CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Education is one of the driving forces for bringing about economic development of a country. Adult education programme also focuses on the economic development. Literacy has a direct relationship with the development process.

Literacy campaigns are not new in India. Mahatma Gandhi and Tagore realized the importance of literacy as a tool of liberation from ignorance and poverty. Literacy campaigns have transitioned from the dictionary definition of the ‘ability to read and write’ to that of continuing education for adults as well. Mere recognition of letters is not sufficient in today’s world to confront the challenges of economic and social advancement.

The Government of India spends a large amount of financial resources on adult and continuing education programmes. The continuing education centres are accountable to the society at large and to government about its public money. This necessitates an inquiry as to whether this public money is spent for its legitimate purpose in an appropriate manner. In other words, it is essential to evaluate the perceived effectiveness and worth of the continuing education programmes conducted by the continuing education centres. Hence, the researcher decided to conduct an evaluative study of some specific programmes of continuing education scheme. Moreover, such an evaluative study could also lead to suggestions for improving the continuing education programmes as well as development of norms for continuing education centres.
The continuing education programmes in India emerged out of adult education programmes. Hence, it is necessary to describe briefly an outline of adult education in India, which is discussed in the following section.

**ADULT EDUCATION IN INDIA**

The Government is aware that youth and adults need to acquire not only the skills of reading and writing, but also the basic practical skills for the improvement of the quality of their lives. Hence, the new concept of functional literacy emerged, which is expected to lead to a learning society. The present adult literacy programmes are aimed at promoting the creation of literate societies that are culturally sensitive, where literacy is interwoven into the fabric of developmental efforts and where adult education initiatives are genuinely responsive to the needs of both individual learners and the communities to which they belong.

In the following paragraphs, major government schemes on adult education and recommendations of Education Commissions concerning adult education in India have been reviewed.

(A) **Government Schemes on Adult Education**

The post-independence period witnessed drastic changes in the field of adult education. The concept, policy, programme strategies, implementation and evaluation techniques, follow-up measures of adult education have undergone several significant changes. Various national and international forces and factors, the ideas of Paulo Freire and financial support of the UNESCO influenced the development of Indian adult education programme. From 1959 to 1977 various sporadic and unco-ordinated efforts were made, which include the Gram Shikshan Mohim, Farmers’ Functional Literacy Projects (FFLPs), Workers’ Education and Non-Formal Education for Youth.
One of the biggest challenges India faces is the problem of illiteracy. The first serious attempt to meet this challenge was made in 1978 with the launching of the National Adult Education Programme (NAEP). This was aimed at eradicating illiteracy in the 15-35 age group. The programme envisaged to cover an estimated 100 million illiterates within a time frame of five years. The objectives of NAEP were literacy, functionality and awareness. This was centre-based/classroom model where the instructor would get an honorarium for teaching adult illiterates. Due to unplanned follow-up programme, though started with a great deal of fun-fare, the NAEP virtually ran out of steam in less than a decade.

Simultaneously other attempts were made to eradicate illiteracy through Rural Functional Literacy Projects (RFLPs), State Adult Education Programme (SAEP) and adult education through voluntary agencies.

National Programme for Adult Education (NPAE) was included in minimum needs programme. This brought the adult education programme once again on the national agenda. The then Government in 1982 included NPAE in New Twenty Point Programme with certain changes in earlier programme such as an increase in the duration of teaching-learning activity with a follow-up programme.

**The Emergence of the National Literacy Mission (NLM)**

Till 1988, Government of India implemented several programmes to eradicate illiteracy, but with little success. Meanwhile, the programmes implemented during 1978-85 were concurrently evaluated by research institutes. Their findings include high motivation and participation of women, high coverage of weaker sections, adoption of management approach and good quality of teaching-learning material. The weaknesses of the programme included poor training of functionaries, poor learning environment in centres, no linkage
between basic literacy, post literacy, follow-up and continuing education, leading to relapse into illiteracy, low level of achievement of literacy and less government support. The objective assessment and a thorough analysis of the strengths and weaknesses gave birth to NLM. The late Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, introduced five technological missions, namely, literacy, drinking water, oil seeds, immunization and telecommunication, to reach the science and technology to the common man.

The establishment of the NLM in May 1988 once again gave literacy and adult education programme a top priority on the national agenda. The aim of NLM was to impart functional literacy to 80 million illiterates in 15-35 age group 30 millions by 1990 and additional 50 millions by 1995. The NLM today seeks to achieve functional literacy to a sustainable threshold level of 75% literacy rate by 2005 A.D. The characteristics of this mission are: it has fixed goals, a clear time frame and a defined target group.

**Total Literacy Campaign (TLC)**

The first breakthrough came in Kerala in Kottayam City, followed by Ernakulum district, where a campaign approach was adopted in January 1989. Ernakulum campaign gave birth to the concept of Total Literacy Campaign in nineties. With its new multi-pronged approach it showed a new path and was quickly adopted by the NLM. On an experimental basis, initially the campaign approach was implemented in selected 40 districts and then launched in 574 districts of India.

The mass campaign mode for total literacy also became a campaign for social mobilization, which meant above all arousing, awakening, awareness building, sensitizing and motivating. TLCs are area specific, time bound, volunteer-based, outcome oriented and are designed to be cost effective. Till 2001, the mission has reached 125 million learners, through more than 12 million volunteers and has made over 71.45 million people literate.
The campaigns are implemented by district level body called Zilla Saksharata Samiti (ZSS). They are registered as independent, autonomous bodies. The ZSS comprises representatives of government officials, elected political leaders, NGOs and representatives of mass organizations, including women's organizations. In most districts, the Collector becomes the Chairperson of the ZSS.

**Teaching-Learning Material**

Special teaching-learning material is prepared, which is based on ‘Improved Pace and Content of Learning’ (IPCL) model. Special literacy kits, which include three primers, are prepared. Each primer has lessons, exercises/drills, three tests and a detachable certificate. The teaching instruction time is 200 hours. The exercises are based on the principle of self-evaluation and confidence building. The primers are graded and after completion of each primer, the learner is expected to achieve a definite level of literacy skills.

**Evaluation of Literacy Campaigns**

The campaign has a provision of 3 types of evaluations—concurrent evaluation, internal evaluation and external evaluation. The concurrent and external evaluations are conducted by external agencies, empanelled by the NLM.

The external evaluations of TLC measure only basic literacy levels of learners according to the norms laid down by the Dave Committee Report (1992) for the evaluation of learning outcome in literacy campaigns, which are accepted by NLM.

**Expected Proficiency in Different Skills**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Maximum Scores</th>
<th>Minimum Scores</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Reading with comprehension</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Writing</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Numeracy</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>70%</td>
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The TLC is followed by implementation of post literary programme in the district.

(B) **Recommendations of Education Commissions Concerning Adult Education**

Education Commissions were appointed from time to time to review the education system in India. These Commissions also discussed about adult education and has recommended different strategies for liquidating illiteracy and defined the role of continuing education. Following section elaborates more on this.


This Commission recommended that, “high priority be accorded to the liquidation of illiteracy. It urged that, adult education should be promoted through both ‘selective’ as well as ‘mass approach’ and also emphasised on the active involvement of teachers and students and the wider use of media for the literacy programme”

The Commission also stressed on functional literacy. It says, in order to retain the literacy achieved, literacy campaigns must have adequate follow up including further education, the use of library and the production of reading material. (pp.665-66).

(2) **National Policy of Education (1986)**

It states that “a vast programme of adult and continuing education will be implemented through various ways and channels including –

(a) establishment of centres in rural areas for continuing education;
(b) wider promotion of books, libraries and reading rooms,
(c) organizing assistance in self-learning; and
(d) organizing need and internet based vocational training programmes.”
(3) **Programme of Action (1986)**

After the adoption of the National Policy on Education in 1986 by the Parliament, a Plan of Action (POA) for the implementation of the policy was prepared. The Action Plan outlined the details of a new national programme of Adult Education, which aimed at providing education including literacy. Major implementation strategies, as suggested include:

- (a) establishing linkage between adult education and the developmental programmes,
- (b) launching of mass functional literacy programmes;
- (c) a multi-dimensional programme of continuing education as the instrument for moving towards a learning society


This review committee recommended that—

- (a) imparting of literacy should be placed in the context of the developmental needs of the adult,
- (b) co-ordination should be established between the Department of Education and other developmental departments to organize programmes for vocational skills for the adult illiterates.

The revised POA stated that, adult education programme should include, ‘self directed continuing education in the perspective of lifelong learning through library service, newspapers for neo-literates, charcha mandals (discussion groups) and such other activities. This may also include skill development programmes for personal, social and occupational development.
The next section deals with the concept of continuing education in India in detail.

THE CONCEPT OF CONTINUING EDUCATION IN INDIA

From late nineteen thirties to the present times, all policy statements and programme strategies of adult education in India mention post literary (PL) and/or continuing education (CE) as important components of adult education. Successive programmes of adult education have reiterated the significance of PL and CE in creating a learning society, yet no programme has systematically transitioned from basic literacy to PL and CE.\(^\text{16}\)

Initially some adult education programmes were planned only to achieve the goal of basic literacy, without visualizing role for PL or CE. There was inconsistency in determining the duration of the basic literacy and continuing education components. Subsequently, in implementation of the programme, it was realized that basic literacy by itself was not enough to lead to the goal of creating a learning society, and therefore PL and CE were appended to the basic literacy component. According to Daswani, “in order to evaluate the role of PL and CE in achieving widespread adult education, it is necessary to understand why programmes of PL and CE have not succeeded so far.”\(^\text{17}\)

Shifts in the goals of adult education, lack of clarity about the importance of PL and CE, lack of clarity in the concepts of PL and CE, may be other factors responsible for not achieving success in the PL and CE programmes.

The different strategies adopted for PL and CE programmes in different adult education programmes are discussed in the following section, so as to understand the evolution of the concept of PL and CE.
Adult Education as Part of General Education

The Adult Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education in its report (1939) recommended that, adult education should be recognised as an essential component in the system of public instruction.

The Committee recognized the fact that lack of stimulus or facilities for neo-literates inevitably lead to relapse into illiteracy. In order to avoid such a relapse, the Committee recommended that, appropriate instructional programmes should be provided, which may awaken the interest of the adults and create in them the desire to continue their education. The Committee felt that interest and desire for further education are best awakened through vocational courses. 18

It is significant to note that as far as continuing education is concerned, the Committee does not make a distinction between the already literate and the neo-literate. In the report, adult literacy is seen as a tool for providing an impetus for further education.

It should be noted that, post literacy had no place in the programme, and continuing education carried the wide ranging connotation of non-formal education, which neo-literates could voluntarily pursue on their own.

Adult Education as Social Education

'A Scheme for Adult Education and Literacy' was examined by a Committee set by the Central Advisory Board of Education in 1948. The report of this Committee states that, the previous programmes of adult education were confined to 'literacy work'. Hence, the Committee recommended 'A Scheme for Social Education.' According to this Committee, social education should include basic literacy and numeracy, and should focus on continuation of education through libraries, discussion groups, clubs and institutions like
people’s colleges. It is important to note that this Committee links continuing education to libraries and discussion groups, a concept that one finds in the latest formulation on continuing education.

In 1963, another Committee on ‘operation of social education’ recommended and stressed that literacy should be given a proper place in the comprehensive programme of social education. The Committee wanted proper arrangements to be made for further and continuing education by organizing adult schools, evening colleges, correspondence courses and refresher courses. It is interesting to note that, by 1963, the concept of continuing education was refined and redefined.

**Adult Education for Development**

In 1978, the NAEP proposed to link adult education to development. Along with literacy, NAEP included two more components namely functionality and awareness.

In the policy formulation for NAEP, the concepts of PL and CE do not figure except, by implication, in one context of ‘literacy with assured follow-up.’ However, in 1979, a Committee on PL and follow-up programmes recommended that, post-literacy and follow-up programmes were as important as the literacy programme itself, and the agency responsible for literacy programme should also organize the post literacy and follow-up programmes.\(^{19}\)

It was found that only during the NAEP a specific time frame and total duration of the literacy components were clearly specified. Post literacy was introduced for the first time in 1978 as part of NAEP, where PL was seen as part of ‘follow-up’ to succeed acquisition of literacy skills.

The review committee, under the chairmanship of Dr. D.S. Kothari, in 1980, recommended a three-stage programme of adult education spread over a period of three
years. The first stage of 300-350 hours of basic literacy spread over a period of one year, followed by the second stage of 150 hours spread over a period of one year for reinforcement of literacy skills together with functionality, and the third stage of 100 hours over a period of one year for achievement of self-reliance in literacy and functionality.

Another committee, under the chairmanship of Shri J. P. Naik, warned that, "the neglect of post literacy and follow-up programmes can be perilous." It also made specific recommendations with respect to need-based continuing education, in the form of equivalence courses for the benefit of neo-literates, to be organized by the local schools.

Though the concept of PL was introduced in NAEP, but it was not clear. It was very vague. PL was clubbed with 'follow-up.' Hence, it did not materialize.

**National Programme for Adult Education (NPAE)**

After the change of the Central Government in 1980, the NAEP was reformulated and with some changes converted to NPAE, which was then linked to the Rural Functional Literacy Programme (RFLP).

In 1982-83, the government started funding PL and CE programmes. Initially PL was for four months with a one year follow-up programme after basic literacy. It was an effort to provide some post literacy support to neo-literates but the programme structure was not elaborately designed.

**New Twenty-Point Programme**

The adult education programme was included under the minimum needs programme in the sixth five year plan (1980-85) as point no.16 under the New 20 Point Programme of the Prime Minister. The programme clearly stated three phases for implementation of adult education, namely literacy, post-literacy and follow-up.
Initially the total period for basic literacy, post-literacy and follow-up programmes was 350, 150 and 100 hours over a period of 3 years. Based on monitoring and feedback reports, a new time frame of 8 months of basic literacy, four months of post-literacy and one year of follow-up was adopted in 1985.

**Jan Shikshan Nilavam (JSN)**

As stated in the National Policy on Education (1986), the Government of India decided to establish JSNs in February 1988. This was the first attempt to institutionalize the PL by providing a separate infrastructure. One JSN served for a population of about 5000 people / cluster of four to five villages. The neo-literates who had completed the basic literacy programme were the main clientele of JSN. The major activities of JSN included holding evening classes, for up-gradation of literacy and numeracy skills, providing library facility, reading room, organising charcha mandal, training for skill development, sports, information window and recreation, etc.

The establishment of JSNs was a bold and pioneering attempt in the area of PL and CE. But due to the lack of political commitment and administrative support, it remained underdeveloped and undernourished. Conceptualization on how PL could be linked to basic literacy was lacking in JSN. Due to this reason, the scheme of JSN was discontinued

**Lessons Learnt**

The preceding discussion shows that the concepts of PL and CE have undergone several changes. The concepts of PL and CE were hazy. The haziness resulted from the fact that literacy was perceived as the central goal, and anything by way of PL and follow-up was seen as an additional desirable. Without a clear-cut model or strategy for linking literacy with PL and CE. After the implementation of TLCs in various districts, the NLM gave a serious
thought to PL and CE and introduced a separate programme for PL and a scheme of CE, which is discussed in detail in following section

**UNESCO Perspective on PL and CE**

The concept of a learning society was first introduced in UNESCO’s report (1972) namely ‘Learning to Be.’ This report defined a learning society as “one in which all agencies in the society are educational providers, and no just those whose primary responsibility is to provide education.” In a learning society, all citizens are engaged in learning, taking full advantage of the opportunities provided by the learning society.

The Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All (APPEAL) was formulated in 1980s as a programme of human development through education. Under APPEAL, the UNESCO Sub-Regional Seminar on CE held in Canberra, Australia, in November 1987, continuing education is defined as a “broad-based concept, which includes all the learning opportunities all people want or need outside of basic literacy education and primary education” (PROAP, 1996). This implies that it is for literate youth and adults, it is responsive to their needs and wants, it includes experiences provided by all education sub-sectors; and it can be defined in terms of opportunity to engage in lifelong learning.

APPEAL has categorised continuing education into six types, namely,

1. Post-Literacy Programmes (PLPs)
2. Equivalence Programmes (EPs)
3. Quality of Life Improvement Programmes (QLIPs)
4. Income Generating Programmes (IGPs)
5. Individual Interest Promotion Programmes (IIPPs)
6. Future-Oriented Programmes (FOPs)
According to APPEAL, PL is one type of CE which has one objective of maintaining and enhancing literacy and general basic work skills which enable the adults to function effectively in their societies/day-to-day life. Here is a basic assumption that the clientele of the PLPs are those who have already acquired the basic literacy skills.

‘World Declaration on Education for All’ held at Jomtien in 1990 also mentions CE. It states that,

“the basic learning needs of youth and adults are diverse and should be met through a variety of delivery systems. Literacy is a necessary skill in itself and the foundation of other life skills. Literacy in the mother-tongue strengthens cultural identity and heritage. Other needs can be served by: skill training, apprenticeships, and formal and non-formal programmes in health, nutrition, population, agricultural techniques, the environment science, technology, family life, including fertility awareness and other social issues.”

From the Jomtien Declaration, one can notice that, the basic ingredients of this declaration are already reflected in our NPE and POA (1992) and the goals of Jomtien Declaration were incorporated in the goals of the NLM.

**NLM Perspective on PL and CE**

As per the recommendations of the NPE and POA (1986) and revised POA (1992), the NLM decided to implement PL immediately after the TLC phase. The NLM has developed a scheme of PL and CE based on APPEAL guidelines.

The NLM did not prepare a separate scheme of PL and CE till 1992 and was dependent of JSNs. But due to the successful implementations of TLCs during 1990-1993, crores of people became literate, which created an urgency to formulate PL and CE schemes.

Meanwhile, in 1993, an Expert Group was appointed under the chairmanship of Arun Ghosh to undertake a status-cum-impact evaluation of literacy campaign launched in different parts of the country since 1990-91. The Committee recommended that:
1. PL / CE should not be implemented in the campaign mode.

2. At least one PL/CE centre per village or even per tola/pada is essential.

3. The TLC and PL/CE phase must be integrated.

4. Organizational control of the PL/CE must be different from that of the TLC structure.

5. In the PL/CE phase a ‘sense of mission’ has to be inculcated without a campaign mode.

The Arun Ghosh Committee had made specific recommendations on skill development, integration of general education with vocational oriented skill training, legal literacy, use of resource mapping, promotion of learner generated material and so on.

**Post-Literacy Campaign (PLC)**

In 1995, the NLM developed guidelines for the implementation of PLCs. The duration of PL was of two years. It was expected that the neo-literates will move from guided learning to self-learning. The major goals of PLC were:

1. **Remediation**: Those learners not covered by the TLC shall be made literate, those below minimum level of learning shall be enabled to achieve it.

2. **Continuation**: This includes retention, reinforcement, stabilization and upgradation of learning.

3. **Application**: Participants must learn to apply their acquired skills in living and working situation which should lead to improving their quality of life.

4. **Communitisation**: It includes enabling a learner to participate in group action for development process.

The PLC served for two categories namely (1) for children (9-14 age group) and (2) for adults (15+ age group).
Though the PLC was proposed to be implemented in a campaign mode as in the TLC, it could not become a reality and it remained on a programme mode. Later on, in 1998, the duration was reduced to one year, and it was decided to implement it in a programme mode.

It is significant to note that, the NLM has delinked PL from CE and linked it inextricably with TLC.

**Scheme of Continuing Education (1996)**

The NLM had designed a scheme of CE for neo-literates in 1996, with an objective to provide facilities for retention of literacy skills and continuing education to enable the learners to continue their learning beyond basic literacy. For this, continuing education is institutionalized by establishing Continuing Education Centres (CECs). The main facilities provided at CECs included:

1. Library – A repository of learning materials
2. Reading Room – A place, which encourages people to read
3. Learning Centre – A Provider of CE programmes.
4. Training Centre – For short duration training programmes, to upgrade skills
5. Information Centre – For securing information on various development programmes
6. Charcha Mandal – Community meeting place for sharing ideas and solving problems.
7. Development Centre – For coordinating services of government agencies and non-governmental organizations
8. Cultural Centre – A place for cultural activities
9. Sport Centre – For recreation and healthy living.
This scheme was implemented in very few districts. But it could not yield the expected results.

**Scheme of Continuing Education (Revised) (1999)**

Under this scheme, CE programmes were to be implemented through CECs. A continuing education centre was to be set up for a population of 2000-2500 which would cater to the needs of at least 500-1000 neo-literates. It also envisaged that a Nodal Continuing Education Centre (NCEC) to be set up for a cluster of 10-15 CECs. Each NCEC and CEC would be run by a Prerak and assistant Prerak, who would provide the facilities at the centres and co-ordinate the various activities. The broad function of CECs include:

1. Teaching-learning centre for remaining non-literate and neo-literates
2. Library and reading room
3. Venue for group discussion.
4. Venue for vocational training programmes and skill up-gradation
5. Venue for extension facility of other development departments
6. Promoting sports and adventure activities
7. Venue for recreational and cultural activities.
8. A composite information centre.

The scheme is implemented through ZSS at the district level. It provides flexibility and freedom to the ZSS for planning and developing local need-based CE programmes. Along with these activities, the NLM has identified four broad specific programmes, namely:

1. **Equivalence Programmes (EPs)**: It provides an opportunity to adults and out of school children who have acquired basic literacy skills or who have completed primary education and who are willing to continue their education beyond elementary literacy for acquisition of competencies equivalent to primary or secondary levels of the formal system. EPs, therefore, are designed
as alternative education programmes equivalent to existing formal, general and vocational education.

2. Income Generating Programmes (IGPs) : They provide vocational and technical education programmes which help participants to acquire or upgrade vocational skills.

3. Quality of Life Improvement Programmes (QLIPs) : They aim at equipping the learners and the community with essential knowledge, attitudes, values and skills to enable them to improve quality of life as individuals and as members of the community.

4. Individual Interest Promotion Programmes (IIPPs) : These programmes provide opportunities for individuals to participate in and learn about their chosen social, cultural, spiritual, health, physical and artistic interests. They focus on personal development.

This revised scheme of continuing education was approved by the Government of India on November 30, 1999. Till 2001, it has been implemented in 112 districts. This scheme is an attempt to provide a systematic, organized and well-coordinated mechanism to mobilize all resources in support of continuing education in the perspective of lifelong education.

Management of the CE Scheme

The overall management of the scheme of CE vests, at the district level, with the ZSS or the District Literacy Committee. The management structure can be depicted as follows:
Funding

This scheme is fully funded by the Central Government for the first three years of the project. For the 4th and 5th year of the project, the Central Government and the State Government share the expenses in the ratio of 50:50. After the completion of the five years of the scheme, the Central Government ceases the funds and later on it will be the responsibility of the State to continue the scheme. 31

The revised scheme of CE has raised the funds for NCECs and CECs. In addition, it also provides posts of assistant Prerak to NCECs and CECs.

Monitoring

The overall responsibility of the implementation and monitoring of the CE scheme lies with the ZSS. At district, block and village levels, responsibility of monitoring is given to the APOs / Supervisors, Gram Shikshan Samiti and nodal Preraks. Through monthly meetings of Preraks of CECs and NCECs, review of the programme is being conducted.
It is over sixty years since the notion of CE was first introduced in the context of adult education. The concept has undergone several evolutionary changes and reincarnations. It is significant to note that in the absence of CE programmes, the efforts taken up in basic literacy and post-literacy are futile. Hence, special attention needs to be given to CE programmes.

The present study deals with an evaluation of two specific continuing education programmes, namely awareness and quality of life improvement programmes. This necessitates a discussion on the concept of programme evaluation as discussed in detail in the next section.

CONCEPT OF PROGRAMME EVALUATION

Evaluation of any programme implies determining its quality and perceived or actual impact. In other words, determination of the worth of a programme means its evaluation.

Meaning: Different researchers have defined programme evaluation in different ways. Following are some of the definitions of programme evaluation.

According to Worthen’s programme evaluation consists of those activities undertaken to judge the worth or utility of a programme (or alternative programmes) in improving some specified aspect of an educational system.

Michael Patton’s (1977) described programme evaluation not as the application of scientific research methods, but as the systematic collection of information about a programme to inform decision-making.

Peter Rossi, Howard Freeman and Michael Lipsey’s (1999) have defined programme evaluation as the application of scientific research methods to the assessment of the design and implementation of a programme.
In short, programme evaluation is a systematic investigation of the worth or merit of some object. Here, the object may be an entire programme or some aspects of the programme, such as learning outcomes, quality of resource persons, quality of instruction and benefits to the participants. Thus, programme evaluation focuses on programme quality.

According to Kaufman and Thomas (1980), evaluation deals with results—intended and unintended. Evaluation tries to find out answers to the following questions.

1. What are the goals and objectives of the organization?
2. What should be the goals and objectives of the organization?
3. What results were intended by the programme?
4. What results were obtained by the programme?
5. What were the methods and resources used to achieve the results?
6. How well were the physical facilities available?
7. How well was the programme administered and managed?
8. What, if anything, about the programme should be changed?
9. What, if anything, about the monitoring system should be changed?
10. What new programmes should be introduced?

Thus, programme evaluation relates back to the prior planning and designing/implementation process of programming. The findings of evaluation help to modify the planning and design/implementation process within its framework and environment. Programme evaluation is not an end but a process important for effective and meaningful planning of a new programme. It is a continuous and cyclic process. Programme evaluation is the step that starts from the stage of planning of the programme and it continues.

Programme evaluations are not conducted for the sake of knowledge but for decision-making. Feedback obtained from programme evaluation should be used to adjust all aspects of programme that need improvement. Programme evaluation, therefore, flows in both direction—from the lower to higher level and from higher to the lower. In other words, all
those involved with the programme’s operation—from planners, organizers to participants—may use the information gained from programme evaluation to increase understanding and aid decision-making.

The programme evaluation of adult and continuing education involves examination of the objectives, the learning experiences provided, and the monitoring and reinforcing activities. Programme evaluation is aimed at answering questions such as: Were the objectives appropriate for the participants involved? Were they stated in measurable terms? Was the programme delivered to those it was intended for and in the intended manner? Were adequate resources made available? Was there a clear relationship between needs and objectives? All these questions reflect on the planning, implementation process and strategies adopted during the programme.

Thus, programme evaluation can play a role in identifying problem areas and testing alternative approaches.

**Purposes of Programme Evaluation**

The purpose of programme evaluation is to assist in planning a future educational programme. Programme evaluation may focus on the whole activity or part of activities or outcomes (to justify), current activities (to improve) or what might be done in future (to plan the programme). It is less concerned with making generalizations than with making decisions in a specific setting. Thus, programme evaluation serves the purpose of planning, policy-making, programme improvement, or programme justification or accountability.

However, the purposes of programme evaluation include:³⁶

- Identifying needed changes in procedures or processes
- Identifying unmet needs
➢ Gathering data on the differential effectiveness of varied approaches.

➢ Determining needed changes in support services, staffing, organizational climate and the like.

➢ Examining the appropriateness of programme goals and objectives.

➢ Gathering data for programme promotion.

➢ Assessing and reporting on performance.

➢ Identifying appropriate topics for general staff development, assigning grades or certifying competence.

➢ Determining the impact of learning experience on the learner/participant behaviour.

➢ Determining the impact of programme on the participants’ behaviour (i.e. at workplace or the community).

Thus, programme evaluation focuses on the relationship of programme inputs, context and processes with the programme outputs; the efficiency of programme; its suitability, and its overall importance.

**Types of Evaluation**

Evaluation can be categorized into two types:

1. **Formative evaluation**: It is carried out when the programme is in progress or is ongoing. If the desired progress is not seen, one can check the areas for improvement or modifications.

2. **Summative evaluation**: It is conducted at the end or completion of the programme, to assess its effectiveness/impact. Accountability is the focus.

Both these methods are discussed at length in Chapter-III.
Programme Evaluation in the Present Study

The researcher has conducted summative evaluation of two continuing education programmes, namely Awareness Programme (AWPs) and Quality of Life Improvement Programmes (QLIPs).

The purpose of programme evaluation in the present study is to assess and report the perceived quality and perceived benefits or impact of AWPs and QLIPs and to judge the worth or the quality of the programmes.

The present study has included the evaluation of the following aspects of continuing education programmes:

- Infrastructure facilities
- Programme execution
- Resources available
- Methodology used for programme
- Effectiveness of programmes
- Selection of Preraks
- Training of Preraks and APOs/Supervisors
- Problems faced by the Preraks
- Monitoring and problems (if any)
- Feedback
- Community participation

Since the present research deals with programme evaluation, the next section describes the meaning of evaluation research in detail.

Evaluation Research

In recent decades, evaluation research has been developed as a significant and separate field of research activity. Evaluation research is basically concerned with the application of its findings and implies judgement of the effectiveness, social utility, or
desirability of a product, process or programme in terms of carefully defined and agreed-upon objectives or values. Evaluative researches are not conducted for the sake of knowledge or information. But their basic purpose is to give recommendations for action. In other words, evaluation research is not designed to support or undermine particular theoretical positions, but rather to contribute to recommendations for action.

**Meaning**: Following are some of the definitions of evaluation research.

Powell defines evaluation research as “a specific type of applied research whose primary goal is not the discovery of knowledge but rather a testing of the application of knowledge within a specific programme or project.”

According to Busha and Harter, “Studies conducted to obtain objective and systematic evidence of the success or failure of projects and programmes are often categorized as evaluation research.”

Baker has defined evaluation research as follows:

“It is not really a different method of doing research; rather, it is research done for a specific purpose: to evaluate some social activity, usually a social programme, which has been set up to address and ameliorate a social problem.”

According to Rutman (1984), evaluation research is “the use of scientific methods to measure the implementation and outcomes of programmes for decision-making purposes.”

Rossi and Freeman (1993) defined evaluation research as “the systematic application of social research procedures for assessing the conceptualization, design, implementation and utility of social intervention programmes.”

In short, evaluation research is basically concerned with the application of its findings and implies judgement of the effectiveness, social utility, or desirability of a product, process, or programme in terms of carefully defined and agreed-upon objectives or values.”
Evaluation research may give answers to such questions as: How well the set objectives of the programme have been achieved? Was the programme completed in given time? What were the reasons for not achieving the goals of the programme? Were the resources adequate?

According to Weiss, evaluation research is a rational enterprise. It examines the effects of policies and programmes on their targets (individuals, groups, institutions, communities) in terms of the goals they are meant to achieve. By objective and systematic methods, evaluation research assesses the extent to which goals are realized and looks at the factors associated with successful and unsuccessful outcomes. The assumption is that, by providing 'the facts,' evaluation assists decision-makers to make wise choices among future courses of action. Careful and unbiased data on the consequences of programmes should improve decision-making.

**Purposes of Evaluation Research**

The purpose of evaluation research varies as per its usefulness, for whom the study is being conducted. Chelimsky (1997) identifies three different purposes of evaluation, namely evaluation for accountability, evaluation for development, and evaluation for knowledge.

1. **Accountability**: It frequently attempts to answer the questions whether the programme or policy 'worked' or whether anything changed as a result. It is useful for auditors and funding agencies.

2. **Development**: This is useful for the improvement of institutional performance. It deals with questions such as: How can management performance or organizational performance be improved? What data systems are necessary to monitor programme accomplishment? What are appropriate indicators of programme success and what are appropriate organizational goals?
(3) **Knowledge**: The focus is on improving understanding of social problems and finding out the details of logic of how specific programmes or policies can ameliorate them. It is useful for programme administrators, programme designers, and programme evaluators themselves. It deals mostly with cause and effect relationship.

The present study deals with gaining knowledge about the functioning of the continuing education centers, the quality of continuing education programmes and how they could be improved.

**Components of An Evaluation Research**

According to Weiss,\(^\text{45}\) the evaluation research considers the following components.

1. **Purpose of the programme**
2. **Objectives/principles of the programme**
3. **Methods used in the programme to deliver the information**
4. **Resource persons/staffing of the programme**
5. **Persons served by the programme / to whom the programme served or clientele of the programme**
6. **Length of service provided by the programme / duration and its adequacy**
7. **Location / venue of the programme**
8. **Size of the programme (short term or long term)**
9. **Under whose auspices the programme is being offered**
10. **Management of the programme**

The present study deals with all the above mentioned components except eighth and ninth components.
Weiss further says that, if persons are being put through the programme and the effect of the programme on those persons is of primary interest, characteristics of the clients themselves can be considered input variables. She proposes the following eleven factors to be measured regarding the persons being served by the programme: (1) age, (2) sex, (3) socio-economic status, (4) race, (5) length of residence in the community, (6) attitude towards the programme, (7) motivation for participating in the programme, (8) aspiration relevant to the general objectives of the programme, (9) expectations of what they hope to achieve as a result of participating / attending the programme, (10) attitude of other family members about the programme, and (11) degree of support from other family members concerning the hoped-for outcomes of participating in the programme. The present study makes an attempt to compare the perceived quality of AWPs and QLIPs on the basis of the participants’ gender, caste and level of education.

Evaluative research has no special methodology but makes use of a variety of research designs. It differs from non-evaluative or basic research only in its purpose.

**STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH TOPIC**

An Evaluative Study of Some Specific Programmes Under Continuing Education Scheme of National Literacy Mission.

**DEFINITIONS OF THE TERMS**

Definitions of the terms included in the present study are as follows:

(1) Programme Evaluation: It refers to determining the quality or the worth of the awareness programmes and quality of life improvement programmes at NCECs and CECs in the selected districts as perceived by the participants and preraks.
(2) **Continuing Education** : It is defined as a broad based concept in the non-formal mode of learning which includes all the learning opportunities for preventing neo-literates from lapsing into illiteracy and for further lifelong learning.

(3) **Continuing Education Scheme** : It refers to a project designed by National Literacy Mission with the purpose of providing continuing education to fulfill the felt needs of neo-literates in continuing education centers established at the grassroots level with flexibility in planning and implementation of the courses.

(4) **National Literacy Mission** : It refers to the apex body established Government of India, aimed at imparting functional literacy to illiterates in the age group of 15-35 years.

(5) **Continuing Education Programme** : It refers to target specific functional programmes that cater to the specific needs and interest of neo-literates and focuses on the development of functional knowledge so as to make learning relevant to life and work.

[ Continuing education programmes include equivalence programmes, awareness programmes, quality of life improvement programmes, income generating programmes, and individual interest promotion programmes ]

(6) **Awareness Programmes (AWPs)** : It refers to programmes aimed at providing knowledge and information on topics such as health, nutrition, social issues and issues related to individual life so as to bring about a change in day-to-day life practices of the participants.

(7) **Quality of Life Improvement Programmes (QLIPs)** : It refers to programmes aimed at equipping the participants with the essential knowledge, attitude, values and skills so as to improve the quality of life as individuals and as members of the community/society.
(8) **Assistant Project Officers (APOs) / Supervisors** The term refers to those fulltime employees of District Education Office (CE) functioning at the Taluka level as joint secretary of Taluka Sakshara Samiti (TSS) and involved in administration of the functioning of the NCECs and CECs.

(9) **Prerak** The term refers to the in-charge of NCECs and CECs who works on part-time basis and is responsible for organizing different continuing education programmes at the center.

(10) **Participants** It refers to those neo-literates who attend the continuing education programmes at the NCECs or CECs and are expected to benefit from the opportunities provided for lifelong learning. These participants may include school drop-outs, those who have completed primary schooling or non-formal education programmes and all other members of the community interested in availing the opportunities for lifelong learning.

(11) **Quality of Continuing Education Programme** In the present study, the term quality is operationally defined as the worth and perceived impact of the programme measured as perceived by participants, preraks and judged in numerical terms as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Magnitude of Quality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-20</td>
<td>Very poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-40</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-60</td>
<td>Moderate/Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-80</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81-100</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NEED OF THE STUDY**

A review of the related literature indicates that several studies have been conducted in the area of evaluation of adult education programme. There are a few studies conducted on the different aspects of Post-Literacy Programme (PLP). However, there are very few studies conducted on continuing education scheme, such as on the constraints in the sustainability of
continuing education centres in India, preraks in continuing education programmes—Kerala experience. However, it is seen that very little research has been conducted on the awareness programmes and quality of life improvement programmes.

Creation of a ‘Learning Society’ is the goal of continuing education scheme. To achieve this goal, a structured programme of continuing education is prepared. This includes establishment of NCECs and CECs at the village/pada levels. These centres are expected to serve the community people by organizing different need-based, interest-based programmes. Based on the needs, aspirations and interests of various groups in the community, different CE programmes should be organized at the centre. In other words, the prerak should keep the participants at the centre of any programme to be organized at the centre. Hence, it is very essential to find out whether the different programmes organized at the NCECs and CECs are relevant, useful and need-based.

The researcher paid informal visits to some of the districts, attended monthly meetings of the Education Officers (CE) organized by the Directorate of Education (CE), Pune. These meetings revealed that awareness programmes and quality of life improvement programmes were organized in almost all the centres. Due to some reasons, income generating programmes, equivalence programmes, individual interest promotion programmes were not organized. Hence, it is very essential to find out whether the different awareness programmes organized at NCECs and CECs are relevant, useful and sustainable in the local situation. It is also necessary to find out whether these programmes have brought out any change in their day-to-day life and changed their regular practices in the life.

One of the objectives of CE is to improve the quality and standard of life. Hence, it is necessary to find out whether the knowledge and information achieved by the participants is practiced in their day-day life and helps in enhancing their quality of life.
Formulation and implementation of continuing education scheme is a virgin experiment in India. Before this, such type of structured programme had not been implemented. Due to its novel and unique nature, it is necessary to study these programmes. Successful implementation of these programmes could lead to the creation of a ‘Learning Society.’

Continuing education scheme is being implemented in India since 1996. In many States, including Maharashtra, the NCECs and CECs started functioning. Due to paucity of funds, these centres were closed within 1-2 years. For example, Dumka district of Jharkhand

The NCECs and CECs stopped functioning approximately after two years, as the funds from NLM were delayed due to audit related problems.

No research/study has been conducted on the problems faced by preraks and participants if the centres are suddenly closed down.

So far very few attempts have been made to collect the opinions of the participants, preraks of NCECs and CECs regarding the actual difficulties faced by them in the implementation of CE scheme.

There may be differences in the functioning of the centres in each district and also within the districts in terms of timings (morning, afternoon, evening), duration (whole day, only morning or evening, only for 2 hours), organization of programmes (teaching/learning process), availability of resources, facilities available, infrastructure, educational background of the learners, strengths and weaknesses etc.

Some attempts have been made to study such aspects of programmes as the training of preraks and the functioning of the centres in general.
Hence, it is necessary to study the following aspects of CE scheme, as this is a virgin experience.

- Contextual demographic background of the CE centres.
- Opinions of participants, preraks and the supervisors, about the facilities available at the centre.
- Perceptions of male and female participants towards NCECs and CECs.
- Perceptions of participants about the different programmes organized at the centres.
- Opinions of participants about the preraks.
- Opinions of participants and preraks about the resource persons.
- Strengths and weaknesses of the programmes from participants’, preraks’, and APOs/Supervisors’ point of view.
- Suggestions of participants, preraks and APOs/supervisors for the improvement of the programmes.
- Future programmes in which participants are interested.

**AIMS OF THE STUDY**

The study was conducted with the following broad aims:

(1) To study the APOs/Supervisors’ opinion about the planning and the implementation of continuing education programmes with specific reference to AWPs and QLIPs.

(2) To ascertain the quality of continuing education programmes with specific reference to AWPs and QLIPs as perceived by preraks.

(3) To ascertain the quality of continuing education programmes with specific reference to AWPs and QLIPs as perceived by participants.
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following specific objectives have been formulated to meet these broad aims:

(1) To study the APOs/Supervisors' opinion about:

(a) General background information of APOs/supervisors.

(b) Preraks (availability, training, problems faced by them, community co-operation).

(c) Planning (space, materials, community co-operation, interventions to solve problems faced by preraks in collaboration/co-ordination with other organizations, types of programmes).

(d) Residual Literacy Programme

(e) Supervision.

(f) Feedback.

(g) Strengths and weaknesses.

(h) Benefits

(2) To study the opinion of the preraks about the following aspects:

(a) General background information of the preraks.

(b) Selection and training of preraks.

(c) Facilities/resources available at the centre (physical as well as human).

(d) Monitoring system followed.

(e) Usefulness/benefit of the programmes to the participants.

(f) Problems faced by the preraks in running the centre
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(g) Strengths and weaknesses of the CE scheme.

(3) To study the participants’ opinion about.

(a) General background information of participants.

(b) Motivation for attending the centre (information about centre, regularity, objectives of centre, use of library).

(c) Physical facilities (timings of the centre and convenience, distance, seating arrangement, facilities available at the centre).

(d) Programme planning and implementation (number of programmes organized by the centre, number of programmes attended by the participants, publicity, venue and its convenience, facilities available at the venue, fees (if any), any help from others in organization of programme planning and/or execution, resource persons, distribution of reading material), methodology adopted to deliver the information, sharing of success stories, reasons for attending the programme).

(e) Opinions about preraks.

(f) Usefulness/benefit of programme.
   (number of programmes useful, effect of programmes on individual and family, things liked, suggestions to improve programme)

(g) Names of programmes, which they would like to attend in near future.

(4) To compare male and female participants’ perception of the quality of (i) AWPs and (ii) QLIPs of NCECs and CECs.

(5) To compare the quality of (i) AWPs and (ii) QLIPs as perceived by open and reserved caste participants of NCECs and CECs.

(6) To compare the quality of AWPs as perceived by the participants of NCECs and CECs with different levels of education.
(7) To compare the quality of QLIPs as perceived by the participants of NCECs and CECs with different levels of education.

(8) To compare the quality of AWPs as perceived by the participants attending different NCECs and CECs.

(9) To compare the quality of QLIPs as perceived by the participants attending different NCECs and CECs.

(10) To compare the quality of AWPs as perceived by the participants from Satara and Ahmednagar districts.

(11) To compare the quality of QLIPs as perceived by the participants from Satara and Ahmednagar districts.

(12) To rank the NCECs and CECs in terms of quality of AWPs and QLIPs as perceived by the participants.

(13) To study the magnitude of quality of AWPs and QLIPs as perceived by the participants.

(14) To rank the NCECs and CECs in terms of quality of AWPs and QLIPs as perceived by the preraks.

(15) To study the magnitude of quality of AWPs and QLIPs as perceived by the preraks.

(16) To conduct a SWOT analysis for AWPs and QLIPs.

(17) To suggest measures for improvement, if necessary.
HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Following null hypotheses are formulated for the present study:

(1) There is no significant gender difference in the scores on the quality of (i) AWPs and (ii) QLIPs of participants of NCECs and CECs.

(2) There is no significant difference in the scores on the quality of (i) AWPs and (ii) QLIPs of participants of NCECs and CECs belonging to open and reserved castes.

(3) There is no significant difference in the scores on the quality of AWPs of participants of NCECs and CECs with different levels of education.

(4) There is no significant gender difference in the scores on quality of QLIPs of participants of NCECs and CECs with different levels of education.

(5) There is no significant difference in the scores on the quality of AWPs of participants attending different NCECs and CECs.

(6) There is no significant difference in the scores on the quality of QLIPs of participants attending different NCECs and CECs.

(7) There is no significant difference in the quality of AWPs as perceived by the participants from Satara and Ahmednagar districts.

(8) There is no significant difference in the quality of QLIPs as perceived by the participants from Satara and Ahmednagar districts.
SCOPE AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The present study is restricted to the evaluation of only two continuing education programmes, namely, Awareness Programmes and Quality of Life Improvement Programmes. It excludes other programmes organized at the NCECs and CECs such as Equivalence Programmes, Skill Development Programmes, Income Generating Programmes, Individual Interest Promotion Programmes. It also excludes evaluation of other activities organized at the NCECs and CECs such as residual literacy programme, library and reading room facilities, sports and cultural activities.

The data were collected only from two districts out of eight districts of Maharashtra, where CE scheme was in operation by the NLM. Only those participants were interviewed, who had attended the programme organized by the NCECs/CECs.

The study focuses only on the judgemental aspects of evaluation, which includes determining the extent to which the stated objectives have been attained. Its major focus excludes developmental aspect, which deals with gathering of information for decision-making.

The present study does not focus on the participant-resource person ratio, expertise of the resource persons, expenses for organizing programmes, cost effectiveness and cost benefit analysis of the programmes.

The present study includes summative evaluation of programmes, which aims at answering questions concerning attainment of the objectives of the programme at the end of the programme with focus on accountability.

Since this research study has been conducted by the researcher herself hence all the interviews were conducted by the researcher personally. The focus of the study is also to add
to the existing body of knowledge and give concrete suggestions to those who are involved in
the implementation of CE programme, namely, preraks, APOs/supervisors and the ZSS,

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The present study will be useful to the Zilla Saksharata Samities (ZSS) who are the
main implementing authorities of the CE scheme at the district level. It will also be useful to
the policy-makers at the State level—State Literacy Mission and at the national level—
National Literacy Mission. Preraks of NCECs and CECs, the backbones of the CE scheme,
may also be benefitted by this study and they can use some of the suggestions from this study
while organizing different CE programmes at their centres.

The local Gram Panchayats (GPs) and Gram Shikshan Samities (GSSs) have very
important role in the implementation of CE scheme. They can adopt some of the suggestions
from this study and extend their full co-operation for making CE a successful programme.

The NCECs and CECs are expected to play a vital role in the creation of a ‘Learning
Society.’ This study in turn may provide the policy-makers at different levels (from National
to District level) with the feedback on the relevance and usefulness of their programmes and
suggestions for improvement, if any.

This study could lead to suggestions about the strategies to be developed to improve
the implementation of activities in NCECs and CECs. It could also give an idea about the
performance of the preraks and APOs/supervisors, loopholes/gaps in the present system of
monitoring and the problems faced by the preraks. It could also give a picture of
expectations of the participants from the APOs/supervisors and preraks.

The present study is an evaluation research The results of this study may be useful to-
(a) a funding agency or organization (NLM/SLMA)

(b) a local agency (NGOs who are involved in implementation of NCEC /or CECs)

(c) The staff of the District Education Office (CE) that is APOs/supervisors, Deputy Education Officer (CE) and District Education Officer (CE)

(d) The programme's clients, the participants of the programme

(e) Researchers and other learned individuals, who may use the findings of this research to do further study/research in other studies
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