CHAPTER VIII

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

The main recommendations for reaffirming the commitment of the state government, State Resource Centre and of the universities for strengthening their strategies to meet the basic learning needs of the people and transform adult education into life long learning process are reported in this section.

The recommendations relate to the following areas:

Projectisation of Centres.
Selection of Personnel.
Motivation.
Literacy For Development.
Training.
Inter-Sectoral Linkages.
Literacy, Post-literacy and Continuing Education.
Institutionalisation of Adult Education.

PROJECTISATION OF CENTRES

The traditional centre based programme needs to be revised. The intention behind the reorganised centre based programme should be area specific - time specific, cost effective and result oriented projects. Every educational institution should organise programmes for a selected area
and a programme of action should be prepared to make the area totally literate in a time bound frame. The objectives of total literacy programme should be to achieve at least 85% literacy in each of the target group, i.e., among women separately, among men separately, among Scheduled castes/tribes men and women separately.

The programme should aim at qualitative achievement of the learners and not just on enrolment. The expenditure per learner should be reasonable and approximately at the rate of Rs. 60 per learner.

The following pre-requisites must be adopted for the implementation of the programme.

Environment Building. The implementation of the programme must be preceded by efforts towards building an environment that is conducive for learning. These efforts should be directed towards moulding the opinions of the volunteers, community and learners for generating a positive demand for literacy. Public opinion should be mobilised for participation in literacy efforts. These efforts should be continuous and also aim at minimising dropout rates.

For generating an environment, message of literacy must be disseminated through door-to-door visits, meetings, and use of all type of media—folk, traditional and electronic. The message may be disseminated repeatedly till the desired impact has been created. Village level campaign committees
may be organised comprising village elders, activists and campaigners for disseminating the messages of literacy.

**SELECTION OF PERSONNEL**

The project would run under the charge of a co-ordinator with some supporting staff. The staff may be selected carefully with the following guidelines in mind.

- The persons to be selected must be persons of character, calibre and leadership qualities in the sphere of social and other constructive work.

- The instructors and supervisors should be identified at the time of pre-project detailed survey. A large number of girls/women should be selected as instructors to mobilise and to impart literacy to women learners.

- In the case of colleges and other institutions, efforts should be made to select maximum number of students. The present practice to involve 50% out of college youth needs reconsideration.

- Steps should be taken to increase the pool of persons available for recruitment as instructors, especially in backward and border areas.

- The appointment of the instructors should be for entire duration of the project, i.e. 2 or 3 years, in case work is found satisfactory during the first year.
The project co-ordinator may be selected by a specially constituted committee with representatives from the state, colleges, resource centres and community. Preference may be given to women and they must be provided adequate support to discharge their responsibilities.

**LITERACY AS LEARNING AND COMMUNICATIVE TOOL**

Literacy efforts no longer adhere to mobilisation of efforts to teach simple literacy and number skills to a vast number of illiterates. No doubt, the efforts have succeeded in reaching thousands of illiterate persons in each district of the state over the past 8-10 years, but the university system finds itself faced with the problem of functional literacy. A large number of neo-learners have not been able to use literacy skills in their everyday life. They could not use it as an essential tool for sharing of knowledge and information, for communication and for participation in affairs of a democratic society. To achieve this, emphasis is to be placed on effectively imparting the literacy skills at the level which is considered to be functional, so as to enable individuals to continue to acquire knowledge and information independently and enhance self-directed learning attitudes. The university system should determine the basic minimum norms to be acquired for functional literacy, the ability to apply reading, writing and numeracy skills in a socio-economic situation required by
a given environment.

**STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT**

Since 1965, when the Teheran Conference strongly advocated integrating literacy into 'the training for work, increased productivity, a greater participation in civil life and a better understanding of surrounding world', a need has arisen to explore ways and means to link literacy into different aspects of development. In India was introduced as Farmers Functional Literacy Programme and functional literacy was organised as part of the 'green revolution' campaign. Farmers involved in 'high-yielding varieties' programme received literacy training as well as strategic agricultural skills to increase productivity. Now, when the programme under National Adult Education Programme or National Literacy Mission is known as Rural Functional Literacy Programme, the universities in the state of Punjab have not made special efforts to link literacy with 'green revolution'. The state universities have little co-ordination with the Agricultural University in the state or the State Agriculture Department to achieve the said objective.

Further, literacy can be combined with vocational training, cutting and sewing, cooking and other vocational courses in adult education centres. This may create the problem of availability of suitable instructors who could
perform both the task i.e. literacy and vocational training. This may be met by proper co-ordination with related departments who are willing to participate. Further, literacy should be linked to over all improvement of human conditions and dissemination of information on health, nutrition, family planning, women equity, conservation of environment and nationalism.

**MOTIVATION**

Many adults are not naturally and spontaneously motivated to learn. They have problems of leisure and freedom to learn. Many are unable to perceive the need for learning and unable to internalise those needs. Women and girls suffer the most in gender discriminatory societies. The conservative attitude of parents and guardians towards females are not easy to change and thus, it is becoming difficult to achieve the targets towards females literacy.

Universities have a key role to play towards the task of environment building for literacy. A positive environment for literacy can sensitize the educated people to mobilise their efforts to arouse, awaken and motivate the illiterates. Literacy environment can be built through regular meetings by imparting messages for literacy, dissemination of success stories and introducing programmes of literacy training at work places.
Motivation can be built by the programme itself. The first step in this direction is creation of environment that may be conducive to learning. It may include:

- Adequate space for 25-30 learners.
- Adequate lighting and ventilating arrangements.
- Approachable location of the centre.
- Display of attractive visual materials at the centre.
- Sufficient supply of teaching-learning material.
- Improved blackboard and other material.
- A well trained instructor.

The programmes besides meeting the basic learning needs, seek to empower learners so as to bring about changes within themselves. The adult education programmes aims to foster social awareness by raising the capacity and capability of the learners, to exercise more control over his/her own destiny and environment. It should enhance critical thinking and problem solving abilities so as to enable the learners to examine the causes of their problems, explore possible alternations and select the most appropriate solution possible at the time. It should also promote equality in education among women, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and people living in areas with low literacy rates.

The programmes should be learner centred. It should be based on their specific needs and interests. The participatory and thought provoking approaches may be used to generate interest in learning.
Motivation of the instructors and other functionaries has also to be taken care of. In this regard, following suggestions are made:

- Honoraria should be paid to the functionaries regularly and without delay.
- The supply of the teaching-learning material should be made adequately and in time.

TRAINING

The training of the functionaries is too essential for proper implementation of the project. For the training of instructors/volunteers, following norms as designed by National Literacy Mission may be observed.

The minimum duration of the training should be 21 days spread over in three phases. The group size should not exceed 30 trainees. In larger groups, attention cannot be paid to individual members.

The methodology should be communicative and participatory.

The training of supervisors should be of one week and cover all the functions that a supervisor has to perform, i.e. effective communication, mobilisation of community support, identification of local needs, use of local resources, planning of activities and management of JSN and centres, designing innovative teaching methods, monitoring and evaluation techniques.
The project co-ordinator should reorganise the training programmes that are more participative and include an element of observation of actual teaching of learners in centres.

He/she may prepare a calendar of activities both for the pre-service, in-service, recurrent training.

The training of all functionaries be managed at the state level through an appropriate MIS (Management Information System).

The officials of the State Resource Centres, District Institute of Education, University Experts should participate as resource persons in the training programme.

The project co-ordinator should also work out a core curriculum. It may include:

- Background, present status and future perspectives of Adult Education.
- Mobilisation of community, learners and volunteers.
- Identification of local needs and resources.
- Use of local resources.
- Co-ordination with development agencies.
- Exposure to development process.
- Planning of activities and management system.
- Designing the materials.
- Use of innovative teaching methods, such as role plays, simulation, puppetry, etc.
- Promotion of continuing education and JSN.

**WOMENS' PARTICIPATION**

National Literacy Mission has laid special emphasis on the education of women. It acknowledges that through literacy women become aware of their social and legal rights, learn and improve income generating skills, acquire a voice in the affairs of the family and participate in the process of social change with dignity and self-confidence.

It would thus be desirable to work for literacy among women with greater vigour and determination. The following measures are recommended to achieve their greater participation in literacy programme.

- Significant pre-literacy motivational programmes be organised for illiterate women.

- Women volunteers to be motivated for greater participation as instructors.

- The centres for women to be located at convenient places so that it may be easier for the women to join the centre.

- The time for the centre to be adjusted according to the convenience of the women.
- Involving the health and family welfare agencies in the programmes and organising training for income generation besides involving agencies such as ICDS, ANM, DWACRA, etc. so as to motivate the women.

- The existing women groups in the villages such as Mahila Mandals, DWACRA groups, to be identified and actively involved for mobilisation of the women in adult education programmes. The programme to be made interesting, useful, need-based and thought-provoking.

**LINKAGE WITH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES**

Literacy is an essential tool for sharing of knowledge, information and communication and upon it depends the success of other developmental activities. It is, therefore, desirable to link literacy to development programmes. This can be ensured in a number of ways and some are stated below:

- Motivating the members of development departments like health, agriculture, social welfare, panchayats, community development, etc. that their programme can be implemented better if linked with literacy.

- Workshops and seminars may be organised for the functionaries of development departments so that they may themselves see the advantages of integration of development programmes with literacy.
The adult education functionaries may review the existing materials developed by the development agencies and revise the same to make it more need-based and relevant to the lives of learners and neo-literates.

- Exhibitions to link literacy and development may be arranged.

- Success stories of neo-literates with regard to implementation of development programmes be circulated.

- Programmes to demonstrate how neo-literates have been able to accept and benefit from development programmes be organised.

Inter-organisational or inter-sectoral collaboration, communication and motivation must be built up at the level of the project to seek the co-operation and involvement of other departments, and developmental agencies to make adult education a meaningful activity and to foster social change through meaningful relationships and interactions.

Further the colleges and universities that cater to the needs of a small area comprising one or two villages or slums, need to establish necessary linkages with the community, which are mutually beneficial. The institutions may offer need based and relevant educational programmes that may ultimately facilitate self-reliance.
The time has come to replace the scattered and diffused programmes by coherent, inter-linked area development programmes. The programmes must be target/outcome oriented and the targets must be achieved from the specified areas in a time bound frame. The institutions of higher education have a special responsibility to set a model for other agencies to follow suit.

MASS CAMPAIGN

Mass campaign is the most suitable approach to serve the vast number of illiterates. This approach can be used to enable the massive illiterate population to read and write within a relatively short time than the centre-based approach, which is highly selective and can be used for limited population only. The university system is adopting both the approaches but it lays special emphasis on centre-based selective approach. The limitations of the approach have been discussed and keeping in view low literacy rate in the state, Mass Campaign is strongly recommended. Adult literacy programmes have to be flexible and there can be no single formula for success. The campaign should be planned to maximally capitalize on prevailing institutional capabilities. Campaign approach is not the possible formula for success but keeping in view its success in Ernakulam and in the state of Kerala in the first instance and later in Pondicherry and other districts of the country, it would be worthwhile to try
the Campaign Approach in the university system. The system may launch the campaign in certain specially identified areas to achieve the targets of total literacy in those areas in specified time. This may work as a model for the other agencies working in the region. The university system provides a large reservoir of human energy and resources and the nation very much desires that these resources may be mobilised for nation building activities through adult education programmes and universal literacy.

**QUALITY LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

Attempts to provide quality learning experience in literacy programmes are often impeded by limited funding, lack of competent personnel and insufficient research and evaluation data. By examining the experiences of certain developing nations in Asia-Pacific Region, it can be inferred that there is a need to develop meaningful curricula. It was in 1988, that National Literacy Mission defined some national values, that could form the basis of curricula. This would certainly call for inclusion of content in the teaching-learning package relevant to improving the quality of life based on national values discussed earlier.

The new teaching-learning package popularly known as 'Improved Pace and Content of Learning (IPCL)' is a most significant development in the field of literacy. The
University's Resource Centre for Adult and Continuing Education has prepared two sets of material for use in the state - one in Hindi and other in Punjabi language. This material makes learning lively and enables the learners to perceive the pace and progress of learning. It also reduces the overall learning duration to about 200 hours while sustaining the motivation of learning.

However, the pre-requisite for implementing the ICFL strategies have not been fully determined and as such are emphasised upon the university system to adopt for implementing the same in the programme.

- To survey the operational area to assess the number of persons to be made literate.
- To prepare a plan to cover the learners in terms of duration and resources available.
- To conduct environment building activities.
- To prepare pre-literacy material to help create environment, discussion, dialogue and interest for large scale adoption in the state.
- Besides preparing the IPCL material, teaching aids, teacher's guide, etc. must be prepared.
- Special material for women's empowerment may be developed.
Proper training to the instructor who is a key person in the entire delivery mechanism must be imparted in the use of IPCL material.

Special schemes of incentives for the instructors and learners may be developed.

LINKING LITERACY AND POST-LITERACY CONTINUING EDUCATION

Post-literacy refers to processes and activities especially developed for neo-literates, which are designed to help them to become fully functionally literate and to be autonomous learners. The post-literacy aims to prevent regression and to develop those higher level literacy skills that are essential for autonomy in learning. Such skills include context vocabulary building, increased general knowledge and its applications, and the development of skills in integrating concepts into cognitive systems. It is essential and important to develop higher skills of critical reading and to foster skills in independent problem solving.

After achieving sufficient literacy skills, the learners need to promote it through programmes of continuing education. The one most important medium of continuing education is JSN of National Literacy Mission. The materials for continuing education may centre around the following six areas:

Post-literacy Programme, Equivalency Programmes, Income Generating Programmes, Quality of Life Improvement
Programmes, Individual Interest Promotion Programmes and Future Oriented Programmes.

The link between literacy and post-literacy continuing education has not been much developed. It is too essential to prevent relapse into illiteracy and to link literacy to development. After basic literacy some reading material must be available to neo-learners to maintain their interests in learning. In this context, the continuing education is an area of serious concern. However, the concept has not been fully defined and integrated into the programme which needs to be done on priority so as to build a self-learning society.

The post-literacy material should stimulate people to acquire knowledge that is generally useful in their lives, knowledge about developments around them, about socio-political changes and so on. Being able to read a short story or a newspaper makes literacy an avenue for the personal pleasure. Materials for continuing education should enable people to acquire new skills and prepare them for increasing the productivity in a current economic undertaking or prepare people to move into a new and more promising economic activity.

The university system should bring subject matter or content improvement. The subject matter for books must be researched, examined, re-written and tested before it can be printed and circulated. The quality of research that goes into the development of these materials must improve consistently over the years.
Further, one must realise that education is a life long process and the neo-learners must be able to pursue this objective with ease and confidence. The university system in the state of Punjab has developed material for use by the neo-learners on certain areas but some of the vital areas have been ignored. These areas are: workers in the organised sectors, workers in unorganised sectors, productive skills and quality of life and so on.

A review of the literacy programme confirms the need for diverse and adaptive literacy strategies which will take full advantage of the prevailing support and institutional capabilities. Similarly, learning experiences need to be diverse and responsive to the needs and conditions of the vast illiterate population. Effective literacy programmes require a comprehensive technical support system to conduct assessment of the needs of the learners, explore different learning strategies and technologies, carry out quality curricula, material developments, train personnel, supervise the project and provide on the spot guidance, assess performance of the learners and evaluate the overall literacy effort. Technical support services can be provided by a group of agencies and the university system should not lag behind to perform its respective functions through a centrally co-ordinated mechanism.

Furthermore, without periodic reinforcement, particularly in the form of concrete results, national commitment and
personal motivation can quickly fade. Further literacy programmes entail the need to institutionalise literacy policies within national development policies and plan to document concrete data to justify popular campaigns at all levels of society to extend the base of support for literacy programme beyond those who are in the field of education. Community based programmes can achieve the dividend and the university system should make all efforts to institutionalise literacy policies and seek people's support in this nation building programme.

The progress to achieve literacy targets has been rather slow in the state of Punjab. Disparities exist between literacy rates for men and women. Wide disparity exists in literacy rates in rural and urban areas. These deficiencies need to be remedied by making concrete efforts to reach the more socially and economically disadvantaged especially girls and women belonging to Scheduled Castes, landless agricultural labourers and urban slum dwellers. Strategies should include providing educational context relevant to the material welfare and increased productivity of the poor. A flexible schedule synchronized with agriculture, occupational, recreational activities of the target groups should be adopted.

For any significant literacy programme, the crucial factors are national commitment and support. To achieve long term support for literacy, efforts have to be made by various
participating agencies to bring such commitment into action. Future strategies should give priority to the implementation of planning and implementation systems at both macro and micro levels. Specifically, the data base should be systematized, and methods of assessment periodically reviewed to ensure their functionality. The organisational frame work, resource mobilisation, technical support, co-ordination, monitoring and reporting should be adequately strengthened to effectively perform these tasks.

The commitment of the universities and support have been identified as critical conditions for improving the adult education programmes. The universities through their extension departments should make serious efforts to reach the community. It would help both the university system and the masses and may generate a movement to complete the unfinished tasks in education which are adult literacy, education of girls and women, equity of women, changes in conservative attitudes and mentality besides paving a way for universal elementary education which in the long run shall lead towards the realisation of goal of "Education For All".