

STRATEGIES FOR ADULT AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME

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The concept

The index of development of people is positively related to the level of education. The per capita income of the people have been found to be higher in countries having high literacy percentage. The concept of education has been changing and along with it the meaning and scope of adult education has been acquiring new dimensions. Adult education is being interpreted in different countries in their own ways. In some countries this is mainly a recreational programme for old people, in some other it aims at continuing education and in countries like India it aims at functional literacy and numeracy. In past, adult education had been equated with literacy and that was perhaps the main reason for which earlier attempts failed. Development in educational condition of a person has now been intimately connected with his developments in the socio-economic field. This has happened because motivation for learning is fundamental to a sound adult education programme. Adult learning in developing countries has to be related to the role of learning in reducing day to day wants and increasing the skill in the work, ultimately aiming at a prosperous living. Adult education has therefore, not to be the responsibility of the education department alone, but has to be the collective responsibility of all departments involved in people welfare programmes. In a study of the EWLP it has been pointed out that the education department could not take up this programme sincerely and even failed to report about the achievements in time. The concept of adult education has now made it binding on the part of the educational authorities to seek collaboration of other departments. The teachers of the education departments may not be able to manage adult education programmes. There are a large number of children who are not attending schools. While emphasis has to be given on the education of the adults, the importance of education of school going age children can not be overlooked. Therefore, it has become necessary to have system of non-formal education for these children of the school-going age.

Socio-psychological motivation

Motivation is the base of the success of both adult and non-formal education programmes. The process of education is mainly involved in building up the power of determination in the individual to explore and draw out the best in him. The adult learner had not earlier bothered to learn. The non-school going child also did not bother to learn. At this stage the type of motivation required by these types of learners has to be of immediate importance to the living condition of the learner. Motivating a child who has come to school is comparatively easier than a child who has not attended any school or has left school. Motivating an adult to learn is more difficult than a child. This also necessitates the need for having more competent teachers than required under formal system. The facilities for learning are to be more in this system. This system has also to get support from the community and community education through different community festivals, ceremonies has to be ensured for the smooth functioning of the system. There are different mass media like radio, films, television which have to be utilised for mass education. It might be better if the adult or non-formal teachers are paid remunerations basing on their performance.

Diversified curricula

Curricula for adult and non-formal education programmes are more difficult to design than for formal education. In this field the curricula are more diversified and at the same time more individual oriented. The first step for designing curriculum is to conduct a survey of the language, trade, occupation and socio-economic condition of the people. If one is interested in teaching literacy and numeracy, he has to see that his primer developed for this purpose is written in the spoken language of the learner and also based upon the trade or occupation of the learner. In a country like India, there are many official languages. Besides these official languages, there are many other dialects, which differ to such an extent

that people of interior areas will not be able to follow any other dialect or official language not spoken by them. Most of these dialects do not have any script. The principle of basic education suggested by Mahatma Gandhi in 1937 appears to be the suitable approach for preparation of instructional materials for the adult and non-formal education programmes. While a set of materials can be prepared at a central place for the use of the country, most of these materials have to be prepared at the local centres with the possibility of having a set of materials for each learner. The main responsibility of developing materials has to rest with the teacher. He may get ideas from the materials developed at the centre or sub-centre located in his area. The evaluation system has to be scientific and progressive in its outlook. A set of test materials have to be prepared covering various languages including dialects and vocations of the people. Again it is the teacher, who has to prepare a suitable test for his learner. This approach to curriculum requires preparation of diversified teachers' guides suiting to different situations.

Training of Personnel

The type of training that the school teachers normally receive in various teacher training institutions may not cater to the needs of the adult and non-formal education programme. These seasoned teachers might have to be given re-orientation on this area. It has been suggested that re-orienting formal teachers may be more difficult than orienting non-teachers. Training programme for these teachers, who had no training in the field of teacher education and did not have any experience in teaching in the formal school system, may cover the aspects such as—(a) the need for adult and non-formal education programme in relation to the socioeconomic development, (b) the difference between formal, non-formal and informal system of education, (c) the national policy on the adult education programme, (d) the national policy on the non-formal education programme, (e) an appraisal of failure and success of the past attempts, (f) the local plan of action, (g) the need of survey, methods of collection of data and interpretation of the data, (h) the importance of reporting-statistics, (i) the psychology of the adult and non-formal learner and the need for socio-psychological motivation, (j) various principles of adult and non-formal learning and methods of teaching, (k) acquaintance with different types of people welfare programmes operating in the country in general and the area in which the teacher has to work in particular, (l) importance of diversified instructional materials and techniques of preparation of these materials, (m) goals for adult and non-formal educators, and (n) strategies for running these centres. These theoretical lessons have to be supported by practical like (a) conducting a survey of a locality tabulating the data and interpreting it for the purpose of starting an adult or a non-formal centre, and (b) preparation of instructional materials for these centres. Besides these practical field visits to a few working centres may be very much useful. The *training* of these teachers might be carried out at different sub-centres. There may be the need for developing a batch of experts at the national level, and batches of experts working at the next level may be state level. These experts working at the state level have to be mainly responsible for smooth functioning of the programme. In case of mass programme a batch of intermediary personnel might have to be prepared, who can give training to the actual teachers in their working situations. The training programme for these resource persons might have all the aspects meant for the teachers and in addition it might have stimulated teacher training exercises. It has been suggested that operational seminars are very much helpful in preparing capable teachers. Teacher training has to be a continuous programme. It has to be given at suitable intervals for transmitting the experience received from the actual situations.

Role of educational institutions

The Universities of the country might distribute the area of the country among themselves. Universities in a country like India have already started working in the field of adult and non-formal education through their National Service Scheme *units* and the departments of adult and continuing education. Their work can be made more vigorous and the colleges affiliated to them can suitably be engaged in training the resource personnel for their respective areas. The school teachers may be involved in the teacher training programme and the main body of the resource personnel may consist of the teachers of senior schools. Other members of the body of resource personnel may be from different departments of the Governments engaged in people welfare programmes and the leaders of the voluntary agencies of the area. The teachers

of the lower schools may be involved in reporting aspect of the programme, including conducting survey of their locality. The teacher training colleges and schools may be involved in preparation of various ideal instructional materials. The students of these institutions, if interested may be involved in running non-formal education centres. But while starting these student managed centres one has to see *that* there are sufficient numbers of local students for running these centres. It has been experienced that holidays of educational institutions do not allow these centres to be run uninterrupted for a particular period found necessary for arriving at a particular standard.

Role of departments other than education

Most of these departments spend funds for mass education purposes. Most of their programmes do not actually reach the suitable person. In many cases intermediaries sabotage the contributions of these departments. These happen due to lack of education of the people. These departments, in collaboration with the education department can very well have their funds utilised through the adult and non-formal education centres. This will make learning at these centres actually life centered. This will also ensure participation of the neglected people in the various activities of the centre.

Role of voluntary agencies

There are many areas, where it might be difficult to get local volunteers to man these centres. If voluntary agencies really have volunteers, these volunteers can be asked to work in these areas instead of working in areas where non-voluntary agencies of the Government can function. These agencies can also help in the organisation of the training programmes for the teachers. Motivating people for going to these centres is a difficult task. It may not have appreciable impact if carried on by the agencies of the Government. The voluntary agencies can easily motivate people and they have necessary man-power with them for the purpose. They can also take up evaluation aspect of the programme. The representatives of the people are experts in delivering mass appealing speeches. These qualities of them have to be utilised for ensuring proper motivation for the programme. As an ideal programme has to generate from the village level, they can sit with the people and plan the adult and non-formal education programme necessary for them.

The organisational structure

As this programme is vital for development of the country, the officer responsible for administration should be made responsible for this e.g. in India the District Collectors may be the administrator for the districts, Sub-divisional Officers for their sub-divisions and Block Development Officers for their blocks. The Divisional Commissioners may look after the division under their control and the Chief Secretary of the State may look after the State programme. This programme cannot be limited to the Education Department. It will be difficult to get other departments actively involved in a programme administered by the Education Department. The Education Department may look after the educational aspects of the programme with the help of its institutions. At each level there may be co-ordination committees, which meet periodically for reviewing the progress and assessing the performance of its personnel employed for the purpose. Payment of remuneration to these personnel might be made only on the basis of their performances certified by the appropriate committee.