SUMMARY:

Education is essential for all round development of the individual as well as country. Literacy is the medium to educate men. Although literacy means acquaintance with the alphabet and ability to read and write, but mere attainment of skill in reading and writing is no longer accepted as a satisfactory definition of literacy. The concept of literacy in course of time stressed functional aspect. Literacy rather than an end in itself should be regarded as a way of preparing men for a social, civic and economic role.

Literacy is an essential tool for communication and learning for acquiring and sharing information, a pre-condition for a persons physical and mental growth and national development. Illiteracy has become an international problem. Most of the illiterate people of the world live in southern Asian countries. Literacy rate in India is only 52.11 percent as per 1991 census. In case of Assam it is only 53.42 percent.

Various efforts have been made by Central Government and State Governments for eradication of illiteracy from India. National Literacy Mission (NLM) was launched on 5th May, 1988, but these centre based approach for eradication of illiteracy failed to achieve the target. With the sight of the strategy from centre based approach to campaign approach the dominant strategy under the Mission is now the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) which is characterised by the large scale involvement of people for
eradication of illiteracy within a specified area in a time bound manner. It is estimated to cover 80 million illiterate people of age group 15 to 35 years.

With the campaign in the country, the State of Assam has also launched TLC in a few of its districts. Jorhat is the first district of Assam to take up Total Literacy Campaign. Jorhat, which is located at upper Assam and 313 Km. far from Guwahati, the capital of Assam, literacy rate in Jorhat as per 1991 census is 65.5 percent. More important from the point of view of launching TLC is the contribution of Jorhat in the field of education, literature, art and culture.

The investigator selected the present study entitled "perspective of Total Literacy Campaign : A case study of Jorhat District", for the reason that it is necessary to know how effectively the campaign was functioning and to ascertain to what extent the beneficiaries could perceive and react to the campaign. The study tries to know the reasons for success and failure of the campaign and it will help to a great extent in understanding the various ways in which the campaign is implemented.

The present study has been undertaken with the objectives -
1. To assess the performance of TLC in Jorhat district.
2. To study the perception and reaction of the beneficiaries towards the TLC in Jorhat district.
3. To find out the problems in the implementation of TLC in Jorhat district.
4. To suggest positive and constructive suggestions for future action.
It is assumed in the study that performance of TLC in Jorhat is not total. It is also assumed that there exist variations among beneficiaries of TLC in Jorhat district. Furthermore beneficiaries vary in their perceptions and reactions towards the TLC programme. It is also assumed that there exist different problems in the implementation of TLC in Jorhat district.

Although different studies have been conducted on literacy programme in India, but in Assam very few studies have been conducted in this field. In 1974 B.K. Talukdar surveyed the status of adult education in Assam. K. Hatibaruah studied on educational programme for community living with special reference to community development blocks of Kamrup district. In her study she also studied the role of adult education in community living. M. Das (1989) studied on the socio-economic problems in the implementation of Adult Education programme in Assam.

The present study is conducted under the Descriptive survey method. Different tools like questionnaire, Interview and Information schedule have been used for data collection. To select sample for the present study a simple random sampling design has been adopted. Total 30 percent Gaon Panchayats from each Anchalik Panchayat have been selected for study. A group of 400 learners, 100 volunteer teachers, and 100 local leading people from different 33 Gaon Panchayat have been selected for the study at random. In order to analyse the collected data both quantitative and qualitative approach have been adhered to. Numerical data have been analysed through frequencies, percentage and standard error. Tabulations and graphical representation are also used as per the need of the study.
Total Literacy Campaign in Jorhat district was launched on 8th September 1992 which was proposed to cover 1,20,000 learners and decided to cover illiterate of age group 15 to 45 years, with primary objectives of achieving self reliance in literacy and numeracy, becoming aware of the causes of deprivation and acquisition of skills to improve economic status and general well being. Emphasis has been given on population education and conservation of environment as the secondary objectives of learning. TLC in Jorhat district has been implemented by Jorhat Zilla Saksharata Samity which is a voluntary organisation with Deputy Commissioner, Jorhat as president. Four tier organisational structure was set up at district level, block level, Gaon Panchayat and Tea Garden/Ward/Village level. Different programmes like cultural procession, cycle rally, public meeting were organised for environment building. To impart literacy to illiterates three primers were prepared. Training was conducted in three phases for key resource persons, master trainers and volunteer Teachers.

Some of the major findings of the study are:

1. Implementation of Total Literacy Campaign in Jorhat District cannot be considered as totally successful programme.

2. There was no considerable impact of environment building and consequently there was lack of community participation in the programme.

3. Most of the learners belong to economically poor sections of the society, similarly most of the Volunteer Teachers belong to poor income group and 52 percent of them were unemployed.
4. Attendance of the learners in literacy centre is not satisfactory, there was 10 to 25 percent dropout learners. The main reason for irregularity as found are - family burden, lack of spare time, lack of interest, work load, personal illness etc.

5. Most of the learners are still not acquainted with three R's which is the basis for education.

6. There was lack of enthusiasm and commitment on the part of the volunteers. Some Volunteers expect to get honararium.

7. Natural calamities like flood, particularly in Majuli sub-division had impeded the smooth organisation of the campaign.

8. There was negligence in the supply of teaching learning materials. No audio visual aids were used in any one of the centres. Most of the topics were introduced verbally without any aids.

9. There was no proper supervision of the centre and there was no fixed time table and holidays for the centre.

10. Vocational course for productive work and occupational development of the learners was not introduced.

11. Training of Volunteer Teachers was neglected, Most of the VTs were trained only once and it was non-residential.
12. Most of the learners already relapse into illiteracy due to lack of post literacy programme.

In the light of the above mentioned findings and problems of TLC in Jorhat district some constructive suggestions have been given for improvement of the condition. Some of the major suggestions are:

1. More importance should be given on Motivation as such environment building should be made more seriously.

2. Involvement of students and teachers, community people, ex-servicemen, housewives should be emphasised.

3. More voluntary organisations should be involved and financial grant should be given to them.

4. Importance should be given on proper supply of teaching learning materials and training of volunteers.

5. Incentives or honorarium to the volunteer is a must.

6. Some manual work should be imparted to the learners.

7. There should be proper supervision, accommodation and fixed time table of the centres.

8. Post literacy programme should be launched and gaps between TLC and PLC should be minimised.
The present study shows that total literacy campaign in Jorhat district suffers from some serious shortcomings. The programme cannot succeed without explicit commitment and total involvement of state government as well as public. This campaign should be made a people programme in Spirit. If the suggestions are taken into consideration there can be qualitative and quantitative improvement of the programme.

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