CHAPTER - V

ADULT EDUCATION AND
ITS SIGNIFICANCE
FOR COMMUNITY LIVING
Most of the developing countries in the world have disadvantaged segment of population who are denied opportunities even to satisfy their minimal learning needs. Their number is quite substantial depending on the size and resources of the country. This deprivation is more pronounced among out-of-school children, school drop-outs, youths and women, and others of the weaker section of the society. So long as educational planning of countries are geared mainly to cater to the needs of the formal system of education and major share of educational resources is earmarked primarily
for formal programmes, there is little scope in most developing countries of any large scale expansion of opportunities for education for these disadvantaged segment of population.

Formal primary education even when combined with literacy courses for adults, is not designed to meet all the diverse needs of any group of people - least of all those of the deprived rural populations.¹

Needless to say, this sort of unhappy spectacle calls for new strategies to be evolved for educational planning that will encompass all possible avenues of learning, to provide educational opportunities in one form or another, such as formal, informal, non-formal, adult education, etc. to all people of both urban and rural areas. The strategy is to be so designed as to make contributions to the nationwide learning system for the improvement of the welfare and life prospects of the deprived segments of the society.

India is predominantly an agricultural country with more than two-thirds of its population (76.7 per cent) living

in rural areas with an overall literacy rate of 36.2 per cent (1981 Census). In spite of massive development efforts since India's independence, there has been no substantial improvement in the literacy rate. For instance, India's literacy rate which was 16.7 per cent in 1951, had increased to only 24.0 per cent in 1961, 29.4 per cent in 1971 and 36.2 per cent in 1981. This indicates that during these past three decades, the increase of literacy rate was respectively 7.3 per cent, 5.4 per cent and 6.8 per cent.

Against the backdrop of preponderance of rural population, educational efforts launched during the past three decades did not appear to have made any significant dent in the female literacy rate. This is evident from the fact that the last four Indian Censuses recorded the female literacy rates as 7.9 per cent during 1951, 13.0 per cent during 1961, 18.7 per cent during 1971 and 24.9 per cent during 1981.

The estimates made by the Registrar General of India indicate that during 1971, 77 per cent of the population in the rural areas were illiterate and among the females, the illiteracy rate was as high as 87 per cent. Whereas in urban areas, 48 per cent of the population were illiterate.

2. Source: Censuses of India, 1951 to 1981.
and among the males, the rate of illiteracy was 39 per cent as against female illiteracy rate of 59 per cent.\(^3\)

India is the largest democracy in the world and supports a population of 684 million (1981 Census), constituting about 15 per cent of the world population 4,600 million. Of the estimated total number of 814 million adult illiterates aged 15 years and above in the world in 1980, 243 million illiterates in this age-group forming 29.8 per cent of the total were in India. That is to say, nearly, one-third of the adult illiterates of the world is in our country.

Though the Constitution of India provides for imparting universal elementary education to all children and though it was sought to be achieved by 1960, this did not materialise due to various constraints. Available statistics shows that out of every 100 children, only 25 complete elementary education. During the terminal year of the Sixth Plan, greater emphasis was given on non-formal education. By the end of the Seventh Plan, i.e. by 1990, it has been proposed to give universal primary education to all children.

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3. Source: Estimates from 1 per cent sample data released by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Govt. of India (1971) published in the Hand Book of Educational and Allied Statistics (Table No. 1.6, pp. 14-15) Ministry of Education & Culture, Govt. of India, New Delhi.
in the age bracket of 6-14 years and it is expected that by then all adults in the age-group 15-35 years would be made literate.

For a country of India's size and with a population content, next only to China's and mass illiteracy to the tune of 64 per cent, Adult education can never be neglected even at a grave national crisis. It is against this background that Adult education has assumed added significance.

Adult education programme launched in India from the first Five Year Plan addresses itself to the unlettered rural adults in the age-group 15-35, who for their lack of literacy, awareness and skill find themselves incapable of participating in the developmental scheme of the country as also in improving their own economic condition and social status. Unfortunately, for our country, this deprived segment which is supposed to possess the maximum potential for increasing production and productivity in various sectors of the economy forms more than 15 per cent of the total population.

Adult education aims at salvaging this handicapped and disadvantaged segment of the population and harness its energy to the total development of the country. The Adult education programme is envisaged to equip the adult with the necessary knowledge and technical know-how to improve
his own personal prospect while at the same time contributing to the broader social objective. An adult equipped with basic knowledge, awareness and skill forms the basic input in the process of total development.

Adult education is a multi-dimensional concept. The meaning of Adult education to give thrust on mere literacy is no longer valid. In its global sweep, Adult education embodies everything that an adult might require for living in the environment of the society. Adult education has assumed different names in different times in different countries; viz. literacy, social education, life-long education, non-formal education, continuing education, education for freedom, education for liberation, fundamental education, correspondence education, distance education, open learning and functional literacy, to name only a few. It is a multi-disciplinary approach and different names have been assigned to it in view of the emphasis given to a particular dimension, in a particular country and time. In fact, it has become a world movement with myriad forms and shapes and no part of it can remain isolated.

Education is not an end in itself but it is a means to accelerate the process of social change. The development and change for better future rest with the people. They are the potential source of strength of a society. The more knowledgeable and enterprising the people are, the more dynamic and resourceful will be the society. The quality of life of the people will be determined by the environment
of the society they live in. When we speak of quality of life, we mean the intellectual level of development of the people which is again interlinked with the level of literacy and attainment of education. As long as illiteracy continues among the people, any attempt to bring about social and economic development is likely to be hindered.

A society with a high level of illiteracy cannot contribute to the well-being of the people, much less accelerate the process of economic development of the country. Adult education is intended to remedy the educational deprivation and thereby to develop their own potentiality. To make the development process self-reliant and self-generating in regard to opportunities and initiatives, it is absolutely necessary to educate the people.

According to A.J. Toynbee, a civilization survives only so long as it makes adequate response to the challenges of its time. In the slowly changing cultures, much of the learning of cultural and physical environment can take place at the stage of childhood and youth. Further learning, which is a must for any growing culture, can be acquired incidentally during a normal lifetime. Beyond this period, the nature and amount of learning to be attained by an individual depends largely upon the rapidity of change in

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the outer world. For a human being, there is always an element of flexibility because when major changes occur in an environment, one must adjust to them. He must learn for his survival or perish. Learn or perish ought to be the basic motto of adult education.

Human values and humanism must shape the emerging world, if mankind has to survive. Mankind can transcend the present condition by its own consciousness and effort. Man is largely the master of his destiny, which affords to him vast scope and choices of action and also requires from him an awesome sense of responsibility.¹⁵

In the context of present day world, life-long education has the most pivotal role to play and such a system of education should be so designed as to meet the requirements of different stages of life, especially for the long spans of adulthood and maturity which are incidentally deprived of any conscious and systematic plan of education.

For the developing countries, adult education in the context of life-long education should be given the highest priority as it makes significant contribution to

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¹⁵ Kirpal, Prem: 'Life-Cycle and Life-long Education' (Formerly Secretary 'PATRIOT' dated 9th December, 1984 to the Govt. of India p. 4 (New Delhi).

Ministry of Education and Culture and Chairman of the Executive Board of UNESCO)
economic growth as well as quality of life.

It is also the main instrument of diverting the affluent world from the mad orgy and mindless wastage of consumerism to the enjoyment of culture, creativity and human values. In both industrial and traditional societies, it calls for a great renewal of the spirit of man to cope with the power and temptations of technology and the threat to the individual posed by a materialistic civilization of mass communication and consumerism.6

The concept of Adult education basically implies7:
(i) That every man and woman should be helped to acquire functional literacy to greater education.
(ii) He and she should also be aided to acquire vocational, technical and professional competence.
(iii) That human and personal development of individuals should be duly fostered.

It has been noticed that in the Indian system of education, primary and elementary education actually lays the foundation of national literacy. Adult education supplements and consolidates the task of elementary education.

6. Ibid., p. 4
7. Roy, Nikhil Ranjan: Adult Education in India and Abroad, p. 4
The two World Conference on Adult Education held in Elsinore, Denmark (1949) and at Montreal (Canada) 1960 opined that the World Conference gave the Adult Education movement throughout the World a new impetus, a larger vision, a renewed hope for a World at peace.

Thus it is seen that the problem of Adult education is not confined to a particular country or nation but it has become a global issue and the nations all over the world have been striving to combat illiteracy right from the early fifties. Declarations have been made by National, International and World Conferences to join hands in achieving this common goal.

UNESCO has given a very broad definition of Adult Education, according to which, "The term Adult Education denotes the entire body of organised educational processes, whatever content, level and method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges and universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as Adult by the society to which they belong, develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical and professional qualifications and bring about changes in their attitude or behaviour in the two-fold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent
social, economic and cultural development.*®

Thus it is evident that Adult education embraces all forms of educative experiences required for men and women to respond to their varying needs and interests, at their differing levels of knowledge and ability and in discharging their responsibilities throughout life as responsible citizens.

The Third International Conference of Adult Education held in Tokyo, in 1972, Unesco, published an international instrument on Adult Education, according to which, aims of Adult Education are as follows:

(i) developing a critical understanding of major contemporary problems and social changes 

(ii) developing the aptitude for acquiring new knowledge, qualifications, attitudes or forms of behaviour 

(iii) ensuring the individual's conscious and effective incorporation into the World of work 

(iv) promoting increased awareness of the relationships between people and their physical and cultural environment 

(v) creating and understanding of and respect for the diversity of customs and cultures.


9. ibid., p. 2.
In the Indian context, Gandhi visualised that liquidation of illiteracy was not enough unless it was combined with spread of useful knowledge. To quote Gandhiji, "Mass illiteracy is India's sin and shame and must be liquidated. Of course, literacy campaign must not begin and end with the mere knowledge of the alphabets. It must go hand in hand with the spread of useful knowledge."\(^{10}\)

Compulsory education has been introduced in U.K. for all children in the age-group of 5-16 years and a large percentage of the school population stays on beyond the minimum school-leaving age. About 94 per cent of the 10 million school children attend free schools maintained from public funds. In 1971, open university system was introduced in U.K. as a means of non-formal education to provide education up to degree level by using a combination of television and correspondence courses together with a network of viewing and listening centres. It is the national policy in U.K. that no person should be prevented by lack of means from taking a course of higher education and the system of grants to students is one of the most generous in the world. Besides full-time regular

students, there are some 2 million students in U.K. who pursue courses of non-vocational adult education. 11

The results of psychological studies made during the late twenties (including those of Professor Thorndike's well known experiments) have proved beyond doubt that adult intelligence for learning persists to an advanced age, while the background of experience is an asset the youthful learners lack; but so far as adult is concerned, it is essential that education should be permeated with the spirit of truth and reality in its relation to life situations, otherwise it will remain a feeble appeal. 12

Non-formal, adult and community education should be as diversified as the needs and aptitudes of the individual community, which have emerged as a result of social and economic changes of the time. To achieve its objectives maximally, the structure of non-formal, adult and community education should be purposely designed to make

11. Source: Britain in Brief, Central Office of Information; London; (Reference Division), September, 1972; pp. 56-57.

possible the integration of its clientele, at any stage of their development, into the social and economic life of the country. In non-formal education, time bound, place bound learning process does not apply. Time for teaching and learning is flexible. The venue for teaching and learning could be any convenient place like bake shop, dress shop, community prayer hall or even a shed, where teaching - learning and application of skill can be pursued.

In the Philippines, facilities for formal education are also used maximally for non-formal, adult and community education activities. Besides, every Public elementary, secondary school offers non-formal, adult and community education programme for out-of-school youths and adults. Projections indicate that the number of out-of-school youths in Philippines which was of the order of approximately 5.7 million between 1978 and 1982 would be reduced to 5.3 million by 1987.13

The role of Adult education
in Community living

India is a Democratic Republic. Democracy rests on people's power. The function of Adult education in a

democracy is to provide every adult citizen with an opportunity for education of the type which he wishes and which he should have for his personal enrichment, professional advancement and effective participation in social and political life.  

According to the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53), the scope of adult education in India is as wide as life itself. The requirements are a bit different from those of normal formal school system. The universities, public institutions and libraries are the main functioning agencies of Adult education programmes. This Commission also recommended the following aspects for an effective programme of Adult education, viz, (i) Liquidation of illiteracy (ii) Continuing education (iii) Correspondence Courses (iv) Libraries (v) Role of universities in adult education and (vi) Organisation and administration of adult education.

**Strategy for liquidation of illiteracy**

As a strategy for combating illiteracy in the country, the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) recommended two types of approach, viz. (i) Selective Approach and (ii) Mass Approach.

Selective Approach

The selective Approach is suitable in case of groups which can be easily identified, controlled and motivated for intensive literacy work. The learning needs of this specific group can be ascertained and appropriate literacy programmes prepared for them. The selective approach is advantageous in that it includes training which will advance their occupational and vocational interests. The selective literacy programmes need be introduced in big firms, large commercial establishments, if necessary, by legislation to make illiterate employees functionally literate within a stipulated period, say, within three years of their employment.

Mass Approach

The Mass Approach involves mobilisation of all available educated men and women in the country to constitute a force for combating illiteracy and this is to be utilised as an effective organisation for a well-planned literacy campaign. The Mass Approach was a remarkable success in the USSR.

On a smaller scale for the first time, this approach was attempted in Maharashtra through the scheme of Gram Sikshan Mahim. The Mahim involved all teachers
and local educated men and women in the village to work for literacy programmes by arousing community interest among the village people, and thus the scheme gained considerable success.

Some Indian universities are engaged in research on the effectiveness of various methods of adult learning. Special mention may be made of the Bombay University Model which consisted of the five methods of adult learning, viz (i) the traditional method; (ii) the alphabetic method; (iii) the known to unknown method; (iv) integrated literacy method and (v) each-one teach-one method.

Without going into details of each method of adult learning for reasons of space requirement, it would suffice to point out that each-one teach-one method developed by the University of Bombay, though time consuming and based on individual instruction was found to be quite an effective method. Each-one teach-one method makes only one person literate with the help of twenty cards in one booklet. This is a novel approach to teach literacy by means of cards representing names of various parts of human body and some other words related to them. Jammu University workshop organised by the Indian University Association in 1982 also opined that
each-one teach-one method is better in several aspects than other methods of adult learning.\textsuperscript{15}

The mankind of the world must learn to live together in peace and harmony. Different countries and nations, must progress towards better future and must learn to live together in peace. Peaceful co-existence is not merely a political slogan but it is a necessity from operational point of view. Mutual understanding and accommodation, sympathy and co-operation are pre-requisites for establishing harmonious relationship between one country and another and by and large, these qualities are fostered by knowledge and destroyed by ignorance.

In the context of the realities of world situation to-day, it is not an exaggeration to say that the future of mankind centres round education. In this modern era, adult education has assumed a new dimension. Now the old connotation of giving instruction in three R's for illiterate and uneducated persons has been discarded. The new concept of life-long continuous education for all people has been universally accepted; because the quality of life depends on its dynamic character and to attain this pursuit, one has to have education and

\textsuperscript{15} Kundu, Dr. C.L. : Adult Education, Principle, Practice, and Prospects; Academic Paperback; 1984, pp. 99-104.
training for adjustment to the ever changing complexities of the world. Man can learn to survive by overcoming the impending catastrophe and can enjoy opportunities for material and social development.

Against the backdrop of constitutional obligation to provide free and compulsory elementary education in India, it has been envisaged that over-riding priority will be given to universal elementary education for children in the age-group of 6-14 years by 1990. This will call for the additional enrolment of 60 million children during the Seventh Five Year Plan period.\(^{16}\)

India is currently faced with the problem of combating mass illiteracy and the problem needs to be tackled on a war footing. The situation is indeed alarming because there are some 140 million adult illiterates in India in the age-group of 15-35 years and 65 per cent of productive age group of 15-35 are illiterate (1981 Census). It is significant to note that 100 per cent literacy rate achieved in U.S.S.R. by 1960, to a large extent, owes its success to the measures taken by Lenin, because it was at his initiative that a decree was issued making it obligatory for the entire population from the age of 8 to 50 to learn to read and write in their own

\(^{16}\text{The Approach to Seventh Five Year Plan, 1985-90; Govt. of India, Planning Commission, New Delhi, p.25}
of the Russian language. 17

Ignorance and poverty are the main fundamental
drawbacks of the majority of the people of developing
countries including India. Ignorance is always related
with poverty and vice-versa. Illiteracy intensifies
the poverty and ignorance leads to a harmful end.
Poverty and illiteracy co-exist and in fact, they are
the two sides of the same coin. Poverty is wide spread
in India as is evidenced by the fact that nearly
50 per cent of the population in India has been living
below the poverty line continuously over a long period.
Latest estimates made by the Planning Commission, howe­ver, indicate that the poverty has been reduced to
36.9 per cent during 1984-85 and it has been envisaged
to further reduce to 25.8 per cent by the end of the
Seventh Plan period, i.e. by the year 1989-90 on account
of various measures on poverty alleviation programmes. 19

17. Prokofyev, Mikhail, Ph.D. (Chem) : Public Education
   in USSR; Novosti Press Agency Publishing House,
   Moscow; 1970.

18. Source : Sixth Five Year Plan, 1980-85; Govt. of
   India, Planning Commission, New Delhi; p. 51.

19. Source : Seventh Five Year Plan, 1985-90, Vo.I;
   Govt. of India, Planning Commission, New Delhi,
   Preface, p. xi.
It has also been observed that countries with low rate of literacy have also been found to be economically poor. On the other hand, those with higher literacy rates are better off. For example, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, etc. with low literacy rates have comparatively a low per capita income, whereas countries like U.S.S.R.; U.S.A.; Canada; Israel, etc. that have a high rate of literacy have also a higher per capita income.

In order to launch a frontal attack on poverty, it is necessary to achieve 100 per cent literacy. For removal of poverty, along-with education, health and social welfare programmes would have to be given adequate priority. Literacy is a tool of development. It is necessary to devise ways and means to establish a linkage between education process and development. It is observed that there is a positive co-relation between education and economic growth, where economic growth is high, growth of higher education is also high.

Apart from school children and college students, non-formal education is necessary for unschooled children and other adults for updating their knowledge to contribute useful service to the society. The linkage between education and society is bi-directional in nature, i.e. education contributes to the development
of society and vice-versa. Looked at from this angle, adult education has to play a very crucial role in eradication of illiteracy which is the primary goal of the country.

In the context of this situation, adult education has to play a legitimate role for all-round development of the unlettered people leading to the socio-economic progress of the country.

The objectives of adult education can be laid down as follows:

(i) Adult education is to help adults learn to do better desirable things they will do anyway.

(ii) Adult education is to help adults discover higher activities and the desire to achieve them.

(iii) To provide adult education or functional literacy education for those who have never had the advantage of any formal education.

(iv) To provide functional remedial education for those young people who prematurely dropped out of the formal school system.

(v) To bring about improvement of basic knowledge and skills and also to give aesthetic, cultural and civic education for public enlightenment.
The vast number of drop-outs at all stages of education, especially in the primary and the secondary level has been a matter of serious concern to the educational planners. Ways should be found out to stop this colossal wastage in terms of money and their energy should be channelized to other useful purpose by introducing vocational courses to make themselves fit to contribute to the economic development of the society. The school leavers as also those who could not afford to attend schools in early life, could be exploited by others due to their ignorance for the latter's personal gains to the detriment of these hapless youths and to the society at large.

It is in this context that adult education can serve as panacea in fulfilling their learning needs and meeting their educational gaps for enabling them to develop their potential which can be utilised in nation-building activities.

The Kothari Commission (1964-66) considers education as an important factor in manpower planning for an accelerated economic development. The success of a planned economy for attaining all-round progress depends upon the development and proper utilization of human potential, the growth of national economy through
diversification and vocationalization of secondary education, channelizing the student population at different levels towards professional training.

Time has come to search for development and innovation of new skills to replace obsolescent skills and practices already acquired. Human knowledge has expanded at fantastic rate cutting across the barriers of time and space. With the knowledge explosion, advanced technology has brought about tremendous improvement in equipments and processes and to keep pace with these developments, the related human qualifications need be improved upon and updated. New specialized skills and new patterns of work involving high degree collaboration between specialists are needed. The education system has to respond to the growing diverse needs of the society.

In India, women constitute an important segment of the population forming about 48 per cent of the total persons (1981 Census). A nation cannot prosper when millions of women remain neglected and they become victims of poverty, disease, hunger, ignorance and oppression. The extreme form of disparity between men and women constitutes the most burning problem in the field of education everywhere in our country from grass-root level to the top. Every responsible citizen should keep abreast of the advancement of knowledge and dynamic,
social, economic and ethical systems and values, because illiteracy and insufficient education has seriously affected the mental growth of women and has prevented the poor from reaping its benefit.

The appalingly low female literacy rate of 26.8 per cent in the age-group of 15-35 for the country as a whole as against the male literacy rate of 56.7 per cent in this age-group is a clear pointer to the fact that even to-day women have continued to suffer from the lack of adequate facilities for women education. This is more so in the country-side where the educational facilities are few and far between.

In India, to-day there are about 248 million women illiterates who form three-fourths of the total female population, of whom nearly 80 million women illiterates are in the productive age group 15-35. This is indicative of the fact that a sizeable number of women are left out by the formal education system and they will continue to play the traditional role of being mothers and housewives busy with their day-long drudgery of household work.

Therefore, there is urgent need for pursuing adult literacy programmes more vigorously than hitherto done so that these hapless millions are adequately
taken care of and made at least functionally literate. Needless to say, if this sizeable segment of the underprivileged population is embedded in illiteracy and ignorance, they cannot contribute to the well-being of the community life, let alone economic growth of the country.

The welfare-oriented adult education is expected to assist the poor women to fight against poverty, illiteracy, inequality, and ignorance. This calls for a series of continuous training programmes for rural women in the adoption of scientific methods for meeting their needs of day-to-day life. The construction and use of non-conventional sources of energy like biogas (gobar gas), use of solar energy, smokeless chullahas may be cited as examples.

The Bell Bicycle libraries introduced in the rural areas by the Uttar Pradesh Government under the post-literacy and follow-up programmes may be tried in the rural interior places of Assam including Kamrup District on an experimental basis and may be introduced, if found effective in the promotion of literacy programmes. Non-formal adult education should be started to impart instruction on primary health care, role of panchayats, small savings, co-operative societies, banks, preparation of teaching-learning
materials for neo-literates. The lecture course should be so designed as to include the knowledge of the preventive measures of the evil effects of alcoholism, tuberculosis, anaemia, care of expectant mothers, family planning and family welfare, cause and symptoms of non-contagious diseases, cancer, etc to be delivered by doctors and specialists.

Therefore, all possible measures should be taken to increase the literacy among women from the existing 24.9 per cent to enable the women-folk to contribute to economic welfare of the nation.

Generally, the newspaper, radio, video, television, sattelite communications are the mass media and instruments of bringing about social change for alleviation of distress of the poor. These mass media need be utilized on an extensive scale. While the affluent nations of the world have made extensive use of T.V. network for dissemination of knowledge and spread of education, in India, it is only recently that U.G.C. sponsored educational programmes have been telecast through T.V. for the benefit of students. But the facilities being confined to only cities and towns having T.V. transmission centres, these are limited in scope and we may have to wait for another 5 to 10 years before the entire student community including those in the
far-flung rural areas can enjoy such benefits. All-out efforts should be made to bring the rural areas under T.V. coverage in a phased manner.

The Indian Adult Education Association which is actively promoting adult education in the country for the last 45 years has played a significant role in the field of educational development and planning in India—the largest democratic country in the world.

People's education helps in bettering the living conditions of the masses, in liberating them from exploitation, in finding out what is true and what is not and above all in behaving like responsible citizens of the community life.

ADULT EDUCATION MOVEMENT IN INDIA:

A HISTORICAL RETROSPECT:

The adult education movement in India dates back to some 200 years from now, when the people received their education through indigenous system. It was during the nineteenth century and early part of twentieth century that a few privileged countries of the world were able to raise the living standards of the teeming millions. But India could not improve the condition of living of her people mainly because of large scale poverty, illiteracy and ignorance.
During the pre-British period, despite low level of living, the people established a socio-economic structure which was well integrated with her predominantly agricultural economy. The indigenous system of education was able to maintain the well-integrated socio-economic structure until it was disturbed by new forces that emerged as a result of establishment of British rule in India. Consequently, the old harmony between agriculture and industry was lost. The Indian artisans could not compete with the expanding mechanized industry of the West.

The Indian economic life suffered a serious setback as a result of rapid increase in population, which brought in its trail the problem of unemployment, degeneration of social and cultural life affecting social services, education, health and sanitation.

During the British rule, the Christian Missionaries were the first to organise social welfare activities in India including literacy work. Among the welfare organisations, special mention may be made of the Rama Krishna Mission, which was founded in 1897 by Swami Vivekananda, with the main object of instilling spiritual awareness among the people by organising a number of welfare activities including the educational upliftment of the masses in different parts of the country.
Many secular liberal institutions, like the Servants of India Society (1905) were established, which were devoted exclusively to social welfare activities.\textsuperscript{20}

Many welfare organisations started night schools for the benefit of illiterate adults. They also worked for the spread of co-operative movement and revival of village panchayats. These efforts gathered momentum with the launching of constructive programmes initiated by Gandhiji which embraced such diverse fields as Harijan uplift, prohibition, promotion of cottage and village industries, basic education including adult education and literacy, promotion of labour welfare, improvement of village sanitation and hygiene.

As already stated, the education system of the British benefited only a few elitist families who could afford to send their children to English Schools. The education imparted through such schools had no relevance to native culture.

For Indians, the whole of modern education, which they were asked to undergo, had no relationship with the basic ideas of Indian civilisation, to be found in Vedas, the Bhagavad - Gita, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.²¹

Commenting on English education, K.M. Panikkar observed that "It did not train men and women to become useful member of society, but merely produced a literate class. It has a tendency to de-Indianize them intellectually, but because of the iron grip of joint family and the social system they had to live lives of mental dishonesty, accepting meekly in society what their minds rejected."²²

Grundtvig who is known in India as the father of the folk high school movement in Denmark opined that the traditional school system started a process of alienation from life. Gandhiji also voiced the same concern vehemently. Education through traditional school system alienates and uproots students from their homes, community and native culture without providing a sustainable

alternative. The equilibrium between home, school and community have virtually collapsed and the school continues to drag itself in isolation. 23

During the later half of nineteenth and the beginning of twentieth centuries, provincial governments organised a number of schools for adults in the big cities to meet the specific requirements of the middle class people to learn English for securing employment under the government. But such efforts were discontinued as soon as their need was satisfied and therefore they did not become an instrument of mass movement for adult education in the country.

The adult education movement had its rise and fall during the upheavals of freedom movement. It got a great fillip through constructive programmes started by Gandhiji and Tagore. Gandhi started his constructive work in the village of Sevagram near Wardha, which later became the headquarters of All India Spinners' Association, Harijan Seva Sangh, All India Village Industries Association and Hindustani Talimi Sangh. The workers trained in these institutions and

equipped with knowledge and result of research of various experiments in the different spheres conducted in these institutions went to the villages and created a general awakening in the rural India, which was the main purpose of any programme of adult education.

The Institution of Rural Reconstruction established by Rabindranath Tagore at Sriniketan in 1922, was an integral part of his famous university Visva- Bharati. In the words of Tagore, the sole "Object of starting Sriniketan was to bring back life in all its completeness, making the villagers self-reliant and self-respectful acquainted with the cultural traditions of their own country and competent to make an efficient use of modern resources for the fullest development of their physical, social, economic and intellectual condition." 24

The idea of comprehensive programme which included development of agriculture, dairy and poultry, rural industries, health, sanitation, and education was to teach the village adults about usefulness of such programmes for the well-being of the community and the society at large.

24. Mohsini, S.R : Adult and Community Education- An Indian Experiment; Indian Adult Education Association; Sept. 1973; p.7
Literacy was given a prominent place in the programme of constructive work after the suspension of Non-cooperation Movement. The political leaders realised that unless the masses were able to read and write, they would not be able to take part in the institutions of self-government and exercise their votes intelligently. It was under such exigencies that almost in every part of India, groups of people were organised to conduct literacy classes for illiterate adults. National schools and colleges, established in the wake of political movement became instrumental in popularising literacy work in their communities.

The literacy campaign took the form of mass movement when the Congress Ministries were formed in 1937. This campaign which was conducted all over India between 1935 and 1940 was described by Dr. F. Lauback, the World literacy expert as one of the greatest in modern times. The first drive for literacy was organised in Bihar and other provinces followed suit. A large number of non-official and semi-official organizations of all types, some of which became prominent and others which remained unknown even in their cities, sprang up in almost every city and town in India. The Christian Missionaries
made a significant contribution in making the movement a success. The campaign, however, suffered a setback in many places and came to a complete halt with the resignation of Congress Ministries in 1939, when the nation had to prepare for the last phase of its struggle for freedom, which is known in the political history as the 'Quit India Movement (1942).'

Though the adult education lost its mass character, it regained its status. It came to be increasingly recognised as an essential part of national system of education which was to be introduced after independence. A number of institutions and agencies like the Lok Shiksha Samsad of Sriniketan (or Public Education Society) established by Tagore, Idara Talim-O-Taraqqi of the Jamia Millia, Mysore City Literacy Council, Bombay City Adult Education Committees and others continued to work in different parts of the country even after the enthusiasm of adult education had subsided. It was, indeed, because of systematic efforts of these institutions and agencies that helped to lay down the foundation of a future system of adult and social education in the country.

Founded in 1939, the Indian Adult Education Association, as an voluntary organisation started its
work towards enlarging and improving the content and quality of life through education which was visualised as a continuous and life-long process. In its earlier days, the Association tried hard to get adult education recognised as an essential component of an alternative development process to mankind. As this objective was fulfilled, the Association now coordinates the activities of various agencies—governmental and voluntary, national and international—engaged in similar pursuits.

ADULT EDUCATION MOVEMENT

AFTER INDEPENDENCE:

Immediately after India's independence, the country was faced with two major problems, viz. post-war reconstruction of her economy that was shattered by the World War II and the problem of large scale rehabilitation of refugees as a result of partition of India. When the Plan era began in the early fifties with the launching of First Five Year Plan (1951-56), priority had to be accorded to raise the level of living of the people and therefore due emphasis was given on increasing production and productivity. Naturally education did not receive attention in the priority list.
It is absolutely necessary that the system of education has to be adapted to the requirements of national planning. Education has even more vital function in relation to the development of an individual. It has to train the sense, develop the intellect, humanize the emotions and equip the individual for efficient living so as to ensure an integrated growth of his personality. More importantly, there is need for re-orienting the system of education so that the people are able to participate effectively in building up and efficiently serving the social order which should be the primary object of national planning.

The most important post-independence development in the field of adult education was the emergence of the concept of social education. The concept of adult education to mean mere promotion of literacy has been found to be too narrow and required to be widened so as to include education of adults in meeting the diverse learning needs of the community. To denote the new concept, the term 'social education' has been coined. Social education embodies a comprehensive approach to the solution of the problems of the community, primarily through community action. Besides literacy, it covers health, recreation and home-life, economic activities and citizenship training. The whole gamut
of national extension and community development programme, social welfare extension projects, rural programmes undertaken by government agencies in cooperation with the people, welfare programmes of voluntary organisations like the Sarva Seva Sangh, the Bharat Sevak Samaj and others, the cooperative movement, the village panchayats, etc are nothing but different facets of the nation-wide effort towards social education and rural improvement.

The programme of adult education got a new impetus with the introduction of Community Development Programmes in 1952 and the Panchayati Raj in 1959. The emergence of Community Development concept after independence to awaken a sense of belonging among the masses was practically new in India. Rural development added significance because of the fact that three-fourths of population in India live in rural areas and 50 per cent of the national income is generated in the rural sector. In fact, the pace of development of India is closely interlinked with the rapid rural development. The community Development Programme gave a new boost to the literacy programmes, among others, in making the unlettered adults functionally literate. Through programmes of social education, apart from imparting knowledge on variegated needs, awareness was created
for building up clean and scientific environment for harmonious community living.

Realising the importance of the role of social education in the spread of education among the illiterate masses, substantial amounts have been allocated under the head 'Social Education' in the successive five year plans as will be seen from the figures furnished in the table- 5.1

Thus it is evident from Table- 5.1 that outlay on Social Education (including adult education and physical education) accounts for varying proportions ranging from 9.5 per cent of total outlay on education during First Plan to 15.9 per cent during the Seventh Plan. This increased outlay during successive five year plans has definitely raised the social value of the community in terms of qualitative and quantitative improvement.

In view of greater emphasis being laid on education, the outlay on education during the Sixth Plan has been stepped up by about 15 times from Rs. 169 crores in the First Plan to Rs. 2524 crores in the Sixth Plan. The outlay on education has been further stepped up to Rs. 6383 crores during the Seventh Plan representing two and half-fold increase over the Sixth Plan allocation on education. The proportion of expen-
### Table 5.1

Outlay on Education and Social Education in India from First Five Year Plan to Seventh Five Year Plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Total outlay on Education</th>
<th>Outlay on Social Education*</th>
<th>Col.3 as percentage of col.2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Plan (1951-56)</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Plan (1956-61)</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Plan (1961-66)</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Annual Plans (1966-69)</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Plan (1969-74)</td>
<td>822</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Plan (1974-79)</td>
<td>1285</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Plan (1980-85)</td>
<td>2524</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Plan (1985-90)</td>
<td>6383</td>
<td>1012</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes outlay on Adult Education and physical education.

**Source:**

1. From First Plan to Sixth Plan: *A Handbook of Educational and Allied Statistics, Ministry of Education and Culture, Govt. of India, New Delhi; Sept. 1983, Table- 10.3; pp. 246-247.*

2. For Seventh Plan: *Seventh Five Year Plan, 1985-90; Vol. I, Govt. of India, Planning Commission, New Delhi; Table-3.4(b), p.29.*
ulture on adult education has also increased from 3.3 per cent during the First Plan to 5.1 per cent in the Sixth Plan and 5.6 per cent of the proposed outlay in the Seventh Plan, as can be seen from the data furnished in the Table - 5.2.

Another important landmark in the post-independence development of education was the setting up of National Fundamental Education Centre in 1956 with a view to train adult education personnel, carry out research and evaluation, try out better type of material and act as a clearing house of ideas and information. In 1960-61, there were 43,295 adult literacy centres, which helped 7,40,110 adults to become literate.25

Since the dawn of independence, the several Committees and Commissions set up by the Central Government have unequivocally advocated that adult education should form an integral part of national

Table 5.2

Expenditure on Education and Adult Education in India during First Five Year Plan to Seventh Five Year Plan.

* (Rs. crores)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Total Expenditure on Education</th>
<th>Expenditure on Adult Education</th>
<th>% c. of expenditure on adult education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Plan</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Plan</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Plan</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Plan</td>
<td>822 *</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Plan</td>
<td>1285 *</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Plan</td>
<td>2524 *</td>
<td>128 *</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Plan</td>
<td>6383 *</td>
<td>360 *</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* represents outlay  
N.A = Not available

Source (1) For First, Second, and Third Plan:

Bordia, Anil and others (ed.)  
Break-up for Adult education not available.

(3) For Fifth Plan: Fifth Five Year Plan, 1974-79 Govt. of India, Planning Commission; p.78
Break-up for adult education not available.

(4) For Sixth Plan: Sixth Five Year Plan, 1980-85 Govt. of India, Planning Commission; Table -21.2; p.361

(5) For Seventh Plan: Seventh Five Year Plan, 1985-90; Vol.II Govt. of India, Planning Commission; p.269
system of education. Special mention may be made of the Kothari Commission (1964–66) which emphasised that educational institutions of all types and grades should be encouraged to provide various programmes of adult education. It is hoped that with the implementation of these recommendations, the cherished goal of making adult education an integral part of national system of education would be achieved before long.

The Central Advisory Board of Education, in November, 1974, interalia, recommended mobilisation of additional resources from the community, to correlate non-formal education programmes for youths and adults with the main developmental activities, involvement of students' youth organisations as well as government and voluntary agencies in organising programmes for various age-groups.

At the instance of the U.G.C, the Conference on Continuing Education recommended for establishment of a Centre or Department of Continuing Education in at least one university in each State.
The adult schools were set up in the country on an experimental basis during 1958-60, with the assistance from the Union Ministry of Education and about 50 Adult Schools were started in different places covering different regional languages. To provide continuation education for school leavers after compulsory education upto age limit of 11 years was yet another experiment conducted during 1963-64 by G.K. Institute of Rural Education, Gargoti, in Maharashtra. 26

Following the pattern of folk high schools of Denmark, Vidyapeeths meaning 'seats of learning' were set up in different parts of the country. The vidyapeeths are based on the ancient Indian Gurukul system of learning and the object of these residential institutions is to provide social and cultural education as well as training in agriculture and crafts to men and women of the age-group 18- 39.

26. Ansari, N.A.: Post-literacy and Follow-up programmes in India (Part II), Indian Journal of Adult Education; Vol.43, No.3; March 1982 p.19
From 1960 onwards, short-term courses on various topics, such as family planning, cattle care, house-keeping, poultry farming, horticulture, child care, have also been included in Vidyapeeths. They put special emphasis on citizenship training, rural leadership, and revitalisation of village life. These vidyapeeths are located in rural areas of the State in pleasant settings and natural surroundings.27

Synchronising with the birth day of Gandhiji, a massive programme known as National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) was launched on 2nd October, 1978 with a view to bring about a fundamental change in the socio-economic milieu of the society. In NAEP, literacy was considered as one of the important components but other development activities like agriculture, health, child care, nutrition were also included in this programme. For implementing the programme, it was absolutely necessary to establish an effective communication with the target group adults between the age-groups 15-35. This could be successfully

27. op cit; p.20
achieved by making extensive use of audio-visual aids.

Dr. Seymour Eskow, President, Rockland Community College, New York suggested that every college in India should become a community college. According to him, the present infrastructure of formal education system should be utilised for the benefit of the community, and that higher education should be linked with realities of life. Higher education in India should be re-organised and resources for adult, continuing and non-formal education should be substantially increased. 28

The Udaipur Seminar on 'Campaigning for Literacy' held in Rajasthan on 4-11 January, 1982 under the joint auspices of the International Council for Adult Education and UNESCO made as many as eighteen declarations, one of which indicated a worldwide commitment to achieving literacy by the year

28. Dr. Eskow's address to Delhi University students on March 11, 1981; Indian Journal of Adult Education; Vol. 42, No.4 April, 1981; p.29 IUACE NEWS (Indian University Association for Continuing Education).
2000 A.D. It was opined that only nationally motivated mass campaign can banish illiteracy, regardless of the adversity of conditions a country faces. The participation of disadvantaged groups that historically have remained subjugated and marginal, especially women demands priority of special attention. The Declaration also suggested to establish equivalence of literacy and post-literacy activities with formal education and to make appropriate linkages with other education work and such cultural expressions as folk media and the arts.  

It is pertinent to note that in line with Udaipur Declaration, vigorous attempts have been made in our country to combat illiteracy and India Government's commitment towards universalization of elementary education by 1990 is a clear pointer to this attempt. The sixth Plan laid emphasis on minimum essential education to all citizens, irrespective of their age, sex and residence. Techniracy was adopted as the major instrument for the spread of literacy, numeracy and practical skills relevant to

29. Indian Journal of Adult Education; Vol.43, No.3; March 1982; pp. 8, 9 and 32.
the economic activities of the people concerned. It was supported by post-literacy, continuing education through a network of rural libraries as well as instructional programmes through mass communication media, particularly after launching of the INSAT to its orbit.

During the Sixth Plan, non-formal education for adults, particularly in the productive age-group 15-35 years was given special emphasis in view of its potential for immediate impact in raising the level of productivity in the economy. The programmes of adult education, which had been initiated in the previous plans and which formed part of the minimum needs programme of elementary education were made more effective and extended in cooperation with other developmental activities and the employment agencies.

The Seventh Plan continues to give priority in the programmes for eradication of adult illiteracy and development of a programme of continuing adult education. The task of covering all the illiterates in the age-group 15-35 years by 1990 is a stupendous one.
As the success of this programme, to a great extent, depends on the motivation of the learners and in view of the huge number of adults involved (about 90 million), the strategy to achieve the goal can be only through a mass movement involving social institutions, voluntary organisations, students, teachers, employers and the community.

This programme will also have to be linked effectively with various development programmes, especially the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP). Active participation of village panchayats, mahila mandals, community centres, etc. would be needed for success of this campaign. The programmes of Nehru Yuvak Kendras (NYK) and the National Service Scheme (NSS) will focus on eradication of illiteracy. Programmes for motivating the learners by holding community meetings and by publicity through posters, films, broadcasting, etc., to create conducive climate will continue to receive priority in the Seventh Plan. A network of rural libraries and development of literature for neo-literates will
also be initiated as a follow up programme to avoid lapse into illiteracy. The existing programmes on rural functional literacy and State adult education programmes and various training programmes for adult learners need to be consolidated and detailed in the new mass movement programmes of adult education.

The National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) aimed at making 100 million adult illiterates (in the age-group 15-35 years) literate in a phased manner by the end of 1983-84. The phase-wise targets are indicated in Table - 5.3 below.

Table - 5.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Annual coverage</th>
<th>Cumulative coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(preparatory year)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The position in regard to enrolment and number of successful learners in Rural India during 1979-80 under National Adult Education Programme is indicated in Table- 5.4 below.

**Table - 5.4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Enrolment ('000)</th>
<th>No. of successful learners ('000)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>male</td>
<td>female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Rural Functional literacy</td>
<td>370.4</td>
<td>183.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Assistance to voluntary agencies by Central Govt.</td>
<td>165.3</td>
<td>92.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Adult education through Nehru Yuvak kendras</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Adult education through universities /colleges</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. State Adult education programme</td>
<td>250.0</td>
<td>144.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Others(Integrated Child Dev.services)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>850.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>459.1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is seen from the Table 5.4 that during 1979-80, the enrolment under various programmes of National Adult Education Programme in Rural India covered 13.09 lakh adults (8.50 lakh men; 4.59 lakh women), of whom only 8.93 lakh adults have become successful learners accounting for 68 per cent of total enrolment. The break-up of 8.93 lakh successful learners, shows 5.92 lakh men and 3.01 lakh women.

The above figures are impressive, and if this trend continues, it should be possible to achieve 100 per cent literacy in India by 2000 A.D. as enshrined in Udaipur Declaration on Adult Education, 1982.

Concept of Open Learning and its Contribution towards Adult Education

Though the affluent segments of the student population all over the world have largely gained from the formal school system, their counterparts in developing and poorer countries have been left out of this
formal system. To compensate for this deprivation, in recent years, there has been significant growth of interest in open learning system in some of the developing countries of the world, which serves as an alternative to formal full-time study in post-secondary education. Such systems are designed to offer opportunities for part-time study, for learning at a distance and for innovations in the curriculum. The primary objective of the open learning system is to redress social or educational inequality and to offer opportunities not provided by conventional colleges and universities.

The open university system has made remarkable success in the United Kingdom and their success has provided substantial impetus to development of this system elsewhere. The phrase 'open learning' has different connotations. It accommodates many different ideas and aims and it evoked a wide respo-
nse in 1950s and 1960s, when it came into use, parti-
cularly at the later secondary and post-secondary
levels.

The open learning system is variously
called in different countries. For example, in U.K.,
it is called 'open learning' and in U.S.A., it is
called 'learning contract'; in U.S.S.R, it is called
'correspondence education'; in France, it is called
'distance learning'; in Iran, it is called 'free
university'; in Israel, it is called 'the everyman's
university'.

The open learning system has made tremen-
dous success in the matter of educational developments
in all countries, developed and less developed alike.

30. Mackenzie, Norman and others: Open Learning;
The Unesco Press, 1975, pp. 142, 184, 210, 314,
322 and 365.
The proportions of students including adults to total enrolment benefiting from open learning system through correspondence courses range from 17 per cent in U.K and 24 per cent in U.S.A to 39 per cent in Japan. Thus it is apparent that open learning system has contributed significantly in providing education to those who were educationally deprived even in industrially developed countries.

The introduction of open learning system in India dates back to over two decades in 1962 when the idea of starting correspondence education in India was conceived of as a pilot project in the University of Delhi. The success achieved by this

31. Source : Mackenzie, Norman and others : Open Learning; The Unesco Press 1975; Proportions worked out by the researcher on the basis of figures given on pp. 235, 323, 345, and 365.
project encouraged several other universities to take up instruction through the distance education technique. By 1984, 28 universities in India had taken up correspondence education and an estimated nearly 3 lakh students are getting instruction at various levels. This indicates that nearly 10 per cent of the total enrolment is accounted for by the distance learners at the higher education level in India. It has been envisaged to fix a target at the higher level of education to impart instruction to 20 per cent of students through the technique of correspondence education. 32

For the first time in the history of distance education, the Andhra Pradesh Government took a momentous decision to establish Andhra Pradesh Open University in 1982. Thus, an autonomous institution of the level of a university was set up to develop distance education. Soon after its establishment, a few other States, viz. Tamil

32. Source : University News dated April 1, 1986. vol. XXIV, No.13; pp.5-8
Nadu, Maharashtra, Kerala, and West Bengal have also started thinking in terms of an Open University for the State. The establishment of the prestigious Indira Gandhi National Open University in Delhi in September, 1985 has added a new dimension in the alternative technique of distance education in the country.

Because of the flexibility in the open learning system in regard to age, admission requirement, etc, the Open University is expected to cater to the needs of those students, primarily adults who were deprived of formal schooling in early life due to a variety of reasons, like poverty, remoteness, employment or domestic necessities. The multi-media delivery system to be adopted by the Open University would ensure a much better interaction with the learners. The existing system of telecast of U.G.C. sponsored programme on higher education by Doordarshan is expected to benefit the learners as T.V. is a powerful medium for the success of open learning system.
Another innovation in the open learning is that science education will be provided through video-cassettes being prepared by the Educational Media Research Centres (EMRC) under the auspices of the U.G.C.

Thus it is expected that the open learning system equipped with sophisticated and modern communication media will meet the diversified learning needs of the students and adults alike and this will significantly contribute to the enrichment of community life.

PROGRESS OF ADULT EDUCATION IN ASSAM

The history of adult education dates back to a remote past both in India as also in Assam. The greatest impediment to economic development of a country or a State is the large scale illiteracy. Removal of illiteracy is the prime concern of a welfare State. Illiteracy breeds in social evils like child marriage, dowry, practice of burning women on their husbands' funeral pyre, bonded labour, child labour, etc. Unlike in some other
States, luckily, these evil practices are not prevalent in Assam. This is primarily because of the fact that Assam has a rich social and cultural background which emanated from the mingling of different races and tribes at different times. Assam is traditionally known as a meeting place of various races and ethnic groups. For instance, the Ahoms who originally came from Thailand got socially and culturally integrated with the indigenous tribes like Bodo, Kachari, Chutia, Koch, etc., and became an integral part of the Assamese society.

Because of this socio-cultural integration, the people of Assam are leading a harmonious community life with fraternity and solidarity without any malice to the people of the neighbouring States. Therefore, traditionally, Assamese society had the feel of the concept of social education or adult education for that matter.

During the 15th century, the social reformer and Vaisnab saints Sankardev and Madhabdev preached their religious teachings among the masses to educate the people not only on religious matters.
but also on other aspects related to their activities of day-to-day life. Therefore, the concept of mass education was already there in Assam, what may be called, in modern terminology, as adult education or social education.

After independence, when multi-facet national reconstruction programmes were on the anvil, adult education began to be increasingly recognised as a tool of development. It forms an integral part of education for community living as it embraces variegated learning needs of the community.

The problem of adult education in Assam is raising its ugly head against the backdrop of high rate of population growth coupled with the tardy growth of economy. The economy of Assam is preponderantly agricultural, since agriculture sector contributes more than 53 per cent to the State Domestic Product (SDP). 33

33. Draft Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) and Annual Plan 1985-86; Planning and Development, Department, Govt. of Assam, Guwahati; p. 28 (Table-11).
Assam displays a predominantly rural characteristics with 90 per cent of her people living in villages and with about 76 per cent of workers engaged in agriculture and allied occupations.  

Against this background of sluggish economy, it is not surprising that in Assam, which is a frontier State in the North-eastern Region of India, the literacy rate has been consistently low, viz. 18.2 per cent in 1951; 26.9 per cent in 1961; and 28.2 per cent in 1971.  

In view of disturbed condition in Assam on account of Assam movement on foreign national issue, 1981 Census could not be conducted in Assam, and as a result, literacy rate in Assam during 1981 is not available. However, on the basis of comparison of past trend of literacy rate in Assam vis-a-vis India, it can be safely assumed that literacy rate in Assam is not likely to be higher than 36 per cent, which is the literacy rate for India.  

34. Census of Assam, 1971  
35. Census of Assam, 1951 to 1971
during 1981. The figures furnished in Table 5.5 speak for themselves.

Table 5.5

Literacy rates of India vis-a-vis Assam from 1951 to 1981

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census years</th>
<th>Literacy rate (per cent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>24.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India, 1951 to 1981

Censuses of Assam, 1951 to 1971

Assam has experienced a phenomenal growth of population, viz. 34.97 per cent, 34.95 per cent, and 36.32 per cent respectively during the last three decades. The population increased from 80 lakhs in 1951 to an estimated 200 lakhs in 1981 recording two-and-a-half-fold increase in course of
POPULATION OF ASSAM (1911 - 1971)

NUMBER OF ILLITERATES

VIS-A-VIS

FIGURE-III

POPULATION

ILLITERATES

LAKHS

150

120

90

60

30

0

1911

1921

1931

1941

1951

1961

1971

150

120

90

60

30

0

LAKHS

POPULATION

ILLITERATES
One significant characteristics of the problem of illiteracy in Assam is that while the literacy rate is showing some improvement over the decades, the number of illiterates is also progressively increasing. This is happening because of increasing number of births and reduction in the death rates due to increased medical facilities and other improved health measures on the one hand and the literacy effort (both formal and non-formal) has not been able to match the population growth on the other. The percentage of literacy for Assam has increased from 18.2 in 1951 to 28.2 in 1971. The number of illiterates has simultaneously increased from 66 lakhs in 1951 to 105 lakhs in 1971 and to an estimated 127 lakhs in 1981. It may be noted that the number of illiterates for Assam in 1981 has been worked out by applying the national literacy rates, viz. 46.7 per cent, 24.9 per cent, and 36.2 per cent for male, female and all persons

36. Census of Assam, 1951 to 1971; For 1981, projected population is taken as given by Registrar General of India.
respectively during 1971-81 to the projected population of Assam as given by the Registrar General of India. The number of illiterates with breakup by sex is shown in table 5.6

Table-5.6
No. of illiterates of Assam by sex from 1951 to 1981

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census years</th>
<th>No. of illiterates ('000)</th>
<th>p.c. of illiteracy (all persons)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>male</td>
<td>female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>3113</td>
<td>3452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>3636</td>
<td>4278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>4883</td>
<td>5623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>5592*</td>
<td>7093*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Estimated on the basis of projected population of Assam as given by the Registrar General of India.

37. Projected population of Assam, 1971-1991 issued by Directorate of Econ. & Statistics, Assam, Guwahati. (table-2; p.5)
According to the figures of population projection released by the Registrar General of India, the population in the age-group of 15-35 during 1981, 1986 and 1991 in case of Assam has been worked out at 67 lakhs, 78 lakhs, and 93 lakhs respectively, which constitute 33.6 per cent, 33.9 per cent, and 34.7 per cent of their respective total population.  

The literacy rate in the age-group of 15-35 in Assam during 1971 was 43.1 per cent. Thus it is observed that the literacy rate in this age-group is higher than the general literacy rate by 14.9 per cent. Based on this analogy, together with the assumption that the general literacy rate is not likely to increase by more than 10 per cent in the next decade, there would be an estimated 35 lakhs adult illiterate in 1986 and about 36 lakhs in 1991.

38. ibid, p.5

It is expected that the literacy rate in Assam in the age-group 15-35 has increased from 43 per cent in 1971 to 56 per cent in 1986 and would reach 61 per cent by 1991. This means there would be still substantial gap to be bridged to achieve 100 per cent adult literacy.

Thus unless vigorous drive is pushed through, it would not be possible to wipe out adult illiteracy completely by 1991 because judging from the present trend, it would take another two decades or so before 100 per cent adult literacy is achieved.

The work of spreading literacy among the unlettered masses was put into operation during the later part of the First Five Year Plan, i.e. during 1954-55 in a net-work of some 880 Social Education Centres, some of which were organised by the Community Development Department. These Social Education Centres were not confined only to the task of making the mass people literate but also in producing a complete man fully conscious of the good of the community life and of social well-being as a whole.
During the year 1954-55, a Janata College was established at Titabar in the then Jorhat sub-division of the erstwhile Sibsagar district for training of village level leaders. The Janata College was developed as a place for evolving new methods and techniques of social education and those found to be effective were disseminated through the training programme.

In order to cater to the needs of post-literacy courses, 428 village libraries were given as annual grant of Rs. 35 each.

Originally, the course in Social Education Centre was of 3 months' duration. But subsequently, on the recommendations of the Standing Committee, the duration of the course was increased to 4 months.

The course was divided into pre-literacy and post-literacy programmes. Pre-literacy course was meant for new learners and post-literacy course was intended for those who passed out from the pre-literacy centres. The post-literacy centres have two-fold purposes, viz.
(i) to prevent the new literates from relapsing into illiteracy;
(ii) to initiate the new literates to an advance course.

During 1955-56, 454 Social Education Centres were organised including 84 in the plains tribal areas under Art. 275 of the Constitution and Art. 370 in the Sixth Schedule (Part A) Areas. Besides attending literacy course in the Centres, the adults were encouraged to improve sanitary condition by using pit latrines and removing jungles and rubbishes from their surroundings, to use improved methods of cultivation and to grow kitchen gardens. Citizenship training was imparted through lectures occasionally arranged in the Social Education Centres as also through articles published in the then bi-monthly departmental journal 'Janasiksha'. Screening of educational films was almost a regular feature in the Centres and 500 cinema shows were arranged in different parts of the State during the year 1955-56 through Audio-visual unit of the Department of Social Education.
A series of illustrated post-literacy Readers in four volumes named 'Joyanimadhab' was published and supplied to all Social Education Centres and Village libraries. This series printed in 16 point type and profusely illustrated under Laubach Method was designed to impart adequate knowledge of health, hygiene, home-economics, agriculture, cottage industries, etc in a simple style. Three other publications for neo-literates by Viswa-Bharati and some others from local publishers were purchased and distributed to the libraries.

During the year 1955-56, a 15-days training camp was organised at Raha in Nowgong district (now Nagaon) in which 36 inspecting officials of the Social Education Department and 10 Secondary School teachers participated. Besides usual course lecture on history, on new concept of social education, methods of teaching adults and their psychology, the trainees were asked to go out in the evening with lamps in hand to the
neighbouring villages to teach one person each during the period of training which served as a nucleus for establishment of 8 Social Education Centres for intensive work. Mrs. W.H. Fisher, Director of Literacy House, Allahabad came with a party of five social educators on invitation by the State Social Education Department and helped the Department in running the above camp throughout the entire period. 40

The All-India Social Education Day was observed throughout the State on 1st December, 1955 with all pomp and grandeur. Processions, meetings, formation of study circle, saafai work, exhibition, illumination and cultural shows were among the highlights of the programme.

During 1956-57, which marked the beginning of the Second Five Year Plan, it was for the first time in the history of the State that a

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40. Source: Annual Report on the Progress of Education in Assam during the year 1955-56, p. 21
definite plan for comprehensive development of education in all its stages was evolved. The work of spreading literacy among the illiterate masses was undertaken during that year in 694 Social Education Centres (648 centres for men and 46 centres for women), some of which were organised by the Community Project Department. Post-literacy work was pursued by organising 463 libraries, community centres and clubs.

During the year, training camps for social education teachers were organised in different parts of the State and 520 teachers were trained in these camps who were subsequently entrusted with the work of conducting social education centres in their respective areas. 41

The year 1962-63 marked the completion of 13th year of operation to the scheme of Social Education in the State of Assam. During the year,

41 Source: Annual Report on the Progress of Education in the State (Assam) during 1956-57; p. 29
the country had to pass through difficult times due to unprovoked Chinese aggression which resulted in declaration of national emergency. The widespread floods and cyclones in different parts of the State and consequent economic hardship had also affected the growth of education in the State. In spite of these difficulties, there was encouraging response from the public and there was increasing popular demand for further educational facilities and reading rooms.

Apart from voluntary organisations, Mahila samitis formed in most parts of the State were making contributions in the field of social education for women and children. Non-student voluntary corps organised, especially around the community centres, took up development activities in rural areas. Subsidies amounting to Rs. 5,000 was given to 15 voluntary organisations during the year.

The literacy classes where mainly adults of the age-group 14-40 were enrolled, were run
mostly by village level primary school teachers who were paid remuneration @ Rs.15 each per month.

During the year 1962-63, four permanent adult schools were functioning, viz.
1. Karnachal Janata Vidyapith, Guwahati
2. Sakmuthia T.E. Adult School
3. Bessakopi T.E. Adult School

These schools were attended mostly by Harijans, labourers, and grade four employees of various government departments. 141 adults were on the roll in the above schools. Post-literacy programmes were continued and sufficient number of books especially prepared for neo-literates as well as charts and posters were distributed for the benefit of those who attained literacy. 60 Community Centres were functioning during the year. Every Community Centre organised 5 adult literacy centres around it. Apart from usual post-literacy activities, individual and group projects were taken up by the members of the community centres.
Individual projects included construction and repair of village roads, school buildings, and namghars (community prayer hall). \(^{42}\)

The number of adults in the Social Education Centres and adults made literate in Assam are presented in Table -5.7

**Table -5.7**

Enrolment in Social Education Centres/literacy centres and adults made literate in Assam during 1954-55 to 1966-67

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of centres</th>
<th>Enrolment ('000)</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1954-55</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>43 3 46</td>
<td>39 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955-56</td>
<td>739</td>
<td>40 4 44</td>
<td>31 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956-57</td>
<td>694</td>
<td>26 2 28</td>
<td>21 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-62</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>17 5 22</td>
<td>12 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962-63</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>15 5 20</td>
<td>11 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965-66</td>
<td>7148*</td>
<td>57 57 114</td>
<td>N.A. N.A.</td>
<td></td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966-67</td>
<td>7913*</td>
<td>64 74 138</td>
<td>N.A. N.A.</td>
<td></td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* represents literacy centres N.A. = Not available

\(^{42}\) Source: Annual Report on the Progress of Education in Assam during 1962-63; p. 40
Thus it is apparent from Table-5.7 that due to vigorous drive for adult literacy in the State during the First Plan and Second Plan period, there was noticeable improvement in terms of adults made literate. But during the first two years of the Third Plan, there was somewhat downward trend. To compensate for this inadequacy, a new thrust was given and the Social Education in Assam included the following objectives:

(1) To wage war against illiteracy.

(2) To improve the standard of living, i.e. to make development programme a success.

(3) To promote social harmony and solidarity.
Plate-IV

Feeding the poor children
under Nutrition Programme
at Sonapur under Dimeria Tribal
Development Block
(Guwahati Sub-division)
(4) To make people conscious about their rights and duties as citizens both as individuals and members of the community in a democratic country.

(5) To encourage to take up individual and group projects relating to increasing agricultural production for economic development and to impress upon them the need of Family Planning.

Towards the later part of the Third Plan period, the activities of Social Education were expanded and besides organisation of Literacy Programme, Library and Community Centre Service Camps, Seminars and meetings, Mahila Samitis, Mainamels (i.e. children programme) and Youth Camps, some Civil and National Defence activities, such as V.D.P., V.V.P, Home Guard Camps, Voluntary Services and Welfare to Troops, etc were also taken up. Family Planning Programme was also coordinated by the Social Education personnel from the State to the Block level; Food nutrition Programme was also taken up by different development blocks under the direct supervision of Social Education Organisers.
and Lady Social Education Organisers.

As a result of increased tempo of activities, there was a remarkable improvement in adult literacy with enrolment of 1.14 lakh and 1.38 lakh adults during 1965-66 and 1966-67 respectively.  

The Literacy Test of the Adult Literacy Centres organised under the accelerated Adult Literacy Programme during 1965-66 in two Development Blocks in Goalpara, four Development Blocks in Nowgong district (now Nagaon) and seven Tea Estates around Doom-dooma were conducted during 1965-66 with a total enrolment of 1.16 lakh adults of whom 47,717 were made literate.

During the Fourth Five Year Plan period, efforts were made to spread literacy among adults through mobilisation of voluntary efforts and local


44. ibid., p.59.
community resources. Adult education continued to form an integral part of Community Development Programme.

The year 1978-79, i.e. last year of the Fifth Five Year Plan was significant in the history of adult education because National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) was formally inaugurated on 2nd October, 1978; and the year 1978-79 was regarded as a year of preparation for implementation of NAEP. In Assam, about 25.33 lakh adult illiterates in the age-group 15-35 were to be covered under this programme by 1983-84 as against the all-India target of 100 million. The estimated number of illiterate women were about 15.70 lakhs. It was also assumed that there would be further 2 to 5 per cent increase over the total illiterate population of 25.33 lakhs due to entry from the lower age-group in subsequent years, flow of outside age-groups and also from repeaters.

Out of the target of 65,000 illiterate adults set for the year 1978-79, 55,000 adults were covered by schemes like Farmers' Functional Literacy
Programme (PFLP) and Non-formal Education Programme (NFEP), Permanent Adult Schemes and the balance of 10,000 were to be covered by new programmes under NAEP. The programme was implemented in seven project areas of Kamrup district and one project area of each of other districts (viz. Goalpara, Darrang, Nowgong, Sibsagar, Lakhimpur, Dibrugarh, Cachar, Karbi Anglong, and N.C. Hills). The total number of projects covered during the preparatory year was 16. The annual phasing of the 63 projects were as follows: 16 in 1978-79; 31 in 1979-80; 16 in 1980-81 i.e. a cumulative total of 63 projects were in existence during 1980-81. The year-wise break up of the coverage of adults together with cumulative coverage is shown in table - 5.8
Table 5.8

Annual coverage of adult illiterates in Assam and their cumulative coverage from 1978-79 to 1983-84.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Annual coverage (in lakhs)</th>
<th>Cumulative coverage (in lakhs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>4.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>10.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>15.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>21.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>25.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Draft Adult Education Plan, Assam (Plains and Hills) 1978-79 and 1979-84; Directorate of Public Instruction, Assam p.9

In addition to these, additional provision had to be made to meet the educational needs of another 50,000 adult illiterates, due to entry from the lower age-groups, flow of persons of outside the age group 15-35 and also for repeaters, etc. This
was proposed to be accommodated by increasing the intake capacity of the existing centres without going for increasing the number of centres. The year-wise break up of centres together with cumulative coverage of centres is shown in table 5.9

Table - 5.9
No. of adult literacy centres in Assam and their cumulative coverage from 1978-79 to 1983-84

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Annual coverage of centres (No.)</th>
<th>Cumulative coverage of centres (No.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>2,165</td>
<td>2,165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(year of preparation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>14,200</td>
<td>16,365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>17,500</td>
<td>33,865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>17,800</td>
<td>51,665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>18,500</td>
<td>70,165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>14,266</td>
<td>84,431</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Draft Adult Education Plan (Plains and Hills) 1978-79 and 1979-80, D.P.I., Assam, p.9
According to the Draft Seventh Five Year Plan of Assam (1985-90) for Adult Education, the State Adult Education Programme was started in Assam from the year 1979-80 as a part of national programme, although the programme was symbolically inaugurated on 2nd October, 1978. The actual implementation of the scheme took place during the year 1979-80 which was treated as a preparatory year and 1.99 lakh illiterate adults in the age-group 15-35 were covered during that year including those covered by State Adult Education Programme (SAEP) and Rural Functional Literacy Programme (RFLP).

The allocation for adult education in Assam during the Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) was Rs.221.00 lakhs with a target to cover 25.33 lakh illiterate adults in the age group of 15-35 years. The Govt. of India sanctioned 8 projects of 300 centres in each under Centrally sponsored R.F.L.P. during 1979-80 in addition to S.A.F.P. which are continuing in the districts of Dibrugarh, Jorhat (old Sibsagar), Nowgong (now Nagaon), Kamrup, Goalpara, Sonitpur (old Darrang), Lakhimpur and
Under State Programme, 43 projects with 100 centres in each were set up during 1980-81. The break up of target of adult illiterates and physical achievements during the Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) is shown in Table-5.10

**Table 5.10**

Target of adult illiterates and achievement in Assam during Sixth Plan under State and Central programme.  
(Figures in lakhs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>State programme</th>
<th>Central programme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984-85</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>1.41*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* anticipated

Source: Draft Seventh Five Year Plan 1985-90 and Draft Annual Plan 1985-86 (Annexure-A); p.2 Govt. of Assam.
Among the notable achievements in the field of adult education in Assam during 1983-84, mention may be made of (1) accord of sanction for four new projects with 100 centres each, viz. 3 in Kokrajhar district and 1 in Goalpara district; (2) creation of State Resource Centre at Guwahati to cater to the long-felt need of the Adult Education programme; (3) accord of sanction for 10 projects for post-literacy and follow-up programme with 100 centres in each to cover 20,000 neo-literates; (4) accord of Govt. of India's sanction for starting of 7 more projects with 300 centres in each under the scheme of RFLP.

Another highlight in this sphere was the introduction of a new Central Scheme under which special award was provided in the field of enrolment of women in the adult literacy centre for which the Govt. of India sanctioned a central grant of Rs. 5.15 lakhs. Under this scheme, 43 Women Adult Education Centres got award of Rs.5,000 each and one district showing the best performance in the field
of adult education would get one vehicle out of this central assistance.45

During 1984-85, the target was to cover 1.41 lakh adults under the State Plan and 1.26 lakhs under the Central Plan covering a total of 2.67 lakhs. There was also target to cover 12,000 adults through the Voluntary agencies which received central grant during 1983-84. Besides, there was a proposal to open 15 more projects of post-literacy and follow-up programme with an additional target to cover 30,000 neo-literates. In all, there were 25 projects under this programme to cover 60,000 neo-literates.46

The Sixth Five Year Plan in respect of State Adult Education Programme ended with the following achievements in Assam including those anticipated for 1984-85.47

45. Draft Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) and Annual Plan 1985-86; Directorate of Elementary Education, Govt. of Assam.
46. ibid,
47. ibid,
PHYSICAL ACHIEVEMENT

A. Number of project:
   (i) State Plan - 47 projects with 100 centres in Cachar
   (ii) Central Plan -
      (a) Govt. agencies : 14 projects with 300 centres in each
      (b) Voluntary agencies : 17 projects with 640 centres in total.

B. Coverage of Adults:
   (i) State Plan - 6.51 lakhs
   (ii) Central Plan - 4.21 lakhs (including voluntary agencies)
   (iii) Total - 10.72 lakhs

Post literacy and Follow up programme

Projects
   (i) State Plan - 25 projects with 100 centres in each
   (ii) Central Plan - 8 projects with 100 centres in each

Coverage of adults
   (i) State Plan - 49,000
   (ii) Central Plan - 15,000
   Total - 64,000

Financial Involvement
   (i) State Plan - Rs. 316.78 lakhs
   (ii) Central Plan - Rs. 262.49 lakhs
   Total - Rs. 579.27 lakhs
The Draft Seventh Plan (1985-90)* has envisaged an allocation of Rs. 2295.00 lakhs under State Plan and Rs. 1161.68 lakhs for Central Plan for implementation of Adult education programmes in Assam. 48

During the first year of the Seventh Plan, under the State Plan, it was proposed to undertake the following programmes: -

(i) Continuation of Adult Education programme in 47 projects with a target to cover 1.41 lakh illiterate adults.

(ii) Post literacy and follow up programme to be conducted in the existing 25 and 22 new projects to cover 94,000 neo-literates.

The Central Plan envisages the implementation of the following programme:

(i) Continuation of Adult Education programme in 14 projects to cover 1.26 lakh adults under R.F.L.P.

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48. Source: Directorate of Elementary Education (Adult Education Wing), Govt. of Assam.
(ii) Post literacy and follow up programme will be undertaken in 8 projects with a target to cover 16,000 neo-literates under R.F.L.P.

(iii) Continuation of the scheme of giving award in the field of enrolment of girls and women in adult literacy centres.

PROGRESS OF ADULT EDUCATION IN KAMRUP DISTRICT

According to 1971 Census, though Kamrup district ranks third in point of area (i.e. 9,863 sq.km.) among the districts in Assam, it had the largest population (28.54 lakhs) with the highest density (289 per sq.km.) as against the State average density of 186 per sq.km.

Though the percentage of literacy in Kamrup district (undivided) has increased from 19.8 per cent in 1951 to 28.8 per cent in 1971, the number of illiterates has also increased progressively from 11.95 lakhs to 20.33 lakhs during the same period. Sibsagar district (old) has the highest literacy rate of 36.6 per cent and in point of literacy rate, Kamrup's position was fifth. The low literacy rate of Kamrup
district may be attributed to the fact that Kamrup district has the sizeable number of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population, among whom illiteracy is widespread, and they accounted for 18.1 per cent and 18.6 per cent respectively of the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe population of the State. The position of literacy rate and number of illiterates in Kamrup district (undivided) is shown in table - 5.11.

### Table 5.11

Population, literacy rates, No. of illiterates by sex, their decadal variation in Kamrup district during 1951-1971.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census years</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Population (in lakhs)</th>
<th>P.C. of literacy</th>
<th>No. of illiterate (in lakhs)</th>
<th>Decadal percentage increase of illiterates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>7.99</td>
<td>30.45</td>
<td>5.56</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>female</td>
<td>6.91</td>
<td>7.53</td>
<td>6.39</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14.90</td>
<td>19.83</td>
<td>11.95</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>11.10</td>
<td>39.22</td>
<td>6.75</td>
<td>+ 21.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>female</td>
<td>9.53</td>
<td>13.55</td>
<td>8.24</td>
<td>+ 28.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20.63</td>
<td>27.36</td>
<td>14.99</td>
<td>+ 25.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>15.10</td>
<td>38.19</td>
<td>9.33</td>
<td>+ 38.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>female</td>
<td>13.44</td>
<td>18.17</td>
<td>11.00</td>
<td>+ 33.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28.54</td>
<td>28.77</td>
<td>20.33</td>
<td>+ 35.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 
1. Statistical Abstract of Assam, 1967-68 table -1.10, p.20; table- 1.15, p.36
2. Statistical Abstract of Assam, 1978 Table 1.13, p.23.
The data presented in the Table - 5.11 indicate that while the population of Kamrup district (undivided) nearly doubled from 14.90 lakhs during 1951 to 28.54 lakhs during 1971, the number of illiterates increased by 70 per cent from 11.95 lakhs to 20.33 lakhs during the same period. The decadal increase of illiterates was 25.44 per cent during 1951-1961 and 35.62 per cent during 1961-1971.

As it has been envisaged in the National Adult Education programme to cover the adult population in the age-group 15-35, it is necessary to know the size of adult illiterates in this age-group. According to 1951 Census in Kamrup district, there were 4.95 lakh adults in the age-group 15-35 constituting 33.2 per cent of the total population of the district. Out of these 4.95 lakh adults in the age-group 15-35, there were 3.64 lakh adult illiterates constituting 73.5 per cent of the adults in this age-group. The number of adult illiterates in this age-group increased from 3.64 lakhs in 1951 to 4.03 lakhs in 1961 and to 4.66 lakhs in 1971, as can be seen from the Table- 5.12.
### Table 5.12


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census years</th>
<th>Total population (in lakhs)</th>
<th>Decadal growth (p.c.)</th>
<th>No. of adults in the age-group 15-35</th>
<th>Total population (in lakhs)</th>
<th>No. of illiterates</th>
<th>Adults (in lakhs)</th>
<th>Illiterates (p.c. to total adults)</th>
<th>Adults (p.c. to total population)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>14.90</td>
<td>+ 17.89</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>20.63</td>
<td>+ 38.46</td>
<td>6.46</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>28.54</td>
<td>+ 38.34</td>
<td>8.58</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Poverty is interlinked with illiteracy.

Any amount of effort to remove poverty would be unsuccessful unless the poor people are brought to a system of educational endeavour to change their outlook. The progress of a nation in modern times is based totally on the acceptance of scientific values which can be sustained only through a continuous educational process. Hence the importance of adult education is being increasingly recognised.
and it has a definite role to play in the national reconstruction.

The Sixth and the Seventh Plan documents envisage that the entire illiterate population in the age-group 15-35 would be covered under the literacy programme by 1990. Special emphasis is being placed on women, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other weaker sections of the Society, who contribute to the bulk of the illiterates.

At the national level, 100 million adult illiterates in the age-group 15-35 have to be covered by the end of the year 1990. The target for the State of Assam has been fixed at 25.3 lakhs (based on 1971 Census) and the share of Kamrup district (undivided) is 4.88 lakhs.

**Progress of coverage through projects up to 4th phase.**

It has been intended to cover the target group (adult illiterates) under two programmes, viz.
State Adult Education Programme (SAEP) and Rural Functional Literacy Programme (RFLP) sponsored by the Govt. of India.

**SAEP**: The district of Kamrup (undivided) with 25 Development Blocks including greater Guwahati area have been grouped into 13 S.A.E.P projects. So far, only 10 projects have been sanctioned which are in operation during the last four phases of the programme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Projects</th>
<th>Blocks covered</th>
<th>Present headquarters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Dimoria and Greater Guwahati S.A.E.P project</td>
<td>1. Demoria Dev. Block</td>
<td>Sonapur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Greater Guwahati</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Chhoygaon S.A.E.P project</td>
<td>3. Chhoygaon Dev. Block</td>
<td>Chhoygaon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Boko-Bongaon Block</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Rani-Rampur S.A.E.P project</td>
<td>5. Rani Dev. Block</td>
<td>Mirza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Rampur Dev. Block</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Karora Dev. Block</td>
<td>Chari ali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Tamulpur S.A.E.P project</td>
<td>9. Tamulpur Dev. Block</td>
<td>Tamulpur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Borigog Dev. Block</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Projects</td>
<td>Blocks covered</td>
<td>Present headQuarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. Hajo Dev. Block</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14. Pub-Nalbari Dev. Block</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16. Bajali Dev. Block</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18. Mandia Dev. Block</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Barpeta Road S.A.E.P project</td>
<td>19. Gobardhana Dev. Block</td>
<td>Barpeta Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20. Rupsi Dev. Block</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Till the time of collecting the information (i.e. March, 1986) only 19 out of 25 Development Blocks in Kamrup district have been covered up to 4th phase programme and the remaining 6 blocks were left uncovered, viz. Chamaria, Rangia, Pachim Nalbari, Baska, Bhananipur, and Chenga Development Block.
During the 5th phase programme, two more S.A.E.P. projects were sanctioned for the Kamrup district (undivided) and only two Blocks were left uncovered by the S.A.E.P.

R.F.L.P. : The Blocks which were left out by S.A.E.P. projects have been covered by R.F.L.P. project with headquarters at Guwahati, (i.e. in the office of the District Adult Education Officer, Kamrup) from time to time.

During the 5th phase, the operation of Guwahati R.F.L.P. project will be confined to uncovered Blocks of Kamrup district (New), one more R.F.L.P. project has been sanctioned for Barpeta which formed a separate district as a result of re-organization of the erstwhile Kamrup district. The total strength of S.A.E.P. would be 8 including the new one.
COVERAGE OF ADULT ILLITERATES ANNUALLY BY
SAEP AND RFLP PROJECT UPTO 4TH PHASE:

Under each S.A.E.P project, 100 centres were organised every year with the target of enrolment of 300 adults of the age-group 15-35. Total enrolment in S.A.E.P. project covered 30,000 adults. Similarly, the R.F.L.P project covered 9,000 adults through 300 centres every year.

The annual target for the district of Kamrup (undivided) was fixed at 39,000 adults. With the bifurcation of the district since July, 1983, the target for Kamrup district (New) was fixed at 30,000 adults per year. With the allocation of one more S.A.E.P project in Kamrup district (New), the target fixed for the district was 33,000 in the year 1984-85 (5th phase).

The table 5.13 given below shows the target, and enrolment of Adult Education Programme in Kamrup district (undivided) from 1st phase onward.
Thus it is seen that during 1984-85 (5th phase) although the target was 30,000 adults, actually 31,025 adults were enrolled of whom 2,763 (or 8.9 per cent) were scheduled castes, and 5,740 (or 18.5 per cent) were scheduled tribes.
ADMINISTRATIVE SET-UP AT DISTRICT AND PROJECT LEVEL

The District Adult Education Officer is in the overall charge of the programmes of both S.A.E.P. and R.P.L.P. He gives guidance to the Project Officers for implementation of the programmes and also coordinates with other departments and agencies for strengthening the programmes. The District Adult Education Officer is also the Secretary to District Adult Education Board, which is headed by the Deputy Commissioner of the District.

For State project: One Project Officer is provided for each project to organise and implement 100 adult education centres during a year. He is assisted by one Supervisor in the field and one Lower Division Assistant typist and two peons in the project office. The strength of supervisors has been raised to 3 from 5th phase.

For Central project: One project Officer is provided, who is assisted by one Assistant Project Officer and 10 Supervisors for his 300 centres. The supporting staff for the office of the Project
Officer (RFLP) consists of one Lower Division Assistant, one Lower Division Assistant cum typist and one peon. The Project Officer (RFLP) functions from the office of the District Adult Education Officer at the district headquarters.

Training of Instructors: The training of instructors is a very important part of the adult education programme. He is to undergo a 14-day residential training in two phases. The first phase consists of pre-service training of 10 days' duration and the second phase consists of 4 days' training held after completion of 3 to 4 months' instructions. Functionality and awareness are two important aspects which are given due emphasis.

Such training programmes for 1300 instructors of each phase are held annually and all the instructors are compulsorily required to attend the training programme. From 1984, the duration of first and second phase of training programme has been changed to 6 and 8 days respectively.
Post literacy and follow-up programme:

The post literacy and follow-up programmes for the R.F.L.P. project areas were taken up during 1983-84. Seven Continuing Education Workers were engaged in delivering reading materials to the neo-literates of the previous phases. One worker usually covers 300 neo-literates of compact areas. He is provided with one bi-cycle and necessary books for the purpose. One Assistant Project Officer has been appointed to look after the effectiveness of the post-literacy work. He is the incharge of the Central library for regulating the flow of reading materials to the neo-literates of selected pockets covering mostly scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and other backward communities. The post literacy work continues for about 10 months in each area selected for the purpose.

The post literacy and follow-up programme has been introduced in the S.A.E.P projects during the current phase. 14 Continuing Education Workers (C.E.W.) have been appointed in the month of January, 1984 to undertake post literacy programme in
in each project area. Four State Projects have been provided with 2 C.E.Ws where there is concentration of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe and immigrant population.

The project-wise distribution of Continuing Education Workers (C.E.Ws) in R.F.L.P and S.A.E.P projects is shown below:

**R.F.L.P - 7 (C.E.Ws)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Blocks</th>
<th>No. of C.E.Ws posted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. West Nalbari Block</td>
<td>2 Nos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bhabanipur Block</td>
<td>1 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Baska Block</td>
<td>2 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Rangia Block</td>
<td>2 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>7 Nos.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**S.A.E.P - 14 (C.E.Ws)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the project</th>
<th>No. of C.E.Ws posted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Dimoria and Greater Guwahati S.A.E.P project</td>
<td>2 Nos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kamalpur S.A.E.P project</td>
<td>1 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Rani-Rampur S.A.E.P project</td>
<td>1 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Tamulpur S.A.E.P project</td>
<td>1 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Barpeta S.A.E.P project</td>
<td>1 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Barpeta Road S.A.E.P project</td>
<td>1 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Mukalmua S.A.E.P project</td>
<td>1 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Jalal S.A.E.P project</td>
<td>1 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Choygaon S.A.E. project</td>
<td>2 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Barama S.A.E.P project</td>
<td>2 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14 Nos.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS OF KAMRUP DISTRICT
IN THE FIELD OF ADULT EDUCATION

Just after the inauguration of National Adult Education Programmes in 1978, the Govt. of India formulated a "Scheme of Assistance to Voluntary Organisations" for participating in the field of adult education. The detailed records of 1979-80 are not available. However, the following voluntary organisations of Kamrup district were engaged in the field of adult education after receiving financial assistance from the Central Govt.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name of voluntary organisations</th>
<th>No. of centres</th>
<th>No. of beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>Gram Lok Seva Sangh, Dhamdhama</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Amar Pragati Sanskrit Chora and Samaj Unnayan Kendra, Guwahati</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Eastern India Women's Association, Guwahati</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Bamundi Yubak Sangha, Hajo</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Nalbari Zila Samaj Kalyan Mahila Samity, Nalbari</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>210</strong></td>
<td><strong>6300</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(It may be noted that details of amount of distribution as financial assistance to these five voluntary organisations during 1979-80 are not available).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name of voluntary organisations</th>
<th>No. of centres</th>
<th>No. of beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>1. Gram Swaraj Parishad, Rangia</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Nalbari Zila Samaj Kalyan Mahila Samity</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Gram Lok Seva Sangha, Dhamdham</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Garakhania Bhagania Mahila Samity, Adabari</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Eastern India Women's Association, Guwahati</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Sahitya Sanskriti Samaj Kalyan Kendra, Pathsala</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Barkhetri Unnayan Samiti, Mukalmua</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>310</strong></td>
<td><strong>9300</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the year 1983-84, an amount of Rs. 5,19,265 was distributed among 7 voluntary organisations of Kamrup district as financial assistance from Govt. of India through 310 centres with 9,300 beneficiaries.  

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49. District Adult Education Officer, Kamrup, Guwahati.
The District Adult Education Board for the Kamrup district was set up with official and non-official members to coordinate and look after the field programme of National Adult Education in the district.

**Proposed Programme for the 5th phase in the district Kamrup (new)**

The 5th phase programme which was launched on 1st April, 1984 covered 36 Gaon Panchayat areas. The target of 50 centres for each Community Development Block could not be achieved in view of the fact that more emphasis had to be given on the coverage of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and other backward pockets of the project areas. Emphasis was also laid on establishing more female centres during the 5th phase where female instructors were available.

**CONCLUSION**

The National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) launched on 2nd October 1978 on a nation-wide basis was a crusade against mass illiteracy. The programme encompassed the adults in the age-group of 15-35 years
who constitute about one-third of the total population in the State of Assam and there are an estimated 35 lakh adult illiterates in 1986, accounting for 44 per cent of the total persons in this age-group.

Judging by the number of adult illiterates, the programme for driving out illiteracy by 1990 is both stupendous and expensive. Apart from financial constraint which is the greatest hurdle, there are myriads of problems that come in the way of effective implementation of adult education programme. Besides difficulties inherent in this frontier due to peculiar topography, there are other problems like transport and communications which often get disrupted due to frequent occurrence of floods and cyclonic storms. There are still many villages in this State which remain inaccessible during the monsoons. It is, therefore, not surprising that the adult literacy programme which is conducted in the C.D.Blocks in the evening hours is beset with enormous problems. Reports are not lacking which showed that the adult literacy programme conducted in the night classes greatly suffered due to scarcity of kerosene oil in the far flung villages.
Another important characteristics of adult education is the participation of adults, both men and women, for which there should be intensive motivation among the adult learners and awareness should be created among them for acceptance of adult literacy programme for the benefit of individuals as also of the community.

Both State and Central Governments have taken adequate measures through various programmes like State Adult Education Programme (SAEP) and Rural Functional Literacy Programme (RFLP), etc., in the C.D.Blocks and Gaon Panchayat level to fulfil the objective of achieving 100 per cent adult literacy by 1990—a objective set out during the Sixth Plan. While some measure of success can be achieved, some educationists and others are sceptical about achieving cent per cent literacy within the target date.

Of course, there are reasons to express this pessimistic view. Firstly, the dimension of the problem is vast in view of the large number of adult illiterates involved in the State of Assam to the
tune of 35 lakhs and secondly, the incidence of poverty in this State is of the order of 38 per cent. Of the projected 230 lakh current population in Assam in 1986, 87 lakhs (or 38 per cent) are below the poverty line, of whom about 78 lakhs live in the village, because 90 per cent of the State's population is rural.

As in the case of the State, in Kamrup district also, the problem of adult education is enormous because it involves the eradication of illiteracy of an estimated 7 lakhs illiterates in the productive age-group 15-35 years.

Both Sixth and Seventh Plans have rightly given due emphasis by including the adult literacy programme as a part of the minimum needs programme (MNP). To tackle this problem, it would be necessary to integrate the adult literacy programme with other rural development and anti-poverty programmes. This

50. Source: For estimate of poverty, Rural Development Department, Govt. of Assam

51. The Draft Seventh Five Year Plan, 1985-90, Planning & Development Department, Govt. of Assam; p. 15-22.
linkage is important even for the success of poverty alleviation programme because ignorance is the main cause of exploitation in various forms. The problem calls for a holistic approach linking adult education programme with income generating programmes to yield better results for economic uplift of the rural poor for better community living. For removal of poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and ignorance, the development process is to be tailored to the actual needs and aspirations of the vulnerable section of the population.

It can be visualised that adult education programme, if properly implemented with vigorous follow-up action can instil an awareness among the people in general and rural population in particular, enabling them to promote human right and dignity both in men and women. Adult education can generate a sense of belonging among the people and can create self-confidence in them to exercise their rights and duties. For successful implementation of developmental schemes for economic growth in the country, people's involvement is a must. Adult education helps the people to bring about a harmonious blending of
traditional as well as modern culture and educate the people to discard social prejudices, superstitions and conservatism, etc., which in turn help in the growth of a healthy community life.

Adult education has made considerable impact in community living in the C.D. Blocks of Kamrup district. This has been manifested in the people's eagerness to adopt modern and scientific methods of agriculture by using improved tools and implements, chemical fertilisers, improved seeds of high yielding varieties (HYV), insecticides, etc., to increase production and productivity in agriculture to raise their level of living and thereby ensuring a prosperous community life.

In short, with the active cooperation of government agencies, educational and social institutions, voluntary organisations and above all people's participation, it should be possible to reach the goal in no distant future.