ABSTRACT

Education can substantially account for the progress of nations as illiteracy is for their backwardness. For developing economics, Adult Education is as vital as formal education. The design of Adult Education programmes, the style of their execution and their periodic monitoring and evaluation determine their contribution to the adult illiterates and the general community.

The present study is an evaluation of Adult Education programmes in a southern most part of an Indian State. It throws light on the efforts and results of Adult Education programmes in the selected district of Tamilnadu, implemented by the Government, Voluntary Agencies and University and Colleges. The study covered a bunch of seven integral programmes in Adult Education, and contacted a cross section of over 500 Adult Education Functionaries and learners, from District Education Officer down to Animators, Volunteers and Instructors in all the 14 blocks of Dindigul district. The study analyses the background of learners, their progress in knowledge addition, assesses the qualitative and quantitative results of Adult Education programme, identifies the attributes and conditions required for its success and evaluates both the organisational set-up and educational content. The study found that the learners acquired skills in either easy numeracy and awareness. However, functional literacy programmes did not take off since no agency had initiated any steps. The functionaries motivated the learners by using innovative methods like cultural programmes, processions, rallies and debates. The learners in the programme
realised the obstacles in being illiterate and expressed their determination to educate their children. On the grey side, Adult Education programmes are conducted on an adhoc basis and hence unable to yield good results. The functionaries of various programmes quit Adult Education upon placement in the schools.

Suggesting ways of improvement, the respondents noted that imparting vocational education, providing incentives to the learners, provision of adequate amenities to the centres and use of Audio-Visual aids would enrich the programme. Further, greater co-operation from the learners, positive attitude of the higher Officials, permanency of job, good pay for the functionaries, conveyance support for the field visits and making the programme as a permanent on going one were expressed as the requirements of enhancing the interest and motivation of the personnel in Adult Education programme. The study observes that in the modern era of information technology, adult learners need to be reached through modern means of communication in their houses and at the work spots in the community and society at large.