Appendix IV

Development of Population Education Programme

Since the first Asian Regional Workshop on Population and Family Education (organized by the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asia: Bangkok, in October, 1970), there are now 14 countries in Asia alone which have recognized population education as one intervention strategy for development. Varied innovative strategies, approaches, methodologies and materials have continuously been developed and used to meet changing needs and requirements in different countries. A lot could be shared by member states in various aspects of population education. Much could be done in cooperatively planning and developing strategies, programmes and activities both at the national and regional levels to qualitatively improve existing programmes in the formal and non-formal sectors.¹

The Regional Consultative seminar on Population Education (organized by UNESCO, held in Bangkok in October, 1982) discussed the curriculum and materials developed in various countries for population education.²

(a) Formal Education and the Educational Levels at which Population Education is Introduced

India, Pakistan, the Phillipines and Thailand have chosen to introduce population education from Grade I, Bangladesh,

². Ibid.
Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal and the Republic of Korea from Grade IV and Sri Lanka from Grade VI.

The most popular mode of introduction is the integration of population content with several areas. In India, at the primary level (I-V Grade), it is integrated with Social Studies, Environmental Studies, General Science, Mathematics and Language, and at the secondary level (VI-X Grade) with Civics, Geography, Biology, General Science, Hindi, Economics and Social Studies.

(b) Non-formal Education

Population education in the region started within the in-school programme, but later on it was realized that the national population education objectives would be difficult to achieve unless population education programmes were also initiated in non-formal education sector. This is because about 50 per cent of the population in the region is not being attended to by the formal education system. The countries in the region thus started expanding their ongoing population education programmes to meet the learning needs of millions of out of school youth and adults who make individual as well as collective population related decisions every day, affecting the welfare of the individual, family, community, and the nation. Many countries in the region have also evolved a variety of non-formal education programmes that
are carried on outside formal schooling. In India for adults, it has been integrated with National Adult Education Programme of the Ministry of Education; and for out of school youth and adults, are population education projects of the University of Madras; Family Life Education Programme of Literacy House, Lucknow; and Integrated Child Development Services Scheme of Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development.³

It is being necessarily realized, that while family information and methods form the subject matter for those who are married, or about to be married, there should be another appropriate knowledge component for younger age groups, dealing not only with family planning and its methods, but with the basic causes and effects of population growth and the desirability of adopting new norms like that of a small family. This body of knowledge which can be introduced into the educational system at all levels, has for the present been given the term "Population education." ⁴ And realizing the magnitude, enormity and urgency of the population problem with which the country was faced, it did not take long for the intellectuals, social workers, political thinkers and particularly those who were directly concerned or closely related with family planning programmes in India to join

hands on a new front initiation of population education in the formal education system. Several voluntary agencies, national as well as international took lead in organizing such a front. Population Education Programmes will be considered as a curriculum enrichment programme which will involve the inclusion of population related concepts throughout the whole range of school curriculum. The culmination of this initial effort was the acceptance by the Government of India in 1970, the basic recommendations of the National Seminar on Population Education held in Bombay in August, 1969 to introduce population education as an integral part of school curricula.  

This national seminar made the following recommendations to define the concepts: The objective of population education should be to enable the students to understand that the family size is controllable, that population limitations can facilitate the development of a higher quality of life in the nation and that a small family can contribute materially to the quality of living for the individual family.  

Population education should be introduced into the curriculum of the schools and colleges by including it in so far as it may be possible, in the area of study now common in the educational curriculum such as social studies, Sciences, Health Education, Mathematics, languages etc. The seminar

very clearly indicated that a comprehensive concept of population education should include knowledge about both the quantity and quality of population and the need to control them for happy human existence.\(^7\)

Population education is a new innovation in the field of education and as such we do not have much experience either in this country or elsewhere on its organisation, and implementation. As per the recommendations of the first national seminar on population education, a population education cell was developed in the National Council of Educational Research and Training to find out ways and means of developing and implementing the programme in schools and teacher training colleges.\(^8\)

National Council of Educational Research and Training has already made a beginning in bringing out some text-books with regard to the introduction of population values in the educational systems. This programme has been prepared in collaboration with the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, and with the active involvement of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. However, none of the States in India has introduced population education as a separate subject in the formal school or college education. NCERT has

---

7. Ibid.
also prescribed the course contents of population education which is to be introduced in the formal educational centres (schools under this programme). The contents are given at three different levels; (A) Elementary level, (B) Lower Secondary Level, (C) Higher Secondary Level. The contents for all the three levels prescribe information in five areas which are as follows:

(A) Population growth  
(B) Economic development and population  
(C) Social development and population  
(D) Health, nutrition and population  
(e) Biological factors, family life and population.

But population education effort was not confined to NCERT alone, although it was called upon to play a leading role as an apex body in the field of educational research, development and training in the whole country. However, all the efforts made by a large number of agencies outside the Government orbit, such as, the Family Planning Association of India; the Population Education Centre in the Venkateswara University, Tirupati; Population Education Project located in M. S. University, Baroda; Pathfinder Fund's Population Education Project in Delhi and the initial efforts made by central Health Education Bureau in the Ministry of Health and Family Planning were more or less accepted by the Population Education Unit in the NCERT.³

³ Paralkar, B. S. and others, Op. cit., p. 3
The basic objectives of the National Population Education Project launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture in collaboration with UNFPA in the beginning of financial year 1980-31, are as follows:

1. to help students develop an insight into interrelationship between population growth and the process of social and economic development at individual, family, society, national and international levels;

2. to make children and teachers aware of the population situation in the country and the targets and efforts of the government of India in solving this problem;

3. to institutionalize population education in the formal education system, including Universities and in non-formal education programmes at the national and state levels; and

4. to develop desirable attitudes and behaviours in teachers and students as well as the community at large towards population issues so that they may take rational decisions about their family size and the quality of life that they would like to have. ¹⁰