Perfection is an ideal and like all other ideals it has to remain unattained. The constraints put by reality force an investigator to make compromises.

The present investigation also had to face several odds with regard to sampling procedures. The intention was to study the data for three successive years so that the repetition or otherwise of the phenomenon could be checked. But she had to be satisfied with only two years because of the set-back received by the NAEP in 1931. The attendance registers for 267 classes out of the 400 supposed to have been conducted during the year were available. Further, out of entire sample of 605 dropouts identified 316 could be interviewed since others were not available.

But the rest of it all was done to the satisfaction of the investigator. The records were studied by her with care and interest. A reliable and valid attitude scale towards learning was developed and used scientifically. The interviews with the
adults were psychologically conducted and case history pre-
pared. Finally, the adult education personnel were also appro-
ached for a better understanding of the phenomenon. And so,
one is justified in feeling satisfied and confident about the
outcomes.

THE MAJOR FINDINGS

These are grouped into various categories as follows:

PROPORTION OF ENROLMENT

Classwise proportion: The number of adults enrolled
per class in the years 1978-79 and 1979-80 was found to be
35.41 and 33.90 respectively as compared to National Norms.

Sexwise proportion: The proportion of females enrolled
were 50.71 in 1978-79 and 41.46 in 1979-80. As against this
the male enrolment was 49.29 in 1978-79 and 58.54 in 1979-80.
This shows that the female enrolment was slightly higher in
1978-79 but lower in 1979-80. The proportions show that the
female enrolment was higher than the National average which
was 34.52.

Agewise proportion: In each of the two years under study,
the highest percentage (31.90 and 32.07) of those enrolled is
in the age group 15 to 20 years and the lowest (3.00 and 6.27) is in the age group above 35 years. This is in tune with the National Policy regarding the age-group. A similar trend was observed in both the sexes separately also.

PROPORTION OF DROPOUTS

**Overall dropouts:** Taking mere continuity in the class register as a criterion for successful completion, 605 dropouts from among 9231 adults, attending 267 adult education classes, during the years 1976-79 and 1979-80 were identified at the end of the ten month period. The percentages of dropouts for two years separately were 5.86 (1978-79) and 7.13 (1979-80) and jointly 6.55. This figures compares favourable with the figures of Gujarat.

**Sexwise dropouts:** Sex differences in the proportion of dropouts were found to be in favour of females among whom the percentage of dropouts in the aggregate statistics of two years was 4.77, whereas it was 3.04 among the males. An identical trend is observed, separately in the two years under study. The percentage of males and females dropping out in the years 1976-79 are respectively 6.88 and 4.87 and in the year 1979-80 - 8.85 and 4.71 respectively. The lower dropout rate among women could have been as due to volunteeriness and higher motivation as well as inability for migration in search of job away from place of residence.
Age-wise dropout: Age-wise, the percentages of dropouts during both the years were found to increase with an increase in age. This increase in proportion of dropouts attend maximum value in case of adults above 35 years, viz. 14.02 and 13.04 percent in the years 1978-79 and 1979-80 respectively.

Higher proportion of dropout in case of learners above 35 may be in compliance to the scheme of NARE to encourage learners of age group 15 to 35 and allow learners above 35 to attend if they desire earnestly.

Sex-age-wise dropout: A study of sex differences at various age levels revealed that as in the entire samples of the two sexes, at each age level also during both the years, the dropout rate among the females was generally found to be lower.

Another sex difference noticed is the increase in the dropout rate with increase in age among men but not among women during both the years.

In the age group above 35 years also females differ noticeably from males. The dropout rate in males in this age group is much higher as compared to the average for males. As against this the dropout rates among females in this age group is near the average of the whole group, and this was consistent during both the years.
Stagewise dropouts: Dividing the ten month course into five stages of two months each it was found that the percentage dropping out during the last stage i.e. 9th and 10th months is the lowest in each age-sex group and is appreciably low for not a single adult drops out during this stage in the year 1973-79 and in the year 1979-80 only 3.91 percent of the total dropouts do so in this stage. No women dropout during this stage.

The highest percentage dropping out in the entire sample during each of the two years is in the first two months and these are 31.57 and 40.79 respectively in the years 1978-79 and 1979-80. But a similar phenomenon is observed among men only when sex differences are studied. Assuming that most of those who leave during the initial stage do not pass adequate motivation, it was inferred that women attending the class were better motivated as a group. The study of percentages dropping out during this stage in relation to age and sex jointly do not permit any inferences to be drawn except that they range between 18.18 to 54.79 percent and are quite high in most cases.

No consistent trend is observed in the percentages dropping out during the three middle stages i.e. 3 to 8 months.

Classwise dropouts: Estimates of classwise proportion of dropouts revealed that 56.33 and 60.31 percent of the classes did not have a single dropout respectively during the years
1973-79 and 1979-80. As against that 2.7 percent classes in the year 1979-80 only showed a dropout rate as high as 50 percent.

A study of 63 classes which were conducted during both the years showed that 27 of them maintained the same proportion of dropouts during both the years, whereas 18 classes showed a decrease and 18 an increase in the percentages dropping out in 1979-80 compared to those in 1973-79.

**Socio-Educational Factors**

The groups of dropouts and non-dropouts interviewed were similar in regard to caste distribution since a large majority in both the groups belonged to the deprived classes.

They were also not different regarding the occupational pattern for an appreciable majority in each group was engaged in daily labour as their occupation.

The two groups differed with regard to family size. Considering a family size of up to five members and family size of more than five members, the dropouts were almost equal divided considering the two family sizes. In case of non-dropouts these coming from large family showed a higher percentage which continued in the class. Thus a large family is found to be conducive to an adult continuing in the class.
A study of marital status revealed that a large majority among both the groups were married but the proportion of married adults among the dropouts was higher by about 5 percent, indicating that married adults are more prone to dropping out from the class.

The family educational status of the non-dropouts was found to be higher in the sense that the proportion of adults coming from thoroughly illiterate families was higher by about 22 percent in the dropout group as compared to the non-dropouts.

**ATTITUDE TO LEARNING**

On a scale of attitude to learning specially developed by using Thurstones' method the score range was 1.58 to 10.48. The ranges of the obtained scores in case of dropouts was 6.25 to 10.00 and in case of non-dropouts it was 7.55 to 10.00.

Even though the dropouts could not be said to express a negative attitude to learning since the mean score of their group was 6.451, the non-dropouts were found to be much more positive and their superiority was statistically significant. The non-dropouts were also less variable.

Examined sexwise separately, the non-dropout males were superior to the dropout males but no significant difference between the mean score of the females of the two groups was observed.
However, a comparison of the attitude to learning of the two groups with regard to three other variables, viz. age, occupation and caste revealed that the non-dropouts generally were more positive and less varied than their counterparts in the dropout group.

A study of the impact of four variables, viz. sex, age, occupation and caste on attitude to learning of carried the groups of dropouts and non-dropouts revealed that the attitude to learning did not differ among the two sex groups and various age and caste groups. But occupational differences in attitude to learning were found to exist to some extent.

Data on a study of women’s attitude to learning as related to occupation did not warrant any relationship that could possibly be established between attitude to learning and occupation.

**REASONS AS PERCEIVED BY THE ADULTS**

**Reasons for dropping out:** The major five reasons for dropping out were worded as (i) tired due to hard work in job, (ii) migration for job or social occasion, (iii) lack of interest, (iv) inconvenient time, and (v) because of advanced age.
Sexwise reasons: A study of sex differences revealed that both sexes agreed upon fatigue and lack of interest as reasons of dropping out. But a higher proportion of men complained about migration for job and inconvenient class time whereas a higher percentage of female complained about class as going at large distance.

Agewise reasons: A study of age difference revealed that in the age group 15 to 30 a major reason for dropping out was migration for a job or a social migration. In case of the older group the reasons for dropping out were fatigue, illness, or advanced age.

Caste and occupationwise reasons: No caste difference could be observed but occupationwise the labourers were more prone to dropping out on account of migration.

Stagewise reasons: A study of the plausibility of the reasons for dropping out at various stages during the course revealed that the validity of the reasons given by the adults for dropping out was questionable.

Reasons for continuing in the class: Among the reasons for continuing in the class, five having relatively higher
frequencies were (i) interest, (ii) leisure, (iii) class was near, (iv) co-operation and encouragement from the family, and (v) acquisition of knowledge. A study of differences among sex, age, caste and occupation groups revealed that the percentage frequencies for the first two of the five reasons identified as major in the entire sample were relatively higher in each of the sub-groups. They did differ with regard to other reasons but the differences appeared to be merely accidental.

RESULTS OF MATCHED GROUPS ANALYSIS

A critical analysis of the case histories of 50 dropouts and 50 non-dropouts, matched on six variables revealed that dropping out in case of 52 percent was justified whereas the remaining 48 percent could have avoided it. Among the non-dropouts 84 percent appeared to have been lucky in having favourable circumstances but the remaining 16 percent non-dropouts did fight against the odds unlike some individuals in the dropout group who succumbed to such circumstances.

REASONS AS PERCEIVED BY THE ADULT EDUCATION PERSONNEL

On the basis of a pair of checklists returned by one project officer, six supervisors and 150 class conductors
their perceptions regarding dropping out and continuing in the adult education classes were gathered.

The class conductors and the supervisors mainly agreed regarding the reasons for dropping out and continuing. The reasons commonly agreed upon referred to those items mentioned by the adults. The two groups differed regarding reasons based on first hand experience and the supervisors on the other two.

CLASS CONDUCTORS AND ADULTS

All the reasons as perceived by the class conductors and the adults were compared for similarities and differences.

Reasons for dropping out exclusively mentioned by the class conductors did include lack of awareness on the part of the adults but the remaining reasons appeared to be the result of prejudices, inferiorities and beliefs among the class conductors. Some of these are such as could not have been mentioned by the adults since the interviews mostly were conducted in the presence of the class conductors. Reasons exclusively stated by the adults were of a typically exceptional type. The reasons for dropping out commonly agreed upon by both the groups refer to (i) embarrassment experienced by the adults on account of advanced age and physical handicapped, (ii) lack of interest and motivation and lethargy, (iii) poverty
causing inconvenience regarding time and migration for job and finally, (iv) difficulties faced by the adults in attending the class.

Reasons for continuing exclusively mentioned by the class conductors mainly mention benefits to the adults which are dependent on the competence of the class conductors, but not acknowledged by the adults. Some of them refer to advantages such as free supply of slates and books and physical facilities in the class, probably not important to the adults. One more concerns lack of addiction as a reason for continuing. The reasons given exclusively by the adults were only three and referred to literacy in the family. The reasons for continuing commonly agreed upon by both the groups refer to (i) facilities such as proximity of the class, suitability of time and familiarity with the class conductors, (ii) recreational activities, (iii) increased economic efficiency, (iv) encouragement and co-operation from the family and finally, (v) availability of leisure to participate in the programme.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In this section the intention is to give some conclusions which are apparent from the findings that are given in the above section. The suggestions that naturally follow these conclusions and which are necessary for improving the work of
adult education are also given in brief. These are as under:

(1) The dropout rate was 5.06 percent and 7.13 percent for the two years of the study. A higher dropout rate in the second year may be due to a lessening of interest on the part of class conductors, lessening of the novelty of the work and a decrease in incentives provided. Thus a lesser dropout rate can be attend if these are kept in mind.

(2) The dropout rate among the males was greater than that for females. The major reasons for this higher dropout rate was found to be the migration in search of a job. This can be avoided if a migrating male is provided facility of continuing his study at the place of migration. This would need a proper co-ordination among ABCs at various places and some short of supervisory agencies which can look after them migrating males.

Some organised sectors provide time and venue for ABC at the work place itself. The data chemicals of Mithapur and the Digvijay Cement Factory at Sabarmati are much known examples. Some could be done by builders and small scale industries in collaboration.

The builder of roads, factory plants and housing colonies are most suitable agencies for organising ABCs by perepetis class conductors.
(3) It was observed that the dropout rate increases with increasing age. Persons at different age levels have different maturity and different interest. If this is kept in mind while conducting an AEC, this dropping rate can be decreased. This would need looking into different content material for different age levels.

(4) A study of the stagewise dropout revealed that the dropout rate was maximum during the first two months of the course. This may be due to a lack of sufficient incentive to attend the class or some undesired pressure to enrolled in the class at the beging. This can be avoided if the adults are properly motivated and they feel the worth of attending the class. Initial undesired presser to enrolled ought to be replaced by real persuasion and providing motivation by the class conductors.

(5) A study of socio-educational factors leading to dropping out from AEC revealed that a large family was conclusive to an adult continuing in the class. Thus more dropouts were found to be coming from small families. This suggests that, for a better functioning and better attendance in an AEC, more attention should be paid to adults who are coming from small families as they are more prone to dropping out.

Similarly family educational status was also found to be a factor leading to dropping out or continuing in
It was found that the proportion of dropouts was higher among adults coming from thoroughly illiterate families. Thus for a better functioning of an ABC and for lessening the proportion of dropouts it seems necessary to pay more attention to those adults who are coming from thoroughly illiterate families and who have no literate family member to motivate them.

(6) A study of attitude to learning revealed that as a group non-dropouts were more positive towards learning. The dropouts also showed a positive attitude but the mean difference between two groups was statistically significant. However, considering sexwise differences, no significant difference was found between females of the two groups. Similarly attitude to learning did not differ among various age groups and caste groups. As against this occupational differences were found to exist. This indicates that the differences may be due to instructional material, convenience of time and similar factors. A more positive attitude to learning can be developed among dropouts if suitable instructional materials are used for them and other factors indicated above are kept in mind.

(7) Major reasons given by the adults for dropping out were fatigue after hard work, migration, lack of interest, inconvenient time and advanced age. Sex differences and
age differences revealed that younger males were more affected by migration. This suggests that a provision should be made for a migrating male in order to see that he continues his study. This can be achieved by providing AECs at place of work and co-ordination among different AECs. This has been already suggested in (2) above.

The lack of interest in the class work can be taken by abridging the drawbacks of the formal education system. The NAET is not nearly literacy campaign. The elements of relevance to the life of the learners; the flexibility in terms of instructional material, timings, venue and personnel of the whole programme; and real hearty participation of all persons concerned are the keys to the success of educational programmes formal as well as non-formal. These wonderful keys are unfortunately not employed by the project officers, with very few exceptions, and hence the problem of lack of interest and motivation crops up and result into dropout.

The problems of time and age can be taken by systematic phased programme drawn after considering the factors of sex, age, occupation, location and time of the target groups from the project area. The problem of
interest and motivation is also closely linked with the recruitment, training and supervision of all the functionaries in this country.

Poverty also seem to be the source of some other difficulties in attending the class mentioned by some cases. These are in terms of fatigue and family responsibility. It is no secret that poor men and women in the villages work hard from dawn to dusk and naturally have no energy left for trying to improve their future prospects.

But it was observed during the analysis of matched pairs that even these difficulties - fatigue and family responsibility - did not always have their roots in poverty. These and class distance appeared to be mere false excuses as a result of the process of rationalization.

(8) A reasons given by many adults for dropping out because of difficulties such as having to go from parental home to the in-laws or vice-versa or because prohibited by the elders, could have avoided if the elders in the family had valued the adult education programme. Similarly, difficulties such as illness in the family and looking after the children would also have not come in their way; if other members in the family had valued education for
them and had shouldered the responsibility and freed
the adult to attend the classes. Encouragement and co-
operation from the family have been mentioned as one of
the major causes for continuing. Thus it appears that
in most cases difficulties could have been avoided if
the adults themselves had not rationalised and the family
members had not been indifferent.

(9) A reasons given by the class conductors for dropping out
included lack of awareness on the part of adults and
embarrassment experience by the adults on account of
age and physical handicaps.

The problem of lack of awareness can be tackled by
suitable programmes that may involve Cram Panchayat,
Social workers and other personnel who have a more direct
approach to the illiterate adults. Programmes like film
show, folk songs, etc. can also help in bringing about
awareness towards learning. Embarrassment by the adults
is a reason which can be effectively handle by a resource-
ful class conductor. Attitude of a class conductor to-
wards his work can help the adults and the physically
handicaps in feeling less shy in attending the AECs.

Thus on the basis of the present study, it may be
concluded that dropouts can be avoided if adult education
programmes are made really worthwhile.
SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

A researcher who gets involved in the problem faces many issues which seek answers. In fact, in a research the thinking process generates more questions than are answered by the research. Some such issues are noted here for future use:

(1) An analytical study of the self-concepts of various types of adults, e.g. S.C., S.T., Other B.C., advanced communities, women, agriculture, industrial workers, unemployed, self-employed, urban and rural.

(2) A study of sex differences in causes of dropping out and continuing in urban and rural areas.

(3) A comparison of the attitude to learning among the urban and the rural adults.

(4) An evaluation of the impact of the adult education programme on the lives of those who have undergone it.

(5) A comparison of case history data obtained from the case himself/herself with those obtained from other sources.

(6) A critical study of role played by class conductors, supervisors, project officers and departments of education and development in the progress of adult education programme.
(7) An examination of the efficacy of the class conductors holding different types of qualifications and work experiences.

(8) A critical study of the attitude of the adult education personnel to the adult education programme.

(9) A study of knowledge, skills and attitudes and personality profiles necessary for class conductors, supervisors and project officers.

(10) To conduct formative evaluation of development of instructional and educational material for adult education in the areas of literacy, numeracy, functionally and concentration (awareness) of various target groups.