CHAPTER TWO

THE PROBLEM AND THE BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

EPITOME

An attempt has been made in this chapter to find plausible reasons for the special interest shown by female adult learners in "mothercraft". The discussion is based on facts and findings of studies regarding women's status in the institutions of family and community through history, the actual role/roles they perform or are expected to perform in these institutions in the framework of the social norms, governed by tradition and culture. After viewing the resulting female literacy situation, the chief demotivating or the limiting factors with regards to the same have been considered.

The discussion is expected to be supportive to the hypotheses of the present study: namely the chief tool to motivate women learners to understand the importance of and take interest in literacy particularly and education generally, is their interest in mothercraft. It should be mentioned at the outset that only those facts which are relevant to the study have been discussed in more detail.
CHAPTER TWO

2.1 The Factor of Inequality of Sexes:

Every human being has a right to education. This principle has been proclaimed and confirmed time and again. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights pertaining to recommendations against Discrimination in Education, adopted by the general conference of UNESCO in 1960, could be borne in mind. Enjoyment of this right however, is not always ensured in the case of men and even less so in the case of women.

If the principle of equality of men and women were really applied it would mean, for example, that girls would have access to primary education on equal footing with boys, that they would have the same chances of completing their schooling and moreover in practice, they would not be prevented by any regulations, prejudices or traditions from pursuing freely the course of studies they wished to pursue.

However, the fact remains that the educational opportunities for women remain distinctly low in most countries as compared with men, both in quantitative and qualitative terms.

During the international women's year 1975, and Women's Development Decade, the following facts about
Indian Women were highlighted. (Nayak, J. T.; 1982):

1. The sex-ratio (no. of women/1000 men) has come down from 972 in 1901 to 930 in 1971 census in India. The 1981 census showed a slight increase, i.e. 935. In a population of 683 million 330.5 million are women. The reasons for the decline in sex-ratio (contradictory to the world trends) were pointed out to be:
   a) Preference is given to boys;
   b) Women die in child-birth;
   c) Girls are usually more mal-nourished than boys.

This indicates that in such a sex-segregated society it is imperative that women themselves take up the task of development of girls and women. However, this could be further elaborated upon later.

2. Women carry heavy workloads, yet their contribution to national development goes unnoticed. (Saraswati, 1979), points out that rural women participate in all farming operations, are expected to be fully responsible for maintenance of the household and also take up additional relevant occupations).
3. "Women are faceless, voiceless and invisible". According to Dandiya, (1979) factual data supports the fact that among the poor, the women are the poorest, amongst the sufferers women are the worst sufferers among the oppressed the women are the most oppressed.

4. Indian school text-books were also found to have a sex-bias. They represent girls and women as passive and only fulfilling roles of wife and mother.

5. Regarding illiteracy and deprivation among the lower income group, girls were found to suffer more than boys.

Any number of examples of discrimination against women can be given. It is more important however to understand that such discrimination not only prevents women from achieving complete self-fulfillment as human beings, it also impedes the progress of society. While statements like, "the mother is the child's first teacher", are often made, very little effort goes into ensuring that this "first teacher" is equipped for her job.

2.2 Importance of Women's Education:

Several studies show that women when educated are
capable of bringing about considerable change for the better. In the context of present research the findings of one study and certain statistics cited by Gopalan (1980) in his paper on "Nutritional Problems in Developing Countries", 1980, should prove useful:

1. A study carried out by NIN in Hyderabad showed that in poor communities living on uniformly inadequate diets, it was the children of mothers, who were particularly ignorant and lacking in resourcefulness and motivation who developed Kwashiorker. A large proportion of poor children even in these communities escaped from serious forms of undernutrition presumably because the poor mothers in these cases were able to use the meagre resources in matter of food or public health services to maximal advantage.

2. According to the 1980 figures the infant mortality rate in Kerala was around 55/1000 as against 161/1000 in U.P., the neo natal mortality was 33/1000 in Kerala and 72/1000 in U.P.; life-expectancy at birth was 64 years in Kerala and 55 years in U.P.; deaths of children under 5 years accounted for 19 percent of all deaths in Kerala and 35 percent in U.P.
These differences cannot be explained on the basis of socio-economic differences or food availabilities per capita. With respect to this, Kerala is no better than U. P. But what is significant is that the literacy rate in Kerala is 67 percent in males and 54 percent in females as against 31 percent and 11 percent respectively in U. P.

The statistics on infant mortality levels in relation to the education of the mother, based on studies regarding infant mortality, further proves this point.

Table No. 1

Infant-Mortality Level by Education of Women (1979)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Educational level of Women</th>
<th>Infant-Mortality Rate Rural</th>
<th>Infant-Mortality Rate Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Literate but below primary</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Primary and above</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Total Literate</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference between rural and urban rates of infant-mortality within the same group by level of women's education may be attributed chiefly to the easier availability of health and related facilities and comparatively better exposure to informal/non-formal education, amongst other things, in the urban areas.

Another study by Ikeda (1975), further establishes this relationship between mother's education and improvement in health status of the family. In this study it was proved that health is important in the value systems of some poor mothers and may provide motivation for them to modify food practices, when they learn that these practices may cause retarded growth, obesity, anaemia or other health problems.*

One may infer from the above-mentioned studies that the women, if better equipped for her job, can achieve better results in her capacity as the nurturer of her child.

2.3 Women's Status and Role in Social Institutions:

1. At this juncture it would be interesting to study the hypocritical situation vis-a-vis the position

---

* Ikeda Jeanne. P.; Expressed Nutrition needs of Low-Income Home-Makers, Journal of Nutrition Education; 77 - 9/75; 104 -
of women in the family and society and the treatment accorded to her, by these institutions.

The most depressed class in our society is the women folk, deprived of their rights to property, secluded from the wider dynamic world, confined to their homes, clamped down by antiquated social customs, steeped in poverty, ignorance, squalor and ill-health, with no interest in life except marriage and feasts etc.

It has been claimed that the Hindu Society is generally male dominated. Women's position in such a society entirely depends on her husband's position in the family/society (Madan - 1976). Things improve for her when she is a mother and a grandmother. Woman-hood in India is inseparable from mother-hood and all that it entails i.e. the responsibility and the honour; everything else is of secondary importance. Here lies the first discrepancy. Neither is the woman equipped for her responsibility nor does her honour improve greatly in actuality on assuming motherhood.

As far as her role in the society is concerned, Veena Das (1976) points out, that in societies which are strongly patrilineal, women do not have
any jural roles in their natal family. They cannot transmit membership of the group, which is considered extremely important. Therefore, their main contribution is to the husband's group, where their role as mothers becomes very important. They provide important structural links between men. Thus the arrangement of marriage assumes great importance. Women through laws of 'anuloma' and 'pratiloma' were also, in the earlier days, viewed as entrance points to the caste systems.

2. Women's Role in Traditional Societies:

UNICEF/WHO appraisals, regarding the topic under discussion, indicate that in traditional societies women and girls suffer many disabilities. A typical woman's role is to bear children, to manage the household and feed the family, to fetch water and gather fuel, to help in the fields in season and winnow, grind, pound or press the cereal and seed crops after harvest. She also shoulders the responsibility for the kitchen garden - if there is one - and for tending small animals. The quality of the family diet depends substantially upon her resources and resourcefulness. The responsibility of sale and purchase at the local market too is hers. She is the provider for nursing care for the sick, so it is
her responsibility to seek out traditional healers
or trudge to distant dispensaries when she recog-
nizes the seriousness of the affliction of any of
the family members. Girls from an early age are
destined to share with their mothers this day-long,
year-long, life-long drudgery.

3. **Traditional Role of Indian Woman**

A national level study conducted in India (1977-78)
shows the work-load of the Indian woman to be
almost identical to that described in the prece-
ding para. This study also revealed that 60 percent
of the rural female population is engaged in some
economic activity and out of the remainder 36 per-
cent work as labourers in the farms.

Various studies on the day-to-day activities of
women in India reveal the following major features.

a) A study in Rajasthan shows that cooking and serving
food, on an average, accounts for 3 hours a day.
She spends 2 hours every day fetching water usually
from a well. She has only about ½ hour per day at
her disposal, to look after young children. Normally
the young ones are cared for by their elder sib-
lings and in their absence, they accompany their
mothers to the fields. At the farm women hardly find any time to devote to these young ones, especially in the peak farming seasons. Besides this, about 5 hours a day are spent in other household chores like household cleanliness, laundry, etc. In the peak farming season she has to spend 8 to 9 hours per day in the fields (2 to 3 hours a day in other seasons). On an average a woman, besides these 8 to 9 hours work outside the house, spends 4 hours every day for duties at home. She also takes care of many farming and dairy-related operations. As a result an Indian rural woman ends up working for about 13 – 14 hours per day.\(^*\)

b) Studies in Haryana (Rhandhawa - 1975, and Chakravarti - 1975) give similar results. According to the study by Chakravarti, women's participation in agricultural operations was found to be 50 to 60 percent. Another earlier study (Sharma and Singh), had found this level of participation in agricultural operations to be in the range of 24 – 76 percent.

\(^*\) Study quoted by Naik C. in her paper, "Nirakshar Wa Alpashikshit Streeyansathi Shaikshanik Karyakram" (Educational Programmes for Illiterate and semiliterate Women) (Marathi); 1983; unpublished.
4. Women's Role in Community Decision-Making:

Although they fulfil such an important role in the rural economy, and are a primary influence on the development of their children, women usually are excluded from formal decision-making with regard to their community.*

Failure to associate communities with the planning of programme intended for their benefit, with consequent lack of public participation in the implementation of programmes is now recognized as a missing link in the strategies for development so far applied and a major reason for the short-fall in achievement of targets.

When this realization is coupled with the above-mentioned exclusion of women's right in community decision-making, inspite of the major role they play in the functioning of any community, and their number by law of nature being almost equal to that of the male members, one can see the enormity of the problem.

----

5. **Role in National Policy Making**

It would be worthwhile to mention here that even in the area of participation in national policy making process as a citizen of the country, women face several hindering blocks, or cannot participate fully due to their lack of knowledge which is a result of the socio-cultural situation.

M. Gandhi declared that women must have votes, and an equal legal status. The constitution grants the same. But the problem only begins at this point. Elections in a democracy are held on issues raised by various parties in their election manifestos and the voter is called upon to make his choices. The fundamental question, therefore, arises at the level of understanding the information by the voter. If she does not have access to the tools of information and skills of understanding the issues raised, it becomes meaningless from her point of view. She cannot be expected to take intelligent decisions on issues about which she knows nothing or understands nothing. Hence for all practical purposes the political participation of women, remains a nominal fact of history only and not a meaningful exercise. It, at best, means the expre-
ssion of the opinion of the group-leader (usually a male-member). This almost makes a mockery of democracy. (Dandiya, 1979).

There is also a decline observed as regards the turn-out of women-voters, women contestants and elected female members. (Tables 2 & 3).

**Table No. 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total voting percentage</th>
<th>Percentage turnout of female voters</th>
<th>Difference between turnout percentage of male and female voters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>54.76</td>
<td>46.63</td>
<td>15.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>61.33</td>
<td>55.48</td>
<td>11.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>55.35</td>
<td>49.15</td>
<td>11.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table No. 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Gen. Election</th>
<th>Total Seats Contested</th>
<th>No. of women Contestants</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No. of women elected</th>
<th>% of winners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Another vicious cycle of apathy due to lack of expression power, in turn due to poor social and educational status and lack of opportunity in decision-making process at all levels, leading to poor participation and representation of women and therefore their problems at the highest decision making/policy making level, thus comes into existence.

6. **Inferior Status of Women in India and the Mother Cult - A Dichotomy:**

Besides the above-mentioned mode of societal functioning and the resultant status of women in such a society, an interesting feature is that, in such predominantly agricultural societies, where there usually exists a symbiotic relationship of man and nature, a number of studies reveal, that there is a tendency to emphasize the feminine principle in nature, to see nature as mother, and the mother-cult assumes great importance. (Ashish Nandy, 1983).

As a result, while culture preaches mother-worship on one-hand, elevating women to the pedestals of Godliness, the social norms force her to assume many important roles like that of a cook, child-
bearer, housekeeper, farmer/agriculturist, merchant, manager at various levels, economist, etc., in addition to being a handy punching bag to give vent to men's frustration, tradition decrees that she lead a life full of drudgery.

**Motherhood as the Women's Most Important Role:**

In the discussion so far an attempt has been made —

a) To highlight briefly the discrimination in the case of women generally and with special respect to education; in the world at large and in India in particular. While doing so the relationship between her social status, the roles she performs and the training she gets to perform these roles have been discussed so as to indicate how socio-cultural norms make her home and children the focal point of her interests and aspirations if any, thereby possibly aiding stimulation of her interest in gaining knowledge around this focal point.

b) To indicate briefly the existence of a definite co-relation between the level of women's education and the betterment of family life.
7. Importance of Motherhood as Motivation towards Women's Education:

From this discussion it should be clear that motherhood has been traditionally considered to be the most important role of a woman. It is believed to be her natural role. "In the west, the woman is the wife of her husband, in the East, the woman is the mother of the child." (MacEwenhas Marie, 1975)

Ramlingaswami (1975) while describing the relationship between mother and child says, that human development begins at conception. A biological continuity exists between the mother and her foetus during pregnancy, followed by emotional and functional continuity between the mother and the child. According to the same author, one may recognize a genetic motherhood, gestational motherhood and a social motherhood. Mothers in many cultures, especially the developing countries view their babies much more as an extension of themselves. She is also considered the provider of health care (including feeding). It is interesting to note that according to a WHO report on "Women as Providers of Health Care" (1982), most health care, through-
out the world, is provided by women whether informal care given in the capacity as mothers, grandmothers, wives, daughters, neighbours or in the formal sector in which women form the bulk of the labour force. However, paradoxically they are also discriminated against even in this respect. Their own health is sadly neglected when in fact they tend to be more vulnerable due to their complex biological functioning.

Since it is her role as mother that gives her whatever little respect, she can claim in her family and community, although only of ornamental nature as described earlier, it is small wonder that a woman’s world revolves around this focal point, namely her home and especially mothering. It should not be wrong therefore, to assume that this is the chief explanation of her receptivity towards knowledge on anything regarding her mothering role, regardless of her level of education.

In contrast, literacy i.e. the knowledge to read and write, is traditionally meant for roles chiefly played by men-folk. Therefore, unless linked with her basic motivation mentioned above, to a woman it may mean a waste of time and energy which she
already is short of in view of her long hours of work and its nature along with absence of proper diet and health care. (Ref. statistics on page 17-18).

After this discussion on the possible reasons, why women show special interest in health education, which in this context could more aptly be termed education in 'mother-craft'.

2.4 Women's Adult Education - The Indian Scenario:

Adult education for women has been given such importance in view of their high rate of illiteracy, and the realization of the relationship between women's education and the general well-being of society.

Attention may be directed to another important aspect (in the context of the present study), namely women's adult education. This is further elaborated on the following pages; in the context of the picture of the existing situation vis-a-vis women's adult education.

* 'Mother-craft': The dictionary defines this term as: 'Knowledge and skill required for care of a child'. However, here it is used to include all skills required by a woman for performing her role of the mother in the context of its meaning as perceived by the Indian psyche. It would be comprehensive enough to include skills of a family caretaker, as her role as a mother extends to all family members.
1. **Illiteracy Among Women in India**

According to the 1981 census the total female population in India was approximately 330,462,862*, the literate among them only 79,154,717**, i.e. about 24.88 percent. Illiteracy is highest among women in rural area. A state-wise distribution of literacy percentage of the female population in India as shown in appendices, reveals that some of the very densely populated states such as Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, M. P., Rajasthan, U. P., have quite a low percentage of women's literacy.

In the state-wise ranking Maharashtra ranks 10th on this list, inspite of the pioneering efforts of many eminent Maharashtrians in the field of women's education.

Saraswati (1979), while discussing the female literacy situation in the country points out that, in the age group of 5 to 15 years when they ought to be in school, the percentage of girls going to school at the primary school level is very low and even those who start to go, drop out within a year or two and soon relapse into illiteracy, thus constantly increasing the number of illiterate women.

**Exclusion:**

* Jammu and Kashmir
** Assam
2. Efforts to Eradicate Illiteracy Among Women:

The problem of illiteracy of women had been recognized and literacy programmes for them started in India around 1976, when the All India Women's Conference started functioning. Several voluntary agencies started organizing literacy movements at the national and regional levels. Later, after assuming independence the concept of social education was introduced in the rural and urban sectors. Programmes for women under this scheme included campaign against illiteracy, besides other essential information needed for a more satisfying life such as the knowledge of rules of health and hygiene, training for improvement of adult economic status, a sense of citizenship with an adequate consciousness of rights and duties and healthy forms of recreation suited to the needs of the community and the individual.

Social education programmes for rural women were organised through Community Development Programmes and National Extension Projects. Multipurpose Extension Agent - Gramsevika - with the guidance and supervision of the Mukhyasevika (SEorganizer for women) started functioning in the villages of India.
as change agents to bring about an integrated development of rural India, social, cultural and economic aspects being covered by the scheme.

Welfare Extension Projects launched in 1954 by the then Central Social Welfare Board (now Union Dept. for Social Welfare) served the women and children. Literacy and social education formed a part of these projects.

Family and child welfare projects, of the same department have agencies, Griha Kalyan Kendras, offering education for women in personal hygiene, health and sanitation, home-craft and family planning. There were provisions for income - generation. The Applied Nutrition Programme* implemented in collaboration with UNICEF, FAO and WHO seeks to educate rural people in improved nutrition by promoting production and consumption of protective foods amongst other things. Health and Nutrition education, and education in child-care forms a major part of the ICDS** schemes.

* Discussed in detail in the following chapter.
** Details in Chapter Three.
It has been proposed by the Government that each industrial unit in the country should adopt a village or villages and strive for rural development. Many industries have already successfully taken up this challenge.

Rural development programmes which are in operation and which should or could include women are listed by Saraswati (1983) to include SPDA/MFAL (Small Farmers Development Agencies/Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Development Agencies), crash schemes for Rural Employment, PIREA (Pilot Intensive Rural Employment Project); Agricultural Credit and Marketing Organizations (Rural Bankers).

For urban women several welfare extension projects were sponsored by the Central Social Welfare Board. Social Education for adult women was part of this programme along with organization of creches, bal-wadis, ante-natal and post-natal advisory service, infant - health centres, hobby clubs, vocational guidance and educational programmes for the youth.

In the urban industrial areas there are Worker's Education Programmes in operation since 1956. Some
of the voluntary organizations have also been active in offering literacy classes and conducting social education programmes – Mahila Kendras of Worker's Social Education Institute, Indore; Mahila Vikas Shala and Matru Vikas Kendras of Bombay City Social Education Committee; Centres for women's Education, Bikaner; are a few examples.

In addition many Government, and voluntary organizations were planning and conducting literacy classes, organizing social education programmes, conducting training courses for literacy workers, producing literacy materials such as primers, follow-up material for neo-literates, organising rural libraries, rural newspapers, etc. West Bengal Adult Education Association has produced primers especially for women and they also have follow-up books in home-science for neo-literates.

Most adult education programmes launched with the primary aim of eradication of illiteracy, including the National Adult Education Programme (1978), now named the SAEP, have emphasized the need for stress on women's adult education.
a) Results of These Efforts:

However, inspite of nearly five decades of efforts in the area (of varied nature), by government and voluntary organizations, the results have been far from satisfactory as is evident from the literacy rates of women today. (Tables: 4, 5).

Table No. 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Total Literate Population</th>
<th>Male Literates %</th>
<th>Female Literates %</th>
<th>Total Literate %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>683,810,051</td>
<td>237,991,992</td>
<td>46.714</td>
<td>24.88</td>
<td>36.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table No. 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Total Literate Population</th>
<th>Male Literates %</th>
<th>Female Literates %</th>
<th>Total Literate %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>62,693,898</td>
<td>29,695,721</td>
<td>58.39</td>
<td>35.08</td>
<td>47.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All India Ranking of Maharashtra - 9

The literacy rate of rural women is even more disheartening.

* Details in the Appendices
b) **Probable Reasons for Negative Results:**

A study of the various programmes reveals that the programmes changed from purely literacy type to social education including other types of information besides literacy training. Methodology, approaches, philosophies, media used, all went through a certain morphogenesis but the achievement cannot be said to be much. Even the Community Development Programmes have not been considered successful in terms of progress made by women in the society, their status and their attitudes towards their individual self, family life, community life and national life, proves Saraswati (1979) in her study.

The newly launched SAEP also seems to face the same fate – as is evident from the reports of the field workers – especially the supervisors and instructors in this programme. They report a general lack of motivation among the women folk to learn, which is a combined result of the fact that

---

*Sahasrabudhe, A. *"A Case Study of Training Programmes for Adult Education Functionaries conducted by SRC Maharashtra"; M. Phil Dissertation; 1983.
women traditionally view themselves as non-learners in area of formal learning of letters, society tends to perpetuate this belief of theirs, their position in the society, the many varied roles they play allowing them very little surplus time, and many other complex factors. Probably the ban imposed by Manu on women's education still perpetuates in the psyche of society at large, to some extent at least.

But this is not the only limiting factor to women's adult education. Several others could be cited:

3. Limitations to Women's Adult Education:

    A. Limitations Inherent to Literacy Programmes themselves:

i) Saraswati (1979) supports the view of many other experts that the literacy programmes were often in isolation of the educational programmes which accompanied them.

ii) The follow-up not being present or not being properly planned meant relapse into illiteracy.

iii) The same author (Saraswati, 1979) points out that
the primers were usually the only type of materials used for learning. Though social education programmes used audio-visual aids such as posters, flashcards, etc., the content of these were not related to the written language they learned in literacy classes. A lot of supportive material has been produced under the scheme of NAEP (SAEP). However as the interviews with the instructors reveal (in a later chapter), again the literacy primer is the focal point for all educational activities. Interviews to probe into the matter further revealed that this was due, in short to mismanagement, in distribution of material at the district level. However, this is discussed in detail in the later sections.

iv) The method used for teaching of literacy, in the earlier programmes often failed to take into account the experience of the adults, their system of logic, their ways of learning through association and correlation. They were taught in the manner children are taught in the school.

v) An earlier comparative study of the past adult education programmes, chiefly the Community Development Programme (C.D.P.), the Social Education
Programme (S.E.P.) and the State Adult Education Programme, by this investigator reveals amongst other things a few limitations common to all these and similar programmes. The relevant findings are as follows:

a) All 3, especially C. D. and SAEP were expected to be self-reliant programmes eventually. However, it has been observed that both came to rely heavily on Government finances, so much so that mis-management of these funds has been one of the main culprits for failure in most cases.

b) While importance of training of adequate number of functionaries was realized, some of the positive aspects of the earlier programmes like involvement of a lady health visitor, agricultural demonstrator and social education organizer were discarded in the ongoing SAEP - a definite disadvantage to the programme considering the virtual incompetence of a single instructor to deal with a varied range of subjects. This is especially true in the case of women's adult education. The experience of the Vardha District adult education programme cited later, indicates that the presence of a lady health visitor is invaluable to the success of women's
adult education. Hence they have achieved positive results by assigning the duties of an adult education instructor to community health workers, which is well within the framework of the existing adult education scheme.

c) Practical training formed a part of C.D. functionaries training. The feed-back from adult education instructors of the SAEP demands the same.

d) Major drawbacks were common to all the three programmes and these could prove hindering blocks to any programme whether meant for males or females. The drawbacks observed through study of relevant reports, evaluative studies and first-hand observations, and study by this researcher, indicate :-

1. Lack of inter-departmental coordination.
2. Mis-management of funds.
3. No motivation in terms of promotion and good payment to the functionaries.
5. Bureaucratic administration.
7. Educational orthodoxy though not in policy, but in practice.
8. Treatment to village level functionaries as odd job persons.

9. Methodology that attempts to direct and regiment learners – again not in policy but in practice.

10. Lack of proper attitude of functionaries.

A major outcome is an unmotivated functionary transmitting and adding to the already existing apathy on the part of the learners. And since the women’s group is always the deprived amongst deprived they are the worst affected by this cycle.

B. **Drawbacks of the SAEP:**

Since the target of the present study is the SAEP, the problems or drawbacks of this particular programme could be additionally highlighted. These are usually also common to other parallel adult education programmes. An investigation of these problems in another study by the present investigator (1983) revealed that these mainly fall into three distinct categories:–

i) Financial;

ii) Administrative;

iii) Motivational.
Some aspects of all the three, especially the first two, have already been mentioned in the discussion on a comparative study of the C.D., S.E., and the SAEP programmes.

These observations, some of which pertain to local situations, and others which are applicable to the whole nation, are based chiefly on the study of evaluation reports of the functionaries of SAEP in Maharashtra and is supported, as and when necessary, by studies and reports of other investigators and experts in the field.

a) **Financial Problems**:

i) **Misuse of Funds**:

Misuse of funds seems to be a major drawback of any programme in India - including SAEP. Shah (1980) points out that experience in planning during the past 25 years indicates that almost invariably the causes of failure have been associated with the human factor, and not inadequacy of funds. Programmes meant for the uplift of the poor have generally benefitted those sections of the society which have been in a position to siphon off, for their own advancement, the resources made available
for the former. The poor are not organized and worst still are not even aware of the rights to which they are entitled as citizens.

This opinion that the poor are ignorant of their rights may hold true, but only a certain extent. One must here take note of the experience of several other organizers of a number of voluntary agencies. They report the opposite. Two examples - one rural and the other urban - may illustrate the point.

1. The organizers of the CRHP, Jamkhed, who with the aim to discontinue the free aid given so far by missionaries, (often for purposes of evangelisation), and promoting a feeling of self-respect amongst the villagers, report complaints in terms of proclamation of rights such as - "If the Americans send us free food-aid, who are you to ask for payment in terms of money or work?"

2. A similar incident was reported by a church-based voluntary organisation, where a nutrition and health education programme failed totally, when a collective honorarium for the newly appointed educator was demanded from the beneficiaries. The honorarium was a sum of 50 paise per card issued to the
beneficiaries, against which they received food-aid every week. 

ii) Bureaucracy as a Hindering Block

The bureaucratic set-up too, inhibits timely sanctions and provisions of funds which leads to grave problems, and can certainly lead to the collapse of a programme which as it is, is delicately balanced on the narrow base of poorly motivated learners, educators and organizers.

Although in conception a revolutionary programme, the SAEP is said to have been reduced to a routine programme, because, "the financial wizards and administrators got the better of the educational visionaries". (Ibid). To overcome this defect, it has been suggested, that the grant-giving body should be bold enough to sanction programmes and projects whose objectives are similar to that of SAEP, but whose budgeting items are different than those given in the blue book. While remaining within the ceiling prescribed for the expenditure, the staffing pattern and the staff salary pattern could be changed as the present day honorarium, (as indicated by the present study too), is too meagre.
iii) Unfair Poor Payments to Functionaries:

It has been pointed out that a person whose main task is to give the poor a new zest for life, confidence in themselves, and joy in the pursuit of knowledge and skill, cannot be hired for a mere Rs. 50/-, when a peon in the same project is paid Rs. 200/-. A self-reliant and highly motivated person alone can instill confidence and self-reliance among the people who have for centuries been neglected and deprived of the barest minimum. A re-examination not only in the budgeting pattern for this programme, but also the management of funds and its release from bureaucratic mechanisms would serve as a life-saving as well as life-preserving drug for any programme of this nature.

iv) Use of the Programme to Reduce Unemployment:

The programme, according to its policy, is to be used, in part at least, to solve the problem of unemployment. And this aim seems to have been

---

* This has been raised in UGC - sponsored programme to Rs. 100/- p.m., as also in the SAEP. However, in the latter case the same remains for technical reasons.
attained as is evident from the data on the backgrounds and attitudes etc., of the supervisors of SAEP, collected by the present investigator for the afore mentioned study. This data indicated that many unemployed persons have been involved in the programme. The policy may prove to be of national interest as it does solve the unemployment problem. However, the policy also means serious drawbacks in relation to the main aims of SAEP:-

1. Treatment as an employment generation scheme, means that those functionaries thus employed are usually in the programme for monetary gains and not necessarily out of motivation. And it is common knowledge that an unmotivated functionary cannot be expected to take the desired interest, or motivate the community. He cannot pass on, what he himself does not possess.

2. The scheme in policy is to be used for employment generation. However the pay given to the field level functionaries is called an 'honorarium'. This can be said to be a mere play upon words which would deceive nobody. Thus there are innumerable complaints regarding the 'pay' being insufficient, in itself a proof enough of the fact that the
persons involved are involved because of the pay and not necessarily out of interest in the tedious work.

3. The unemployed youth view this job as a stepping stone or gap-filling employment between the state of unemployment and a better job,* which is only natural, as certainly no one can be expected to make a living out of this work (as it exists today), unless supported by some other source of income, or he/she is an idealist enough not to care for monetary aspects. Students often get involved in the programme because it is either compulsory, or it means a certain percentage of additional marks in their final totals, or a certificate which one hopes would be useful in later life for purposes of admissions to desired courses or employment.

* As part of another study by this researcher the supervisors of SAEP were administered a questionnaire wherein they were asked whether they would like to continue in this job or leave it as soon as a better opportunity presented itself. The respondents were almost unanimous in stating that they would certainly leave. These included even those who said that the work was interesting.
This brings up another question, whether so much expenditure on training of such individuals (who, unfortunately seem to form the majority, for a nationwide programme makes any sense? Would not the purpose be better served by local level, small scale programmes based on local needs, and supported by a few dedicated workers?

b) Administrative Problems:

"Adult education in India faces the problem of co-ordination, more markedly since the programme of functional literacy, integrated rural development and non-formal education have come to fore", mentions the Indian Journal Adult Education (IJAE) editorial (March, 1977). Earlier when the focus of adult education was chiefly on literacy and social education, the programmes were more or less within the province of the education department on the governmental side and educational institutions on the non-governmental side. Functional literacy, however called for contents with subject matter programmes at various stages. Integrated rural development called for the coordinated and cooperative functioning of the various developmental measures in the rural areas. Likewise non-formal adult edu-
cation measures implied that educationists and the 
 instructors had to seek the involvement of the 
 various media as well as various socio-economic 
 operations.

Co-ordinated measures tend to become a kind of 
 escapism from the ugly reality in administration 
 and management. The solution usually sought is 
 setting up of coordinating committees at various 
 levels. However, experience shows that all such 
 devices touch only the fringe of the problem. In 
 adult education the problems have been avoided 
 rather than faced. Ministries of education have 
 sought to have their own self-contained programmes, 
 which tended to fall into routine groove. The deduc-
 tion of the present investigator in the context of 
 her evaluative study of the training programmes and 
 trainees in adult education (Maharashtra), 1983, 
 obtains support from such observations as those 
 mentioned above. This deduction was that whatever 
 the name given, the programme tends to be a mere 
 literacy programme, an important observation from 
 the point of view of the present discussion, as 
 this itself is seen to be the single largest con-
 tributory factor towards failure of women's adult 
 education.
Motivational and Other Problems:

1. Psychological Aspects of Motivation to Learn:

The world conference on 'Literacy and Society' held in Rome (1962), has cited some reasons which prevent the illiterates from becoming literates and one can appreciate them better if one studies the principles of learning and teaching.

i) Theory of Adult Learning:

There are two main problems involved in teaching adult learners.

a) Motivation of learners and,

b) Evolving an appropriate technique of teaching.

There are also two groups of learners involved in such a programme:

a) The target group of adults themselves;

b) Adult educators who are going to teach the adults comprising personnel of various levels with different kinds of responsibilities.

Techniques for motivation of the trainees would have to be evolved and methods for their training found out. A study of certain facts about adult learning would make this endeavour easier.
Considerable theory on adult learning is available. Though often evolved in the developed countries, considerable thought has been given to the unique and concentrated nature of the problems in the under-developed countries. Thinkers like Ivan Illich and Paulo Freire have given radical direction to the thinking about adult learning. A history of the past few hundred years of the Indian scenario itself, reveals the use of adult psychology, effective use of popular media for attainment of goals ranging from political awakening*, social awakening¹, demystification of knowledge² and so on.

It should be noticed that various disciplines propagate different theories of adult learning. A detailed description of these would be valuable but it would be out of the scope of the present study. Therefore a summarized review of these various theories is presented in the following discussion.

* Work of Ramdas
1. Gadge Maharaj, Eknath, Tukaram
2. Dnyaneshwar

To quote a few salient examples from Maharāṣṭra itself.
ii) Definition of Learning:

Learning is said to have been achieved when behavior undergoes an incremental modification, which is more or less of a permanent nature. The pattern of behavior may include modification in knowledge, skills, attitudes, appreciation etc.

iii) Facilitating Effective Learning:

Psychological and behavioural scientific research shows the following regarding effective learning, indicating desirable strategies.

1. Learning is best when there is need to learn and this is felt by the learners. This is the single chief motivational factor for adult learning.

2. The learning experience has to be delightful and the learning atmosphere free of tensions. Such a delightful experience should ensure the return of the adult to such learning and a desire to repeat that experience of a richer and a more complicated variety.
3. The 'self' of the adult learner should be preserved and the choice to learn should be a personal choice, not an imposed decision. Thus the teacher's role would be only to guide the choice, not to make the choice.

4. One cannot really teach an adult, one can only facilitate learning by facilitating the perception of the learner. This perception is entirely need-based and therefore, once again calls for relevant education/training programmes.

5. Developmental psychology shows that there are various changes in the make-up of man, with advancing age. Different developmental tasks for different age-groups, have been identified. Learning takes place according to the demands of these tasks and therefore teaching has to be in consideration of this.

6. Environmental influences are known to inhibit as well as facilitate learning, thus implying that the best use be made of environmental influences, or building up a programme in view of the environmental influences.
7. The S-O-R formula of learning (Stimulus-Organism-Response) is operational in adult learning too, but the 'O' assumes great importance and gets stronger with advancing age. The 'O' manifests itself in the form of perception.

8. Existence of Load : Power ratio with a 'Margin', has also been suggested. This is the ratio of Demands on self : Resources available, with a Margin of the excess of the ratio. Development of a better Margin by better utilization of power and reduction of load would facilitate better learning.

9. There are critical periods when life exerts stress, calling for adaptations, thus making, most meaningful learning possible at these junctures. Commitment also increases and changes with age. Learning is better in youth due to the feeling of life lying ahead, (besides physical factors such as energy).

10. Adults view themselves as non-learners especially the women, and this acts as a negative force of any teaching-learning situation.

11. The sense of discovery which is instrumental in child-based learning is lost with advancing age and thus motivation to learn is hampered. Fostering this sense of a discovery or re-building would
certainly aid the adult education programme a great deal.

12. The degree of motivation to learn in adult learning depends on the goal the concerned adult sets for himself while engaging in a learning activity. Thus, the need for the adult to see the learning as leading to an important goal for self-betterment is indicated and its implications to the trainer are obvious.

13. Andragogy - the science of adult teaching/learning points out that:

a) The individual develops a need to be perceived as self-directing and therefore if treated as a child, resentment would be the result.

b) As pointed out earlier, experience increases with age and therefore:

i) there is a greater need for experimental techniques with involvement of learner rather than traditional transmital techniques;

ii) whenever the adult's experiences are ignored, he feels that he is ignored and, therefore, rejects learning altogether;
iii) experience leads to widening individual differences which complicate the task of adult educators, especially in a mixed group of learners.

c) Andrology also points out towards problem-centred orientation in learning.

14. Effectiveness of learning is enhanced by timely and prompt feedback.

iv) Lack of Motivation to Learn in the Light of Theories of Adult Learning:

In the light of these theories one can review the reasons cited by the world conference in Rome (1962), which prevent illiterates from becoming literates. These are:

1. The environment of the illiterate adult does not impress on him the need of literacy for individual growth.

2. The adult does not have the necessary time and energy, as he has to toil round the clock for learning to support his livelihood.

3. The adult feels that he is too old to learn to read and write.
4. He feels shy to attend the literacy classes, as he has the fear of being ridiculed by society.

5. Social customs and traditions prevent the adults from attending literacy classes.

These universal phenomena are applicable wholly to the Indian adult education scene, and the picture sometimes looks so bleak that it is not very rare to find pessimistic views like 'illiteracy can never be eradicated from India' being expressed in journals of education (M. Ahmed, 1977). The reasons given for such pessimistic views are, that India does not have the necessary psychological atmosphere to generate enough motivation among the illiterate adults, so that the adult keeps coming to the centre for adult education for a sufficiently long period of time, about a year or 400 to 500 hours, to acquire literacy. This should not have applied to the SAEP, as the course was not meant to be a literacy course in principle. However, in practice the situation is almost entirely opposite.

2. **The Time Factor:**

The illiterate often belong to the poorer sections
of the society. They are so busy in earning a livelihood that there is little time left 'to go for literacy'. Agricultural operations keep them busy almost throughout the day, throughout the year. During the slack season many may leave their villages in search of odd jobs. Those in the dairy business return late and are, by that time dog-tired. Those in the cattle buying and selling business move with the cattle. During the rains few are willing to move out of their houses. At this juncture one may recall the description of a woman's daily work-load, described earlier, and the reasons for her disinterest become even more evident. Not only is she tired due to heavy, round-the-clock work, poor nutrition and inadequate health care, she also has no time for literacy classes, having had to work more than 15-16 hours a day.

The evaluation of the SAEP, done at field level, reinforces this fact. Hence the necessity to re-organize classes in a different, more suitable form is indicated. Classes at work-sites would probably be more welcome, though with its own limitations. In the case of women, more meaningful learning may be possible through discussions in
informal groups, door-step conversations or even during gossip-sessions (ideally at places where women go with their laundry, and tend to relax a bit), steered in the right direction by a trained full-time animator.

Whatever the case, at least a non-formal approach so publicised in the SAEP and in fashion generally, should guarantee freedom of choice of organizing classes as per the wish and convenience of the learners and the instructor/ animator/educator.

This is especially true in view of the fact that, even during the available free time, people would find watching the cinema or simply sitting together, and discussing community affairs, more alluring than the hard jobs of learning literacy skills. The fact could be put to use by the planners of SAEP classes or similar adult education classes, who can train animators to be group leaders in such discussions. Alternatively, group leaders may be selected for the post of instructors. (Like those selected - to some extent in the CRS and CRHP projects described latter). Such animators do not have to be teachers at all. They could be just the discussion leaders, steering the discussions in the
desired direction, towards the desired goal. This is supportive to theory of adult learning discussed earlier.

As proved by the complaints regarding surprise visits to non-functioning adult-education classes, and observations made by several researchers, it becomes worthwhile questioning not only the whole approach but the worthiness of spending crores of rupees and a huge national effort on a programme that brings in so little positive result.

3. Need for Community Oriented Programmes:

One also has to take into account that the learners are people and not an undifferentiated mass. Each is a unique person. As groups they have a wide variety of interests and preferences, life-styles and hopes, different levels of deprivation and affluence. They are given to cultural and emotional expression through a vast range of differing dialects, routines and rituals. This was well reflected in the evaluation reports, especially of the supervisors of SAEP, who expressed contrasting opinions about their likes and dislikes regarding the various components of their training programmes.*

4. Disparities in the State-wise Literacy Rates —

Plausible Reasons —

Though a nation-wide programme, there have always been disparities in the rates of literacy of different regions in India.* This has been attributed to several quantitative and qualitative factors in a study conducted by J.B.G. Tilak (1978). Apart from differences in economic and socio-demographic characteristics, historical legacies, administrative capabilities and political effectiveness, which differ across states and shape the public policy differently in different regions in a federal system like ours, they also account for striking inequalities in the rates of literacy. The qualitative factors as revealed in the study are: Tamilnadu's high performance in literacy owes its credit to the British Colony in Madras Presidency. Similar is the case with Maharashtra and West Bengal.

However, the top performance of Kerala in literacy cannot be attributed to the same, since unlike Madras, Kerala was composed of the princely

* Detailed Table in Appendices.
states of Travancore and Cochin. Rudolph and Rudolph (1969) credit, 'a variety of early penetration going back to the pre-Christian era ...'.

The factors that explain the Punjab’s high level of literacy can again be traced back to history, as Punjab has been penetrated by cultural, commercial and military forces from the times before Alexander.

The same history according to Tilak (Ibid), reveals that the states belonging to middle, low and very low levels were not subjected to penetration from outside either cultural, commercial or military.

As it is well known, the political air in Kerala, Tamilnadu, Maharashtra, West Bengal etc., was also very much responsible for the high levels of literacy in those states (J.B.G. Tilak (1978)).

(See Table No. 6).

(N.B.: The figure in this table may not entirely tally with those given by the Census Table. However these are part of the study by J.B.G. Tilak and hence prescribed as such).
### Table No. 6

**Levels of Literacy in India (J.B.G. Tilak)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Very Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chandigarh</td>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>Bihar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61.6%</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>W. Bengal</td>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>Jammu Kashmir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>Harayana</td>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>Dadra &amp; Nagar Haveli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56.0%</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pondicherry</td>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td></td>
<td>NEFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.0%</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goa, Daman Div</td>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.8%</td>
<td>31.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laccadives &amp; Minicoy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andaman &amp; Nicobar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamilnadu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujrathe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. **The Importance of Political Will to Succeed:**

The importance of a firm political will for success of any programme is obvious. In India, rulers do pledge a strong political will for programmes of social upliftment like SAEP. This however manifests itself as an empty promise with innumerable limiting factors like delays, complexities, inadequacies of payments and above all redtapisim in management, as is evident from the study of the functionaries, their training, their attitudes, field level training programmes, the situation studied by ex-officials of the SRC, Maharashtra and many similar studies. The evident malfunctioning is often covered up under the garb of the principle of democracy.

This brings out a further problem: it is so easy to misuse democracy or misunderstand its implications, that it can easily be used to cover up faults in a programme, or non-performance of persons involved. Under democratic principles, it is

---

2. Discussed in a later chapter.
difficult for the authorities to manage the pro-
gramme, unless they are skilled enough to maintain
the delicate balance of discipline and democracy,
discipline and flexibility, and yet be able to
demand results.

6. **Socio-Political Problems and Lack of
   Motivation to Learn**

Dube (1980), points out some socio-political pro-
blems which complicate matters. The reasons for the
same have been suggested to be rooted in history:
A vast number of illiterates and semi-literates
have lived in India for centuries, alongside a
highly literate, articulate and reflective mini-
ority. This has been a fact of life which people by
and large appeared to have accepted. The kind of
education that developed in India during the Bri-
tish rule and emerged as the dominant system in
free India, emphasized the role of education as an
avenue to new economic opportunity and social sta-
tus. The acquisition of formal qualifications —
certificates, diplomas, degrees — became more
important than learning. Those whose lives moved
within the grooves set by tradition never felt a
strong need for education; in fact many were afraid of its destabilizing consequences. Those who pursued new economic opportunities and branched off into non-traditional professions and vocations tended to function as a social category apart, losing most of their organised links with their parent society. The greater majority clung to the precarious security provided by tradition, whether it offered bare basic subsistence or a little more. Education posed threats to such a society and there emerged stereotypes like "education makes children disobedient", and more relevant to the present study, "with attainment of literacy women become self-willed", (a taboo in a society where a woman is considered subservient to man). The very idea of an adult trying to read and write was ridiculed. An adult who persists in his attempt to learn such skills is offered few or no opportunities; exceptions were a few drives, campaigns of literacy - which were at best half-hearted and uninspired efforts with too small a duration. This, coupled with the irrelevance of the literacy programmes to life, improper methods of teaching etc., was enough to do a long-lasting
damage in terms of a permanent loss of interest in adult education.

C. Special Problems of Women's Literacy and/or Literacy Programmes:

In continuation of the above discussion, it may be observed that while on the one hand tradition/culture would rather keep the women uneducated for the fear of educated women eventually dominating men, on the other hand women view themselves as non-learners where formal learning of letters is concerned.

As already mentioned they are also too busy in their daily chores to find time for learning anything—especially that which they are not interested in. In addition, they lack the necessary energy in view of their generally poor nutritional status and below average health conditions. Added to this are other problems reported by the field level and other functionaries of adult education.* These include:

* Study reported in Chapter IV and earlier research (1983) by the same investigator.
1. **Inconvenience of Time**—The late night classes are inconvenient to women, reportedly from the point of view of—

a) **Safety**: It has been reported, that some destructive elements in the society are still given to according the same treatment to any woman trying to educate herself that was accorded to Smt. Savitribai Phule when she attempted to educate women.* The field workers report that this is usually for two chief reasons:

i) Traditionalists do not like women to be educated;

ii) The local, self-appointed, leaders view the adult educators as some sort of threat to their power—as the instructor having been trained to discuss various problems, if functions to the expected capacity, automatically becomes the leader of people, in action, for anything concerned with the community.

Added to this is the element of those members of

* History of women's education shows that Smt. S. Phule a pioneer in women's education — was abused by traditionalists when on her way to perform her duties related to women's education.
the society who consider it their privilege to enjoy at the expense of women - so the women joining the adult education centre are treated with nasty comments, stone-throwing, abuses, chasing etc.

All this means that those few members of the community, who willingly agree to women's adult education, refuse to send the women-folk belonging to their families to such centres or the women themselves refuse to go.

What applies to the learners, applies to women instructors as well. Thus we have fewer female instructors and some of these have been successful in solving their problem of security only because they escorted their learners to and from home every day and/or conducted classes, in their own houses and/or themselves were escorted by some male member of their own family. (This was especially seen in Vardha District SAEP, where the number of women's classes and women instructors is very large).

b) Other Time Related Aspects:

The classes are often held in the night or late in
the evening. This poses additional problems; besides being inconvenient from the point of view of safety as shown earlier:

i) If the classes are held in late evening, there is additional resistance from the family because this is the time the men-folk return home and the women are supposed to cook and serve them as they complain of exhaustion — regardless of the fact that the women have also been working for the same number of hours, besides looking after the house.

ii) If the men's classes are also held at the same time, obviously the woman is expected to miss her class.

iii) It is also the time when she has to put her children to sleep and unless someone is cooperative enough to take over this duty it is impossible for her to leave the house.

iv) Solving this problem by holding the classes in the afternoon or sometime during the day limits the service to those who are free during that time. This means a large section of those really in need of adult education are left out.
2. Use of Incorrect Motivational Tactics:

Often a wrong approach is used to motivate women learners. They are told that the benefit of coming to the adult education class would be being able to put down their signatures on paper. The present researcher has had the opportunity to speak to hundreds of instructors - male and female, supervisors, to other staff as well as some learners and it was found that not a single one really understood the meaning of learning to sign. To all whom this investigator spoke to about the matter* said that signing means putting one's name down on paper, and for this one had to learn the relevant alphabets/script.

Not a single educator was able to understand, leave alone explain, the fact that signing a document meant reading, understanding and then putting down one's name as a symbol indicating that one has read the document, understood the matter and possibly agrees to what is said in it. Otherwise, a signature is synonymous with a thumb impression.

* A single question was asked - "What do you understand by learning to sign?"
This single simple fact not having been understood probably at the trainer level, it was taken for granted that the meaning of the symbol is understood - has done much damage, in the opinion of this investigator, to women's adult education. What happens as a result of this situation is that the few motivated women learners demand that the first thing they want to learn is to sign their names. This becomes their single felt-need - though often a forced felt-need. Now teaching to write their names to a whole class would mean that a number of letters/alphabets, with vowels, consonants and conjuncts have to be introduced at the same time - almost against any principle of teaching generally and adult teaching particularly. Once the animator has used this carrot as the motivational instrument, the clientele would at best take only half-hearted interest in any other topics he/she tries to discuss. Their concentration is on the goal of learning to sign. The animator is forced to make his class a literacy class and field research has shown that often he has to resort to school-type methods for alphabet teaching.
Once the ladies learn to sign their names - their goal is achieved and therefore they start questioning as to why they should keep on going to the adult education classes. Since to them signing has meant putting down their names on paper - literacy learning and importance of literacy ends at this point.

3. **Location of the Centre**

Another problem typical to women learners has been reported by many instructors and supervisors of adult education:

Often the most convenient place to hold classes is the village temple. Usually this is a Maruti temple. Maruti is considered a bachelor God, and therefore female learners have been found to refuse to enter such temples.

Having the classes in temples poses another special problem for women. During their menstrual periods, women never enter temples. Additionally some women customarily are expected to remain secluded untouched by anybody during this period, every month.

Thus there is a constant change in nature of attendance of the class. This makes the task difficult.
for the educator who may, have to repeat lessons for such absentees when they attend next, meaning boredom to others.

Also in the 15 - 35 age group - the target group of SAEP - the likelihood of the clientele having young children, pregnancies and deliveries is greater. This also accounts for greater absenteeism and higher drop-out rate.

4. **Solving the Problem**

The question therefore arises as to under the circumstances how to motivate women learners to attend adult education classes or more important still become literate.

Asha Dixit* (1979), suggests among other things the following to motivate women to become literate:

1. The syllabus of the course should be need based.
2. Rapport building by house to house contact is invaluable.

---

* Dixit Asha, "Women's Illiteracy and Problem of Motivation", Problems of Women's Literacy, Mysore 1979, pg. 66.
3. Recreational programmes like Bhajans, etc., are very important to women's literacy classes.*

4. The time and place for a class should be convenient to the clientele.

5. Women teachers, preferably from the same community, are important positive addition to any programme.

6. Adequate funds are important.

7. Supportive programmes like nutrition, ICDS etc., help positively.

* An experience of the present researcher may be cited in this connection. The SRC (Maharashtra) conducted a few adult education classes in Pune. One centre in the in the Hanumannagar slum almost closed down for the same reason - women said now that they could sign their names and more knowledge of literacy skills was unnecessary. Enquiries with the instructor revealed that she had never made it a literacy class though an accidental discovery proved otherwise. She was asked to stop all literacy work, and since it was the festival season, to invite all women regularly to sing their traditional songs. They were to be told that SRC would like to make a collection of such folk-songs. This approach worked and the classes were resumed once again in full earnest.
A) Use of the Knowledge of Principles of Adult Learning and Androecogy:

Another way to solve the problem of motivation could be based on the adult learning theories described earlier in this chapter.

a. Need-Based Programme:—

The first theory mentioned therein, says that the learning to be successful should be need-based, and still better, the need should be the 'felt need' of the learner. Therefore the single question one may ask is what do the learners want to learn?

The women having realized their role to be that of an eternal mother, and tradition having fostered this belief, it would be safe to assume that women are interested in and feel the need to learn about mothercraft.

Carl Rogers (1977) states: 'A person learns significantly only those things which he perceives as being involved in maintenance of,* or enhancement of the structure of 'self'. This to an extent explains the willingness of females to learn about

* This has been re-emphasized by Jessie Craig.
health - their own (structure of self), their children (who are viewed as extensions of/projections of oneself).

The third theory of learning tells us to preserve the 'self' of the adult learner making the learning a personal choice. The next theory emphasizes the need to avoid teaching and only facilitate perception of the learner which is entirely need-based.

b. The theory of better utilization of the power and development of a better margin in the ratio of demands on self: resources available, Load: power, is especially relevant to women's adult education. It is obvious from her living conditions that the demands on the self are tremendous while the resources available minimal. So the woman it can be assumed would welcome anything to reduce her load and increase her power. Identification of the load and power therefore are critical to women's adult education.

From these theories, considering her role in the family as described earlier, and her perception of
the same, one may conclude that an Indian woman's life revolves around her children and home which she takes care of in her capacity as a 'mother'. Agricultural and auxilliary operations, marketing etc., are to her, all extended functions of this role. While the resultant 'load' is tremendous, the resources available (power) are minimal. She would certainly welcome augmentation of her 'Power'.

c. Theory of Learning During Critical Periods:

Or Problem Centred Programme:

The theory of 'Critical Periods' (theory 9) says, that there are critical periods in the lives of individuals when life exerts stress conditions. At this juncture the most meaningful learning takes place. The stress situation for the target group of women learners of SAEP (who are in the age-group of 15 - 35 years) is bearing children, delivering them and rearing them. Naturally though they view themselves as non-learners (theory 10), if the goal of learning coincides with the need of this 'critical' period and helps them to augment their 'Power' the learning could be very good (goal directed learning is better - theory 12). The
theory of andrology (theory 13) which recommends problem-centred education for all adult teaching as the best mode of adult education, supports the above mentioned.

Not only is the fostering of their interest in motherhood to achieve goals of literacy supported by theories as above, practical experience of many a field worker proves that women are most receptive to, and also demand knowledge pertaining to mothercraft in general and children's and their own welfare in particular.

In addition to the development of a model, designed with due regard to the principles of adult psychology as described in the foregoing paragraphs, Jessie Craig's suggestions may prove useful:

i) Useful need-based knowledge that is immediately applicable is more meaningful to adult learners;

ii) In every community there are leaders who are first to change. These leaders should be identified.

iii) Removal of wrong concepts first is important.

iv) Continued reinforcement (Giffit and co-authors- (1972) and reinforcement through other workers like the nurse is useful.
Why is mothercraft so important to women?

It would be interesting to investigate briefly why this is so:

Motherhood to a woman means conceiving, giving birth to the child, nurturing him through his childhood and seeing him/her well settled in life. The role is extended to all children of the family and often even the neighbourhood. The woman is brought up in preparation for this role, and she continues with it till her death. (Probably many a conflict between the mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law stems out of this reluctance to give up mothering). The role commences as surrogate mothers to the younger siblings and continues till death in the capacity of mother, grand-mother, great-grand-mother, aunt etc. The girls are encouraged to play with dolls assuming the roles of a mother. A girl in our society is in fact nurtured to believe that motherhood is her ultimate goal in life. As already pointed out, it is also synonymous to elevation of her position in the family and society. She is brought up to be a mother, never an individual.
Dr. R. C. Dhere (1978), while tracing the roots of the 'Shakti Cult' and the tradition of 'Devi Upasana' in India, states that, "man first saw and deemed fit to worship Godliness in the form of woman whom he looked upon as the symbol of procreation".

The worship took many forms, and symbolism was its major part. A study of ancient sculpture, reveals Dhere, indicates the symbol of this worship in a form epitomizing her role of procreation. Though a study of accompanying literature, the legends, myths etc., surrounding the various ancient places of Godess-worship in some states of India, proves Dhere in his study (1978), the woman was looked upon as an independent entity, whose chief role was motherhood. While attempts were made to put her into bondage of marriage and relationship as the norms of the society changed, she always emerged independent, accepting temporary relationships for the sole purpose of procreation. Dhere in this connection, cites several stories and rituals which indicate that the temples of male and female folk-

* Dhere R. C. "Lajjagauri" (Marathi), 1978; pg. 14.
idols, widely worshiped for centuries in Mahara-
shtra, remain separate. So 'Rakhumai' supposedly
the 'wife' of 'Vithoba' stays in a separate temple,
and 'Yamai' the wife of 'Jyotiba', refuses to
marry him by closing her doors on him, in an annual
ritual performed to this day*.

The above description offers a possible explanation
for the traditional nature of the fact that women
consider their role as mothers-progenitresses, as
their most important role in society.

Historically, right through the epic period too,
woman's role as a home-maker and mother has been
emphasized. Any education, if recommended, was
with these roles as its focal point. Her role as
mother was glorified, she was considered the crea-
tor, educator and the greatest preceptor of her
children in terms of her race and society.

Right from Manu who spelt out: "To be mothers
were the women created", to Vivekananda¹, there
always has been an emphasis on her role as the mother.

---

* Dhere R. C.; 'Lajlagauri'; (Marathi); (1973); pg. 140.

¹ "An ideal women in India is a mother first and
mother last ....."
Thus brain-washed to believe their sole purpose of being as performance of motherly duties, the Indian woman seems naturally inclined to make this role a success and probably therefore is motivated to learn about mothering rather than learn to read and write - the latter not being considered the traditional part of her duties. To her learning to read and write is only important to the extent it would aid her in child-rearing.

This weakness of the woman if tapped and channelled would provide an important break-through in women's adult education.

D) The Problem of Inavailability of Suitable Instructors:

Recalling what was described earlier (in connection with the problems of adult education generally), adult education though planned to be comprehensive in nature, need-based and flexible in its approach, largely remains a literacy programme. Among other reasons for this limitation is the fact that the field level adult educator is largely incapable of performing a simultaneous duty of a literacy teacher and an educator of topics ranging from health to agriculture, political and social awareness to
veterinary science. Being poorly paid the motivation level is low. Basically though expected to be educated up to the school-leaving examination, it is not rare to have instructors whose educational qualifications are limited to the fourth standard. Reportedly it is impossible to get instructors who are more educated especially in the tribal areas, backward areas and of course the problem is augmented when women instructors have to be appointed. However, this problem, in the case of women’s centres, is not limited to the backward or tribal areas – where it has been reported that even a fourth standard qualification is rare to find. Whether or not the basic education expected really means anything in terms of a knowledge-bank aiding the complex nature of educational duties expected of the instructors is another story – firstly because the quality of this basic education is questionable and secondly the instructors have usually left this education far behind them with advancing age.

Being poorly paid, the motivational level is also low. The educator with all her difficulties including lack of support in terms of teaching aids,
information, expert support, prefers the easy way out and converts her adult 'education centre' into an adult 'literacy class' leading to poor attendance and possible failure * more so in case of women's centres.

2.5

The Emerging Model to Better the Situation:

From the discussion so far two facts emerge clearly:

1. Women's adult education is a problem area and the reasons for its poor functioning is chiefly the lack of motivation amongst female learners as they traditionally view themselves as non-learners of literacy skills.

2. Women however are interested in knowledge regarding 'mother craft', as they view themselves as eternal mothers.

The obvious scheme therefore to solve the problem of lack of motivation would be using their interest in mother-craft and then slowly moving towards allied literacy skills.

There could be two ways of doing this:

i) Specially training the instructors of women's centres in knowledge and skills pertaining to 'mother-craft'. On the negative side this would mean an added burden to the instructor; but on the positive side it could mean limiting his/her role to specialised skills of mothercraft and literacy.

ii) The second mode could be utilizing the already existing trained personnel in this area, for the purpose, in an attempt to integrate the activities. Ideally this could mean that the functionaries (field level) of adult education, agriculture, health, animal husbandry, etc., function as a team rather than performing their duties in an isolated fashion to suit the administrative set-up which is difficult to coordinate. Of course this would be highly ambitious, considering that many schemes seeking solutions to rural/urban problems tend to function at a lower than expected level.

* The same scheme could be used for other areas of adult education. E.g. After concentrating on mothercraft + literacy, the next area could be agriculture and literacy. Thus the problem of his making the centre a literacy class for lack of skills could be solved.
due to their failure to recognize the true problems of the clientele and the comprehensive nature of the solution to the same ought to have. Thus an agricultural worker fails to see the relationship of a crop-failure with the nutritional status of the family; the health worker fails to recognize this as a possible cause of susceptibility to infections; or the adult educator does not understand this cycle of crop-failure leading to decreased buying power and/or malnutrition as the cause of disinterest or easy fatigue of his students.

Thus while a comprehensive programme could solve the problem best, limiting oneself to the scope of the present study, one may explore integration of mother-craft training and adult education.

The first task therefore would be to find out the existing resources for such training as often newer programmes are launched seeking new resources when the existing resources go unnoticed.

The first obvious resource base for mothercraft education would be the health sector. The health schemes of the government where much stress has
been laid on preventive measures and health of the vulnerable sections of the population - chiefly women and children, therefore would be the first resource base. The field level health worker could work with the adult educator to achieve the goal of literacy besides achieving his own goal of health education. Health education forms a major part of all preventive as well as curative aspects of any health scheme whether conducted by the government or by the voluntary agencies.

It is true that the health educator/visitor too is an underprivileged person like his counter-part in the adult education programme. Though trained to stress the educational aspect of health care, studies show, that he often ends up as a substitute doctor, dishing out pills or as an odd-job man for the medical professional when he/she visits the area concerned. All the same he/she is an important resource base for mother-craft education.

Various schemes, with specified target groups, also deal with mother-craft education. In the following chapter these are reviewed in order to clarify
the resource base for the model to be tested.

In this study therefore options would be kept open. Wherever the resources are available, especially in the form of health educators - either belonging to a government, semi-government scheme or voluntary agencies, the first attempt would be to integrate their work with that of adult education within the scope of this study. Wherever this fails, or such a resource base is not available, the adult educator would be intensively trained in mother-craft education. Being an action research the flexible approach should be possible.
CHAPTER THREE

Relevant Programmes of Health and Adult Education:
-A Review-

EPITOME

This chapter has been divided into three parts as under:

Part A outlines the significance and scope of health education. It describes the health education scheme of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, highlighting the aspect of training. The SAEP (NAEP) is also briefly sketched to serve as reference.

Part B discusses a few selected schemes aimed at improving the conditions of women and children. Such schemes (Govt. and voluntary) are innumerable. Most of them have a planned component of education. In the context of the present study, a review of such schemes would be invaluable as these would enlighten the investigator on available resources and help in avoiding the possible pitfalls. Thus a few existing schemes have been reviewed in this part of the chapter, although with a limitation, that due to obvious constraints all available schemes could not be covered here.
in totality, only the absolutely relevant aspects aiding the goal of model-plan development, have been described. The data is primarily based on published and unpublished reports of the projects.

Part C of this chapter is devoted to in-depth case studies of two relevant projects where the concepts discussed in this thesis, especially the importance of: 'the felt need', 'community participation', and 'integrated approach', have been successfully translated into practice. The training aspects of these two schemes have been compared with that of the existing adult education and health education schemes to provide indicators for model development.