CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION AND FURTHER RESEARCH

4.1 Summary

The on-going literacy programmes in the country in continued efforts through Total Literacy Campaign (TLC), Post-Literacy Campaign (PLC) and Continuing Education (CE) under the auspices of National Literacy Mission (NLM)--launched in 1988 adopting mass campaign approach with a focus on literacy as a means of empowerment and development having well defined goals (area-specific, time bound, total coverage for given age group), voluntary based approach, environment building and mass mobilization, improved pedagogy and stress on post-literacy and continuing education--has entered a crucial phase in the country to achieve the goal of Education for All. The achievements of the programme vary from state to state and within a state district to district in terms of success parameters.

Himachal Pradesh, a hilly and predominantly rural state, too has shown the mixed results in the achievement levels. The phase of TLC/PLC is over and all the districts are on the verge of entry into continuing education, with two districts Mandi and Sirmaur taking a lead in this direction. Hence, there was felt need to critically study
the impact of continuing education programmes—the consolidation of activities undertaken in TLC/PLC and extending the scope beyond these to evolve better linkages of the continuing education programme with rural development.

4.1.1 Objectives of the Study

1) To study the continuing education programmes in Himachal Pradesh in terms of physical aspects, the method, and media to impart continuing education as a sequel to total literacy campaign and post-literacy campaign.

2) To study the people's awareness about continuing education programmes and rural development programmes in Himachal Pradesh.

3) To evaluate impact of continuing education programmes in rural development in Himachal Pradesh as perceived by:

   i) Community

   ii) Neo-literate.

4) To identify the problems of community participation in continuing education and rural development programmes in Himachal Pradesh.
5) To evolve the measures for improving community involvement in continuing education programme in Himachal Pradesh.

4.1.2 Delimitations of the Study

The present study was delimited in the following manner:

1. The study was confined to the non-tribal districts of the state only, and further only rural areas for sampling frame for studying the impact of continuing education on rural development.

2. Continuing education has been taken as the "package of the educational programmes" in vogue for continuation of TLC/PLC activities by ZSSs and SRC in association with various development departments and other education agencies, while making use of various media methods, and determining its linkages with social and economic inputs in rural community and relevance to the rural needs and interests of the community.

3. Rural development in Himachal Pradesh has taken as the concept in sociological and cultural context with even and equitable distribution of various inputs in development programmes among
rural masses for having better physical quality of life.

4.1.3 Operational Definition of the Terms

1. Continuing Education:

Continuing education is operationally defined as the mode of non-formal education aiming at providing opportunities for adult neo-literates, in particular as well as school leaver youth along with other reading public for:

i) Personal development

ii) equity and

iii) economic development.

This programme includes different structures, strategies and materials in the form of:

Newspapers, Journals, Leaflets, Wall-papers, Newsletters etc.; Textbooks and other Textual Materials; Supplementary and Follow-up Reading Materials; Libraries; Extension Literature; Out-of-School Programmes Parallel to the School System and other non-formal courses and programmes; occasional programmes based on Special needs and Interests; Correspondence Courses; Local Study and Action Groups; Instructional Television, Radio, Film and other New Educational Technology; Traditional and Folk Media; and Sports, Games, and a number of other activities.
The present study takes into account the activities defined in the programme objectives of adult and continuing education as laid down in the Programme of Action (1992) of National Policy on Education which states:

i) Self-directed continuing education in the perspective of life-long learning though library service, newspapers for neo-literates, charcha mandal, and such other activities. This may also include the skill development programme for personal, social and occupational development.

ii) Environment building activities would continue to be undertaken through organisation of jathas, street plays and nukkad nataks, wall writings, literacy songs and slogans, articles in newspapers and magazines by creative writers, thinkers and opinion leaders, etc.

iii) The three important goals of post-literacy programme would be remediation, continuation of learning activities through facilities of libraries and reading rooms, supply of reading material suiting the felt needs and interest of learners and application of literacy skills to actual living and working situation.

4.1.4 Methodology

Descriptive method of research following qualitative approach was used in the following manner:

Research Tools

Four interview schedules were developed by the researcher for the collection of data:

1. Interview Schedule for Neo-literates to seek information about their socio-economic background and views
and perceptions regarding literacy movement/ continuing education and rural development.

2. **Interview Schedule for Neo-literate and Illiterate** to seek information for assessing the impact of literacy movement and continuing education on rural development in terms of their views and perceptions on key issues in these programmes.

3. **Interview Schedule for Community Leaders** to seek information with regard to their socio-demographic background and views and perceptions about continuing education and rural development.

4. **Interview Schedule for Field Functionaries in Literacy Movement and Continuing Education** to seek information with regard to their socio-demographic background, and participation in the programme as well as problems being faced by them in the implementation along with seeking suggestions for improvement in the programme.

Sample

Keeping in view the launching of TLC/PLC in Himachal Pradesh in 1991-92 and lead taken by the districts of Mandi and Sirmaur in the literacy movement as well as entry into the crucial phase of continuing education ahead of the remaining districts, these two districts were selected for
the present study for sampling purposes. Further, two blocks from each district and two panchayats each from these blocks were selected randomly to have the sample for the study:

1. All the field functionaries working at the centre/panchayat/block level (N=80).
2. 200 neo-literates and 160 illiterates drawn randomly from the selected panchayat,
3. 40 community leaders with a representation of 10 from each of the blocks, under study.

4.1.5 Analysis of Data

Documentary analysis was carried out to critically study the status of TLC/PLC in the state and reporting of status of district of Mandi and Sirmaur, which have entered the continuing education phase. Percentage analysis was carried out in terms of the responses of (i) the neo-literates and illiterates for assessing the impact of continuing education on rural development; (ii) community leaders' views and perceptions regarding key issues of linkages between continuing education and rural development and (iii) views and perceptions of field functionaries with regard to continuing education and rural development to improve the efficacy of continuing education programmes in the context of rural development.
4.2 Conclusions

The conclusions drawn on the basis of analysis of data may be reported as under:

4.2.1 Literacy and Development in Himachal Pradesh: Some Trends:

The activities undertaken during TLC/PLC may be given in a brief manner:

1. Establishment of Jan Jagriti Kendras.
2. Development of literature and procurement of literature from NBT which includes neo-literates' books and publication of newsletters.
3. Universalization of elementary education.
4. Literacy to health.
5. Women Empowerment.
7. Jan-Vachan Andolan.
8. Celebration of Important days such as International Literacy Day, Women's Day, Environment Day, Independence Day, Anti-smoking Day and Jan Sewa Divas etc.
10. Mopping-up Operation to bring left-outs for literacy.
The impact of TLC/PLC in Himachal Pradesh, as reported by various ZSSs to Directorate of Adult Education, Himachal Pradesh (1996) an other official records of State Resource Centre (Rajya Gyan Vighyan Kendra), Himachal Pradesh speaks of certain important indicators of success:

1. A sense of general awakening and awareness is being felt amongst the learners.

2. The persons who could not get formal education for one reason or the other are now ensuring that their children are sent to the school for education. Thus the Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) Programme is being strengthened.

3. Awakening amongst the neo-literate women can be felt from the fact that they are demanding opening of sewing centres, anganwaries, drinking water at their door steps and other facilities of their daily needs. The neo-literates women at various districts are getting organised to fight against alcoholism and other social evils.

4. The neo-literates are adopting small family norms.

5. People are becoming conscious about their future and have started contribution towards small savings, off-season vegetables are being grown by the farmers
on large scale. Fruits and vegetables are being exported to developed countries every year.

6. In some districts the neo-literates with the help of local people have constructed paths and school buildings.

7. Inspired by the literacy workers, the villagers have planted a large number of trees.

8. In urban areas cleanliness drives particularly against polyethylene bags have become popular.

Thus through TLC and PLC, messages have reached every corner of Himachal Pradesh which itself is a great achievement.

Some independent studies conducted in the recent past and critical observations of researchers (Negi, 1995; SRC, 1997; Kumar, R., 1998 and Singh 1998a, 1998b) on educability of masses under literacy campaign and the synthesis of the findings may be summed up:

1. The neo-literates and left-outs a similar pattern of family size and distribution in different age groups. The educational status of left-outs seem to be higher than those of neo-literates.
2. There has been change in life style of neo-literates to be more conscious about hygiene and good education for children and encouragement for cooperation.

3. The general impact of literacy has been appreciable, especially promoting voluntary action, more so perceived by neo-literates. The neo-literates have been found to be more sensitive than left-outs with regard to various problems of village community, and lesser caste conscious.

4. The role of governmental and non-governmental organisations has been perceived to be quite appreciable by neo-literates as well as left-outs in case of literacy and education and allied issues such as library movement and additional learning material for children.

5. The neo-literates have perceived appreciable changes in educational system and impact of education on children's pro-social behaviour and confidence building.

The main reasons for non-enrolment during TLC/PLC in order of magnitude are domestic problem, requirement of classes at home nearby home, inability in learning in the category of personal reasons; in case of administrative
reasons the main reasons reported by the non-enrolled population are unsuitability/ non-availability of Shaksharta Ghar, non-availability of Akshar Sainik and inadequate learning material; and the other reasons were lack of orientation on the part of organisers and non-approaching of the organisers to motivate the illiterate people for joining literacy movement.

Further, the adult neo-literates who did not join the PL activities gave some reasons for not joining; the most prominent reasons being:

- Lack of approach by the agencies to join PL Centre; domestic problems; inadequate learning material; lack of teacher/instructor for classes; centre's location; and irregularity in centres activities.

The foregoing findings are the outcome of the survey studies conducted from time to time in different parts of the state. Beyond these surveys some pertinent observations made during interaction with community may be summed up as under:

1. The Participation and active involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions could not be ensured in the literacy movement.

2. The Progress of field functionaries, i.e., zonal/panchayat co-ordinators need to be monitored in an effective manner.
3. Post-literacy centres were not formed as per norms, and where these were functioning these were not functioning properly due to lack of infrastructure, teaching-learning material as well as lack of training on the part of guides and functionaries.

4. The administrative support in strengthening literacy movement by evolving inter-linkages of literacy with other development and welfare programmes needs to be given a fresh look for effective intervention in the on-going literacy programme in the state.

Hence, it may be summed up that literacy campaign has shown positive impact on individual's and community life. However, significant differences have not emerged with regard to perceptions of neo-literate and left-outs which means that content and process of literacy campaign in near future need to be given a new impetus in the continued efforts for literacy movement.

4.2.2 Views and Perceptions of Neo-Literates and Illiterates Regarding Impact of Continuing Education on Rural Development

i) literacy movement has had its reach to female population in a significant manner;

ii) illiterate population still uncovered is in the elder age group, i.e., 46 and above; and

iii) literacy movement has been able to cover up the elderly population as well which is not the NLM target, a significant step towards the outreach of
literacy movement to cover a large number of illiterates irrespective of age considerations,

iv) the reach of literacy movement in rural areas has coverage of all the social classes, though it has not been able to reach the disadvantaged sections of SC, ST and OBC in a meaningful manner.

v) literacy movement has been able to bring to its fold the adults engaged in agriculture/ horticulture activities and has shown a failure to reach the labour class and persons in the low skilled occupations.

vi) neo-literates have higher income levels than the illiterates in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh.

vii) the neo-literates, though in smaller number as compared to illiterates, have had the exposure to school education; and the reasons pertaining to not joining the school are the economic backwardness and lack of schooling facilities; as well as school related aspects for discontinuation of studies.

viii) literacy movement as viewed by neo-literates, has shown perceptible impact on educability of children in particular and of adult mass, in general.

ix) literacy movement has shown appreciable effect of 'Kalajathas i.e. cultural programmes on literacy movement' and 'reading habits of neo-literates,' though there seems to be no impact of the movement of the use of electronic media for developmental purposes and its effect on life style.

x) literacy movement has shown a positive impact on promoting voluntary initiatives and improving the functioning of panchayats as well as VEC etc., though not effective in 'abolition of caste system' and 'solving community problems.'

xi) literacy movement has raised the awareness level of neo-literates regarding voter awareness and women reservation for gender equity in political process. However, the caste factor and ineffective role of panchayat are the problem areas where literacy movement has not been found to be showing any perceptible positive impact.

xii) literacy movement has raised the level of awareness regarding the role and functions of panchayats and
cooperatives in community development programmes.

xii) literacy movement has enthused the neo-literates to be actively engaged in development/welfare programmes which is a sign of emerging linkage of literacy with development in rural areas and an interaction with administration for the same.

xiii) literacy movement has made neo-literates to be quite appreciative of the efforts of governmental/non-governmental organisations on improving community life, especially pertaining to literacy and education and to some extent for skill upgradation and income generating activities, thus posing a challenge to literacy workers and organisers to improve and diversity the content and methodology of continuing education programmes in order to be very well linked with developmental programmes, to improve quality of life of rural masses.

4.2.3 Views and Perceptions of Community Leaders Regarding Impact of Continuing Education on Rural Development

The views and perceptions of the community leaders in rural areas are acting as facilitators to provide all kinds of support to field functionaries and neo-literates in the efforts being made to relate literacy and continuing education programmes with community development reveal that:

i). The large majority of the community leaders have highlighted the problems of lack of administrative cooperation and awareness on the part of community members to make use of such developmental schemes;

ii). It has also been pointed out by them in large number that problems in getting loans facilities from banks/ cooperative societies as well as political
interference demotivate the neo-literate and other community members to make use of the facilities available under various developmental schemes for their personal betterment.

iii) The suggestions made by the community leaders to the pertinent socio-economic and cultural issues have a significant implications for implementation of continuing education programme to contribute to evolve community development programmes with perspective of social justice and equity which is the need of hour, i.e.:

Improved agricultural practices and adoption of non-conventional energy resources, provision of marketing network, arranging skill development training and follow-up, strengthening voluntary action and seeking academic support from senior citizens and literacy community for their active role in continuing education programme, introducing craft/vocational component in continuing education, arranging of loan facilities for small/cottage industries and participatory administrative co-operation with different agencies.

It seems that the community life in rural areas is affected by a number of socio-economic and administrative problems which are a hindrance in community development
programmes, which need a greater attention for field functionaries in continuing education programmes for promoting the community development programmes.

4.3.4 Views and Perceptions of Field Functionaries Working in Literacy Movement Regarding Continuing Education and Rural Development

i) The field functionaries in the literacy movement have average educational status mainly representing agricultural status mainly representing agricultural community with average income levels. The age-distribution spread from young to elder age levels and share of women are the encouraging indicators of success of the literacy movement to have people of wider perspectives in its fold for their role in continuing education programme.

ii) The field functionaries have been found to be members of more than one local level organisations such as youth club, village education committee, gram sabha, mahila mandals, and even ZSSs showing the social activism. This is also depicted from the reasons with regard to joining literacy movement such as voluntary mission, social service, and knowledge save and to enhance personal competencies etc.
iii) The problems faced by field functionaries in implementing continuing education programme as identified by them pertain to: personal aspects i.e., lack of regular supply of material; monitoring and evaluation along with problem of utilization of feedback; lack of training and administrative apathy; and administrative aspects, i.e., problem of planning and execution at ZSS level, lack of flexibility in execution of programme; lack of coordination at different levels of organisational structure; problem of community leaders' support in the movement as well problem of support from academic community in the execution of programmes.

iv). The field functionaries have reported lack of adequate support from development welfare agencies to continuing education programme,

v). The field functionaries are well aware of the essential components of continuing education programme and perceived positive impact of on-going activities in continuing education programme, more markedly on skill development and participation in panchayat activities; and the lesser extent on environmental issues and gender equity.
The suggestions made by field functionaries to improve the efficacy of continuing education programme pertain to material production to meet the diversified needs of the beneficiaries, regularity in supply of reading materials; regular monitoring and evaluation mechanism; administrative participation in an effective manner; ensuring community leaders' support in the execution of the continuing education programme as well as programme evaluation through research studies with academic and technical support from academic community to ensure sustainability of the continuing education programme as life long education in community life.

4.3 Suggestions for Educational Implications

The findings of the present study—pertaining to the impact of continuing education on rural development in Himachal Pradesh—are a pointer to the corroboration of the findings of a number of researches conducted earlier before the launching of NLM, and in recent past the evaluation of TLC/PLC in different parts of the country. Thus keeping in view the delimitations of the present study, and the short duration of continuing education in vogue in two districts, and in order to have the continued and vigorous efforts for evolving linkages of literacy development, some suggestions for educational implications may be laid:
The inherent problems encountered in the implementation during TLC/PLC phase in terms of regular supply of learning materials, provision of development of learning material—to cater to the diversified needs of the beneficiaries for their social economic and personal development in the comprehensively evolved 'human development' paradigm encompassing all the essential components of human life—need the attention of policy makers and implementing agencies so as to strengthen the academic inputs in the continuing education programme. Moreover, the 'monitoring and evaluation' of these programmes is one of the weaknesses which, too, calls for evolving pragmatic strategies to have in-built mechanism of programme evaluation so as to enhance its effectiveness in the context of changing needs of rural communities in the wake of infrastructural inputs being made by the state in rural development programmes.

The implementing of continuing education programme is to cover the illiterates and drop-outs for literacy and strengthening of literacy skills of neo-literates and learners on the other hand. This gigantic task is to be performed by the field functionaries who have reported lack of training,
lack of support from development welfare agencies and the community leaders for the implementation of different activities in the programme.

The calls for the necessary orientation of the administrators at state, district, block and local level to devise guidelines and action plans in the development/welfare programmes to incorporate the component of 'literacy and education' so as to provide necessary inputs to the continuing education programmes which have been essentially evolved in the context of developmental perspective. Needless to mention without literacy and education, development has no meaning, and it is only the literacy and continuity of literacy movement through continuing education programmes that aims and objectives of development can be successfully attained with equitable distribution among different sections of rural population with specific focus on disadvantaged sections, namely, SC, ST, OBC and women.

iii). The role of local bodies such as panchayats and NGOs such as Mahila Mandals and cooperatives in rural development programmes is being realised in the wake of decentralization and micro level planning. Hence, the active participation of these
organisations need to be ensured in the implementation of continuing education programmes.

iv). There is felt need of the implementing agencies to have support from academic community, especially from institutions of higher learning and research in the planning, execution and evaluation of the ongoing programmes in continuing education. This calls for strengthening the 'extension' component so that universities and others research institutions to provide all kinds of academic support for field functionaries in designing of the curricular programmes, development of learning materials, training of field functionaries for imparting education to target groups and monitoring and evaluation devices.

v) In the light of the availability of plethora of research studies--descriptive, case studies, evaluative and experimental--carried out in different parts of the country with focus on various aspects of TLC/PLC and continuing education, there is urgent need to have documentation of all such studies in a systematic way for dissemination among the researchers, academicians and field functionaries to devise research studies in the local cultural contexts with area-specific and
population-specific perspectives to provide necessary feedback for improving the content and methodology of continuing education programmes to cater to the local area-specific and population-specific needs of community for developmental purposes.

These suggestions, though broad in scope provide a rationale basis to devise the continuing education programmes with an interactive and integrated approach involving all the sections of society—from grassroot level functionaries to community leaders to administrators to academic community—so as to achieve the goals of human development in humanistic manner for evolving a learning and egalitarian social set-up.

4.4 Suggestions for Further Research

In the continuity of the present study, delimited in its scope in a number of ways, and need and importance of the research in the field of adult education, especially when TLC/PLC phase is paving way for continuing education programme, following suggestions may be laid down for further research:

1. The present study aimed at general impact of continuing education broadly defined and linked with developmental processes which needs to be followed
by further action and applied researches to gauge the impact of such programmes on specific aspects of rural development with area-specific and population-specific context.

2. The present study was delimited to only two districts of Himachal Pradesh in terms of area coverage. Hence, similar studies need to be undertaken in the other districts of the state to encompass the topographic variations of the state.

3. Since continuing education for neo-literates was the focus of study, it is suggested that researches should be carried out on the other population groups such as school drop-outs, pass-outs of primary schools and non-formal education programme and all other members of the community interested in availing opportunities for life-long education by identifying their learning/developmental needs and designing of continuing education programmes to enable each and every member of the society to face the challenges of future life.

4. The implementation of rural development programmes, aiming at improving the quality of life of village communities, need to be studied through area-specific and population specific along with its
relationship with formal and non-formal education so as evolve the integrated approach to rural development processes to achieve the goal of development in terms of qualitative improvement in the level of living in economic terms as well as social and psychological sense.

5. Intensive studies of groups like scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other socially backward communities as well as the economically weaker sections of the community (small and marginal farmers, labourers and those who fall below the poverty line) in terms of their participation in development programmes may be carried out to reduce disparities in rural areas to move towards egalitarian society.

6. Another important area of concern is the need of identification of psychological indicators which could serve as leverages for bringing about the required behavioural changes among rural masses, especially the illiterates and neo-literates to enhance the level of participation in different social welfare and economic development programmes through continuing education programme.
7. The Human Development Reports have given due emphasis to gender development index (GDI) accounting for the gender disparity in terms of achievement in life expectancy, educational attainment and increases, and existing of gender empowerment measures which calls for focus of research studies on women as well to have important implications for programme formulation and implementation for rural development in general, and women development in particular.

8. Since continuing education and adult education have overlapping fields, there is need for fundamental researches to theorization so that a clear demarcation between the two is established, and future researches should focus on such theoretical issues to build up the body-politic of the knowledge.

9. Impact studies also need to be undertaken at state and national level to gauge the role of National Literacy Mission (NLM) on literacy status of the adult population, awareness generation and functionality components, especially with regard to 'empowerment' and 'equity' so that the transition of literacy movement through TLC/PLC to continuing
education may be strengthened in the local culture-specific contextuality.

10. The institutional support to literacy movement and specifically to emerging challenges of implementation of continuing education through 'extension' activities need to be studied to strengthen the voluntary/mission approach to these adult education programmes.