

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, PROBLEMS AND COMMENTS

### 5.1. Summary :

Literacy is a major component of Human Resource Development and is basic to any programme of social and economic progress. Development can never become self sustaining unless it is accompanied by corresponding changes in the attitude, value, knowledge and skills of people as a whole. The only way this change can be accomplished is through education and literacy is the first step towards education.

The National Literacy Mission (NLM) was launched as a societal and technology mission on 5th May, 1988 with the objective of imparting functional literacy to 80 million illiterate adults in 15-35 age group by 1995, has now been set with the goal of covering 100 million non-literates by the year 1999 (Annual Report, Government of India, 1996-97). Children in the age group 9-14 years are also included where there are no Non-Formal Education (NFE) Centres. The Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) have been extended to 417 districts in the country where an estimated 90 million of learners have been enrolled in the programme and 56 million are reported to have been made literate. The campaigns are initiated with appropriate environment building activity coupled with a door to door literacy survey during which potential learners and volunteers are identified. Suitable primers are developed and primer-specific training is provided to the required personnel. The environment building activity as well as monitoring and internal evaluation are continued through the teaching/learning activity, which accounts for a total of 200 hours spread over a period of 6 months. An external evaluation is made at the conclusion of the teaching (Ibid, pp. 136-137).

In spite of a few Government sponsored evaluation programme in a few districts time to time in our country and a few stray attempts of some institutions in this connection, upto this date no clear picture is made available to interested public about the learners' view, problems and difficulties of the Total Literacy Campaign learners and the programme itself, method of evaluation, justification of declaring a district as a totally literate district and also the impact of TLC by scientific evaluation and by structured interview. An attempt has been made in the present investigation to highlight the said facts by studying the Bengalee learners in different learning centres of North 24-Parganas District of West Bengal. The representative group of learners has been selected from 96 learning centres, drawn by circular systematic sampling techniques, based on stratified cluster of unit from a total number of 30,000 Bengali medium running learning centres scattered in all the four subdivisions of the district involving both urban and rural areas. On the

basis of the above methodology 21 Gram Panchayates (G.P.) out of 218 and 8 Municipalities out of 24 in the whole district have been selected. Altogether 809 learners (519 females and 290 males) both from rural and urban areas from the 96 learning centres along with 245 others which include Voluntary Teachers, Master Trainers, Key Persons, Panchayate Members, Municipality Administrators, School Teachers, local people, not associated with the TLC programmes and illiterate people of the locality, who were not enrolled in the learning centres, were made involved in the present study.

Data were collected from 809 learners by four parallel sets of custom built achievement tests for reading, writing and numeracy in order to study their scholastic achievement as expected under NLM standard. For impact study, data were collected from 245 others, viz., Voluntary Teachers (VTs), Master Trainers (MTs), Key Persons (KPs), Panchayate Members, Municipality Administrators, School Teachers, local people not associated with TLC programmes and illiterate people of the district, who did not enroll in the learning centres by a structural inventory.

From this sample of 809 learners, a smaller sample of 200 learners distributed over 20 learning centres, covering all the four subdivisions, were selected by PPS of sampling techniques, for evaluation by two psychological tests, viz., (1) Raven's Progressive Matrices Test (1960) to assess the abilities like simultaneous cognitive processing, intellectual reasoning, accuracy of discriminatories, analogies, permutation and other logical relations; (2) Wechsler Digit Span Forward Tests (1974) to assess the abilities of successive cognitive processing, span of memory and recall.

The findings of the study have revealed the following significant happenings, which deserve immediate intervention :

#### **5.1.A. Administrative Problems :**

The broad motivational and organisational factors are found to be contributed to a significant proportion of drop out of learners (enrolled 9.24 lakhs Bengalee learners in September, 1991, in August, 1993 the figure came down to above 5 lakhs) almost 50% from the Total Literacy Campaign Course, without completing. Moreover, out of 51,000 learning centres of the district (in September, 1991) only 35,000 were found running (during August, 1993) in the whole district. All these indicate that

there was certain incompleteness inherent in the planning of the total programme. Though occupational and other hazards in the daily life of the poverty stricken learners, the religious festivals, the climatic and other natural factors were also partly responsible for this above drop out. Moreover, other political factors, e.g., Panchayat Election, General Elections and last but not the least the Ayodhya incident, which had fairly serious repercussions in the district, severely disrupted the academic work, learning centres had to remain closed in the entire urban belt for more than 20 days due to prohibitory orders. Even after such orders were withdrawn, learning centres could not be opened and the status quo was not maintained. This indicates lack of seriousness on the part of Zilla Saksharata Samiti (ZSS). However, there was considerable variation, unevenness in the process of rejuvenation and the individual initiative or the lack of it among the district officials was distinctly observed in different spheres.

The single most redeeming feature appears to be an indomitable urge of the overwhelming majority of the poor learners to strive for literacy. But due to non-availability of adequate number of regular volunteer teachers several learning centres had to make defunct. The said non-availability factor consequently influenced the spread of the venture for the benefit of women in rural area, particularly. In this connection, it may be mentioned that qualified unemployed youth, who came forward as volunteers for the cause mostly belonged to poor socio-economic family and for them the authorities failed to provide with proper financial incentives to uphold their initiative and work-motivation permanently.

Further, quite a large number of the learning centres in both urban and rural areas are either located in the dwelling houses or in the open space or in the kuchha structure. During rainy seasons all those centres become unusable for few months, which seriously hamper the study of the eager learners and thereby losing their motivation and ultimately dropped out. There is a separate problem for private dwelling houses as learning centres instead of public places, causing some sorts of personal difficulties for a few learners particularly for their castes and religions. Here the traditional old prejudice of untouchability of Indian society plays a prominent role.

Moreover, most the learning centres of the districts both in urban and rural areas are running during evening or night, which are causing difficulty on the part of the housewives to attend due to household work.

More than 21% of rural areas and 23% of the urban learning centres do not have Blackboard facilities, which require immediate intervention. About 50% of the rural areas and 33% of the urban learning centres neither have sufficient light nor any lighting facilities, how the centres run here during evening and night hours ?

Learning centres should be situated within walking distance, but 35% of the urban and about 13% of the rural learning centres are more than 1 Km. distance, which cause inconvenience for the learners to attend the centres and thereby drop out rates are increased. Moreover, inadequate Government grant for the TLC programme for maintaining the learning centres, teaching aids, supply of kerosene oil etc. have also been reported.

Moreover, on the technical side in most of the learning centres of the district, Primer-II is yet to be completed, due to delay in the delivery of the said Primer, though external evaluation of the district TLC programme has already been done and the district has been declared as fully literate district. The training of the Voluntary Teachers, Master Trainers and Key Persons is not adequate for attracting the new learners. All these discrepancy deserves immediate intervention.

## **5.2. Socio-Cultural Problems :**

- (1) Though before the actual start of the TLC, everywhere in the district, the extent and the depth of popular feeling about the programme was found to be remarkable. People came forward to help the organisers in a number of ways. They provided accommodation lanterns for the learning centres. Individual learners irrespective of their economic status provided inputs like kerosene oil, pencils, slates etc. Industry houses provided banners, posters. Most of all the volunteers from key persons to voluntary trainers, provided almost free services. But as the programme continues, motivation of all these participants are gradually lost. The indifferent attitude of the local influential people and a few political leaders particularly in the urban areas with the cause of Total Literacy Campaign Programme, becomes prominent. Some of them play the role of a fault finder of the local administration. They seldom come forward to patronise the cause by active participation, appreciation, cooperation and help to motivate the illiterate people or those who dropped out to join the learning centres or act as teachers.

- (ii) Lack of a few people's, particularly elderly male members' interest to join or send their family members (particularly the female members) to the learning centres has been identified in the present study. The reason for said apathy and indifference of those people are found linked herewith three major influencing variables, viz., (a) illiteracy of these people, (b) class and caste prejudice and (c) unemployment. These people, here, are found as victims of a peculiar complicated nexus of socio-cultural conditions and concerned impact. Those people remained deprived of any formal education and earning vocational fitness in their childhood and adolescence due to class and caste prejudice. As a result, they never get any employment opportunity and have to depend on very casual low income for subsistence. Another mentality, which are common in the patriarchal society, plays an important role here, where females regarded as child producing instrument only and their functions are limited within four walls of the house only to perform household work. These types of people are present in the rural area population with a fairly good proportion with comparatively low proportion in the urban municipal area population. They seldom take active interest to boost up the morale of their family members to become devoted learners.

### 5.3. Resource Problems :

Following the directives of policy-makers and implementors, there should be separated learning centres for males, females and non-formal (9-14 years age) groups, with at least one voluntary teacher in each such centre. There should not be more than 10-12 learners in each such centre and all the essential learning materials are to be supplied to the learners by the Government through voluntary teachers. Moreover, a sum of Rs.55.00 only per month has been allotted to run each such centre to the contingencies expenses, e.g., kerosene oil, lamps, etc. But it is observed that, the concept of separate centres are to remain within the paper and pencil. Most of these learning centres are to be amalgamated into one centre, common for all the three groups, due to non-availability of voluntary teachers. Ultimately such learning centres become crowded with even more than 100 learners of different age and sex groups. So the enrolled learners never get the opportunity to come across proper resuming. Moreover, the Government grant of Rs.55.00 per month per centre has not changed, which is meant for centres with 10-12 learners only, how

it can solve the problem of the amalgamated centres with even more than 100 learners ? In general, for want of space, resource and scientific knowledge of the authorities the ever motivated poor learners seldom get individual attention in the learning centres. As a result, they drop out without completing the course.

#### 5.4. Learners' Achievement Problem :

- (i) On the technical side it is observed that though the Primer-I has been completed in all the learning centres of the district the Primer-II is yet to be incompleted in most of the centres sampled for the present study. Though both these books have been prescribed by the National Literacy Mission as the prescribed text book for the TLC learners. As per reasons most of the voluntary teachers complained against the delay in the delivery of the Primer-II.
- (ii) The impact of infrastructural and technical deficiencies of the learning centres of the North 24-Parganas District, West Bengal, described in the preceeding paragraphs, have been distinctly reflected in the limited enrichment of the learners' cognitions along the horizontal plain. Some of the main findings are as follows :-
  - (a) Estimated mean scores in reading ability (out of 16) are 10.08, 8.37, 9.44, 8.47 and 8.67 for Barasat, Basirhat, Bongaon, Barrackpore sub-divisions and the district as a whole, respectively.
  - (b) Corresponding values for writing ability (out of 55) are 33.90, 30.43, 30.18, 30.61 and 32.03.
  - (c) Corresponding values for numeracy (out of 50) are 34.62, 31.23, 34.09, 32.50 and 33.70.
  - (d) Corresponding values for composite total scores (out of 121) are 72.60, 65.04, 70.71, 66.59 and 74.40.
  - (e) Proportion neo-literates receiving NLM Norms (70% and above in total score) are 78.5, 52.5, 77.2, 55.7 and 71.92 respectively.

- (iii) As revealed from the obtained test scores 21.5% learners of Barasat, 47.5% learners of Basirhat, 22.8% learners of Bongaon, 44.3% learners of Barrackpore subdivisions and 28.02% learners of the total neo-literate population of the district are below the literacy level. There are great variation of results obtained by the learners in different subdivisions. The picture has become critical as the majority of learners of two subdivisions (Basirhat and Barrackpore) out of four are below the NLM standard and thereby lowers the standard of the whole district. This subdivision to subdivision variation within the district may be due to infrastructure facility of the learning centres, teaching methods, motivation of both voluntary teachers and learners etc., which also influenced between the learners variables. From the obtained figures it may be concluded that work for eradication of illiteracy through Total Literacy Campaign Programme, has been done well in the Barasat and Bongaon subdivisions of the district of North 24-Parganas, whereas the performance of the other two subdivisions, e.g., Basirhat and Barrackpore, are not upto the expectation.
- (iv) It is also revealed that the obtained F-ratios for Reading, Writing, Numeracy and composite total scores were much greater than their required critical values (at .001 level), result in the rejection of null hypothesis. This means the probability that the mean scores of the learners of the subdivisions differ merely by sampling error is very very small. The estimated  $\omega^2$  values implied that a strong statistical association existed between the subdivisions and the achievement scores of the learners with the strength of 19% for reading, 27% for writing and 24% for numeracy and 28% of the composite total score (Hays).
- (v) The important feature of the work was a concurrent assessment of learners' cognitive abilities by psychological tests. As the learning in the learning centres depends, to a rather large extent, on these abilities, it was worth which to do this assessment.

Regarding intelligence and simultaneous memory processing as revealed by Mean score of Raven's Progressive Matrices Test the neo-literate population of the district and all the subdivisions are much below the prescribed age norms. It is seen that same hierarching of subdivisions, as in learning, is also evident here. The



relative differences between the averages are, however, greatly reduced. Learners of Barasat and to some extent Bongaon subdivisions are found to be superior to the learners of other two subdivisions — in logical and spatial reasoning as indicated from the mean scores of the Progressive Test.

Regarding successive memory processing as revealed by the results of Digit Span Forward Test only 38.25% of adults and 13.31% of the non-formal (9-14 years age) groups in the district can recall seven digits in a series. The successful proportion of neo-literates in different subdivisions are — Barasat - Adult (39.62%), non-formal (15.28%), Bongaon - Adult (39.32%), non-formal (16.41%), Barrackpore - Adult (37.52%), non-formal (10.31%) and Basirhat - Adult (38.37%), non-formal (9.25%). This shows that adult neo-literates of Barasat and non-formal neo-literates of Bongaon subdivisions are superior in cognitive abilities, in the district, as revealed by the psychological tests.

So, in these selected areas of extracurricular activities the neo-literates, in general, revealed the influence of inadequate social transaction of the teaching. The learners, in general, have expressed the influence of cramming effect more and incompetencies in translating the gains of their learning in the learning centres to interpret relevant facts truly or meaningfully by keeping pace with expected age norms.

- (vi) Achievement tests used in this study were tailored for measuring a relatively low level of learning. That they were not difficult is seen from the fact the 90% or above scores are found to be received by learners in all the subdivisions. But the poor average performance of a few subdivisions learners is, therefore, likely to be due to poor teaching, in general, on the part of voluntary teachers and lack of motivation on the part of the taught, and not so much to any deficit in cognitive abilities. This is confirmed by statistical analysis of F-ratio and estimated  $\omega^2$  values.
- (vii) Gross disparities in the learning efficiency and extracurricular activities, over the learners in different subdivisions are always prominent. This is also confirmed by the statistical significance obtained by F-ratio. So the expectation of policy-makers regarding universalisation of literacy remained unfulfilled.

### 5.5. Demographic Variables Related Problems :

Effects of socio-economic stratifications on learners' achievement are more or less consistent as expected. Nevertheless, the study has thrown up many an interesting issue which calls for an explanation :

- (i) Females predominate over males in all the four subdivisions and the district as a whole, which indicates higher motivation of female learners to be literate than their male counterpart. Regarding the conventional idea about the superiority of males, findings of the present study in relation to reading, writing, neumeracy, composite total scores and for attaining NLM norms, support the view with statistical significance in favour of sex influence over their achievement record.
- (ii) In general, two groups of potential learners, e.g., non-formal (9-14 years of age group) and Adult (15 years and above age groups) are enrolled in the learning centres. In the present study a large proportion of adult population is found in the learning centres, in comparison to the non-formal groups. This indicates that adult learners are much motivated to learn their younger generation. Regarding achievement also they were better than their younger counterpart in every respect, in the district as a whole and in all the subdivisions, except Barrackpore, where non-formal groups are found better than their counterparts in every aspects, which may be due to some local factors which influenced their better result.
- (iii) Neo-literates in the district belonged to either Hindu or Muslim communities, with the predominancy of the farmer group in almost all the subdivisions except Bongaon, where the Muslim community predominates. Religion to which the learners belong have a direct learning on their scholastic achievement. Performances of Hindu learners are always better than those of Muslim community in the district and in all the subdivisions except Bongaon, where Muslim learners are found better than their Hindu counterpart in every respect.
- (iv) Learning centres of the district are found to be dominated by Scheduled Caste learners (36%) followed by other Backward Caste groups (26%),

Upper Castes (20%) and Scheduled Tribes (18%). Before political independence (1947), due to class and caste prejudice, the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes and other Backward Caste groups are not encouraged to become literate even — as because the society used to get cheap manual labours from these groups. Though at present the Government is trying to improve the situation by reserving seats for these groups side by side with the higher castes to respect the spirit of equal rights of the citizen, the caste prejudice and stereotypes regarding untouchability of low castes are not totally wiped out.

Caste groups which the learners belong have a direct learning on their scholastic achievement. Performances of upper caste learners are better than those of other castes in the district. This may be due to the fact that most of the other castes learners are first generation learners.

- (v) Majority of the learners (63%) in the district belong to the unskilled labour class and do not have any fixed income. They are followed by unemployed (18%) and only a small groups (5%) are employed. From the findings it can be said that a strong association exists between the achievement of learners and their profession. Performance of unemployeds (78%) are always higher than the other groups followed by daily wages (72%), self employed (67%) and service-holder (61%) in the district. This clearly indicates the high motivation for learning among the unemployeds and daily wage earners for having a good job and fixed income — thereby a link between education and employment.
- (vi) More than 70% of the learners of the district are first generation learners. The percentage of parents (father and mother) devoid of any ability to read and write alphabets reached 71% and 85% respectively in the district. From the findings it can be revealed that a very strong association exists between the achievement of learners and their parents' educational attainment, which is also statistically verified.
- (vii) Majority of the learners (82%) of the district belong to large families of more than 5 members, which clearly indicates the little impact of

"Family Planning" upon the neo-literates. However, the family size of the learners does not reflect any consistent effect upon the competency level of their learning gains.

- (viii) About 16% of the neo-literates in the district belong to below poverty line families, with a monthly family expenditure of Rs.500/-only and below. However, majority of them (57%) belong to the middle position between Rs. 501/- to Rs. 1,000/- only as monthly family expenditure. It is evident from the findings that economic status of the neo-literates bear no influence on their achievement.
- (ix) About 28% of the learning centres of the district do not function regularly for various reasons, as reported by the neo-literates. Findings revealed that regular functioning of the learning centres has a clear positive impact on the achievement of the neo-literates in the district.
- (x) 62% of neo-literate population of the district are regular in attendance in the learning centres. Among the 38% of the absentees in the district, the main reason of absence is for household work. Other major grounds for absence were 'not released by the employer', applied for the 'serviceholder' and 'day labour' learners, and 'irregular functioning of the learning centres'. It needs special intervention of the authority to change the timing of the learning centres so that it can accommodate maximum number of learners. Achievement of the neo-literates who are regular in the learning centres are always higher than those who are irregular.
- (xi) A very large majority of the neo-literates (95%) of the district are attending the learning centres with the aim of gaining 'prosperity in life', while only a very small percentage of them (5%) are coming to learning centres just to 'enjoy the learning', which clearly indicates high motivation of learning on the part of the neo-literates of the district. From the findings it may be said that the aim of learning has a positive effect upon the achievement of the neo-literates.

- (xii) It is found that a large majority of the neo-literates (85%) of the district do not get any help from anybody at home or anywhere outside their learning centres for mastery over lessons and task completions. It is found that such guidance outside the learning centres are always significantly helpful in achieving the literacy level.
- (xiii) Though a large majority of the learners (91%) of the district do not face any difficulty in getting learning materials from the learning centres, still there are a few learners (9%) who do not obtain either any of the learning materials (primers, papers, pencil etc.) or all of them from the learning centres for reasons not known. May be they have joined the centres late. Learning achievements are always found significantly better for the neo-literates, who are not facing such difficulties.
- (xiv) A large majority of the neo-literates (57%) of the district cannot spare time in study beyond their learning centres. Out of those who (43%) can spare some time in study, 44% have got no habit of reading any supplementary book or newspapers etc. besides this usual primers. This may be either due to their poor socio-economic condition or lack of reading habits as first generation learners in the family. By and large, there is a linear positive association between both the processes, viz., study habit beyond the learning centres and frequency of supplementary reading and the learners' achievements the higher frequency, the higher is the score.
- (xv) In the district as a whole majority of the neo-literates do not have any specific aim for the future continuation of their study. They have left their choice with the authorities for so long as they continue their study in the learning centres. A very small percentage of them are expecting upto Secondary level 21% of the district population of neo-literates are happy to have some working knowledge of literacy. From the obtained results, no clear association between their expected education and their achievement have been found.
- (xvi) A notable percentage of neo-literates (66%) are eager to change their present profession after obtaining the literacy. Among them 69% prefer

self employment or small business and 31% service. Though a significant relationship is found to exist between the 'change of profession' of the learners and their achievement scores, but no such relationship observed with their choice of profession.

- (xvii) In all the demographic variables, a large variations among the performances of the neo-literates among the four subdivisions of the district. From the obtained F-ratios and estimated values it is reasonably safe to conclude that a very strong statistical association exists between the subdivisions and the achievement of the neo-literates irrespective of demographic variables and this association is quite sizeable in a productive sense for any population situation corresponding to this study (Hays, 1963).

#### **5.6. In Relation to the Impact of Literacy :**

Short term impact of Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) is the main focus of the present study. From the findings, certain aspects may be delineated to be present here.

##### **(i) Participation in TLC :**

Among different groups of learners, the evermarried females have figured most prominently in TLC. This may be caused by the traditionally prevailing trend of wide spread early marriage particularly in the rural sector. It is also found that Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and other Backward Castes are relatively more prominent than others, so far as participation in TLC as well as prevalence of illiteracy in Pre-TLC period are concerned

##### **(ii) Reasons for Joining TLC :**

Though most of the male and female respondents joined TLC mostly 'for the sake of knowledge', the 35% of female and 22% of male respondents took up the noteworthy position of a noble cause as 'to help children in their study'.

It is observed that majority of the respondents have been influenced by the voluntary teachers to join the TLC. Besides other motivators, Gram Panchayat

members, District Political leaders, etc., some of the respondents are self motivated to join the TLC. This may be due to wide spread campaign of the Zilla Saksharata Samity **at** the grass root level.

**(iii) Reasons for Not Joining TLC :**

Majority of the illiterate males of the district do not join the TLC for 'pressure of jobs', while the majority of female illiterates stay away 'for preoccupation with household work and other jobs'. However, 18% of the female respondents say that, they stay away only because their husbands or other elderly members of the house do not want female literacy. This factor is prominent mostly among the Muslim religious groups.

**(iv) Drop-outs from TLC :**

A significant proportion of respondents participated initially but could not continue or complete the TLC course for various reasons. One such reason is the winding up of the learning centres, due to non-availability of the voluntary teachers with regularity. The other major causes, as observed, are for the male respondents, 'pressure from their present employer for not to join the TLC'. May be they do not want unskilled labour to be literate, only because, they may have the idea that once they are literate, they would not tolerate their exploitation. For the females besides this reason there are other reasons too, e.g., 'non-availability separate learning centres for females', 'female teachers', pressure from their family members, etc.

**(v) Changes in the Reflective and the Material Spheres :**

In order to discuss the impact of TLC on the reflective domain of the learners, two types of appraisal are carried out — (a) attitude of the respondents regarding education, early marriage health consciousness and (b) general observations of the participants. The results indicate that majority of the neo-literates and illiterates are eager to send their wards to the school. Regarding marriage age majority of the respondents of both the neo-literates and the illiterates of the district, by and large prefer, early marriage of the girls, whereas for the marriage age of the boys the attitude of the neo-literates and the illiterates are just reversed.

**(vi) Health Consciousness :**

It appears that the respondents consider 'washing hands before taking food', 'cleanliness of residential place and its surroundings' and 'children to take bath regularly', 'use of fresh tap or tubewell water for drinking', etc., to be the principle preventive measures. This awareness indicates a rather realistic attitude. Still, there are a few among neo-literates and maximum numbers among illiterate groups who do not consider this. So the impact of literacy has made little effect upon them. It is encouraging to note that in case of illness the respondents, by and large, consult doctors or go to hospitals or Public Health Centres. Simultaneously, the low proportion among neo-literates and moderately high proportion among illiterates, of the user of black magic or witchcraft may be an indicator of the little influence of literacy upon the traditional prejudice.

However, though there has been an increased desire to avail of modern health facilities, the majority of the illiterates and a few of the neo-literate respondents, still get the child delivery by untrained midwife.

A majority of illiterate respondents and about one-fourth of the neo-literates still do not consider 'immunisation' as essential.

**(vii) General Awareness :**

It is found from the general observations of the respondents on other items in course of attitude measurement that the neo-literates show more positive attitude compared to the illiterates. Majority of the neo-literates are aware about operation and success of the TLC programme in the district, whereas illiterates are not at all interested in this matter.

Regarding preference for post-literacy subjects both the neo-literate and illiterate respondents have made a few practical suggestions. These suggestions indicate awareness of the respondents about the incompleteness inherent in the TLC programme of the district. However, as regards the subjects which are proposed to be taken up for further learning or inclusion in the TLC are farming, poultry and animal husbandry, handicrafts, pisciculture, electrical/electronics works, etc.



These preferences tend to reflect the urge of the respondents for betterment of their lot, in an elementary but realistic manner.

The difference of attitudes among the neo-literates and illiterates assuming diffusion effects being equally operative on TLC participants and non-TLC respondents may be caused distinctly by TLC factors.

#### 5.7. Comments :

According to the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE, 1992), evaluation of learner should be two-fold in character, namely, 'formative' and 'summative'. The formative evaluation commences right from the stage of formulation of action plan and its implementation at various stages; while the summative evaluation deals with evaluation of learning outcome at different stages and teaching-learning process as also with the impact of the programme on acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills and on the overall quality of life of the learner. Such evaluation, in addition to being a tool of assessment and review of the status of the programme, could also be a supportive tool to introduce correctives to improve the quality and content of the programme. It may be claimed that more or less such evaluation techniques has been fairly reflected in the present study. The broad motivational and organisational drawbacks and certain incompleteness inherent in the planning of the total programme is evident from almost 50% drop out of the potential learners (9.24 lakhs enrolled in September, 1991) within two years. About one-third of the learning centres of the district (from 51,000 in September, 1991 to 35,000 in August, 1993) had to be wind up for want of voluntary trainers with regularity. Though occupational and other hazards in the daily life of the poverty stricken learners, the religious festivals, the climate and other natural factors were also partly responsible for the above drop out, however, there was considerable variations unevenness in the process of rejuvenation and the individual initiative or the lack of it among the district officials was distinctly observed in different spheres.

The most redeeming features appear to be the indomitable urge of the overwhelming majority of the poor learners to strive for literacy, but winding up of the learning centres and/or consolidation of separate learning centres for females and non-formal (9-14 years of age) groups with the adult male centres and becomes the great obstacle in spreading the literacy by demotivating the learners.

Voluntary teachers, generally come from poor socio-economic families, are gradually losing their motivation to attract learners and teaching for want of proper training, incentives and permanent jobs. Most of the centres could not complete Primer-II due to delay in supply. Moreover, such primers are also not exclusive for the first generation learners of the district.

In spite of all these, 72% of the learners of the district have attained the literacy as per NLM criteria by obtaining more than 70% marks in reading, writing and numeracy. If all the other facilities are there 100% of them would surely attain literacy.

Though the district has been declared as the fully literate district by the Government, the universal literacy is yet to be attained. Most of the traditional beliefs and prejudices, still persists among the persons there. Though there are some changes in the economic life of the learner, it is difficult to attribute them solely to the TLC factors, other non-TLC factors are there, e.g., land reforms, mobilisation of the peasantry by mass organisations and exposure of a sizeable section of the less educated population to audio-visual media.

The aim of the total Literacy Campaign is yet to be fulfilled due to apathy and goodwill of a certain sections of the community. They do not consider the need for education to such proletarian section of the population whom they have deprived for years together and use them as their own personal property. These people are suffering from the obsession that if these people are educated, they would be conscious about their rights and privileges and would not be their puppet anymore.

#### **5.8. Suggestions :**

1. Imparting of literacy should be placed in the context of the developmental needs of the learners. Total literacy programmes and also post-literacy programmes should be accompanied by a wide range of measures relating to health, family planning, nutrition, housing and employment needs. They should also address themselves to issue of fundamental rights, laws, secularism and democracy. After creating awareness in respect of these essential needs and issues the learner himself should be expected to ask for literacy as a felt

need. Instead of starting with literacy the start should be irrespective of creation of awareness for essential needs and from their work backward to literacy.

2. On most of the developmental problems and matters relating to fundamental rights, social justice, etc., the majority of the illiterates more often than not find themselves in positions of conflict with the official authorities. Therefore, genuine initiatives for TLC programmes voluntary agencies, community groups, political parties and their mass organisations should be facilitated.
3. Along with TLC programme, an independent study group should be commissioned to evaluate the programme, side by side particularly, with a view to arrive at an understanding of what may be appropriate strategies to remove illiteracy in the quicker possible time. The evaluation may also look into the various alternative models and study their relevance with respect to diverse socio-cultural and political conditions in different parts of the country.
4. The neo-literates should be placed in an environment in which they have constant interface with the challenge of the written word.

#### **5.9. Urgent Attention :**

The following points deserve urgent attention of the authorities concerned to improve the planning and administration of Total Literacy Campaign in any district in near future :-

1. Primers to be extensively revised and should include modern methods of farming, handicrafts, animal husbandry, pisciculture, electric and electronics works and other vocational skills amongst the illiterates. For this the Department of Education should coordinate with the Department of Rural Development and Ministry of Labour and organise programmes for vocational skills for the illiterates. There will enhance the employability of the adult illiterates and thereby create awareness regarding basic needs and issues of life in the process generating demand for literacy as a felt need.

2. Learning centres should be opened in the public places, e.g., school building, clubs, etc., instead of private dwelling houses. These centres should be within walking distance for the learners and the timings should be according to the spare times of the majority learners. If necessary, 2-3 shifts may also be done.
3. Voluntary teachers, key persons, master trainers should be properly trained by the experts so that they can motivate to teach and attract learners to learning centres. They should be given proper incentives and after successful completion of the programme they may be absorbed in the post-literacy centres or in primary schools. Only female voluntary teachers to be allotted for the female learning centres.
4. All the learning centres should be provided with a blackboard and sufficient lighting arrangement should be there. All the learning materials are to be provided to the learning centres in time. Adequate Government grant should be provided for meeting the daily expenses to run the centres.
5. Regular visit by the key persons and other members of the locality should be there to note the progress of learning and learners' attendance. Short term evaluation may be done by the voluntary teachers to their own centres to check the progress. There should be remedial teaching for the low achievers.
6. It is imperative that universalisation of Elementary Education is given top priority in educational planning and resource allocation (Banerjee, 1993). The objective should be to ensure that no child in the district at present shall grow into an illiterate adult in the next century. If this can be achieved, it would have then succeeded in controlling the chief contributor to illiteracy in India, i.e., low rate of participation in school education.
7. Strict adherence to implement juvenile justice measures to abolish child labour and present misuse of the abilities of growing children, by the ignorant or negligent guardians, violating the constitutional rights of children.
8. Strict community vigilance against not releasing potential learners either in the household or in the working place to the learning centres for the sake of religion or workload.

9. The tools and techniques used in the present investigation can be safely administered to other districts — a task which must get priority attention.