CHAPTER 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY.
The state of Madhya Pradesh is said to be one of the backward states of the country. The scheduled tribes and the scheduled castes, which are noted for their educational as well as socio-economic backwardness, form about 33.6 percent of its population. Educational development in the region of Mahakoshal which formerly formed a part of the Central Provinces and Berar, followed the broad pattern of the British India, where the educational work was started by Christian missionaries and taken up by state and private agencies. The remaining areas, are former princely states where the education of masses was almost neglected in the pre-independence period. This is reflected in the poor literacy figure.

According to census report of 1961, the percentage of literacy in the state was only 17.11. The general literacy rate in our state was 171 per 1000. Out of which 138 were men and 33 women. The rural literacy rate was 127 and urban literacy rate was 435 per 1000 inhabitants. The census report of 1971 reveals that the total number of literates in the state are 9,214,643. Out of which 7,023,743 men and 2,190,900 women are literate. The state has 22.12% literacy and separately 32.76% male and 10.34% female literacy. This poor percentage of literacy makes the whole state educationally backward.

It is evident that the percentage of literacy is

*Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India New Delhi: (INDIA-1971-72) p 65.*
lower in rural areas and it is much lower in the case of rural women literacy. Literacy enables people to play their roles in society much better. It provides them a tool to acquaint themselves with their social, economic and political environment. An understanding of environment helps in better adjustment to the society. Hence literacy becomes important in the social perspective. Literacy is an important part of social education which is a wider term. In order to assess the role of social education in developing the rural societies we may undertake a normative survey of the conditions in Madhya Pradesh.

A normative survey provides background of ideas and data from which more refined and controlled study is made. In the present study the survey approach fits appropriately into the total research scheme. Considerable care was taken in the formulation of the problem, and in the determination of the best procedures for attacking the problem.

The investigation is mainly based on the responses of District Panchayat and welfare Officers of Madhya Pradesh who initiate and execute the different programmes of social education for rural development. It was therefore advisable to address a questionnaire to them. Their responses have been sought with the following two objectives:

(1) To know what programmes of social education have been adopted for rural development.

(2) To know the degree of achievement of the adopted programmes of social education.

The general procedure followed is indicated below:
INTERVIEW.

Interviews were sought with Dy. Director Panchayat and social welfare in-charge of social education scheme at Bhopal, two district Panchayat and Welfare Officers, four ex-block development officers and four Panchayat and social education organisers for securing information which is known only to them and can not be gathered from any other reliable sources. These officers except Dy. Director Panchayat and social welfare, were selected randomly for the purpose of interview.

In order to prepare the interview schedule the investigator read about the programmes of social education running in the state and framed items and questions keeping studily in view the objectives of his research. It also helped to compare the responses of various persons with whom the interviews were sought. Before approaching these persons an information about their temperament, interest, sociability and free time was obtained. The time of interview was fixed suitting their convenience.

In order to get useful information from the interview it was desirable to establish rapport with the persons interviewed. This was done by starting general discussion in which most of the talking was done by the person himself. When he went estray a question or two from the interviewer brought him back to the real topic under discussion. When it was found that the person has not much more to say the
investigator directed discussion on the subject of his research. This brought forth the reactions, experiences and the feelings of the respondents on the research problem and helped in arranging at points for data collection. Certain conclusions which could be drawn from these interviews are given below:

(1) The state government decides the plan and programmes of social education and prepares guidelines in the light of the five-year plans and according to the requirements of the existing situation in the state. These are sent to the Directorate of Panchayat and welfare for the effective implementation in rural and urban areas.

(2) The Directorate Panchayat and Welfare delivers the whole scheme of social education in the hands of District Panchayat and Welfare Officers, who, with the help of Panchayat and social education organisers, Gram Sevaks and Gram Sevikas, operators, primary school teachers, members of Panchayat samities and many other workers at district and block levels execute the different programmes. The work at various levels is supervised and controlled by the District Panchayat and welfare officers.

(3) Panchayat and welfare officers adopted these programmes in the light of requirements of economic, social, health and recreational development and political awakening among rural masses.

(4) The degree of achievement of adopted programmes differs
from district to district and thereby the impact of social education on community life would also differ from district to district.

(5) A questionnaire should be framed and sent to all the District Panchayat and Welfare Officers of Madhya Pradesh, who are the persons holding the key post in the district for social education and rural development in order to find out their free and frank opinions. On the basis of these, inferences could be drawn and worthwhile suggestions could be made.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

The investigator prepared the questionnaire on the basis of the interviews to know about the role of social education programmes adopted for economic, health and recreational development and social and political awakening in rural areas and to assess the impact of social education on community life. He made the survey objectives clear in the first questionnaire to the respondents so that the communication might be acute. The questionnaire was sent to four Panchayat and welfare officers of Madhya Pradesh for pre-testing. Many programmes of social education considered important in the interviews were mentioned in the first questionnaire for their guidance and illustration. They were requested to put a check mark (✓) against those programmes of social education which have been adopted in the rural areas and to list those new programmes which they considered necessary for the rural development.
On pre-testing of the questionnaire it was found that certain programmes about which questions were asked, were not adopted by the districts and certain questions could not be clearly understood by the respondents. Questions on such programmes and such questions those could not be understood were deleted. The new programmes listed by respondents were included and the questionnaire was finalised, printed and sent to all the 43 district Panchayat and welfare officers in the state. The questionnaire was framed under seven broad headings and each heading was named under different sections.

Section "A" attempts to collect general information with regard to the total rural population, rural literacy percentage among men and women, number of adult classes conducted in rural areas and their enrollment.

Section "B" was concerned with the economic development and included eleven questions on activities of the social education programmes to improve the economic status of the population in as much as they helped in earning more.

Section "C" consists of two parts. One on health and hygiene and another on development of recreational activities. The first part contains questions on programmes to improve public health and rural sanitation as well as programmes for enhancement of physical welfare of the people. The second part dealing with recreational programmes seeks to collect information about fifteen cultural activities, seventeen
literary activities and twelve creative activities in arts and crafts.

Section "D" is meant to collect the information about the social development of the people which is brought about by welfare activities, activities concerning removal of social evils and activities concerning development of social virtues. The welfare activities concerned mostly with the welfare of women, children, tribal and advasis population and backward classes. The number of activities under it are seven. Activities regarding removal of social evils are result of six programmes of social education and seek to remove the evils of drinking, caste-system, child marriage, fraction, tension, superstitions and the like. Information regarding development of social virtues through social education scheme is sought through nine questions on programmes which may enable the villagers to lead a happier, fuller, richer and more prosperous life as an individual and as a member of a well integrated society.

Section "E" is concerned with the political awakening among the rural masses. Fifteen programmes of social education which deal with citizenship and enlightenment were listed in this section and questions from them have been asked.

Section "F" seeks to find out the impact of social education on community life in rural areas. For facility of knowing the total impact, the items have been divided under four broad heads which concerned with (1) Economic development
(2) Health and recreational development (3) social development and (4) political awakening.

Section "G" deals with the finance of community centre and the training programmes of workers. An enquiry has been made into the sources of expenditure incurred in running programmes of social education. Questions have been put about the training of workers at the village, the block, the district and the state levels. This accounts for 24 items in the questionnaire.

If, there are certain programmes about which questions could not be included in the questionnaire, opportunities have been provided to the respondents to write them out under the item 'ANY OTHER' which has been generally provided at the end of each section and sub-section. The questions on the programmes were arranged in such sequence which made it easy for the respondent to reply and caused no confusion to him while going through the questionnaire.

Rating scale:

In order to find out the opinions of District Panchayat and welfare officers about the programmes of social education and the degree of achievement in them a five point rating scale has been prepared. They had to check one of the five points which are no. (1) Very high (2) High (3) Average (4) Low and (5) Very low, considering the degree of achievement of each programme.

In order to show which particular programme was adopted
in a district, they were required to check first the programme, if it was adopted and then to check its achievement on the proposed five point scale.

**Distribution of the questionnaire:**

The investigator felt that the respondents may not readily return the questionnaire after filling it. This is because questionnaire sought information about certain government work which the officers are not expected to give to a private investigator. Secondly, the questionnaire was a long one and would have required time to fill in which the officers may not prepare to despatch for a private individual. There might have been some other hitch in parting with the official information about the social education programmes in the state. Therefore, the investigator approached the government of Madhya Pradesh to allow him to get the necessary information through the questionnaire.

Shri G.L. Shukla, I.A.S. the secretary to the government & in the Panchayat/social welfare department, welcomed such an investigation, encouraged the investigator and addressed a letter to all district Panchayat and welfare officers of Madhya Pradesh directing them to extend their full cooperation in sending the information required by the investigator. Being educationist, he quickly recognised the importance of such an investigation and ordered that the questionnaire with the covering letter should be sent by the government to
all the district Panchayat and Welfare Officers of Madhya Pradesh. This greatly facilitated the investigator's work in getting the information.

Whenever the return of questionnaire was delayed by certain districts he approached the Secretary and he readily sent reminders to the delaying officers. But for the help from him, it would not have been possible to get full and faithful information on the problem. The copies of the letters issued by the government to the District Panchayat and welfare officers are included in Appendix 'A'. In case of one district questionnaire was not returned for several months and repeated requests through reminders had to be sent to get it back.

All the District Panchayat and Welfare Officers sent the questionnaire back to the research duly filled in. The data supplied by the district Panchayat and welfare officers thus collected, analysed and interpreted to arrive at general conclusions. The classification of data was done under different heads showing different aspects and sub-aspects of rural development. This made the comparative study of each item convenient.

The data was presented in tabular form and the arrangement of items in rows was made according to the serial number given to the item in the questionnaire.

Item-wise as well as district-wise interpretation of data has been given under the tables mentioned in the different
chapters and conclusions have been drawn from them.

PERSONS INVOLVED.

(1) The District Panchayat and Welfare Officers:

The scheme of social education in rural areas places on the shoulders of district Panchayat and welfare officers a new and significant responsibility and demands their initiative and drive. The programme of social education may be implemented at every stage, but their success wholly depends upon the District Panchayat and Welfare Officers, who play the pivotal role in this field. It has been increasingly recognised in our state that the key to all improvement in rural areas through education lies in the hands of a better and efficient District Panchayat and Welfare Officer. The scheme of social education with its wider objectives is a challenge to the workers of social education and particularly to the District Panchayat and welfare officers, who are already executing the whole programme of social education in the rural areas and who are directing, suggesting, guiding and controlling the other social education workers such as Panchayat and social education organisers, primary school teachers, operators, village level workers, members of panchayat sanities and the like. These district Panchayat and welfare officers carry out the programmes of social education in collaboration with other agencies and development departments and in co-operation with other workers in rural areas effectively and in the right spirit.
(2) Other workers of social education:

Research in social education is in its early infancy in India. Social education research requires a large army of workers. Among social education workers Gram Sevaks, Gram Sevikas and primary school teachers at village level and Panchayat and social education organisers at block level are indirectly involved in the present study as the information of the questionnaire was supplied by them to their officers.

(3) The villagers:

The investigator conducted the formal discussion on rural development with the same villagers in their homes and chaupals which provided valuable help in drawing conclusions. The investigator found during the course of discussion that the literate villagers are more responsive and aware of modern amenities and opportunities. The discussion also brought out the importance of literate villagers in development work. The investigator felt that social education may be a powerful motivation for energetic action in village communities. The inferences drawn from discussion with them can be summarised as below:

(a) Reading and writing has made their lives richer, fuller and happier as an individual and as a member of the village community. As a functional literate should do they use literacy in reading and writing letters, in reading literature supplied by the government and the books borrowed from library.
They read Alha and Ramayana and other religions and cultural books.

(b) Literate persons of the village spend their leisure time in different ways. Some read books. Their reading interests vary from religion to science applied to agriculture. Reading is not their regular activity. It mostly depends upon the mood and convenience of the villagers. There are others who spend their leisure time in singing devotional songs. While the illiterate memorize these songs and the literate copy them from varied sources and sing them. These persons are generally members of what is known as Bhajan or Keertan mandlies. The mandalies meet off and on.

(c) Most of the villages are primarily agricultural villages. The people work on land and are engaged in occupations connected with agriculture. Most of them have medium size land holdings and practise traditional methods of agriculture. A large number of them are illiterate and do not care to know the new methods. Only a few use their literacy skills in their occupations.

(d) During the past three or four decades the lower castes have improved their economic condition and enhanced their social position in the caste hierarchy.

(e) It is obvious that many villagers were illiterate labourers for several years. The desire to become literate dawned on a few of them when they realised that by becoming literate, they could earn more and have more power. The
desire to improve their economic condition brought them into contact with literate persons in the village and outside. Eventually they succeeded in acquiring sufficient skills in reading and writing and feel that their labour has been rewarded. Their goal was not only to become an efficient worker in their fields and stop there; but rise higher and higher. This desire enabled them to continue their literacy interests further. Consequently they are in a better position to-day. They are enlightened villagers. What they do with their present literacy skills and how they use them to improve their socio-economic status in the near future may be revealed by this study.

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