CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

This chapter briefly traces the development of adult literacy campaigns in order to understand the conditions in which it took its birth and analyse the factors which necessitated the spread of literacy among the adults in different parts of the world and in India. Tracing the history of adult literacy also helps in understanding how India was inspired by the campaigns in other countries and how the campaign in India changed from time to time to meet the needs.

2.1 HISTORY OF LITERACY CAMPAIGN

2.1.1 Soviet Union

The first national adult literacy campaign in the world dates back to 1917 in Russia. In the Soviet Union, immediately after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, the country embarked on a massive national literacy campaign. Before 1917, under the Tsarist regime, about 70 percent of the people were illiterate. The national literacy drive initiated by the new regime was designed to create a new political consciousness, provide opportunities for the people to participate in the political process and consolidate the revolution. Adult literacy was seen as a means of breaking down class structures and bringing about equality, (Kassam, 1989 : 583).
2.1.2 China

In China, before the revolution in 1949, the overall illiteracy rate was 85 percent and it was as high as 95 percent in rural areas. After the revolution, the country embarked upon a mass literacy campaign with more or less the same goals and purpose as in the Soviet Union. By 1979 the proportion of illiterates had been reduced to an estimated 30 percent and by 1982 to 25 percent. (Ibid: 533-534).

The Chinese campaign is notable for the immense number of personnel involved, for the flexibility and diversity of the means employed and in particular, for the mass mobilization of human resources on which it was based. Literacy classes were run by villages, co-operatives, communes, production brigades and teams, rural primary and secondary schools and were implemented under economic and cultural conditions which varied widely in different areas of the country. In many parts of China these classes continue even today as the literacy programming evolves through various phases (Cairns, 1989: 550).

2.1.3 Vietnam

Similar conditions were seen in Vietnam. In the three large campaigns between 1946 and 1958, some 15 million adults were recorded as having been made literate. The campaign was of a long duration because of the large population involved (Ibid: 551).

These four countries shared certain features which were to characterize many of the later campaigns. There was a strong ideological
leadership mobilization and participation of the masses, literacy in the framework of national goals and objectives and emphasis on attitudes, values and national purpose.

2.1.4 The African Continent

2.1.4.1 Tanzania

In the United Republic of Tanzania, in 1970, about two years after the country's decision to follow a socialist and self-reliant path of development, a national literacy campaign as well as national adult education programme were initiated. The illiteracy rate in the country was then about 80 percent. The ruling party TANU was convinced about the empowering potential of adult literacy and adult education in building an egalitarian society and genuinely wanted to empower the people. The objective of Tanzanian socialism was "To build a society in which all members have equal rights and equal opportunities; in which all can live in peace with their neighbours without suffering or imposing injustice, being exploited, or exploiting, and in which all have a gradually increasing basic level of material welfare before any individual lives in luxury" (Nyerere, 1968). In an attempt to arouse the people's consciousness about the need for change, one of the major objectives of adult education was defined as follows:

"The importance of adult education, both for our country and for every individual, cannot be over emphasized. We are poor and backward
and too many of us just accept our present conditions as the 'will of God' and imagine that we can do nothing about them. In many cases, therefore, the first objective of adult education must be to shake ourselves out of a resignation to the kind of life Tanzanians have lived for centuries in the past". (Opcit, 1973).

Thus Adult literacy and adult education were clearly perceived as a means of giving the people more control over their own affairs. The TANU GUIDELINES (TANU, 1971) articulated the need for people's participation in their own development and liberation. "For a people who have been slaves or have been oppressed, exploited and humiliated by colonialism or capitalism, 'development' means 'liberation'. Any action that gives the people more control of their own affairs is an action for development, even if it does not offer them better health or more bread. Any action that reduces their say in determining their own affairs or running their own lives is not development and retards them even if the action brings them a little better health and a little more bread". (Kassam, Opcit : 531-533).

The campaign was notable for its emphasis on qualitative as well as quantitative issues. The campaign benefited because of the leadership at the highest political level from President Nyerere. The initial year of the programme, 1970, was declared as Adult Education year. The Tanzanian campaign was based on the national policy of socialism and self-reliance, with literacy programmes integrated into the development plans with an
emphasis on agriculture, home economics and political education. The courses incorporated both theoretical and practical elements. The agricultural programmes extension officers worked together with literacy teachers for demonstration classes. Administration was decentralized under the Ministry of National Education. The campaign placed a considerable emphasis on the post-literacy phase. Courses were established based on a two-year programme of five compulsory books on which learners were tested. The post-literacy phase also included several rural news papers and over 2000 rural libraries. There was a strong emphasis on evaluation at class room level, on monitoring by literacy committees of both qualitative and quantitative issues and on systematic reporting (Cairns, *Op cit* : 552).

2.1.4.2 Ethiopia

The Ethiopian campaign was launched in 1979 in five languages and later extended to ten and then to fifteen. Available data indicate an extraordinary quantitative achievement. More than 250,000 instructors are indicated to have taken part with 11.5 million participants, of whom over half were women. The literacy rate, which was only 7 percent in 1974, had been in 1982 raised to an estimated 44.8 percent. Designed to support national development objectives, the campaign was implemented through a relatively decentralized model which facilitated initiative and
decision making at field level and was based on mass mobilization.
(Cairns, Ibid : 553).

2.1.4.3 South Africa

One of the major means of perpetuating Apartheid was followed by
the white rulers by offering inferior education to black South Africans and
by also denying them adult literacy and adult education opportunities.
However, the socio-political imbalance changed with the concerted
efforts made to abolish Apartheid. With the release of Nelson Mandela
and with the establishment of a democratic government, the blacks are
now receiving education. However, during the last decade, non-
governmental organizations have been very active in promoting literacy
and adult education for the black population of South Africa. (Kassam,
Opct : 534).

For instance, in Tanzania, Yusuf Selemani, a worker at the
Tanganyika coffee Curing Company Ltd., a beneficiary of the adult
Literacy programme, had this to say

"Before the literacy classes were started at our factory by the new
Tanzanian management, the old foreign management did nothing to
alienate our oppressed state. They maintained our ignorance and it
seems to me that they actually took delight in pushing us about like a
plough. The truth is that if I start talking about my former oppression and
wretchedness, I will not be able to finish talking about it even if I spend a
whole day. In short, when I started to work in this factory one of my legs was inside the factory and the other was outside because your employment could be terminated in a most arbitrary fashion and there would be no law to protect or defend you. This country now is full of laws. I now feel a more complete human being. It is like being born again and all your rights are explained to you". (Kassam, Ibid : 534).

Rukia Orashi, a peasant woman of the Republic of South Africa, with seven children and several grandchidiren, related the following experience from her life. “Take, for example, the question of inheritance, your relatives could easily snatch away your property. He brings a paper and asks you to sign; you don’t know what is written on that piece of paper and he is probably very cunning. The following day you come to know that you have nothing. Everything belongs to him. Such incidents have occurred here quite frequently, yes, quite frequently. They have happened because you don’t know how to read and write. Your parents die and your relative can write and concoct something, or if he has a friend who is a clerk, he asks him to prepare a document, he brings it to you and asks you to press your thumb on that paper. Before you do that they bring that thing what is it called? the ink pad, then you press your thumb there, “ng,aa”, and the job is finished. Afterwards you realize that things which you had discussed and agreed upon before are not the same things that appear on the document. But now we are thankful. We can defend our
rights, we can’t be forced to do anything against our wishes, we can’t be cheated. You put your signature only to those things you clearly understand and which you can read yourself”.

Widespread adult literacy affects existing power relations and power structures and the distribution of wealth and resources at the international, national and local levels (Kassam, *ibid* : 534-535).

2.1.4.4 Eastern Africa-The Somali Experience

The revolutionary Government of the Somali Democratic Republic took power on 21 October, 1969. “Literacy was one of its main preoccupations. To make the revolution meaningful in the lives of the people, to create a new political culture, to integrate the people into one nation and perhaps to develop one national economy, there had to be dialogue between the government and the masses. The dialogue had to take place in the language of the people, which was Somali. This meant that Somali had to become a written language and that the people had to become literate in it” (Adzejewski, 1975).

The literacy campaign in Somalia involved two phases—the urban literacy campaign and the rural literacy campaign. The complexity of the rural phase was the nature of the population that had to be served. Most of the people involved were nomads who were perpetually on the move searching for water and grazing grounds for their animals. Few among them, if any, could be mobilized as literacy teachers. Infrastructures of
transport and communication were lacking. The environment was harsh. (Elmi, 1977).

The main driving force behind the Somali literacy campaign was the politics of language which were inextricably mixed with the politics of development. If development was to become a reality, dialogue had to be conducted between the government and the people in Somali. In a very real sense, the literacy campaign of Somalia was inevitable if the language policy was to be implemented with reasonable speed (UNESCO, 1978).

The main objective of the rural campaign was more in the nature of community development through literacy. This campaign also used the mobilisation of masses and was similar to the ones conducted in the Latin American countries. The most significant gain was the emergence of a new consciousness among the people and of a political consciousness among the rural masses. The rural people came to understand what development was and how they had to bring it about themselves. At the end of the campaign both layman and social scientists began to make an effort to understand nomadic and rural life (Bhat, 1992:196-200).
2.1.5 Latin American Continent

2.1.5.1 Cuba

A similar phenomenon occurred in Cuba after the overthrow of the Batista regime by Fidel Castro in 1959. A National Literacy Campaign was initiated in 1961 as part of the revolutionary regime's strategy to abolish class structures, to create a new revolutionary consciousness and to develop new economic skills. The literacy work had also been part of the revolutionary struggle against the Batista regime in the period prior to 1959. (Kassam, Op cit : 533-534).

Mobilization, based on strong ideological leadership in a period of rapid social transformation was significant in Cuba, where an estimated 200,000 volunteers participated in the massive 1961 campaign. The Cuba campaign was short (Cairns, Op cit : 551).

2.1.5.2 Nicaragua

The Nicaragua literacy crusade of 1981 was an attempt to consolidate and strengthen people's liberation from the unjust and dictatorial Somoza regime and to enable the people to participate in the reconstruction to a more just society (Yusuf, Op cit : 534). Implemented by the National Literacy Commission under the Ministry of Education, the campaign mobilized over 80,000 volunteers. It represented as had the earlier Cuba campaign, a national ideological, administrative and organizational commitment of remarkable scale. The campaign had three strategic components Viz.,
i) Conscientization of the people.

ii) Strengthening of popular organizations, and

iii) Establishment of the National Literacy Crusade as the basis for permanent adult education.

The crusade was seen as a battle against ignorance. It aimed at national development through a commitment somewhat similar to the encouragement given during wartime. The voluntary youth organization for example, was designated as the popular literacy army, and was based on the guerilla structure of the struggle for Liberation (Cairns, Op cit: 553).

2.1.5.3 Brazil

Brazil has the largest co-ordinated scheme for adult education in the Third World, Called MOBRAL, which has an annual central budget of £20 millions with matching grants from municipalities. In 1964, a military coup ended the rule of the populist government, partly because of the adult education policy it was pursuing. The position was made sensitive by Brazil's franchise, which is open only to literate citizens, with the result that any proposal to substantially increase the number of literates has considerable political implications. The populist government in fact had introduced a new literacy scheme under the direction of Paulo Freire, staffed by Catholic radicals and aimed at the conscientization of the masses. The military government put an end to the scheme and Freire was sent to prison. Under the influence of the catholic Bishops, however
it was revived and came to be designated as MOBRAL (Thakur, 1990: 35-37).

The Brazilian literacy movement which coordinated the scheme for adult education is known as MOBRAL. MOBRAL was proclaimed on September 8, 1967 to coincide with the International Literacy Day. Today MOBRAL is a familiar name to literacy workers throughout the world. The driving force behind MOBRAL was the revolution of 1964 that brought the army to power. Literacy rates at the time were extremely low, ranging from 19 to 27 percent from one state to another. Therefore the economic and political considerations indicated the need for a mass instrument of education and socialization and MOBRAL was to be that instrument. The stated objectives of MOBRAL are personal development of learners, improved opportunities in the job market, the education of children, social mobility and social justice, development of the community through dialogue and critical awareness, political participation through voting, enjoyment of good health, sports and leisure, consumer education and fostering and preservation of popular theatre. The General approach is based on certain assumptions viz., adults can and should be responsible for their own learning, individual development and community learning development should not be divorced from each other, the community should be the starting point in learning to read and the knowledge obtained by the individual should be applied back to the community.
The duration of the course was five months of meeting for two hours a day and five days a week giving a total of 200-240 hours of classroom instruction. Televised literacy programmes offered sixty transmissions of twenty minutes each, supplemented by 200-240 hours of self instruction or with assistance from a monitor. MOBRAL has used one curriculum, one type of primer for teaching literacy all over Brazil, yet it has claimed to be flexible in meeting the diversified needs of communities all over the country. MOBRAL also had a computerized data system since 1973 and this was expanded and further consolidated in 1978 into a full-fledged Management Information System. (Bhat, 1992 :185-190).

Relevance to India

From the success achieved by the literacy campaigns in other countries, following points clearly emerge which are relevant for any country;

1. Each country must work out its own literacy campaigns according to its needs and circumstances.

2. The very first lessons from the campaigns is that even the poorest of countries must eradicate illiteracy in order to achieve development and that they are capable of doing so. Tanzania did not wait for the economy to take off and for a literate environment to emerge but used literacy as an instrument to bring this about.
3. The political will of the leadership can work wonders. It can resocialize members of society, transform the social fabric and invent a new future. Cultural revolutions can be brought about, literacy campaigns can be launched and assured of success. The political will must be clearly articulated and must be oriented towards the people. A campaign that will change an entire country into a classroom must be rooted in an ideology that inspires the whole population.

4. The justification for a successful literacy campaign must not be expressed solely in "bread and butter" terms. It may be better to justify a literacy campaign in such transcendental categories as a cultural revolution and a new social hope while at the same time describing its intermediate objectives in terms of political participation and industrial, technological and economic development.

5. There are no substitutes for the twin processes of organization and mobilization. On the one hand, the government must undertake both the administrative and the technical organization of planning and subsequent implementation and on the other, people must be mobilized, learners must be motivated to learn, those who can teach and contribute in other ways must be encouraged to do so.

6. Universal Literacy is possible even in a multinational, multilingual, multigraphic society. The goal of universal literacy is the mother tongue—should not be abandoned. Selective and intensive approaches seem
severely limited unless subsumed under a mass approach. Equalization through universal literacy is ideal. Women and the Weaker sections of society must not be neglected in the attempt to cover the so-called productive groups.

7. The will to act and succeed above in the absence of infrastructure, lack of technical capacities and scarcities of material resources is important. The social willingness to launch educational programme with minimal resource is the conviction that "something inadequate is better than nothing" deserves to be borne in mind.

8. A literacy campaign must be linked to larger educational, economic, political, developmental and cultural policies. After the first step of literacy, the road ahead to further education and development will be clearly in view.

9. Literacy campaigns should be evaluated not merely in terms of people made literate but in terms of their effects in cultural, social and developmental terms.

10. In this age of technology, literacy campaigns should learn to put technology to work, to deliver teaching and training through radio, television, taperecordings, to develop management information system, and to develop training, supervision and logical systems.

11. There is no one correct way to organize a campaign for literacy. A nation may declare a literacy campaign independently of the existing
institutions of formal and non-formal education or may implement a campaign through such existing institutional structures. It may establish different priorities—vanguard versus the masses, urban versus rural, steel workers versus miners. It may practice social or geographical incrementalism. The only thing it cannot do are to let the commitment dissipate, to let direction become confused, to let declarations become hollow. (Bhat, *Ibid* : 200-203)

2.2 Development of Adult Education in India

Through the ages, the adult education programme has been changing from the most superficial way in the ancient period to a more developed method of the present day. The change in governments and the relative change in the policies and programmes of the government have been mostly responsible for this transformation. More notably, the change in the trend has been drastic in the post-independence era.

2.2.1 Ancient Period

In the olden days people used to gather at various places in the form of congregations and would exchange views and have discussions. This was one of the informal ways of teaching the common folk the norms and values of society, while the other was imparting informal education through the medium of social and religious institutions like ‘Kathakars’, ‘Ramilas’ ‘Bhagwat Tungis’, ‘Kirtans’, ‘Theatres’, village markets, etc. Thus the heritage of adult education in India has was maintained in its
traditional values and knowledge. These institutions however, were not related to obtaining the economic needs of the community and did not flourish under the state patronage (Pati, 1989:12-13).

Apart from the great Rishis who wrote the Vedas and Upanishads and the great epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata, the great Indian thinker Adi Shankaracharya was the latest in the old traditions of man's awakening and consciousness. The congregations at religiously well-known places like Varanasi, Prayag and Allahabad played a big role in educating the Indian masses. The Kumbh mela, held once in every 12 years at Prayag and Haridwar, the Aradh Kumbha once in 6 years and various other melas at different places in India, in fact were organised for cultural unity, national integration and adult education in the form of mass awakening. Thus, there have been very rich traditions in Indian social life to educate the masses. Hence, Adult Education functioned though in a very superficial way, from times immemorial (Mohanty, 1991).

2.2.2 The British Period

The first definite report regarding literacy is to be found in the report of William Adam (Sargent Plan, 1944). On the basis of a sample survey in some urban and rural areas of Bengal and Bihar in 1836-37, Adam reported that the percentage of literacy in India was about 6 percent (Pati, 1989). Lord Hardinge, the viceroy, observed in 1844 that “even in
the selection of persons to fill the lowest office...a man who can read and
write would be preferred to one who cannot*. But it was not until 1854
that the East India Company took steps to develop an educational system
for the country (Phadnis, 1959:22).

The first reference to adult education in India was made by Charles
Wood in 1854 when in his famous Despatch, he proposed a scheme for
adult literacy for the masses. No concrete step was taken by the East
India Company. As such by 1860 a section of adult population found
itself, greatly handicapped and to meet their needs, night schools for
adults began coming into vogue. It was around this time in 1857 that
the three Universities of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras were
established.(Khullar,1996 :1,2).

Till 1917 the British Government had little concern for the education
of adults. The emergence of night schools in England during the Industrial
Revolution had some impact in India. In every British Indian province
some financial provision was made for giving grant to night schools.

The Indian Ministers in the Dyarchy (1921) made efforts to promote
adult education without much effect. In 1929, Hartog, an English
administrator claimed that there were nearly 11,000 centres of Adult
Education in British India and that 3,00,000 adults were attending these
centres. (Nurullah and Naik, 1951 : 814).
In 1936, Gandhiji established the 'Hindustani Talim Sang' at Wardha and gave the nation a new system of basic education in which adult education formed a significant part.

In 1939, the Adult Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) made important recommendations on adult education. These included persuading illiterates voluntarily to undergo instructions. These would interest the learner and be closely related to his needs and occupation. Radio, Cinema, Gramaphone and a magic lantern were proposed to be used as aids to Adult Education Programmes.

The Post-war Educational Development Plan popularly known as the Sargent plan (1944) estimated that even with universal system of social education, there would be about one crore illiterates in the age-group 20-40 in India. Hence, the need for providing adult education as complimentary to free and compulsory education was recognised. It recommended that the responsibility of adult education should rest with the state. However, voluntary effort wherever available, was to be supported by the state. Sargent gave a 20 year plan at a cost of Rs.3 crores to eradicate illiteracy. However the plan remained only on paper due to financial constraints and political developments in the country (Sargent Plan, 1944 : 58).
2.2.3 The Post-Independence period

After independence in 1947, renewed efforts were made in the direction of educating the masses. In 1948 the CABE (Central Advisory Board of Education) Committee of Adult Education recommended the setting up of Social Education Councils in every state for drawing up plans for social education for people in the age group 12 to 45 years. In the CABE meeting in 1949, a 12 point programme was adopted to combat illiteracy which included the use of projectors, motor vans, loudspeakers and films to be shown in every village to create an awareness. They were also to provide simple instruction in crafts and industry suitable to the locality, agriculture, cottage industries and cooperative activities.

In 1951, the Ministry of Education called a meeting of eminent educationists to discuss the production of suitable reading material for neo-literates. It recommended a daily news sheet, an illustrated fortnightly or monthly which would contain material on sports, health, hygiene, agriculture and world news, primers for adult learners and guide book for teachers (Nurullah and Naik, Opcit).

2.3 The Plan Ideology for Adult Education

2.3.1 The First Five Year Plan (1951-56)

The First Plan had programmes related to education and the development effort, but it was considered as secondary essential. It was evidently intended to socialize ignorant and illiterate villagers and obtain
for them the benefits of literacy by making them aware of better living, hygiene and the power of a democratic state (Planning Commission, 1956:186).

2.3.2 The Second Five Year Plan (1956-61)

This plan continued the ideology of the previous plan. Literacy was still not considered a "Primary Essential". However, new schemes such as Janata Colleges, Youth Clubs, Gram Raksha Dals, Farmer's Club, Mahila Samities setting up of libraries and Gram Shikshan Mohims found place. These programmes continued in the Third plan (Planning Commission, 1961:516-517).

2.3.3 The Third Five Year Plan (1961-66)

This plan identified poverty as the main cause of the nation's social and economic problems. Poverty was a hinderance to good life and hence it was to be eradicated. The broad aim of this plan was to provide adult education wherever there was a demand for it. The village panchayats, teachers and volunteer agencies were to maintain popular enthusiasm and develop adult education and literacy on a continuing basis. The plan allocation for social education was raised from Rs.15 crores in the Third Plan to Rs. 62 crores in the Fourth Plan.

In 1963 the Ministry of Education clarified that the concept of Adult Education and Social Education (SE) meant 'adult education' and that it was intended to bring social change through the development of social,
economic and political life of the individuals. It was aimed at initiating better work and better use of leisure.


2.3.4 The Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-74)

During this plan period the programmes of farmer’s education and functional literacy was extended to 100 districts so as to cover 10 lakh adult farmers. Departments of Adult Education were set up in a number of universities. The National Board of Adult Education (NBAE) was established to advice the Government on the subject. About 100 Nehru Yuvak Kendras were established to involve the Neo-student youth in the programmes of functional literacy. However, the financial crunch came in the way of further development and hence progress was slow. Of the total Rs. 809 crore outlay in Fourth Plan, Social Education received only Rs.10 crore, i.e., 1.2 percent of the total plan outlay.

In 1971-72, the International Commission on Education established by UNESCO and headed by Mr. Edgar Faure, laid a special emphasis on non-formal education for children as also adult education for adults in the age group 15-35 (Planning Commission, 1974 :117).
2.3.5 The Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79)

The Fifth Five Year Plan proposed to integrate adult education with all development programmes. Several Vidyapeeths were set up to assist the different agencies for mass education and functional literacy (Planning Commission, 1976:77).

Awareness was to be an important part of the curriculum but was not understood even by middle-level functionaries. Ideally, the objective was to make learners aware of the things happening around them, to help them understand the roots of their disadvantage and the sources of their problems, to enable them to understand the mechanisms for improving their conditions, and finally, to give them the conviction that something could be done (Mushtaq Ahmed, 1975). In reality, nothing of this was even reflected in the curriculum. Field level workers, if not unsympathetic ideologically, were ill-prepared to teach these ideas in the context of dialogic action.

2.3.5.1 From National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) to Adult Education Programme (AEP)

There were several contradictions in the conception as well as in the planning of the NAEP. These contradictions, however, did not have the time to surface. The important political task before the successor government was to point the earlier government as an aberration and to discount its policies and programmes. The NAEP was dealt with appropriately as well (Arnova and Harvey, 1987:245-265). The
programme changed in three steps. (1) The name of the programme was changed from National Adult Education Programme to Adult Education Programme. (2) There were new figures for illiterates to be covered by the programme and new time schedules to cover them. The target now was to enroll 110 million illiterate adults in the age group 15-35 in ten years, 1980 to 1990. (3) Instructional Process was conceptualised into three different Phases.

2.3.6 The Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85)

Great impetus was given to adult education in this plan. "Elimination of adult illiteracy" became a plan goal from the Sixth Plan onwards.

The Sixth Plan Working Group on Adult Education recommended that priority in Adult Education should be given to women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. It was made a part of Minimum Needs Programme. The launching of the National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) after changing the name from AEP was a significant achievement. By the end of December 1984, 1,86,510 centres were functioning in 26 states and 5 Union territories with an enrolment of 55,34,763 adult learners. In the Sixth Plan, Rs 25.5 million was allocated for the adult education programmes, but the achievement fell short of target.

"The challenge of Education-A policy perspective 1985", brought out by the Government observed that since the rationale and dynamism of the adult education came from perceived imperatives it was a pre-requisite for
development and survival. It seemed necessary to consider the national goals be advanced through it (Planning commission, 1985:356).

2.3.7 The Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) (From NAEP to TLC)

This plan continued the efforts put forth in the Sixth Plan very rigorously. The National Policy of Education-1986, also known as the New Education Policy (NEP) spelled out the perspective of Adult Education.

2.3.7.1 National Policy on Education, 1986

This laid an emphasis a importance of adult education and continuing upgradation of skills with a view to produce manpower resources of the kind and number required by the society. The national policy requires systematic programmes of adult education linked with national goals viz., alleviation of poverty, national integration, environmental conservation, observation of small family norm and promotion of women's equality. Therefore concerted efforts will be needed in this direction to improve upon pedagogical aspects of adult literacy between the existing programme and the developmental programmes (NPE, 1986).

A massive programme of adult education was envisaged for implementation through various modalities. The introduction of National Literacy Mission (NLM) was a milestone in the history of adult education. It set 2000 A.D. as the target date to cover non-literates in the age group
2.3.8 National Literacy Mission (NLM)

The National Literacy Mission (NLM) is a societal mission supported by a political will at all levels for the achievement of its goals (Govt. of India, NLM, 88).

2.3.8.1 Main Objective:

Its objective is to impart functional literacy to 80 million illiterate persons in the 15-35 age group, 30 million by 1990 and additional 50 million by 1995.

2.3.8.2 Issues

The six issues identified for the success of the NLM are

1. National Commitment.
2. Creation of an environment conducive to learning.
3. Motivation of learners and teacher.
5. Techno-pedagogic inputs and

2.3.8.3 Strategies

The main strategy of the NLM is the acceleration of people's participation through media and communication, creation of local level participatory structures, taking out of Jathas and training of cadres of youth. Another important strategy is to undertake technology demonstration in 40 districts for development, transfer and application of
techno-pedagogic-inputs and to evaluate results for applications beyond 40 districts.

The other strategies are

1. Expansion and strengthening of the mass movement for functional literacy.
2. Institutionalization of continuing education, particularly through Jana Shikshan Nilayams (JSM)
3. Vocational training.

2.3.8.4 Communication components and inputs

The NLM identifies the following communication inputs for securing people’s participation.

1. Regular programmes on radio and TV for information, motivation and active involvement.
2. Systematic use of the newspapers for creating a positive attitude towards promotion of literacy among the influential sections of society.
3. Sponsoring theatre groups to make the messages of the street corners, hamlets in rural areas and fairs.
4. Folk and traditional media for creation of an environment.

The Mission also highlights the importance of ‘Jathas-Cultural carvans for new Education’ and envisages the following

(1) Group of teachers, students, non-student youths, artists moving in trains, busses, bicycles and on foot for the cause of new education, including literacy, environment, science for everyday life, women’s equality and national integration.
(2) In towns, mohallas and villages they pass, they discuss issues and counter fundamentalist and reactionary forces and further perceive the importance of literacy as a tool for amelioration of their plight.

(3) Alongwith discussion and debate there may be nukkad operas, improved plays and group singing.

A Jana Shikshan Nilayam, JSN (Locally called in Karnataka State as Bala Belaku Kendra) will be the principally instrumental for organising post-literacy and continuing education programmes where modern communication (media) aids like the community radio, audio cassette players, TV and possibly VCR educate the rural masses (Mohanty, 1988: 23-24)

2.3.9 Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) - Main Component of the NLM

In the Seventh Five Year Plan, with a view to eradicate illiteracy, the targets of the NLM were re-formulated and the strategies were recast. While Rural Functional Literacy Programmes (RFLP), the post-literacy programmes and the teaching learning process were modified, new strategies like area-specific and time bound approach to achieve 100 percent total literacy through campaigns were evolved. Thus, the Adult Education Programme saw a new turn to TLC-Total Literacy Campaign.

On May 5, 1988, a mass mobilisation campaign, under the Technology Mission, was launched by the then Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv
Gandhi, at New Delhi to achieve the targets. Similar campaigns were launched in 24 states and Union territories on the same day and after.

The TLC is a campaign method which gradually replaced the old method called Centre Based Approach in achieving literacy.

The new method was initially tried through some specific projects in Gujarat, twenty talukas of Karnataka and twenty blocks in West Bengal. This is based on the campaign method which had succeeded in countries like Burma, Cuba, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, Tanzania and Vietnam.

The concept behind the campaign method is Gandhian. It concentrates on well-knit, thoroughly organised scientific attempt at mass mobilisation to achieve the target in a one time programme in a particular area within a time frame on a purely voluntary basis.

2.3.9.1 Characteristics of the TLC

The TLC is

1. Area specific based on area planning.
2. Time-bound.
3. Volunteer based.
4. People-centred, and
5. Result-oriented.

The campaigns are generally organised at district level through 'Zilla Saksharata Samitis' under the leadership of the District Collector/District Council. It involves a massive participation of non-governmental
organisations (NGOS) and students and effective use of traditional and
tfolk theatre forms in the literacy work.

The first Indian town to become fully literate was Kottayam in Kerala
(April-June 1989) in 100 days. The first district in India to acquire total
literacy was Ernakulum in Kerala in one Year (January-December 1989).
The first Indian state declared fully literate was Kerala on 18.4.1991. The
year 1990 was observed as the International Literacy Year and literacy
work was accelerated throughout the country.

The result of the literacy campaigns and other efforts were reflected
in the country’s decennial census. In 1991 the literacy rate was 52.11
percent as against 43.56 percent in 1981 for the population aged 7 and
above, an increase of 8.55 percent. Male literacy increased from 56.37 to
63.86 percent while female literacy increased from 29.75 to 39.42 percent

By March 1992, 25 districts had achieved 85 percent literacy. The
union territory of Pondicherry achieved total literacy on November 30,
1991. Burdwan and Midnapore in West Bengal, Sindudurg and Wardha in
Maharashtra, South Canara (Dakshina kannada) and Bijapur in Karnataka
and Sivaganga and Pudukottai in Tamil Nadu are the districts which
acquired total literacy in the early phase of the campaigns. Ajmer was the
first district in North India to get this distinction. At present total literacy
campaigns are being implemented in 156 districts (Khullar,1996 :1,2).
However, in spite of all these efforts, a wide gap remained in achieving the target. This was mainly due to the galloping growth of India’s population, which seemed to nullify all the efforts made by the Government in eradicating illiteracy (Planning Commission, 1990).

2.3.10 The Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97)

The targeted coverage during the Eighth Plan is about 10.5 crore, compared to the achievement of 2.65 crore during the Seventh Plan period.

2.3.10.1 The Present Status

The content of literacy kit and the Adult Education Programme at present includes literacy, numeracy and functionality. It also includes inculcation of values like secularism, national integration, scientific temperament, small family norm and environment conservation. In some districts women have taken up the cause of prohibition, peace and communal harmony. Maternal and child health have also been included in the programmes.

The budget provision for the TLC for the year 1995-96 was Rs 120 crores. The TLC has now been extended to 338 district and has already entered the post literacy phase. According to the latest reports, an estimated 71.1 million learners have been enrolled in the programme and 44.70 million are reported to have been made literates (Khullar, 1996).
2.3.10.2 The Recent Adult Education Programme (From TLC to PLC)

The post-literacy programme has been institutionalised in the form of JSN. Post-literacy is viewed as continuing education of children who complete primary education and of adults who complete literacy courses. A total of 32,218 JSN have been sanctioned of which 25,000 have been operational. The learning hours have been reduced from 500 hours to 200 by the introduction of Improved pace and content of learning (IPCL). The scheme of Shramik Vidyapeeths (Workers Education) has been reviewed. The number of State Resource Centres (SRCs) has been increased. A National Institute of Adult Education (NIAE) was set up in 1991 to augment the technical and academic resource support to Adult Education and to undertake quality research and evaluation studies.

During the Eighth Plan, it was proposed to cover 345 districts including about two-thirds of all districts in the 10 educationally backward states under the Total Literacy Campaigns (Planning Commission, 1992).

2.3.10.3 Objectives of Post-Literacy Programmes

Remediation: The purpose of PLC is to remedy the deficiency of primary education and adult literacy programmes.

Continuation: This refers to retention, reinforcement and stabilization for literacy skills as well as their upgradation and improvement of functional skills. Traditionally, this is the principle function of post-literacy.
Application: The normal course of improvement of literacy and functional skills should lead to their application to bring living and working situation. Application has to be organized by positive measures also, for example by provision of necessary inputs to supplement the imparting of knowledge regarding improvement in agricultural practices, provision of family planning aids along with an understanding about the importance of their use etc. Through application of literacy, people begin to participate in the development process.

Communitization: The process of positive socialization and the use of communication skills for individual and group assertion may be called communitization. It may take the shape of group action for improvement of the environment, of vitalization of community forums or popular organizations for securing social justice. Communitization is the means by which the individual acquires a new identity. (Carron and Anil Bordia, 1986:156)

In the Indian context, the PLC is an extension of TLC a programme for neo-literates. This includes imparting education on special issues. The major approach is to hold a number of special campaigns based on different issues for example special campaign on small family norm, maternal and child health, special campaign on nutrition for the previledged the pregnant and lactating women. During 1997 it also includes a special campaign on Aids awareness. This is apart from the learning-teaching classes in the JSN. The main intention of PLC is to see that the neo-literates (of TLC) do not relapse
back into illiteracy and are continually engaged in making them better developed citizens. (Khullar, 1996: 3, 4).

2.4 Adult Education Programme and Rural Women

Education of women has been neglected in our country down the ages, though there were some remarkable women whose attainments in knowledge were very high. The accepted view was that women did not require any formal education for fulfilling their role as a housewife and as a mother. The knowledge and experience required for taking up their responsibilities could be passed on from the mother to the daughter (Government of India, 1989: 1).

When planned development of the country was taken up, the first two Five Year Plans rightly laid emphasis on expansion of facilities for elementary education, though the need for reducing illiteracy was also felt. The approach adopted was to strengthen social education programme to enable the adult population, including women, to participate in the socio-economic transformation of the country. This was actually the first organised attempt to make women literate. A Lady Social Education organiser was appointed in every development block and a full time social worker was put in charge of social education centres which were opened in selected areas which included villages. Illiterate women were taught literacy skills as well as functional skills. The Mahila Mandal, which were set up in some villages by enthusiastic social workers with the help of local women played a very
important role in bringing together women to fight social evils which had stood in the way of their programmes (Government of India, *Ibid* : 3). The National Committee on Women’s Education (Government of India, 1958) set up in 1958 points out that the policy of the Government to extend educational facilities to women had not succeeded as it was visualised. Their illiteracy created a barrier for having social justice and equality of status with men. The Report on Status of Women (Government of India, 1974) clearly indicated that constitutional and legal guarantees for all citizens alike had not helped in changing the lives of women because they did not have access to knowledge. Even the gap in knowledge between the sexes remained unbridged because Government policies were not implemented in true spirit. Women continued to be regarded as home makers and the education provided to them was designed to strengthen their role. The planners and administrators did not realise that women have a multiple role in society.

The National Policy on Education (Government of India, 1968) which was announced in 1968 following the recommendation of the Education Commission included adult education. It highlighted urgent need for initiating bold, imaginative and effective measure for stepping up literacy among women, particularly of rural areas, where the motivation for it was weak and the social environment was hostile for organising literacy programme for them.
The introduction of Farmer's Literacy programmes have affected the existing social education programme for women adversely. The giving of financial and technical assistance to farmers' training programmes indirectly meant that the government regarded women's education programme to be of secondary importance. The whole approach to adult education was reviewed by UNESCO in the context of life-long education. The Government of India, on the advice of the Central Advisory Board of Education, launched the non-formal education programme in November 1974. The functional literacy of adult women was given special importance during the International Women's Year, 1975. It was designed to deliver a package of services to illiterate women of the age group 15-35 as they were considered to be more receptive to new ideas and could also change their attitudes. It was expected that women would be able to acquire literacy skills through functional literacy work and also participate in the development effort of the community. Some of the specific objectives of functional literacy programme were:

1. To promote a better awareness of modern methods of health and hygiene and
2. To impart need based training in home management and child care

(Govt. of India, Op cit, 1989 :7,8).

It was proposed that an educated Anganwadi worker appointed under Integrated Child Development Scheme could be entrusted with running functional literacy classes as well. Under this scheme the Child Development
Project Officer would also supervise the functional literacy programme. (Ibid, 1989:8).

The new policy statement on adult education which was announced by the Government in April 1977 gave the highest priority to women's adult education programme. A committee was constituted on Adult Education Programmes for Women (Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, 1977). The committee summarised the aims of adult education as under:

1. Both men and women had to be made more conscious of their rights and responsibilities by enabling them to understand the status of women in society and also the different ways-apparent or concealed-by which women were oppressed.

2. Women had to be assisted to achieve economic viability by helping them to acquire literacy and other necessary skills.

3. Women had to be provided access to knowledge in other areas particularly in health and child care, nutrition and family planning.

4. Women had to be assisted to form groups for learning productive skills and strengthen their participation in developmental process (Op cit, 1989:11,12).

The committee suggested some measures which could help in the organisation of Adult Education Programme. It was decided to organise separate programmes for women of high caste, those coming from family of small farmers, of landless labour class, of artisan families and women of
service class families. The committee also suggested that in view of the prevailing rigid caste system, especially in the rural areas, an enlightened educational programme for women would be necessary to overcome the barriers. It envisaged special programme of finding suitable time of holding the class while organising programmes. The committee also made it clear that women instructors would have to be appointed to take up the responsibility of running the adult education centres for women (Ibid, 1989:13,14).

The Adult Education Programme which was inaugurated in October 1978 was implemented after April, 1979. It had been visualised that the entire illiterate population in the age group 15-35 would be covered within a period of five years i.e. 1979-84. They would be made literate, their general awareness would be increased and their functional skills and capabilities as citizens improved. It was also expected that after the literacy skills were acquired, the neo-literates would undertake a programme of post-literacy and follow-up work. The programme of adult education was massive and also time bound. Hence the Government of India decided to involve all state governments, voluntary agencies, educational institutions and universities. However, it was seen that the government could not reach the required target, the reasons were the learners were not sufficiently motivated. The young lady instructors running the centre could not talk to older women with care on topics like child care, health and hygiene, family and other social
matters. The result was that awareness aspect was neglected in most centres. The social welfare department continued to run its programme under ICDS scheme without trying to strengthen the imparting of literacy skills. In some areas the adult education instructors and Anganwadi workers instead of co-operating clashed as a result of which both the programmes suffered. The authorities did not try to find a solution to the problems which were leading to the clash and continued to provide better working conditions for Anganwadi workers than were allowed to adult education instructors. Apart from this, the field experience of many adult education functionaries showed that women were irregular in attending the centre and often had short spells of absence on account of illness in the family, or because of their visit to their relations (Ibid, 1989, 16-17). The review committee (Government of India, 1980) appointed by the Government of India noted the following deficiencies:

1. The over-riding consideration was to complete the targets in the specified time, but very little was done to find out whether the programme could be developed with the limited facilities available.

2. Special emphasis was to be laid on the enrolment of women, but the actual enrolments were far from encouraging.

3. The programme followed was confined to literacy. The other two components namely functionality and awareness remained on paper, as an appropriate methodology was not developed in a period of two years.
4. The learning material made available to the learners was not based on actual needs and interests of learners.

5. The linkage of adult education programme with development programme was crucial for the success of the programme, but most of the functionaries of the programme did not understand the basic idea of linkage and how it could be established.

6. The awareness component of the programme was not understood by the field staff. Being unaware of its meaning and content, the instructors could not attempt it. This was specially true of the young girls who were incharge of centres for women.

The Review Committee particularly suggested the need for special instructional material for functionality and awareness aspects of the programmes. It also recommended post-literacy classes and continuation education of longer duration for the neo-literates, indirectly emphasised that it was not the percentage of literacy that was important but having neo-literate women to remain literate. This aspect had been more or less neglected in all programmes that were undertaken earlier. (Ibid, 1980).

The Sixth Five Year Plan (Ibid, 1980) stipulated a programme of functional literacy for adult women aiming at imparting literacy to both rural and urban women. The scheme was also being operated by the Department of Social Welfare on a high priority basis and is being implemented in the ICDS projects also. The major thrust of the programme
was to provide education in elements of health and hygiene, food and nutrition and home management and child care. During this plan period about 7800 ICDS areas were having the functional literacy courses during 1984, benefiting nearly 0.4 million women (Dutta, 1986:124).

The All India Adult Education Conference, held in Varanasi in October 1984 also deliberated on non-formal adult education for women as the main theme, under the four sub-themes

1. Education of rural women and their participation in development programme.
2. Health and nutrition education for women.
3. Literacy and social awareness.
4. Income generating programmes for women.

It was also decided that the following factors were essential under the non-formal adult education for women

1. Making the women conscious of their rights and responsibilities, the implications of laws governing women's status in society and developing an understanding about the various manifest factors which cause women's oppression.
2. Providing women access to knowledge in areas like health, child care, nutrition and family planning. (Sachdeva and Asha, 1985:10-22).
2.4.1 Need for a New Approach

So far non-formal education programmes have given importance only to the traditional role that women play, namely, that of wife, mother and housemaker and ignore factors like reality an integral segment of women's labour force. Along with professional education, the women should be educated in areas like health, nutrition, child care and family welfare so that some of their natural roles are also strengthened (Ibid, 1985:10-13).

The National Literacy Mission document is mainly concerned about imparting functional literacy. One of the key factors in functional literacy is imbibing the values of national integration, observation of environment, women's equality, observances of small family norm and immunisation (NLM, 1988). It has proposed "Women's Integrated Learning for Life" (WILL) programme. According to this programme women's literacy and education are critical for proper child care. ICDS programme will endeavor to review the component of women's functional literacy (Govt. of India, NLM, Opcit, 1988).

Apart from the programme of the Ministry of Education, some amount of adult literacy work is also carried on through a programme known as Functional Literacy for Adult Women (FLAW) which is a component of the ICDS of the ministry of social welfare (Mathur, 1989: 24).
2.4.2 Mahila Samakhya

Government of India has launched a scheme called Mahila Samakhya (education for women's equality) in ten districts of Gujarat, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh. The basic thrust of the scheme is on creating mechanism to give women an opportunity to plan and monitor their own education and the education of their children.

The basic assumption of the project is that education is not accessible to poor rural women because they are caught in the daily struggle for food, fuel, drinking water and child birth which leaves them very little time for education. Similarly, young girls are busy with house-hold work and are not sent to school. The Mahila Samakhya project counters the constraints through strong women's organization (Mahila Sanghs) as nodal points.

Components provided under this project are adult literacy centres, non-formal education centres, continuing education centres, vocational/information based training for rural women and support services such as child care facilities and access to drinking water. A single agency provides all the above inputs (Government of India, 1992 : 9).

Hence, the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97) adopted this strategy of the National Literacy Mission in the Adult Education Programmes by means of literacy campaigns in several districts of the country (Govt. of India, 1994 : 6,7 ).
Thus India has recognised the importance of and the need for spreading adult literacy. When India achieved Independence nearly fifty years ago there was massive illiteracy, for education was the prerogative of the elite class. Education was urban oriented, while the masses lived in the numerous villages. Indeed India was considered the land of villages where 80 percent of the population resided. The rural adults were unable to enjoy the fruits of education as all programmes by passed them. Thus the planners and policy makers saw the need to spread literacy in the rural areas and free the rural population from ignorance, superstition and out moded customs. Literacy could help them participate in developmental programmes and stop being exploited and cheated by the landlords and middlemen. It would also make them aware of the family norm, health and hygiene. India realised the need for spreading literacy in rural areas.