CHAPTER-I
INTRODUCTION

Approximately half the people of the world today are illiterate. Education for literacy, therefore, is a major world problem. India is one of the few countries in the world, which has a large illiterate adult population. In this context, it would be desirable to assess the size of the problem of illiteracy in the country. One of the very important characteristics of the problem of illiteracy in India is that while the literacy rate is improving over the decades, the number of illiterates is also simultaneously increasing. This is happening because our literacy effort (formal and non-formal) has not been able to match the population growth. The percentage of literacy has increased from about 5 in 1901 to 36 in 1981. The number of illiterates has simultaneously increased from 225 millions in 1901 to about 438 millions in 1981.

To solve the problem of eradication of illiteracy, many efforts have been made during pre and post independence period. Over the past several decades various measures were
undertaken by individuals, voluntary agencies and various organizations of the Government to combat illiteracy. Various programmes in the past have been organized, but most of them had different emphasis and different target groups.

The National Adult Education Programme was launched in 1978 to solve the problem of eradication of illiteracy. This programme was launched on a large scale to cover the objective of converting 100 million illiterates into literate ones over a period of five years. Various kinds of agencies and functionaries are involved, with different tasks to deal with different target groups. Government also contributed to this programme through financial help.

The National Adult Education Programme was started with enthusiasm. Large number of adults enrolled in this programme, and after some time many of them dropped out. The main question before the employed adults is the ten month duration of the course and that too conducted in the evening. Physically and mentally fatigued adults join the adult education classes, but with the passage of time they become less and less enthusiastic towards the programme. This ultimately results into irregular attendance and leaving the courses. Thus, there is a wastage of Government money after this programme. However, looking to the importance of adult education programme, it is
imperative that some research is conducted regarding the adults leaving such classes.

Through this research the class conductors will become familiar with the real situation and problems of the adults. It will also throw some light on the ways and means of avoiding and lessening wastage in adult education.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms need to be clarified:

Dropouts: It means those illiterate persons who have left the study from the adult education classes in between.

Adult Education: Education programme and policy for the illiterate people in the age group 15 to 35.

SCOPE

The present investigation is designed to take into its perview the centres for adult education conducted in Gujarat under the National Adult Education Programme launched in 1978.
OBJECTIVES

The following were the objectives of this investigation:

(1) To obtain centre, age, sex and yearwise estimates of those enrolled.

(2) To obtain centre, age, sex and yearwise estimates of dropouts.

(3) To compare the scores of dropouts and non-dropouts on a scale of attitude towards learning.

(4) To find out the reasons for dropping out and continuing from the point of view of the adults themselves.

(5) To find out the reasons for dropping out and continuing from the point of view of the adult education personnel.

(6) To compare the two points of view of the adults themselves and of the adult education personnel.

(7) To compare the reasons for continuing and dropping out to be able to draw conclusions and indicate their priorities and interrelationships.