CHAPTER III

ADULT EDUCATION AND THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

In 1978, Government of India launched the National Adult Education Programme and many universities were involved in it in a substantial way. The programme gained considerable momentum during 1978-80, but remained static during 1980-82, when the whole programme of National Adult Education Programme was under review by the Kothari Committee. The programme moved forward during 1982-85 and 1985-90 and so on.

The Government of India had included eradication of illiteracy, population education and rural development in its 20 point programme and the University Grants Commission gave priority to it in 1983 and this renewed the process of involving universities and colleges in these national tasks. Following major decisions of the University Grants Commission gave a new thrust to this programme:

- All universities and colleges be involved in the programme of eradication of illiteracy, institution of population education clubs and programmes of continuing education with proper emphasis on the needs of the weaker sections and women.

- Financial assistance will be available to the universities and colleges on 100% basis upto 1990, which was later extended upto 1995.

- All such activities will be implemented under one umbrella of 'Department of Adult, Continuing Education and Extension'.

- The functionaries of the programme will have academic status at par with teachers of the university and will be in non-vacation category for the purpose of leave rules only.
The real boost to the programme came after the acceptance of the recommendations of the Working Group appointed by the University Grants Commission in September, 1982 in consultation with the Government of India, Ministry of Education and Culture. The group made the following recommendations which were accepted by the University Grants Commission.

Adult literacy programme through universities may be implemented in two phases. First phase to cover the period ending 31st March, 1985 and the second phase ending 31st March, 1990. In the first phase all affiliating type of universities and at least 1,500 colleges are involved to organise 15,000 to 20,000 centres. In the second phase, the number of centres be raised to at least 50,000 by involving all the universities/colleges in the country in Point No.16 Programme. While doing this, and in particular in the first phase, universities/colleges in the districts having literacy level below the national average, colleges for women and in the rural/backward/tribal areas were given priority so as to ensure priority organisation of the programmes for women, Scheduled castes/tribes and people from the rural and backward areas of the country. The programme has been extended upto 1995 and is known as Area Based. Under the Area Based Programme, all the activities i.e. adult education, continuing education, population education clubs and Jan Shikshan Nilayams (Public Reading Rooms) shall be integrated
in a specified area and a time bound programme shall be prepared by each college, university to make that area literate. The approach is area specific-time specific.

A University may be considered as a unit and be made responsible for the implementation of the programme through itself and its colleges. The universities may finalise their plans in consultation with the State Governments and colleges. The university Unit of Adult, Continuing and Extension Education be the Nodal Agency for monitoring, evaluation and research.

A university be considered as a Unit of the programme and that all the grants are made to the university for disbursement to colleges participating in the programme. The universities would be responsible for the maintenance of the accounts of grants and submission of necessary documents ensuring the proper utilisation of grants made to them.

A single mechanism be created in the university system whereby all activities like adult literacy, NSS, Continuing and Extension Programmes, etc. are organised under one umbrella.

It is important to have one integrated mechanism so that adult literacy programme does not end abruptly but grows into follow up and continuing education to form part of a coherent system.
Every university and college should be required to adopt a minimum number of villages or mohalas or areas of community or a developmental block and to undertake a programme of total removal of illiteracy through a planned and phased programme. Wherever possible, neighbourhood approach may be preferred. Local community be actively involved in all stages of planning and implementation of the programme.

The literacy rate among women, Scheduled castes/tribes, migrant labourers, people from rural and backward areas and other weaker sections of the society is very low. High priority should be given to the Adult Literacy Programme for these groups for improving their literacy level. Special attention should also be paid to the organisation of adult literacy programme for the physically handicapped.

Financial assistance to the universities/colleges be provided at the same level/norms as approved by the Government of India for the voluntary organisation participating in the programme.

Normally assistance may be provided for the organisation of at least five centres. However, in the case of women colleges, colleges in the rural, backward (below national average literacy level) and tribal areas, assistance may be provided to organise even two centres. Universities/colleges may also be assisted to organise adult literacy programme through "Each One Teach One".
In view of the high priority given to the programme of Point No. 16 of the new 20 Point Programme of Government of India, universities/colleges be involved in a big way so as to help achieve the goals. With this in view, universities/colleges may, therefore, be assisted on 100% basis at least upto the end of Seventh Plan or 31st March, 1990 to enable the universities/colleges to make long-term continuous planning and action plans.

All the posts will be on a long term basis and will be of temporary nature. Staff appointed for this programme be given all such benefits as are given to the corresponding permanent employees of the universities/colleges to ensure continuance of the staff and hence of the programme.

Co-ordination between the agencies involved in the implementation of the programme is essential at all levels. Efforts of co-ordination should be more at the grass root level.

Universities and colleges should collaborate with various welfare and voluntary organisations in the implementation of the adult literacy programmes.

The expenditure on posts sanctioned by the University Grants Commission and when the UGC's assistance ceases for such posts, be met by the State Governments as part of the maintenance budget.
MAJOR DECISIONS

The University Grants Commission during this period took some major decisions having considerable bearing on the strengthening and expansion of the programmes of Adult and Continuing Education in the universities including the following:

Universities have been requested to establish Departments of Adult and Continuing Education and Extension. These will be non-vacation academic departments; working hours for the staff of these departments will be the same as for other offices of the universities.

The pay scales of Directors, Assistant Directors/Co-ordinators and Project Officers of Adult and Continuing Education were rationalised and brought at par with the pay scales of Professors, Readers and Lecturers. The qualifications prescribed for these posts take into consideration the field experience of the persons.

The posts of Directors/Assistant Directors/Project Officers and others have been sanctioned for the proper manning of the departments of Adult and Continuing Education. The Commission has requested the Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors of universities all over the country for expeditious appointments of staff in the Departments/Centres for Adult and Continuing Education.
Post-M.A. Diploma in Adult Education has been introduced in few universities with a view to provide trained manpower required for the effective implementation of the programmes of Adult and Continuing Education. The Commission is also considering the introduction of graduate studies in Adult Education as also courses at the M.A./M.Phil. level for strengthening of programmes of Adult and Continuing Education in the country.

The Commission has agreed to assist the universities for the programme of Adult and Continuing Education upto 31st March, 1990.* After this, the expenditure on posts will be merged in the maintenance grants of the universities. The University Grants Commission has agreed to this for Central Universities and Institutions deemed to be universities receiving maintenance grants from the Commission. The Chancellors of the universities in the States have been requested to consider this.

The programme of Adult and Continuing Education and Extension are to be implemented under one umbrella. The University Grants Commission has requested the Vice-Chancellors of the universities to ensure that these programmes are implemented by a single department, i.e. Department of Adult and Continuing Education and Extension.

The Commission has constituted a monitoring group consisting of experienced persons in the field of adult and continuing education to monitor the programmes all over the

* Extended upto 1995.
country. The members of this monitoring group are the representatives of the Commission on the Advisory Committees of the universities on programmes of adult and continuing education. The monitoring group will help the universities towards effective implementation of the programmes of adult and continuing education, keeping in view their time bound and target oriented nature. The monitoring group has finalised the guidelines for its work.

The Commission has agreed to assist research projects and award of fellowships for researches in adult education.

CONFERENCE OF VICE-CHANCELLORS, 1981

The conference of Vice-Chancellors (May, 1981) endorsed fully the concept of continuing and extension education as an integral function, besides teaching and research of the universities. It is essential to bring about greater co-ordination between extension activities, manpower planning, self-employment and social awareness and greater interaction with the local community.

CONFERENCE OF VICE-CHANCELLORS, 1984

The conference of Vice-Chancellors of Indian Universities held in May, 1984 emphasised that:

Adult Education/Continuing Education should not be an adhoc programme, but should continue to be an integral part
of university activity and should get institutionalised. Universities/colleges doing this work should aim at concentration of their efforts at selected areas to achieve tangible results in literacy, economic development, reduction in population growth and poverty.

Extension should be the third important major activity of the universities like teaching and research as envisaged by the University Grants Commission in the Policy Frame of 1977 and should be given the same importance as teaching and research.

It should gradually permeate within each subject/discipline in the form of change in the curriculum of teaching methods and evaluation strategies.

The university system should absorb the concept of "Extension Culture" as its integral component and beginning be made by providing at least 25% time allocation for the off-campus extension work through community education type programmes.

CONFERENCE OF VICE-CHANCELLORS, 1989

The conference of Vice-Chancellors of Indian Universities was held in October, 1989 at Srinagar. It emphasised that:

(i) The whole university system must involve itself in National Literacy Mission (NLM).
(ii) Work for National Literacy Mission should be the main function of the Departments of Adult/Continuing Education.

(iii) Involvement of teachers and students should be on voluntary basis.

(iv) The exact nature of student involvement should be decided by universities/colleges themselves.

(v) National Literacy Mission should be an essential part of the courses for teachers organised in Academic Staff Colleges.

INvolvement of Universities

U.G.C. Report, University System and Extension as The Third Dimension (1987) states that there are about 140 university type institutions in the country including IITs, agricultural universities, etc. The proposals of 83 universities/institutions were approved during the period October, 1983 - March, 1985. This being the first phase and the achievements in terms of institutional involvement of universities in the first phase have been substantial. The involvement of the 83 universities quoted above in different extension programmes, i.e., adult education, continuing education, population education and planning forums are given below.
The involvement increased during the period 1985-90 and at present according to UGC (1989) report, 130 universities and over 2,500 colleges are participating in the programme.

INVolVEMENT OF COLLEGES

During the period 1983-85, University Grants Commission planned a target involvement of 1,500 colleges in extension programmes and against this proposal were received and approved of about 2,900 colleges. The number of women's colleges involved is 150. The break up of the involvement of colleges in different activities is as follows:

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In the State of Punjab, there are four universities i.e., Panjab University Chandigarh, Punjabi University Patiala, Guru Nanak Dev University Amritsar and Panjab Agricultural University Ludhiana. The Panjab and Punjabi universities adopted extension programme with the formulation of National Policy on Adult Education (NAED) in 1978, whereas the Guru Nanak Dev University and Panjab Agricultural University adopted the adult education programme as one of the National Service Activity under the National Service Scheme.

In the two universities providing adult education programme, the process began with the projectisation of adult education centres in rural areas, programmes of continuing education and population education in 1983.

The terms adult education project, continuing education programmes and population education in the context of the University Grants Commission frame work are explained.

ADULT EDUCATION PROJECT

The adult education project in the university system is coterminus with its jurisdiction comprising centres from 30 to 1,000 depending upon the area/jurisdiction of the university. Panjab University Chandigarh was sanctioned a project in 1983 with 340 centres and Punjabi University Patiala with 30 centres only. The centres are implemented through colleges.
A centre is a venue in an area for 25-30 learners in the age group 15-35 years. The key person to implement the programme of adult education in a centre is an instructor. The instructor is a young boy or girl student in the college.

The instructor imparts basic literacy skills besides giving social awareness regarding the linkage between illiteracy and socio-economic backwardness, exploitation, deprivation besides impact of literacy on personal and family development, more self reliance and confidence, health, sanitation, ecology and conservation of environment. The programme also includes development of skills and vocational education.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

University Grants Commission has made provision for university based and college based programmes of continuing education and makes available a sum of Rs.2,500/- per programme. The University Grants Commission in its guidelines stresses the importance of continuing education for operationalisation of a culture of life long education. It states that individuals and groups need to be continuously galvanised into developmental action through a process of updating their knowledge and skills, a better understanding of their work environment and its challenges.
The institution of higher education may extend their physical and technical resources to all segments of community in their area in the form of short-term need based educational programmes. The programmes of continuing education should aim at -

- establishing linkages with community;
- provide opportunities for disseminating knowledge to people;
- cater to the felt needs of society, more especially to the people for disadvantaged sections; and
- enrich higher education by integrating continuing education in the university system.

On the basis of these objectives, an attempt has been made to consider the types of programmes and these have been divided into following six types.

**TYPE I**

**POST LITERACY PROGRAMMES**

These aim to maintain and enhance basic literacy skills and problem solving skills. The institutionalisation of JSNs is a step towards the achievement of this objective.

**TYPE II**

**EQUIVALENCY PROGRAMMES**

These aim to provide alternate education equivalent to primary education and beyond.
TYPE III

INCOME GENERATING PROGRAMMES

These help the participants to acquire or upgrade vocational skills and enable them to conduct income-generating activities. The institutions of higher education, technical education can provide low cost work-centred educational programmes from its existing structures by using non-traditional approaches and innovative methods for the benefit of the people.

TYPE IV

QUALITY OF LIFE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMMES

These aim to improve the life styles and standards of living of people. These aim at changing the attributes, attitudes, behaviour patterns, values and skills of people. Programmes on issues concerning health, sanitation, parenthood, population education, drugs, social and cultural awareness, consumerism and leadership can be included under this category.

TYPE V

INDIVIDUAL INTEREST PROMOTION PROGRAMMES

People have their chosen interests such as sports, health, physical, social and cultural. These programmes
should aim at enabling people to learn more about their interests.

TYPE VI

FUTURE ORIENTED PROGRAMMES

These aim at providing opportunities to villagers, farmers, community leaders, business and professionals to learn new skills, knowledge and techniques. These will aim at providing opportunities to the participants to adopt themselves and their organisations to growing social technological changes.

POPULATION EDUCATION

The problem of population growth is a matter of great concern in India. The population of India was 683 million in 1981 which rose to 836 million in 1991. There is an urgent need to convey population education messages to the people so that it may be possible for all sections of society, more especially the disadvantaged, to adopt small family norms and make them aware of their responsibility to themselves, to society and to future generations.

The adult education programme in India is very large and concentrates primarily on adults in the age groups 15-35 who are most important for the point of view of population control.
Population education is an educational programme designed to make learners understand the inter-relationship between population/population growth, development and quality of human life.

In adult education programme, it is considered very essential and vital to link literacy with population education issues concerning small family norms, adverse effects of over population, status of women, health, environment cleanliness, sanitation, air, water and soil pollution, etc.

The University Grants Commission intends to institutionalise population education in the system of higher education by integrating population education studies in the curriculum and developing extension programmes like population education clubs where students in each institution devote their time and energy to the promotion of awareness between population education, development and environment through appropriate activities.

The University Grants Commission envisages to involve all the universities (about 140) in the country and over 5,000 colleges for inculcating population education issues among students and to the wider community through their extension work.
PLANNING FORUM

The scheme of Planning Forum has been introduced in the universities and colleges with the following two objectives:

- To create an awareness of need for planned development of the country among the student community and involve them in national development efforts right from the planning stage, and
- To develop plan consciousness among the educated youth in particular and through them among the masses.

The forum is expected to help people in the neighbourhood area to see how far the objectives and provisions for local area are being achieved and utilised. The forum is envisaged as a live wire to provide feedback to the local/state authorities regarding the implementation of the plan on the basis of response of people and the survey findings.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The University Grants Commission makes the following recommendations to be adopted by the universities for the purpose of rural development with thrust on removal of poverty:

- Identification of poverty concentration in its own jurisdiction.
- The universities and colleges to identify blocks/clusters of villages in their neighbourhood for the concentration of efforts.
- To initiate studies to formulate five year development plan for the area.
- To enable the colleges to identify their role contribution and operationalise them.
- To use research and other knowledge for speeding development especially in those areas which have remained relatively underdeveloped.

**SCIENCE FOR THE PEOPLE**

What to talk of learners or neo-literates, even our educated youths are not in possession of scientific knowledge and information that they may be able to make use of in their daily lives.

In order that masses may be able to make use of science and technology, the concern of the nation is to develop 'Scientific Literacy' among the people. It may mean general education in science, science for better lives and citizenship and so on. Some of its essential components are given below:

- Knowledge of significant science facts, concepts, principles and theories.
- Ability to apply scientific knowledge in every day life.
- Development of scientific attitudes and interest related to science.
- Understanding of general ideas regarding the characteristics of science and about important interaction of science, technology and society.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The purpose of environmental education is to enable people to understand the complexities of the environment, awareness regarding environment related issues, protection and enrichment of the environment.

The University Grants Commission recommends to the universities to adopt following activities:
- Involvement of the students to work as change agents.
- Plan research and teaching activities in the area of environmental education.
- To make environmental education as part of teacher-training course and in-service training programmes.
- To initiate steps to establish linkages/co-ordination between existing development-oriented programmes and environmental education.
- To develop courses of study on environmental education at undergraduate level.

Summarisingly, it may be stated that the university system proposes to institutionalise extension, permeate extension in all disciplines of study at all levels and transform adult education movement into a life-centred life-long process.