INTRODUCTION

T.P “Empirical studies for designing and testing out some folk-art forms for conscientising adult learners in Kerala” Thesis. Department of Adult Education & Extension Services, University of Calicut, 2001
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Need and significance of the study
Statement of the problem
Definition of terms
Objectives of the study
Hypotheses
Methodology in brief
Scope and limitation
Arrangement of the thesis
INTRODUCTION

Education plays a key role in the overall development of human beings. It occupies a honourable position in the society. It is true that national cohesion, scientific temper, independence of mind and spirit as enshrined in our constitution can be achieved only through the instrument of education.

Education has been considered to be a noble endeavour since time immemorial, in gurukulas, ashrams and monasteries. At the time of independence India we adopted the British system of education which was not only qualitatively inadequate but also characterized by structural imbalance. At that time, only fourteen percent of population was literate and that only one child out of three had been enrolled in a primary school. Low levels of participation and literacy was aggravated by acute regional, gender and social imbalances and disparities. In India the task of educating the illiterate folk was proved very difficult because of its huge size, multi-linguistic and multi cultural diversities.

After independence the planners as well as the administrators realized the urgent need for a national system of education suited to the need and aspiration of the free and modern India. The makers of the constitution itself laid basic pillars on which the edifice of Indian education could be built.

In the educational set up of our country primary schools occupy a very significant slot. At present India has one of the largest elementary education systems in the world. From 1990 onwards we have been following a Minimum
Level of Learning (MLL) and that greater efforts have since been made to impart education effectively. In the elementary education sector a number of innovations in the form of centrally sponsored schemes have been made in different states as an aftermath of National Policy on Education (1986). These are Operation Black Board, restructuring and strengthening the Teacher Education for upgrading the skill of teachers, Non-Formal Education Programmes, District Primary Education Programmes (DPEP), Sarva Shikshak Abhayan, etc. In the post 1986 period significant shift was seen in funding towards elementary education and adult literacy with the objective of achieving the goal of “Education for All.” The DPEP launched in 1994 with assistance from the World Bank lays emphasis on decentralized management, community mobilization and district were specific planning.

India cannot remain aloof from the influences of globalization in the field of education. We have to produce competent brains to meet the challenges of the modern times. So enterprising educationists from different states in the country have already come forward through to take up the task established government-semi-government, private institutions and self financing institutions, to meet the challenges. But at the same time it will be the look out of the government to see that the larger community being provided a universal sound primary education. For that they have to adopt even the method of adult education. In this context Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao’s observation is very relevant. He says “without adult education and adult literacy, it is not possible to have that range
and spread of economic and social development which we require, nor it is possible to have that content or quality, or tone to our economic and social development that makes it worth in terms of values and welfare. A programme of adult education and literacy should therefore take a front place in any programme for economic and social development.”¹

Literacy is a basic human need and a key to education. There is a correlation between literacy and economic development. Literacy influences economic development in several ways; in the first place, the educational system provides the labour force, that matches the needs of economy. Secondly literacy is a pre-requisite of economic development. It assumes a particular set of attitudes and values or broadly a new culture of its own. A tradition bound society can be converted into modern one only through literacy of its masses. According to Robert Heilbroner “The mere lay-in of a core of capital equipment, indispensable as that is for further economic expansion, does not yet catalyse a tradition bound society into a modern one. For that catalysis to take place, nothing short of a pervasive social transformation will suffice; a wholesale metamorphosis of habits, a wrenching re-orientation of values concerning time, status, money, work; and un-weaving and re-weaving of the fabric of daily existence itself.”²  During the last fifty three years, the country has been

making significant progress in the literacy programmes. But the widening spread and influence of electronic media are throwing up new challenges at an alarming rate. So a concerted and well determined effort on the part of the authorities is essential for the development of India. Otherwise it will remain as an illiterate and economically backward nation in this century in the wake of globalization, liberalization and privatisation.

Literacy is the foundation of human capital for better quality of life and wealth of a nation in respect of social, economic and political development. The eradication of illiteracy from a thickly populated country like India is not an easy job. To eradicate adult illiteracy the government of India launched a mission called National Literacy Mission (NLM) in 1988. Without eradicating illiteracy the process of nation building would never be completed. The goal of NLM is to attain a sustainable literacy level of seventy five percent by 2005. The Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs) and Post Literacy Campaigns (PLCs) are the principal strategies adopted by NLM for eradication of illiteracy in India. The literacy campaigns are area-specific, time-bound, cost effective and outcome oriented. More over it lays emphasis on decentralized management, community mobilization and district specific planning. NLM has made all efforts to organize literacy movement and to achieve the best result.

Despite all those efforts it is a fact that one third of the World’s largest illiterate population is in India. This may be due to the fast rate of growth of
population which has already crossed the one billion mark. No doubt the literacy growth rate could not keep pace with this population growth rate. Consequently the number of illiterates went on increasing for several decades. A turn round in this trend has been visible since 1991. Between the period of 1991 and 1997 sustainable reduction in the number of illiterates was noted indicating the success of the efforts made in the area of literacy and basic education.

The field of adult education experienced that the efforts made in the literacy programmes will be useless, unless effective post-literacy and continuing education are provided with. There were a number of literacy campaigns and missions. Most of the participants of these area are of fragile nature and if they do not strengthen the newly acquired literacy skill in their day to day life, they are liable to relapse soon into the illiteracy level. So conscientious efforts should go into literacy drives because literacy is an important input in the overall development of individuals and nations. Through the continuing educational awareness on social issues the future of society could be qualitatively improved. Adult learners can be brought into the creative arena of the world by means of continuous conscientious efforts on the part of educators.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE

Transformation of World can be carried out by human observations, that is, the knowledge acquired by human beings is important for nourishing
progress of the world. Knowledge has many dimensions and it is available everywhere. It is present in human brain, acquired through education information, intelligence, experience and conscientiousness. Education, consciousness and conscientiousness among adult learners are essential for a participatory society. For the effective development of peoples' power, they themselves have to come forward readily. Individual and society received education through the effort of study which can be easily adopted by others.

Education cannot, on its own solve the problem raised by the social ties, for life based education is the basic component of social cohesion and national identity. The four pillars of education, such as learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be - make the adult learners to identify their own problems. They themselves have to find out suitable solution for this, that is, a problematic situation has to be solved by themselves. It is achieved only through co-operative effort of each and every individual - which is the real and deep level education. It acts as a great contribution for the healthy development of the individual and the society.

For achieving the deep level education literacy is an essential component. Literacy facilitates the development in the social sector especially in health, primary education, labour, industry, rural development, poverty eradication, peace, population control and such other critical areas of development. In order to impart education in the social issues to the adult learners, conscientisation is needed.
The concept of conscientisation is the arousing of man’s positive self in relation to environment and society through liberating education. Conscientisation techniques presents a life situation in order to promote and reflect the reality of human problems to the learners, using generative themes and meaningful words.

According to Paulo Freire, “Conscientisation does not stop at the level of mere subjective perception of a situation, but through action, prepares men for the struggle against the obstacle to their humanization.”

In Kerala there are a number of adult education centres, for providing literacy to the illiterate masses, and full fledged centres of learning for all categories of people from all walks of life. It should be a common place for all, having something to give and take through learning, implementing different programmes. But none of the programmes include any conscientisation themes connected with social issues. Our nation requires conscientisation programmes connected with social issues to eradicate the social evils prevailing in the country.

One can not attain conscientisation through any mechanistic fashion, but through culture. India’s culture is based on various traditional art forms. Hence if the art forms are used for implementing education for adult learners, it can be digested easily and maximum out put achieved.

The style of folk art forms are peculiar and are worth studying as the most valuable treasures of culture and growth of a society. The folk art forms are not mere art to be appreciated and enjoyed but every aspect of, real life is reflected in it and that every point is easily communicable. Folk art forms have by and large, retained their characteristics, perhaps due to the compulsions of the historical and social conditions both in terms of forms of meaning and more importantly function. Folk art forms are constituted by illiterates, backward farmers and rural people.

In Kerala for conscientising the adult learners no scientifically tested models have been evolved and developed using folk art forms and hence the present investigation. Certain models have to be developed. Through these models, the interest of the adult learners, their participation and conscientisation, towards social issues can be improved. The present study is intended to develop such scientific models and testing out some folk art forms for conscientising the adult learners in Kerala. Since folk art forms are easily communicable and popular it would be most appropriate to make use of these forms for developing models or strategies in order to conscientise the adult learners.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The present study titled as "EMPIRICAL STUDIES FOR DESIGNING AND TESTING OUT SOME FOLK ART FORMS FOR CONSCIENTISING ADULT LEARNERS IN KERALA."
DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. Folk art forms

Specified popular and traditional art forms of the present context. In this study the folk art forms refers to:

a) Ottanthullal,
b) Street drama,
c) Vilpattu,
d) Kathaprasangam, and
e) Drama.

2. Conscientising

Developing of a deep moral awareness and preparing of positive action in relation to something one’s environment and society through deep level education.

3. Adult learners

Learners who are outside the normal age of schooling, falling within the 15-60 age group, not attending formal schools.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the major objectives of the study:

1. To identify the critical area in which adult learners are to be conscientised
2. To develop appropriate conscientisation strategies using the following folk art forms:

   a) Ottanthullal
   b) Street drama
   c) Vilpattu
   d) Kathaprasangam and
   c) Drama.

3. To test the efficacy of the five conscientisation strategies used in the study, by measuring the attitude of the clientele groups towards, defined social issues by comparing the mean attitude scores of the group before and after the conscientisation using the test of significance.

HYPOTHESES

MAJOR HYPOTHESIS

Folklore techniques have maximum efficacy in changing the attitude of adult learners towards crucial social issues selected for study viz.,

1. Uncontrolled Population Explosion
2. Spread of AIDS
3. Alcoholism
4. Practice of Dowry
5. Social Disharmony
SUB-HYPOTHESIS

The select conscientisation programme will improve significantly the attitude of the adult learners towards each of the defined conscientisation areas.

METHODOLOGY IN BRIEF

The present study is intended to designing and testing out some folk art forms for conscientising the adult learners in Kerala. The study is experimental in nature. It is intended to conscientise the adult learners about the fixed social issues prevailing in our society, through five folk art forms.

TOOLS

1. Interview schedule

2. Attitude Scale

On the basis of the information collected with the help of interview schedule five social issues, i.e., Uncontrolled Population Explosion, Spread of AIDS, Alcoholism, Practice of Dowry and Social Disharmony, were identified. These issues were translated through easily digestible folk art forms as given below:

1. Uncontrolled Population Explosion, through the form of Ottanthullal,

2. Spread of AIDS through the form of street drama,

3. Alcoholism through the form of vilpattu,

4. Practice of Dowry through the form of Kathaprasangam, and

5. Social Disharmony through the form of drama.
From this strategy, the investigator prepared five attitude scales. This attitude scales were presented before the experts in the concerned field and certain changes made. Firstly five standardized attitude scales were prepared.

SAMPLE

The sample consisted of adult learners in Kerala. The sample selection was purposive, but true representation of the population. Here took purposive sample keeping in view the experimental nature of the study and its demand and delimitations. Out of the 1510 adult learners (733 males and 777 females) from rural, semi-urban, and urban areas of Kannur, Malappuram, Ernakulam, Pathanamthitta and Thiruvananthapuram districts. The number of samples selected for each category were as follows:


2. Spread of AIDS - 302 adult learners (145 males and 157 females)

3. Alcoholism - 310 adult learners (160 males and 150 females).

4. Practice of Dowry - 300 adult learners (143 males and 157 females) and

5. Social Disharmony - 300 adult learners (144 males and 156 females).

DATA COLLECTION

Keeping in mind with the five teaching models, that is, Inquiry Training Model, for Uncontrolled Population Explosion, Organizer model for Spread of
AIDS, Jurisprudential Model for Alcoholism, Social Simulation model for Practice of Dowry and Role playing for Social Disharmony, five folk art forms were presented to a group of adult learners in different places of Kerala. Before and after the presentation of the programme, copies of the standardized attitude scale were issued to the participants and collected the same duly filled up. Using these filled up attitude scales collected, the work was set in motion.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Analysis and interpretation of data was done using the test of significance.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The literacy campaigns in India have covered about 90 per cent of India’s villages and its population. Presently all the 14 districts of Kerala are covered by the continuing education programmes. For creating and building up an environment conducive to learning a number of programmes like Kala Jathas, Street Plays, Slogans, Wall Writings, Human chains, Cycle rallies, Local theatre puppetry, Folk songs and Modern media have been arranged. These campaigns also created social awareness regarding the importance of education both for parents as well as for their children including girls. The most illiterate and deprived section of the society have well appreciated this effort. Even though a number of efforts have been made to achieve total literacy, follow up
programmes were not up to the mark to keep the participants in the literate stage. All these efforts would not find its goal without having created proper awareness on the various social issues. There has been no attempt to test and evaluate the awareness of various social issues properly; especially those connected with folk art forms. The folk art forms easily arrest the minds of the adult learners. Most of the folk art forms can be used for conscientising the adult learners.

In Kerala the number of adult learners are much more than one expects. Out of the fourteen districts, only six areas in five districts were selected. Tribal areas, hilly areas, coastal areas were not selected. Because of the empirical design of the study and also time limitation, much of the areas could not be considered for the study. Regarding the sample - since the study is of experimental nature limited the number of adult learners to 1510 and were randomly selected in rural, semi-urban, and urban areas. Among the number of socially relevant problems here, only five problems were selected because the experts in the fields concerned, have identified these five problems as crucial. These social issues were presented in five folk art forms selected from the folk art group. These folk art forms are capable of communication to the adult learners. Conscientisation can gain its fruits.

In this study interview schedule and attitude scale are used for collecting data. For analysing the data test of significance is used.
ARRANGEMENT OF THE THESIS

This thesis consists of six chapters. The introductory chapter includes need and significance, objectives, hypothesis, statement of the problem, definition of the terms, methodology in brief scope and limitations.

In chapter two, an attempt has been made to sketch out the literacy movement- a global perspective, literacy programmes and movements in India, such as, National Adult Education, the Farmers Functional Literacy, National Adult Education Programmes - National Literacy Mission, Jana Shikshan Nilayam, Mass Literacy Campaigns in Kerala, The Peoples Education and Literacy Campaign, Mass Literacy Campaign (MLC) Model - an Indian Experience (Ernakulam Total Literacy Campaign). State Level Mass Literacy Campaign, Post-Literacy and Continuing Education, etc.

Review of the related studies has been attempted in the next chapter.

Chapter four deals with methodology. It includes selection of the social issues, preparation and standardization of the attitude scales, selection of samples and implementation of the five strategies.

Analysis and interpretation of data obtained has been attempted to in the fifth chapter.

The last chapter contains conclusions and suggestions of the study.

As in customary to every thesis bibliography, tables, charts, diagrams etc., are appended towards the end of the thesis.