Many people are succumbed to drugs and alcohol. Danger due to drug abuse is more in illiterates because of their lack of awareness and knowledge on its ill effect. The present study shows that 10% of the participants were addicted to alcohol and only 1% stopped this habit after attending literacy class. This clearly indicates that the literacy classes have focused on the ill effect of drug abuse and alcoholism. An immediate change may not be possible for an addicted person by attending the literacy classes. The literacy classes therefore have to give more importance to eradicate such social evils so that knowledge and awareness should create a mass mobilization to fight against such things.

Population explosion is one of the vital problems India is facing. Scarcity of resources, increasing health problems and increased pollution are some of the problems caused due to the population explosion. The Government of India is trying to reduce the population explosion through various awareness programmes. The literacy participants are therefore supposed to get awareness of the population explosion and various impact of population explosion. The present study revealed that, 72% of the participants were not aware of population explosion. Of the 28% who were aware of the
population explosion, 39.28% have got the knowledge from literacy class alone and others from newspapers, radio and others from the radio and literacy class. This indicates that the literacy classes could make aware the participants of population explosion. Likewise, small family norm is suggested to prevent population explosion. The literacy participants are supposed to support/adopt the small family norms and also to propagate the idea of small family. The data revealed that majority of the participants (64%) were aware of the advantage of small family norms. Though many (11%) got the knowledge from the literacy classes, and radio (12%), majority learned it from life experience. However the rest of the respondents were not aware of the advantage of small family norms. Interestingly only 39% of the respondents were ready for propagating the idea of small family norms. This indicates that the literacy classes though have made awareness on small family norms to the participants; it could not make aware of the same to all the participants. Since awareness on the advantage of small family is very important to prevent population explosion, literacy classes have to make more effort to disseminate the small family norms and its advantages to the participants properly and more effectively. Similar importance is there for keeping sufficient gap between the children which is very essential in view of mothers’ and child’s health. The data showed 53% were of the opinion that there should be sufficient gap between the children while others were not aware of the bad impact if sufficient gap between the children is not kept. Of the 53% participants who were in favour for keeping sufficient gap between childbirth, 24.52% got this awareness from the literacy class and 33.96% from the health centers. This shows that the literacy class though convinced the
participants on the importance of keeping gap between two children; many were not having such knowledge. Therefore there should be sufficient emphasis for such vital health related issues while formulating curriculum for literacy learning.

The relationship between knowledge, attitudes and practice has been identified as key in the analysis of how literacy affects development practices, including the uptake of family planning, immunization and preventive health care. Although literacy programmes often focus on providing knowledge about family health care, research has brought into question whether literacy classes are the best way to convey such information. (Robinson-Pant, 2001; Fiedrich, 2004).

Regarding the family planning through external devices, 18% of the respondents of the study were having a positive attitude while 17% possessed negative attitude. Amazingly 41% of the respondents were not having such knowledge on use of external devices for family planning. However, 24% of the respondents were not having any opinion on the use of external devices for family planning. Of the 18% of those who are having a positive attitude towards use of external devises for family planning, half of them got the awareness by attending literacy class and others claimed that they got the awareness from the doctors, health centers etc. This shows that the literacy classes have not made a significant impact to disseminate knowledge on use of external devises for family planning. Therefore literacy classes have to give more importance to disseminate such knowledge. Since studies have overwhelmingly documented positive and significant relationships between
female literacy and use of contraception and increased spousal communication (Cochrane and Susan Hill, 1978; Jejeebhoy, Shireen 1995; Chaudhury, Rafiqul Huda, 1978), the female participants are to be more educated on such issues. There still exists a large gap between knowledge and actual practice of contraception, the literacy classes have to give more focus in teaching such things.

Regarding gender quality, 59% opined that there should be equality of sexes. Among them, 10.16% developed this opinion after attending the literacy class. However the majority (88.84%) developed this attitude through their life experience. Many attempts have been made to develop a measure of ‘women’s empowerment’ within literacy programmes. From many parts of the world, there is evidence of women gaining access to and challenging ‘male’ domains through participation in adult literacy programmes (Leve et al. 1997; Nirantar 1997; Burchfield 1996). Many women report that learning literacy and attending a class is in itself a threat to existing gender relations (Horsman 1990; Rockhill 1987). Literacy participants can gain more voice in household discussions through having experience of speaking in the ‘public’ space of the class. Diagne and Oxenham (2001) reported from Burkina Faso that ‘the majority of participants in a literacy programme evaluation felt that they had indeed learned how to persuade their husbands to listen to them more and had gained confidence in steering family affairs’. The observation of the present study shows that the literacy programme helped to change the attitude of some participants on gender equality. The programme, however,
has to give more importance to it and create self-esteem among women participants.

This study reveals that 28% participants use to compel their children for doing work. The major reason for compelling children to work was found to prevent crime, to increase income because the child not showing interest in studies, and to keep the children from being lazy. Attention should be given by the literacy programme to teach better methods to eradicate the above reasons fruitfully.

On the whole, the programme shows mixed results on its impact on Family Background. Though it could make some important attitudinal changes it could not give practical knowledge on methods of family planning and happy family living.

III. IMPACT ON SOCIAL BACKGROUND

Regarding the social activities, the data revealed that only 12% of the respondents were found engaged in the social activities. Of this 2% started social activities after attending the literacy class. Those who have not engaged in any social activities reasoned that they are not having interest, no time or no chance obtained for such activities (Figure 32).
Majority (93%) said that no social organization has helped their study centres. The rest were not aware of such aid/help.

Man as a social animal is supposed to have good relation with the neighbours irrespective of their caste and religion. A good neighbour is one of the best assets for a house. A good neighbour may be helpful when one is in need. Therefore there should be good relationship. Socialization is supposed to be one of the important benefits the participants get from the literacy classes. Good relation with the neighbours is one of the first step for socialization. Regarding the relation with neighbours, the data showed that 77% participants have a good relation with the neighbours. Of these 43% of the participants possessed a very good relation with their neighbors just like

**FIGURE 32  Participation of Neo-literates in Social Activities**
one family. While the relation of 34% of the respondents with their neighbors was good, the relation of the rest of the participants with neighbors was moderate (Figure 33).

![Pie chart showing relation of Neo-literates with their neighbors]

**FIGURE 33  The Relation of Neo-literates with Their Neighbours**

Majority of the participants (77%) were having neighbors belonging to various caste and religions. Surprisingly 32% of the respondents were excessively conscious about the neighbors caste and religion. However 92% of the respondents agreed that the caste or religion has not affected his or her relation with the neighbour. Majority (97%) of the respondents said that they help their neighbors in various ways. This helping mentality was mainly developed in the respondents (96.90%) long before from their parents. A few have developed this attitude after attending the literacy class. Majority (88%) of the participants got various help from their neighbors.
As neo-literate, 21% use to help their neighbours. The main helps rendered by the neo-literates to their neighbors were to read and write letters, few have even helped to teach the neighbors on lessons learned from the literacy classes (Figure 34).

![Help Rendered by the Respondents as Neo-literates](image)

The data revealed that major part (73%) of the respondents has got encouragement from the neighbours for their studies/ learning. However the rest have not given any reason for not getting encouragement in the studies. Regarding the informal visit between neighbours, 86% said that there is informal visit between neighbours and 2.32% of these had started visiting their neighbours after attending the literacy class. The others were having the practice of informal visit of the neighbours from long before.
Similarly with regard to participation in festivals, the data revealed that 96% were having the practice of participating in festivals, marriages and funeral ceremonies and offer necessary moral support. This habit started long before mainly as practiced by their parents. All the respondents helped the people financially and physically in all these occasions. However those (4%) who were not participating in such functions have not stated any specific reasons.

Illiteracy and lack of information can cause adverse impact on human life. Many do not know about their rights. Incidents such as torture and custodial rape are well documented and yet women are not even aware that they have a right to the presence of a policewoman during interrogation. Legal literacy and awareness of human rights are therefore vital. Similarly, with its capacity to reach adults and youth who missed formal schooling opportunities, Literacy programmes are supposed to play a key role in conflict and post-conflict situations. These programmes may be used as opportunities for adults and youth to identify the sources of conflict and to take steps to mediate and negotiate toward a solution.

Regarding the reaction against injustice and crime, the data revealed that 64% of the participants felt there is need to react against injustice, crime etc. Of these 10.93% of the respondents developed such attitude after attending the literacy class. Others have developed this opinion long before from their life experience.
TABLE 22
Participation of Neo-literate in Public Functions
(N=100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of public function</th>
<th>Participation of respondents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Festivals</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Marriages</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Funerals</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Cultural programme</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Public meetings</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Celebration of literacy festival</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Literacy week</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Literacy campaign</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Literacy processions</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Responses provided for multiple answers and hence the total does not add up to 100 percent)

Likewise, almost all (98%) respondents use to participate in the public functions. Of these many (91%) used to participate in festivals, 96% each in marriages and funerals. However, participation was found low in case of cultural programmes, public meetings, celebration of literacy festival and literacy meet (Table 22).

Discussion

Social impact of literacy is very vital since it is a process which leads to establish networks, social trust that facilitate co-ordination and cooperation for mutual benefit, leading to reciprocity and the achievement of
An analysis mutual goals. There is marked association between social impact and participation in the literacy classes. This association is deemed to be a positive one because strong social networks seem to enhance participation in learning, and learning in turn seems to increase social impact. The combined effect of trust, networks, norms and reciprocity also creates both strong communities and a sense of personal and social efficacy. This study, explored some potential links between social impact and literacy learning in the learners participating in the study. The present study also is careful of the fact that majority of literacy learners belongs to communities that experience socio-economic marginalization.

The present study shows that very few literacy participants are engaged in the social works. Of these some started the social activities after attending the class. This shows that the literacy class tried to motivate the participants on the social activities. Others had not attended such social activities mainly due to lack of interest, time or chance. This clearly indicates that the participants have not been convinced on the importance of social activities and hence have not been motivated properly. Also there should be some chances for the participants to engage in such activities.

Through literacy participants should develop an attitude of acceptance, love, and respect toward others and this is the attitude on which all human relations depend. The participants must learn to distinguish between people and ideas, and to challenge ideas without threatening people. Ideally, this attitude will go beyond acceptance, love, and respect, to empathy and the sincere desire to help others. The present study shows that majority of the
participants are having good social network with their neighbours. Interestingly, many have seen their neighbor as just like a member of own family, irrespective of the neighbour’s caste. Majority (92%) of the participants agreed that the caste or religion has not affected his or her relation with the neighbour. Similarly, 97% of the respondents helped their neighbors in various ways. The helping mentality was mainly developed in the respondents (96.90%) long before from their parents and a few developed this attitude after attending the literacy class. Likewise, majority (88%) of the participants got various help from their neighbors. This showed that the participants were already having a very good social network with the neighbors and are helping each other in many ways. Similarly, many (73%) participants have got encouragement from the neighbors for their studies/learning. This indicates the participants are having very good relation with the neighbors and also they are encouraging the participants to join in the class to eradicate illiteracy. Though many participants use to visit their neighbours before they join in the class as and when they get time, some of the participants started visiting the neighbours after joining in the literacy class. This signifies that the literacy class has changed the attitude of some participants to their neighbours and thereby increased their social space.

Regarding participation in festivals, the data revealed that 96% were having the practice of participating in festivals, marriages and funeral ceremonies and used to offer necessary moral support. This habit started long before mainly as practiced by their parents. All the participants helped the other people financially and physically in all these occasions. However, there
was also some (4%) without participating in such functions. The literacy classes have to identify such people among the participants and make understand the advantage of participating in such festivals and socialization.

Illiteracy and lack of information can cause adverse impact on human life. Incidents such as torture and custodial rape are well documented and yet women are not even aware that they have a right to the presence of a policewoman during interrogation. Legal literacy and awareness of human rights are therefore vital. Similarly, with its capacity to reach adults and youth who missed formal schooling opportunities, Literacy programmes are supposed to play a key role in conflict and post-conflict situations. These programs may be used as opportunities for adults and youth to identify the sources of conflict and to take steps to mediate and negotiate toward a solution. The participants (64%) of programme felt that there is a need to react against injustice, crime etc. Of this many developed such attitude after attending the literacy class. This indicates that the literacy class made significant impact by creating awareness on the need to resist injustice. These observations are in corroboration with study of Burchfield et al. (2002b) in Bolivia where literacy participation was reported to increase awareness on legal rights among the participants.

The connection between literacy and political engagement is predicated on the assumption that as individuals become more exposed to information about their environment, especially the public institutions and government, this will create a love to nation among the participants. There is expectation that if individuals are engaged in political decisions about various
aspects of their lives, an intimate connection emerges between literacy and democracy. Celebrating the days of national importance is one of such factors, which show the individuals love to the nation. The present study showed that though majority (75%) of the participants used to celebrate the days of national importance, few (10.66 %) participants started such habit after attending the literacy class. This finding proves that, the literacy class influenced some of the individuals for participating in such celebrations and they were aware of the importance of such celebrations and developed love to nation. However the literacy programmes have to make more emphasis on such matters to make all participants to take part in such occasions by proper motivation.

The programme thus could enhance the already existing social network and practices.

IV. IMPACT ON CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Regarding the celebration of days having national importance, 75% of the respondents used to celebrate such festivals. Of this few (10.66 %) participants started such habit after attending the literacy class.

The data revealed that few (6%) of the members are having membership of cultural organizations. Of these except one respondent all have become members after attending the literacy class. Likewise the data regarding the participation in different cultural and social organizations showed that 13% of the respondents were engaged in social activities, 1% each was engaged in youth organization and cultural organization. However,
none of the respondents had participated in library activities, Sastra Sahitya Parishath or sports clubs.

Regarding the participation in various awareness programmes, majority (55%) of the respondents were participated in processions (Table 23). Similarly, many have taken part in awareness camps (39%) and padhayathra (42%).

**TABLE 23**

**The Participation of Neo-literates in Various Cultural Programmes**

(N=100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Various cultural programmes</th>
<th>Participation (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Processions</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Street plays</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Awareness camps</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Padayathras</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Other programmes</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Responses provided for multiple answers and hence the total does not add up to 100 percent)

Similarly, regarding watching various cultural programmes showed that 10% of the participants used to watch various cultural programmes such as Theyyams, Drama, Thiiruvathirakkali, Oppana, Attam etc. Likewise, only 1% is found to watch cultural programmes twice in a year. Others use to see as and when there is opportunity. Regarding spending of time during the leisure hours, the data showed that 1% of the participants had used to spend
their leisure time by net making. Others spend their leisure time by watching TV, listening radio, speaking etc. Similarly regarding the hobbies, the data revealed that, 11% of the respondents were having hobby of poultry farming and 1% was having hobby of reading. The others (86%) were not having any such hobbies.

**Discussion**

Greenleigh Associates (1968) revealed that literacy participants inclined to participate in various community activities. Similar observations are made by Carron *et al.* (1989) and reported involvement of the literacy class participants in various community activities. Murtagh (2002) studied the social activity and interaction in Northern Ireland and proved that literacy would help the people to establish networks, norms and social dependence that facilitate to bring together and co-operation among individual for mutual benefit. Data of the present study showed that majority of the participants were having membership of cultural organization. Of these except one respondent all became members after attending the literacy class. This observation indicates that literacy classes positively influenced the participants to take part in the social and cultural activities. However, literacy classes have to give emphasis to make the participants for continuing education related activities such as library activities, activities for dissemination of knowledge in science, sports club activities etc.

Spending of leisure time by a neo-literate is very important since this time can be used in a creative way to practice what they learned as well as improving their knowledge and awareness. While men generally read
material, which serves more functional purpose such as newspaper, women read romance stories in magazines and write diaries for self-expression. The study also revealed that newly literate women began to read women’s magazines, which were seen to promote traditional values and roles for women. Similarly, Zubair (2001, 2004) in Pakistan reported women’s access to reading and writing in Urdu and English and changes the quality of their leisure time and creates a new norm of privacy –something not part of the Pakistani culture. Younger women create private time where they can read news, romantic fiction and women’s magazines and write diaries. The present study revealed that the participants spend their leisure time by watching TV, listening radio, speaking etc. Very few (1%) were having the habit of reading during the leisure time. This indicates that the leisure time is not used properly to improve new skill of reading and writing acquired from the literacy class. The literacy classes therefore have to motivate the participants to practice the newly acquired skill during the leisure time.

The impact of the programme on the cultural background is not complete.

RESULTS OF THE FOLLOW-UP STUDY

Though it was not the part of the objective of the study, since equivalency certificate holders were available by the time the study came to an end, the investigator had conducted a follow-up study to check whether the impact obtained as per the study was retained. (The details of the Equivalency Programmes are presented in Chapter II). The study was conducted on the sample available in a single literacy centre by using the same interview
schedule for the neo-literates and the performance tests for reading, writing and numeracy. The findings were reduced to only dimensions for easy comparison. The results obtained from the same eight subjects in the initial study and the follow-up study are given in Table 24.

**TABLE 24**  
**Results of the Follow-up Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Dimensions studied</th>
<th>% of Neoliterates</th>
<th>Initial study (N=8)</th>
<th>Follow-up study (N=8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reading, writing and numerical abilities</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Political awareness</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Knowledge on India’s relation with neighbouring countries</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Awareness on consumer rights</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Awareness on various financial assistance from the government</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Awareness on health care</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>62.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Awareness on the importance of prenatal and postnatal care</td>
<td></td>
<td>62.50</td>
<td>62.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Knowledge on need for prevention of infectious diseases</td>
<td></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>87.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Improvement in job</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>12.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Spending habits</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Religious believes</td>
<td></td>
<td>87.50</td>
<td>87.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Attitude towards the education of children</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Attitude towards giving higher education to girl child</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Awareness on the population explosion and its causes</td>
<td></td>
<td>37.50</td>
<td>37.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Awareness on the need of small families</td>
<td></td>
<td>62.50</td>
<td>62.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Participation in social activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>12.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Participation in cultural activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>62.50</td>
<td>62.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Spending leisure time</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The minimum level of attainment for reading, writing, and numerical ability put together is set as 70%. The minimum level of attainment set for reading, writing and numerical ability separately is 40%. In the initial study none of the respondents attained 40% separately for reading, writing and numerical ability or 70% when these three were put together. The eight respondents obtained for the follow-up study had the ability to identify one or two letters, read one or two alphabets, and identify certain numerals and also do very simple adding calculations in the initial study. The percentage of respondents with these abilities came up to 62.5. As they could not reach the minimum level of attainment the data given in the table is zero. But in the follow-up study cent percentage of the same respondents have shown minimum attainment of 70%. This achievement may be due to the continued courses given to them through the equivalency programme under the Continuing Education Programme of the Kerala State Literacy Mission Authorities (KSLMA). A meager improvement is found in political awareness, awareness on consumer rights, awareness on various financial assistances by the government, awareness on health care and infectious diseases. Nevertheless, no changes observed in improvement in job, spending habits, religious believes, knowledge on India's relation with neighbouring countries, attitude towards the education of children, attitude towards giving higher education to girl child, awareness on the importance of prenatal and postnatal care, awareness on the population explosion and its causes, awareness on the need of small families, participation in social activities, participation in cultural activities as well as spending leisure time among the neo-literate.
Discussion

The comparison of the results of the follow-up study with those of the initial study show that out of the eighteen dimensions compared six had shown considerable improvement while the others remained the same. This shows that the original impact had by the Total Literacy Programme had not been eroded off.

CONCLUSIONS

The study has explored the impact of the literacy programme on almost all aspects meant for the total upliftment and empowerment of the neo-literatees in Malappuram district. The major conclusions reached at from the study are presented below.

I. Personal Background

a. Impact on Education

1. The programme has a positive impact on making the illiterates aware of the need for literacy. But the programme could not provide enough facility centres for continuing education.

2. The programme had an average impact on their performance in reading, writing and numeracy.

3. It could develop reading habit among participants.

4. It had an impact on increasing the political awareness.
5. But the programme has low impact on knowledge of India’s relation with neighbouring countries and the internal problems of the country.

6. Similarly, the programme has only a low impact on making awareness on consumer rights.

7. The programme could not provide enough knowledge of different types of financial assistance instituted by the Government and could not help them in utilizing these financial aids.

**The final conclusion is that the programme could not educate people on the important rights and provisions directly touching their life.**

b. Impact on Health and Hygiene

1. The programme had an impact on changing the preference of treatment from the traditional medicines to modern medicines.

2. The programme could educate some of the participants (11%) on the importance of health care.

3. It could increase the knowledge on the importance of prenatal and postnatal care to more persons among the participants (14%), though the others already had the knowledge.

4. Preferring a hospital for delivery is found to increase after the programme.

5. The programme could make the participants aware of environmental pollution and its different causes.
6. It could gain momentum to stop bad habits like smoking and consumption of alcohol (25 to 28% of those had the habits).

7. It could increase the number of participants following hygienic practices (16%).

8. It could increase the number of participants having a separate dwelling house for their pet animals (6% more while 87% already had it earlier).

9. Though the programme could increase the awareness of the need for having a latrine, only a few had constructed a latrine (4%). (This may be due to the poor financial condition of the participants. As pointed out under ‘impact on Education’ the programme had failed to impart knowledge of different types of financial assistance provided by the Government).

10. The programme could make people aware of the importance of pure drinking water.

11. The programme had made a notable impact on disseminating knowledge on infectious diseases and the preventive measures.

12. Though the programme could give enough awareness on the need for nutritious food, it could not make much change in the food habits, due to poor financial condition.

On the whole it could be concluded that the literacy programme could make much impact on the Health and Hygiene aspect of life; yet,
the strategies of the programme should not only focus on improving awareness but also on changing the root causes.

c. Impact on Vocation

1. The programme could make the participants who were already employed rethink a change of their job for more earnings. It could also change their attitude towards work more positively and increase their interest in work.

   Thus the programme has made a positive impact on vocation; it should also motivate the participants to learn skills that may help them for self-employment.

d. Impact on Economic Condition

1. The programme could influence the spending habits of the participants and made them spend more economically.

2. But the programme had failed to give awareness of renewable energy sources such as biogas and use of better utensils for energy conservation.

3. The programme has also failed to provide sufficient awareness on financial assistance from the Government, for various purposes.

   The programme had an impact only on the spending habits and not on other important conditions, which could have helped them in leading a more economically conscious living.
e. Impact on Religion

1. The participants of the programme are still religious and their belief in religion has not decreased with increasing earnings.

2. Majority of the participants could not be influenced by the programme to keep away from their religious rituals.

   **The religious beliefs and other cultural practices are so deep-rooted that a change in the existing practices may take much time**

II. Family background

1. The literacy programmes could convince the participants of the importance of giving education to children, which is an important step to eradicate illiteracy.

2. It could also influence the participants to treat their boys and girls equally without any discrimination.

3. The programme could make a high positive impact on the attitude towards higher education of girls.

4. It could develop an attitude of protest against premature marriage of girls.

5. The programme could make the participants aware of population explosion.

6. But the programme could not make any change in the habit of alcohol consumption.
7. Similarly the programme could not succeed in disseminating the need
   for small families.

8. It could not effectively spread the message of keeping sufficient time-
   gap between each pregnancy.

9. The programme could not disseminate the knowledge of use of
   external devices for family planning.

10. It could also not influence the participants’ attitude towards equality of
    sexes or towards the upliftment of women in a more positive way.

   **On the whole, the programme shows mixed results on its impact on**
   **Family Background. Though it could make some important attitudinal**
   **changes, it could not give practical knowledge on methods of family**
   **planning and happy family living.**

**III. Social Background**

1. The programme had not tried to motivate the participants to do social
   activities.

2. The programme had an added effect on the positive attitude of the
   participants to their neighbours.

3. It could generate awareness on the need to resist injustice.

4. The programme could add to their participation in celebrating days of
   national importance, thereby developing love for the nation.
The programme thus could enhance the already existing social network and practices.

IV. Cultural Background

1. The programme had made a high impact on making the participants to take part in social and cultural activities.

2. But it failed to motivate the participants to spend their leisure time fruitfully.

The impact of the programme on the Cultural Background is not complete

Thus the study reveals that the impact of total literacy programmes on neo-literate adults of Malappuram district only mediocre. While it showed rather high impact on Education, Health and Hygiene and vocation, it showed only a low impact on Social and Cultural background of the adult neo-literate.