APPENDIX A

USE OF MASS MEDIA FOR ADULT EDUCATION:
SOME INSTANCES

1) Italy

As late as 1960, there were still almost two million illiterates in Italy, mostly in the rural southern part of the country. Furthermore, there was a great deal of resistance among those people to literacy teaching. The Italian Broadcasting System and the Ministry of Education combined their efforts and facilities to try to solve the problem. They created a continuing television program called "Its, Never Too Late". This program was carefully designed so as not to embarrass or antagonize adult viewers. The teacher's desk and class room never appeared in the picture; the teacher was chosen for his friendliness and for his resemblance to an ordinary person rather than an intellectual. Care was taken not to offend adult pride by talking down to the audience by "playing games" with them, or by treating them like pupils. The program was leced with humour and with useful information in addition to the skill of reading. It was accompanied by specially prepared reading materials, and followed by additional courses which the student could take if he so wished. The Italians found it useful to station a teacher at each class meeting place to guide the students, supplement the television teaching and answer questions.

The Italian experiment then, was an effort to teach a literacy class mostly by television to adults who were predisposed to be resistant. What were the results? Nearly every one of the adults who regularly followed the course at the viewing posts learned to read and write, some of course, better than others. No precise data could be gathered on the progress of students who had viewed the course in their
homes but there were reports that some of them had greatly missed the help of the local teacher in correcting the students' own drill. The experiment, said the Ministry of Public Instruction, was very economical. The number of regular viewing points reached 4000, and the number of viewers was approximately 563,000. More than one fourth of all the illiterate in Italy, assembled at one time to be taught by one expert teacher.

2) Ivory Coast

The television literacy programme in the Ivory Coast was one of the outcomes of the famous Gaston Berger Resolution, introduced by the French delegation and adopted by the UNESCO generated conference in 1960. This noted the apparent impossibility of very soon riddling the world of illiteracy by traditional means and invited the nations of the world to consider the possibilities of using new techniques for the purpose. The eloquent resolution has since been a moving force, especially in the countries where French influence has been strong.

In the Ivory Coast, the project began as an attempt to give the fundamental skills of reading and arithmetic to a number of workers in Abidjan who were being groomed to serve as middle level supervisors. It was carefully planned, and introduced in phases to correspond with the growth of teaching technology in the country. In the first year, 1962 when no television was yet available, the group were taught with the assistance of visual aids of various kinds, the chief purpose being to perfect the method of teaching. In 1963, the group was taught with the aid of programmes on closed circuit television. By the next year, when Ivory Coast got its television station going they were taught by open circuit, although still only in Abidjan. By 1965, it was possible to organize groups in cities and villages outside Abidjan. In the Abidjan courses for workers, the plant management appoints a monitor (animator) and provided a place for the group to meet. In outlying communities an
animator was appointed for leadership qualities and teaching potential and given two weeks of training in Abidjan.

The programmes themselves lasted one hour and fifteen minutes, and were followed by another forty five minutes of class work under the direction of the animator. Sixty programmes were broadcast each year, each one being repeated the next day in order to offer more flexibility in scheduling the listening groups. In the beginning of the course, the programmes were typically designed as follows: General education - fifteen minutes; Reading - fifteen minutes; Arithmetic - five minutes. Several points are worth mentioning about this schedule. For one thing, all the literacy teaching was in French. This decision was taken because of the numerous tribal languages that would otherwise have to be taught, and also because of the usefulness of French in the work of the students. The introductory fifteen minutes of general education dealt with subjects relating to the family, daily life, the privileges and duties of a citizen, and so forth. They were introduced not only in an effort to build interest, but also to assure the students that he was being treated as an adult, not as a child learning to read.

An advance course was given on close-circuit television at one place only in Abidjan. It lasted two hours combining the television with practice. The programme began with fifteen minutes of reading, followed by fifteen minutes of discussion and practice by the group. Then came fifteen minutes of the French language, followed by another fifteen minutes of class work; fifteen minutes of arithmetic, followed by fifteen minutes of practice and a final half hour when the programme and the practice went on together. The programme, in fact, paced and stimulated the practice. In early 1966, twenty three viewing groups totalling 750 adult students, were following the programme in Abdijan; and thirty seven groups (total enrolment not known) were doing the same in the interior of the country. Of the 407 workers who completed the beginning course in 1964/65, 350 had signed up for the second course. The strongest
and feeblest of these were regrouped in two classes for conventional instruction; the remaining 250 used close circuit television course. The original goal of the programme in Abidjan was to train one thousand or so workers designed for advancement, which was attained in another year or so. The next step was to extend the opportunity more widely throughout the country. These programs, however have been discontinued since 1993, the year the USSR witnessed a break-up.

3) Peru

This programme was also started in mid sixties and had the same characteristics as the other programmes like a fierce localness, a comparatively low cost operation with a large portion of co-operative assistance, and a serious tone. The television programmes were largely replicas of the first reading and number lessons given to the young children, with the omission of the light side which ordinarily is a part of teaching infants. Fifteen minutes were devoted to reading and writing at the beginning level, fifteen minutes to the advanced level and an intervening fifteen minutes to social education, including material on health, home work, and religion. Students viewed in groups with a monitor. About 120 adults were in these courses in late 1965. Adult literacy programmes still continue in Peru but they receive less attention than before. As a result, the adult literacy rate in rural areas has come down sharply from 51% in 1972 to a mere 11.3% in 1995 (UNESCO, 1996).

4) Honduras

The Radio School (Escielar Radio Fonicas) of Honduras and the sponsoring agency, Accion Cultural Popular Handurena, were modelled after the Sutatenza programme of Accion Popular Colombia.
The project operated under difficulties. The population was scattered and it was hard to assemble a listening group in many areas. The peasants came home from their field work and they had little energy left for taking on the challenge of education. Illness brought a near famine, all contributing to the absences from the course. The people were poor and there was little material available to encourage them to learn to read or to enable them to practise reading skills once learned nor was the Accion Cultural Popular Hundurend in position to supply much of the scarce resources.

In an effort to fill the gap, the Radio School encouraged the students to write letters to the director. Each of these letters, several thousand during the five years of the project, was answered. A Radio School magazine was planned, using vocabulary geared to the basic word lists of the course.

The Honduras programme has operated under great difficulties, financial and technical, having a difficult area and population to serve, and with a shortage of personnel. These were comparable to difficulties encountered in Niger and many stemmed from the same cause, namely, lack of resources. Nevertheless, about 8,000 students are registered in the local schools. They meet six days a week. In the Elementary course, the first five days of the week include fifteen minutes of radio instruction in literacy, thirteen minutes in arithmetic and twelve minutes of religious, economic and other topics. The Saturday programmes are on sport, civics and singing. In the Advanced course, the first five days of the week have twenty five minutes of radio, alternatively on literacy and arithmetic and twelve minutes alternatively between health and agriculture. Saturday is devoted to farm matters. After the broadcast the pupils discuss and practise. Of the approximately 7,800 adults registered in these schools about 3,400 are examined at the end of the course and around 89 per cent pass.
6) **United Kingdom**

According to Mohanty (1984) anybody would be amazed to learn that in the United Kingdom where education has been compulsory up to secondary stage and all kinds of educational facilities are freely provided to students up to the age of 16, there were millions of illiterate adults whose reading age was less than that of the nine year old child. The reasons for this might be traced partly in the educational system itself where for the last few years public examination has been abolished and detention is not encouraged and partly to the growing member of immigrants and mentally handicapped children. Although it was estimated that there might be two million of adult nonreaders, the number of functionally illiterate who were unable to read and write as required of a true citizen, would be immensely higher, i.e., six to eight million!

It was also very natural that in that advanced and elite society, illiteracy could not but be regarded as a stigma, a great blemish on the part of an individual. Hence, concealment was the outcome of the feelings of shame and embarrassment. Therefore, it was a problem to find the illiterate adults out and ascertain their exact number. An illiterate husband used to hide his deficiency of illiteracy from wife; an illiterate wife concealed hers from her husband. Even parents were not aware of their children's illiteracy. There was as such no demand and, consequently, no adequate provision for adult education in the case of many Local Education Authorities (LEA). However, in the early 1970s a joint venture was started by the LEAs and the British Broadcasting Cooperation (BBC).

According to Mohanty 1984, the BBC was involved in the adult literacy campaign in Britain from the very beginning. Rather, its education officers took initiative in drawing the public attention to the seriousness of the problem and generating sympathy and concern among the people. Through its various
programmes BBC made incessant efforts to show the plight of illiterate adults and motivate them to learn. Of course, it also made coordinated endeavours to provide adequate facilities for adult education through special television and radio programmes, telephone referral service, workbooks, handbooks and guide books. Its share in non-broadcast services was also quite considerable. Television programmes entitled “On the move” mainly meant for non-readers and radio series called ‘Teaching adults to read” for tutors/volunteers were produced and broadcast. The editors and producers of two very popular television current affairs programmes, “Nationwide” and “Panorama” were interested in mounting items of the national literacy drive. Supporting materials were produced and distributed through various means and methods. Even the priced books were in heavy demand. For example, in 1975 the print order was given for 8,000 copies of the student’s book, but the demand from book shops and other outlets was for 50,000 copies. Obviously the book was bought by parents for children. And by immigrants, as well, who were the “real” target audience. It was gathered that students who came forward as a result of “On the move” bought the book and used it on their own before getting tuition. Subsequently, another series “Your move” TV programmes were produced and on the basis of feedback, a book with the same title was found quite effective and useful.

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) played a very significant role in this adult literacy campaign not only in identifying the adult non-readers, but also in motivating them to learn and enable them to open a new chapter in their life. The BBC Education officers took initiative to draw the public attention to the seriousness of the problem and the BBC programmes generated concern for the plight of the illiterate adults. Although there was scepticism in the BBC for the cost-effectiveness of its programmes and ability of LEAs for providing adequate facilities for adult education, it left no stone unturned for contributing its share most effectively and efficiently. Even though the field was entirely new and of various dimensions, it made
a major commitment of time and resources with a view to making a substantial national contribution. The most important point in this was that the BBC personnel were eager to learn from and correct their initial mistakes on the basis of tryout and feedback. As a result of which each service of programmes was remade until all of them were most suitable and effective. Continuous research would be going on into the future needs and impact of broadcasting. On the basis of its findings and consultations with LEAs a new plan for adult literacy was prepared to make a coordinated use of the following salient features:

1) The project would have dual thrust to contact and mobilize potential students on one hand and potential volunteer tutors on the other.

2) The most effective use of television would be in reducing anxiety and stigma, rather than imparting instruction.

3) The television programmes should be transmitted in peak viewing time where non readers might come across them.

4) The programmes would need to be acceptable to the mass literate audience amongst whom non-readers were cancelled. Success seemed most likely if the programmes were shorter.

5) Serious attempts were made to use broadcasting to delve deep into the problem through all kinds of programmes and not only through "educational" ones. Most of the efforts were geared to orient and involve the producers and presenters of BBC "general" programmes to make a common cause by communicating the messages of mass literacy in their own styles to their wide audience, whether for pop music as for current affairs.