CHAPTER III
THEORETICAL FRAME WORK
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A number of theories pertaining to adult education have emerged in the recent past. An attempt has been made here to examine some of the important theories and their relevance to this research study.

3.1 Theories of Adult Education

3.1.1 Mao Zedong’s Philosophy of adult education

This is mainly based on the Chinese communist revolution. For half a century, Mao Zedong not only led the Chinese Communist Revolution but also personally directed some of China’s communist Adult Education Programmes. From this revolutionary practice and Marxist philosophy, he developed his philosophy of adult education. From 1917 when Mao organized the Changsha Worker Evening School to his death in 1976, Mao never took his attention away from adult education. Many of Mao’s ideas on society, human beings, knowledge and learning are borrowed from Marxism. However, facts show that Mao has inherited a lot from Chinese heritage, especially in the education of Cadres, party members and the Chinese people as a whole. Mao held the notion that adult education was for revolution. Specifically, adult education was for political indoctrination, moral cultivation and general educational studies and skill training. These three aspects make up the content of Mao’s adult
education. Mao used unique methods of adult education which include criticism and self-criticism, the setting up of models, the massline, going to the countryside and the launching of a national campaign. He challenged the authoritarianism of teachers by criticizing teachers and intellectuals. He recognised four strengths and parallely four weaknesses. The four strengths are the realization of a radical approach of educational philosophy, the learning society, the massline and the moral cultivation. The four weaknesses are the over emphasis of class struggle, the way of defining needs, political indoctrination and thought control and the denigration (spoiling reputation) of intellectuals and academic knowledge. (Yanzi, 1989:272-273)

3.1.2 The People-Centered Theory of James Yen

James Yen, a remarkable Chinese adult educator, through his various educational programmes was able to effect the change in the lives of over four lakh people in China. Recognizing that every area of life must be addressed if one hopes to uplift the people, Yen's fourfold educational programme was designed as a holistic (involving the mind, body, social factors etc.) approach to implementing education, livelihood, health and self-government. Literacy work, a major piece of Yen's educational programme, was one of his main areas of emphasis. Through his literacy programme, more than 50 million people were taught to read and write only in 96 hours. Through his integrated fourfold educational programme, as human beings were developed, society was
developed. Yen trained lay people to carry out the rural reconstruction projects. The lay workers replaced professional teachers, doctors and other experts. The people formed local organizations to manage the development process. Yen's notion of education included cognitive, physical, economic, social and political dimensions. The informal learning which included experimental learning, modeling and learning through organisation was most powerful in developing individual and social dimensions.

Yen's theory of adult learning can be seen in the methods he used for implementing his educational programme. To effectively change a social and political context, Yen believed that all the people in the community must participate in the reconstruction activities. He advocated a bottom-up community based approach so that every person in a community would be mobilized and benefited. To mobilize the people involved in social reconstruction, Yen required the rural reconstruction workers to live with the people and to immerse among themselves. The people centered approach tapped the potential of the people in working collaboratively in changing the individual and eventually the community.

The development of the communities was through the process of learning and these communities became learning communities. Yen used these ideas and the fourfold programme to reconstruct Tuig Hsien (a country of 4,00,000 people) from 1929 to 1937. He later repeated the same model in the
Philippines and in many other Third world countries. (Pui Kiu, 1993) This theory is also known as Yen's theory of Education for change.

3.1.3 The Socio-Psycho theory of A.H. Maslow in adult education

Abraham H. Maslow is well-known for his "hierarchy of needs" theory of motivation. Maslow's work suggested an ultimate goal for adult education, the promotion of self-actualization. (self-realization). This would mean that Adult Education Programmes should be structured in such a way as to foster both extrinsic and intrinsic learning i.e, to foster both the acquisition of facts, skills and attitudes, and the development of the inner potential of the learner. In attempting to achieve this ultimate goal, adult educator should involve in attempting to provide gratification for the basic human needs suggested by Maslow and in attempting to create environments for learning in which the learner can express his nature. The Theory emphasized that planning and evaluation provide opportunities for intrinsic learning and suggested that both activities be shared with learners as much as possible. Peak experiences, those moments when individuals are highly self-actualized, were found to be important for adult education because they provide a taste of a person's potential level of function. He insisted that attempts be made to trigger them within the Adult Education Programme. The techniques which are used in a given programme should be those which do not limit growth, which encourage synergy and which are likely to encourage the learner's absorption.
Maslow's theory implied that promotional activities should be planned on the basis of efforts to make the programme as attractive as possible, while at the same time minimizing elements of threat and risk. (Warren, 1968).

Paulo Freire's Concept of Conscientization

The term conscientization refers to consciousness or awareness. The Chambers English Dictionary gives the meaning as "to make one aware of (political or social rights, etc.)."

Conscientization refers to the process in which men, not as recipients, but as knowing subjects, achieve a deepening awareness both of the socio-cultural reality which shapes their lives and of their capacity to transform that reality.

Conscientization like education, is specifically and exclusively a human process. Only individuals who are socially conscious are able to achieve the complex operation of transforming the world by their action. They make an attempt to grasp and to understand the social reality. (Freire, 1972: 96).

Freire's main contribution to the field of non-formal education lies in the concept of conscientizacao, which has been translated as conscientization a word coined to describe the arousing of man's positive self-concept in relation to his environment and society through a liberating education which treats learners as subjects (active agents) and not as objects (passive recipients). A
liberating education must accordingly shed the elements that perpetuate the
dichotomy of one set of people in position of prestige and authority, the
oppressors, and the others in positions of dependence and inferiority, the
oppressed (Srinivasan, 1977:1-2).

To help the peasant break away from traditional fatalism and feelings of
powerlessness, Freire emphasizes reflective thinking as the crux of the
educational programme. He then introduces the concept of praxis (reflection,
action and reflection) as man's real function. Men and Women are not mere
objects to be manipulated. They are active and creative subjects with a capacity
to examine critically, interact with, capable of transforming their worlds (ibid:3-4).
This concept of conscientization has been adopted in the National Literacy
Mission and its campaigns, namely Total Literacy Campaign and Post-Literacy
Campaign, as described in detail earlier.

3.1.4 Freire’s Theory of Education

According to Paulo Freire, education either domesticates or liberates.
Keeping this in view he has propounded the following two concepts of
education.

i) Banking Concept of Education (BCE)

ii) Problem-posing Concept of Education (PCE)
i) Banking Concept of Education

It is an instrument of oppression and domestication and is based on the theory of Antidialogical Action. Here man is preoccupied with his own world and not with the community at large with its problems. Here man is self centered due to his ignorance.

Theory of Antidialogical Action

The theory of Antidialogical Action is based on the following principles of conquest, divide and rule, manipulation and cultural invasion

Conquest :- Means there is conqueror and conquered, with two sets of antagonistic values. Conqueror imposes his things on the conquered and makes them his possession while the conquered is devoid of his possessions.

The conqueror :- Is antidialogical and oppressor simultaneously while the conquered lose their expression. The conqueror deprives conquered of their culture, their world, their expressiveness and their economic position while the conquered thus becomes only a man in the world, dispossessed of his humanity.

Divide and rule :- According to this the oppressor, which forms the minority suppresses and dominates the majority therefore it divides the social order and keeps it divided in order to remain in power.
Manipulation: By manipulation Freire means keeping the people in a state of political immaturity through a set of myths, a series of deceits and promises in order to anaesthetise the people so that they may not think beyond the situation in which they are immersed.

Cultural Invasions: Here Freire refers to the oppressors as invaders and the oppressed as the invaded. Accordingly, he feels that the invaders want the invaded “to walk like them, dress like them, talk like them” (Freire 1972,122) meaning thereby that the invaded start thinking that their own culture is inauthentic, and they start to mimic the ‘Invaders’ model’ in all aspects, names, value standards, dresses, music and living modes. This leads to the intrinsic inferiority and duality of the invaded. Freire says that “This cultural invasion is on the one hand an instrument of domination, and on the other, the result of domination” (Ibid,123)

In the Banking Concept of Education, the main transaction according to Freire, is the act of transferring information from the teacher to the students. The students are thus the repositories and the teacher is the depositor. Certain traditional teaching attitudes and practices are logically deduced from this premise.

Freire describes them as a system of domestication which reflects the oppressive nature of society as a whole.
1. The teacher teaches and the students are taught.
2. The teacher knows everything and the students know nothing.
3. The teacher thinks that the students are being taught.
4. The teacher talks and the students meekly listen.
5. The teacher disciplines and the students are the disciplined.
6. The teacher chooses and enforces his choice and the students comply.
7. The teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher.
8. The teacher chooses the programme content, and the students adapt to it.

In this process the teacher confuses the authority of his knowledge with his own professional authority, which is in opposition to the freedom of the students.

The teacher is a subject in the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects. In the Banking Concept of Education, the teacher assumes an authoritarian role as one best qualified to prescribe what the learner should learn and how he should think and behave. This authoritarian role tends to diminish the status of the learner as a human being. Thus, Freire claims that the traditional form of teaching represents the imposition of one man's knowledge upon another and attempting to transform his consciousness onto the students' consciousness (Srinivasan, Op cit: 6-7).
ii) Problem-Posing Concept of Education (PCE)

This is based on the Theory of Dialogical Action.

Theory of Dialogical Action :- is based on the principles of co-operation, unity, organisation and cultural synthesis.

Co-operation :- As against the theory of antidialogical action, which converts a person unto a 'thing' i.e. an object, dialogical theory of action sees a person as a 'human' i.e. a subject. Here co-operation among the subjects is the key factor which is possible through commitment, trust, confidence and belief of both parties or persons.

Unity of Liberation :- By this it means that unity among the oppressed and unity of the leaders with the oppressed is essential in order to achieve the liberation. This comes through the revolutionary praxis. Through revolutionary praxis, Freire says that "they discover that-as-men-they can no longer continue to be 'things' possessed by others: and they can move from consciousness of themselves as oppressed individuals to the consciousness of an oppressed class" (Freire, 1972:142) i.e. class-consciousness which unites them.

Organisation :- People need organisation for the common task of liberation.

Organisation means adhesion of the people and organising of the leader themselves with the people, and not separately. Organisation is the process in which leaders, who are also prevented from saying their own words, initiate the
experience of learning how to name the world. This is done through consistency between words and action, boldness, radicalisation (reformation), courage to love and faith in people. Freire says that “It is quite true that without leadership, discipline, determination, and objectiveness, without tasks to fulfill and accounts to be rendered an organisation cannot survive and revolutionary action is thereby diluted” (Ibid:144). He further says that “organisation requires authority so it cannot be authoritarian. It requires freedom, so it cannot be licentious. Organisation is rather a highly educational process in which leaders and people together experience true authority and freedom, which they can seek to establish in society by transforming the reality which mediates them” (Ibid:146)

Cultural Synthesis: - The aim of cultural synthesis is to surmount the antagonistic contradictions of the social structure and thereby achieve the liberation of man. It is a mode of action for controlling culture itself. Generative themes emerge from the culture for the process of action as cultural synthesis. Leaders and people, together, create the guideline for their action. Therefore, there is no invader and imposed model. The actors critically analyse reality and intervene as subjects in the process. In the synthesis, leaders and people are reborn in new knowledge and new action. According to Freire, cultural synthesis does not mean that the ultimate goal of revolutionary action of “to be more fully human” should be limited by the aspiration expressed in the word view of the people. He further says that the solution lies in synthesis, meaning thereby that
the leaders must identify with the people's immediate demand, but on the other hand, they must set the meaning of that very demand as a problem: It is the 'conscientization' which will inform the people that "it is necessary to be the 'owner of one's own labour,' that labour 'constitutes part of the human person, and that 'a human being can neither be sold nor can sell himself; to go a step beyond the deceptive of palliative solution. It is to engage in authentic transformation of reality in order, by humanise men" (Ibid:154)"

The problem posing concept of education is in opposition to the Concept of Banking Education. It breaks a vertical pattern in the characteristic of the traditional teacher/student relations. It establishes a horizontal dialogue. Thus in Freire's Conscientization, the process is "No one can teach anyone else, no one learns alone, people learn together acting in their world". Here there is no 'authority-dependency' relationship. Instead of domesticating the learning experience, it provides adults opportunities for critical analysis of their environment, for deepening their self perceptions in relation to it, and for building confidence in their own creativity and capabilities for action. It is observed that even literacy when approached from Freire's standpoint is transformed from a mere technical skill into a component of a process. It implies values, develops mentalities and leads to social and political consequences. Teachers and students thus become jointly responsible in the process in which both grow intellectually. The assumption is that men and women are conscious beings who are capable of reflection and capable of self
introspection about reality. Education therefore increasingly challenges them, moves them to authentic and critical reflection and thereby increases the scope of their perception. It evokes new challenges and commitments to their reality. This whole process is described by Freire as one of 'humanization'-or the pursuit of humanity in which man identifies his historical vocation (Ibid: 8).

Thus humanization means affirmation of man as a person and this is done by breaking the 'structure of domination' (Ibid: 27).

\[
\text{oppressor} \quad \uparrow \\
\quad \downarrow \\
\text{domination} \\
\quad \downarrow \\
\text{oppressed}
\]

The characteristics to be removed in the oppressed are inferiority complex, self deprivation and emotional dependence.

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{i) inferiority complex} \\
\text{ii) self deprivation} \\
\text{iii) emotional dependence}
\end{array} \quad \text{Needs to be liberated}
\]

The problem confronting the concept of education is in the dialogical character of education. The important aspect from the point of view of libertarian
education is for men to feel they are the masters of their way of thinking. By discussing their views of the world, explicitly or implicitly, they try to manifest their suggestions with those of their comrades. As this view of education starts with the conviction that education cannot present its own programme but that it must search for this programme dialogically with the people, it serves to introduce the 'pedagogy of the oppressed', in the development of which, the oppressed should participate (Freire, Op. cit.: 53-54).

3.1.5 Pedagogy of the Oppressed

This methodology is based on educational philosophy. It was an important method used for the study of the dispossessed in Brazil. India has incorporated the literacy campaign similar to that of Brazil and as propounded by Paulo Freire. This methodology holds good for the study of Adult Education Programme (campaign approach) in the Indian context.

Paulo Freire describes this as "culture of silence" of the dispossessed. He points out that ignorance and lethargy were the direct result of their being economically, socially and politically dominated by a paternalist society of which they were victims. Rather than being encouraged and equipped to know and respond to the concrete realities of their world, they were kept submerged in a situation in which such critical awareness and response were practically impossible. It became clear to him that the whole educational system was one of the major instruments for the maintenance of this culture of silence. In order
that the oppressed be able to wage the struggle for their liberation, they must perceive the reality of oppression. This perception itself becomes the motivating force for liberating action.

The pedagogy of the oppressed has two distinct stages: as a humanist and as libertarian pedagogy, in the first stage, the oppressed unveil the world of oppression. This confrontation occurs through the change in the way the oppressed become conscious of oppression. In the second stage, the reality of oppression already becomes transferred. This pedagogy ceases to belong to the oppressed and becomes a pedagogy of all men in the process of permanent liberation. In this stage, through the expulsion of the myths created and developed, in the old order, which like specters haunt the new structure emerging from the revolutionary transformation (ibid: 31).

It is seen that when an illiterate peasant participates in this sort of educational experience, he comes to a new awareness of self, has a new sense of dignity, and is stirred by a new hope. Time and again, peasants have expressed these discoveries in striking ways after a few hours of class: 'I now realize I am a man, an educated man'. 'We were blind, now our eyes have been opened'. Before this, words meant nothing to me; now they speak to me and I can make them speak'. 'Now we will no longer be a dead weight on the co-operative farm'. This happens in the process of learning to read and men discover that they are creators of culture and that all their work can be creative. Thus those who were completely marginalized become radically transformed.
They are no longer willing to be mere objects responding to changes occurring around them. They are more likely to take upon themselves the struggle to change the structure of society which until now they served and which was a source of oppression to them. For this reason, a distinguished Brazilian student of National Development recently affirmed that this type of education works among the people who represent a new factor in social change and development, 'a new instrument of conduct for the Third World, by which it can overcome traditional structures and enter the modern world'. (Ibid, 9-13).

According to Paulo, the campaign is based on a 'dialogical and problem posing' system of education. According to the Brazilian educationist, to surmount the situation of oppression, men must first critically recognize its causes so that through transforming action they can create a new situation. However, the oppressed who have adapted to the structure of domination in which they are immersed, become resigned to it. They are inhibited from waging a struggle for freedom so long as they feel incapable of running the risks it requires. Liberation is thus like a painful child birth. The man who emerges, is a new man—a man in the process of achieving freedom (Ibid: 24).

3.1.6. Process of Conscientization

This process involves two important steps. They are:

(1) Investigation and (2) Codification
1. Investigation of Generative Themes in Post-Literacy / Adult Education Programme. This process involves six stages.

**Stage-1:** Investigators meet the people of the project area in an informal meeting and talk about the purpose of the project. The people are taken into confidence through trust and mutual understanding, participants are associated with the process as volunteers.

**Stage-2:** Investigators and volunteers gather a series of necessary data about the total life of the area.

**Stage-3:** Preparation of report and finalisation by inter disciplinary team in the area itself.

**Stage-4:** Preparation of programme content.

**Stage-5:** Codification of Contradiction in sketches or photographs.

**Stage-6:** Decodification in thematic investigation circles. This stage has two phases Viz., dialogue and action.

**Dialogue:** Dialogue is the method used in codification. It is the encounter between men, mediated by the world, in order to name the world. Since dialogue is a human phenomenon, the essence of dialogue is the 'Word'

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\text{World} \rightarrow \text{Word} \rightarrow \text{Work} \rightarrow \text{Praxis}
```

\text{Focus}
Dialogue is an act of creation. It is simple exchange of ideas to be consumed by the participants in the discussion. Dialogue needs humility and mutual trust to bring men together.

No dialogue results in no communication. According to Paulo Freire, Dialogue is the heart of the process of conscientization. Dialogue is antithetical between educator and educatee. It is not always necessary that the educatee (one who is taught) should come forward and participate in the dialogue. It is for the educator (one who teaches) who is supposed to have an intense faith in man. He should challenge and encourage the educatees to participate in the dialogue. Dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship with mutual trust between the educator and the educatee.

Result

True dialogue $\rightarrow$ critical thinking $\rightarrow$ Continuing transformation of Society.

(Where as in Banking concept, monologue becomes a vertical relationship)

(Freire, *Opit* : 63-65)

**Important Functions of a Dialogue**

1. It has tremendous power to comprehend the difficult issues.

2. It helps the participants to arrive at a consensus on particular issues.
3. It makes participation from both sides compulsory.

4. It keeps participants attentive and reflective.

5. It is found to be vigorous and useful when the focus object is clear, controversial and interesting.

6. Dialogue needs to be assisted by the following factors: physical arrangements, closeness, friendship, informal setting, supplementary reading, audio-visual presentation, facilitation’s role of co-ordination and clarification of ideas to create new knowledge.

Hence, it is through dialogue that relationship between the educator and educatee undergoes dramatic change. The dialogue revolves round a knowledge object related to a life experience of each of the participants and each participant tries to explore collectively why we think, what we do and how this thinking has arisen historically and ideologically in order to make sense out of it and then look critically at that sense making (Geetharam, 1991: 27-28).

Dialogue cuts all barriers. It cuts domination too and thereby establishes love between the educator and the educatee. Dialogue cannot exist without humility. Dialogue requires an intense faith in man, faith in his power to make and remake, to create and re-create, faith in his vocation to be more fully human, founding itself upon love, humility and faith. Dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the participants is the logical consequence. Dialogue cannot exist without hope. Finally, a true
dialogue cannot exist unless it involves critical thinking. Without dialogue, there
is no communication, and without communication there can be no true
education.

Language plays a very important role in dialogue. Freire insists on the use
of mother-tongue as the language to communicate with the people. (Freire,
Op cit: 94-96)

Level of consciousness :- According to Freire, the process of
conscientization involves raising consciousness from semi-transitive level to
transitive level. These are hierarchical i.e., one comes after the other and not
vice-versa. They are inter-linked as seen in the following diagram.

Fig 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitive level</th>
<th>Level of Consciousness</th>
<th>Position of man</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Critical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Curious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Confused</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Semi-transitive level

Concept of Conscientization
1. It refers to the process in which men, not as recipients, but as knowing subjects, achieve a deepening awareness both of the socio-cultural reality which shapes their lives and of their capacity to transform that reality.

2. It refers to learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality (Freire, *Opit*: 15).

3. Men emerge from their submersion and acquire the ability to intervene in reality as it is unveiled. Intervention in reality - historical awareness itself - thus represents a step forward from emergence and results from the conscientization of the situation. This conscientization of the situation is the deepening of the attitude of awareness characteristic of all emergence.

4. Since the basic condition for conscientization is that its agent must be subject (i.e. a conscious being), conscientization like education is specifically and exclusively a human process (*Ibid.*, 31).

In this process, the culture of silence is broken by the oppressed. The oppressed are liberated from social oppression. (Freire,*Ibid* : 223). Many educational Sociologists have supported this theory. Lloyd (1972) in his comment on educational theory saw conscientization as "to make aware" or "awakening of consciousness" or "Critical consciousness". He agrees with Paulo Freire's theory and says that this is a social process, it does not stop at an awakening of perception but proceeds to action, which in turn provides the basis for new perception, new reflection. Consciousness is necessary to any
education. It mobilizes people to decolonize their institutes, opening them up to free participation by all members. Thompson (1988) also has a favourable view of the theory. He further adds that it leads to empowerment. (Boston, 1974).

Ann.E.Berthoff adds teaching and learning are dialogic in character and dialogic action depends on the awareness of oneself as knower, an attitude which Freire calls conscientization (Elias, 1976). Mashayekh (1974) has a similar view and says that this is purely a "psycho-social" method.

Fig 3.2

Schematical Representation

Conscientization \(\rightarrow\) Awareness

\(\uparrow\) Literacy

Empowerment \(\leftrightarrow\) Literacy

Liberates from Oppression

\(\uparrow\)

Development \(\leftrightarrow\) Social transformation

(of self, personal development)

From the schematical representation, it is seen that conscientization leads to awareness. From this, the oppressed are liberated from oppression.
This is seen in their social transformation which results in personal development. Hence, we can observe that through literacy the awareness created further brings development of the self. This development is an important factor resulting in the empowerment of the person. Hence through literacy conscientization results in development of the human.

3.2 Women’s Woes

Major problems identified by UNESCO (1987) (at a seminar held in Lucknow in 1987) include inadequate knowledge in matters relating to

i) Health and Family Life.

ii) Illiterate Women’s role dictated by traditions.

iii) Lack of self-confidence.

iv) Separation - violence against women.

v) Lack of decision making power in family.

vi) Lack of organisation among women.

vii) Vested interests which prevent women’s participation in development.

viii) Discrimination with regard to wage distribution (unequal pay for equal work).

Here, in this theory, development refers to the transformation from less human to 'fully human. Women have always been marginalised and oppressed by the age old traditions and taboos which have suppressed her through
prescriptions and proscriptions and this socialisation process has resulted in her culture of dependency on father, husband and in later life, on her son.

Education along with income generating capacity has been perceived as the key to success and equal participation of women in the development process. According to Paulo Freire, "If education is to have any value for women it must be a means to raise their consciousness above the oppressive structure that keeps them in a position of powerlessness." The education required to empower women is the education for development. It is felt that this coincides with the Gandhian ideology which says that 'educate a girl/woman, and you educate an entire family'. In this sense, the Indian girls/women, once educated are likely to see not only the education of their own family, but are also likely to put a new life into their community as well. With this view, literacy (adult education) with conscientization has been considered appropriate for "empowerment of women in India" (Patnaik, 1985:35). The double burden of work of women is well known. The Indian parliament, in May 1986, adopted a new National Policy of Education-1986 (Government of India, 1986) which envisages that "Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. The policies will be well conceived edge in favour of women. The NPE system will play a positive, interventionist role in the empowerment of women". Education brings about empowerment of women.

The adult literacy process is an act of knowing. The literacy process must relate 'speaking the word' to 'transforming reality', and to man's role in this
transformation. The adult literacy process as an act of knowing implies the existence of two interrelated contexts.

1. Authentic dialogue between the learners and educators as equally knowing subjects. This is what schools should be in the theoretical context of dialogue.

2. In the social reality in which men exist, conscientization does not precede learning to read and write. It occurs simultaneously with literacy or post-literacy process (Freire, *Op cited* 14).

3.2.1 The applicability of Paulo Freire’s theory of conscientization in the Indian context.

This study makes use of this concept of adult education because it is applicable to the Adult Education Programmes conducted in India for rural masses with special context to rural women. The AEP has taken a new shape in the form of the literacy campaigns. From times immemorial, Indian women have been subjected to oppression, be it physical, social, economical or political, thereby speaking of their low status. Although social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and others tried to raise the status of women by abolishing social evils like *sati* and child marriage, the status of rural women has remained unchanged. This is basically because of their ignorance. Even today, we find that rural women are subjected to oppression and are tied by social taboos and customs. This is the major reason for low female literacy in the rural masses. To improve the status of the rural women, it
is very essential to liberate them from oppression. This can be achieved by making them conscious by programmes which would bring to them an amount of awareness related to various fields—political, social, economic, health etc. This can be brought only when one person interacts with the other. According to Freire, dialogue and language are the most important means of communication for interaction. It raises the level of consciousness from the so-called 'Semi-transitive to transitive', thereby resulting in 'Human development' or 'personality development'. This theory can very well be said to be a theory of development.