

Professional Development Program for Adult Educators

Learning Package on
PARTICIPATORY ADULT LEARNING,
DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION
NETWORKING (PALDIN)

**PARTICIPATORY LIFELONG LEARNING
AND
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGIES**

Course 01

An ALADIN-India Initiative

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**Participatory Adult Learning,
Documentation and Information Networking (PALDIN)**

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AND
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Course 01



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Please Note

It is important that the learner completes all activities mentioned in PALDIN units because much of the learning content is incorporated in 'learning by doing' type of activity sections of each unit of a course. It will not be useful to simply read the various sections of the unit and leave out Reflection/ Activity. Interactivity through all such sections of each unit is meant to give impetus to participatory learning whereby all learners get also the opportunity to contribute to construction of knowledge content of PALDIN units. In addition, learners' feedback to each unit will go a long way to help the revision of the course material.

Participatory approach to learning adopted in PALDIN courses brings home the point that adult educators' training is itself a demonstration of sound adult learning practice. In other words, PALDIN learners need to take participatory approach to their interaction with adult members of the communities during their work situations.

Another point to note is that PALDIN courses and their activity exercises stress in equal measure conceptual understanding of the field, practical skills of participatory learning and not easily perceivable but equally important personal qualities of empathy and rapport. While completing activity exercises of PALDIN units, its learners will find plenty of occasions to discover that adult learning is a social process and adult educators' reflection on social reality influences how they perform their roles in work situations.

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Preface

Notwithstanding the expansion of Adult Education as a field of practice and a discipline of study, very little attention has been paid to the professional development of Adult Educators. Unlike School Education, which has in India a well designed professional programme of one year duration for the preparation of school teachers, there is no such provision in the field of Adult Education. Hence, a large number of organizations employ untrained personnel or those with minimum training. The attempt to provide on the job training to the staff has been found to be limited in scope. Several research studies have traced the ineffectiveness of Adult Education programs to the poor quality of training of the program staff. Therefore the need for building and strengthening the capacities through appropriate professional development programs for adult educators has been repeatedly highlighted in several forums of the UNESCO, especially Adult Learning Documentation and Information Network (ALADIN) which has about two hundred members in fifty countries.

A Country Study (2004) sponsored by the then UNESCO Institute for Education on *the Status of Adult Learning and Documentation Centers in India* revealed that most of the organizations in India were neither networked nor have the expertise in documenting their activities or dissemination. The majority of the Staff members working in these organizations expressed a desire to acquire relevant training. This idea was seriously pursued by a group of five members, namely, Dr. Mohan Kumar, Additional Director, Directorate of Adult Education, Government of India; Dr. P. R. Goswami, Director, National Social Science Documentation Center, ICSSR; Shri K. C. Choudhury, Chancellor, International Institute of Adult and Lifelong Education; Dr. Madan Singh, Secretary, Indian Adult Education Association and Prof. S. Y. Shah, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, who formed ALADIN-INDIA. They organized an International Workshop (2005) with the support of the National Literacy Mission of Government Of India, Indian Council of Social Science Research, International Institute of Adult and Lifelong Education and the UNESCO Institute of Education. The participants at the Workshop discussed several issues related to capacity building of the staff members and stressed the need for designing a short duration program of study through open and distance learning mode. Accordingly, the ALADIN-INDIA prepared a proposal. Consequent upon the funding support from the University Grants Commission of India, the work was initiated at Jawaharlal Nehru University. The project team began with a survey of the existing courses in Adult Education and Information Management. Subsequently an International Workshop (2006) was organized and a curriculum was framed and well-known scholars were commissioned to prepare the course material.

The development of a professional programme for Adult Educators is a challenging task not only because of the wide variety of jobs undertaken by them, but also the varying expectations of the different types of organizations which employ them viz., government agencies, NGOs, universities, libraries and information centers.

It has been observed that in most of the adult learning organizations, especially in small organizations, one person is expected to undertake various types of work, such as project management, project documentation, information management, networking and dissemination of information. While those who work in libraries and information centers may have some knowledge and expertise related to information organization and management, they often lack the knowledge and skills required to plan, manage and document adult learning activities. In the same way, most of the adult educators, while possessing relevant knowledge and skills related to their area of work, may lack the expertise related to the classification and cataloging of documents. Invariably, it has been observed that many adult educators have very little idea of process documentation and how to manage information. Although there are separate courses of 6-12 months duration either in Information Management or in Adult Education, there is no comprehensive short term professional program of study for adult educators, covering adult learning, project documentation, information dissemination and networking.

The present learning package on *Participatory Adult Learning, Documentation and Information Networking* (PALDIN) is an attempt in this direction.

S.Y. Shah



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The professional development program on *Participatory Adult Learning, Documentation and Information Networking (PALDIN)* has been undertaken with the active cooperation of several experts and financial support from a number of organizations, namely, University Grants Commission of India, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), National Literacy Mission (NLM) and International Institute of Adult and Lifelong Education (IIALE). Of the several individuals who have shown great interest in this project and encouraged it, I would like to record my gratitude to ALADIN Co-coordinator Ms. Lisa Krolak, Head of Documentation at UILL, Dr. R. K. Chauhan, Additional Secretary of UGC, Dr. Bhaskar Chatterjee, the former Member Secretary of ICSSR, Mr. Jagan Mathews, the former Director General of NLM and Mr. K. C. Chaudhury, Chancellor of IIALE.

My sincere thanks are due to the two Course Coordinators, namely, Dr. Anita Dighe, former Director, Campus of Open Learning, University of Delhi and Dr. P. R. Goswami, Director, National Social Science Documentation Center, ICSSR, for ably coordinating the course development and going through the manuscripts. I appreciate the scholarly contributions of the following experts who wrote different units, namely, Professors - Pramila Aggarwal (George Brown Community College, Toronto), Ila Patel (Institute of Rural Management, Anand), Anita Dighe, Shobhita Jain (JNU); Dr. Usha Reddi (Commonwealth Education Media Center of Asia), Dr. Mandakini Pant (PRIA), Ms. Shalini Joshi and Malini Ghose (Nirantar), Dr. Ajay Kumar (JNU), Dr. P. R. Goswami, Dr. S. M. Dhawan, Dr. S. Ganguly (Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow). Dr. B. K. Sen, Dr. Tariq Ashraf (University of Delhi).

Professor Shobhita Jain (Senior Consultant) deserves special thanks for helping me in coordinating the project and shouldering the main responsibility of finalizing the draft by meticulously going through the entire manuscript, copy editing, rewriting certain portions, putting them in ODL format and checking again and again several versions for errors. Dr. Manasi Mishra (Research Associate) provided excellent academic support throughout the project. I would like to acknowledge the services of Ms Arvinder Chawla and Mr Kamal kumar, who designed the book and its cover.

My heart-felt thanks are due to all the participants of the International Workshop, held in March 2006 at the India International Center, New Delhi, for finalizing the syllabi of the two courses of PALDIN. Annexure 1 on the next page gives the names of the participants. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the support of the authorities of Jawaharlal Nehru University for granting me permission to undertake this project and providing all the facilities.

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Introduction to the Professional Development Program of Study in Participatory Adult Learning, Documentation and Information Networking (PALDIN)

Shobhita Jain

The project team of PALDIN courses development extends a warm welcome to PALDIN learners. This introduction to PALDIN, a professional development program of study consisting of two courses, familiarizes you with its target group, aim and objectives and provides a brief description of its courses and their relevance to your profession. Next follows an account of the special features of the courses' contents that have been developed with the help of a wide range of academic resources.

Let us clarify at the outset that our attempt to build capacities of adult educators and thereby value of their profession does not in any way refer to professionalism that gives rise to exclusiveness, elitism and all too familiar gap between educators and learners. PALDIN courses have been prepared in the spirit of discourse between equals, with no sense of compulsion and encumbrance of examination and grading. This is a self-transforming learning package, advancing belief in participation and open dialogue. In our perception every adult is an adult educator as well as a learner.

Target Group

PALDIN courses will be of interest to the program staff of different types of adult learning setup, namely, State Resource Centers (SRCs), University Departments of Adult Education, Documentation Centers, and NGOs-run Centres. They will be able to use PALDIN courses developed in open and distance learning format as per their convenience of time and place.

Aim and Objectives of PALDIN

PALDIN is an innovative open learning program with the aim of capacity building of adult educators.

Objectives of the program are to

- ❖ Provide its learners a conceptual understanding of the various roles of adult educator in the context of contemporary socio-economic life that requires a continuous stream of lifelong learning for adults.
- ❖ Offer the learners the ways to learn various skills pertaining to documentation, dissemination and networking.
- ❖ Give adult educators opportunities to apply what they learn in each course so that they are both reflecting on their new learning and applying the same in their day-to-day work situations.

Duration and Delivery of the Courses

As mentioned above the learning package on Participatory Adult Learning,

Documentation and Information Networking (PALDIN) comprises two courses, each of which would notionally require a minimum of four hundred and eighty hours of study and practical work. In terms of open and distance learning mode, you can say that this much of workload completed will entitle you to earn sixteen credits of an advance level learning. You work out the same in terms of months and visualize the workload of 2 months @ 8 hours work each day or of 4 months @ 4 hours each day or of 8 months @ 2 hours each day. This is only a notional scheme. You can, of course, work two hours one day and four hours another day and take a break of few days to resume the work later. As per availability of time you can complete the courses at your own pace. You can study both simultaneously or one after the other. The flexibility available to learners includes the facility of going through the course material any time of day or night and at any place of your choice. If you prefer to read the printed text, you opt to use the books. In case you like to read it on your personal computer, you can use the single compact disc that contains the entire course material.

Brief Description of the Two Courses of PALDIN

The two courses of PALDIN come to you in the form of two books. The book on *Participatory Lifelong Learning and Information and Communication Technologies* outlines the global, regional and national scenario on literacy and discusses policy on adult and lifelong learning. Then it traces the philosophical roots of current forms of adult learning and sensitizes its readers to the need of critically looking at them for acquiring conceptual clarity. This leads to the concept of and working with the community. Focusing on the processes of participatory learning the book dwells at length on participatory training and evaluation. Finally, the book provides very useful inputs on the role of information and communication technologies in education and development and ends with their uses in literacy and lifelong learning. For further details of the book see the introduction to the course.

The book on *Documentation, Dissemination and Networking* deals with the processes of documentation and dissemination of information and then it elaborates with the theme of networking for obtaining better linkages between those documenting and disseminating information relating to adult learning. All this culminates in knowing how to manage adult learning setup, including its library-related resources. Communication and organizational behaviour are two pillars of management strategies explained in detail so that adult educators may apply the same to their work. Introduction to the course provides more details about the various themes discussed in the book

PALDIN course material is now ready for pilot testing in the field. Feedback from the first batch of its learners will be the basis of its final version that will go to the larger community of adult educators.

The two courses will also be available in a compact disc (CD). Each book has a certain number of units, which sensitize learners to critically approach the various themes and sub-themes. The course material is designed to facilitate learners to increase efficiency and effective functioning in their work situations because each unit of both courses requires application of what has been learnt. Thus in a cumulative manner, step-by-step learners increase their skills to obtain better outputs in their professional work.

At all levels in your career, understanding your roles enables you to hold on to your job, to succeed in getting further promotions and above all to effectively take part in decision-making processes that exist in your profession. There is currently a growing demand for professional adult educators to carry out lifelong learning programs. The reason for such a demand is linked to the fact that the global spread of industrialism coupled with information and communication technologies has vastly expanded the scope of lifelong learning by all adults. Such programs of study as PALDIN strive to upgrade knowledge and skills of adult educators and thereby empower them to carry out their roles in an efficient and effective manner.

For pilot testing of the two courses, some select adult learning institutions will accept to run them and the first batch of learners will basically study as well as evaluate the course material.

Special Features of the Presentation of PALDIN Course Material

A reading of the special features of designing lay-out of the course material will help PALDIN learners to devise their own strategies to go through the course content according to their particular interests and choices.

Language and Style of Writing

PALDIN course material has been consciously prepared in gender-sensitive language, that is, it addresses equally both women and men learners. Further throughout the courses there is use of clear and simple language and captions appear to indicate systematically numbered figures, tables, boxes and activities etc. Style of writing reflects a learner-friendly conversational format that indicates a relationship of equality between the learner and the developer of the course content. All efforts have been made to avoid the use of words like 'should' or 'must' because such words reflect a tendency of offering commands to learners.

Aide-memoir

Each unit comes to you with a clearly stated structure that informs in advance its coverage and the order of discussion of each theme and sub-theme. Similarly stating clearly the learning objectives prepares you to systematize your reading of the contents in terms of outputs of your efforts. The learning objectives spell out what you would achieve after reading the unit and completing all its activities. You can use the learning objectives as study tools to review your preparation for problem-solving situations at work.

The introduction of each unit states the theme and elaborates how the theme develops. It outlines the roadmap of your learning of a particular theme. The introduction also links the particular theme with the unit that precedes and succeeds the unit you are reading so that you keep a firm grip on how the subject matter develops through various units. At the end of reading each unit, you are hopefully ready to apply in practical life what you have learnt. This is the main objective of PALDIN. So you are advised to take this part of learning seriously and systematically if you wish to derive full advantage of this learning package.

Additional Information

In systematically numbered boxes, you will find additional information about concepts/ processes/ events mentioned in the text. Serial numbers of boxes pertain to the

unit they belong to. Similarly, illustrations, elaborating the points made in the text, have systematic numbers and captions. We have avoided the practice of inserting footnotes to the main text. Our practice is to explain the term or concept when it appears for the first time in the text.

All references to the works cited in the text of each unit appear in alphabetical order at the end of the book. We have followed the Harvard system of referencing both in the main body of the text and the list of references at the end of each book of PALDIN. References include all the sources that developers of the units have cited in the text. They include also the books suggested as Further Reading. References help those learners who wish to explore further into a particular theme or sub-theme discussed in PALDIN course material.

Experience-based Learning through Reflection and Activity Exercises

Through reflection and activity exercises, PALDIN units have incorporated the constructivist principles of learning in the design of your learning environment. Often formal classroom teaching is not embedded in learners' everyday experiences and this is why learning tasks do not carry much meaning and relevance for them. Most learning is often confined to the sole aim of passing the examination and obtaining a degree. Our aim in PALDIN is to make learning tasks embedded in adult learning-based contexts and here the learner's situation requires her/ him to possess the knowledge and skills for solving day-to-day problems in adult learning setups. The reflection and activity exercises encourage you to hold discussions with other learners and thus experience the benefits of collaborative learning. These exercises offer you the choices to identify issues of your interest and relevance. The focus is on situations wherein you experience interaction through authentic tasks and thus you go through the process of knowledge construction. In this approach the emphasis is on how to learn, how to construct and rebuild new meaning that is more important than the outcomes in terms of knowledge for its own sake. Our expectation is that PALDIN learners would take this approach to learning to their field and apply it while dealing with adult learners. We have endeavored to include a higher order of thinking about one's own thinking and problem-solving ways. You may call it a process of reflexivity that has a strong potential for problem-solving. This approach allows the scope for generating alternatives with more effective strategies. In a nutshell, the whole process involved in reflection and activity exercises is to facilitate PALDIN learners' movement from their initial state of understanding to the abstract levels of understanding. We take the so-called "mistakes" as steps in learning through a natural and productive process. Our attempt is to build this dynamic process of learning into the reflection and activity exercises of PALDIN units.

Evaluation Methodology

As per the above learning process, this learning package has a system of continuous assessment of its learners' performance. PALDIN learners need to complete all exercises and the process of completing the exercises comprises the act of learning by doing. Each PALDIN learners is to submit to the institution that runs PALDIN courses a written proof of completing all exercises in a systematic and neat fashion with clearly stated the learner's name, date and place of the work, serial number of the activity etc.



Introduction to Course 01: Participatory Lifelong Learning and Information and Communication Technologies

Anita Dighe

Need and Rationale

National governments of a majority of developing countries have tended to marginalize adult education policies and programmes as well as the training of adult education functionaries. A study undertaken in 2002 by the UNESCO Institute of Education (now known as the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning) showed that in most countries, despite the large number of adult education functionaries who need training, only a small percentage get trained due to paucity of resources, both human and financial. The training methodology is mostly top-down; it is reduced to knowledge transmission and is not conceived as multi-dimensional, learner-centered and participatory. In most cases, the training programmes are organized in a perfunctory and ad hoc manner. As a result, there is not only transmission loss, the adult education functionaries are often ill equipped to meet the challenges posed by their work and the professional commitment required of them. Undoubtedly, there is a need to improve the quality of training that adult educators receive. Likewise, it is important for policy makers to think of new approaches to training adult education functionaries.

Several important initiatives that affect educator training, however, have been taken in international policy arena in recent years. UNESCO has played a significant role in this regard. Of the various international conferences, the 5th International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V) proposed a vision of adult learning which cuts across a variety of sectors and is firmly rooted in a framework of human development and social justice comprising elements such as democracy, critical citizenship, cultural diversity, social inclusion, human rights, peace and gender equality. The *Hamburg Declaration and the Agenda for the Future* reflected a strong commitment for promoting the right to education and learning and to the creation of a learning society. Taking place within the context of intensifying processes of globalization, CONFINTEA re-established the importance of adult education as an essential component of the education system and stressed the centrality of the adult learner and of learning as a lifelong process. It stressed the importance of quality training that would enable adult educators to acquire theoretical understanding, hone their practical abilities and improve the personal qualities needed to perform their roles effectively.

The second major initiative at the international level was the Dakar Framework for Action (2000) at which the commitment and resolve for investing in quality education for children as well as for adults was reiterated. UNESCO's Global Monitoring Report on Literacy (2006: 35) considers adult educators as key actors in the process of 'creation of rich and dynamic literate environments'.

While the traditional or conventional modes of training have been inadequate, the rapid development of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and the advent of the internet, e-learning and virtual classrooms are now providing opportunities to ensure that adult educators continually update their knowledge and skills in an increasingly globalized knowledge society. Developing ICT-based distance education and e-learning provides opportunities for training adult education functionaries, both across geographical areas and to sections of the population hitherto unreached. It is for this reason that the initiative taken by the Group of Adult Education (GAE) at the Jawaharlal Nehru University to develop an e-learning programme to improve the overall quality of training of adult educators needs to be commended. Course 01 on Participatory Lifelong Learning and Information and Communication Technologies is a collective contribution by its writers to facilitate the professional development of adult education functionaries. While it is envisaged that in the next phase it would be converted into an e-learning programme, the present endeavor is to put together a course consisting primarily of print materials that would be offered initially as a mix of on line/off line/face-to-face modes.

Though keeping the open and distance learning (ODL) format in mind, there is a breaking away from the usual ODL approach by emphasizing the participatory approach in the development of Course 01. Bringing the learner center-stage is still not the hall-mark of the ODL system; while in developing Course 01, it is envisaged that the participatory approach would ensure a user-friendly and sustainable learning package. The learning package includes a blend of theory and practice and it is hoped that much of the learning would take place through activities.

Course Design and Thematic Structure

Course 01: Participatory Lifelong Learning and Information and Communication Technologies deals with the themes of current significance in the development of concepts and processes in the field of adult and lifelong learning. It comprises fourteen units. These were written on the basis of the interests, expertise and experience of each of the contributing writers. Thematic structure of the course revolves around the concept of participatory approach to adult learning and its sequence develops from an introduction to prevailing scenario on literacy, policy issues, philosophical foundations to understanding the concept of community. From this juncture the course turns to developing the materials for adult learners to participatory approaches in the work of adult educators. Finally, the course highlights the importance of introducing information and communication technologies in the field of adult and lifelong learning.

Let us now look at the content brief of each unit. This will provide you with some foretaste of what you are going to receive while reading the content of Course 01.

Content Briefs

Unit 1: Global, Regional and National Scenario on Literacy attempts to build a perspective on literacy by capturing some of the theoretical debates, as well as the international initiatives, particularly those of UNESCO, in influencing and shaping the discourse on literacy. The attempt here is to egg the PALDIN learner on to understand that there is need to go beyond the traditional definitions of literacy

and to appreciate its complex, interdisciplinary nature and its close link with development. While examining literacy statistics at the global, regional and national levels, the learner will need to question his/her understanding of the nature and meaning of literacy and to work a definition of literacy that would be relevant to his/her interest and background, field experience, and area of work.

Unit 2: Policy on Adult And Lifelong Learning: International and National Perspectives deals with the international and national perspectives of the policy on adult learning. It is the international policy discourse that has shaped the national policies on adult education in a large number of developing countries. While the international policy discourse has been progressive and has tended to evolve with the social, economic, political, technological changes that have taken place, at the national level there has been a knee-jerk response, as well as a lack of sustained and concerted effort to deal with the national problem of adult illiteracy. This has led to the marginalization of adult education programmes.

Unit 3: Philosophical Background of Adult and Lifelong Learning and **Unit 4: Philosophical Trends, Theories of Educational Intervention and Adult Learning** introduce the learner to an understanding of educational problems and issues in a broader framework. The underlying objective of these two units is to introduce the learner to the educational theories and to the contributions made by some of the great thinkers of the last century so that he/she can not only critically analyze educational theories but also relate to them by applying them in real life contexts. Unit 3 focuses on the meaning and importance of lifelong learning and then introduces the various philosophical traditions that have a bearing on adult education and lifelong learning. Unit 4 deals with the specific theoretical contributions of those thinkers/educationists who have significantly influenced adult education theory and practice. While capturing the essence of the work of Piaget, Dewey, Gramsci, Freire and their relevance to adult education theory, the contributions of Gandhi and of Tagore assume significance because of their relevance in the Indian context.

Unit 5: Sociological Background of Adult Education discusses the use of sociological theory and method in analysis of education with particular reference to adult and lifelong learning systems and processes. Keeping in mind re-orientation from psychology-dominated perspective to a more sociological view of adult learning, the unit deals with some of the main currents of thought in sociology that have led to better grasp of issues and concerns of adult education.

Unit 6: Understanding the Community focuses on the importance of community participation. One of the underlying principles behind developing PALDIN is that the thrust has to be learner-centered and context-specific. Likewise, the educational program needs to be owned by the community, or else it is not likely to meet with any measure of success. Unit 6 describes the different types of communities and stresses on first understanding the community in which one is working. Elaborating the processes of assessing community needs and mapping community assets, it highlights the power dynamics that are operative at the community level.

Unit 7: Reading Material for Neo Literate and Semi-literate Adults highlights the complexities of writing materials for neo-literate and semi-literate adults and focuses on building capacities of individuals and institutions in developing materials

that are gender-sensitive and relevant to the needs and interests of rural communities. The PALDIN learner gets in Unit 7 an opportunity to analyze existing material that is available so that he/she can develop a critical perspective on mainstream reading materials. While raising issues relating to the politics of language, the unit highlights certain principles that need to be taken into consideration in writing for adult readers.

Unit 8: Participatory Research, Unit 9: Participatory Evaluation (PE), Unit 10: Participatory Training, Unit 11: Learning Environment of Participatory Training, and Unit 12: Participatory Training Methodology and Materials are based on PRIA's useful training material in participatory approach to adult learning. PRIA is one of the pioneering institutions in the country that has systematically worked over the years on Participatory Research, Participatory Evaluation, and Participatory Training. The five units are therefore reflective of the accumulated knowledge base that PRIA has built on the basis of its field experiences as well as those of its network partners. The units spell out the steps involved in undertaking participatory work, whether in training, research, or evaluation.

Unit 13: Role of ICTs in Education and Development: Potential, Pitfalls and Challenges provides an overview that examines the meaning of ICTs, weighs the strengths and weaknesses of ICTs, examines some of the common myths that surround them, and highlights the lessons learnt on the use of ICTs to enhance learning. While the impact of globalization on adult education has not received the attention it deserves in the PALDIN units, Unit 13 focuses specifically on the role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and to their use in education, with particular reference to the developing countries.

Unit 14: Use of ICTs in Literacy and Lifelong Learning examines the use of ICTs in literacy and lifelong learning programmes. While discussing the current use of ICTs in literacy programs in a large number of E-9 countries, the unit gives specific attention to the use of ICTs in the Indian context and highlights the analysis of these experiences to delineate the role of ICTs in promoting literacy. Strategies are then spelt out if ICTs have to be used as a tool for achieving Literacy Decade Goals.

Expected Outcomes

A perusal of the fourteen units will reveal that there are some gaps in the areas covered. Some of these include the political economy and economics of adult education, planning and management issues relating to adult education programmes, and the like. While it was envisaged that gender would be a cross-cutting issue, it is apparent that gender did not receive concerted attention from all the unit writers. Likewise, there is no inclusion of the changing development paradigm and its impact on adult education. However, despite the gaps, Course 01 has been put together. It would be field-tested and then modified and improved upon. In other words, the last word has not been written for this course. After the course has been put together in the light of feedback, the expected outcome of the course can be defined as providing a useful resource to adult educators' general awareness of current developments in adult learning.



GLOBAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL SCENARIO ON LITERACY

SHOBHITA JAIN

Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Global Scenario
 - 1.2.1 Need for Literacy
 - 1.2.2 Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE)
- 1.3 Regional Scenario
 - 1.3.1 Differences in Regional Literacy Rates
 - 1.3.2 Narrowing of Gender Gap in Literacy Rates
 - 1.3.3 Numbers of Illiterates High in Some Regions
- 1.4 National Scenario
 - 1.4.1 Literacy Practices in India
 - 1.4.2 Long-term Objectives and Commitments for Literacy
 - 1.4.3 Issues of Language and Gender
- 1.5 Apply What You Have Learnt

Learning Objectives

After studying this unit, you are expected to be able to

- ❖ Explain the concept of literacy and its importance at the global, regional and national levels
- ❖ Explain the need for literacy
- ❖ Identify the various forms and types of literacy
- ❖ Apply various approaches to implement adult literacy programmes.
- ❖ Develop your own understanding of issues related to literacy.

1.1 Introduction

Unit 1 provides the learner with an overview of the state of literacy world wide. It discusses the vision and need for literacy especially in contemporary knowledge societies and the necessity of working for literacy for one's well-

being. It guides you to develop your own definition of literacy, describe different forms of literacy, and to apply your understanding of adult literacy learning to global, regional and national scenarios.

1.2 Global Scenario

Before we start our overview of global scenario on literacy, it is essential to build a perspective on literacy discourse. In the field of literacy, we are much used to dividing the world into illiterates and literates. Generally we tend to follow the global pattern of perceiving in society such binary oppositions as between underdeveloped and developed, between primitive and modern. Just as there are worldwide programs to remove underdevelopment and thereby usher in modern age so are there many plans to end illiteracy. In this sense for most of us the distinction between illiteracy and literacy is the same as between primitive and modern or between underdeveloped and developed.

This perception makes universal literacy as a first condition for development. Such a view of literacy begs questions like ‘How does one define literacy? Do underdeveloped countries wait till they achieve universal literacy before they can engage in development activities? Why have traditional adult literacy learning initiatives not brought in any significant way either universal literacy or enabled participants to acquire new skills to improve their well-being? These are some difficult questions that we need to consider as we construct our perspective on literacy. For academic debate on this subject you may like to go through Box 1.1.

Box 1.1 Debate on Literacy

In academia, social scientists like Goody (1977) and Olson (1977) found a link between cognitive abilities and learning to be literate and then they pointed out how through times immemorial literacy has been important for the way a society works. Global concerns with literacy campaigns also reflect the popular assumption about utmost importance of literacy for functioning of a society. Though we generally associate the development of writing with main cognitive advances in human history, new researches in the field of adult learning belie the veracity of link between cognition and literacy. For example Scribner and Cole (1978), Street (1984), Finnegan (1988) and Maddox (2004) have challenged the thesis of a link between literacy and cognition. They argue that there are no empirical or theoretical grounds to assume that literacy and cognition are necessarily linked with each other. Though Farrell (1977: 451) argued that “the cognitive restructuring caused by reading and writing develop the higher reasoning processes involved in extended abstract thinking”, there is, however, hardly any evidence to prove that writing promotes general mental abilities, or literates possess any special language integration skills. Such ideas as promoted by Goody, Olson and Farrell were in the past a basis for planning literacy programs but in contemporary conditions, differences between literates and non-literates do not follow the assumptions of the metaphor of a “great divide” between literates and illiterates.

The results of the tests Scribner and Cole (1977: 13-17) carried out in three areas of communicative skills, memory and language analysis during their study of Vai peoples of Liberia made clear that ‘specific practices promote specific skills’ and that is why the claims of literacy thesis are not tenable. In the light of the hold of cognition thesis of literacy and its sway over policy makers, the doubt arose in mind about literacy being over-rated.

Scribner and Cole’s finding (that the distinction between illiteracy and literacy may not

be appropriate under conditions when reading and writing of a text is not the sole source of information and knowledge) is tenable because today people receive information and knowledge from innumerable sources, including those that do not require the ability to read and write. In view of the sophistication of “oral” culture in India (also see Finnegan 1999), it is not surprising to find the entire corpus of Vedic literature surviving for centuries without being written up by its creators. Mahatma Gandhi once said, “Illiteracy is a curse in our country.” At the same time he went on to proclaim, “Literacy in itself is no education.” For Gandhi, “Literacy is not the end of education or even the beginning.” He elaborated that “Literacy must be one of the many means for intellectual development, but we have had in the past the intellectual giants who were illiterate.” Gandhi espoused a well-integrated concept of cultural literacy.

It is important that we do not ignore the findings of new researches while re-formulating our plans for literacy on the ground that these are simply academic discussions and have nothing to do with actual practical work of achieving the goal of universal literacy. In fact so called academic discussions of assumptions underlying literacy programs help us to escape the route of unproductive activities and gain control and knowledge of what we plan to do. We need to always justify our plans, their objectives and outcome before organizing literacy programs because if we plan that adult learners become aware and more critical as a result of adult literacy programs, we need to apply the same logic to ourselves and our plans. We need to be aware and critical of what we plan in the name of literacy drives. Challenging an approach does imply a quest for an alternative, new perspective that may arise out of debates in the literacy field. For example, you may like to have a critical look at the ten-year plan of collaborative action on the part of UNESCO that espouses literacy initiative for empowerment (LIFE). It is a global strategic mechanism for realizing the goal of universal literacy. It is committed to partnerships at regional and national levels. This document presents a dynamic concept of literacy acknowledging literacy as a tool for enhancing all aspects of life. It argues that literacy is one of the human rights and literacy is a first step to most other forms of learning. You may in turn point out that adult learn from many sources which do not include the kind of literacy that is insisted upon in most adult literacy learning centers. It is true that many adults learn from each other and much of the learning comes from such media as radio, television and films. So you may like to promote literacy as a second to developmental activities. This you would be able to do only if you engage in critical reflection about the whole issue of adult literacy learning.

An international perspective on adult literacy and post-literacy is indeed a guide for developing one’s own ideas on how to go about your professional work as an adult educator. Reading through UNESCO documents gives a feeling of satisfaction that the international organization has elaborate plans of large-scale collaboration to bring about universal literacy by 2015. However, in the light of utter hopelessness of the situation on ground,

UNESCO documents appear to be full of false hopes. Adult educators have begun to raise basic questions and articulate their views in the context of literacy that can pull people out of poverty. This critical thinking helps also to discover why adult literacy programs are ineffective and why a person like Sir John Daniel, President, Commonwealth of Learning, has quite negative words to say about adult educators (see Box 1.2).

Box 1.2 Going Beyond the Current Status of Adult Literacy Learning

You are an adult educator. It is assumed that as an adult educator you are already aware of the national scenario on literacy in India. For example, you are of course familiar with the facts that starting from Mahatma Gandhi's basic education in 1937 (when he voiced for a coordinated teaching-learning process of hand, body and soul and learning by doing) and the Kothari Commission Report in 1966 to the Education for All (EFA) Declaration of Government of India in 2005 - all emphasized the importance of literacy. As you know Professor Amartya Sen, the 1998 Nobel laureate in Economics, recalled in his message at the celebrations for 2002 International Literacy Day, "There is an old Bengali saying that knowledge is a very special commodity: the more you give away, the more you have left. Imparting education not only enlightens the receiver, but also broadens the giver - the teachers, the parents, the friends."

Some questions arise in mind. Is Amartya Sen referring to adult educators? Do you have confidence in the role of adult education as it exists today? Or, is it necessary to go beyond its current status? With a co-learner, discuss the following quotation from the speech by John Daniel (2003). What does he mean by these statements?

"... adult educators have a reputation for being boring, sanctimonious, backward looking and paternalist. They have a propensity to miss the boat when new developments of importance in adult education appear on the scene. This is not a good reputation to have, especially if we want to influence governments and the wider society."

You may not agree with what John Daniel has to say about adult educators. In fact, I too do not agree with him. All the same let us try and make out what he meant when he spoke the above words about adult educators. Send your views to PALDIN e-journal on its website (to come up in near future). John Daniel has certainly spoken some unsavory words, meant to hurt the pride of adult educators. But do they ring a bell in our minds? Is there some truth lurking behind them? About twenty Delhi-based adult educators participated in a workshop, held in January 2006 at JNU. Well, some participants looked bored if not boring, while some were making a show of being keen, serious and committed. In their responses to questions about contemporary social reality, many of them were backward-looking and paternalistic. Adult educators have been described to me as a 'lazy lot' who would not be up to 'reflecting' and answering activity questions. So may be John Daniel was just being blunt and calling a spade

a spade. Or, he may be simply trying to shake us up and exhort us to take up the challenge of universal literacy. Whichever way it is, I suppose the test is right here. Let us find out during pilot testing how many learners of Unit 1 actually complete its interactive exercises and create their own meaning and understanding of literacy.

You can also compare John Daniel's statements with those of H. S. Bhola (2005: 67). He is well known among adult educators and he said,

Adult educators in India have to understand Globalization in general and how it has influenced Indian politics, economy and health services, education—and adult education—in particular. ... As activists, Indian adult educators must work to ensure that the position regarding its political economy India is indeed protected; and that the state is not allowed to withdraw from its functions that have traditionally become a part of the social contract between the state and its citizens. They must re-commit themselves to

adult education and lifelong education and press on the state to allocate enough resources to revive the objectives and operations of the National Literacy Mission and design and launch new programs and projects of adult education for poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

Do Bhola's words inspire you to carry

forward your professional pursuits with new ideas about adult literacy learning? Alternatively, would you like to form your own perspective on global, regional and national scenario on literacy? Let us proceed to initiate the process whereby you construct your own perspective. Why not try to make a beginning and complete Activity 1.1.

Activity 1.1

Reflect on your past and present experiences as an adult educator and in one page describe your ideas about an effective and successful adult educator for the twenty-first century India. It would be interesting for you to read descriptions, written by your fellow adult educators, enrolled in this course. While writing your one page you may like to include what you already know about the international scenario; the latest Dakar Framework of Action at Senegal calls upon countries to achieve a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults. UNESCO's Global Monitoring Report has recently brought out a document entitled 'Literacy for Life' (2006). It will be a good idea to have a look at this document as well, especially its chapter 1 on 'Literacy: The Core of Education for All'. This chapter gives a working definition of literacy. Here, literacy refers to 'a context-based continuum of reading, writing and numeric skills acquired and developed through the process of learning and application'. Further, you need to reconsider the model of literacy that we have so far followed in our country. In order to enlarge our familiarity with the global perspective, let us reflect on what the international agencies like UNESCO promote, where we stand currently in terms of achieving literacy, what kind of literacy it is, how we evaluate what literacy does to participants in literacy learning classes and if literacy does all that has been claimed by policy makers? Writing this one page will initiate your process of thinking about your contribution to literacy movement as a professional adult educator.

Of course, you already know that various stages of evolution in explaining and defining literacy as per the needs and demands of the period have taken place and are influenced by academic research, international policy agendas and national priorities from time to time. You also know that a commonly held viewpoint is that literacy means developing or acquisition of reading and writing skills and numeric skill is a complement to or component of literacy.

It is well known that in the international arena UNESCO started supporting the spread of adult education as part of a concerted effort to advance basic

education after the Second World War. The first global survey of adult literacy, covering over sixty countries, was published in 1957. By then the world leaders and policy makers realized that education and literacy could better enable individuals to participate in and benefit from a modernizing economy. The second-half of the twentieth century witnessed international policy community stressing on the role of literacy in economic growth and national development especially in newly independent countries. In 1978, the General Conference of UNESCO adopted a definition of functional literacy which

is still in use as ‘A person is functionally literate who can engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his (or her) group, community and also for enabling him (or her) to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his (or her) own and the community’s development.’

In 1958 at the General Conference of UNESCO the standard definition of literacy emerged which is: ‘A person is literate who can with understanding both read and write a short simple statement on his (or her) everyday life.’ The definition of literacy sometimes extends to basic arithmetic and other life skills. This definition became a yardstick for measuring literacy in national censuses.

As you are well aware, this understanding of literacy which emphasized on an exclusively skills-based view captured the attention of researcher during 1960s and 1970s. Further elaborated to use and apply skills in meaningful ways, the notion of functional literacy gained ground on the basis of linking literacy to productivity and overall socio-economic development. To use literacy in social and cultural context has also been a perspective among recent developments. Literacy has also been viewed by many educators as an active process of learning involving social awareness and critical reflection which in turn would promote social change. The Brazilian educator Paulo Freire advocated integrated notions of active learning within a particular socio-cultural set up, as he wrote: ‘Every reading of the word is preceded by a reading of the world’.

But, some of you may say that in order to cope with the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) age of

the twenty-first century we need to have something more than the basic skills for survival. Isn’t it so? Answer to this question will depend on how you wish to define literacy. Some of you may have come across the concept of ‘multiple literacy’ which is related to technological, health, information, media, visual, scientific and other contexts and more suited for life in the twenty-first century. Emphasis is placed not only on reading and writing, but also on skills and practices relevant to the changing demands of community life. With the emphasis on adult literacy skills in evolving labor markets and knowledge-based societies during the 1980s and 1990s, the Jomtien Conference at Thailand in 1990 for Education for All (EFA) placed literacy within the broader context of meeting the basic learning needs of every child, youth and adult. It stated that these needs comprise both essential learning tools (such as literacy, oral expression, numeric, and problem solving) and the basic learning content (such as knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes) required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning.’ This concept of basic learning needs in terms of learning tools and learning content is invariably subject to interpretation by implementing agencies. In this sense, no one definition of literacy can reflect all its aspects. Even the EFA Global Monitoring Report’s matter-of-fact definition of literacy does not lend itself to a universal and standard measurement of literacy. Also in normal process of learning one measures achievement by carrying out and completing a task while

in formal system of adult literacy learning there are formal tests to measure success. In a way we may speak of the need to enlarge the scope of externally planned and assisted adult literacy learning to include informal learning whereby literacy learning becomes a part of our social skills learning.

The above approach to learning alludes to the concept of lifelong learning that

has now become the buzz word in discourse on education. As a result many adult education departments in educational institutions of higher education have even converted themselves into departments of lifelong learning. So you have now 'lifelong learning discourse' (See Roger) in which adult literacy learning has to be contextualized in terms of adult learners' perception of themselves and their self-created goals.

Activity 1.2

With the above background information that many of you already possess, systematize your ideas on literacy and as Activity 1.2 write down your definition of literacy in one page and then you can compare your definition with some other examples of definitions of literacy in various books on literacy and also on the Internet.

Let us now in sub-section 1.2.1 look at the global scenario on literacy in the perspective that you may have already begun to form about the need for literacy

1.2.1 Need for Literacy

UNESCO holds that education is a human right, but 771 million adults are illiterate (UNESCO 2005) and approximately 100 million children (UNESCO 2004) are out of school today. Many of those who enroll in primary schools drop out before acquiring adequate literacy skills. Here literacy refers to basic skills in reading, writing and numeric to have access to information about health, environment, education and the world of work. Does it mean that 771 million adults have no knowledge and skills about health and environment? What happens to skills that people without so-called literacy possess to survive and earn a living despite many odds against them? Do they not learn from each other? Have they not preserved environment for

thousands of years? Asking these questions does not mean that those asking them are against literacy for all. What in fact is questioned here is the premise that illiterates have to somehow become literate in the sense of being able to read, write and count. Questioning this premise opens a window for us to understand the context for the need for literacy.

At present, 85 per cent of populations with insufficient literacy competencies live in thirty-five countries (see Annex 1 of LIFE 2006). Planners and policy makers consider that relevant policy measures, well-planned programs and sustained allocation of sufficient resources are needed to ensure that effective learning opportunities are provided to those without literacy competencies. They do not as such mention the actual use of new skills. It is recognized that women and girls are the largest group without access to education and they need focused attention, for their personal

development and for their role as mothers, and as citizens. But we do not find any mention of women and girls encumbered with the responsibilities of collecting firewood, water for sheer survival. Will reading, writing and numeric help them getting firewood and water with less exertion? Of course, we need to also give priority to other excluded and disadvantaged groups, such as ethnic minorities, rural populations, indigenous people, people living with HIV/AIDS and disabilities. Conventional literacy programs with their focus on reading, writing and numeric can help only a few while focus on effective developmental activities can address most of those mentioned above. In a way, if were to give the need for just literacy a back seat and concentrate on effective developmental activities, it would be easier to promote the cause of universal literacy.

Given the fact that literacy is a low priority on the development and the education agendas in many countries and consequently is a weak link in the global movement towards achieving Education for All (EFA), we may rather

consider a model of multiple adult literacies whereby participants engage primarily in different activities and learn reading, writing and numeric in the context of those activities. The following statements reflect a similar view.

"Literacy is not a pre-condition for the spread of some form of basic knowledge however much it would be facilitated by literacy." (UNICEF 1990: 53-54).

"Literacy is neither an entry requirement, nor necessary for the clientele to learn. ... the facilitation of adult and continuing learning can be provided without first teaching learners to read and write." (Bas 1991, cited in Lynch1997: 90)

"While literacy is a pre-requisite to 'schoolability', it is not crucial to either the ability or the need of non-literates to learn." (Grandstaff 1976: 300)

The following excerpts in Box 1.3 culled from the Internet provide an idea of the wide range of multiple literacies which have now come into being. Perhaps, in your answer to Activity 1.2 you have mentioned some more forms not included in the Box 1.3.

Box 1.3 Range of Multiple Literacies

*Until recently, most of us defined literacy as the ability to read and write. Today the definition has been enlarged to include the ability to locate, evaluate, use, and communicate using a wide range of resources including text, visual, audio, and video sources.

*Defining literacy has become increasingly complex in the information age where readers encounter many new and different types of content. Over the past few decades many "new literacies" have been identified. For instance, you can easily identify eight categories: Basic Literacy, Scientific Literacy, Economic Literacy, Technological Literacy, Visual Literacy, Information Literacy, Multicultural Literacy, and Global Awareness.

*Along with information and technology related literacies, many people have focused on other categories of literacy such as communication literacy, productivity literacy, content literacy, and critical literacy.

The knowledge and skills needed to perform prose tasks, (i.e., to search, comprehend, and use continuous texts) are called prose literacy. Examples include editorials, news stories, brochures, and instructional materials.

*The knowledge and skills needed to perform document tasks, (i.e., to search, comprehend, and use non-continuous texts in various formats) are called document literacy. Examples include job applications, payroll forms, transportation schedules, maps, tables, and drug or food labels.

*The knowledge and skills required to perform quantitative tasks, (i.e., to identify and perform computations, either alone or sequentially, using numbers embedded in printed materials) are called quantitative literacy. Examples include balancing a cheque book, figuring out a tip, completing an order form or determining the amount of interest on a loan from an advertisement.

*According to the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), information literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to “recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information.”

*ACRL, in its statement on Information Literacy and Competency Standards for Higher Education states:

Information literacy also is increasingly important in the contemporary environment of rapid technological change and proliferating information resources. Because of the escalating complexity of this environment, individuals are faced with diverse, abundant information choices in their academic studies, in the workplace, and in their personal lives. Information is available through libraries, community resources, special interest organizations, media and the Internet, and increasingly, information comes to individuals in unfiltered formats, raising questions of its authenticity, validity, and reliability.

Information literacy forms the basis for lifelong learning. It is common to all disciplines, to all learning environments, and to all levels of education. It enables learners to master content and extend their investigations, become more self-directed, and assume greater control over their own learning. An information literate individual is able to

- ❖ determine the extent of information needed
- ❖ access the needed information effectively and efficiently
- ❖ evaluate information and its sources critically
- ❖ incorporate selected information into one's knowledge base
- ❖ use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- ❖ understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information
- ❖ access and use information ethically and legally.

In view of the idea of multiple literacies, let us have a critical look at Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) which is a global strategic framework for the implementation of the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD 2003-2012). It is supported and led by UNESCO. As an integral component of EFA, UNLD provides both a platform and an impetus for achieving all six goals of the Dakar Framework for Action, promoting literacy under the banner ‘Literacy as Freedom’. The UNLD reaffirms ‘that literacy for all is at the heart of basic

education for all and that creating literate environments and societies is essential for achieving the goals of eradicating poverty, reducing child mortality, curbing population growth, achieving gender equality and ensuring sustainable development, peace and democracy’ (United Nations 2002). Evidently, LIFE holds literacy as a first step that would facilitate other processes like reduction in poverty, child mortality and population growth. We have on the other hand made a case for giving a backseat to literacy and

primacy to developmental activities.

1.2.2 Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE)

Let us recognize the fact that despite the importance of literacy for the achievement of global development objectives, many countries do not have enough resources and capacity to address the challenge. LIFE will be supported over ten years to implement some of the recommendations highlighted in the UNLD framework.

LIFE specifically aims to contribute to the empowerment of women, out-of-school girls and their families, especially in rural areas, and of those with insufficient or no literacy skills - often the poorest and most marginalized members of society. Their empowerment in turn can have a positive impact on the quality of the lives of their families, poverty reduction, socio-economic development, and school enrolment of their children. Taking into account the principles put forward by the Delors Commission, LIFE will promote literacy throughout life so that women and men can engage in 'learning to be', 'learning to live together', 'learning to do' and 'learning to know' (UNESCO 1996). LIFE will be planned and operationalized alongside other EFA initiatives, especially the Teacher Training Initiative in Sub-Saharan Africa and EDUCAIDS, the Global Initiative on HIV/AIDS and Education.

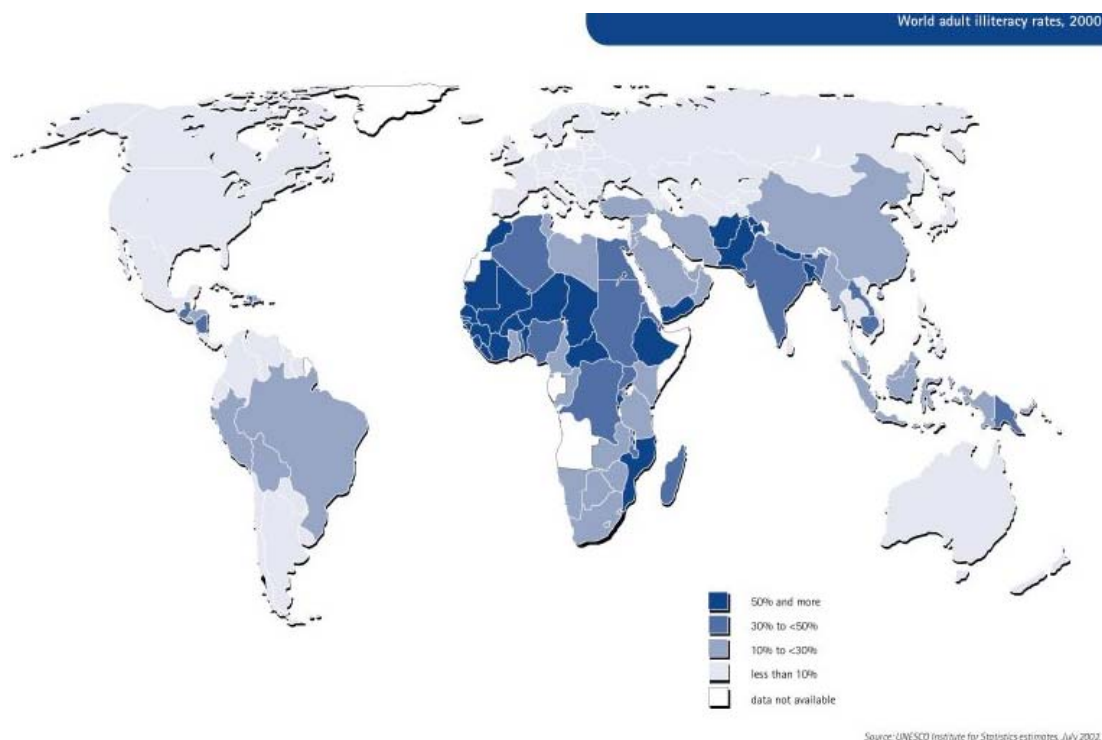
'Learning to be', 'learning to do' and 'learning to know' are all different paths that adults perform on the basis of their social skills learnt informally. Their social skills may or may not include the basic skills of literacy. In many countries even those who had gone through formal schooling have been reported to have regressed into the state of being almost

illiterate. In this sense, for most adults, as Roger (Informal Learning in Lifelong Learning, page 8) says, 'it is important to give recognition and value to the informal learning about the subject matter, both the perceptions of the subject which help to create the learner's identity and strategies which have been built up within this field'. This is why Overwien (2005) and Collin et al (1989) have argued that non-formal learning through apprenticeship is more appropriate than formal schooling so that one acquires learning that is dynamic rather than 'robotic acquisition and automatization of core skills' (Luke 2005: xi).

The map given below shows the world adult literacy rates in 2000. You can see at a glance your country's adult literacy status. Obviously, we begin to feel a little uncomfortable when we look in global terms at the current status of adult literacy in India.

This situation brings home the important concern of training adult educators so that they can improve the current growth of literacy in our country. In order to operationalize plans for creating a literate society, the initiative of training adult educators is as important in India as it is in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is so because new developments of importance in adult education have appeared and it is time to make sure that we do not miss them. Adult educators cannot afford to project the image of 'being boring, sanctimonious, backward looking and paternalist' (Daniel 2003) and not notice new developments occurring in their field of activities.

Literacy meets a wide spectrum of individual needs and development goals. Your definition of literacy (hopefully



already worked out by you in Activity 1.2) most likely reflects a much broader understanding of literacy where literacy stands for several types of skills. The concept of ‘multiple literacies’ can be used if you think it fits your description of literacy. Remember, we have already discussed these forms in Box 1.2.

The term ‘literacy’ is often used as a metaphor, as we say computer literacy or environmental literacy or legal literacy or gender literacy etc. Here, literacy is used more in the sense of skill. Is literacy something different for adult educators? Does it mean only the ability to read and write texts? Is literacy the same as ‘awareness’? Is it not that one can be aware but not literate or one can be literate and not aware? To answer these questions we need to consider and be clear about the discourse on various approaches to literacy. For this purpose you may put your thinking antennae up and look into the current and previous practices of operationalizing the concept of literacy. For achieving tangible results, you would look into

objectives of adult literacy learning programs and the measures for deciding on their success.

The following examples show that literacy is important but not a pre-requisite. It can take place as and when required.

- ❖ In Nirantar a group of women have learnt about maintaining water pumps and in the process they learnt literacy skills as well.
- ❖ In Bangladesh, a group of men organized and operated a tempo service and as they made profits, they learnt also how to read and write so they could sustain their operations.
- ❖ In Nepal, a group of women wanted to learn to sew but they could not read the sewing manual so they were told to first learn to read and write. They lost their interest in sewing and their efforts to literacy did not also proceed well.
- ❖ Lalita Ramdas found that literacy classes could continue only as long as the activity helped to find work.

If no remuneration was found, adult educators were told to go away and teach children only. As a result

Ramdas had to re-think her approach to literacy.

Activity 1.3

Do the above examples lead you to articulate your approach to literacy? Work out implications of the above examples in terms of non-literate people’s ability to engage in their own development. Write in the next page a note on ‘Literacy can come second’ and include in your note concepts like ‘contextualized literacy’, ‘kinds of literacies’ and ‘mixed learning groups’. Compare your note with that of fellow learners.

Let us now turn to the regional scenario on literacy.

1.3 Regional Scenario

It is well known that the overall world adult literacy rates do not reflect regional variations and we need to separately discuss the regional scenario on literacy.

1.3.1 Differences in Regional Literacy Rates

The EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002 estimates that the overall world adult literacy rate in 2000 was 79.7% - women 74.2% and men 85.2%. Past and projected improvements in world literacy rates are shown below in Figure 1.1:

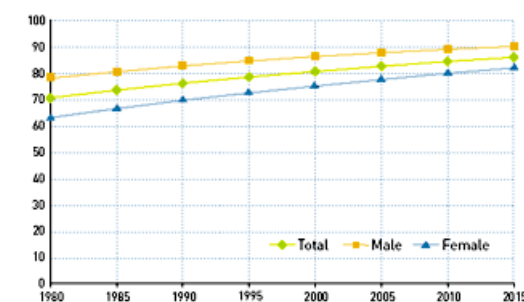


Figure 1.1 Adult Literacy Rates Worldwide (1980-2015)

As indicated above, the figures mask large regional differences, with the lowest overall rate in South and West Asia (55.3%), and the highest in Central Asia (99.6%). Sub-Saharan Africa showed the biggest increase over two

decades. Figure 1.2 projects trends to 2015 on the basis of past experience:

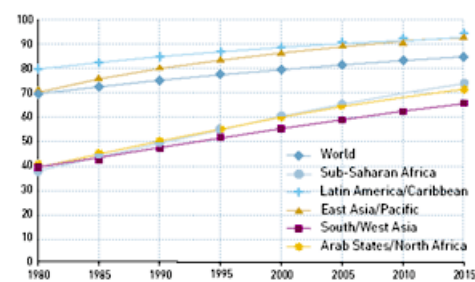


Figure 1.2 Adult Literacy Rates by Region (1980-2015)

1.3.2 Narrowing of Gender Gap in Literacy Rates

It is noteworthy that the gender gap in literacy has narrowed in all regions, and it is expected that the trend will continue to 2015 as shown below in Figure 1.3:

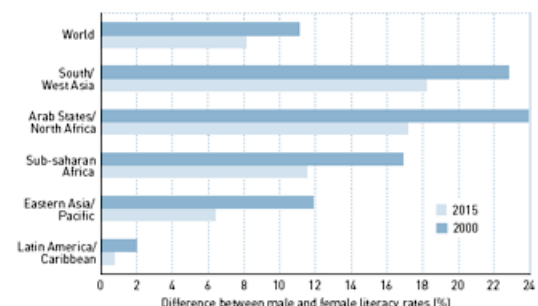


Figure 1.3 Gender Gap in Literacy Rates, by Region (2000 and 2015)

These trends and projections give us reason for hope and optimism regarding progress in literacy. Though gender differences in literacy rates are more marked among adults, there are now almost no gender difference in literacy rates of 15-24 year olds in many regions of the world. However, the absolute numbers of illiterates remain obstinately high. Of an estimated figure of 875 million illiterate adults in the world in the year 2000 nearly two-thirds were women. It has been projected that the

fastest increases in literacy rates among adult women will take place in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab Sta

1.3.3 Numbers of Illiterates High in Some Regions

Literacy efforts have not kept pace with population growth - in South and West Asia and in Sub-Saharan Africa numbers of illiterates have increased since 1990. Table 1.1 compares numbers of male and female illiterates by region for 1990 and 2000.

Table 1.1 Number of Adult Literates - 000's

	1990			2000		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
World	879130	324914	554216	861966	3133231	548643
Developed countries/countries in transition	21970	6660	15311	14895	4862	10033
Developing countries	857159	318254	538905	847071	308461	538610
Arab States	62400	23118	39282	67473	24310	43162
Central and Eastern Europe	16519	3833	12686	12518	2857	9661
Central Asia	480	98	383	222	73	149
East Asia and the Pacific	232904	71924	160979	186404	53412	132992
Latin America and the Caribbean	41932	18243	23689	39254	17436	21819
North America and Western Europe	11363	4024	7339	7873	2935	4938
South and West Asia	382151	151980	230171	412242	159705	252538
Sub-Saharan Africa	131380	51693	79687	135980	52595	83385

For the sake of gaining a comparative perspective, the statistics quoted above from various sources speak for

themselves. We need to form a comparative perspective for locating our country's status in the regional scenario.

This exercise is useful for looking beyond our noses and spotting where and what is happening and if there is something for us to learn from others' experiences. In this context we may also glance at figures on youth literacy in our neighboring countries (see the Table

1.2). Adult literacy rate in this table is for the age group 15 years and above. Youth literacy rate is for the age group 15-24 years. The youth literacy rate for India relates to 2001. The table has been taken from UNESCO in the National Literacy Mission Website.

Table 1.2 Youth Literacy Rate for India

Country	Adult Literacy Rate	Youth Literacy Rate
China	90.9	98.9
India	61.3	73.3
Nepal	44.0	62.7
Pakistan	41.5	53.9
Sri Lanka	92.1	97.0
Bangladesh	41.1	49.7

1.4 National Scenario

We will now turn to the national scenario. Your task here is basically to discover the links between global, regional and national scenarios on literacy and then generate a profile of the local scenario on practical dimension of adult literacy learning in India. Regarding the substantive aspects of national scenario on literacy you will be reading in detail in other units of this course of PALDIN.

Practicing literacy or its practical aspects have to be understood in terms of what we consider to be the ways of learning or in other words theories of learning. With respect to the practice of adult learning and practical activities for spreading literacy, we need to have a clear understanding of theories of learning, which are subject to varying points of view, including 'collaborative learning', 'distributed learning' and 'communities of practice'. Some of these ways of looking at learning do not focus on individual learner, rather they

emphasize group learning and social practices around which communities build their knowledge structures. Making a paradigmatic shift from cognitive approach to understanding literacy practices in their socio-cultural contexts, we need to go into what is known as New Literacy Studies (see Barton and Hamilton 1999, Collins 1995, Gee 1999, Heath 1993, Street 1993) and think about the everyday meanings and uses of literacy in their cultural contexts. We can also critically assess the claims of cognitive approaches to literacy and explore the potential of findings made available in New Literacy Studies. You may like to discuss Street's (1984) distinction between an 'autonomous' model and an 'ideological' model of literacy.

Autonomous model of literacy deals with practices that impose western conceptions of literacy on other cultures (see Street 2001).

The autonomous model of literacy

assumes that literacy in itself, autonomously, will influence other social and cognitive practices. This model of literacy hides its cultural and ideological assumptions and presents them as though they are neutral and objective. Research in the social practice approach has challenged this view and shows that in practice dominant approaches relying on autonomous model impose western notions of literacy on other cultures. Instead of imposing an alien conception of literacy on your society, you may like to look at an alternative model for planning literacy programs in your area.

You may like to first give a critique of the cultural and ideological assumptions of autonomous model of literacy and then look at literacy as a social practice that is embedded in socially constructed principles of knowledge.

The ideological model of literacy provides a more culturally sensitive perspective of literacy practices as these practices differ from one culture to another and from one context to another and therefore each particular version of literacy would be always ideologically rooted in a particular worldview. The ideological model of literacy has premises different from autonomous model and posits that literacy is a social practice and not just a technical and neutral skill and that it is basically rooted in socially constructed ways of how one knows something.

Clearly, literacy in this sense is always contested with regard to its meanings and practices. Working in the field of literacy is always a social act that influences the nature of the literacy being learnt and the learners already hold some ideas about literacy and about their position in relations of power.

In the light of above discussion, it is not

tenable to hold the view that 'literacy' can be 'given' neutrally and its social impact can be measured afterwards.

Traditional literacy programs, based on autonomous model of literacy, have largely failed because they did not use appropriate intellectual tool to understand the diversity of literacy practices around the world and did not design literacy programs to suit the particular needs of adult learners. You can argue that organizing literacy program is to be a part of a power relationship and how adult learners take hold of such a programme depends on socio-cultural practices and not just on pedagogic and cognitive factors.

Adult educators need to address in a literacy programme all the questions about power relation among the participants, about the resources and their sources, about choices available to learners for learning one literacy rather than another type of literacy, about how learners challenge the dominant points of view of literacy.

It is worth asking about what literacy means to the concerned adults and which social contexts the use to drive meanings of literacy. Often, one has come across the fact that even non-literate persons engage in literacy activities and therefore the dividing line between literate/ non-literate is not all that obvious (see Doronilla 1996).

The new concepts of 'literacy events' and 'literacy practices' have been commonly used in New Literacy Studies. Heath (1982: 50) has explained the concept of 'literacy event' as 'any occasion in which a piece of writing is integral to the nature of the participants' interactions and their interpretive processes'. Street (1984: 1) has elaborated the term 'literacy

practices’ as a means of focusing upon ‘the social practices and conceptions of reading and writing’ and also that he term includes the social models of literacy that participants bring to bear upon those events and that give meaning to them.

The questions posed about literacy practices make one feel like going further into the complex nature of debates around literacy issues. Bringing enlightened perspectives to what an adult educator can do for achieving universal literacy is possible by questioning one’s own understanding of the nature and meaning of literacy.

1.4.1 Literacy Practices in India

If we put the official view of managing and funding literacy programs vis-à-vis the perspective of our discussion on different approaches to literacy, we need to reflect on the nature of literacy programs and their objectives. This reflection enables us to make our own choices on literacy practices initiatives in adult learning activities. We need to think about implications of adopting the approach that treats literacy as the ability to read and write. Will it lead to adult literacy programs with text books and adults being taught to read and write in ways similar to those in which children are taught in schools? Is it possible to take another approach in which there is no ‘task conscious-learning’, instead we have ‘learning-conscious learning’? What is the implication of this approach? Will it start from what adults know and what they can add to learning sessions?

According to Street (2005), this approach would involve use of ‘real literacy materials’ that come from everyday social life. Does it mean that

we need not do anything beforehand? As Street says we need to carry out pre-programme research on what adults already know and also find out what the learners would like the programme to provide. This is quite a lot for adult educators to prepare before they take up any of the provisions made available by the government in the field of adult learning. Such advance preparation will initiate the process of building your own perceptions about the national scenario on literacy.

Being a signatory to World Declaration, India’s commitment for EFA, and particularly for primary education and adult literacy became evident from Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE), the national policy making body’s (a) endorsement of EFA goals, as underlined in India’s National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 and its Programme of Action (as revised in 1992); and (b) approval for accepting external funding for primary and elementary education programs (MHRD-NIEPA, 2000). Kerala with the highest literacy rate (90.86 per cent) and Bihar the lowest (47.00 per cent) represent two extremes of the Indian scenario on literacy. Social indicator like life expectancy at birth (2001-2006) is 71.61 for males and 75 for females in Kerala while in Bihar, it is 65.66 for males and 64.79 for females. Similarly another social indicator, infant mortality per 1,000 live births is only 10 in Kerala against 61 in Bihar. Also birth rate (per 1,000) is 16.9 in Kerala against 30.9 in Bihar and death rate (per 1,000) is 6.4 in Kerala against 7.9 in Bihar. All these indicators highlight the social differences in the two states and the differences show that literacy is the key to improving the quality of life (see Sen 2005:). The literacy rates in different

states for 1981 and 2001 reflect considerable variance throughout the country. Leaving aside a few states at the top and bottom, most of the states are either a little above or below the national average.

With this national scenario, adult educators in India would certainly wish to re-think the current practices in the field of adult literacy in order to achieve better results. Should we continue to borrow the formal learning methods of school? If we were to focus on informal learning methods, surely we would then need to alter our use of curricula and text book and also the way of formative and/ or summative assessment of literacy programs. For making a shift from formal learning methods to informal learning methods, or combining the formal and informal methods, we need to examine our assumptions about how one knows. Secondly, we would need to consider the cognitive consequences of learning literacy and talk about cognitive approaches to literacy.

As has been pointed out by Street (2006) both meaning of literacy and its mode of operation for research and action are highly contested issues. In order to run an adult literacy programme for attaining long-term success, we need to probe into these contested domains. Adult educators need to seek and become aware of alternative approaches to literacy work. It is only then it would become possible for them to tell their adult learners to acquire literacy for becoming aware, more critical and in control of their own development. We may also consider what Levi-Strauss (1961: 291-292) argued about literacy that it is not the royal route to liberation and it is many times a means of enslavement. This may be a polemical view but coming from a great thinker

of our times it needs to be seriously considered by adult educators of the twenty-first century.

1.4.2 Long-term Objectives and Commitments for Literacy

In the light of EFA goals and targets set up in Dakar Framework for Action and clearly aligned to social and gender equity thrusts, NLM felt the necessity to effect a certain re-focusing of its strategies pursued since 1999. The EFA-NPA's new "thrust areas" in literacy include (MHRD 2003: 85):

- ❖ Achievement of 75 per cent literacy level by 2007.
- ❖ A multi-pronged strategy to address regional, social and gender disparities in literacy.
- ❖ Refocusing literacy, post-literacy and CE programmes to increase and strengthen women's participation, so as to bridge gender gap in literacy.
- ❖ Encouraging PL and CE districts to pay special attention on mobilization and organization of women into neo-literate and self-help groups (SHGs).
- ❖ Special attention to socially disadvantaged groups like SCs/STs and women.
- ❖ 45 districts with <30% female literacy rate selected for a multi-pronged strategy to raise female literacy.
- ❖ Special stress with ZSS to specifically highlight strategies to take up literacy and skill up gradation programmes for SCs/STs and women in particular.

Achievement of 75 per cent literacy seemed a doable pursuit in 2003 but in December 2006, the month of writing this Unit, does it appear to be an achievable goal?

Let us remind you that it is important to be aware of what is real and what is

rhetorical in the field of literacy. Only then one is able to realistically plan for achieving some tangible results. Do you really believe some of the following claims made by various agencies on behalf of literacy drives?

- ❖ Literacy changes the way human beings think.
- ❖ Literacy leads to human modernisation and to the changing attitude about development.
- ❖ Literacy fosters democratic ideals and increases national productivity.
- ❖ Literacy will be eradicated by fifty-per cent by the year 2015.
- ❖ It is possible to initiate an innovative literacy programme in a modest way and sustain it through local efforts.

1.4.3 Issues of Language and Gender

If we are to be more culturally sensitive and in line with specific literacy practices required for specific cognitive skills being targeted, we need to reflect on issues of both language and gender. Explicit language policy guides the use of mother tongue in adult learning and this remains a topic of debate because access to the economic market place may require learning to take place in a language that is not one's mother tongue.

Often general views on literacy rates hide large inequalities with higher illiteracy rates among girls and women because literacy varies dramatically by gender, ethnicity and urban-rural living. However, it is worth reflecting on the fact that whether mere increase in number of women and girls can make any noticeable impact on achieving the ideal of a self-directed adult learner who is able to define her learning needs and to face the challenges of new ways of doing things with fast shifting epistemologies of workplaces. Do we not need to plan for some kind of revolution

in our cultural and political settings?

The language of teaching-learning (or medium of instruction-) in adult literacy programs has, as a conscious policy, been the mother tongue from the beginning. After TLC became the dominant approach and strategy, NLM adopted the approach of leaving the issue of language of instruction, to ZSS – the reason being the language preference of learners, their numbers and feasibility of literacy primers development and transaction as the main considerations. Within a State there are many languages and dialects with or without a written script, spoken by sizeable number of people. There are cases of TLCs that used primers in 6-7 languages, as per their demographic composition and language preference of the learners. In some cases, learners not knowing regional language --- language of administration may like to become literate in that language. There are also districts with large tribal population, speaking a dialect that may or may not have a written script. In such cases, learners are initiated into literacy by using the first primer in the local dialect and switching over to regional language in second and their primers used in TLC. The reading materials in PL and CE stages are generally in regional languages.

The gender focus (to reduce gender gaps in access/provision, participation, achievement, etc., that have a more quantitative dimension) and addressing the gender bias i.e., age-old socio-economic and culturally embedded gender inequities, have been the two distinct, but inter-related dimensions of India's literacy movement since early 1990s. Gender focus was obviously warranted by their two-thirds share in illiteracy.

The gender focus of TLCs (viz., paying greater attention in proportion to their number), however, did not come by a pre-design. It emerged from actual experience seen in the massive response of women who perceived the social sanction for their participation as an opportunity to realize their aspirations for literacy, empowerment and improvement. But the hurdles of gender inequities were pervasive, in the socio-

cultural outlook, in the content of literacy primers about the role of women in society, in development, position within family, solidarity and collective assertion for their equality, and so on. The literacy movement was the first to address these issues of gender in early 1990s which lent an effective model for the gender focused primary education programs later.

1.5 Conclusion

You have in this unit demonstrated your skill of working out an explanation of the concept of literacy by defining it from the input given in study sections of this unit. You had an opportunity of also checking if your effort was along the right lines and that is how you could also improve your effort in case you felt that your definition missed out on any relevant aspect of literacy.

Secondly, you discussed various forms of literacy. Prevalence of ever-widening types of literacy makes each one of us illiterate in one sense or other and we all try to learn new skills, making literacy a lifelong endeavor.

Thirdly, you tried to work out the importance of literacy in various ways.

1.6 Apply What You Have Learnt

We now come to the last section of this unit. It has to do with the application of one's learning to one's profession as well as everyday life. This effort helps the learner to internalize one's knowledge and skills.

At this point you need to complete the important activity of applying what you have learnt in unit 1.

You imagine that under UNLD schemes, an international organization has invited you as an adult educator to participate in planning literacy operations for women of your area. As a preparatory exercise for this event you need to carry out the following type of home work.

- ❖ State clearly your approach to adult literacy.
- ❖ Profile of the community you intend to work with, focusing especially on women members of the community
- ❖ Kinds of constraints you as an adult educator are likely face when you implement your plans for women's literacy in the community
- ❖ Main components of literacy-related activities in your plans and the approach you would take to understand he meaning an practice of literacy
- ❖ Nature of resources you would look for implementing your plans

- ❖ How do you plan to acquire those resources?
- ❖ At what stage do you want to include women in your plans of literacy for them?
- ❖ Can women contribute in any way in planning and implementing the plans for their literacy?
- ❖ How long would plan to continue with this activity?
- ❖ What is the outcome that you expect out of your efforts?

- ❖ Who will be the best judge of the quality of your work in this matter?

Answer the above in a systematic manner and compare your answers with those of co-learners. This exercise will be largely based on our own local field situation and each learner will have unique sets of statements to make. This is why it will be quite interesting and useful to compare your responses with those of other learners. This will give you an opportunity of learning from each other.



2

POLICY ON ADULT AND LIFELONG LEARNING: INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

ILA PATEL

Structure



- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 The International Perspective
 - 2.2.1 Fundamental Education (1950s-1960s)
 - 2.2.2 Functional Literacy (1960s-1970s)
 - 2.2.3 Paulo Freire's Radical Approach to Literacy (1970s)
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 - 2.2.5 Growing Emphasis on Adult Literacy and Learning (2000-present)
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 - 2.3.4 The Campaign Approach to Literacy
 - 2.3.5 From Literacy to Post-Literacy and Continuing Education
 - 2.3.6 Marginality of Adult Education in Legislation
 - 2.3.7 Conclusion
- 2.4 Apply What You Have Learnt

Learning Objectives



After going through Unit 2, it is expected that you will be able to

- ❖ Discuss the shift in international policy perspective from fundamental education to adult literacy and learning
- ❖ Describe the gradual transformation in national policy discourse from marginal status of adult education in national planning to integration of literacy, functionality and social awareness in adult learning programmes
- ❖ Articulate your own views on the current status of policy perspective on adult education in India.

2.1 Introduction

After obtaining in Unit 1 a global, regional and national overview of literacy, it is now time to talk about

the national and international perspectives about policy on adult and lifelong learning (for a simple

explanation of the terms ‘lifelong learning’ see section 3.2 of Unit 3). As will become clearer, much of the action on adult learning has always been based on policy directives and for this reason, it is necessary to become familiar about issues entailing different policies in the

international and national contexts. Unit 2 has two parts. Its first part deals with the international policy discourse while the second part provides a historical overview of the national perspective on adult education.

2.2 The International Perspective

Since the 1950s, there has been significant shift in the international policy discourse on adult education. It has been influenced by the changing perspectives put forth by the United Nations Education, Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Discussion in this section gives an overview of international perspective on literacy and lifelong learning (UNESCO 2005:153-55).

2.2.1 Fundamental Education (1950s-1960s)

In the post-Second World War period, UNESCO recognized the acquisition of literacy as fundamental aspects of individual development and human rights and supported literacy as part of its efforts to promote basic education. It advocated *fundamental education* to eradicate illiteracy. The focus of fundamental education was primarily on imparting the basic literacy skills of reading and writing. Subsequently, interest in the worldwide campaign for universal literacy weakened due to the Cold War. Although the international community recognized the need to eradicate illiteracy and finding ways to promote acquisition of a basic set of autonomous literacy skills, only isolated national literacy campaigns were undertaken in developing countries.

2.2.2 Functional Literacy (1960s-1970s)

In the 1960s and 1970s, international

organizations advocated human capital models of education that perceived education as one of the key inputs for economic development. Within this perspective, literacy was viewed as a necessary condition for economic growth and national development. UNESCO proposed the concept of functional literacy and emphasized interrelationships between literacy and economic development. The Experimental World Literacy Program (EWLP) introduced in 1966 and implemented with financial and technical assistance of United Nations Development Organization (UNDP) and other international agencies in eleven countries till 1973 to enhance efficiency and productivity of individual farmers. In 1978, UNESCO adopted a broader definition of functional literacy, which is still used today:

A person is functionally literate who can engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his (or her) group and community and also for enabling him (or her) to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his (or her) own and the community’s development.

Subsequently, the broader concept of functional literacy has incorporated divergent human concerns and a range of people’s functions encompassing the whole life. Lifelong education is implicit in the expanded concept of functional literacy

2.2.3 Paulo Freire's Radical Approach to Literacy (1970s)

In the 1970s, UNESCO's conceptualisation of literacy and other international agencies was also influenced by Paulo Friere's radical approach to literacy. In this approach, acquisition of literacy skills of reading, writing and arithmetic were not seen as an end in itself, but as a means to create the conditions for acquisition of critical consciousness about one's social reality and take necessary action to challenge and change it. Freire's influence on UNESCO's conception of literacy was reflected in the Persepolis Declaration (1975) that acknowledged that literacy must go beyond the process of acquisition of basic literacy skills and underscored transformative potential of literacy. In practice, however, pseudo-Freirian approach was adopted in many literacy programs in developing countries for imparting development-oriented literacy skills and knowledge, while maintaining the status quo.

2.2.4 Broadening the Definitions of Literacy (1980s-1990s)

During 1980s to early 1990s, international investment and interest in promoting adult literacy programs declined substantially. With growing pressures of the World Bank's economic reforms on the education sector, investment in primary education was favored at the cost of adult education. UNICEF and UNESCO voiced concerns against such trend throughout the 1980s and brought the focus on literacy and education for all. Over the 1980s and 1990s, the definitions of literacy were broadened in response to the growing demands created by new technologies and other information media in the developed countries for increased levels

of knowledge, skills and understandings. The concept of literacy was broadened to encompass not merely the ability to read, write and count, but also a broad set of information processing competencies and multiplicity of skills. The International Literacy Year (1990) and the World Declaration on Education for All, adopted in Jomtien, Thailand placed the challenge of literacy within the broader context of meeting the basic learning needs of all children, youth and adults. Furthermore, the Hamburg Declaration (1997) also endorsed literacy as essential for lifelong learning and as a catalyst for active community engagement.

2.2.5 Renewed Emphasis on Adult Literacy and Learning

Involvement of the international community in literacy since 2000 has revolved around two goals articulated in the Dakar Framework of Action:

“ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programs, and achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults”.

Following the World Education Forum in Dakar (2000), there has been renewed interest among international planners in improving literacy levels. Many international organizations (for example, ILO, World Bank, OECD, UNICEF, UNESCO, and UNDP) have acknowledged the challenge that illiteracy poses for development. While renewed interest and commitment to literacy has emerged, there are marked differences in understanding about literacy across organizations. The United Nations Literacy decade (2003-2012),

launched in 2002, perceives literacy as essential life skills for every child, youth and adult to participate in the societies and economies of the twenty-first century and as an essential step in basic education (UNESCO 2003). In the recent years, the World Bank advocates Adult and Nonformal Education (ANFE) that focuses on not merely literacy but all the possible learning needs of children and adults (Easton et. Al. 2003)

Despite renewed interest in adult literacy and learning, it is important to underscore that although education is one of the key goals in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of 2000 dedicated to reducing poverty, within which education is a key goal, adult literacy and education however, is not explicitly included in the MDGs. Focus

on adult education is implicit in the Goal 3 related to promoting gender equality and empowering women.

In summary, international conception of literacy has shifted from defining literacy as technical and discrete skills to functional human resource skills for economic growth to human capabilities for social-cultural and political change. Over the years, broader understandings of literacy have emerged, encompassing 'conscientization', multiple literacies, literacy practices and lifelong learning. There is now growing recognition about the social context in which literacy is acquired, developed and sustained. Literacy is not merely perceived as a skill but as socially and culturally determined practices

2.3 The National Policy Perspective: Historical Overview

In India, the educational policy provides a broad framework for education planning, and gives direction for overall educational development in the country. Adult education in India is planned within the broader context of the general educational policy (Patel 2000). The central government plays a leading role in policy formulation and planning to direct overall educational development in the country, while individual states are responsible for the expansion and growth of education in their respective areas on the basis of specific directions and guidelines provided by the central government. This section highlights divergent approaches to adult education since the independence.

2.3.1 Marginality of Adult Education in Development Planning (1947-77)

Despite massive illiteracy and low level

of education in the workforce, the central government after the independence in 1947 neither took any Constitutional responsibility for educating the adult illiterate population nor emphasised adult education within the general educational policy. The major thrust of the general educational policy in the first three decades of planned development was on the expansion of the pyramidal system of formal education. It was implicitly assumed that expansion of the general educational system, particularly elementary education, would solve the problem of illiteracy in the adult population. Hence, adult education was relegated to unimportant position, both in terms of the educational policy and finances.

During the first three decades of planned development (1947-77), adult education

programs with limited coverage and funds characterised the state's approach to educating the vast population of adult

illiterates. Each program followed a different strategy and approach to adult education (see Box 1).

Box 2.1: Major Programmes of Adult Education during 1947-77

Social Education Program: The First Five Year Plan (1951-56) rejected the term “adult education” as narrowly confined to literacy work and proposed social education as a comprehensive approach to educating adult illiterates. The major thrust of Social Education Program was to make illiterate citizens conscious of their rights and responsibilities for building a democratic nation, while incorporating the components of health, recreation, and economic life. Imparting basic literacy skills was not assigned priority in the social education program

Farmers Functional Literacy Program: In the early 1960s, the focus of adult education shifted from citizenship training to skill-training for development. The Farmers' Functional Literacy Project (FFLP), known as Kisan Saksharata Yojana, was launched as a centrally-sponsored scheme in the Fourth Plan (1969-74) in three districts as an experimental project under the Experimental World Literacy Project of UNESCO. The FFLP was one of the three components of the Farmers' Training and Functional Literacy Project (FTFLP), which aimed at upgrading human resources to improve agricultural productivity of the farmers. The focus of the FFLP was on upgrading the occupational skills of farmers and inculcating among them modern attitudes, values, and behaviours to attain self-sufficiency in food production. It advocated the concept of functional literacy and emphasised imparting basic literacy skills along with practical and technical agricultural knowledge.

Non-formal Education Program for Youth (15-25 years): The Fifth Plan (1974-79) advocated non-formal education for several categories of learners – unschooled children, youth, and adults at all levels of education. It also launched the Non-formal Education Program for young adults who had missed schooling to provide them the second chance for learning. The primary goal of the program was to provide them functionally relevant education in order to prepare them as producers as well as responsible citizens. The underlying assumption was that acquisition of appropriate skills and knowledge about the welfare-oriented development programs would increase their participation in this development and help improve their economic conditions. In practice, the program remained a traditional literacy program and its overall implementation was poor.

2.3.2 Towards the Nationwide Programme of Adult Education (1977-84) edit

It was with the shift in the direction of general educational policy in 1977 from higher levels of education to basic education, that eradication of illiteracy came to the forefront of development planning. A draft policy statement on adult education was issued for the first time by the government in 1979, which was operationalized in the form of a nationwide program of adult education, known as the National Adult Education

Program (NAEP). The NAEP aimed at covering an estimated 100 million illiterates in the age group of 15-35 over a period of six years (1978-84). The conceptual framework of NAEP integrated literacy, functionality and social awareness. Adult education projects were implemented nationwide under the NAEP by voluntary agencies, educational institutions (universities and colleges), local bodies (for example, panchayats and municipalities) and the central and state governments. Launching of the NAEP led to creation

of administrative and organisational structures for adult education at the national, state and district levels.

However, promise of the NAEP was not fulfilled. Though the NAEP was intended to be a mass program of adult education, it never assumed the mass character as envisaged in the policy statement. The coverage and intensity of projects under the NAEP remained rather limited. In practice, the NAEP remained a traditional centre based, honorarium based and hierarchical program of adult education, which was funded and controlled by the government. With the fall out of the Janata government in the late 1979, the NAEP continued with minor modifications as the Adult Education Program (AEP) without making a significant dent in eradicating illiteracy.

2.3.3 The Shifting Approach to Adult Education

The National Policy on Education (NPE), introduced in 1986 (Ministry of Human Resource Development 1986a and 1986b) and revised in 1992 (Ministry of Human Resource Development 1992a and 1992b), has been a major landmark in the history of adult literacy education as it articulated for the first time the national commitment to addressing the problem of eradication of adult illiteracy in a time bound manner with planned, concerted and coordinated efforts. The policy also provided impetus to development of a mass approach to eradication of literacy with mass mobilisation and support of divergent sections of society. The NPE (1986) contributed to widening the scope of adult education in order to provide flexible learning opportunities to out-of-school youth and adults. Specifically, it advocated the following:

- a) Expansion of non-formal, flexible and need-based vocational education programs for neo-literates, youth who have completed primary education, school drop-outs, and adults;
- b) Provision of non-formal vocational education and training for workers of the unorganised sector through the existing institutions and agencies. For example, community polytechnics, *shramik vidyapeeths* (polyvalent adult education centre), rural institutes, Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and Training for Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM) of the District Rural Development Agency.
- c) Promotion of continuing education as an indispensable tool not only for human resource development, but also for the creation of a learning society. Besides advocating distance and open learning for higher levels of formal education, the policy recommended continuing education for neo-literates and school drop-outs through *Jana Shikshan Nilayams* and proposed need-based non-formal vocational education programs and training for divergent groups (workers, youth, farmers, etc) to upgrade their knowledge and skills to improve their productivity and their skills.

2.3.4 The Campaign Approach to Literacy

It was in pursuance of the mandate of the NPE (1986) that the National Literacy Mission (NLM) was launched in 1988 as a societal and technological mission with the objective of imparting functional literacy to 80 million adult illiterates in the age group 15-25 years by 1995 (Ministry of Human Resource Development 1988). The NLM assigned

National Literacy Mission - India

Literacy Campaign and Operation Restoration | Continuing Education | Jan Sikshan Sansthan | Support to NGOs







अब नहीं तो कब



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- Directorate of Adult Education
- New Initiatives
- Challenges & Achievements
- NLM and Women's Empowerment
- Financial Parameters and Allocations
- Tender

Figure 2. 1 NLM Website Home Page for PALDIN Learners to Consult

priority to eradicate illiteracy among women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and other disadvantaged groups through mass mobilisation and support of the wider sections of society.

The launching of National Literacy Mission in 1988, and the subsequent emergence of Total Literacy Campaigns in different parts of India, led to the emergence of the concept of developmental literacy which included the components of self reliance in basic literacy and numeracy, social awareness, acquisition of relevant skills and imbibing the values of national integration, conservation of environment and gender equity.

The NLM introduced Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs) as area-specific, volunteer-based and time-bound literacy campaigns and they became a viable strategy for promoting literacy on a mass scale, advocating planning and implementation of TLCs through decentralised administrative and organisational structures. TLC introduced a strategy of mass mobilisation to generate social demand for literacy, while involving wider sections of society in promoting literacy. Although NLM policy document envisaged nationwide expansion of post-literacy and continuing education through new institutional structures, better utilisation of the existing infrastructures and open and distance learning, post-literacy and continuing education for neo-literates was neglected as the major focus of NLM strategy remained on mass literacy campaigns till the mid-1990s (see Figure 2.1.) In practice, the focus of TLCs remained on imparting rudimentary literacy skills and not functional skills and knowledge (Ministry of Human Resource Development 1994).

2.3.5 From Literacy to Post-literacy and Continuing Education

In 1999, the NLM was revamped by the central government to attain the goal of total literacy, i.e. sustainable threshold literacy rate of 75% by 2007. It continues to focus on imparting functional literacy to non-literates in the 15-35 age groups, specifically among the socio-economically disadvantaged groups. Although the group of 15-35 is identified as a primary target group of literacy programs, NLM does not exclude those age groups that are interested in literacy and other programs.

However, NLM has modified its approach to achieve its goal (Planning Commission 2002). Based on the premise that the TLCs succeeded in making a large adult population literate, NLM has shifted its attention to tackling the problem of residual illiteracy. It has adopted an integrated approach, amalgamating all the features of earlier TLC/post-literacy phases under one project, called 'Literacy Campaigns in Operation Restoration'. This new approach envisages integration of basic literacy teaching-learning with post-literacy activities to ensure a smooth transition from TLC to post-literacy on a learning continuum (see Daswani 2002). It assumes that such an approach would achieve continuity, efficiency and convergence and minimise necessary time lag between the two. The Post-literacy program is also treated as a preparatory phase for launching continuing education that aims at creating a learning society. In other words, NLM has de-linked post-literacy from continuing education and linked it closely with TLC. Continuing education program is envisaged to link literacy with actual life situations by imparting relevant technical and vocational skills.

Furthermore, NLM has changed its approach to promote decentralisation. Specifically, it has promoted decentralisation of financial and administrative powers to the State Literacy Mission Authorities for sanctioning literacy-related and continuing education projects. It continues to involve non-government organisations (NGOs) in environment-building for TLCs, but assigns them a major role in implementation of continuing education projects. NLM has strengthened State Resource Centres (SRCs) to increase their involvement in continuing education program. It has also enlarged the activities of Jan Shiksha Sansthan so that they could function as repositories of vocational/technical skills in urban and rural areas not only for youth and workers with low-level of education, but also for neo-literate youth and adults.

2.3.6 Marginality of Adult Education in Legislation

The Constitution of India recognises the significance of education for social transformation. During the last decade, two major changes have taken place in the Indian Constitution, which have far reaching implications for education. The 86th Constitutional Amendment Act (2002) makes free and compulsory education a justifiable fundamental right for all children in the age group 6-14 years. It guarantees eight years of elementary education to each and every child in the country. However, the focus of Constitutional amendments in education is primarily on elementary education of children (6-14 years), and not on adult education and lifelong learning for youth/adults. The underlying assumption is that universal elementary education among children (6-14 years)

will automatically tackle the problem of adult illiteracy. Hardly any efforts are made to justify adult literacy being a part of the Constitutional provisions and guarantees. The right of the vast population of non-literate youth and adults for basic literacy education and learning has remained invisible in the government policy.

On the other hand, enactment of the 72nd and 73rd Constitutional Amendments has paved the way to decentralisation of educational governance at the local level. The new legislation will have far reaching consequences for the provision of adult/non-formal education for women as well as the roles and responsibilities of central government, state government and local bodies in governance of non-formal education, and adult education.

2.3.7 Conclusion

In summary, despite massive illiteracy and low level of education among the adult population, adult literacy did not receive adequate attention in the first three decades of planned development in India. Until the late 1970s, the government's policy of adult education was characterised by the sporadic programmatic efforts through pilot projects, which were linked with the government's development strategy. It was with the shift in the direction of general educational policy in 1977 from higher levels of education to basic education, that adult education received some attention in the educational policy. NAEP, the first nationwide program of adult education, proposed to integrate literacy, functionality and social awareness in the program. However, It did not succeed in making a dent in promoting adult literacy as it remained a traditional, honorarium-based,

hierarchical and government-funded and controlled program.

It was the NPE (1986) provided impetus to development of a mass approach to eradication of literacy with mass mobilisation and wider support of divergent sections of society. The NLM, introduced as a technological and societal mission, adopted the campaign to eradicate illiteracy on a large scale, but did not pay adequate attention to post-literacy and continuing education. Since late 1990s, there is a noticeable

shift in NLM policy towards integrated approach to amalgamating literacy, post-literacy and continuing education phases, devolution of financial and administrative powers from national to state and local levels, and strengthening and revamping of existing institutions. Nonetheless, marginality of adult education has continued in legislation, and development planning. It is critical that adult literacy and learning is placed at the heart of the agenda of basic education for all.

2.7 Apply What You Have Learnt

Write a note of approximately 800 words on your views about shifts in policy discourse on adult education. Your note needs to include the direction India's policy on adult education has received from international policy

discourse in this matter. Do take into account your own professional experience as an adult educator and include your own understanding of critical policy issues in the area of adult literacy and learning.



3 PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND OF ADULT AND LIFELONG LEARNING

AJAY KUMAR

Structure



- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Adult Education and Lifelong Learning
 - 3.2.1 Assumptions about Adult Learning Behavior
 - 3.2.2 Lifelong Learning: An Educational Movement
- 3.3 Philosophy of Education
 - 3.3.1 Fundamental Purposes of Education
 - 3.3.2 Various Philosophical Traditions
- 3.4 Philosophies of Adult Education
- 3.5 Conclusion
- 3.6 Apply What You Have Learnt

Learning Objectives



After going through Unit 3, it is expected that learners will be able to

- ❖ Understand (adult) educational theories and practices in different contexts,
- ❖ Apply creatively their understanding of (adult) educational practices to support the empowerment of group of adult learners - linguistically, socially, economically, culturally and politically, and
- ❖ Understand the role of adult education in social movements, community development and mobilization.

3.1 Introduction

After Unit 1 about global, regional and national scenario on literacy and reading Unit 2 about international and national policy discourse, Unit 3 introduces PALDIN learners to an understanding of educational problems and issues in a broader framework. This exposure would make it easier for them to conceptualize educational theories and ideas of some of the great thinkers. In addition, it would enable them to

interpret research data and findings as applicable to their professional work in adult learning. The contents of Unit 3 and Unit 4 provide PALDIN learners an opportunity not only to critically analyze educational theories and apply them in real life contexts, to be able to identify the nature of educational phenomena and but also relate them, their application and development in adult education.

3.2 Adult Education and Lifelong Learning

Reflection

Consider the following quotations and construct your own one-liner on what you consider to be the essence of adult education.

‘Reflection without action is mere verbalism. Action without reflection is pure activism’.

- Paulo Freire (1972:60)

‘Theory without practice leads to an empty idealism, and action without philosophical reflection leads to mindless activism.’

- Elias and Merriam (1980: 4)

Adult Education is based on the ‘belief that people can take hold of their lives, can make changes, that they are not helpless in the face of structural forces’.

- M.K. Smith (1994:119)

‘You must be the change you see in the world’. –Mahatma Gandhi (Un sourced)

—Mahatma Gandhi(Un sourced)

The term ‘education’ usually refers more to mean ‘formal education’ based on organized and structured systems of curriculum-based classroom teaching and periodic evaluation at different levels. However, more broadly it also refers to all kinds of ‘experiences’ which help an individual grow wisely and become enlightened and empowered members of a society. In this latter sense, the process of education is ‘lifelong’. Here lifelong learning embodies self-directed growth. From early times, self-education has been the main device of people of all nations and civilizations to cope with the world around them.

During ancient times, education was part of natural learning process in response to the struggle for survival. Older generations of matured adults trained the younger members of their community or group about the knowledge and skills, which they needed and were deemed, fit to be passed on. In pre-literate societies (before the invention of the written, standardized and codified script), much of the knowledge and skills were transmitted by ‘oral’ means and through imitation. Later, written scripts were developed and preservation and transmission of knowledge became highly structured and organized. This process of transmission of knowledge and skills gave rise to making of society, culture and institutions. Schooling as a formal and organized institution of knowledge transmission came into existence during 3000 to 500 B.C. in Egypt and India. However, modern schooling and education, which is more dominant today, is largely of European origin and can be dated back to 1770.

Adult education and lifelong learning is all around us as long as we try to make a living, whether individually or collectively. Whenever we are engaged with each other in doing one thing or the other, one can see many examples of the ways people teach and learn. Learning is an act or process of gaining experience, knowledge and skills. In contrast, memory consists of an individual’s capacity to store, retrieve, and act further on that knowledge. We become novices to experts based on our capacity to learn and gain new skills and knowledge. Our brain makes new pathways and connections based on reliability and predictability of our experiences (see Conner: 1995).

Thus learning is an act or process, which

involves switching from our most fundamental assumptions to the complex ones. According to Conner (1995) learning entails:

- ❖ An increase in knowledge based on meaningful experience and information
- ❖ Storing or memorization of information or data consisting of our experience
- ❖ Making practical use of the acquired knowledge
- ❖ Abstraction or theorization which involves codification of meanings of things that we do or we have experienced
- ❖ Comprehension, application and understanding them in different contexts.

Rote learning frustrates us because the brain resists meaningless stimuli. Learning is interesting when it is based on felt needs and perceived interests and when it is based on comprehension, critical and analytical understanding, and its contextual application.

Adult education is a highly developed sub-discipline of education where people 'whose major social roles are characteristic of adult status undertake systematic and sustained learning activities for the purposes of bringing about changes in knowledge, attitudes, values, or skills' (Darkenwald and Merriam 1982: 9). A fundamental purpose of adult education is to facilitate growth of persons toward understanding of their self, leading to maturity. Thus self-knowledge is one of the main aims of adult education, which consists of awareness of one's own skills, abilities, attitudes, assets and responsibilities. Today adult education includes basic adult education, continuing professional education, adult literacy training, education for basic skills, vocational

training, education for sustainable development, education for community development and transformation, etc. In India, traditionally adult education mainly refers to training and education of adults who have had no opportunity to formal education in their early years.

Adult education is the practice of teaching and educating adults. It is imparted at the workplace or otherwise in classrooms, through 'extension' or 'continuing education' courses organized at senior **secondary or college and university levels**, more generally by adult education professionals. Adult education is also referred to as 'popular education and training for transformation' or 'education for community mobilization' or 'education for sustainable development'. It has also been referred to as andragogy to distinguish it from pedagogy. Pedagogy literally means the art and science of educating children and often is used as a synonym for all formal classroom based teaching. More commonly, pedagogy signifies a teacher-centered education. Andragogy, in contrast, is defined as 'the art and science of helping adults learn'. Its usage now is more broadened to include learner-centered education for people of all ages.

Adult education differs from children's education in many ways. One very significant difference is that adults already have a fairly large amount of accumulated knowledge and experience with them. This knowledge and experience of adults coupled with their deep-seated attitudes can either add value to their learning experience or hinder it. Another significant difference is that adults often seek practical applications and uses of knowledge, which they wish to learn effectively.

They need to foresee a goal orientation to their learning with a reasonable expectation that the new knowledge will help them further that goal.

3.2.1 Assumptions about Adult Learning Behavior

In order to understand how adults learn and foresee their goal orientation, Malcolm Knowles (1980) has given us four assumptions about their learning behavior as they think through instructional strategies and programming needs

- i) Every person has some conception or idea of his/ her own self, which may be called 'self-concept'. This self-concept of an individual adult moves from that of being a dependent person toward being an independent, self-directed person. This change comes along with one's process of maturity although different people exhibit different scale and rate of this change. This differential change implies that teachers also have a responsibility for nurturing such change in the adult learner. Matured and emotionally balanced adults generally have a tendency to work or proceed under self-direction; however, there are those who at times exhibit a tendency for dependency.
- ii) During the growth and maturation process, every individual accumulates vast life experiences, which can become a rich potential resource for learning. For adult education, its implication is that teachers should be able to use that as a resource to make gains out of such an experience, while discussing a text (in adult literacy case) or a problem-solving issue related to their livelihoods and trying to seek a solution. Using such a resource during a learning exercise provides the adult learner confidence, empowering him/her to be more articulate, communicative and assertive.
- iii) Adult learner's willingness to learn more is strengthened when resources for learning are related to real life problems and to personal developmental goals. Such an assumption implies that adult educators or facilitators need to adopt and facilitate problem-solving methods and self-discovery techniques based on true assessment of their needs. This can be identified through a listening survey and listing of various 'generative' themes. Adult learners learn better and faster when they apply their learning efforts in context of real problems and their current developmental needs. Thus, the context of time and place of a learning text (subject) is an important input in any organized learning setting.
- iv. In this sense, the starting point for an adult learner is a desire first to develop communicative competence based on problem-solving methods and solutions. In such a case, adult learners first seek immediate information and/or satisfaction, which may be either helpful or empowering (or even enjoyable, as in case of texts of humor and fun) for them during their learning efforts. The implication here is that adult education and lifelong learning needs to address the perceived needs of learners. Both the adult educator and the adult learner together should be able to diagnose learner's needs and further develop related learning objectives or goals.

These assumptions about adult learning behavior help us in understanding the adult learners well. These assumptions also provide us the direction in which the learners' thinking could be developed to facilitate them to become more self-directed learning individuals. Adult learners as self-directed learners can become more active learners by being able to diagnose their desires and needs. Thus by possessing and enhancing a strong self-image (self-concepts) about themselves, with positive and strong self-esteem, the adult learners can develop a personal ownership of the learning programme, from beginning to end, and from planning stage to its final successful implementation

3.2.2 Lifelong Learning: An Educational Movement

Lifelong learning denotes a continuous process of learning both in formal and informal situations; it embodies an add-on experience from everyday life. It has also evolved as a contingent concept implying that "it's never too soon or too late to learn", an educational philosophy that has become a favorite of professional organizations and rapidly changing and modernizing societies. Lifelong learning implies an attitudinal change, which holds that 'one can and should be open to new ideas, decisions, skills or behaviors'. Lifelong learning is now an educational movement within institutions and organizations (both national and international organizations like the national education policy of India and the UNESCO). UNESCO and other national governments find it necessary to provide their citizens with learning opportunities at all ages so that it is useful for them in numerous contexts, e.g. at their workplaces, in the market, in exercising their consumer rights

against unfair trade practices, support for good governance, raising of quality of public life, at home and in their leisure activities. These learning opportunities need to be provided not only through formal educational institutions like the schools, colleges and universities but also through provision of non-formal institutions of lifelong learning.

Lifelong education as imparted institutionally by organizations like universities and colleges (including some non-governmental organizations like Nirantar, Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti, and Sewa) is based on assumptions and philosophy of self-directed learning. Lifelong learning is also a form of pedagogy which is imparted institutionally through channels like correspondence courses offered by universities, distance learning or e-learning, continuing education, home schooling, etc. It includes graduate and postgraduate adult education programs for those adults who wish to improve their qualifications, bring their skills up to date or retrain themselves for a new line of work. Many in-service trainings and internal corporate organizations' training programme for their workforce have similar goals. In the West, even after retirement people opt for life-long learning programs to satisfy their inner urge for enlightenment, which often takes diverse forms, crossing traditional academic boundaries. Growth of scientific and technological progress in the more modernized and globalized world of recent decades has necessitated the institutionalization of lifelong education. Despite the expansion of institutions like schools, colleges and universities, formal educational institutions alone cannot cover the entire population, especially the adult population's desire to equip

themselves with latest technological knowledge needed at their workplace. The knowledge and skills acquired by an adult population through the formal

education would usually not be sufficient for an ever-growing professional and technological environment.

3.3 Philosophy of Education

Why do we need philosophy? Many scholars and thinkers have suggested that while implementing an educational programme the question of ‘why’ must precede the questions of ‘what’ or ‘how’ things are to be done. This means that before we decide about the content (referring to ‘what’) or the process (referring to ‘how’), we first need to ask as to ‘why’ (referring to ‘philosophy’) we would like to do such a thing, and what would be the advantages or disadvantages of doing such a thing.

The question of ‘why’ related to ‘philosophy’ behind an action or an idea can help us to understand phenomena critically. In an adult and lifelong learning context, for example, the ‘why’ question provides us alternative approaches to programme planning, curriculum designing, teaching, budgeting, evaluation, etc. It makes us aware of how values, ethics and aesthetics can enrich a lifelong learning programme. It highlights the importance of our individual histories and the ways they influence our actions as adult educators. It also helps us to develop our own working philosophy and free us from any kind of dependence on somebody else’s principles and ideologies in a dogmatic manner. A ‘working philosophy’ refers to ‘an individual adult educator’s system of beliefs, which is an outgrowth of the sum of our personal values, experiences and lifestyles and it is related to the way we do things. A working philosophy also gives us greater control and deeper interest in things that

we do or would like to do and over our decision-making powers.

3.3.1 Fundamental Purposes of Education

In a broad cultural context, education can be seen to perform two main basic functions in a society. The first is to conserve and transmit useful, practical, cognitive skills and knowledge along with the cultural heritage of one’s received tradition to the next generation. The second is to simultaneously enable a positive critique of one’s heritage so as to provide, and create, a more adequate response for further changes. In both cases education, whether adult education (literacy) or lifelong learning has to be critical and creative. Whatever the future may hold for a community (or the nation), educational and literacy practices will always be a means to an end or desired goal whose visions are generated by changing forms of politics.

The future of a nation-state (e.g. the Indian nation-state) and its civil society depends on education of its younger generation as responsible, thoughtful, and democratic citizens. This is a complex and challenging task requiring deep understanding of the social, cultural, economic, and political identities in terms of its organizing principles, including an understanding of who the learners are, both as individuals as well as collective members of the society. This can be achieved by a sophisticated system of cultural education and value transmission. Here

the emphasis with regard to role and purposes of education is more on social and cultural reproduction.

A nation's progress in every practical field depends on its capacity to provide for its citizens every opportunity for learning, whether it is in the sphere of technical and higher education and research, medical education, human rights education, elementary and primary education, adult education or lifelong learning, etc. Hence education is a tool to promote well being, prosperity and future development of the individual, society, the nation-state and the entire human civilization. In this regard, role of education is primarily seen as one, which is related to economic growth, production and reproduction.

A formal and universal primary and secondary education provides for better childhood socialization and it further enables the individual fullest development of his/her potential. Development of this potential depends much on adequate preparation in childhood. A good quality and critical education provides firm foundation for personal development and satisfaction. 'The better the foundation that is built, the more successful the learner will be'. Thus an educational investment in adolescence reaps dividends in the distant future (10-15 years), whereas an educational investment in adults reaps dividends immediately.

3.3.2 Various Philosophical Traditions

We can consider five major philosophical traditions found in the literature of philosophy of education that also have relevance in the adult education and lifelong learning field. Each of these philosophies is based on certain

assumptions about human nature, the purpose of education, and the role of the adult educator (or facilitator) and the learner.

i) **Liberal tradition:** This tradition believes that freedom comes through a liberated mind and all human beings are endowed with a reasoning ability to liberate themselves. It stresses the development of intellectual power of the mind as the individual learner is believed to be a 'renaissance' (liberated) person who is quite cultured and keen to learn. Based on this liberal view about human nature, it focuses on the role of organized knowledge (curriculum) and evaluation in the intellectual development of the learner. It emphasizes mastery of the content with the educator viewed as an expert/ authority, and where information (knowledge) flows in one direction, which is 'top-down', i.e. from the 'expert' to the 'learner' and not vice versa. The 'expert' is the transmitter of knowledge; he/she is the 'know-all', an 'authoritative master', who directs the entire learning process.

ii) **Progressive tradition:** It developed out of the ideas of John Dewey in the United States during 1920s and 1930s. Even earlier, one can find many similar resonating assumptions and views of progressive education in Gandhian scheme of education of three Hs - heart, hand and head. The progressive tradition stresses an experiential, problem-solving approach to learning and emphasizes experience of learner as the main determining factor in seeking solutions and change and thus believes in the social reform role of education. The teacher's role, in this tradition, is that of an 'organizer' who guides the learner through his/her experiences that are educative. The teacher is one who

mainly stimulates, instigates and evaluates the direction of learner's learning process. This tradition emphasizes problem solving, experience-based education, lifelong learning, democracy and democratic training, pragmatic knowledge, needs assessment of the learner and social responsibility.

iii) **Behaviorist tradition:** This tradition focuses more on behavior modification and controlled environment for the learner. It believes that human behavior is tied to prior conditioning, that external forces control all human behavior. The teacher is considered as the manager, controller who predicts and controls the learning outcomes and desired behavior. Teaching methods include behavioral conditioning, feedback, drill and practice. The learner is supposed to take an active role only in a 'packaged learning' called curriculum based on systematic instructional design models.

iv) **Humanist tradition:** This tradition is based on a romantic view of human nature. It considers human nature as essentially positive with virtually unlimited potential. It believes that it is the intellect that distinguishes humans from animals. Human beings have potential/ innate goodness. It places emphasis on individual's personal growth and self-direction in learning. This philosophy practically caters more to privileged sections of society and facilitates self-actualization of the individual learner who is by nature intellectually gifted. Here the privileged learner is also supposed to reform the society as a benevolent and gifted member of the society. The teacher, in this case is only a facilitator and /or a helper who promotes but does not direct learning. This tradition also emphasizes

experiential learning, freedom, individuality, self-directedness, openness and cooperation.

v) **Radical tradition:** This tradition believes that people themselves collectively create meaning, and that knowledge leads to an understanding of reality and, ultimately, helps to bring about the necessary change. The fundamental role or purpose of education is to bring about radical social, political and economic changes in society through critical knowledge, training and education. Its emphasis is on human agency, which can act towards a particularly desired change or goal; it emphasizes particularly the transformative role of education and radical social change. It emphasizes equality between the teacher and the learner in the learning process and emphasizes personal autonomy for both the learner and the teacher. Its basic belief is that people create history and culture by combining reflection with action. This tradition only suggests but does not determine the direction for learning and it is left open for negotiation between the teacher and the learner. It emphasizes critical pedagogy with dialectical unity between thinking and action in the transformative role of education. Critical pedagogy is a teaching and learning approach, which attempts to help learner question and challenge domination, and the beliefs and practices that dominate. In other words, it is a theory and practice of helping learners achieve critical consciousness. The main criticism of radical tradition is that its goal exceeds its own desire to instill creativity and exploration as it encourages detrimental disdain for traditions, hierarchy (such as parental control over children), and self-isolation.

To have a little more and better understanding of what these different traditions hold in terms of individual learning and his/her role as an active

or passive member of his/her society, we present in Figure 3.1 these traditions on a continuum.

Behaviorist → Liberal → Humanistic → Progressive → Radical

Learner as a machine → Learner as a brain → Learner as a living being → Learner as an active agent

Figure 3.1 Philosophical Traditions on a Continuum

Attention of the learners is drawn to the fact that some of these philosophical traditions have overlapping assumptions about the purposes of education, roles of the learner and the teacher, sources of authority, methods and practices. Fortunately, learners can find a way of dealing with all the various models and traditions. One way to deal with it is to critically and analytically examine the relationship of theory and practice in each model and compare them by their historical outcomes or significance. One may agree with certain assumptions of a particular model or tradition, and disagree with the other. So one can choose and try to develop a holistic model, which is comprehensive and politically correct. This is called

‘eclecticism’. Eclecticism is not a philosophical system or model but it is an integrative approach towards synthesizing personal interpretations of various models to draw out the best components for themselves. So it is possible to pull out the best from various models in order to build one’s personal philosophy. For example, I would choose partly the liberal perspective as far as its assumptions and beliefs in ‘nature of human beings’ are concerned. I will wholly borrow and follow the progressive perspective but also try to integrate it with some elements of the radical perspective, which emphasizes structural imbalances and thus advocates active agency for social change. What would you choose to be?

Activity 3.1

At this stage it is possible for you to carry out an exercise of articulating your own views, in 500 words, on philosophy of education in the light of what you have read so far in Unit 3.

3.4 Philosophies of Adult Education

See the following three tables, which compare five major educational philosophies (Liberal, Behaviorist, Progressive, Humanistic, and Radical). These tables are based on presentations

by Lorraine Zinn (1990). The tables have been slightly edited and expanded as per the understanding of the author in order to remove certain confusions and overlappings.

Table 3.1: Adult Education - Purpose, Learner, and Teacher

Educational Philosophy	Liberal(Classical, Traditional)	Behaviorist	Progressive	Humanistic	Radical
Purpose	To develop intellectual powers of the mind; to make a person literate in the broadest sense—intellectually, morally, and spiritually. It is a politically correct and legitimate belief but romanticizes about unlimited intellectual powers of the mind.	To control the behavior of an individual within an organization; to bring about behavior change through systems of reward and punishment and self-training to ensure survival of human species, societies, & individuals.	To transmit culture and societal structure to promote social change; to give learner practical knowledge and problem-solving skills, to reform society	To develop (selected / privileged) people open to change and continued learning; to enhance personal growth and development; to facilitate self-actualization, to reform society.	To bring about fundamental, social, political & economic changes in society through education; to change culture & its structure in order to eliminate various inequalities, dominations and exploitations.
Learner	“Renaissance person”; who is cultured & always a keen learner; who seeks knowledge rather than just information; s/he has cognitive capacity for conceptual & theoretical understanding.	Learner takes an active role in ‘packaged’ and programmed learning, practicing new behavior, and receiving feedback; strong environmental influence to control his/her learning achievements.	Learner needs, interests, and experiences are key elements in learning; people have unlimited potential to be developed through problem-solving education based on experience.	Learner is highly motivated and self-directed; assumes responsibility for learning and self-development.	Equality with teacher in learning process; personal autonomy; people create history and culture by combining reflection with action
Teacher	The teacher is an “expert” who is the transmitter of knowledge, one who is authoritative & clearly directs the learning outcome. It is top-down, one-way vertical communication used in teaching and instruction.	The teacher is the manager & controller who predicts and directs learning outcomes, who shapes learning environment and desired behavior. It is also top-down, one-way vertical approach in teaching communication.	The teacher is an organizer who guides learning through experiences that are educative; stimulates, instigates, evaluates learning process. (Horizontal, both way, top-down and bottom-up approach in teaching communication.)	Facilitator; helper; partner; promotes, but does not direct learning, sets mood for learning, acts as a flexible resource for learners. (Horizontal and both way, top-down and bottom-up approach in teaching communication)	Provocateur; suggests but does not determine direction for learning; equality between teacher and learner. (Dialogical, horizontal and both way, top-down and bottom-up communication approach)

Table 3.2: Adult Education-Source of Authority, Key Words, Concepts and Methods

Educational Philosophy	Liberal	Behaviorist	Progressive	Humanistic	Radical
Source of Authority	The Western canons of liberty and individualism.	The environment, organization or society within which one works .	Situations that learner finds him/herself in; e.g. culture & social experience of learner .	The self/ learner, one who is privileged, lucky or gifted by birth.	Socio-economic and socio-political imbalances.
Key words/ concepts	Learning for its own sake; rational, intellectual education, general education; traditional knowledge; classical- / rational humanism.	Stimulus-response; behavior modification; competency-based; mastery in learning; behavioral objectives; trial and error; skill training; feedback; reinforcement.	Problem solving; experience-based education; democracy; lifelong learning; pragmatic knowledge; needs assessment; social responsibility.	Experiential learning; freedom; feelings, individuality; self-directedness; interactive; openness; co-operation; authenticity; ambiguity; related to existentialism.	Consciousness-raising; praxis; non-compulsory, non-coercive learning; autonomy; critical thinking; social action; de-institutionalization; literacy training.
Methods	Didactic; monologue, lecture; study groups; contemplation; critical reading and discussion.	Programmed instruction; contract learning; teaching machines; computer-assisted instruction; practice and reinforcement.	Problem solving; scientific method; activity method; experimental method; project method; inductive method.	Experiential; group tasks; group discussion; team teaching; self-directed learning; discovery method.	Dialogue; problem posing; maximum interaction; participatory discussion groups, critical pedagogy.

Table 3.3: Adult Education - People Practices and Time Frame

Educational Philosophy	Liberal	Behaviorist	Progressive	Humanistic	Radical
People/ Practices	Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas Adler, Friedenber, Kallen, Van Doren, Houle; Lyceum; Chautauqua; Elderhostel; Center for the Study of Liberal Education.	Skinner, Thorndike, Watson, Tyler, APL (Adult Performance Level); competency-based teacher education; behavior modification programs.	Spencer, Pestalozzi, John Dewey, Lindeman, Benne, Blakely, ABE, citizenship education; community schools; cooperative extension schools; without walls, Participatory Training. Also, to some extent M.K. Gandhi.	Erasmus, Rousseau, Rogers, Maslow, Knowles, May, Tough, McKenzie; encounter groups; group dynamics; self-directed learning projects; human relations training; Esalen Institute.	Brameld, Holt, Kozol, Reich, Neill, Paulo Freire, Goodman, Illich, Ohliger; Freedom Schools; Summerhill, Freire's literacy training; free schools.
Time Frame	Oldest philosophy of education in West. Rooted in the Classical Period of ancient Greece.	Founded by John B. Watson in 1920s.	Origins can be traced to 16th c. Europe. Based on empiricism and pragmatism (1870s U.S.). Began as a serious movement in U.S. in early 1900s with John Dewey.	Roots go back to classical China, Greece, and Rome, but became a movement in the U.S. in 1950s-60s through the works of Maslow and Rogers.	Origins are found in the 18 th c. anarchist tradition, Marxist thought, and the Freudian Left. Modern movement began in early 1960s in Brazil with Paulo Freire.

Activity 3.2

Study Table 3.1, Table 3.2 and Table 3.3 and highlight in one paragraph all the points of overlap among the various philosophies of education. Then in another short paragraph, write your own impression of the kind of adult education you think exists today in India.

3.5 Conclusion

Unit 3 has explained the concepts of adult education and lifelong learning and discussed assumptions about adult learning behavior. It has described lifelong learning as an educational movement and elaborated on

fundamental purposes of education. Unit 3 has also compared the various philosophical traditions and has endeavored to bring through activity exercises your own ideas into open

3.6 Apply What You Have learnt

Discuss in 800 words the philosophy of your learning PALDIN courses and try to

bring out the educational philosophy of Course 1 of PALDIN.



4

PHILOSOPHICAL TRENDS, THEORIES OF EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION AND ADULT LEARNING

AJAY KUMAR

Structure



- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Development of Adult Education and Lifelong Philosophy
 - 4.2.1 Jean Piaget (1896-1980)
 - 4.2.2 John Dewey (1859-1952)
 - 4.2.3 Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937)
 - 4.2.4 Paulo Freire (1921-1997)
- 4.3 Adult Education, the Indian National Movement and Seminal Indian Thinkers
 - 4.3.1 Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948)
 - 4.3.2 Rabindra Nath Tagore
- 4.4 Conclusion
- 4.5 Apply What You Have Learnt

Learning Objectives



After going through Unit 4, it is expected that you would be able to:

- ❖ Develop your own concept of andragogy and self-directed learning based on theoretical contributions of different philosophical trends
- ❖ Understand contradictions of pedagogical processes, their dialectical unity and dependence on theory and practice
- ❖ Differentiate and choose theories of educational intervention, research and learning.

4.1 Introduction

Unit 4 is a continuation of Unit 3, elaborating the sub-theme of the philosophy of adult education and lifelong learning. Unit 3 has already looked into the issue of the development of adult education and

lifelong learning. Now Unit 4 deals with the theories of some of the great thinkers of our times in the context of educational intervention, research and learning.

4.2 Development of Adult Education and Lifelong Philosophy

Although adult informal education and lifelong learning are as old as civilization itself, modern connotation of them as an organised institutional and educational activity is of recent origin. In the West, 'modern' understandings of adult informal education and lifelong learning owes much to the work of Rousseau and to the works of educators such as Pestalozzi, Froebel, Montessori and Jean Piaget. We shall now discuss, in brief, the work of those educators who have made a significant contribution to development of adult education philosophy.

4.2.1 Jean Piaget (1896-1980)

Jean Piaget is one of the most distinguished developmental psychologists who studied the nature of intelligence and the way it grows and develops in a human being. Piaget devoted almost fifty years of his life exploring this process.

Put simply, Piaget's theory contends that all intelligence is shaped by human experience. Intelligence is not an innate internal characteristic of the individual. Rather it is a product of the interaction between the individual and his/her environment. Piaget (1972) argued that our ways of knowing change "qualitatively in identifiable stages, moving from an inactive stage, where knowledge is represented in concrete actions and is not separable from the experiences that spawn it, to an iconic stage, where knowledge is represented in images that have an increasingly autonomous status from the experiences they represent, to stages of concrete and formal operations." These are the basic stages in the developmental processes of an individual's mental growth, which constitute Piaget's model of Learning and Cognitive Development. These processes and stages also determine the basic learning processes among adults.

Activity 4.1

Do you agree with Piaget's argument that all intelligence is shaped by human experience? If yes, give at least two reasons for your agreement. If not, then explain why you do not agree with Piaget.

4.2.2 John Dewey (1859-1952)

John Dewey (United States), Antonio Gramsci (Italy), Mahatma Gandhi (India) and Paulo Freire (Brazil) have been four pioneer educational thinkers of the 20th century who emphasized not just on the individual development alone based on urban middle class values but also the societal development with concerns for democratization of educational process and its content for the empowerment of the masses. Some of John Dewey's significant ideas include a concern for

democracy and community, reflection and thinking and importance of experience and the environment. He is legitimately acknowledged as the champion philosopher of democracy in the US in the 20th century. He sought an educational meaning of democracy in almost all spheres of life. According to Dewey, the main aim of philosophy consisted of realization of social progress where the role of education was of greatest interest to him. In fact in as early as 1916, he published a book titled,

Democracy and Education. Another very important work by him is titled, *Experience and Education* (1938). See Box 4.1 for some of his ideas in this book.

John Dewey's ideas regarding education, experience and communication constitute three main pillars of adult education and lifelong learning. Dewey considered education as a process of growing in meaning, social responsibility and maturity and said, "all genuine education comes about through experience." Experience gives meaning, a person can find multiple - even infinite meanings of a thing and use it accordingly. Meaning can also denote the consequences and relationships of events and things. Through their lives, people seek to understand their worlds, and share (communicate) their meanings. Education and communication thus

imply a social and historical process of having shared meanings and purposes. According to Dewey's philosophy, education, communication and experience constitute a triad in a democratic environment and serve to maintain a culture's continuity. Education, communication and experience are thus powerful tools in mobilizing a community towards lifelong learning and towards social transformation. Dewey also provides us the main elements of his democratic ideal which consists of (a) existence of genuine shared purposes within the members of an organization or a community; (b) freedom to communicate with one another, and with other groups; and (c) genuine educative experiences, which promote personal and social growth.

Box 4.1 Distinction between Traditional and Progressive Approaches to Education

In *Experience and Education*, Dewey (1938: 17) makes a distinction between the "traditional" approach and the "progressive" approach in education, which he calls the "new education". In the traditional approach, "the subject-matter of education consists of bodies of information and of skills that have been worked out in the past; therefore, the chief business of the school is to transmit them to the new generation." This approach (traditional) is teacher-centered rather than learner-centered where the teacher deposits dry information, knowledge and skills as saleable commodities in the heads of the students. In this model, students are generally considered as passive but receptive, and obedient and the teachers are supposed to be agents of this transmission of information, knowledge and skills.

In addition, Dewey (1938: 20) proposes a progressive model, called the "new education." The underlying philosophy of this "new education" is that "there is an intimate and necessary relation between the processes of actual experience and education." Dewey rejects knowledge of the past as the only end of education and argues that it is only a means to the higher goals of attaining multiple possibilities for human development - cognitive, attitudinal,

social and moral. For both the general educators and adult educators, the challenge is how to genuinely use experience to educate the masses for a better quality of life for themselves.

4.2.3 Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937)

Another most significant of radical educators is Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci did not provide a proper theory of education or ideology. Much of his writings on education are in part a

reaction to the Gentile Reform of Education (1923) introduced by the Fascist regime in Italy. As a result, Gramsci comes to provide us some principles regarding education and schooling. It is from these principles and observations on Gentile Reform and his other essays on 'Intellectuals', 'State and Civil Society' and 'the Philosophy of Praxis' that one can try to sketch an educational theory. Gramsci's writings provide us deeper insights of education in the cultural sphere. For example,

Gramsci (1971: 258) made statements like, "every relationship is a pedagogical relationship" or "education is an activity and initiative in political and cultural hegemony". Gramsci's resistance to Mussolini, his stress on the role of critical thinking, individual action and thought in history, his vision that workers create their own intellectual, educational and cultural institutions - all these provide a cultural agenda of education. See Box 4.2 for four major basic themes related to education in Gramsci's writings.

Box 4.2 Basic Themes Related to Education in Gramsci's Writings

Four major basic themes (subjects) like functions and purposes of schools, content and curriculum; discipline, instruction and role of teachers; and vocational schools are important in Gramsci's writings. These subjects constitute all the mainstream educational debates: e.g. the relation between education and class; the problem of specialization and vocationalism; the ideology of education and division of labour; elite school and the "comprehensive" school. These aspects demand from us an understanding of the main premises upon which a theory of education can be constructed. Gramsci's notes on 'Education' consist of three levels at which educational activity occurs. These are: "elementary education ('genacio'), secondary schools ('liceo') and the university. Teachers are involved in the process of producing, transmitting and justifying public knowledge. They do this explicitly via the curriculum and implicitly through the organization of school. Course content, teaching styles, grading procedures, power relations entered into, are all means whereby the formal educational system makes its contribution to the consciousness of students, his personal identity and social roles and to the store of public knowledge, public values and public culture. Gramsci's views in these matters change in their emphasis as well as in content as we move from lower stage of education to higher stages in education. Nevertheless, there runs consistently a coherent theme aiming 'development of critical thinking' as the major function of schooling. This function is integrated with technical knowledge of production at a higher stage of education.

Activity 4.2

What is meant by 'cultural agenda of education'? Write your answer to this question in one paragraph and give some examples of educational institutions which carry forward a cultural agenda of education.

4.2.4 Paulo Freire (1921-1997)

Paulo Freire may be considered as the forerunner of critical theory tradition in education. Freire's (1972) concept of "the culture of silence" has popularized the role of the individual and the community including that of the

adult educators to bring in social reform and change. While in exile after the 1964 coup in Brazil, Freire wrote his first book, *Education as the Practice of Freedom*. In 1972, he also got his first book published in English, titled, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Freire's

work has inspired adult educators and learners worldwide to bring about social change through mass literacy. Freire warns that his educational philosophy should not be seen as a methodology. Instead, he wants adult educators and development professionals to reinvent a philosophy (of education) to fit in their

context and social and political reality. As Freire says, “the future isn’t something hidden in a corner. The future is something we build in the present.” See Box 4.3 for some of the basic principles of his educational and philosophical foundations.

Box 4.3 Basic Principles of Paulo Freire’s Educational Philosophy

- ❖ Man’s ontological vocation is to be a Subject who acts upon and transforms his world, and in so doing, moves toward ever-new possibilities of fuller and richer life individually and collectively.
- ❖ Every human being, no matter how “ignorant” or submerged in the culture of silence he or she may be, is capable of looking critically at the world in a dialogical encounter with others.
- ❖ Provided with proper tools for this encounter, the individual can gradually perceive personal and social reality as well as the contradictions in it, become conscious of his or her own perception of that reality, and deal critically with it.

About the relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed, Paulo Freire (1972: 21) says ‘the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed’ is ‘to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well’ who ‘oppress, exploit and rape by virtue of their power’. Thus the struggle for humanization consists in breaking the cycles of injustice, exploitation and oppression. In these roles, those who commit injustice- the oppressors, do not only deny freedom to those they oppress, they also risk their own humanity, because oppressor’s consciousness ‘tends to transform everything surrounding it into an object of its domination’ (Freire 1972). The oppressed too internalize this oppression as natural; they too initially become ‘sub-oppressors’, and a role, which they begin to think, is the ‘ideal model of humanity’. To break this cycle, Freire suggests, a revolution of ideas must take place. But how would the oppressed ‘resolve this oppressor-oppressed

contradiction’? This contradiction can be resolved through what Freire (1972: 25) calls as “the pedagogy of the oppressed, a pedagogy forged with, not for, the oppressed (be they individuals or groups). By confronting “reality critically, simultaneously objectifying and acting upon that reality”, the oppressed can begin to transform themselves from objects to Subjects. According to Freire, this makes the beginning of revolution as the first stage.

Freire’s pedagogy of the oppressed has two major stages.

- ❖ The oppressed unveil the world of oppression and through the praxis, commit themselves to its transformation.
- ❖ The pedagogy ceases to belong to the oppressed and becomes pedagogy of all people in the process of permanent liberation.

Freire (1972: 46) rejects the traditional approach in education, which he calls as the ‘banking education’ where

teachers make deposits of information into the empty minds of the students, and subsequently which students memorize and repeat. 'The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world'. Thus a libertarian and progressive education must 'begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers and students'.

Progressive educators help students to reach conscientizacao (conscientization). Conscientization consists in breaking through prevailing mythologies to reach new levels of awareness—in particular, awareness of oppression, of being an object in a world where only Subjects have power. The process of conscientization involves identifying contradictions in experience through dialogue and

becoming a Subject with other oppressed subjects—that is, becoming part of the process of changing the world. Instead of banking methods, progressive educators must employ problem-posing methods. Freire (1972: 56) elaborates that 'in problem-posing education, people develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation'. Teacher-students and student-teachers are continually reflecting on themselves and the world, establishing an authentic form of thought and action. It is in this manner that education can be constantly remade, instead of being static. It helps people to look ahead, to hope and plan for the future. "Problem-posing education does not and cannot serve the interests of the oppressor. No oppressive order could permit the oppressed to begin to question".

Activity 4.3

Have you read *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Freire? If yes, write a one page note on what you found to be most appealing in this book. If not, then first read the book and then write the one-page note.

Paulo Freire (1972: 60) felt that for the learner to move from object to Subject, he or she needed to be involved in dialogical action with the teacher. Dialogic action has two basic dimensions - reflection and action.

Action and Reflection = word = work = praxis.

Sacrifice of Action or Action without Reflection = activism (acting without thinking).

Sacrifice of Action or Reflection without Action = verbalism.

For Paulo Freire, verbalism is an empty word, which means words without action. According to him, transformation cannot happen with action alone, it requires reflection as well. Transformation based on pure activism is impossible, because without reflection, there can be no commitment to transformation, it would be an empty action. Transformation requires praxis, which is action and reflection. It is praxis, alone which enables transformation to take place. Freire (1972: 62) held that 'Dialogue cannot

exist without humility'. You cannot dialogue if you place yourself above another, seeing yourself as the owner of truth. Dialogue requires faith in humanity. "Faith is an a priori requirement for dialogue." For Freire (1972: 63-72), "Founding itself upon love, humility and faith, dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the

dialoguers is the logical consequence". Dialogue further requires hope in order to exist. "Hopelessness is a form of silence, of denying the world and fleeing from it". 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.'

Box 4.5 Important Elements of Freirean Theory of Progressive Education

- ❖ Adult educators must unveil the opportunities for hope, regardless of the obstacles.
- ❖ Adult educators must work and accept the political and directive nature of education.
- ❖ Adult educators must have respect for differences in ideas and positions.
- ❖ Adult educators must respect the learners and never try to manipulate them, whatever their level of ignorance.
- ❖ Adult educators must be tolerant, open, forthright and critical, allowing every learner to participate and dialogue.
- ❖ Teaching does not simply consist in transmission of facts and information or even knowledge concerning the object or concerning the topic; it consists in active and critical reflection.
- ❖ The learners must learn to learn as to why something is being taught, why and how a particular content is necessary.
- ❖ Learners must be challenged (not teased) about their conviction in order to help them develop convincing arguments in defense of the why.
- ❖ Adult educators must respect people's knowledge and beliefs, popular knowledge available with them, cultural content of their popular knowledge. Educators should consider this as the starting point of their discourse, which is essentially a resource of knowledge that the learner has already created of his/her world.
- ❖ Adult educators should also try to transcend the narrow horizons of the neighborhood or even the immediate geographical area, to gain a global view of reality.

The importance of Freirean theory or philosophy of education lies in its emphasis on acts of 'cognition not only of the content, but of the why of economic, social, political, ideological, and historical facts ... under which we find ourselves placed.' The pedagogy outlined above does not romantically celebrate the adult learner or student's experience just for its own sake. Rather, this pedagogy is based on a critically affirmative language, and advocates

that educators must work constantly on both their own and the experiences of learners. This pedagogy in situations of classroom or textbook interaction requires that we democratise language teaching and break down the elitist mould or paternalistic barriers to the development of the communicative competence and ensure equality of all learners.

4.3 Adult Education, the Indian National Movement and Seminal Indian Thinkers

It was during early 20th century that formal (official) provision and expansion of adult education in India took place. The national movement, at the beginning of 20th century placed a significant emphasis on education for citizenship, social reform and nation building. The national movement, in order to improve the social and political position of women, the untouchables and the tribals, focused on many social evils like 'sati', child marriage, infanticide, etc. Further, the struggle to establish trade unionism and the desire to open up education to workers also helped rooting of adult and non-formal education in India. Simultaneously, there was the development of university extension work. With M.K. Gandhi leading a mass national movement for independence against the British, we find a creative mass movement from below. Gandhi emphasized self-education and self-discipline, and subjects that mattered in the deepening of understanding of their political struggle against evil forces, both internal (e.g. religious fanaticism) and external (e.g. British rule).

4.3.1 Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948)

Gandhi was perhaps the only Indian leader who anticipated that developments taking place under the British Raj would make the people of India lose their control over national affairs including social and economic policies, culture, language and identity. He could anticipate the dangers of an increasing gap between the traditional rural masses and the Westernized urban elites. Thus, he gave a call for popular education both

through formal schooling and informal education through mass political participation. Participation of masses in every national and local public activity was central to his alternative development model based on the village economy. The essential approach to socio-political transformation towards creation of such a society was improvement in the methods and conditions of debate, discussion, communication, and persuasion.

Dialogue, trust, humility, persuasive debate and discussion, tolerance and appreciation, equality between protagonists and antagonists, coherence and articulation of statements based on moral truths, assertiveness for all such truths were essential elements of Gandhi's concept of 'Satyagrah' as a political tool to fight injustice. Thus mass literacy requires training in comprehension of a social situation or a text, and based on it further articulation and expression of a speech or a statement coherently to make a case (argument) for asserting a moral truth or one's conviction. It also requires communicative competence in presenting one's viewpoints across others critically and forcefully.

Gandhi also advised the local communities to learn the basic skills of essential crafts, local industry and communicative competence in speech to achieve self-sufficiency and autonomy, both in politics and economy. For this, public participation, mass education and the use of the vernacular were central to Gandhi's approach towards mass mobilisation. Gandhi considered that popular education based

on moral and critical mass communication forms was necessary to relieve the people of their ignorance about the modern state, its laws and institutions, which had left them behind making them feel alienated. According to Gandhi, in a situation of ignorance and alienation, all laws and systems of governance were of little value for the people. He believed that when education becomes an instrument of dominant groups with vested interest in it, it loses its capacity to train individuals develop rational-judgement skills. Public participation in *swaraj* (self-rule) requires that each individual has an unrestrained ethical autonomy to exercise reason and choice rather than conform to some pre-decided pedantic knowledge.

Gandhi found the existing system of

education defective on three counts (see Acharya 1997: 601-606):

- a) It was based on an alien culture, almost to the exclusion of the indigenous languages, traditions and social practices.
- b) In its exclusive emphasis on intellectual and technocratic - managerial training, it had completely ignored the culture of the heart, which is character, and the culture of hands found in artisanal and manual skills.
- c) A popular, creative and useful education was at variance with foreign models of education, influenced by the social and educational philosophies of rich colonial countries, which were divorced from the actual needs of a disadvantaged majority.

Activity 4.4

Do you find that education system in India still suffers from the three defects put forward by Gandhi? If yes, explain your reasons for your views. If not, elaborate what changes have now come about in education system in India.

Gandhi believed that technical and pedantic learning based simply on the 3Rs, (e.g. reading, writing and arithmetic) was unhelpful for the majority of disadvantaged groups in India. Also, learning based on reading of 3Rs and abstract principles, though quite useful for the modern world dominated by a techno-managerial ruling class, had no benefit for the India's majority. Hence mainstream modern schools returned students from lower-class backgrounds as failures. Most school dropouts in India still come from these backgrounds, while a few who successfully climb the ladder because of their sheer hard work and perseverance are permanently alienated from their sub-culture.

In 1936 Gandhi put forward his own alternative scheme of mass elementary education - 'Basic Education' or 'Nai Talim' as he called it. His scheme was quite different from the philosophical ideas of both the Romantic tradition and the Brahmanical tradition. Gandhi emphasized a different aspect of learning usually ignored by earlier traditions. He emphasized that artisan-apprenticeship skills, manual training and related discourses should be the central and the main basis of all primary and elementary education. He believed that in a largely agrarian and poor society like India, communication and manual skills related to artisanal work and vocational training could be the most profitable form of popular education.

This was the philosophical basis of his 'Basic Education' scheme. See Box 4.4 for 3Hs of Education.

Box 4.6 Gandhi's 3Hs of Education

For Gandhi, true education consisted in acculturation and training of the whole person, by which he meant the 3Hs rather than the 3Rs: 'heart' (character), 'hand' (practical skills) and the 'head' (mind). By education of the 'heart', he meant training the 'character' and spiritual or moral advancement, which he placed above all knowledge, whether intellectual or vocational. Gandhi's 3H education is not only inclusive but also broader than Paulo Freire's 'problem-posing' education. Here community economics has priority over political economy, though the essence of both in the Gandhian scheme is the same i.e. to make the individual and the community viably independent.

However, the ultimate goal of education for Gandhi, was 'freedom from fear' (Julian Brotherton 1993: 7). 'The oppressed, having internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom' (compare Freire, 1972: 23). In order to overcome this fear, freedom first requires that people develop economically, morally and socially. Then it requires that people eject their own oppressor's image and replace it with conviction, autonomy and responsibility. Freedom must be 'pursued constantly and responsibly. Freedom is not an ideal located outside of man; nor is it an idea, which becomes myth. Rather it is the indispensable condition for the quest of human completion' (Freire 1972: 23-24). This was a truly radical move. Knowledge of productive handicrafts such as weaving, spinning, leatherwork and pottery in India had earlier been associated with lower caste groups. Knowledge and skills possessed by them were never considered 'worthwhile knowledge' by the upper-castes in India. In fact, we are still so heavily influenced and habituated to the dominant type of schooling that we find it difficult to understand and imagine the Gandhian

scheme of education, which is based on the discourses and skills of lower caste vocational groups. The elitist notion that knowledge and intelligence are personal endowments or personal achievements, and that schools can impart only such print-based knowledge is a 'great conceit' of the dominant intellectual class in the same way 'as that of the commercial class' which thinks 'wealth is something which they personally have wrought and possess' (Dewey 1927: 211).

As far as adult education is concerned, Gandhi said in a speech in 1945 that it should be an 'education for life' through 'close association with life'. 'Education for life' did not mean 'education for the duration of life, but education for the sake of life. ... Adult education is a matter of teaching the art of living' (quoted in Sykes 1988: 51). By the phrase 'education through life' he meant that knowledge for adults couldn't be imported from the outside that all adult education programmes must focus on the communicative functions of language and life-experiences of learners. This also implied that learning must necessarily be carried out in the

mother tongue, also a basic principle of his 'Basic Education' scheme. 'Without the capacity to speak effectively and to read and write correctly and lucidly, no one can develop precision of thought or clarity of ideas' (see Wardha Scheme on Basic National Education, 1937). He did not want the vernacular languages to lose their communicative capacity to flourish and educate the masses.

Gandhi is a good example of a self-directed adult learner. Although Gandhi may not be accepted as an adult educator in the conventional sense of the word, the views on education that he expressed, experimented with, and enforced in practice make him a historical educator. Gandhi's ideas regarding education are radical and revolutionary. Searching the philosophical foundations of education, he starts by asking, "What is the meaning of education and what should be its aim and object?" In Gandhi's view, education means much more than intellectual knowledge. Its primary aim is the building up of character. Education that helps to build up sound character and promotes self-development is true education. And the true education of the individual, which is all round development of personal faculties, is best obtained through action. Gandhi's "scheme of education bases itself on the sound and indisputable fact that knowledge and understanding develop in relation to problems set by action" (Gandhi: 1951).

4.3.2 Rabindra Nath Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore maintained that a wholesome education must educate the mind along with the senses. Tagore was brought up in a family atmosphere where freedom was emphasized - freedom of language, imagination, spirit

and mind. Thus he held that the main purpose of education is to promote freedom, freedom from structured and oppressive school education, freedom from the confined walls of the classroom, freedom for consonance with child's nature, and freedom of movement. Typical of the romantic idealist tradition, Tagore stressed on the natural development of the child, emphasizing spontaneity and creativity as the crux of learning. Tagore's ideas on education were very much in the tradition of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Montessori and Wordsworth and this enabled him to develop a critique of the Anglicized education system in India, not on nationalistic grounds but on universalistic principles (see Krishna Kumar 1991: 161-166; Mani 1961, Salkar 1990, O'Connell, et. al. (eds.) 1989: 89-101). However, some of his thoughts have a direct bearing on primary education and the acquisition of basic skills.

The tragedy with the Tagorean vision was that it was too idealistic and romantic in the context of mass education in India. In Tagore, learning takes a romantic journey under conditions of full freedom but it does not consist of a critical elaboration, a consciousness of what one really is, knowing oneself as a product of historical processes. He wanted to criticize the inhuman face of libertarian education guided by a market economy, which produced competition, division and alienation and accepted foreign domination. But he did not see the hegemonic relationship of education to politics or the political domination of powerful groups in determining the content and curriculum of modern education. Tagore did not give much attention to the political nature of the

state and schools and the values imparted by them. Nonetheless, he rightly pointed out the significance of a learning environment for children to grow freely and creatively, but he conceived of this environment as an island (i.e. a Tapovan) within the modern national and international system, rejecting implicitly any attempt to criticize or even comprehend the system in its political relationship to the power

of different groups or nations. He was also right to point out the need for introducing new teaching methods, which are supported by modern humanist psychologists. His reflections on teaching methods stressing play, group learning, flexible class organization and mother-tongue education were valuable pedagogic contributions to the psychology and philosophy of education.

4.4 Conclusion

Unit 4 has covered major philosophical trends and educational interventions in adult learning in India. It has paid special

attention to the ideas of Indian social thinkers in the context of the need for adult learning in the country.

4.5 Apply What You Have Learnt

- (a) Draw out common elements of educational philosophy in a comparative chart form from the views of John Dewey, M.K. Gandhi and Paulo Freire.
- (b) Conduct at least two informal interviews with any adults and obtain

information related to their philosophy of learning, education, their learning styles and learning attitudes. Do more than two interviews if possible. The product could be a 2-3-page write-up on each interview.



Sociological Background of Adult and Lifelong Learning

SHOBHITA JAIN

Structure



- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Shift from Psychology-oriented Approach to Sociological Understanding
- 5.3 Participation from a Social Perspective
- 5.4 Sociological Approaches
 - 5.4.1 Structural Functionalism
 - 5.4.2 Interpretative Sociology
 - 5.4.3 Theories of Reproduction
 - 5.4.4 Critical Theory of Education
- 5.5 Conclusion
- 5.6 Apply What You Have Learnt

Learning Objectives



After reading Unit 5, it is expected that you would be able to

- ❖ Perceive the process of gradual shifts in understanding adult learning processes
- ❖ Learn about some of the main sociological approaches that are useful in making adult learning more effective
- ❖ Form your own idea of the relationship between adult learning and sociological perspectives.

5.1 Introduction

Unit 3 and Unit 4 have clearly explained that education covers all that we experience from formal schooling to the construction of understanding through day-to-day life. You may say that one's education begins at birth and continues throughout life. Everybody receives education from various sources. It is well known that family members and society influence one's education and so it makes sense to discuss sociological background of adult and lifelong learning as the theme of Unit 5.

We find that globally widening access and participation in adult and lifelong

learning and social inclusion are high on current policy agendas. With rapid technological, economic and social changes in society initial education is now regarded as being inadequate in terms of preparing individuals with the skills and knowledge required for life in a knowledge society. As a result it is necessary to widen access to adult learning opportunities in order to address the changing needs of society. However, who gets access to what type of adult education is a key issue as there is still a learning divide within most societies between different social groups and the

study of sociology provides us an understanding of the nature of this divide.

Assumptions and perceptions which characterize the development of adult and lifelong learning as a distinct field of study have influenced the nature of practice, followed in the actual work situation of adult educators. We find

that often over concern with practical aspects of adult and lifelong learning brings about amongst adult educators a general lack of interest in broader social issues. For example they hardly reflect on the link between social structure, social change and adult learning. This state of affairs is however fast changing and Unit 5 deals with the changed scenario.

5.2 Shift from Psychology-oriented Approach to Sociological Understanding

As you already know that adult education has made a significant shift from earlier individual psychology-oriented approach (see Box 5.1) to the approach that emphasizes participation in adult learning programs from a social perspective. This approach explores how broad social processes affect adults' perceptions of reality. Adult educators are now interested in understanding philosophical foundations of adult learning and lifelong education. Unit 3 and Unit 4 have already covered this dimension of adult educators' quest.

Adult educators are also deeply interested in acquiring an ability to understand and direct the basic processes of education. In other words

they are involved in the refinement of objectives, the selection and application of methods and content of adult learning and in this sense they seek effectiveness in working with one another, with other individuals and groups and with the general public. For this purpose, many adult educators have turned to discovering how structuring of knowledge is linked to both theory and practice of social and cultural patterns of control in society. This is why Unit 5 focuses on this trend among adult educators and discusses the use of sociological theory and method in analysis of education with particular reference to adult and lifelong learning systems and processes.

Box 5.1 Psychology-oriented Approach to Adult Education

If you were to assume that learning derives in a linear manner from research, there arises a great deal of faith in psychology-oriented process-product perspective because it claims to provide results that become prescriptions for practice. Some of you may believe that motivation determines participation of adults in learning and then you may like to explain the concept of motivation in terms of psychological constructs. You may then talk about the general nature of motives and needs and deal with people in abstract and there will be hardly any analysis of psychological processes taking place in concrete specific situations. Such perspectives focus the individual person and stress on motivation and attitudes per se.

5.3 Participation from a Social Perspective

You can on the other hand look at participation in learning from a social perspective and try to find out how the objective world influences our perception of reality. Comparing participants with non-participants in adult learning is only one aspect of inquiry. You may also analyze participation and non-participation in relation to broad social and economic movements. You have already learnt in Unit 4 that Paulo Freire considered education as a political process with political outcomes.

There is, of course, no single comprehensive theory on participation in adult and lifelong learning. Taking a more sociological approach to understanding the issue of participation, you may like to integrate theoretical models in order to arrive at a more balanced perspective and view adult learning as a societal process and at the same time not neglect the individual's psychological conceptual apparatus by looking at the links between the two levels. This will create a balance between aspects of practicability based on assumptions about the characteristics of the learners and broader social processes.

Keeping in mind this holistic approach and re-orientation from psychology-dominated perspective to a more sociological view of adult learning, we will now discuss some of the main currents of thought in sociology that have led to better grasp of issues and concerns of adult education.

Early in the twentieth century, Emile Durkheim (1922) wrote *Education and Sociology* and this was perhaps the earliest attempt to apply sociology to the practice of education, including adult education. For one early example of such application you can cite Waller's (1932) classical study, *Sociology of Teaching*. Another example is the work of Brookover (1949), namely, *Sociology of Education*. In the field of application of sociology in education, including adult education, you can study i) the relation of education to different aspects of society and to the society as a whole. You can also analyze ii) education as a social system as well as iii) the consequences of education for learners.

Let us now discuss some of the main sociological approaches in relation to the above three areas of application of sociological theories and methods in the study of education, including adult education.

Activity 5.1

What is in your opinion a balanced approach to understanding the structure and processes of adult learning? Write a short note of 300 words and compare your note with the notes of fellow PALDIN learners?

5.4 Sociological Approaches

Sociology as a structured social science discipline emerged in the nineteenth century. Now in the first decade of twenty-first century it has branched out

in many sub-disciplines and subjects like education and adult learning have extensively used sociological paradigms to evolve their theory and practice. Let

us discuss some of those sociological approaches which have at one time or other dominated adult learning discourse.

5.4.1 Structural Functionalism

During the early days of adult education structural functionalism was one of its main sociological perspectives. As Dahrendorf (1959: 161) summed up, the assumptions of structural functionalism included that every society is a relatively persistent, well-integrated and stable structure of elements and every element in a society has a function that renders a contribution to its maintenance as a system. Functioning social structure is based on a consensus of values among its members.

Taking the functional dimension of educational institutions, such scholars as Barton and Walker (1978: 271) considered education 'as a mechanism constructed by society to meet the manpower needs appropriate to an expanded economy'. You may consider the variant of functionalism used for finding out social correlates of manpower allocation as 'technological functionalism'. It will suffice to cite one example of the extensive use of functionalist paradigm. Heath (1978: 96) said, 'Indeed it would not be far fetched to suggest that much of (British) Labour Party's policy on education right upto the present day has been influenced if not dominated by technological functionalism'. Ball (1981) indicated in his review of sociology of education in developing countries the impact of functionalism on educational policy.

In the U S A the mainstream sociology of adult education focussed on quantification and positivism. The emphasis on empiricism (The view that

knowledge of the world is limited to what can be observed or experienced. For instance, concepts apply to or derive from an experience - the concept of dizziness applies to the experience of dizziness. The experience must have evoked the concept, or the person must recognize that the concept applies to the experience. Also, beliefs about the world have truth merit only when they are related to someone's experience.) paved the way for building adult education a field of study. There was an increase in the application of statistical methods. Growing empiricism and more advanced statistical methods saw a steady growth of quantitative data based on different kinds of survey. Cropland and Grabowski (1971) observed that the quality of the empirical studies in adult education improved from rather loose case reports to being more analytical and multivariate.

Domination of survey-based studies did not last forever. In search of better alternatives adult education moved away from a focus on quantitative methods to qualitative methods, especially life history and biography. This does not imply that the need for quantitative data diminished. In fact, application of both the quantitative and qualitative methods ensured a better balance in findings of researches in adult education.

Both actor-network theories (see Box 5.2) and the new literacy studies are examples of empirical research. There are in them useful lessons for adult education research that might be derived from approaches developed in the Sociology of Scientific Knowledge. The goals of such research are to enhance our understanding of educational policy and practice as effects of power circulating in networks of human and non-human entities. There

is a critical discussion of some of the concepts and assumptions underpinning both actor-network theories and the new literacy studies. Of course, in this approach some of the problems are not resolved initially, but only identified as issues to be worked through in practice.

You may say that as an example of this approach would be that we map the current government strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills in India onto a framework designed for researching by adult educators.

Box 5.2 Actor Network Theory

Bruno Latour (1993), one of the main exponents of Action Network Theory (ANT), proposed that all objects are hybrid. You can find their ordering in space and time. It is this ordering that comprise the networks through which it becomes possible to say certain things while other things are not said. This position poses major challenges to how you may theoretically conceive the various practices of adult education because ANT asks you to examine the complex relations that constitute practice rather than focus on select factors. As ANT has its roots in the sociology of science and technology, you would find that it has emerged most strongly among those who use notions of cyborg as a metaphor to indicate the hybrid forms of human/ technology actors through which learning takes place.

The tradition in sociology of describing empirically the social, economic and political conditions of society became a hallmark of the work of those engaged in exposing the inequalities of society so that it was possible to change them (see Dennis 1980 and Hammersley

1981). Adult educators found useful the ethnographic tools employed in qualitative research for studying learning processes and the transmission of culture in the home, the adult learning setup and the community (see Box 5.3).

Box 5.3 The Ethnographic Method

Ethnography seeks to understand and represent the points of view of the members of a particular culture. It is primarily an approach to collect and analyze data and as in other types of qualitative research, the data collected are rich in their descriptions of people, places, languages, and events. Ethnographers generally carry out extensive fieldwork during which they listen to, observe and record carefully what people say and do. Their main aim is to make records of their observations of behavior and avoid distortion and ethnocentric bias. In education scholars like Cazden, Hyes and John (1972) have used this classical approach to data collection to examine the social functions of language use in the classroom.

The hallmark of ethnographic method is participant observation. The observer becomes part of the community under study and tries to understand the points of view of its members. For example Michael Armstrong's (1980) book is an account of what he observed among children during one school year to study intellectual growth and its enabling conditions.

Along with participant observation, ethnographers take extensive notes and engage in audio- or videotaping, interview informants and compile biographical data on them, collecting genealogies and life histories, take photographs or make films, administer questionnaires or surveys, and elicit ratings and rankings. All these and other forms of data collection help the ethnographer in obtaining a holistic view of the culture studied. It is interesting to note that ethnographers do not set out to test pre-established

hypotheses. Rather they describe all aspects of the community under study in the greatest detail possible. In this sense they structure and refine their research as they proceed. In other words, their collection and analysis of data influence the design of their study. Adult educators use only some of the ethnographic tools described here to learn about the home, adult learning setup and community contexts of their target groups. For instance, Kirsch and Guthrie (1982) in their study of the on-the-job reading practices of 42 service and clerical workers of the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company in Washington, DC, discovered that the amount of time workers spent engaged in various types of reading activities significantly predicted their performance on related tasks.

As in mainstream sociology, so also in adult education many scholars became aware of severe limitations of structural functionalist perspective. Archer (1981: 272) argued that functionalist model of social structure had two major drawbacks and in her words, 'as a model of social reality it was often inapplicable. As a means of investigating institutional operations it was supremely unhelpful because the notion of mutual determinism made it impossible to question which other parts of society influenced education most, when, where and under what conditions'. Another critic, Silverman (1970: 67) observed, 'Functionalists direct our attention to the consequences rather than to the causes of social phenomena'.

Keeping in line with the general trends

of positivistic paradigm facing serious criticisms in the social sciences, adult education too endeavored to look in other directions. One such direction was the revival of Marxist theory (discussed later in sub-section 5.4.3) that emphasized the study of conflict, power, control and the impact of social structure on adult education processes. Another more popular approach was in the direction of 'new sociology' or interpretative perspective that focussed on structuring of knowledge and symbols in institutions of adult learning and their relationship with principles and practices of bio-cultural control in society (see Beck et al. 1976, Barton and Lawn 1980-81). The streams of symbolic interactionism, phenomenology and ethnomethodology influenced the works of interpretativists.

Activity 5.2

Take one example of quantitative work in adult education and describe its usefulness for your understanding of the field of adult education. Then, consider its limitations. After this short exercise, take one example of qualitative work in adult education. After viewing its explanatory usefulness and limitations, work out how both examples serve to enrich your ability to comprehend the dynamics of processes in adult education. Apart from going through the two examples, you need to write at least 500 words to discuss strengths and weaknesses of both works and to state their ability to enhance your understanding of your profession.

5.4.2 Interpretative Sociology

The focus of interpretative sociology is on the subjective meaning as basic for obtaining an understanding of the social world. In opposition to structural functionalism, all varieties of

interpretative sociology view individuals as creators of meanings and emphasize the assumptions underlying social order. By and large, they suspect quantitative approach and avoid like bad virus the use of objective categories. There is a

predominant stress on the transmission and acquisition of interpretative procedures.

Believing with Heidegger (1962) some in adult education found it logical to consider all human experience to be interpretative and it became clear that it was not possible, for example, to go further without making some assumptions about what comprises a learning experience. Instead of suspending the activity of making preliminary assumptions, it was then considered better to continuously share them. This exercise of sharing the

assumptions made more transparent the biases and also helped in identifying the points of agreement and disagreement. Instead of trying to uncover and describe the pure and objective essence, the interpretativist approach made it easier to become more open to challenges arising from new data and to construct a plausible understanding of the adult learning phenomenon.

You would find that phenomenological orientation (see Box 5.4) is hand in glove with the general emphasis on individual learner in adult education.

Box 5.4 Phenomenology

Phenomenology involves our understanding all phenomena (appearances, usually objects of sense experiences) from the point of view of those who have experienced them. Phenomenologists hold that a rich and fuller grasp of any human phenomenon requires that you examine people's lived experiences (see Gadamer, 1990; Heidegger, 1962, 1972; Husserl, 1931, 1970, 1973; Moustakas, 1994, Van Maanen, 1990). Since the purpose of adult and lifelong learning is to gain a full understanding of the phenomenon of adult learning, phenomenological inquiry appears to be very appropriate.

In North America and Europe, the *Discovery of Grounded Theory* by Glaser and Strauss (1968) influenced some educators to abandon the logico-deductive procedure of verifying theory and prefer the method of generating theory from data. Thus they opted for inductive approach and by and large used the concept of grounded theory as a synonym of qualitative approach (though Glaser and Strauss had made it clear that both quantitative and qualitative types of data were equally useful for verifying and generating theory). It was firmly held that using the strategy of grounded theory adult education could arrive at generalizations from experiences in practice (this approach fitted well the usual practice-based orientation of adult educators). According to Rubenson (1980) there was, however, little effort

on the part of adult educators to actually generate theories from data collected from experiences in practice.

Several interpretative orientations involve the study of interactions. The 'new' sociological orientation in adult education made it possible to draw concepts also from symbolic interactionism (see Box 5.5). Harre and Secord (1972: 151) held that social behavior is an outcome of individuals' monitoring of their activities. Monitoring individuals evaluate the meanings of social situations in which they find themselves. They make choices among various ways available for behaving and also improve upon their choices as per new situations. Invariably individuals possess a plurality of social identities and present an appropriate identity as per their self-monitoring of their performances.

Box 5.5 Symbolic Interactionism

Based on Crotty (1998: 72-78), the following introduction to Symbolic Interactionism will give you an idea of its origin and salient features.

Symbolic interactionism originated in the work of George Herbert Mead (1863-1931). Herbert Blumer (1900-1987) translated and disseminated the ideas of G. H. Mead. These ideas bear testimony to North American philosophy of pragmatism. In this philosophy there is the exploration of the authentic meaning of ideas and values in relation to their practical outcomes and context.

In Symbolic interactionism, you view society or the exchange of significant gestures as that makes individualism, consciousness and self-consciousness possible. Self-consciousness becomes possible via an internalization of significant gestures. You would have noticed that children internalize social attitudes and institutions through role play. In role play (for example, children play 'doctor-doctor' or 'mummy-daddy' etc) children act out the roles of 'generalized others' and relate them to broader social institutions. Symbolic interactionism makes a case for understanding experience and social phenomenon from the perspective of the role of the actor(s) in the situation.

Symbolic interactionism represents a research methodology that has developed within the larger field of ethnography and shares with it the idea that you cannot reduce each culture to some general pattern and compare it with other cultures. This means that each culture is irreducible and incomparable and we can only understand each culture from within. In order to view culture from within, we need to step in the shoes of the other or 'get inside' how the culture views the world.

Symbolic interactionism emphasizes the study of roles, cultural scripts, interaction between roles or actors, social rules or games, players and rituals. This research methodology has also inspired the dramaturgical approach (especially of Erving Goffman), game theory, negotiated order theory and labeling theory. It has also given impetus to grounded theory (see Glaser and Strauss 1968).

Some of interpretative sociologists emphasize the ethnomethodological perspective (see Box 5.6), which examines the methods we use to find out how people define a situation.

Ethnomethodologists assume that people use interpretative structures to construct meaning and it is possible to generalize such structures.

Box 5.6 Ethnomethodology

Ethnomethodology investigates the reality of everyday social life. In this sense, ethnomethodology does good ethnography and shows how it is done. Garfinkel (1967) argued that social structure is what members perceive it to be and it changes according to interpretations actors provide. Garfinkel bared and unmasked 'the invisible commonplace by violating it in some manner until it betrays its presence' (Gouldner 1971: 392).

In a critique of ethnomethodology Gidlow (1972: 402) said that depiction of the reality of everyday life does not by itself ensure its realistic picture because it is quite possible that the ethnomethodologist has not correctly understood the interpretation of the world by the actors or the actors have misinformed the ethnomethodologist.

5.4.3 Theories of Reproduction

Althusser (1972: 245-246) held that in modern societies the educational system is the dominant ideological state apparatus and each group coming out of educational institutions carries the burden of ideology that is appropriate to the role it is supposed to play in society. The ruling class inculcates its ideology through a variety of know-how so that the relations between exploited and exploiters are reproduced. Though we may generally believe that educational institutions are mostly devoid of ideology, according to Althusser ((1972: 260-261) the mechanisms of ideological domination by capitalist regime are hidden behind the supposedly neutral position of educational setups. Giroux (1981: 5) has pointed out Althusser's failure of giving recognition to the possibility of human struggle and resistance. Both Sharp (1980) and Willis (1981) have criticized Althusser for not exploring the autonomy and struggle of educational setups. Gintis (1972) made a case for examining the social relations of education that produce and reinforce the attitudes, values and capacities which enable individuals to move in class-stratified society. Gintis (1972: 131) claimed that 'the educational system helps to integrate youth into the economic system through a structural correspondence between its social relations and those of production'. Apple (1980-1981) has on the other hand pointed out that it is important to examine the dynamic interplay between education and economy and we should not reduce the complexity of this relationship to the level of practice alone. He draws our attention to learners' creativity to control their learning environment. Arnot and Whitty

(1982) have shown that the principle of correspondence between education and capitalist economy has not been able to explain the conflicts and contradictions between education and economy. Of course in classical Marxian theory of superstructure contradictions in the economic system influence other areas of social world but education system can hardly influence the reproduction system as a whole. So we are not surprised that Gintis and Bowles (1980: 55) failed to discover a key contradiction in the relationship between education and economy. All the same theories of social reproduction did influence the study of understanding the relationship between education and economy, even if the perspective was quite limited and it did not explain the complex role of education in reproducing prevailing social formations.

Some of the limitations of reproduction perspectives were overcome by theories of cultural reproduction. Making persistent efforts to integrate micro-and macro-cosmic levels of analysis, Bernstein (1977) emphasized the study of both the structural and interactional aspects of social life. But Bernstein confined his analysis to class only and did not pay attention to how ideological forms of patriarchal and race domination interact with class (see Willis 1981: 57). Bourdieu (1973) has on the other hand brought out clearly the specific role of sociology of education in the study of the relations between cultural reproduction and social reproduction. You can discern this in the contribution of the educational system to the reproduction of the structure of power relationships and symbolic relationships between classes.

According to Swartz (1977), theoretical framework of Bourdieu deals with i)

cultural background or academic background, ii) educational system as the basis for controlled and limited social mobility and iii) social class background as mediated through influences of educational environment. As Swartz (1977: 554) has argued Bourdieu has put forward basically a functionalist

perspective, though at a deeper level.

Critics of social and cultural theories of reproduction moved sociologists of education to another level of discourse, namely, critical theory of education. We will discuss this development in the next sub-section.

Activity 5.3

Write in about 200 words your understanding of interpretative sociology. What are the various streams of interpretative sociology? Answer this question with suitable examples.

5.4.4 Critical Theory of Education

Attempts to study and analyze structural features of education and the relationship between education and economy have led to persistent focus on social inequalities. Many of us have looked at educational setups as places where we learn norms, attitudes and values related to economic order. Apple (1981: 34) has pointed out that this view fails to recognize that educational setups contribute also to the production of technical/ administrative knowledge that we need to expand markets, control production, labour and people and to create consumerism-driven needs among the population. In other words, processing of knowledge involves more than its distribution among different types of people. It includes production, control and accumulation of knowledge by those in power.

Following neo-Marxist perspectives Giroux (1981: 22) has made a case for studying how educational setups sustain and produce ideologies and how hegemony in any of the processes is not indicative of a solidary force. Contradictions and tensions of hegemonic forces generate counter-hegemonic struggle and that is how we witness the distinction between ideology and hegemony. Both hegemony and

ideology reflect the political nature of educational setups. Generally we end up studying one or the other aspect of the hegemonic process, whereas Giroux (1981: 27) argues that we need to focus on the dynamic nature of the antagonistic relationships that you can find in the daily running of educational setups. Adult educators may find themselves somewhere in between the two positions, namely, i) a desire to participate in social reform type of efforts to bring about just social order without trying for structural changes in its nature and ii) to join in revolution for total social change.

Weber (1948), in his analysis of the structure of social groups, showed that the dominant social group universalizes its cultural ideals through establishment of such pedagogical system that would cultivate among the people those ideals. In other words Weberian thesis is that dominant social groups hold the power to decide the nature of values of the educational system and therefore those in subordinated groups are mostly in the position of disadvantage if they do not subscribe or cannot access the standards set by dominant groups. Inspired by Weberian ideas, Collins (1977: 127) held that insofar as a status group has control over an educational setup, it would

attempt to decide the educational requirements for employment of its learners. In this sense, on the basis of differences among the series of competing interests it is possible to explain the differences among the main types of educational structures in the modern times. In the spirit of a neo-Weberian perspective, Archer (1981) has argued that as Weber always emphasized exploration of larger events, those of us subscribing to Weberian ideas need

to study the interplay between the roots and processes of educational system and also examine the relationship between the micro- and macro-levels of those systems. Combining the functionalist and Marxian ideas of structural constraints on social action with phenomenological stress on the subjective meaning of social action, King (1980: 7) has made a case for adopting Weberian perspective to explain educational processes.

Activity 5.4

Do you think that there is a link between education and economy? Would adult education in India be better organized and its programmes better implemented if we appreciate the dynamics of relationships between these two domains of society? Where will you place the importance of cultural aspects of both the educational system and economic structures? Write your answers after reading and critically considering all sub-sections of the section 5.4 of Unit 5.

5.5 Conclusion

In their search for evolving a theoretical orientation of integrating micro- and macro-cosmic levels of education, adult educators have yet to build upon the various sociological advances discussed above and arrive at a refinement of quantitative and qualitative methodology of adult education. The tension between policy/ practice-oriented studies and fundamental research-oriented works continues and efforts to build a theoretically firm

sociological base have not yet yielded substantial results. Adult education is still considered as a means of taking urgent socio-economic measures for giving boost to development. This is particularly so in developing countries like India where despite substantial progress adult learning and lifelong education have to give priority to solving the problems of illiteracy, poverty, unemployment, malnutrition and hunger.

5.6 Apply What You Have Learnt

Our account of sociological background of adult and lifelong learning has included several briefs on different sociological perspectives which have been put to use in examining social aspects of education system. You may like to select one of the perspectives and apply it to the study

of current status of adult learning in your particular region. It is true that in India, despite some great experiences in its literacy and vocational programmes, not all regions have had similar growth in setting up adult learning centers and then sustaining

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them for generating innovative methods of creating knowledge and skills in the field of adult learning. In this sense, it will be very useful to learn in detail about developments in adult and lifelong

learning in your region. Write an essay of about 1,000 words on this theme and try and incorporate at least one of the sociological perspectives discussed in Unit 5.



6 UNDERSTANDING THE COMMUNITY

PRAMILA AGGARWAL

Structure



- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 What is Community?
- 6.3 Types of Community
 - 6.3.1 Geographic Community or a Neighborhood
 - 6.3.2 Community of Identity
 - 6.3.3 Community of Interest or Solidarity
 - 6.3.4 Intentional Community
- 6.4 How to Work Effectively in the Community?
 - 6.4.1 Begin by Posing Questions
 - 6.4.2 Ask Yourself
- 6.5 Community Needs Assessment and Community Assets Mapping
 - 6.5.1 Creating Community Space
 - 6.5.2 Diversity
 - 6.5.3 Power Structure
- 6.6 Community Participation
- 6.7 Conclusion
- 6.8 Apply What You Have Learnt

Learning Objectives



After going through Unit 6, it is expected that you would be able to

- ❖ Analyze your community
- ❖ Identify the diversity in community in which you work
- ❖ Apply your understanding and analysis in your practice and become more effective in your work as adult educators
- ❖ Recognize your own status/role in the community and its significance to your work in the community.

6.1 Introduction

Purpose of Unit 6 is firstly to engage you in the notion of community that is dynamic and diverse in every aspect: class, religion, age, gender, language, and caste and secondly to provide some tools and strategies to be more effective in your role as adult educators. Section

6.2 to section 6.3 cover the first objective of the lesson and section 6.4 and Section 6.5 introduce tools and strategies to apply the concept of ‘community’ to your work as an adult educator.

6.2 What is Community?

Please examine the following definitions/descriptions of community and see the degree to which they apply to your specific community. You may find that they may not apply to your situation in their entirety.

- ❖ Community is a concept to describe a social organization that is considered fundamental to traditional to Indian society such as *jati*, village or religious sect. Such communities are often regarded as natural grouping based on ties of shared blood, language, history, territory and above all, culture. (Upadhyaya, 2006)
- ❖ In their edited book, *Lives in Context: the Art of Life History Research*, Coles and Knowles (2001: 11) define community as ‘Clusters of individual lives make-up communities, societies and cultures. To understand some of the complexities, complications, and confusions within the life of just one member of a community is to gain insights into the collective’.
- ❖ Bill Lee (1992) defines community, simply as a group of people who have something in common.
- ❖ In Greek language it means “fellowship” or a group of people who come together for mutual support and to fulfill their basic needs.
- ❖ For Boothroyd (1990) a community is ‘A Human system of more than two people in which the members interact personally over time, in which behavior and activity are guided by collectively- evolved norms or collective decisions, and from which members may freely secede’.

- ❖ Roberts (1979) sees a community as ‘a collection of people who have become aware of some problem or some broad goal, who have gone through a process of learning about themselves and about their environment, and have formulated a group objective’.

As we can see from a sample above, community as a concept connotes a wide range of meanings. It is popular in several academic disciplines as well as in everyday usage. While for some, it takes a long time for individuals to form a community, for others it is possible to create easily and fast: such is the case when real state developers use it to describe new buildings in terms of community “a community coming near you”. They use community as a product or a commodity to be bought, sold or exchanged in the market. Often it is used to describe an organization or institution such a workplace, a school or a college or university to imply a common spatial bond. At other times we use it to talk about people who have share a common characteristic such as religion. caste or language.

You will also discover that the concepts of community, identity, and culture are used interchangeably in literature. The literature on nature and function of Community can be divided into roughly two opposing views. While some believe that it is natural and key to human welfare, others argue that communities are non-democratic and stifle individual growth and freedom. Our objective is to become familiar with these debates. Several scholars have examined the complex and fluid nature of community as a concept because it and lends itself to quite varied interpretations. More

recently it has become prominent in the field of International Development, reconstruction of war torn countries by the west, either as a suffix or a prefix, building communities for example. One thing is certain; it stands for something good and desirable. You might have come across phrases such as: community development, community capacity building, community economic development etc.

However, we can't assume that community is always benign and supportive. Just like many families, it can be oppressive too. A community may hold on to value system that is patriarchal, repressive, exclusive and undemocratic. In short, it may mirror all the ills in the larger society. Individuals have may have no choice in their affiliation to a community/ culture or how they are perceived by the world outside. Furthermore, it is assumed that individuals have a choice about their

belonging; that they willingly join a community similar to joining an organization such as a trade union or a social club. This assumption can be false as individuals may not be conscious of their "membership" to a particular community with which they are assumed to feel an affinity. In fact, at times we might be quite upset and horrified when we get seen as part of a certain community. For example because of my Muslim name, I am seen as having sympathy with "terrorist" and assumed to be pro Pakistan, resulting in my being isolated from the larger community. It is not only those "ignorant" people out there who make assumptions about people they know nothing about, we (educators) too carry stereotypes and prejudices and being aware of and being conscious of our own baggage is a good place to start. Let us now look at the various types of community.

6.3 Types of Community

Before we move on to the types of communities, it is worth mentioning that all communities are dynamic in nature. They act, interact, evolve and change as a result of larger political and economic forces as well as internal and external forces.

Broadly speaking there are three types of communities. These are not mutually exclusive as we all are members of these types concurrently. For example: I am an older woman who likes to walk in the park in Shahadra. As I live in Shahadra, it makes me a member of that geographic community. As I meet other older women in the park, it makes me a member of a community of interest as well as identify. You will find that all of us have several interests and

identities and therefore belong to many communities simultaneously. At the same time our interests change and so do identity. We will develop these ideas in some detail.

6.3.1 Geographic Community or a Neighborhood

It is the only type of community about which there is agreement amongst scholars. It has physical boundaries by which make it distinct or separate, such as a river, a street. In a town there might be several neighborhoods, each with some special attributes: caste, religion, rich and poor. In addition, a neighborhood usually has a diverse population with individuals and groups occupying different physical space. It is

important to observe who in a village or a section of a city or town, lives in a cleaner part, and who lives near an open sewer, or who has more space and who has less; how far or close they are from

the centre of the village; how much they have to walk to get water etc. It can be instructive in seeing certain patterns of physical exclusion and marginalization.

Activity 6.1

Conduct a mapping exercise of your geographical community. All you need to do is to walk and observe. Plan to spend a couple of hours to complete a walk about. You may want to return at different times of the day. Given below is a checklist for the community observation exercise.

- ❖ What are the natural features of the area such as trees, hills, rivers etc?
- ❖ Are there any key landmarks or points of reference such as a community centre, parks, places of worship, historic buildings?
- ❖ What is the population density? Are there a lot of people in a small space.
- ❖ What groups of people live there? Not their caste, religion, language, ages and other diversities that you notice?
- ❖ What level of activity do you notice on the street? Do people sit out on front steps, public benches, sit under trees? Where do children play?
- ❖ Where do people gather? Bus stop, places of worship, grocery shops etc
- ❖ Are there schools, post office, grocers, banks, medical/health facilities, and parks?
- ❖ What transportation options are available? Are there adequate roads, bus and train connection? How do residents get around?
- ❖ Do residents have access to adequate food and shelter? What kind of housing do people have?
- ❖ What does the community look like? Is it clean or dirty, old or new, well maintained or does it need repair?

Within a geographic community, you will find both communities of identity and community of interest as well as examples of intentional community.

6.3.2 Community of Identity

It implies common identifiable characteristics or attributes such as having in common a culture. By culture we mean: language, music, religion, customs, etc. Identity can be based on age, gender, and sexuality. It does not mean that an individual necessarily

identifies with the community to which s/he is perceived to belong. A woman may not feel any thing in common with other women except that all women are female.

Community of identity may or may not be geographically bound. For example, I as a woman identify with women in my immediate location but may not feel an affinity with women in Russia, partly because I do not know them or their culture.

Activity 6.2

You could begin with yourself. Examine your identity in terms of your gender, class, age, sexuality, education, religion, caste, politics, and language. You might discover that depending on the context one or more of these elements get more importance than others. Make a note of situations where you are most comfortable and where you are least comfortable.

6.3.3 Community of Interest or Solidarity

It incorporates social movements such as women's rights, political party, peace, and environment, saving trees or public education. A community of interest is present concurrently in different geographical spaces. Individuals may be connected to their interest community at the local, and or global level.

Community of interest can be formal or informal or both. In all cases, individuals become a part of this community voluntarily. Individual level on involvement may vary from being very active to being sporadic or passive. See Box 6.1 about what you need to consider while thinking about your community of interest.

Box 6.1 Your Community of Interest

- Do you have a group of people you meet, see, speak to, e-mail, share information, or phone on a regular basis?
- What do you get out of these contacts?
- What do you give in return?
- How long have you been part of this group?

6.3.4 Intentional Community

In addition to the above three types of community, there is, what observers call an intentional community. In this type of community, individuals come together voluntarily and are supportive of each

other. Members may share interests as well as identity and or a geographical location. For example mothers of young children get together once a week or student form a study group or retired seniors meet in a local park.

Activity 6.3

After going through Section 6.3 on the different types of community think of two examples of each type and write a short note of 200 words on each of your example.

6. 4 How to Work Effectively in the Community?

Adult educators need to get a thorough understanding of the physical, socio-economic and political dimensions of the community. They need to understand that individuals and groups in a given community have different level of power based on caste, gender, age, education, religion etc. Adult educators need to consider all these differences when they engage with learners. It is your professional obligation to understand your community, yourself and your

relation to the community.

6. 4.1 Begin by Posing Questions

While working with a community, you would like to begin your understanding of the community by asking some of the following questions relating to the program you are carrying out.

What are the reasons for the Program?

Who is funding it and for how long?

What is expected of you?

6. 4. 2 Ask Within

After clarifying the situation about the program you are dealing with, you need to do a bit of introspection and ask yourself the following questions.

What do I expect of myself?

What are my reasons for taking up this job?

What are my hopes?

What are my fears?

It is very normal and natural to feel nervous and apprehensive. The predominant emotion amongst community developers/activists when they first start working in a community is that of fear: fear of not being accepted by community members. How do you overcome or manage this fear? See Box 6.2 for a few suggestions

Box 6.2 Suggestions to Overcome Fear

- ❖ Learn as much as you can about the village/town, about its demography, politics, economy, values, cultures, and local power structure. Here, get a feel for important issues such as young men leaving the village or lack of access to clean water.
- ❖ Talk to people who have either worked there before or are currently working.
- ❖ Identify a couple of local leaders who are willing to help you with outreach.
- ❖ Listen.
- ❖ Attend gatherings, events, meetings, celebrations, festivals
- ❖ Keep a journal of your observations and your own feelings.

In case you do not have an opportunity to learn about the community before you start your job, you can do it after you start. Don't worry. Knowing and understanding a community is a life long process. Communities are dynamic and are always changing, just like us. It is not unusual to feel overwhelmed when

you first meet or enter a new community. You will want to solve all the problems and feel frustrated because you are unable to make much or any perceptible difference. At such times, patience and passion will see you through.

6. 5 Community Needs Assessment and Community Assets Mapping

It is very normal to focus on “what is wrong” or “they don't have this or that”. However, it is important to remember that while communities have needs, they also have assets. It is much harder to get at the assets as these are usually not visible and self evident. In these situations adult educator can play

a crucial by facilitating the process of community discovering its strengths and riches in skills and resources. In order to obtain a map of community assets, it will be helpful if you complete Activity 6.4 on community analysis that will facilitate your obtaining a list of community assets.

Activity 6.4

Carry out a Community Analysis of your neighborhood/ section of your town/ a small village. Here is a sample of topics to cover in your exercise. You may include more topics if necessary. This exercise is different from the community walk that you conducted to understand your geographical community. This exercise builds on the observations gathered during your community walk. It gives you a more in depth look at the community.

- ❖ Geographic, corporate, jurisdictional boundaries
- ❖ Demographics, statistics, subgroups
- ❖ History, community strengths
- ❖ Political structure, governance
- ❖ Economic structure, major or key employers
- ❖ Community action organizations
- ❖ Civic and service problems

6. 5.1 Creating Community Space

You can create a welcoming and inclusive space if you were to keep in mind two principles: beauty and order. By beauty, we mean that the physical space is aesthetically pleasing. You can invite participants for ideas. You are bound to find people who are really artistic and creative. The second principle, order means that the space is kept tidy and orderly. When participants leave, they should ensure that their space is clean, all the things are in their proper place. In order that it is experienced as a community space, invite participants to take turns to organize the space every time you meet. You are trying to develop a sense of ownership amongst participants as well as conveying to them that their ideas/ opinions matter at every step. Sometimes getting space itself is a challenge. Obviously, you will not be able to solve such issues alone. You will also need to consider such issues of access, suitability and appropriateness of space. Here, your community analysis will be of great asset, as it will help you identify spaces that are most inclusive, where most participants can come without hesitation. Issue of safety, not only physical safety but psychological safety is a key issue. A site that is not

associated with a particular, for example, an upper caste land owner, or a religion, is worth exploring.

6.5.2 Diversity

It is really important to understand and appreciate diversity of participants in your programs. By diversity we mean, aspects such as different caste, religion, gender, age, access to resources, ways in which people make a living, ability, proximity to people with influence in the community etc. You will need to develop effective strategies to reach out to those who individuals and groups who are usually left out of decision-making, or have very little say in the life of the community. In most cases, these individuals or groups are women, the poor, and people with disabilities. A few concepts will greatly help in understanding the socio-psychology of such individuals and groups.

6.5.3 Power Structure

In most known societies and communities there is inequality amongst its members. This inequality is based on unequal distribution of wealth and resources. Quite often you will find that individuals with money dominate those

individuals and groups who do not have access to wealth. However, wealth is only one of several indicators of power; other being, male, and upper caste, When all three elements come together, we have a situation of absolute power. In order to maintain power, these individuals and groups need to keep others in their place. They do so by systemically oppressing and exploiting them. Oppression is generally understood as the domination of subordinate groups in society by a powerful group. Oppression occurs when one group in a society owns most of the land and businesses because of their dominant status accrued to them by their social location such as their caste, religion, ethnicity gender, family history, education etc. They make decisions on behalf of others, occupy political offices and are able to exclude individuals and groups from participating in the life of their community/ society and country. If and when the excluded groups raise their voice to correct the wrongs done to them, the dominant group resorts to direct and indirect violence to maintain their power.

Over time oppression and exclusion can lead to internalized oppression amongst the oppressed groups. In *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, Michael Reich (1976) pointed out that “ what has to be explained is not the fact the man who is hungry steals or the fact that who is exploited strikes, but why the majority of those who are hungry don’t steal and why majority of those who

are exploited do not strike.” What one needs to ask is why majority of oppressed accept the rule of minority elite, even when it is clear that it is against their interest to do so.

We are sure you will be able to find plenty of examples of this phenomenon in your community. You may want to record these instances of manifest internalized oppression. Here is an example for you to consider: a worker in a factory does not get paid wages for two weeks. His employer tells him, “I have no money. I will pay you in a few weeks”. Another few weeks go by and there is still no money. Often, you will find the worker sympathizing with the employer with sentiments such as, “He is a good man. He is really hard up. I am sure he will pay as soon as he has money etc”. Meanwhile the worker is falling behind on his rent while the employer may be stressed but continues to live his life as always.

We need be aware of the every day consequences of internalized oppression. Internalized oppression often leads to affected people’s alienation from their environment. It may manifest itself in many forms: mistrust of people from their own group, apathy, anger, sullenness etc. Obviously, these behaviors can be very challenging for adult educator when she is trying to get a program started. We hope that this insight into the socio psycho dimension of marginal and subordinated groups, will allow you to be persistent and creative.

6.6 Community Participation

Active community participation is the key to building an empowered community. In any innovative programme not only participation of

community is a requirement but also it is critical to the success of that programme. Studies show that communities with high rates of

participation apply for and receive, more funding than communities with less participation. In addition, participating communities achieve greater citizen satisfaction with their community. Adult literacy and education programs as such require greater participation by local communities without which the programme stands to lose its ground. The National Policy on Education (1986) also emphasized greater participation of local communities.

Community participation also involves democratic decentralization of power and responsibilities. In participating communities all groups are involved and responsibilities are divided to ensure engagement of special talents and interests of contributing organizations. Participating communities have many centers of activity and community action engages the natural enthusiasm and talents of citizens. This type of community involvement also got publicized easily as they conduct their work more openly. Here citizens are well informed about the community's work and about their opportunities for personal involvement in meaningful roles. Participating communities encourage citizens to offer their best for the common good. All ideas are treated with respect and welcomed as a source of inspirations with potential value for the entire community.

6.7 Conclusion

After explaining the concept of community, we discussed different types of community and prepared the ground for working effectively in the community. Lastly we elaborated on carrying out the processes of assessing community needs and mapping community assets. Unit 9 has thus explained how you can analyze your

Furthermore, in community participation everybody are welcomed regardless of color, age, race, prior community involvement, level of education, occupation, personal relation, handicap, religion or any other factor. In this process, as the people relies that discrimination and other factors would stop other people to participate, they actively reach out to all citizens to encourage their participation. Here leaders are not ego-driven but focused on operating a high-quality, open decision-making process. Hence, they are not carried away by any single organization, group or philosophy and their leadership is supposed to facilitate divergent viewpoints and ideas. In adult education programs where area-wise and local-specific ideas needs to be encouraged, community participation is a must and it has to be inter-woven in the philosophy and methodology of implementation. But for this, inclusive participation has to be built in to create and support meaningful volunteer opportunities. We have many examples and instances in the implementation of adult education programs all over India where volunteers were so self-motivated with enthusiasm and dedication that after the successful completion of that phase it was difficult to canalize their creativity. Of all the empowerment principles, perhaps, community participation is the best method to follow.

ground for working effectively in the community. Lastly we elaborated on carrying out the processes of assessing community needs and mapping community assets. Unit 9 has thus explained how you can analyze your

community and identify the elements of diversity in your work situation. This process is to facilitate your understanding the way of making your work more effective and efficient. It

would also make possible for you to define your own status and role in the community and in turn you can view its significance to your work in the community.

6.8 Apply What You Have Learnt

Unit 5 has dealt with very important aspects of the work of adult educators and very simply it has provided you in practical terms some tools and strategies to make your performance more effective. To take advantage of this learning we suggest that you carry out

an exercise to discuss in 600 words the power structure of the community that you are working with and also explain how your understanding of the power structure facilitates your work as adult educator.



READING MATERIAL FOR NEO-LITERATE AND SEMI-LITERATE ADULTS

SHALINI JOSHI & MALINI GHOSE

Structure

- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Neo-literates and Semi-literates
 - 7.2.1 The Adult and Continuing Education Department's Categories of Adult Learners
 - 7.2.2 Content and Style of Material available to Neo-literate and Semi-literate Adults
 - 7.2.3 Some Statistics about Adult Learners
- 7.3 Adult Educators to Bridge the Information Gap
 - 7.3.1 Issue of Gender in Literacy Materials
 - 7.3.2 Issues of Language in Literacy Materials
 - 7.3.3 Language and Communication
- 7.4 Feedback of Adult Learners on Materials Produced for Adult Learning
- 7.5 Apply What You Have Learnt

Learning Objectives

It is expected that after reading Unit 7, you will be able to

- ❖ Reflect on your role as an adult educator in the process of creating material for neo literate and semi literate adults
- ❖ Examine existing material available for neo literate and semi literate adults
- ❖ Develop an understanding of the principles of writing for adult readers.

7.1 Introduction

Design of Unit 7 enables adult educators to appreciate the special needs of semi literate and neo literate adults for 'appropriate' reading material. The unit provides a context to the issues related to creation of reading material for adults. It will also lead you to develop a critical

perspective on mainstream reading materials. Unit 6 focuses on the following two main issues.

- (a) Issues related to the availability of reading material for neo literate and semi literate adults
- (b) Content and style of material available for adult readers

7.2 Neo-literates and Semi-literates

A neo-literate is an adult or an adolescent who did not or could not make use of the available educational opportunities on time, and who at a later stage acquired the skills of literacy through formal or non-formal approaches. Majority of neo-literates are economically poor and live in rural areas or urban slums. A large number of adult women who became literate after participating in the Total Literacy Campaign in the 1990s are neo

literates. Neo literates have fragile levels of literacy. In the absence of 'appropriate' reading material, such learners can easily relapse into illiteracy.

Semi literate is that adult or adolescent who has low levels of formal education. School drop outs or those who have studied up to the 5th or the 8th standard constitute this category of learners. Here too the lack of practice in reading and writing overtime can easily lead to the loss of literacy skills.

Activity 7.1

What image comes to mind when you think of a neo literate or a semi literate person? Write down your response in not more than 2-3 minutes.

7.2.1 The Adult and Continuing Education Department's Categories of Adult Learners

The Adult and Continuing Education Department of the Government of India has divided learners into three categories according to their levels of literacy and numeracy.

- ❖ **Level I** includes those who have the ability to read and write words/ sentences using most frequent letters and vowel signs; read and write numbers up to 50; write ones own name.
- ❖ **Level II** has those who have the ability to read and write words and

sentences, almost all the letters, all vowel signs and some conjunct letters; read and write up to 100 and do simple addition and subtraction up to 100; write names of family members and ones address.

- ❖ **Level III** includes those who can read and comprehend a small passage (usually text/ newspaper headings, road signs etc; compute simple problems of multiplication and division involving numbers up to 100; apply skills of writing and numeracy in day to day activities .i.e. writing letters, filling forms etc.

Activity 7.2

Part 1: What according to you is the kind of material that neo literate and semi literate adults like to read? Make a list of all such material.

Part 2: What is the kind of material that you like to read? You may have more than one favorite, so make a list of everything that you like to read. This list does not refer to material that you read as part of your work, for example teaching learning material, curricula, primers etc. In your list include material that you enjoy reading.

Questions

- i. Is there a difference in the two lists?
- ii. Is the second list longer than the first?
- iii. Is there more variety in the type of material in the second list?
- iv. Does the first list include reading material that is more functional in nature?

Reflect

If the answer to all or most of the questions is YES, there is a need to reflect and understand the divide between 'us' and 'them'.

7.2.2 Content and Style of Material available to Neo-literate and Semi-literate Adults

Material that is specially created for neo and semi literate readership is usually exceedingly dull, and preaches worthy messages which are deemed necessary (by 'us') for the poor ('them') to help them improve their lives. There is also a tendency to tell readers about the way things 'should' be. Cleanliness, hygiene, family planning, and vaccination are often the subject matter of such publications. The image of rural people as being ignorant, dirty and lazy is often reinforced. Women's issues are seldom discussed, and women are almost always portrayed within the stereotyped context of performing household tasks, or being part of the scenery instead of central to the plot itself.

Compare this material to what 'we', the educated, like to read. We are literally spoiled for choice. Far more information is available than we can possibly read and digest. We are curious to hear about news from the wider world and about current events. And we like to read for entertainment - novels, romance, thrillers and science fiction; we regard access to enjoyable and useful reading matter as an inalienable right.

Why then should readers in rural areas have such a limited range of reading material available to them? Why is 'their' need different from 'ours'? Why is their right to literacy and education not complemented by an equally important

right to regular access to enjoyable and informative reading material? We need to reflect on these questions.

The divide between what readers want and what is provided for them, and the underlying notions of 'doing good' and 'bettering people's lives', reflects in most of the little reading material published for neo and semi literate readers. It falls upon those who are writing for neo-and semi literate readers therefore to make available to such readers a rich variety which meets their needs for information and also entertainment. This means respecting and recognizing the right of adults to learn.

7.2.3 Some Statistics about Adult Learners

The Global Monitoring Report, 2007 (UNESCO) highlights the grim situation of education in various countries of South and West Asia. The report states

781 million adults (one in five worldwide) lack minimum literacy rates. Two-thirds are women. Literacy rates remain low in South and West Asia...Without concerted efforts to expand adult literacy programmes, by 2015 the global number of adult illiterates will have dropped only by 100 million. Governments must also focus on building literate environments.

The National Readership Study (NRS) is the largest annual study conducted to understand reading habits and availability of reading material in the country. The 2006 NRS data highlights the gap between urban and rural India in terms of availability of reading material. The study data reveals that there are 359 million people who can read and understand one or the other

language but do not read any publication. Of this 359 million, 68 per cent read Hindi. It is not just affordability that is a constraint.

The NRS 2006 has - for the first time in India - attempted to capture the topics that interest readers across different strata of society. Apart from News and

Politics, Sports is the topic of interest among readers. This is followed by Films and TV Serials. While the level of interest among urban audiences is higher than among rural audiences, urban and rural up-market readers exhibit very similar patterns.

7.3 Adult Educators to Bridge the Information Gap

It is quite clear that the large number of neo and semi literate readers in rural areas have very little access to sources of information. Libraries, in addition to other resources, form a major source of information. However, libraries in rural areas are not well equipped to cater to the information needs of neo and semi literate readers. Lack of vision and adequate human and financial resources are some of the reasons for the present status of rural libraries. While some efforts have been made by NGOs in recent years to start libraries in rural areas, these efforts are limited and inadequate. In several places reading material is provided only once in the year. Most publications available address

issues of health, child care, fertility control and employment. Few efforts are made to encourage and develop a culture of reading. Women rarely access reading material in libraries. In most places it is only men and boys that visit libraries regularly.

The role of adult educators and those working on issues of education is extremely critical in bridging this information gap. Efforts need to be made to provide informative and interesting reading material to neo and semi literate readers. With this background, it is also important to look at the issue of gender in relation to reading material for readers with low levels of literacy.

Activity 7.3

What do you understand by gender? How do you come across gender issues in your work as an adult educator? Take about 15-20 minutes to think and write your answer on a separate sheet of paper.

Reflect

Do you think that gender is related to the biological difference between men and women? Or in your view, is gender a synonym for women and women related issues?

7.3.1 Issue of Gender in Literacy Materials

Before looking at gender in materials, it is necessary to look at and question our own understanding of this issue. Read Box 7.1 and compare with it your answers to questions in Activity 7.3 and the following Reflection.

Box 7.1 What is Gender?

Gender is a socio-cultural concept. It varies greatly across contexts. Gender roles are specific to societies and are constantly changing/ fluid.

Gender relations give the impression that they are permanent and based on naturally drawn sexually different roles. However, their main aim is to establish and maintain social order. In the process they have created unequal power relations between men and women and have denied women equity in matters of rights/ space/ freedom/ choices.

Critical aspects of gender are that

- ❖ It assigns *different* and *unequal* roles and attributes of “masculine” and “feminine” to men and women.
- ❖ In practice, it categorizes these ‘masculine’ and “feminine” roles and attributes as “natural” differences, this makes unequal relations seem normal.
- ❖ Gender is revealed to be a construction rather than a given if we shift the perspective from gender as difference to gender as concretely experienced dominance then gender changes from what seems normal to what calls for questioning.
- ❖ Gender relations are not static; they vary across cultures and time. They are dynamic and recreate new ways in which masculinity and femininity are constructed and communicated in a particular context or period.
- ❖ Since gender is an evolving concept it is open to re examination and change. Gender relations are not sacrosanct, in fact existing gender relations need to be questioned.

As people involved in the area of adult education we come across gender relations in our own lives. In our work at educational institutions, schools etc we witness gender at play. This is also true for materials - textbooks, magazines, newsletters, teaching learning material etc. Therefore, it is extremely important for us to analyze material from a gender perspective (see Box 7.2). Let us do this by looking at a few publications and complete the series of Activity 1.4, Activity 1.5, Activity 1.6, Activity 1.7 and Activity 1.8.

Activity 7.4

Analyze the illustrations in a school text book (selected by you) from a gender perspective.

Do you see gender stereotypes in any one or more than one illustration? To check your answer, turn to Box 7.1 to look at how these illustrations can be analyzed.

Box 7.2 Gender in Illustrations

In each set of illustrations, look for the representation of a problematic situation, according to the authors of the book. Look for another set of illustrations that represents an ideal situation and has a balanced perspective. However, if you put on your gender lenses, you will see that both sets illustrations are problematic.

You may discover that in all illustrations women are shown in stereotypical roles - women are involved in household work, their characters are passive and they are not in decision making roles, unlike the men in the illustrations.

Such illustrations tell us a lot about the perspective of the writers of the book. Division of labor and roles according to the biological sex of a person need to be questioned, not reinforced as has been done in the illustrations. The illustrations make these differences seem natural and normal. This does not enable the learner to analyze the

critical abilities that enable learners reflect, analyze and question the issues from a perspective that is sensitive to issues of gender.

Activity 7.5

Select a story that includes some women characters and read it once just like hat and read it again with your gender lenses on.

Where do you see gender in the story? What are the words used to describe the gender roles and gender-based division of labor in everyday activities? Is the difference in these words only a matter of language or is language also biased in terms of gender?

Write your responses to the above questions.

Activity 7.6

Select an article that deals with both genders. It may be from any mainstream magazine. Read the article and answer the following questions. Write your responses on a separate sheet of paper.

How would you analyze the article from a gender perspective?

What, according to you are the gender issues in the article?

You may discover that the activities related to analysis of materials point to the following important issues related to gender in materials.

- ❖ Gender does not mean a mere inclusion of women in materials. Illustrations that include women or articles/stories/chapters with women cannot address the issue of gender in materials.
- ❖ Often material reinforces and strengthens existing stereotypes. The manner in which men and women are represented, roles assigned, norms followed, needs to be questioned in order to address the issue of gender in materials.
- ❖ Gender does not work in isolation. It is closely linked to other issues of caste, class, religion, rural-urban backgrounds and other identities.
- ❖ Role reversals need to be avoided. Stories, articles and images showing girls going to school, boys drawing water from wells or women in the public domain and men doing household work are too simplistic in nature. These do not enable readers to question the complex nature of gender relations.

While reading publications - mainstream or those developed by NGOs, you need to remember to analyze these from a gender perspective (see Box 7.2). Similarly, while watching plays, films, television programs, look out for gender stereotypes or places where gender norms have been questioned or challenged. This analysis should also inform our writing.

Box 7.2 Readings and Resource Material on Gender

1. *Larki kya hai, larka kya hai*- Kamla Bhasin
2. Understanding Gender- Note by Nirantar, a centre for gender and education, New Delhi
3. Gender Issues in Education- National Curriculum Framework 2005 Position Paper- NCERT
4. *Zindagi in Nazron se* (a compilation of gender stories) - Nirantar
5. *Pitara* Issue Numbers 50, 55- Nirantar

Activity 7.7

In order to write articles and stories for adults, make list of the places from where you are likely to get information.

How many places do you have on your list?

Reflect

It is possible to collect information from a range of sources. These include primary as well as secondary sources of information. Primary sources could include- schools, hospitals, education and health centers, offices in the area (government, non government), railway station, bus stand, panchayat offices, events in the area, shops, public places, markets etc. Local people can also provide information on local history, events, and incidents and could also be a source of information for folk stories and folk culture. Secondary sources would include- newspapers, books, magazines, NGO publications and other publications. Libraries, internet, encyclopedia and reference books also provide us information on a range of issues.

It is important to authenticate the source from where we are accessing information. On the one hand it is important to distinguish between 'fact' and 'fiction', what gets told as news may not necessarily be true so it is important for us to collect facts from a range of people and use these as the basis for writing. On the other hand it is also important to check information that we access from secondary sources. Websites, publications should have references for the information provided. Wrong information or presentations of facts that have not been authenticated will lead to us providing incorrect information to readers.

Activity 7.8

Select a paragraph in a story that includes women characters and read each sentence and circle the words that are not part of your everyday language.

How many circles do you have in the paragraph? Can you think of simpler words for the words that you have circled?

Reflect

To be sensitive to the needs of neo literates and semi literates in terms of language used is important given that this requires a conscious effort to write in a way that is appropriate for this readership. All our formal school education has rewarded writing in ways (for instance in formalized Hindi) which neither allows us to express ourselves in an uninhibited way nor is the style easy or enjoyable for those who are reading.

7.3.2 Issues of Language in Literacy Materials

While writing it is important to write in the way that we speak and use '*bol chaal ki bhashaa*'. We should avoid formal and difficult words as Hindi is not the language of self-expression and communication in most 'Hindi speaking

states'. Mainstream Hindi is also an iconic symbol of power and the powerful. While a wide range of reading material in Hindi is available, it is usually written in a style that is incomprehensible and intimidating. Stories, poems and other literature are not available to a large number of readers with low levels of

literacy as the language used is too formal and difficult.

Read

1. *Navsaksharon ke liye kis tarah ki*

saamagri upyukt hai- Article by Nirantar

2. Writing for neo literates- Article by KK Krishna Kumar, BGVS

Activity 7.9

Ask five people you know to list the languages that they can speak, read or understand. Make a list of these.

Questions

- (i) How many languages are there in your list?
- (ii) According to you, how many of these are languages?
- (iii) How would you classify the remaining?
- (iv) On what basis have you made this distinction?

Very often we do not give enough importance to certain languages. There is a distinction made between 'language' and 'dialect', and languages are given more importance than dialects. Dialects are often referred to as '*dehati bhasha*', there is a connotation of it being 'separate' and 'lower'. What we need to question is **whether this distinction between language and dialect is real or a politically created division.**

To understand this we need to first question our own understanding of language. The following definitions of 'language' are considered significant by most people.

- ❖ It is a medium of expression.
- ❖ It implies listening, explaining and understanding.
- ❖ It involves thinking. We 'think' in language.
- ❖ Language is a source of identity. It plays an important role in making us feel 'same' or 'different'.
- ❖ It is also a medium for the creation of an image.
- ❖ It is a source of motivation for some.

- ❖ It is a means of bringing people together by binding them with a sense of belongingness. However, this also happens only if there is sensitivity in the language and the way that it is used.
- ❖ Just as language can bring people together, it can also be a medium of discrimination.

Emergence of Hindi as the language of the power: During the freedom struggle there was an effort to promote a single identity - that of a Hindu nation - based on a divisive strategy against the common enemy, namely 'Muslims'. With political power in the hands of those promoting this ideology, Hindi automatically spread to the south and other regions where it is not commonly spoken. Simultaneously, the ideas of 'Bharat' and 'Pakistan' were born. It is not very clear at what point in time the identity of religion emerged as the most significant one, but if we read the Congress documents of that time we will see that the language used and the politics were closely related to each other. Language forums started taking sides with politicians. Gandhi promoted

Hindustani, which is a combination of Urdu and Hindi. By the 1930's it was decided that the national language would be Hindi-Hindustani. The faith of Muslims in Hindus and in the Hindu leaders collapsed at this development. They felt the need for a separate Urdu identity. It is interesting to note that what is today called Urdu was originally called 'Hindi', 'Hindvi', or 'Indui'. Hence, it was all about power play. Gradually it became acceptable that only that which is written in Devanagari script should be called Hindi. Subtly, it implied that Hindi is therefore the domain of 'dev' (Hindu god) and of 'nagar' (city - not village). Songs that are promoted also promote a certain ideology. For instance, 'vande mataram' is a song from Bankim Chandra Chatterji's "Anandamath". In this novel, Muslims are not shown in a good light, but the English are. 'Durga' - the goddess - was depicted in glorification as the one responsible for the destruction of the Muslims. Hence, certain images are depicted in a certain way in literature.

Tagore refused to accept this as the national song, and with the promotion of this song its ideology, gradually the Muslims began to feel threatened. And it is due to this language that the demand for Pakistan gained popularity. What is ironical is that within 24 years there was a demand for a free nation in the name of language - Bangla - not religion as it was in 1947, and the Bangladesh war ensued. But in Mujibur Rahman's time the politics and the identity of religion again took over.

7.3.3 Language and Communication

One of the functions of language is communication - speaking, listening, and understanding each other. While

listening it is also important to be able to transform. Interpretation of language plays an important role in communication. It is necessary that not only one point of view gets heard and that all 'parties' get a voice in any discourse. Effective communication is achieved by presenting different sets of ideas and the analysis skills to look at them critically. We are mere facilitators to help people; we cannot impose ideas and change normally takes a lot more time and more discussions. The use of language and of folk media is critical. Music - the tone, music, beats, words - is associated with people's lives so they like it much more than serious songs - e.g. - Nachari (of Mithila), Baul (of Bengal), etc.

Even if language is changed across cultures, the tone, music, and beats are very important. That is why in working with communities, sometimes religious and popular music is what works best. Folk music does not stay permanent in a particular form; it is dynamic. For instance, the emergence of Rabindra Sangeet in Bengal was in reaction to certain kinds of music and the effort was towards generating equality through music; but the purists of Bengal today do not allow any change in it and Rabindra Sangeet is considered the forte of a few people only.

It is often said that Gandhi was successful because he spoke the people's language. Although he used songs, words, images, etc, that some people thought were 'right-wing' there was so much acceptance among the communities. He used language very effectively. In the Gandhi Ashram publication 'Bhajanawali' there are numerous prayers. Reading numerous prayers exposes readers to numerous languages and therefore, multiple

identities. It's all about availability and accessibility to 'choices'.

The politics of language: Language is also not static. We add our values, desires and viewpoint to every image. This is what language also does. Every generation adds new words, new perspectives, new thoughts, etc, to an existing language. The synthesis of the word used for Dalits over a period of time illustrates this point very clearly. Jyotiba Phule spoke of education for the 'ati-Shudra' and Premchand, Mahadevi Varma, etc, used the word 'chamar'. Use of such language may be insulting for the marginalized community. Gandhi changed the language and made a political statement by referring to the Dalits as Harijan - 'Hari' refers to 'god' but 'jan' refers to the fact that 'all are equal'. Ambedkar advocated that social justice is based on law. He and Gandhi used law - an English weapon - in order to fight the English. Ambedkar renamed the Harijans as 'Dalit'. Dalit is a political word that indicates the real situation - it has the connotation of oppression as well as the pride of a separate identity - unlike Harijan, which is still accepting the caste structure and is ignoring the reality. Thus, we see the movement in the use of language in Shudra à Harijan à Dalit, depending on the politics of language at different points of time.

Language need not always have sound; it could communicate a lot through gestures, 'andaaz', style, and physical appearance. It is probably true that unless we internalize our values it does not translate into action and practice. And as we may use language to convey positive messages, sometimes language divides as much as it seals and perpetuates stereotypes. Control and ownership over resources also determines language and power, as is often the case with the politics

between the vernacular and the mainstream languages.

In all societies, children and women sometimes use play and playful language so that it is not understood by others. Through this playful exercise they 'create their own language' that is different from and not understood by the power structures of the world. Sometimes silences also speak volumes, which may or may not be understood and accepted by society. Children, women, adivasis and other marginalized groups often keep quiet - it could be an indication that they do not want 'outsiders' to enter their world. If you enter you will exploit them. Silence here is a form of protest; silence also means high levels of comfort of living with oneself. Hence, silence or play language helps to create a different world - and hence, give a sense of 'security' and independence. Thus, language perpetuates power relations. The fact that power and language are closely related to each other is also reflected in that the abusive language is usually insulting for women. Another example of it is how gendered language can perpetuate patriarchal relations.

It is extremely important that we recognize the richness and diversity of language in varying cultural contexts. For instance, among the Great Andamanese, people use different words for 'my eye', 'your eye', 'his/her eye', while in most other languages there is only one word. In Hindi for example it is much simpler and there is only one word for 'eye'.

Use of words qualifying femininity and masculinity in language are indicative of the subtle references to power and gender relations. For instance, in Subhadra Kumari Chauhan's poem she speaks of the valiant '*Jhansi ki rani*', and uses the word '*mardani*' (man-like) to describe her

patriotism. Writers like Premchand and Agyeya used names to depict political relations. The story aptly titled 'Roz' describes the love that has dried up because life is so monotonous and there is so much drudgery.

In today's context stories of fairies and ghosts have almost disappeared from our lives. Some folk tales that still exist illustrate how creativity exists in language. An example is that of the oral history of Santhals. According to them, the earth was made by an earthworm; yet other tales say that a tortoise carries the shell on its back, which is the earth. Within folk culture, there is a lot in the cultural expression that talks about history, identity and language.

The stories from the Arabian nights were told in such a way that every night there would be an incomplete tale. This leaves so much to the imagination of the reader. Good stories should have open-ended story lines that would leave a lot open to the imagination of the reader. What is happening today is that many of these stories are being removed from the school curriculum and they are being made commodities that are put on television, in advertising and in the market. If we forget all this we are limiting our lives and opportunities. And even social change makers should keep in mind these aspects while producing material.

There is a power play among languages. Hindi has emerged as the most powerful language among all the Indian languages. We often speak of other languages that we speak as an afterthought. This shows how 'less powerful' languages face 'inhibition' in public forums where they may be considered 'indecent', and '*dehati*' in comparison with a 'mainstream' language. People from 'marginalized' communities do not speak openly in public spaces because they feel

inhibited. Do limited physical region, limited numbers, lack of acceptability and lack of political strength affect the power of a language?

Even a look at the VIII Schedule will give us an idea that the number of languages recognized in the Constitution has increased, but it is languages like Santhali, Bodo and Nepali that have got acceptance - all because of political reasons. Thus, it seems that the power of languages changes over time - the best example being that of 'Hindi' being recognized and the Devanagari script being the identity for the 'Hindi' language. Before the 1940s there were a lot of Hindu writers in Urdu, but not after the 1940s. Similarly, as Bawa Karant (a Hindi 'pracharak') said - the division of states in India is largely based on the identity of language. After Partition, the English language took over its official status in order to prevent language based conflicts from emerging. Ironically, in Tamil Nadu, the majority of the people learn Hindi but it is not a politically accepted language. The English model of education gained popularity and provided the common ground where voices spoke against discrimination on the basis of caste, class, etc. The teachers however all belonged to the Brahmin community and the fears of power relations remaining status quo were realized. These changes take place due to the social, historical and economic aspects in politics. Hindi is today considered the national language because of the views propagated by the polity. There is no Constitutional basis for this belief.

The other important aspect in the politics of language is the script. The question is - is it important for a language to have a script to be recognized? Is it possible for a single language to be written in different scripts? Is it possible to write numerous languages in a single script?

As we develop an understanding on language and power, it is important for us to keep the following issues in mind while writing.

- ❖ It is possible and desirable to write in the local language (s) while writing for adults. Since people's life worlds, experiences, imagery are best expressed the local language, using this can be powerful means of communication.
- ❖ Language, both written and oral, constructs, defines and represents our reality. Language is political. It is laden with power. And there are clear hierarchies. Written languages are up there in the evolutionary ladder. Oral traditions are mere dialects. There is a need to question and challenge this belief.
- ❖ Textbooks and written material often tell the story of 'civilizing the uncivilized'. In other words, the message given out is that adivasis, children, Dalits, women and other marginalized groups need to be 'civilized'. This needs to be critiqued. Our writing/language should not reinforce these stereotypes.
- ❖ Based on our experiences and work, we can say that the less 'pure' a language is the more beautiful and richer it is.
- ❖ Textbooks often give rise to a 'dead' language - they promote the 'pure' rather than the 'beautiful'.
- ❖ It is the role of the adult educator to introduce learners to the nuances of

different languages and cultures. An interesting illustration is with regard to the word 'khulasa'. While the Urdu language understands it as 'brief' in Hindi it means 'detailed' - which have diametrically opposite meanings.

- ❖ Grammar is the mere 'making meaning' out of the language construction that society makes. Grammar does not determine what meaningful language is and what is not.
- ❖ Grassroots experience shows us how the realities of people are sometimes distant from our curricula. An example is from the literacy work carried out at the Sahajani Shiksha Kendra. As part of the curriculum, the first letters introduced through the literacy material is 'namak' (salt). But the women immediately responded by saying that their word for salt in Bundeli is 'non'.
- ❖ While writing in the local language, there is always a concern - which local language to use? One should always see the consensus of the people that we work with- the language that is understood by the majority should be used and not what is described as 'pure' language.

Suggested reading for the above sub-section 7.3.3 of the unit

Stories: Bhaktin, Chini Feriwallah, Hansi, Thakuri Baba

Articles: Gaaliyan and Prakatthan, Bhasha, Boli and Shoshan by Ramakant Agnihotri.

7.4 Feedback of Adult Learners on Materials Produced for Adult Learning

Writing articles for neo literate and semi literate adults is a specialized task.

As we have seen issues of perspective, language, style become very important

while writing for this constituency. At the same time it is important for us to understand the needs of readers and to **get feedback** from them. The information we get back from readers enables us to understand them and their needs better, and to modify our writing accordingly.

Feedback can be sought in several ways. In feedback sessions, we can:

- ❖ Ask readers to read the article/ story/ piece of writing whilst we take note of where they are stopping to see what they find difficult and what they are comfortable with.
- ❖ Ask readers to do a ranking of items that they liked after giving them a range of pieces to read.
- ❖ Divide readers into small groups, and asked them to read and explain to others the meaning of a particular article.
- ❖ Conduct a debate between two groups of readers on a particular piece of writing. The arguments that they use to defend their views will be an indication of what the article/ writing has communicated.
- ❖ It is also possible to design a

questionnaire to ask readers to note what they liked and disliked about our publication, and what suggestions they could make for improving it. However, there is a danger that readers will only tell us what they think we want to hear. It may be difficult to evoke spontaneous responses from readers.

- ❖ It is also possible to conduct in-depth interviews with readers. This means that we will have to spend time with readers in order to understand their reading habits, look at what reading material is available in their areas and how/whether they are being able to access this, the time that they spend on reading. This could be also be done by providing readers a number of publications and observing what is picked up first, what is read first, what they understand/enjoy and what is difficult.

It is a good idea to go through some select case studies to go about your task of preparing appropriate material for adult learners. You may select your case-studies on the basis of your work experience in adult learning setups

7.5 Apply What You Have Learnt

What according to you constitutes good writing? Select three articles that look at the issue of sex determination of unborn child.

Read the articles and respond to the following questions.

- i. Are all three articles written in simple language, in *bol chaal ki bhaashaa*?
- ii. Do all three articles provide new information to the reader in a language and style that is simple but that does not simplify the concept?
- iii. Which out of the three is didactic in nature and why?
- iv. Which article assumes a level of information that readers may not have?
- v. What are your views on the introduction, structure and conclusion of each article?
- vi. What is the length of sentences?
- vii. Is the heading appropriate? What kind of headings should be used?

viii. After responding to all these questions, which article according to you communicates the information related to sex determination in the best way possible to readers?

Make a list of the principles of writing that make this the most effective article.

While writing on issues that relate to health, *panchayati raj*, agriculture, livelihoods, etc. you may consult the following important points that will make writing more effective.

- ❖ Writing needs to have a peg. Articles written around events, incidents, issues that are topical are easy to relate to even if they are outside the readers immediate concern.
- ❖ Articles need not be written in an essay style.
- ❖ Writing needs to be simple, not simplistic. Complex issues should be kept alive.
- ❖ Avoid using explicit definitions when introducing new words. Instead, weave the definition of the word/ concept or the idea around a sentence.
- ❖ Articles need to raise questions on the very nature of development and government policies.
- ❖ Articles need to provide new information but there need not be an overload of information. Use statistics, data judiciously. Statistics is not always easy to relate to. Percentages, ratio etc need to be explained. So instead of writing 'sex ratio is 753', explain and write 'for every 1000 men there are only 753 women, which means that there are 247 women less (or missing) for every 1000 men in the country.'
- ❖ Articles need to have a flow. Use short paragraphs and link each

paragraph to the previous one.

- ❖ The beginning of each article needs to be interesting. It needs to highlight the seriousness of the issue or it needs to provide new information. Long introductions that do not provide new/interesting information are not effective and do not encourage readers to read further.
- ❖ At the end the article needs to raise questions or comment on the topic covered. It is not a good idea to leave too many questions left unanswered. The conclusion need not be moralistic or message loaded.
- ❖ Avoid using jargons of development work.
- ❖ Headings need to be interesting. Catchy titles generate interest. Straightforward headings can also be used for clarity. Use sub headings to explain further if the headings are not too explicit.
- ❖ Sentences need not have more than 14 words. Each page needs to be limited to 250-270 words. Keeping in mind the literacy and comprehension levels of neo literate and semi literate readers, lengthy sentences/articles are difficult to comprehend.

Read

You may like to read a few examples of articles and stories that have been popular with neo and semi literate readers. Read the articles keeping in mind the points mentioned above.

Story from Pitara, BGVS booklet, Katha series

You may also like to read 'Pitara- simple, not simplistic'- article in the book Reading Beyond the Alphabet- Eds. Brij Kothari, Vijay Shree Chand, Michael Norton.



PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

MANDAKINI PANT

Structure

- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Research
 - 8.2.1 Conventional Research Paradigm
 - 8.2.2 Its Critique
- 8.3 Emergence of Participatory Research (PR)
 - 8.3.1 Roots in Adult Education Practices
 - 8.3.2 Role of the International Council of Adult education
 - 8.3.3 Participation in Development Programmes
- 8.4 Key Features of Participatory Research (PR)
 - 8.4.1 Participatory Research Process
 - 8.4.2 PR Concepts
 - 8.4.3 Outcomes of PR
 - 8.4.4 Methodology of PR
- 8.5 Conclusion
- 8.6 Apply What You Have Learnt

Learning Objectives

After completing Unit 8, it is expected that you would be able to

- ❖ Critique the conventional research paradigm
- ❖ Discuss the historical context of the emergence of participatory research
- ❖ Describe characteristics, concepts, outcomes and methods of participatory research

8.1 Introduction

Unit 8 will familiarizes you with the concepts and issues of participatory research and evaluation. In Section 8.2 you will get an exposure to a critique of the conventional research paradigm. To view participatory research as an alternative approach to conventional research, in Section 8.3 you will read

about its roots, characteristics, concepts, outcomes and methodology and also mark out the major differences between conventional research and participatory research. In Section 8.4 you will trace historical context of participatory evaluation and learn about participatory evaluation tools.

8.2 Research

The word *research* literally means ‘to investigate thoroughly’. It refers to a systematic process of inquiry through scientific methods to discover, interpret, revise facts about a given subject or a problem and thereby generate a new body of knowledge. You may ask as to what happens to the knowledge generated by social research. We will first look at its conventional use and then come to alternative uses.

8.2.1 Conventional Research (CR) Paradigm

The knowledge generated is used to develop general laws about the facts. The thrust of scientific methods such as experiments, comparison of case studies, observation and survey methods is to develop objective and quantifiable knowledge. The research situations are controlled in such a manner that no unaccounted for or spurious influences can invalidate the conclusions. Observation, rather than experience and abstract conceptualization are central parts of the research process. As such, researchers attempt to be neutral, objective and value-free in their data collection and analysis.

Most types of formal research generally follow certain steps, which are based on a process of problem formulation, hypothesis construction, ‘instrument’ construction (usually some form of interview or questionnaire), collection of data, analysis and interpretation of data. The order of steps may vary depending on the subject matter and researcher.

Researchers have a responsibility to communicate their findings to add to the existing body of knowledge about their subject. Written form is most aptly

suitable for communication of findings to other professional colleagues, thus publication of research findings in scholarly journals is deemed the most important form of communication.

Once approved by other experts in the field, this knowledge then adds to an existing body of knowledge within academia and is taught to new generations of students.

Most social science research carried out all over the world is related to either of two purposes.

- a) First, the need and desire of administrators and policy makers to gather information from and about those who do not make decisions in order to make decisions for them. Government, donor agencies, and institutions generally conduct policy research. The professional experts and consultants are the researchers. The objective is research for policy making.
- b) A second purpose of research relates to new knowledge generation and researchers’ own economic and professional needs. Academic research is conducted at and by academic institutions and universities. Researchers are generally the subject experts and students. Summarizing and packaging the findings in ways that can be consumed by journals, books, seminars, and international conferences does not only lead to greater access to research funding and but also to the researcher’s career advancement. Researchers who presume an ethical obligation to disseminate their findings to the general public through other avenues must work doubly hard to do so, with very little professional reward.

The conventional research paradigm by and large corresponds to the description given above. Researchers who deviate from it can suffer professional ostracism, financial restrictions, and public criticism .

Questioning the notion of traditional social research, being value-free, universal and objective, there are those who challenge the objective approach advocated by mainstream conventional scholarship. They promote the idea of active engagement with social causes. Over the years there has come about a continuous debate between those supporting conventional research and such modes of alternative methods of research as participatory research, feminist research etc. In order to fully grasp this significant discourse, let us first examine the main issues of the debate between conventional research and its alternative, participatory research.

8.2.2 Its Critique

The control over the process of knowledge production and its use and dissemination often reinforces amongst the have-nots the feelings of powerlessness, ignorance and self-blame. We can look at the critique of the conventional research paradigm in the following four categories.

i) Absolute Critique

In conventional social science research, knowledge-generation is the key purpose. There is a wide gap between available knowledge and its utilization. This lack of utilization of generated knowledge leads to research that cannot be used to improve our social, economic, and political systems. For instance, survey research is not conducive to

subsequent action. Research alienates respondents, or at best treats them as sources of raw information. The abilities of people to investigate their own realities are likewise not stimulated or developed. Further, influenced by the research paradigm of natural sciences, social science research also assumes that there is one truth about social phenomena. It is difficult to present a realistic representation of any social phenomenon by believing in one truth.

ii) Purist Critique

Many social scientists assume that their research is neutral. Under the guise of achieving objectivity, rigor is maintained by the researcher's control over the focus and methods of inquiry. However, survey and interview questions, consciously or otherwise, reflect the researcher's own values and ideology. Professional researchers know all and they control the entire process of research. Therefore, respondents often experience survey research as alienating, dominating, or oppressive in character. The attempt to achieve objectivity by maintaining a strict separation between the researcher and the subjects is also problematic. Firstly, researchers share essential humanity with their subjects; they are, therefore, subject to same laws that they are attempting to understand. Secondly, the sheer presence of another person has impact over the research 'subject', or the people under study. Therefore, despite researchers' best efforts to be objective, controlled social reality is always a distortion.

iii) Rationalist Critique

The rationalist critique questions excessive reliance on thinking, observing and conceptualizing as main modes of

knowing and researching. The researchers tend to oversimplify social reality. The overemphasis on thinking and conceptualization in the conventional research paradigm intends to reduce subjectivity, but as a result, the feeling and acting processes have been largely neglected. When compiled in clear data sets, charts and graphs, the information gathered through conventional survey research masks the complexity, the richness, and the contradictions inherent to human experience.

The conventional research methods are not consistent with the principles of adult education, which is rooted in an especially strong concern for social justice and equality. These principles include: programs should be based on adult needs; adults are more able to articulate their learning needs than children; although adults' ways of learning change with age, the phrase 'too old to learn' is a fallacy; adults often work out quite complex learning strategies to achieve desired goals on their own.

The conventional research paradigm only supports two of the four types of adult learning processes: reflective observation and abstract conceptualization. The other two modes of learning, concrete experience and active experimentation, are de-emphasized. This limitation constrains the classical research paradigm in two ways. Firstly, those persons who are not comfortable in observation and conceptualization modes of learning do not easily enter the research profession. Secondly, even those who are strong in these two modes and engaged in research, lose some of their insights by denying or neglecting the other two modes.

iv) Elitist Critique

The development of modern institutions of knowledge production has delegitimized people's own knowledge- the popular knowledge. Trained and exclusive experts and their institutions have become sole pursuers of knowledge. By conducting research to evolve new insights and theories, they subtly yet powerfully regulate the modern knowledge industry. Papers, books, journals, seminars and conferences as the only legitimate modes of dissemination of knowledge, systematically deprive the ordinary from participating in the process of knowledge production and distribution. As most research findings are communicated in written form, it is researchers, journal editors, and publishers who essentially control the outcome of research. Those who assist the research process as respondents or subjects, that is, those who are researched, have no control over the research and its outcome. The dominant research paradigm tends to ignore ethical issues in that the providers of information are denied any control over it, and political issues in that as knowledge is power, the research process further enhances the power of the elites. (Tandon 2005)

In spite of the above critiques, it is important to remember that numbers or statistics in and of themselves are not the key problem. In fact, mostly they are useful as quantitative statistics summarize social information in a form that is convenient and can be readily transferred and disseminated. Accurate statistics around poverty levels, or illiteracy rates, for example, are important information for people to gather knowledge about their own communities. But it is equally important

to be concerned with more fundamental questions around process of knowledge creation such as: who has the right to create knowledge? Who controls that knowledge? Who will benefit from the research? How is that knowledge used?

Hence you can appreciate why we insist on adult educators' awareness of the significance of participatory research. Let us now deal in detail with participatory research.

8.3 Emergence of Participatory Research (PR)

Participatory research (PR) evolved as an alternative system of knowledge production by challenging the premise of conventional social science research methodology. The premise is that social science researchers can approach research sites in a neutral, objective, and value-free manner. Instead, participatory research recognized average people as researchers themselves, in pursuit of answers to the questions of their daily struggle and survival.

8.3.1 Roots in Adult Education Practices

The discourse on participatory research needs to be understood in a historical and humanitarian perspective. By the late 1950s and the early 1960s, the research paradigm reflected North American and European models of research, which derived from empiricism and positivism, and paid rigorous attention to instrument construction, as well as statistical precision and replicability. Participatory research, as alternative perspectives on research methodology, grew out of a reaction to approaches developed in North America and Europe.

Participatory research attempted to find ways of uncovering knowledge that worked better in societies. It grew from the practice of adult educators in the countries in the geographic South, particularly in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and their critique of classical research methodology. These adult

educators working with oppressed people realized that rise of specialization, and professional expertise had lead to the devaluation of both popular knowledge and alternative systems of knowledge production.

In early 1960s Latin American social scientists, stimulated in part by the success of the Cuban revolution, began exploring more committed forms of research. Paulo Freire (see also Unit 3 and Unit 4) and his colleagues in Latin America developed widely influential concepts for adult education among the urban and rural poor. He developed a theoretical framework, which shared the basic premise of adult education that adults should have control over the content and form of their education. His dialogic approach to adult education engages individuals in critical analysis and organized action to improve their situations. In these dialogues, educators and “students” move toward a critical consciousness of the forces of oppression and the possibilities for liberation. One of the most useful roles Paulo Freire played was to bring some of the current ideas of Latin American scientists to the attention of people in other parts of the world. His work on Thematic Investigation (1973), first in Brazil and later in Chile, was an expression of this search.

Paulo Freire's work on conscientization reinforced the notion that socially marginalized people could be involved

in the production of knowledge. Building on the premise that ‘knowledge is power’, the participatory research approach assisted socially marginalized people to critically investigate their reality, analyze it, and then undertake collective action to bring about constructive changes in their lives.

At the Tanzanian Bureau of Resource Allocation and Land Use Planning, Marja-Liisa Swantz and teams of students and village workers were involved in questions of youth and employment in the Coastal region and later, in studies of socio-economic causes of malnutrition in the Central Kilimanjaro region. A visit by Paulo Freire to Tanzania in 1971 was a stimulus to many social scientists that otherwise might not have been as impressed by the existing experience of many adult educators or community development workers.

It was also during the seventies that Participatory Action Research (PAR) gained impetus from Fals Borda’s work with grassroots groups in Columbia. Borda’s aim was to legitimize “popular knowledge” and develop a “science of the proletariat” with which the masses could conduct their own struggle for social transformation. Both PR and PAR focused on the importance of learning and organizing as vehicles for empowerment. Conscientization, which

includes process of collective action and reflection by the people, was an important component for achieving empowerment.

While the specific term “participatory research” developed in the developing world, the concerns PR attempts to address were present in rich countries as well. Therefore, while the terminology may be different, consciousness around the limitations of the classical research methodology in a world of immediate and urgent problems was growing in Europe and North America as well. Several examples of participatory and action-oriented research traditions in Europe and North America are illustrated in the box 8.1. It is important to note here that while PR may at times appear identical to action research in the use of methodology; there are two significant ways in which PR is different. First, the ideological stance and emphasis on making the researcher’s value-premises explicit are generally not mentioned in the action research approach. Second, action research is at times being undertaken without the participation and control of the actors in the situation. In essence, then, action research becomes another method in the exclusive control of the social researcher (Tandon 2005).

Box 8.1 Examples of Participatory and Action-oriented research in Europe and North America

- ❖ Recognition of relationship between class position and unequal distribution of wealth and power could be found in the early work of Frederick Engels with the working classes of Manchester.
- ❖ In Switzerland, researchers in curriculum development adopted methodologies from political research to suit their needs.
- ❖ In Canada, methods of evaluation along action research lines for community development work were developed.
- ❖ In the Netherlands, the National Institute for Adult Education pioneered in participatory research through its evaluation of the British adult literacy.

- ❖ In Italy, Paolo Orefice and colleagues at the University of Naples applied the methodology to their investigation of community and district “awareness” of power and control. In the USA, the Highlander Centre in Tennessee used approaches similar to participatory research for years, most recently to deal with issues of land ownership and use (Hall 1974).

8.3.2 Role of the International Council of Adult Education

With the support of the International Council of Adult Education (ICAE), many researchers around the world are formally and informally experimenting with and developing different aspects of participatory research. You may like to read below some of the guidelines that have emerged from these efforts to date.

- ❖ A research project – both the process and results – can be of immediate and direct benefit to a community (as opposed to serving merely as the basis of an academic paper or obscure policy analysis).
- ❖ A research process should involve the community, or the expected ‘beneficiaries’ in the entire research process, from the formulation of the problem and the interpretation of the findings, to the planning of collective action based upon them.
- ❖ The research process should be seen as part of a total educational experience, which serves to determine community needs, and to increase awareness of problems and commitment to solutions within the community.
- ❖ Research should be viewed as a dialectic process, a dialogue over time, and not as a static picture of reality at one point of time.
- ❖ The object of research, like the object of education, should be the liberation of the human creative potential and the mobilization of human resources for the solution of social problems.
- ❖ Research has ideological implications and researchers are not value-neutral. Research that allows for popular involvement and increased capacities of analysis can sometimes make conflicting action possible, or necessary. For example, as the research unfolds, it may be necessary for the researcher to choose to side with one group or another within the community (Tandon 2005).

ICAE has encouraged and supported the formation of network of Participatory Researchers since 1988. It summarized the following characteristics of participatory research.

- ❖ Participatory research is an integrated activity that combines social investigation, educational work, and action.
- ❖ The political impetus originates in the community or workplace itself.
- ❖ The ultimate goal is fundamental structural transformation and the improvement of the lives of those involved.
- ❖ The workplace or community is involved in the control of the entire process
- ❖ The awareness in the people of their own abilities and resources is strengthened and mobilizing or organizing is supported.
- ❖ The term “researcher” can refer to both the community or workplace

persons involved as well as those with specialized training.

- ❖ Outside researchers are committed participants and learners in a process that leads to militancy rather than detachment (Tandon 2005).

8.3.3 Participation in Development Programmes

In addition to its influence from the field of Adult Education, PR also drew strength from debates around participation in development programs. Several encouraging developments occurred through international dialogues between participatory researchers and development practitioners, including expanding definitions of poverty to include such concepts as deprivation of education, human rights, dignity, and autonomy, in addition to access to basic needs.

As the newly independent nations began to deliver development programs to their people, two trends began to emerge by early 1980s. First, a blind reliance on theory, models and experts was

displacing the knowledge and experience of those “being developed”. Second, the process of “delivery” was displacing a sense of “ownership” of local communities with Governmental control and supervision. It is to challenge such approaches to development that Mwalimu Julius Nyerere (then President of Tanzania) commented that people could not be developed; they alone could develop themselves. These ideas and emerging experiences from the ground then began a trend whereby participatory development approaches and methodologies began to be evolved in field practices of programs and projects around the world in late 1980s and in the decade of 1980s. There has also been a growing recognition of the validity of popular and indigenous knowledge, and a rising international commitment to community members’ participation in development and evaluation initiatives. There has been increasing pressure from policy makers, development managers, and civil society groups to keep people at the centre of development initiatives and thought.

8.4 Key Features of Participatory Research (PR)

The underlying assumption of PR is that ordinary/oppressed people are knowledgeable about their social realities and are ca-pable of articulating this knowledge. With this assumption, promoters of PR argue that it is a process of knowing and acting. Let us now discuss participatory research process.

8.4.1 Participatory Research Process

As mentioned above, people engaged in participatory research do two things simultaneously. They enhance their understanding and knowledge of a particular situation and take action to

change it to their benefit. Knowledge for the sake of knowing is de-emphasized; knowing is linked to a concrete action. This enhances the quality of knowledge and informs the basis for action. This is the starting point of PR. We note the following characteristics of the PR process.

Initial Motivation for PR

Since PR is initiated in the context of the actual reality, which the have-nots intend to change, an existing problem provides the initial motivation for engaging in the research process. In situations where people are already

aware of a problem and articulate enough about it, they may initiate a PR project themselves. They may or may not use the resources of experts, such as the knowledge of researchers from outside. In other situations, some outsiders - be they activists, educators, facilitators, community animators, or researchers - may provide the initial problem focus. However, the involvement of people living the reality of that problem, even if it begins with an external push, is a necessary element of the participatory research process.

Extent and Nature of People's Participation

While participation of people in processes of knowing and acting is a necessary part of PR, the extent and nature of this participation varies considerably. Where initiative to engage in a process of PR comes from people of the situation, their participation is quite widespread. In most such cases, they take part in the methodology of data collection, analysis of data, planning, and taking action. In other cases, where initiative comes externally, the participation of people from the situation is initially limited, but tends to increase in scope and depth as the process moves on. They may not be as much involved in methods of data collection and analysis as they may be in planning and taking action. The people in the situation must have control over the process of knowing and acting. It is easier to obtain control when initiative comes from the people themselves. In cases where there is an external initiative, it is a slow process by which the people begin to control the research process.

Emphasis on Qualitative Method of Data Collection

The methodology of PR attempts to reduce or eliminate the limitations of

classical research. While it does employ methods of data collection which are prevalent in classical research, it also emphasizes qualitative and factual methods, which are otherwise considered not so scientific. The methodology of PR, however, stresses inter-personal communication among different parties and demands clarification of the motives of the external party, if any.

Focus on Collective Analysis

Participatory Research is always 'collective' in nature; the process requires groups of people to engage together. The most important step in this context is collective analysis of a given situation. This is a significant distinction from classical social science research, which is typically an individual effort. Participatory research is a collective enterprise and this is reflected in its different steps.

Networking among the Have-nots

A characteristic of PR has been the creation of organizations among the have-nots. Many marginalized people, in the Asian context and elsewhere, are unorganized and isolated. The process of PR brings such persons together; collective sharing, analysis and action generate strong connections between them. Over a period of time, these connections grow into organizations of the 'have-nots'.

PR as a Learning Experience

The process of participatory research is an educative experience for those engaged in it. The people in the situation become aware and more knowledgeable through their engagement. They become more knowledgeable about methods of knowing and analysis; they become aware of their situation and possible way to change that situation.

It is this component of learning-for-all that makes Participatory Research a distinct approach.

PR as Collective Action for Change

Participatory research is a way of taking collective action for bringing about three types of change, namely,

- ❖ Development of critical consciousness of both researcher and participants;
- ❖ Improvement of the lives of those involved in the research process; and
- ❖ Transformation of fundamental societal structures and relationships.

8.4.2 PR Concepts

Those involved in participatory research make use of several concepts and we note here some of those regularly used.

Conscientization: People are active agents in the research process. People, if involved in an analysis of their realities; develop the understanding and the capacity to act to improve that reality.

Useful knowledge: PR is concerned with useful knowledge i.e. knowledge, which enables people to solve their problems and improve their lives.

Control and empowerment: Knowledge about the existing oppressive reality and control over the process of knowledge

generation and the end-result is empowering. When people participate in determining their own future, they become empowered.

Outsiders as facilitators: Outsiders often-initiate PR interventions. However interveners adopt the position of facilitators, catalysts or change agents rather than positions of dominance. Their role is to initiate a participatory process and take steps to ensure that the control local people and groups have over that process steadily increases.

Action-orientation: Focus is on people acting to solve practical problems. These actions then lead to the generation of practical knowledge.

A vehicle for change: PR is instrumental in bringing about change at an individual level and it also emphasizes the importance of collectives of individuals in understanding and transforming social reality. The process of collective discovery and decision-making enables individuals to accept change more readily. PR has promoted the use of mobilization and community organization strategies, particularly amongst oppressed sections of society.

See Box 8.2 for a case study that illustrates some of the above concepts.

Box 8.2 A Case-study

In Orissa, India, people have suffered for years under the power of moneylenders to whom they had mortgaged their fruit trees on which they had to survive. Slowly, through the influence of Participatory Research people realized that the law did not bind them to these moneylenders. It is not merely this knowledge that freed them, but the fact that they acquired it together in a group. The process of learning was one of reflection on their situation and the realization of their strength in unity. This slow reflection and realization of their strength helped them to stand up to the money-lenders, free themselves from their clutches and eventually gain ownership of their trees.

Source: Tandon (2005)

8.4.3 Outcomes of PR

Because of the outcomes it generates,

PR has become synonymous with processes of liberation of the people.

For example, the involvement of poor, marginal farmers and landless agricultural labors in PR has resulted in enhancing their self-confidence and ability to take collective initiatives in their common interest. We may here note some of the key outcomes of PR.

Refined capacities: The active participation of ordinary people/ oppressed enhances self-confidence about their capacities to analyze the situation and develop solutions.

Appropriation of new knowledge: The ordinary people/oppressed learn to appropriate, incorporate and re-interpret the knowledge produced by the dominant system for their use. New knowledge is built on the existing knowledge. As people begin to appreciate what they already know, they are more open to seek new information. This desire to seek new knowledge is enhanced if it is done in the context of concrete problems that the people are facing. People are motivated to create and use new knowledge whenever they see its relevance in solving some concrete problems of their daily lives.

Creating informed options: The process of collective analyzes of given social settings provide many alternatives. As part of the process of data analysis, options are debated on the basis of concrete information. As a result, people are able to accept and reject options on an informed basis. This creates a sense of 'empowerment', which is based on the confidence that information has been understood and interpreted.

Liberating the mind: Finally, PR liberates the minds of the oppressed by helping them to reflect on their situation, regain their capacities, to analyze and critically examine their

reality and to reject the continued domination and hegemony of oppressors.

Increased ownership: The PR process puts emphasis on the active participation of the ordinary/oppressed people in generating their own knowledge. They learn to take responsibility for their own learning. It is this active focus, which constitutes a powerful impetus for people to exercise control over their own lives.

Empowerment: When people learn to value their own knowledge, produce as well as use new knowledge, are enabled to reflect on their situation of powerlessness and ignorance, and develop the capacity to participate rationally and critically in public life, they are empowered. Empowerment, thus, operates within three dimensions

- ❖ **Personal:** developing a sense of self and individual confidence and capacity and undoing the effects of internalised oppression. (*Power within*)
- ❖ **Relational:** developing the ability to participate, negotiate and influence the nature of relationship and decisions made within it. (*Power to*)
- ❖ **Collective:** Individuals work together to achieve a more extensive impact. This includes collective action based on cooperation. (*Power with*)

Ideological commitment: It should be clear from what you have read above that PR is not value-neutral, but is ideologically committed to the weakest sections. It has a necessary relationship with social transformation and action, while social science research has conspicuously avoided any active involvement. The very act of involvement in the process of analyzing a given social setting creates a sense of ownership of that knowledge, and a

willingness to transform that problem in social setting. The people are able to take concrete actions as part of their involvement in participatory research.

It is apparent that PR has made valuable contributions throughout the world as it has been effectively used in different sectors to bring about improvements in villages, urban slums, tribal habitats, and in countless other social settings. In all these efforts, particularly in Asia, PR has confined itself to micro situations (for example in a neighborhood, slum, or squatter colony) and concerned itself with the 'have nots' (landless laborers, migrant workers, tribal people, women).

For obvious reasons you too would be interested in knowing a little more about PR, especially about its methodology. Our next sub-section deals with PR methodology.

8.4.4 Methodology of PR

PR focuses on inter-personal communication among different stakeholders. A number of qualitative methods as group discussion, role play, public meetings, community seminars, fact finding tours, photo story, popular theatre, education camps are used. It

also employs classical methods of data collection such as open-ended survey. The use of methods depends entirely on local condition and situations. According to ICAE (ICAE: 1981) the method serves to promote

- ❖ Production of collective knowledge; the investigation and presentation of a social reality by the groups living it, with the sense of ownership of group information;
- ❖ Collective analysis; the ordering of information in ways useful to the group in examining their reality;
- ❖ Critical analysis; using the ordered information to determine the root causes of the problems and issues apparent in the community, with a view to finding solutions for them
- ❖ Building of relationships between personal and structural problems as part of collective problem solving process
- ❖ Link reflection with action, taking time to ask who? What? Why? Where? When?

See Box 8.3 for a case study that applied PR methodology and obtained fruitful outcome.

Box 8.3 An Example of the Use of PR Methodology

Research team of Vrikshamitra was working on a mission of conscientizing the people about their problem in 1981. The researchers were touring on bicycles in 20 villages in District Gadchiroli of Maharashtra in order to come into direct contact with the people. *Mendha (Lekha)* was one of the villages selected by the team on cycle tour. *Vrikshamitra* set up in the village *Sahayog Shibirs* (discussion groups) where the entire range of issues was discussed and debated several times. A common platform to discuss each and every issue pertaining to the village proved a boon to them. They felt that the entire process of village meetings, discussions, questions and answers and again new questions emerging from those answers was an educational experience for them. Then as a matter of strategy, for every problem confronting them, they used the group discussion forum. The reflection and analysis led the villagers to decide action to transform their social reality. Knowledge of rights as emerged from discussions in *Sahayog Shibirs* in village *Mendha (Lekha)*, Gadchiroli district, Maharashtra, made the local citizens aware of the exploitative issues. As they gained control over knowledge, they organized and mobilized to fight against corruption, and contemplated the ways of developing strategies to negotiate for higher wages. They became aware of

minimum wage and exploitative practices of contractors. Formation of organization led the tribals to demand collectively for higher wages. The above case illustrates the way participatory research created a sense of empowerment and organization amongst tribals.

Source: PRIA 2000

8.5 Conclusion

Since all of us have been involved in research at some point in our academic career, it is important for us to reflect on the kind of research we carry out. As a matter of fact, it does not prove to be useful to enter into polemics about one or the other method of research. In fact being eclectic in approach and taking the best from all sources is always a more wise choice. All the same, in order to be clear in one's mind about implications of the choices we make, it is better to keep in mind the distinctions between various approaches and therefore it is very much in order as a conclusion of Unit 8 to talk about the differences between

Conventional Research (CR) and Participatory Research (PR).

In broad and general terms, PR lays emphasis on authenticity as opposed to scientific validity of the information in CR. This is for two reasons: firstly, knowledge about a social setting is not equivalent to the information obtained from it. Secondly, the social generalization of information is not as important; since people are trying to change their own circumstances first, not address problems at a more general level. Key differences between PR and CR are delineated in Figure 8.1.

Indicators	PR	CR
What is the research for? action later	Action	Understanding with perhaps
Research for whom?	Local people	Institutional, professional, personal interests
Whose knowledge counts?	Local people	Experts
What is the basis of selection of problem?	Local priorities	Funding priorities, institutional agendas, professional interests choice of methodology
Methodology chosen for?	Empowerment, mutual learning	Disciplinary conventions, objectivity & truth
Who takes part in the research process?		
1.Problem identification	Local people	Researcher
2.Data collection	Local people	Researcher
3.Interpretation & frameworks	Local concepts frameworks	Disciplinary concepts &
4.Analysis	Local people	Researcher
5.Presentation of findings & useful	Locally accessible academics or funding bodies	By the researcher to other bodies
6.Action on findings	Integral to the process	Separate; May not happen
Who takes action?	Local people with or without external people	External agencies
Who owns the results?	Community people & The researcher	Researcher
What is emphasized?	Process	Outcomes

Figure 8.1 Main Distinctions between CR and PR

8.6 Apply What You Have Learnt

Apply and analyse the conventional research paradigm and participatory research paradigm, choosing any community related issues in the following format.

Indicators	Classical research	Participatory research
Problem - What is the basis of selection of problem? Who identifies??		
Method What are the methods? Who does the data collection?		
Outcomes What are the outcomes? Who utilises the results?		



PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION (PE)

MANDAKINI PANT

Structure

- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Purpose and Function of Evaluation
- 9.3 Historical Context
- 9.4 Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Process
 - 9.4.1 Key steps
 - 9.4.2 Some Critical Issues for Reflection
- 9.5 Participatory Evaluation Tools
 - 9.5.1 Cost-Benefit Analysis
 - 9.5.2 SWOT Analysis
 - 9.5.3 Values-Based Analysis
 - 9.5.4 Capacity Inventory Checklist
- 9.6 Case-studies of Participatory Evaluation
- 9.7 Conclusion
- 9.9 Apply What You Have Learnt

Learning Objectives

After going through Unit 9, it is expected that you would be able to

- ❖ Describe the historical context of participatory evaluation
- ❖ Understand the process of participatory monitoring and evaluation
- ❖ Understand the significance of participatory evaluation tools
- ❖ Derive lessons from the case-studies and apply the concept and tools of participatory evaluation in your own research and work as adult educator.

9.1 Introduction

Unit 9 introduced PALDIN learners to participatory research and Unit 9 explains the concept and tools of participatory evaluation. This dimension of planning for social action is an important component of professional activities of adult educators. Unit 9 is therefore a necessary input in the basket of various useful contributions of the course. In its Section 9.2, it deals with purpose and function of evaluation

while in Section 9.3 and Section 9.4 it describes the historical context and process of participatory evaluation. In Section 9.4 you will find a detailed description of the tools of participatory monitoring and evaluation. Section 9.5 discusses participatory evaluation tools. Hopefully this section will facilitate your application of the tools in your own work as adult educator.

9.2 Purpose and Function of Evaluation

Evaluation is an integral, yet often overlooked, component of planning for social action. The purpose of evaluation is to help us to better understand whether our hard work is having the impact we desire. Some groups may intuitively know whether or not they are doing a good job, and that knowledge is, at times, sufficient. Nevertheless, there are a number of reasons to engage in evaluation, many of which overlap with reasons to engage in research. These reasons include, but are not limited to

- ❖ Planning for more effective social action;
- ❖ Learning from successes and mistakes;
 - Justifying activities to disinterested community members;

- ❖ Justifying activities to external funding bodies and donors;
- ❖ Ensuring that the group or organization is developing in a sustainable manner;
- ❖ Sharing successes and failures with others to build solidarity; and
- ❖ Building community.

Evaluation fulfils two functions. First, it has an internal support function. It aims to analyze the past to understand the future. Second, it fulfils a control function. This includes control of accounts and financial operations. It is important to make a proper distinction between these two functions as any confusion between the two always leads to emphasizing the control function and overlooking the internal support function.

9.3 Historical Context

The evolution of evaluation began early in the 1950s. The rapid growth in international development assistance in the 1970s saw the shoring up of monitoring and evaluation systems, as the need for the control and accountability increased. The conventional monitoring and evaluation effort focused on physical inputs and outputs and financial expenditure against capital items. It relied on objective methods. It was usually facilitated by outside experts and often initiated by donor agencies. It was by and large concerned with

- ❖ Establishing the financial and technical feasibility of the project
- ❖ Producing a comprehensive and detailed project design or blueprint

- ❖ Setting up a project management system to ensure that all components and materials are delivered on time, and that the performance does not deviate from the blueprint or overrun cost or time limits. (United Nations Development Program 1996).

Over time, this narrow scope for evaluation became linked to the low success rates of development projects. The failure of development projects, the shrinking base and the emergence of basic needs movement led to new understanding that development is a complex process and crude indicators of economic growth like per capita income were insufficient. With newfound emphasis on distribution than growth, satisfaction of human needs

than production, development of human resources than technology, new management tools were put in place to supplement evaluation techniques. The development agencies of late are transferring the governance of development initiatives into local hands, and training the beneficiaries as researchers and evaluators themselves. Hence came into light the concept of participatory evaluation (PE), participatory monitoring (PE) or participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM and E). The concept emerged in the same era as participatory research. It maintains the same conviction as PR that is “evaluation should and can be used to empower the local citizens to analyze and solve their own problems” (Jackson and Kassam 1999: 3).

The increasing concern for participatory evaluation emerged primarily because of the limitations of conventional approach of monitoring and evaluation to assess the views and aspirations of local community who are directly affected by development and their concern for seeking greater accountability of

development agencies and policy makers. Participatory appraisal and planning, a set of new approaches stressed the importance of taking local people’s perspectives into account. The shifts in the perspectives of organizations towards reflecting more on their own experiences, and learning from them have also led to the rise of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM and E).

PM and E involves local people, development agencies, and policy makers deciding together how progress in development should be measured, and results acted upon. It can reveal valuable lessons and improve accountability. It is a challenging process for all concerned since it encourages people to examine their assumptions about what constitutes progress, and to face up to the contradictions and conflicts that can emerge.

See Box 9.1 for a look at the differences between participatory monitoring and evaluation and conventional form of monitoring and evaluation.

Box 9.1 Distinction between Conventional M and E and Participatory M and E		
	Conventional M and E	Participatory M and E
Who plans and manages the process	Senior managers, or outside experts	Local people, project staff, managers, and other stakeholders, often helped by a facilitator
Role of ‘primary stakeholders’ (the intended beneficiaries)	Provide information only	Design and adapt the methodology, collect and analyze data, share findings and link them to action
Role of ‘primary stakeholders’ (the intended beneficiaries)	Externally-defined, mainly Quantitative indicators	Internally-defined indicators, including more Qualitative judgments
Approach	Predetermined	Adaptive

Source: Marisol and Gaventa 1999:

9.4 Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Process

The four broad principles that guide PM and E process are as follows:

- ❖ **Participation** to open the design of the process to include those most directly affected by the program and agreeing to analyze data together;
- ❖ **Negotiation** to reach agreement about what will be monitored or evaluated, how and when data will be collected and analyzed, what the data actually means, and how findings will be shared, and action taken;
- ❖ **Learning** for subsequent improvement and corrective action; and
- ❖ **Flexibility** is essential since the number, role, and skills of stakeholders, the external environment, and other factors change over time. (Marisol and Gaventa 1999)

9.4.1 Key Steps

Some of the key steps in the process of participatory monitoring and evaluation are as follows.

i) Setting Objectives: Frames of reference

Establishing the frame of reference and planning the details of the process, keeping in mind the concerns of the stakeholders and ensuring their participation is the first task in any PM& E exercise. In this step you need to discuss about why evaluation is needed, to whom it is going to benefit, what problems one might face and what should be the objectives of evaluation exercise takes place. One must know the actors in the process, the rationale of the project, the end users of the project, and how the results and process are to

be used. End users could be multiple: community members, project staff, donors, development agencies, NGOs, researchers, national policy makers. This helps us set the frame of reference within which a pre-planned evaluation exercise then proceeds. Having decided the objectives, indicators are then established. The selection of indicators usually depends on what is being assessed, who the end users are, and how the information will be used. The criterion for determining indicator is based on acronym SMART; specific, measurable, action oriented, realistic and time frame. Indicators should capture intangible as well as tangible changes and factors such as personal and social development.

Selecting the best indicators is, however, not always easy. It is in fact a balancing act between choosing locally-relevant factors, and those that can be applied more widely. The more stakeholders that are involved, the longer the process of selecting indicators could take.

ii) Identifying parameters and Information needed

This is an exercise that requires some reflections on what is that we are trying to assess. It is the statement of those dimensions, factors, aspects and variables, which we are trying to assess. PM& E is generally used for impact assessment, project management and planning, organizational strengthening or institutional learning, understanding and negotiating stakeholder perspectives and public accountability. When emphasis is on impact of programs and activities within a given development context such as girl child education; an income

generating program, a health care program, the focus of such PE exercise is essentially on the field; entails active involvement local population, people, likely to benefit from the programs, field level staff and organizers. When the emphasis is on development promoting organizations, open, critical and collective reflections on various organizational issues like people to people interactions, interpersonal interactions, issues of team building conflict management, tensions between the need for routine structure and spontaneity and flexibility can bring about a common and shared understanding of problems and collective efforts to solve them.

iii) Developing methods to obtain that information and data collection

Choice of methods becomes relevant here. We can have open-ended interviews, questionnaires, structured interviews, group discussions, field observations study of records etc. Folk media, songs, role-plays, dramas, art, drawing, have also been extensively used in getting information.

iv) Analyzing data

This is a stage of systematization of information obtained. At this stage a collective process is supported and encouraged. PM and E involves at all levels all end users and stakeholders including the beneficiaries in data analysis. Stakeholders groups engage in critical reflection and thinking about the problems and constraints, success and outcomes of the activities undertaken. Data analysis primarily depends on the tools chosen for gathering data and on the information required by the participants.

v) Documenting, Reporting and Sharing

The collective analysis should be disseminated to all constituencies from where the information has been taken. This feedback is an important step. Some of the important criteria in documentation and reporting include: clarity, simplicity, brevity, use of visuals, timeliness familiarity, and accessibility. Results should be communicated in different ways responding to end users' needs.

vi) Creating Future Scenarios.

This step entails painting future scenarios on the basis of analysis developed and assessment of outside environment for their work and programs etc.

vii) Evolving Action Plans

These action plans are broadly identified and not concretely planned in detail. Multiple future scenarios are discussed, sorted out, integrated and the parties are encouraged to develop concrete action plans.

9.4.2 Some Critical Issues for Reflection

A. You may consider the following dimensions of the process of monitoring and evaluation.

1. End users (Actors/Participants)

Who are the actors in PE process?
What roles do they play? What responsibilities they undertake? Who identifies them?

2. Purpose

What is the situation and context of PE? Who decides?

3. Evaluation initiator

Who initiates? What for?

4. Question makers

Who frames?

5. Methods

- i. Who decides?
- ii. Who owns the methods?
- iii. What is the intent and purpose of methods?
- iv. Are the methods relevant to culture of the participants?
- v. Do the methods facilitate learning?
- vi. How is the methods used-for data collection; to generate interest; to mobilise participants in PE process?
- vii. Are methods gender sensitive: focus and highlight gender specific issues?

6. Facilitators' role

Why facilitate?

- i. To create an environment of sharing and reflection, encouraging participation and expressions of people's knowledge and experience.
- ii. To build confidence and capacity of the people to be active owner and partner in the process of evaluation.
- iii. To stimulate critical faculties of analysis and reflection among various constituencies
- iv. To help identify resources and ways of collecting information, analysing and systematising that information and planning actions to help bring together the view points of various stakeholders in PE exercise.
- v. To facilitate dialogue between the constituencies on the issues raised by the evaluation.

Who facilitates?

- i. A set of persons having effective facilitation skill such as sensitivity to view points of different stakeholders; understanding the context where evaluation is being undertaken;

identifying the participants; manoeuvring the process of evaluation in various stages for collecting, analysing and utilizing information.

- ii. These persons could be from within the context; outsiders; they could be combination of insiders and outsiders.

7. Impact/outcome

Who are we empowering: individuals/groups? Who has the control? Who utilizes the results?

B. The issue of unequal powers of stakeholders is also important.

While identifying various constituencies in a given PE exercise, different sets of participants have different power relations among themselves. For instance, local community feel dependent on animators; animators may feel powerless in front of their organizations; organizations may feel powerless before donor agencies. If the sensitivity to these unequal power relations is not maintained, the process of authentic participation may not take place at all. The PE exercise may degenerate into an exercise controlled by the powerful. For instance, donors and organizations are legitimate stakeholders to the outcome of PE exercise. How and to what extent do we incorporate their viewpoints? How not to distort PE process or undermine critical reflections by crucial stakeholders?

C. Validation of participatory evaluation process is also necessary.

How does one validate a PE exercise? What are the bases by which validation can occur?

If PE is a collective process of reflection and action on both past, present and

future then it helps the group to reflect critically upon its primary objectives, its goals, process, and how empowerment of the marginalized has taken place. The group is therefore able to assess whether their plan of action has been effective and meaningful. In such a case PE is valid if it results in consciousness of the group of their realities, helps bring about and catalyse change at all levels of functioning. The next question then follows: how does one arrive at the indicators of change? If we predetermine the indicators then we are predetermining the outcome. If we assume change as the dynamic process then we cannot predict the outcome.

Unlike the conventional evaluation process, PE highlights the inherent contradictions among and within various constituencies. If this highlighting questions the assumptions about change: individual, group, organizational, social-economic and political, then this itself is a validation of PE process.

D. Look at the links between participatory research (PR) and participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM and E).

PR perspective is inherent. PM and E is a process of learning promoting reflection and critical analysis by the powerless, marginalized, and oppressed of their reality and circumstances. It is characterised by following characteristics.

- ❖ Supports and extends participatory models of development more generally
- ❖ Empowers communities, organizations, and individuals to analyze and solve their own problems

- ❖ Values the knowledge and experience of local citizens in analyzing their economic, political, social and cultural reality
- ❖ Uses learning and education to promote reflection and critical analysis by both project participants and development workers
- ❖ Serves the purpose of improving the program and organization in a given development intervention, in the interests of the beneficiaries;
- ❖ Involves the active participation of project beneficiaries, who play a decisive role in the entire evaluation process;
- ❖ Promotes the beneficiaries' ownership of a development program;
- ❖ Uses participatory methods of obtaining data and generating knowledge, employing a wide range of predominantly qualitative methods, sometimes in combination with quantitative methods; and
- ❖ Is participatory and collective and that creates better, more in-depth, and more accurate knowledge of the performance and impacts of a development intervention.
- ❖ It is a way of learning from and with community members to investigate, analyze and evaluate constraints, opportunities and make informed and timely decisions regarding development programs. Participatory methods and participatory tools for information gathering back the concept (Jackson and Kassam 1999: 2).

See Box 9.2 for some useful questions to ask while evaluating a program with the community.

Box 9.2 Useful Questions for Evaluating a Program	
Process	Questions
Initiation and control	Who initiates? Who defines the problems?
Critical content	What is evaluated? Why? By whom?
Collective analysis	How is information gathered? By whom? How is data analyzed? By whom?
Learning and skills developed	What is learned? develops what skills? What are the products and by-products?
Uses for Action	How are results disseminated? Who uses them? How are they used? Who benefits?

Source: International Council for Adult Education. 1991: 59

After learning about the process of participatory monitoring and evaluation, let us now discuss in Section 9.5 the tools that enable us to carry out the PE process. But before moving on to Section 9.5 let us also complete Activity 9.1 so that it is easier to use the PE tools in your work as adult educator.

Activity 9.1

Read carefully the paragraph on PM and E process and explore if you are actually familiar with all the terms, concepts and phrases used in it. In case you are not clear about any of these words, seek help now to clarify before trying to use PE tools. You may use the Internet facility to seek clarification before writing your answers.

- ❖ Explain in 200 words what you understand by 'participatory models of development'.
- ❖ Give in 100 words your definition of the term 'empowerment'.
- ❖ Discuss in 150 words the connotation of the phrase 'economic, political, social and cultural reality'.
- ❖ Distinguish between project participants and development workers.
- ❖ What is meant by 'development intervention'?
- ❖ What is the difference between active and passive participation?

- ❖ Give your definition of 'beneficiary'.
- ❖ Distinguish between quantitative and qualitative methods of obtaining data.
- ❖ List the participatory methods and tools for information gathering.

9.5 Participatory Evaluation Tools

A wide range of methods and tools has been developed to carry out PM&E. They all seek to compare the situation before and after a particular project, or set of events. They include homemade questionnaires and scientific measurement techniques adapted for use by local people, as well as more innovative methods such as oral histories, and the use of photos, video and theatre.

The PE tools are needed to

- ❖ Facilitate discussion between different groups
- ❖ Gather and analyze information
- ❖ Present conclusions and recommendations

The following are some straightforward tools that can be employed with little, if any, outside intervention. Becoming familiar with such processes can help communities to reclaim control over the evaluation of their work. It is important to remember that the tool alone does not initiate a participatory process; it is how the tool is used. Practising working

together helps people to learn to work together more effectively.

9.5.1 Cost-Benefit Analysis

Cost-benefit (CB) analysis is a tool used to compare, in monetary terms, the actual or estimated costs and benefits associated with a program. They are used, for example, in decision-making processes that determine budget allocations for public spending. When used as a simplified tool for evaluation, group together can create a straightforward list of the costs and benefits associated with the project, program, or other activities, can even think for future plans. Determining the social, economic, ecological, governance, and learning implications of a program, for example, can help to evaluate the sustainability of that program over time. Comparing costs and benefits can also help the group make decisions around 'tradeoffs', that is, which costs the group is willing to incur to achieve the benefits, or which risks they are willing to venture to meet the stated objectives.

Activity 9.2

What is in your opinion the purpose of cost-benefit analysis? Have you ever carried out such an analysis during your work as adult educator?

If yes, describe the process adopted in your exercise.

If no, describe how would you make CB analysis participatory?

9.5.2 SWOT Analysis

SWOT is an acronym that stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The first two components refer to the strengths and weaknesses internal to the group conducting the analysis. They are a basic inventory of what the group does well, and what areas are in need of improvement. The last two components refer to opportunities and threats in the external environment. Opportunities can include discovering potential sources of funding, creating partnerships with other organizations, finding out what relevant literature is available. Threats can emerge from the political-economic climate, organizations with competing goals and ideologies, or changing community demographics. Taking account of external opportunities and threats is sometimes referred to as an 'environmental scan'.

The process of a SWOT analysis can be as simple as a group brainstorming meeting, or longer-term research endeavour, depending on the time and resources available. Like PR processes, the key is that the evaluation is initiated and controlled by people in the group. Going through a SWOT analysis as a group can think about ways to capitalize on its strengths, and take steps to improve its weaknesses. They can also think about how to take advantage of new opportunities, or create plans to circumvent the threats, or contingency plans. Furthermore, while they may not have control over the external environment, knowing the opportunities and threats that exist can help them to be aware of and more prepared to deal with pressures that affect them from outside.

Activity 9.3

Imagine the situation in which you are participating in PE of PALDIN courses. Carry out a SWOT analysis of PALDIN course 2 and give your analysis in four short paragraphs.

9.5.3 Values-based Analysis

The techniques for recognizing stakeholder values are increasingly being incorporated into evaluation processes. The program beneficiaries themselves determine which values the standards against which their programs are evaluated. The process of collectively stating values can occur before a project is initiated, so that community members can return to those values at decision points throughout the project implementation. Group members

choose which values they consider important. When values are listed at the beginning of a project, these values can become measurement criteria or indicators for organization's success. While these terms may imply a rigid planning process, they are purely intended to help groups to evaluate whether their efforts are having the desired effect. As the group proceeds with the project, they can return to these values to determine whether and how the stated values are being addressed through their efforts.

Activity 9.4

Explain what is meant by 'value' in the above sub-section. Distinguish between 'value' and 'goal' from the point of view of a project participant.

9.5.4 Capacity Inventory Checklist

This approach begins with the assumption that people have knowledge and capacities, or 'assets', and working collectively, we can use these assets to better our communities.

This checklist includes questions about the following community assets.

- ❖ General Skills, such as health care, office knowledge, food preparation, music, operating equipment and machinery;
- ❖ Community Organizing Skills such as fundraising and community gardening;
- ❖ Enterprising Interests and Experience, such as business development; and

- ❖ Any other skills relevant to the group.

Groups need to adapt this checklist to serve their particular needs. This would include adding questions about other skills that the group finds useful, such as questions about which formal or informal associations (religious or educational institutions, sports clubs, etc) with which people and their family members have relationships. The act of going out into the community and talking to people about these skills can, however, build a sense of community through the formation of relationships, and a better understanding of what resources are available.

9.6 Conclusion

In this unit we have described and critiqued the conventional process of evaluation and outlined historically the evolution of participatory evaluation. After describing the process of

participatory evaluation we explained participatory evaluation tools and provided some case studies so that you draw lessons about how to go about while carrying out PE process.

9.7 Apply What You Have Learnt

Consider an example where you have been part of evaluation process as an adult educator in a community. Summarise in 1000 words the evaluation process, reflect and share the following questions.

- ❖ What is the basis of evaluation?
- ❖ Who identified the problem?
- ❖ Who initiated the evaluation process?
- ❖ Who participated?
- ❖ Who designed the process?
- ❖ Who chose the evaluation methods?

- ❖ What methods were used?
- ❖ Who analyzed and interpreted the information?
- ❖ What are the outcomes?
- ❖ How are findings utilised?
- ❖ Who benefited?
- ❖ Type of knowledge generated?
- ❖ Strength & weakness analysis?
- ❖ Control and ownership?



10 PARTICIPATORY TRAINING

MANDAKINI PANT

Structure



- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Understanding Participatory Training
 - 10.2.1 Conventional Training
 - 10.2.2 Principles of Adult Learning
 - 10.2.3 Principles of Participatory Training
 - 10.2.4 Spheres of Influence
- 10.3 Steps in Participatory Training
 - 10.3.1 Pre-Training Phase: Designing Training
 - 10.3.2 Post-Training Phase I: Monitoring and Evaluation
 - 10.3.3 Post Training Phase II: Follow up of Training and Report Writing
- 10.4 Conclusion
- 10.5 Apply What You Have Learnt

Learning Objectives



After completing Unit 10 it is expected that you would be able to

- ❖ Discuss principles of participatory training in the context of adult learning.
- ❖ Describe the various steps in pre- and post phases of participatory training.

10.1 Introduction

Unit 10 will familiarize you with the concepts and issues of participatory training. In the section 10.2 we critically assess the conventional training programs and discuss the principles underlying adult learning and participatory training. This section will end with a consideration of spheres of influence during interaction inside training rooms. Section 10.3 deals with steps in participatory training. Since this subject is too vast and some of its areas have already surfaced in Unit 9, we have opted to discuss only pre- and

post-training phases in Unit 10. In-training phase or learning environment is the theme of an independent unit, and in Unit 11 you will read details about this phase of participatory training. In Unit 12 you will have an opportunity to read about participatory methodology and materials. Since the theme of participatory training is of key significance for adult educators, we have covered it in several units. We hope this extra emphasis will provide substantial inputs to PALDIN learners.

Participatory Training

Training is a learning process, which involves learning of new skills, concepts and behavior.

10.2.1 Conventional Training

The conventional training adopts a

trainer centric approach where trainer becomes a central point around which the entire process revolves, while learners adopt a passive role. Figure 10.1 shows the conventional method of training.

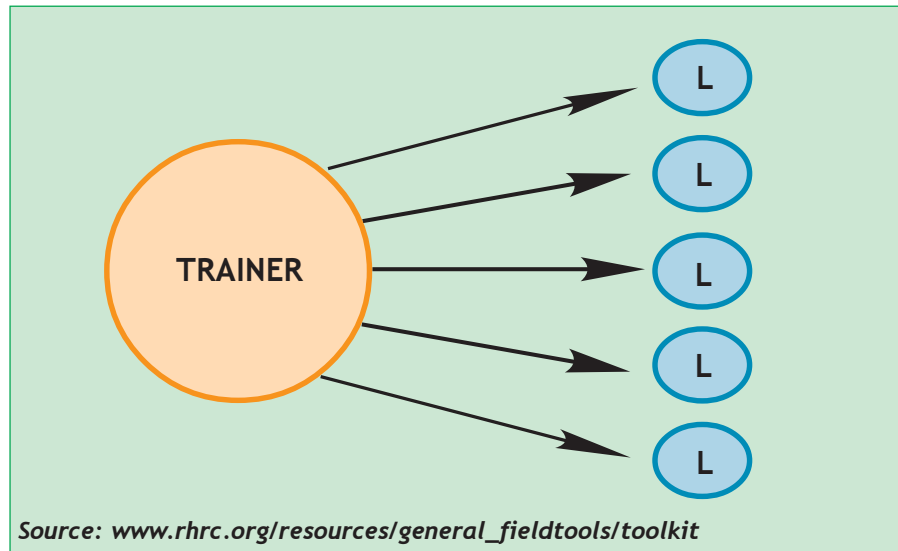


Figure 10.1 The Didactic 'Trainer' to 'Learner' Method

In the conventional training

- ❖ Relationship between the trainer and the learners is in the mode of teacher and students relationship.
- ❖ The trainer and the training institution have the responsibility of training.
- ❖ The trainer defines what the learners need to learn and how these learning needs can be met.
- ❖ Learners learn what the trainer teaches; have little knowledge about the topic and have no experience to share. Learning is simply a function of the capacity of the learners to learn and the ability of the trainer to teach.
- ❖ The trainer is considered important

because she/he is assumed to be knowledgeable.

When we view this method from adult learners' vantage point we find that this method is not an effective training model. It disregards learners' knowledge and experience. Adults generally learn better and remember what they learned when they:

- ❖ Hear information
- ❖ See demonstrations and illustrations
- ❖ Discuss information and ideas, and
- ❖ Practice techniques

Participatory training deals with adults and as such, has its theoretical base in the principles of active learning and adult learning.

Activity 10.1

What are, in your opinion, the key methods of adult learning? Write your answer with illustrations from your experience in adult learning.

10.2.2 Principles of Adult Learning

- ❖ Adults come to the learning situation with a well-defined perception about one's self. Low self-concept blocks new learning. Low self-concept may have been due to their perception of their past experiences of marginalization. Building their self-concept can facilitate their learning.
 - ❖ Adult learning is an emotional experience. The act of learning creates anxiety, stress, fear, frustrations or helplessness. This needs to be understood and handled with sensitivity.
 - ❖ Adults usually come with an intention to learn. If this motivation is not supported they will withdraw. Learning improves when self-directedness is encouraged, when they identify what they need to learn and do. Therefore, the learning content needs to be derived from their needs and methods must be based on mutual respect between the learner and the trainer.
 - ❖ Adults are voluntary learners. They enter learning programs to seek solutions to their immediate and personal needs and to accomplish things to improve their lives and to gain control over their lives. The here and now feeling must be respected and recognized to keep them motivated to learn. The solutions to their problems must come from their understanding and analysis and must be congruent with their life style and functioning.
 - ❖ Adults learn best in an atmosphere of active involvement and participation. Learning is an active process conducted in an atmosphere of openness and encouragement. It is not just taking part in a pre set program; instead the learners participate at every stage from planning the agenda, choosing methods to self-evaluation.
 - ❖ Adult education helps groups to organize, stay together and grow. People develop their creativity and insights when working with others to identify and solve problems. Collectively they recognize their knowledge, skills, interests and ability to act.
 - ❖ Success reinforces learning. When people succeed in their activity, their satisfaction motivates them to get more involved. It is often best to begin with a small and immediate problem. Successful solutions of the problems will empower them to face problems and expand their vision of the future.
 - ❖ Participation is difficult when there are financial, physical, or socio-political constraints. Learning takes place when learners are not under stress; when learning environment is safe and supportive.
 - ❖ Different adults learn differently. This necessitates use of diverse sets of learning methods to enable the learner and the learning process.
- The adult learning model applies the adult education principles to participatory training programs. Learners actively participate when the principles

and practices of adult education forms the basis of training program. They learn quickly and retain new knowledge and

skills. The implications of adult education principles for training are summed up in Box 10.1.

Box 10.1 Implications of Adult Education Principles	
Adult Education Principles	Implications for the training plan
Adults learn best when they perceive learning as relevant to their needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Provide “real life” situations and emphasize the application of learning to real problems. ❖ identify learners’ needs and what is important to them.
Adults learn by doing and by being actively involved in the learning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Provide activities, which require active participation of learners. ❖ Provide activities which involve the learners as whole people: their ideas, attitudes, feelings, physical being.
Adults have unique learning styles. They learn in different ways, at different rates, and from different experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Use a variety of training techniques. ❖ Establish an atmosphere of respect and understanding of differences.
Participants bring relevant and important knowledge and experiences to the workshop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Provide opportunities for sharing information. ❖ Discuss and analyse participants’ experiences. ❖ Use participants as a resource and encourage them to participate and share their experiences.
(Source: www.rhrc.org/resources/general_fieldtools/toolkit/)	

10.2.3 Principles of Participatory Training

The salient features of participatory training principles are as follows.

- ❖ Participatory training is participant centered. The training rises out of specific needs of participants as articulated by them.
- ❖ The learning not only imparts new knowledge but also generates awareness and builds skills.
- ❖ Learning is derived from the

experiences of the learners. Experiential learning is crucial to participatory training.

- ❖ Participatory training requires a learning environment where learners and their experiences are valued and they feel psychologically secure and safe to unlearn, try their new ideas and share their experiences.
- ❖ Participation of learners in the entire training process is valued. Consequently they develop their own

norms, values and take responsibility for their own learning.

❖ The role of trainer is very crucial. The

trainer believes not only in the participatory principles, but demonstrates it as a way of life.

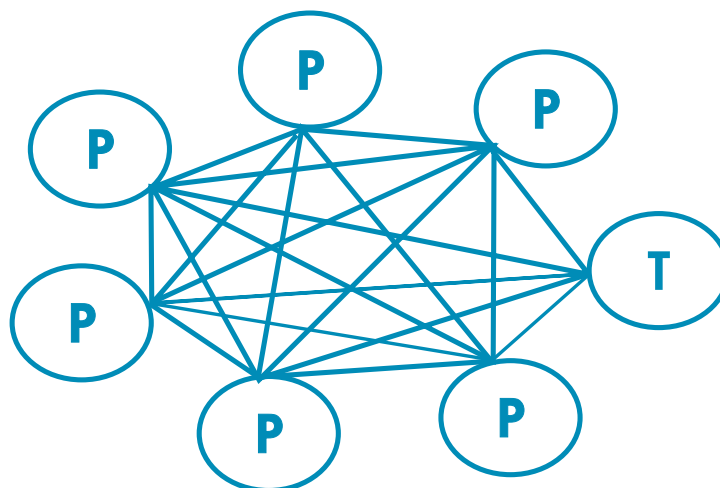


Figure 10.2 Active Learning Method of Participatory Training.

Figure 10.2 shows the pattern of active learning and Box 10.2 gives the roles

and functions of both the trainer and the learners in participatory training.

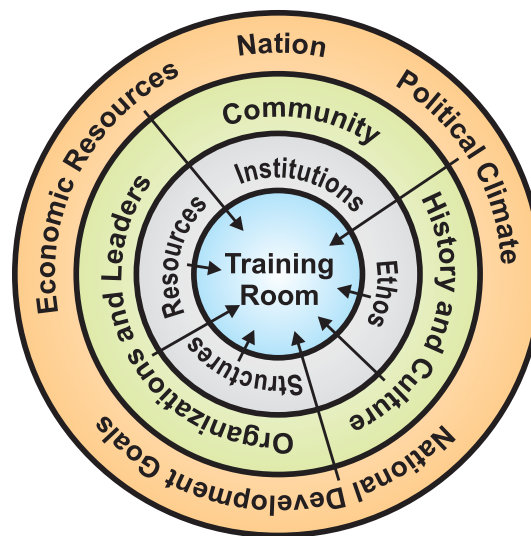
Box 10.2 Roles and Functions of the Trainer and the Learners in Participatory Training	
The Trainer	The Participants
❖ Is a facilitator	❖ Are members of a communication network.
❖ Is a good communicator	❖ Feel at ease
❖ Works at the same level as the participants	❖ Participate actively
❖ Respects participants' ideas and experiences	❖ Share experiences
❖ Is supportive of the learning process	❖ Ask questions, make mistakes, and take risks as part of the training process
❖ Is an organizer of learning experiences	❖ Use the trainer as a resource, guide and mentor

(Source: www.rhrc.org/resources/general_fieldtools/toolkit/)

10.2.4 Spheres of Influence

The training program design is perhaps the most difficult task as factors outside the training sphere influence the interaction inside the training room. Interactions within training are influenced, enhanced or impeded by the wider spheres where training policies are formulated and decisions are made. For instance, the trainer who follows a bottom-up problem oriented conscientization processes might face

problems if operating in a highly centralised political framework. Figure 10.3 helps us to understand the ways in which interactions within a training room is influenced by the wider spheres outside the training room. An initiative in any one of these circles can cause ripples in both ways. When resources are scarce, institutional attitudes are rigid and directive; designing a participatory training program can be full of constraints.



Source: United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (1988: 27)

Figure 10.3 Influence of Wider Spheres on the Interaction inside the Training Room

As someone involved in training program you might be situated in any of or more of these circles:

- ❖ You might be a member of staff of an institution engaged to provide training
- ❖ You might be an official of a govt department charged with the responsibility of planning training programs
- ❖ You may be an advisor working for international agency with responsibility for collaborating with implementing organizations in planning and implementing training

The preliminary identification of spheres and roles make distinctions between levels of decision-making when we consider the variety of steps in program design.

Activity 10.2

Make a chart or diagram to indicate how wider spheres have influenced your interaction during a training program.

10.3 Steps in Participatory Training

Further, participatory training process emphasizes a systematic and comprehensive effort to design, conduct and evaluate training program. It comprises of a series of steps in three distinct phases. The pre training phase focuses on designing of training program. During training phase, focus is on group facilitation, debriefing and consolidation and creating conducive learning environment. The post training phase includes such steps as evaluation, follow-up and report writing. We will here first discuss the spheres of influence and then go on to pre-, during and post-training phases of participatory training process.

10.3.1 Pre-Training Phase: Designing Training

This is the most critical and most creative component of the training program. It comprises of the following steps.

- a) Conducting learning needs assessment. What do participants want and need? What does the organization want and need?
- b) Formulating objectives based on organizational and personal needs.
- c) Identifying content from the objectives.
- d) Sequencing the content. How to start a program and end it? How to sequence the various contents to develop the pace for learning?
- e) Choosing the methods.

a) Conducting Training Needs Assessment

What is meant by training needs assessment? A training needs assessment is the process of identifying the requirements in a given situation, in this

case, what the trainees in the workshop need to learn. If we are engaged in a program of basic education and we want to promote a deeper commitment on this issue in the village education committee, then the members of the village education committee become the learners.

Why is training-needs assessment vital?

- ❖ To develop long and short range plans of action
- ❖ To help set priorities
- ❖ To develop support and stimulate action
- ❖ To design a workshop that will provide the participants with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed in their jobs

How is one to assess training needs?

- ❖ Identify the information needed
- ❖ Identify the sources of information

Broadly, there are three sources for identifying training needs of a particular group. Although they are independent sources for gathering information, you must consider them as complementary to one another in order to prepare a consolidated list of training needs. The three sources are:

- ❖ Job descriptions of the job or task that learners perform give insight to the learning needs of the group. The nature and requirements of their work become a source of information about their learning needs. This exercise can be done for each individual learner, for the entire group of learners as well as for an organization as a whole. See if the job description is complete and accurate. (Add or revise tasks as needed.)

- ❖ Existing records, documents and other such materials can also become useful sources of information. These records may be minutes of meetings, progress reports, performance review documents, etc. They can also be records of events and problems that a group of learners might already have worked on.
- ❖ Previous training conducted with the same learners and reports of the session could also be a source of useful information. Some time these

reports may also have future learning need assessment.

Result of need assessment

- ❖ A needs assessment identifies the gap between the present situation and the desired situation.
- ❖ You can examine both present and desired behavior, knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- ❖ You can collect data, which will be useful in the evaluation stage.

See Box 10.3 for Dos and Don'ts

Box 10.3 Dos and Don'ts

Dos

- ❖ Make systematic and comprehensive design efforts
- ❖ Know background and need of the participants

Don'ts

- ❖ Borrow standard formats and designs from others
- ❖ Fit session to requirement and availability of trainers, training institutions and resource persons availability
- ❖ Organize materials and locations to suit the need of trainers, training institutions and budgets
- ❖ Identify content to suit the methods (Source: PRIA (110106): Insights to Participatory Training. New Delhi. PRIA. Mimeo)

(Source: PRIA (110106): Insights to Participatory Training. New Delhi. PRIA. Mimeo)

b) Defining Objectives

What is meant by defining objectives? An objective is a specific statement of what a participant must be able to do to demonstrate that he or she has achieved the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to complete a task. Each objective must be

Specific: It must state exactly what the participant will do.

Measurable: It contains quantitative terms (e.g., numbers, percentages).

Attainable: It is possible for the participant to accomplish.

Relevant: It is related to what is needed on the job.

Time Bound: It states how long achieving the objective will take.

Why should we define objectives?

- ❖ All learning needs do not get fulfilled through a single training program. We have to make a choice of those learning needs that can actually be addressed in a structured, systematic and planned training program.
- ❖ Foci of learning can be classified in three ways.

- ❖ The first is learning of knowledge i.e. gathering of information, concepts, and ideas. This is “**cognitive learning**”- it includes mental, abstract and intellectual effort.
- ❖ The second focus of learning is called **awareness where an emotional appreciation** of the issues is done. It includes themes like motivation, commitment, values, emotions, (matters of heart) etc.
- ❖ The third focus of learning is to **build skills** in specific area, for example, skills in vaccination.

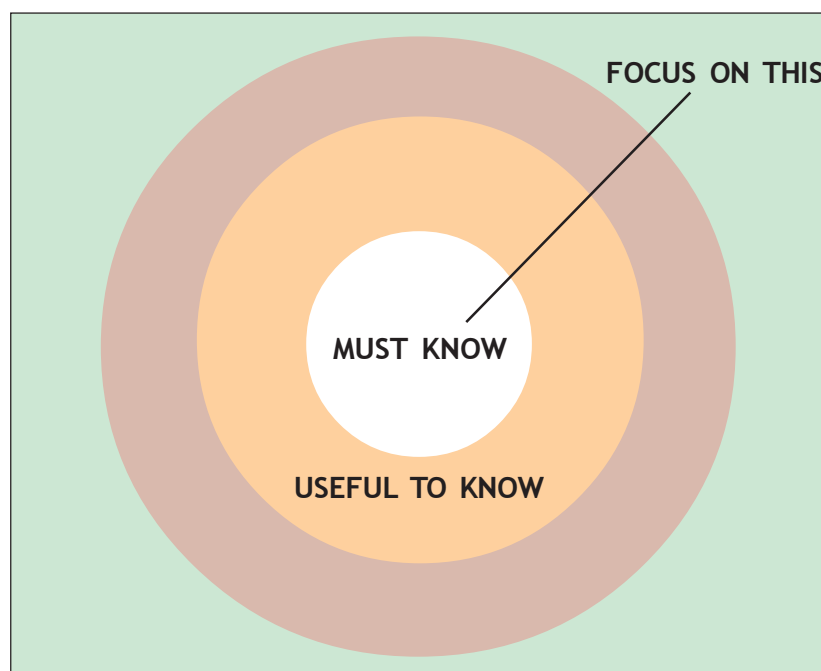
This framework of learning helps us to separate and clearly specify the objective of a particular training program.

- ❖ Objectives serve to relate the content of the training to the knowledge,

skills, and attitudes identified in task analysis, which is based on the desired job performance of the participants. They make planning and implementation of training focused, effective, and efficient. They are the standards used to evaluate the training.

How do we define objectives?

- ❖ Determine skills, facts and attitudes which learners already have and identify those they need to learn (expectations). In the training workshop stress only those facts that participants **MUST** learn to be competent in their work (see Figure 10.4).
- ❖ Use active verbs when writing objectives. See Box 10.4 for looking at active use of verbs.



Source: www.rhrc.org/resources/general_fieldtools/toolkit/

Figure 10.4 Focal Point

Box 10.4 Illustration: Participatory Training on Panchayati Raj**Expectations of the trainees·**

To acquire information and knowledge on

- ❖ Panchayati Raj System, 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act in rural development, empowerment of women and dalit
- ❖ Practical grassroots experience with gram panchayats
- ❖ Ways to communicate the essence of Panchayati raj system to rural masses

Objectives

- ❖ To develop an understanding of Panchayati Raj System with special reference to 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act and its role in community development and empowerment
- ❖ To sensitise the development workers to strengthen gram sabha and gram panchayat
- ❖ To develop an understanding of various low cost methods of communication to spread the message of Panchayati raj to marginalized sections of society.

Result of defining objectives

The objectives of training program are

directly linked to what the learners' need to learn.

Activity 10.3

Describe how, in a need assessment exercise, that you may have carried out during your career as adult educator, you have identified the needs for a program and how you have defined the program's objectives.

c) Identifying Content from Objectives

Once we have derived the objectives of a particular training program precisely, the next task in designing is to identify the content, which will help us to achieve those objectives.

In identifying the content, we once again need to look at:

- ❖ Who our learners are?
- ❖ What is their level?
- ❖ What is their starting point?
- ❖ What do they already know?
- ❖ How much detailed information can be given?
- ❖ Which combination of learning foci needs to be emphasized with that group of learners?

For example, a training program to generate greater commitment towards education of the girl child among members of the village education

committee has to be conducted. This would require an emphasis on creating awareness rather than skills because the village education committee is not directly responsible for teaching; that is the job of the teacher.

The elaboration of content in order to respond to each of the objectives of training requires considerable knowledge of the subject matter. Experts may have to be consulted. Yet, it must be ensured that the content is appropriate to the level of learners and not overly detailed.

D) Sequencing Content

Having identified different content areas, the sequence or flow of different contents needs to be specified. The important thing in sequence is to determine how the entire training program will flow from the beginning to the end and how one content area follows another.

There are several important considerations when determining a useful sequence. Logically sequenced content takes learners step-by-step from on-pace of knowledge and learning to other. Sequencing of the content can be done in the following ways:

- ❖ First, the content related to the individual is dealt with followed by content related to the group, moving on to the community and then to the society. It is a micro to macro sequencing of contents (see Box 10.5 for an illustration).
- ❖ Second, the sequence moves from society to community to the group followed by self. This is macro to micro sequencing (see Box 10.6).
- ❖ Third, is a combination of these two sequences, where one starts with macro, comes to micro and then moves again to the macro level. The sequence flows from society to community to group to self and back to the group to community to society.

Box 10.5 Illustration: Micro-Macro Sequencing of Contents for a Sensitization Workshop on Violence against Women		
Day 1	Session	Method
10.30 am-10.30 am	Welcome Introduction	
10.30 am-11.00am	Tea	
11.00 am- 1.00 pm	Issues and challenges concerning women	Individual exercise and group discussion
1.00 pm- 2.00 pm	Lunch	
2.00 pm- 4.00 pm	Violence against women: personal experiences	Individual case studies and open discussion
4.00 pm- 4.30 pm	Tea	
4.30 pm- 6.00 pm	Video on strategies to combat violence against women	Video and open discussion
Day 2		
10.30 am - 11.00 am	Perpetuation of violence against women: Psychological and family analysis.	Case study and discussion
11.00 am-11.30 am	Tea	
11.30- 1.00 pm	Perpetuation of violence against women: Societal analysis	Case study and discussion
1.00 pm-2.00 pm	Lunch	
2.00 pm - 4.00 pm	Strategies to combat violence against women	Lecture
4.00 pm- 4.15 pm	Tea	
4.15 pm- 6.00 pm	Individual strategies to overcome violence against women	Individual assignment and group discussion

Box 10.6 Illustration: Micro-Macro Sequencing of Contents for a Sensitization Workshop on PRIs: For first time Pradhans of Panchayats

Day 1	Session	Method
9.30 am-9.30 am	Welcome Introduction	
9.30 am-11.00am	Tea	
11.00 am- 1.00 pm	Perspective on development and participatory Development	Buzz group and lecture
1.00 pm- 2.00 pm	Lunch	
2.00 pm- 4.00 pm	73rd constitutional amendmentsalient points	Lecture
4.00 pm- 4.30 pm	Tea	
4.30 pm- 6.00 pm	Video on PRI functioning	Video and open discussion
Day 2		
9.30 am - 11.00 am	Roles and responsibilities of Pradhan	Lecture
11.00 am-11.30 am	Tea	
11.30- 1.00 pm	Factors promoting and hindering functionaing of Pradhans	Case study
1.00 pm-2.00 pm	Lunch	
2.00 pm - 3.00 pm	Presentation of group report and discussion	
3.00 pm- 3.30 pm	Tea	
3.30 pm- 5.00 pm	Plans for applying learning to own work	Individual assignment and group discussion

e) Choosing Methods

The last step in the process of designing is selection of appropriate methods. In this area of work, we use learning - training methods as these address each focus of learning directly.

If the focus of learning is knowledge, concepts and information, it can be best provided through what is known as the lecture method. The other methods of acquiring new knowledge could be demonstration, field visits, etc.

- ❖ For literate participants, reading materials can also be provided. But the quality, level and appropriateness of those materials need to be ensured.
- ❖ Other aids like flip charts, posters, transparencies etc. may also be used. But essentially the purpose of lecture either by one person or by a panel of persons is to provide additional information, new knowledge and concepts to the group of learners.

When **the focus of learning is awareness**, the existing experience of learners can be utilized. Methods appropriate for awareness have been called **structured experiences** because they make structured use of either the past or the present experience of learners or others.

- ❖ Group discussion as a vehicle for learning is one such example. Learners in a small group share their experiences and critically analyze them to develop new insights and appreciate the issues involved.
- ❖ Exercises and simulations generated during the training program are other examples of structured experiences. These make use of the experience generated during the training itself.
- ❖ Role-play is another example of structured experience. It encourages the learners to enact a part of the

reality they have observed or experienced. Role-play also promotes awareness.

- ❖ The case study method is useful in situations where other people's experiences are used for the learning of a group. The case study may be written, oral, audio, or audio-visual.

The third **focus of learning is the learning of skills**. No skills are learnt without practice.

- ❖ Apprenticeship is a long-standing method of learning skills. Be it playing a sitar or repairing of scooters, in both cases the model of practice is apprenticeship. During the training program itself, methods should be such that allow practicing of skills by the learners.

A sketch in Box 10.7 demonstrates how objectives and methods are related.

Box 10.7 Inter-relationship between Objectives and Methods

Imparting knowledge	Developing skills	Changing attitudes
Lecture	Demonstration	Discussion
Reading	Practice	Practice
Case study	Case study	Case study
Audio visual	Simulation	Simulation
Presentation	Role play	Role play

The choice of the learning method is a crucial determinant of an effective training program. Following the above steps, a time schedule is set. Ideally the length of the training program is determined by assessing how long it would take to achieve the training goals. However, in reality a number of constraints affect the decisions such as willingness of the employers to release

their staff, and willingness of the trainees to be away from their families if the training program is a residential one. Therefore, important consideration would be the time given to the project work in the field, theoretical study and simulated practice in the training centre. Participatory learning depends upon the availability of materials. Sometimes the program planner will have to prepare

learning materials; and provide learning resources where they do not exist such as a library or information resource centre. Resource persons are identified if needed. It is important that resource persons have experience of field practice as well as academic knowledge and

teaching expertise. Unless we have this we shall not be able to engage in problem solving, reflective, experiential mode of training. You cannot tap and share the experience of others if you yourself lack it.

Activity 10.4

Imagine that you are to select a method for developing skills of adult learners. Your colleague has suggested the following considerations for selecting a method. Do you agree with your colleague? Or, would you rather consider some other issues?

- ❖ Who are the learners and what is their background?
- ❖ How to create a conducive-learning environment?
- ❖ Availability of physical infrastructure, material and other resources.
- ❖ Size of the learning group and facilitator.
- ❖ What are the trainers' capacities and competence?

10.3.2 Post Training Phase I: Monitoring & Evaluation

We have discussed in detail the concept in Unit 8. In this section we shall understand the process in the context of participatory training.

A. Monitoring and Evaluation

What?

Monitoring and evaluation are processes of collecting and analyzing information in order to assess the effectiveness of the training workshop.

Monitoring is essentially an on going process to ensure that the training program is on track and that the pace and content of learning remain relevant to the group of learners. The pace of learning is closely observed to adapt its pace and depth to the requirements of learners.

As an on going assessment process, monitoring can take several forms:

- ❖ Predominantly, it is an exercise done by the trainers themselves; it may include a group of learners from time to time. The mechanism of a steering

committee that reviews the day's proceedings at the end of the day is a practical example.

Field Illustration

At leadership training for presidents of village forest committees, the facilitator asked for three volunteers each day, to form a steering committee. The responsibility of the steering committee was to monitor the progress of the day's proceedings, inside and outside the training hall. They were asked to informally enquire from other participants their opinions about the training program, the day's sessions, and the methods used, about logistics and other administrative and learning related components. Each evening the steering team briefed the facilitator team about the perceptions of the participants and also provided suggestions for enhancing the effectiveness of the training program. The steering team thus played an important role in guiding the training program in right direction and at the correct pace.

- ❖ Monitoring can also be done through daily or weekly reviews conducted in a somewhat more structured and formal manner. Clearly, one has to be on top of the learning process during the training in order to being able to utilize the feedback from monitoring.
- ❖ Monitoring by trainers and facilitators entails observing learning processes as they occur during a training program. This observation can also focus on a specific individual or sub-group in order to ensure that they participate actively in the learning processes.

(Formal and more structured mid-term reviews can be undertaken during the training program to elicit a feedback from the participants. But this is not a substitute to the requirement of ongoing and continuous monitoring of the process of learning of various learners, their sub-groups etc.

Evaluation in the context of participatory training means the systematic eliciting and analysis of feedback information about the relevance and impact of the training in order to assess whether learning or change has been effectively brought about. It is not aimed at being judgmental; rather, it brings out strengths and weaknesses. It helps to reflect on and consolidate present learning for participants, it also helps trainers modify and revise the program, and strengthen future programs.

Traditional evaluation practices seek passive involvement of learners, who are usually the objects of evaluation. The evaluation is often one sided, by the trainers, who may not even share results of the evaluation with learners.

Characteristics of Participatory Evaluation

- ❖ **Shared Control:** Both the learners and the facilitator maintain shared control over the process of evaluation.
- ❖ **Developmental:** It helps in strengthening the training program by working out the difficulties faced by learners and trainers; it is intended as a developmental intervention.
- ❖ **Awareness raising:** It leads to a process of collective awareness raising. All the learners and the trainers are aware of what is happening to them at a given point of time.
- ❖ **Empowering:** In this methodology, information is shared with the group and the learners maintain control over the process of evaluation. As an outcome, it becomes an empowering experience.
- ❖ **Mobilization:** Learners are motivated towards contributing to the effectiveness of the training program through such an evaluation process.

Why?

Monitoring and evaluation activities are conducted to improve the quality of the training and to determine whether the participants have acquired the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to do their jobs. The results of monitoring and evaluation are also used to plan future training workshops.

The Evaluation Process

In evaluation of participatory training, we assess changes in the learners, and overall effectiveness of the program, including the trainers. The assessment is not only during the program but also after the program is over.

In the context of learners

Some of the important aspects evaluated in the learner’s context include:

- ❖ Attitudinal change- Has the training brought about any changes in the attitudes and values of the learner? Does the learner perceive certain significant changes in his/ her orientation to people, work, and self-etc.? Is there a feeling of personal growth?
- ❖ Behavioral changes- Have the learners shown any behavioral changes during the training program? Have they noticed any behavioral changes at home / work after the program?
- ❖ Conceptual development- Has knowledge about relevant topics increased? Has that knowledge been useful during transactions at work? Has there been exposure to processes that the learner knew nothing about before the training?
- ❖ Performance changes- Has the training contributed to an improved performance? Have there been any distinct changes in the functioning of the individual learner in the field of work?

In the context of Training Program

Following are some of the important aspects, which we evaluate in the context of training:

- ❖ Training objectives- Are the

objectives realistic, simple and relevant? Have they been achieved? If so, to what extent?

- ❖ Contents and training methods -Is the content of the program adequate and meaningful? Are the training methods appropriate? Do they facilitate or hamper learning?
- ❖ Group process- Are the groups functioning effectively? Is the group process contributing to learning or hampering it?
- ❖ Trainers- Are the trainers keeping pace with the learners? Are they too slow or too fast? Are they sensitive to the learners’ needs? Are they competent?
- ❖ Learning materials- Are they well organized? Are the learners finding them relevant? Are materials appropriate to the contents?
- ❖ Physical equipment- Is the training venue comfortable? Are the living arrangements suitable? Are the food arrangements satisfactory? Does the physical environment facilitate learning, or hamper it?

How to Evaluate?

It is important to obtain valid and authentic information for evaluation. Individual learners have their own indicators and standards for evaluating. Therefore, for evaluation, feedback can be sought from different sources; these may be primary and secondary sources.

Table 10.1 Primary and Secondary Sources of Feedback

Primary Sources	Secondary Sources
❖ The learner himself/ herself (first and major source)	❖ Diary (maintained by the learners and others during and after training)
❖ Colleagues (people around the Learner-at work and elsewhere)	❖ Records (of training and related activities)
❖ Trainers (have seen learners closely)	❖ Reports of organizations (performance and progress reports)

When to Evaluate?

Evaluation can be done daily, mid-term or immediately after the training and at specified intervals after the training.

Daily Evaluation (Monitoring)

- ❖ Daily evaluation is very helpful in identifying and resolving problems as they arise. One method to carry this out is to form a steering committee. Members either volunteer to be on the committee or are chosen by the group members. Membership could also be on a rotational basis, new members joining every day.
- ❖ The committee members seek information, reactions, feelings and suggestions from other members of the group throughout the day. They also keep track of what is happening during the session. At the end of the day, a meeting of the committee is held. Based on the concerns shared, solutions can be developed jointly and appropriate responsibilities can be taken to effect these changes.
- ❖ Sometimes, less structured ways of daily monitoring can also be used. For example, spending some time (say, half an hour) in the morning on such concerns could also be done to facilitate daily evaluation.

Mid-term Evaluation

- ❖ A quick evaluation may be held in the middle of a training program. This is a vital stage for consolidating the present learning, giving opportunity for catharsis to take place and ensuring the right direction for the remaining period of training.

- ❖ In a group, individual learners can share their feelings, concerns, new learning, their reactions to the content and process of the training, or any new aspects they would like to learn etc. The groups' stage in development can also be gauged in this way.
- ❖ Mid-term review can be done orally, through a questionnaire and/ or individual interviews. The results of this evaluation can be used both at the individual and group levels.

Immediately After the Training

- ❖ Soon after the training has been completed, an evaluation is held to assess its impact. This information must be elicited when experiences are fresh in the minds of the learners or it may be forgotten.
- ❖ This evaluation can be done through the oral sharing process in-groups, questionnaires, small group meetings and individual meetings. Suggestions for future training programs can also be sought at this stage.

At Specified Intervals after the Training Program

- ❖ Back home, after the training program, the learner through his/ her practice can gain some additional insights into the training program.
- ❖ To strengthen future training programs, such insights are very essential. The learners and the trainers can decide upon the method of sharing this feedback. A questionnaire or face-to-face dialogue, or both may be used.

Methods of Assessment

- ❖ Oral sharing - In this method, participants evaluate the training in pairs, threes, or groups. A set of parameters or a questionnaire is given to them. Each pair or small group can have a reporter, or a spokesperson. In a large group, the trainer may take notes.
- ❖ Questionnaire - A questionnaire is a series of written questions on a given topic. These questions are either open-ended or close-ended. Open-ended questions do not have the answers categorized into specific scales. Close-ended questions provide a scale (for example, good, satisfactory, poor)
- ❖ Interview- Interview is a face-to-face method of collecting information. Specific and concrete data can be generated through this process. This technique can also be used in a field setting to cross-validate information obtained through other sources.
- ❖ Observation- Observation techniques are useful methods of collecting data unobtrusively in a natural setting. Data about individual performance, group interactions and organizational culture can be collected by observation. A person observes and notes the information needed.
- ❖ Records- Organizations maintain numerous records that reflect the various stages of their performance and growth. Records are by definition information obtained second hand. However, records are still valuable sources of information for an evaluator. They provide the background information with which

Table 10.2 Monitoring and evaluation at a glance

When?	What?	How?	Process
Daily	Content, processes, session flow, logistics language.	Mood meter Recap Large group discussion Steering committee Observations	Monitoring
Mid Training	Pace of learning, groups, stages, design.	Using questionnaires Large group discussion With different groups of participants	Monitoring & Evaluation
Post Training	Achievement of objective Learning Material and logistics Trainers Understanding awareness and skills developed.	Questionnaire Large group discussion Open space and standard considerations	Evaluation
After some time	Impact of training Attitudinal and behavioral change Follow-up support	Field Visits Impact assessment study Organizing meetings/ workshops	Evaluation

the evaluator can compare the results of the post-training phase.

It must be recognized that no one single method of data collection is complete in itself. In combination with different methods, valuable information can be obtained. The important thing is to obtain valid and authentic information from a variety of sources and methods. This provides the opportunity for crosschecking the information. Also the cost of obtaining information should be borne in mind when choosing methods. A trade-off may be necessary between the extent of information needed and cost of obtaining it.

10.3.3 Post Training Phase II: Follow up of Training and Report Writing

Follow-up of the training program is essentially meant to continue the process of learning initiated during the training program. Each training program creates a set of knowledge and ideas, which learners try to implement in their own situations. These efforts may require further support as follow-up.

Everything that is done by learners and trainers after the training program does not constitute follow-up. Follow-up is any process of intervention and support provided to an individual and/ or group, to further enhance their learning process, for a specified period of time, following the training program. Thus follow-up implies activities carried out to support the learning process after the training program within a given time frame.

Follow-up to a training program can be used for several purposes, including

- ❖ Follow-up provides support, encouragement, knowledge and

resources needed to implement the learning the learner acquires during the training program.

- ❖ It helps to define additional learning needs during the period immediately after the training program. It helps to continue the learning process by bringing out new learning needs.
- ❖ Follow-up is also used to assess the training program and its impact on the learners, their work and their organizations. This helps the trainers in designing future training programs.
- ❖ Follow-up provides an opportunity for the learners to consolidate their own experiences acquired during the training program.
- ❖ In a broad sense, follow-up can also be used strategically. If training has larger objectives of social change, follow-up can be used in a strategic way to:
 - a) Foster a feeling of solidarity among the like-minded activists and organization.
 - b) Sustain the process and efforts of cadre building and formation of networks.
 - c) Strengthen formation of small groups and facilitate a process of building a larger and stronger organization.

Methods of Follow-up

Follow-up can be conducted in different ways. It can be planned differently for each learner; it can also be done for the entire group of learners, it can be done for a selected sub-group as well. Methods of follow-up depend on its purpose and group of learners. Some possible

methods are:

- ❖ Face to face interactions among learners themselves and between learners and trainers. Example, field visits by other learners or trainers to a site, meetings of just learners, as well as along with trainers, meetings of all learners or a sub-group. It may also involve conducting advance training, providing additional learning material, providing opportunity for apprenticeship, etc.
- ❖ The choice of the method should depend on the needs of the learners and availability of resources. Illiterate, rural and urban poor learners may require greater use of direct methods; project holders may be satisfied with indirect methods only. A combination of direct and indirect methods is generally very effective.
- ❖ It is important to plan for follow-up deliberately and consciously. It does not happen automatically. Broad follow-up plans should be considered at the time of developing the design of the program. Details of the follow-up can be again worked out at the end of the program along with the learner.

Report Writing

Generally, report writing is considered a time consuming and boring job. It is a common feeling that the report is only useful for administrators or researchers. Report writing however is a basic tool, which provides information about the event, the objectives, content, process and methodology. Report writing is important as it helps maintain records of an event and can later give rise to new

ideas on reflection. Reports are also a part of the organizational memory and follow -up strategy.

Types of Reports

Although there are no specific types of reports, for the purposes of training they maybe broadly classified into:

- (a) Process-based training report
- (b) Data-based training report and
- (c) Research based training report

The process-based report is meant to help one understand the event in detail. Along with a quantitative data the main emphasis of the report is to provide its audience the elements of methodology used by the trainers in achieving the objectives. It also explains the methods and techniques used in such a way that the readers can develop the skills themselves. Most of the case-study types of training reports fall under this category. The style of presentation of this type of report outlines both process and contents in detail. This type of report is useful for those who are trainers or those who would like to see how a particular training program was facilitated and how a particular method was used in achieving a particular objective.

The data based report is a report that informs the readers about the event. It presents the objectives of the training and outlines the content of the training with the types of methods and materials as well as the resource persons in a precise form. This kind of report stresses more on factual data. These reports are generally used by the donors, government departments, administrators etc, because of their interest in knowing the type of people involved, the outline of the content, and the use of funds for the event.

The research - based training report emphasizes the how and why of a training event. The objective of this report is to identify some of the basic learning that is used by the trainers in attaining a particular objective. The analysis of the methodology is used as a basis for this kind of research report. Researchers use

such training reports to study different aspects and methods of training used by the trainers. Sometimes such reports are also prepared to evaluate the effectiveness of the training program and whether such a training model can be used in future. At times, a report may be a combination of all the three types.

Activity 10.5

What are the key questions to be kept in mind while writing a report?

10.4 Conclusion

In this unit we have described concepts, principles underlying adult learning and participatory training. We found that the conventional training programs adopted a trainer centric approach where trainer was a central point around which the entire process revolved. The learners adopted a passive role. Participatory training, on the contrary was participant centered. The training arose out of specific needs of participants as articulated by them. Participatory training, premised on the principles of

participatory research, aimed to bring about changes in attitudes, behavior and functioning of learners by bringing changes in their perception of their abilities and needs; it also empowered the learners by providing them information and equipping them with appropriate skills and means to use information in relevant context. We have also described the steps in participatory training process in three different phase viz., pre, during training and post training.

10.5 Apply What You Have Learnt

Write in 1000 words a report on a training program that you may have conducted or attended during your career as adult educator.

You can use the following tips on report writing.

- ❖ Take detailed notes during the training programme.
- ❖ If possible write a brief - report daily.
- ❖ Make a record of the important activities conducted during the training on a regular basis, while the training is going on.
- ❖ Record the behavioral aspects of the trainees during the training.
- ❖ Capture processes along with the contents.
- ❖ Keep one set of learning materials for reference.

- ❖ Note details of presentations made by groups.
- ❖ Write in a simple lucid language and try to write the report soon after the completion of training.
- ❖ Seek inputs from your co-trainer/co-facilitator.



LEARNING ENVIRONMENT OF PARTICIPATORY TRAINING

MANDAKINI PANT

Structure

- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 Learning Environment
 - 11.2.1 Small Group Facilitation
 - 11.2.2 Group Processes
- 11.3 Participation
 - 11.3.1 Decision-making
 - 11.3.2 Problem-solving
- 11.4 Leadership
 - 11.4.1 Leadership Styles
 - 11.4.2 Factors Affecting Leadership Behavior
 - 11.4.3 Role of the Leader
- 11.5 Conflict Resolution
- 11.6 The Unconscious Processes of Groups
 - 11.6.1 Role of Group Members
 - 11.6.2 Facilitating a Group
- 11.7 Debriefing and Consolidation
 - 11.7.1 Important Considerations while Conducting Training
 - 11.7.2 Trainer's Role and Behavior
- 11.8 Conclusion
- 11.9 Apply What You Have Learnt

Learning Objectives

It is expected that after reading Unit 11, you will be able to

- ❖ Understand the nature of the ways in which learner groups perform
- ❖ Discuss the nature of participation of adult learners
- ❖ Critically examine the issue of leadership in the course of actual training
- ❖ Analyze the concerns in conflict resolution
- ❖ Discuss group processes and deal with processes of debriefing and consolidation.

11.1 Introduction

Unit 11 is about the phase of training when actual learning takes place during the training program. Learning

environment has teams of multi disciplinary participants. They bring with them different perspectives on their

roles in the tasks of working with adults in different communities. Section 11.3 is about the key factor of nature of participation of those taking part in participatory training. Section 11.4 discusses the role of leadership during the training period. You will learn about conflict resolution in Section 11.5 and about group processes in Section 11.6.

Finally Unit 11 provides the important inputs of debriefing and consolidation of what has been done during the training.

Hope that the contents of Unit 11 will help you discover the ways of conducting efficiently the adult learning programs at your adult learning setup.

11.2 Learning Environment

All adult learning setups endeavor to create such learning environments as provide free and fair scope of participation in learning processes. We will discuss the key issues involved in making the learning environment participant friendly and something to enjoy and benefit from. In sub-section 11.2.1 we will discuss the nature of small group facilitation and in sub-section 11.2.2 we will talk about group processes.

11.2.1 Small Group Facilitation

One of the key components of participatory method is the emphasis on multi disciplinary teams of learners. By working as a group the team members can approach situations from different perspectives, carefully monitor each others' work and carry several tasks simultaneously. The trainer needs to know the ways in which groups perform..

When several people come to work together, they are not necessarily a productive team before people in a group function well together, they must pass through several stages. Initially people come together, sometimes as strangers and as colleagues, to create a new group for some stated purpose. In this initial stage of group formation

they are still a collection of people, each with their own agenda and expertise and with little shared experience. As they become familiar with one another they enter a stage of brain-storming, where personal values and principles are challenged, roles and responsibilities are taken, and group objectives of working together become more defined. As the individuals begin to understand their roles in relation to others, they establish a shared vision, develop a clear identity and group specific norms of behavior. This is the stage of norms-building. As the norms establish the group becomes ready to focus on output, they enter the stage of performing. It is in this stage the group members begin to act as a team, willing to take significant risks and try out new ideas on their own.

Participatory training makes imperative that learners work as part of a group. A small group is able to share experiences, provide feedback, pool ideas, generate insights and analysis. It is basic to experiential learning. Learners may also plan collectively for action to bring about change in their existing conditions. In group both content related and process related behaviour occur. The content aspect relates to what group does. It includes key objectives, the learning agenda and the topics of learning. The

process aspect is related to how the group is functioning. It is concerned with how the group achieves its objectives, how it moves through its agenda and how it communicates its content.

Insights into group processes is important in order to facilitate critical learning. In sub-section 11.2.2 you will learn about the group processes. Continuous monitoring of the processes helps the trainer to revise the pace of training, select the methods and many a times also logistics as well as physical setting.

11.2.2 Group Processes

Communication is an integral part of group processes. Similarly active participation is also a key element of group processes. Since participation is actually the essence of participatory training, you will learn about it in detail in Section 11.3. Here, we will talk about the direction, mode and reception of communication.

Communication: Communication within a group deals with the spoken, unspoken, verbal non-verbal explicit and implied messages that are conveyed, exchanged relating to information, ideas, values and feelings. To understand the various exchanges while they occur one has to consider various aspects of communication such as direction, mode and reception.

A) The direction of the communication

(i) One way and two way communication

One-way communication relates to a situation where one person conveys the message and the other passively receives it. Two-way communication implies a situation where not only do the two

parties talk to each other but that they are listening to each other as well. It helps in clarification of doubts, confusions and misconceptions. Both parties understand each other well and give feedback to each other.

(ii) Communication networks

By observing who talks to whom communication networks one can understand the existing hierarchies between the group members. If we plot our observations, we may see the following patterns.

In the first two patterns communication is directed only at some specific group members, for example, towards a single authority. Communication flows through all possible channels in every direction in the third pattern. It is interesting to note that groups exhibiting any of these communication patterns differ according to situations from each other in terms of efficiency of task performance, time taken for work and satisfaction of members with their roles in the group.

Communication can also take place horizontally. Those in inferior positions tend to talk up to the other person, demonstrating humility or submission. Those who assume a superior position tend to do the opposite. In the position of relative equality as between good friends, communication can occur horizontally.

B) The mode of communication

We are used to equating communication with conversation or through exchange of words. A great deal of what we express and understand does not occur expressed through words. We also communicate non-verbally through gestures, expressions, changes in voice.

In fact we communicate very less through words. Non-verbal expressions form a greater part of our communication. While non-verbal signals are translated unconsciously, we can make our communication effective by

becoming aware of the non-verbal communication process; becoming conscious of the signals we are transmitting and ensure that our non-verbal expressions match our verbal pronouncements (see Box 11.1).

Box 11.1 Communication in the Non-verbal Mode

- ❖ Using our bodies- through gestures, posture, facial expressions, eye movements.
- ❖ Using our voice- laugh, yawn, scream, whisper.
- ❖ Using our skin-touch, pat, push.
- ❖ Using distance-sitting close, standing very far, sitting on a higher seat, standing behind a table.
- ❖ Using clothes, hairstyles, perfumes, jewelleryes, accessories to make certain statement about ourselves.
- ❖ Using silence- convey a range of emotions as disapproval, shock, hurt, joy, togetherness(Source: PRIA. 1998: 23)

c) Reception of Communication

Besides putting across our own ideas and points of view, it is also important to listen carefully to others and thus receive their communication. When people are talking to each other does not mean

that they are also listening to each other. Listening is based on hearing and understanding what others say to us. It is possible only when we pay attention to what is being said. For guidelines for effective listening see Box 11.2.

Box 11.2 Guidelines for Effective Listening

- ❖ Concentrate on hearing-we think 4 times faster than the other person can speak, so our thoughts tend to stray.
- ❖ Listen with an open mind
- ❖ Pay attention and understand what is being said-listen beyond the words, understand the feelings, emotions, what is being implied. Be alert to non-verbal messages.
- ❖ Do not predict what the speaker is trying to say-do not jump to conclusions.
- ❖ Do not pretend to have understood when you have not. Clarify your doubts, and request the speaker to re-explain.
- ❖ Do not become defensive and do not argue or interrupt.
- ❖ To ensure that we are listening attentively we should from time to time restate, repeat and summarize what we think is being said.

It is helpful to understand barriers to effective communication at both

personal and situational levels. For this please see Box 11.3.

Box 11.3 Barriers to Effective Communication

At the personal level·

- ❖ Our values, opinions, prejudices and attitudes·
- ❖ The tendency to speak or react before thinking·
- ❖ Stereotyping people-making quick generalizing·
- ❖ Use of words and phrases with personalised meanings·
- ❖ Lack of trust

At the situational level·

- ❖ Physical well being and mood of the individual·
- ❖ Differences in the backgrounds and context of the learners·
- ❖ Differences in the language spoken

(Source: PRIA 2002) is the publication 2002 or 2005 because in other place the same is shown as 2005, please clarify

Activity 11.1

Select a 30 minute period of communication and note down answers as per the checklist given below and then analyze the direction and mode of communication in this example.

Checklist for observing communication

- ❖ Who talks? For how long? How often?
- ❖ Who talks to whom? To the group as a whole or to some people in the group?
- ❖ Who talks after whom? Is it encouraging or challenging?
- ❖ Who interrupts whom? Are some people interrupted all the time?
- ❖ Do the members listen to each other?
- ❖ What non-verbal messages are being conveyed?

After discussing communication aspect, let us now focus on the element of

participation as an important aspect of group processes.

11.3 Participation

Participation is a fundamental process within a group. If members do not participate, the group ceases to exist. Mere physical presence and being vocal does not mean that participation has taken place. Levels and degrees of participation vary.

Some members participate actively. They are talkative, demanding and volatile. Some, on the contrary, are withdrawn, quiet and passive but they listen very carefully. See Box 11.4 for the factors that affect members' participation.

Box 11.4: Factors that Affect Members' Participation

- ❖ The content and task of the group-is it interesting, important and relevant?
- ❖ The physical atmosphere-is it physically, socially and psychologically comfortable?
- ❖ The psychological atmosphere- is it accepting or non-threatening
- ❖ The level of interaction and discussion-is adequate information is provided for everyone to understand? Is it at the level everyone understands?
- ❖ Familiarities between group members- do members know each other previously?(Source: PRIA 2002)

It is important to identify and tackle indifferent and uninvolved members who are there in a group but actually

are not interested in the activities of the group.¹ They can potentially damage the group.

Activity 11.2

In order to observe the nature of participation, select a particular session of group interaction among participants of an adult learning group at your adult learning setup and write down the answers as per the checklist given below and then analyze the quality of participation of each member of the group.

Checklist for observing participation

- ❖ How much talking is done by the leader or leaders? How much is done by other participants?
- ❖ To whom are questions usually addressed? Are the questions addresses to the group as a whole or to particular members?
- ❖ Do members appear interested or bored or self-conscious and therefore keeping aloof?
- ❖ Is formation of pairs and sub groupings taking place? Are the participants discussing issues other than those addressing the group task?
- ❖ Are quiet members encouraged to speak? If yes, who has encouraged them?

You can make out the nature of participation if group members participate democratically in decision-making processes of the group.

11.3.1 Decision-making

Decision-making within a group takes place in one or more of the following ways.

The plop: A decision is suggested by one individual, to which there is no response the decision is adopted. 'Plopping' usually occurs in new groups, when some

members have equal status, or when one member is overly aggressive.

Self-authorized: The individual who assumes authority makes a decision. The others find it easier/ convenient to accept the decision than to reject it. The essential difference between this and the 'plop' is that the 'plop' is not tendered with authority but gets adopted by default, whereas in this case the decision is tendered with the assumption that it will be adopted.

Pairing: Two individuals joining forces

make a decision. One floats the idea, other seconds it and the decision is made on behalf of the group.

Minority group: The clique makes the decision and the rest accept it.

Vote: The decision depends upon the number of people adhering to it. Vote may be taken by a show of hand or even by ballot.

Consensus: This is essentially a kind of minimum consent by all. It is important to differentiate between a true and a

false consensus. True consensus occurs when everyone has contributed to the discussion, all angles have been considered and everyone is in full agreement. This type of consensus, though desirable is not always possible. What can be aimed at is that everyone feels they have had the opportunity to put forth their views and influence decision, it was a good and open discussion, they are prepared to act on the decision taken.

Activity 11.3

Select a session that you have with the adult learning group at your setup and first observe the decision-making process as per the checklist given below and then analyze the participatory nature of participation in the session. Write down the results of your analysis on a separate sheet of paper.

Checklist for Observing Decision-making Process

- ❖ Does anyone make contributions, which do not receive any kind of response or recognition? What effect does this have on the member?
- ❖ Does anyone make a decision and carry it out without checking with other group members? For example, she/he decides on the topic to be discussed and immediately begins to talk about it. What *effect* does this have on other group's members?
- ❖ Who supports other member's suggestions or decisions? Does this support result in the two members deciding the topic or activity for the group? How does this affect other group members?
- ❖ Is there any evidence of a majority pushing a decision through over other member's objections? Do they call for a vote?
- ❖ Is there any attempt to get all members to participate in a decision? What effect does this seem to have on the group?
- ❖ Is the decision made by consensus? Are differences fully explored? Is there unanimity or full agreement?

For a case-study of decision-making during the course of training, see Box 11.5 and

you will find that you can easily identify the role of facilitator in that situation.

Box 11.5 Field Illustration of Decision-making

In development training for village water and sanitation committee members (fifteen in number) of Ramgarh village of Uttar Pradesh, the group was given a task of making a village sanitation plan. It was observed that the village Pradhan, representing the strong

Rajput section of the village, took all the key decisions in the plan. Six more men of the Rajput community supported him in his decision. The suggestions of the five women in the committee were not given much significance. Nor were the dalit men given much role in the decision-making. Dissatisfaction and discomfort in the group were clearly evident.

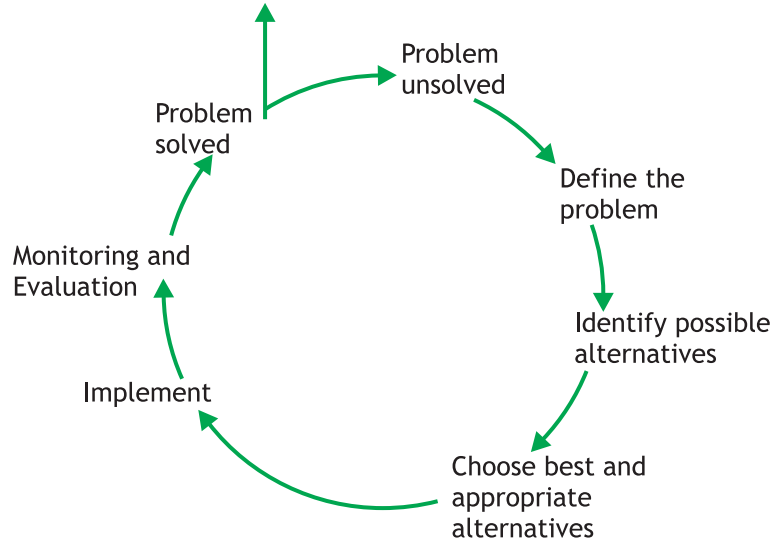


Figure 11.1 Implementing the Solution

Let us now discuss the situation when a group needs to solve a problem and observe how problem-solving takes place as a group-process.

11.3.2 Problem-solving

Most groups find themselves unable to solve a problem because they address it at a superficial level. After that they find themselves blocked because they cannot figure out why the problem occurred and how they can tackle it. For an effective problem solving they may pursue the following procedure.

Clearly define the problem: Collect additional information, from elsewhere if necessary, and analyze it to understand the problem further.

Look for solutions: and the normal sequence of events. Sometimes it pays to deliberately think of ‘wild ideas; which are apparently not relevant. The objective should be to generate as many ideas and suggestions as possible.

Choose the appropriate alternative: This will involve resolving some conflict.

Collaborative and consensus based resolution is preferable rather than forcing a choice. Considerable discussion is needed to evaluate the various alternative solutions on the basis of constraints and available resources (see Figure 11.1). You will find more workable if you implement the solution on the basis of a plan and then evaluate the solution.

11.4 Leadership

Leadership involves focusing the efforts of the people towards a common goal and to enable them to work together

as one. In general, one individual is designated as the leader. This individual may be chosen from within or appointed

from outside. In a small group, the leadership function (unlike the leader) is not static, but is performed by different members at different times. Thus one member may provide leadership with respect to achieving the goal while a different individual may be providing leadership in maintaining the group as a group. These roles can also switch and change. It is interesting to note how leadership is assumed, challenged, and changed in the course of a small group's life.

11.4.1 Leadership Styles

Leadership styles may be classified on the basis of the behavior of the leader.

The Autocratic Leader: Such a leader imposes his or her own will with very little concern for the members' needs, opinions and preferences. This type of leader has great concern for accomplishing the task but little or no concern for the members.

The Laissez-faire Leader: This kind of leader has little or no concern for the task at hand, but is concerned about the people, letting them act according to their own wishes.

The Democratic Leader: This type of has equal concern with the task and the people. In the ultimate democratic tradition, all members of the group share function of the leadership.

11.4.2 Factors Affecting Leadership Behavior

The same individual in different circumstance and/ or with different groups may behave differently. In order to understand this we can consider the following factors affecting leadership

behavior.

- ❖ **Within the leader:** Is the leader convinced about sharing authority? Does she/he have confidence and trust in the rest of the group, - a sense of security? What is her/his value system?
- ❖ **Within the group:** Are members willing to take responsibility? Are they mature and interested? How cohesive is the group? Can they act together? What is the degree and level of involvement? Is there a sense of autonomy or of dependence?
- ❖ **Within the situation:** Is there a time constraint? Is there a crisis? What is the nature of the problem the group is working on? What is the intrinsic nature of the organization within which the group exists? What is overall environment?

11.4.3 Role of the Leader

The leader must assume greater responsibility to be open, equal accountable, humble, sensitive and committed. She/he must enable the group to identify and analyze issues of vital concern to the group, and as group grows, share his/her leadership with other members.

- ❖ Raise the members' awareness and motivation
- ❖ Increase the readiness of members to accept responsibility
- ❖ Develop group work and group morale
- ❖ Convince the group that they can affect change
- ❖ Further individual members' needs for growth and development

Activity 11.4

Select a session of a workshop at your adult learning setup and observe the pattern of leadership among the participants on the basis of the checklist given below and making use of the example given in Box 11.6.

Checklist for Observing Leadership Process

- ❖ Which members are highly influential? That is, when they talk, do other listen?
- ❖ Which members do not wield much influence?
- ❖ Do you see any rivalry in the group? Is there a struggle for leadership?
- ❖ Who are the members trying to assume leadership? Do they rely on coercion, expertise, formal authority, and personal qualities?
- ❖ How is the designated leader behaving? Is the style autocratic, democratic or laissez-faire?
- ❖ How are people reacting to the leadership?

Box 11.6 Field Illustration

In a training of trainers for Anganwadi women workers from ten Anganwadi centres from four districts of Himachal Pradesh, the facilitator observed that from the group of ten women workers, two women wielded high influence on the group, at different points of a group exercise. One took lead in initiating the task, ensuring that the group completes the task on hand, with less focus on the member's participation. The other focus was on ensuring that each member got a chance to contribute to the group discussion and also complete the task. The task-oriented woman was knowledgeable about the task and did most of the talking, getting attention of most members of the group. The people oriented woman however spoke relatively less. There was no apparent conflict between the two women, reflecting an effective instance of shared leadership. The facilitator did not make any external intervention, as she observed the effective functioning of the group due to the perceived leadership of the two women.

Let us now discuss in Section 11.5 the important issue of conflict resolution during the training of adult educators

working with adult members of a society.

11.5 Conflict Resolution

Conflict is inevitable in the life of a group. When members with different experiences, attitudes and expectations come together in a group, differences are bound to arise. These differences are sometimes suppressed and not openly discussed. On occasions, the emotions behind the differences in the two parties make the expression of conflict quite intense and visible. The important thing to remember is that conflicts exist in all small groups.

The differences arising out of information, facts and knowledge are easy to resolve. Confusions about roles, co-ordination and responsibilities can also be sorted out in the group. The most difficult conflicts to resolve (they perhaps never get resolved) are those arising out of differences in values. The most important thing that can be done in these situations is to understand the real causes for differences.

Why is conflict resolution seen as a process? Because conflicts do not go away, each conflict resolution also feeds into the next conflict in a group. It is, therefore, useful to see conflicts as a series of differences in a group, each

with some link to the next. How the group deals with conflicts affects the manner of its' functioning (see Box 11.7 for possible ways of dealing with conflicts in a group).

Box 11.7 Ways to Deal with Conflicts in a Group

Avoiding: Withdraw from conflict situation, leave it to chance.

Smoothing: Cover up the differences and claim that things are fine.

Bargaining: Negotiate to arrive at a compromise, bargain for gains by both parties.

Forcing: Push a party to accept the decision made by some leader.

Problem Solving: Confront the differences and resolve them on a collaborative basis.

So far we have discussed group processes which are apparent for everybody to see and understand without much problem.

But there are also unconscious processes of groups. Let us look at them too.

11.6 The Unconscious Processes of Groups

The various processes mentioned do not provide information about things happen the way they do. In order to understand this, one needs to consider some unconscious processes that occur within groups, such emotional undercurrents that produce interfering or destructive behaviors.

i) **Response to authority:** From the moment we enter a group unconsciously, we try to relate to the authority figure in the group. Depending upon our individual experiences and reactions to authority in the past, the first response is either one of dependency, or of counter dependency.

- ❖ **Dependency:** Members look up to the authority to tell them what to do. They are lost without the authority figure and seek security from it.

- ❖ **Counter-dependency:** Members resent authority, their behavior

reflects hostility towards authority. Emerging from these stages what has to be achieved is a state of interdependence where members can relate with each other reciprocally.

ii) **Fight, flight and pairing:** Working cohesively in a group is not a natural function. The unconscious response to being in a group is to fight, to flee, or to pair up. Various behaviours within the group provide clues to these unconscious processes:

- ❖ **Fight:** Disagreeing, asserting dominance and attacking whatever is believed to be responsible for stress, trying to get one's own way.

- ❖ **Flight:** Staying out of discussion, daydreaming, changing the topic of discussion, making irrelevant remarks, and cracking jokes continuously.

- ❖ **Pairing:** Forming dyads, triads or subgroups that are not task oriented,

in which members protect and support one another.

In order to function cohesively and work towards the goal the group needs to resolve these unconscious processes. They have to be recognized, not ignored or denied. Once these processes are identified, the group needs to work with them so that emotional energies are channeled towards the group's effort.

11.6.1 Role of Group Members

As outlined below a variety of behaviors are seen in-groups.

- i) **Task role behavior:** Some group members many tend to be 'all business', they try to set task objectives; they process information necessary for the task and they push for completion of the group assignment. Behavior of this type is often referred to as task-oriented role behavior.
- ❖ **Initiator-** S/he takes the lead in making suggestions about new goals and procedures of operation. S/he defines the constraints of the problem and is instrumental in seeing that the group makes progress on accomplishing its task.
 - ❖ **Information processor-** This individual seeks and gives information and checks the accuracy of the information available. S/he seeks the opinions and values of group members so that they may be incorporated into the task processes.
 - ❖ **Summarizer-** S/he helps the group in its task by processing information into more complex forms. This may be done by restating and summarizing the group's information into forms, which may be more meaningful to the group.
- S/he helps by clarifying and elaborating on the thoughts of the groups. S/he helps to orient the group with respect to its goals.
- ❖ **Evaluator-** S/he subjects the output of the group to tests such as practicality, logic and morality. S/he tests to ensure that the output meets the objectives and purpose of the group.
- ii) **Maintenance role behavior:** Some behavior is directed towards maintaining group harmony and cohesiveness; encouragement is given, communications are fostered and conflicts are mediated. This is referred to as maintenance role behavior. This behavior maintains the vitality and functioning of the group, whereas task-orientation behavior is focused on the solution of the problem or achievement of the task established for the group.
- ❖ **Encourager-** S/he acts to elicit the contributions of others by agreeing with others and accepting their ideas. S/he tries to promote group involvement through praise of their work and acceptance of others' ideas.
 - ❖ **Harmonizer-** S/he leads in the efforts to reconcile differences of opinion and to settle conflicts. S/he acts to relieve tensions when conflict arises.
 - ❖ **Compromiser-** When involved in a conflict s/he often offers compromises by yielding on her/his position in order to maintain group harmony,
 - ❖ **Gatekeeper-expediter-** S/he acts to facilitate communication. Her/His behavior is designed to elicit or deny participation to members. S/he helps to reduce tension and conflict

by directing communication into safe channels.

iii) Individual behavior: Individual behavior that is not oriented toward any group function but rather is directed toward the resolution of a person's own needs. This is different from the others in that it is not relevant to the functioning of the group, while the others are relevant.

Gross differences between individuals in a group or individuals not identifying with the task can often lead to a pattern of individual behavior which is detrimental to group work. The differences could be on the basis of temperament, attributes, values, background and so on and the behavior exhibited includes

- ❖ **The aggressor-** deflates the status of others and expresses disapproval, attacks the group.
- ❖ **The blocker-** tends to be negativistic and stubbornly resistant.
- ❖ **Recognition seeker-** calls attention to him/herself, through boasting, acting in unusual ways;
- ❖ **The dominator-** tries to assert authority and superiority by manipulating the group members.
- ❖ **Help seeker-** attempts to gather sympathy from other group members;
- ❖ **Self confessor-** uses the group opportunity to express personal, non group oriented feelings and ideas;
- ❖ **Playboy-** displays lack of involvement in the group processes by being cynical, nonchalant; and
- ❖ **Self-interest pleader-** speaks for grassroots, "marginalized" to cover his/her own prejudices in the stereotypes which best fits his/her present needs.

11.6.2 Facilitating a Group

A group cannot function effectively on its own initiative, it needs to be facilitated. Facilitation can be described as a conscious process of assisting a group to successfully achieve its task while functioning as a group. Facilitation can be performed by members themselves, or with the help of an outsider. In order to facilitate, it is important to understand fully the areas that need to be facilitated.

i) Facilitation maybe required for the following purposes.

- ❖ The effective performance of task and maintenance functions
- ❖ The processes like participation, communication, decision making and leadership
- ❖ The effective resolution of issues like inclusion, influence and intimacy, the smooth transition of the group from one stage to another
- ❖ The accomplishment of the task

ii) To facilitate effectively the facilitator needs to

- ❖ Understand what is happening within the group
- ❖ Be aware of his/her personality and how s/he comes across, and, know how to facilitate.

a) Diagnosing a Group: The process of finding out what is going on in a group may be called diagnosing. It is an essential skill of a facilitator. S/he can help solve the problem only if s/he is able to diagnose what it is that is going wrong. Diagnosis involves understanding the causes including influential factors that may exist outside the group (e.g. history of past relationship between members). Examples given in Box 11.8 illustrate the point.

Box 11.8 Some Examples of Problems and their Causes

Problem 1- Everyone does not participate or show an interest, few remain silent.

Possible causes

- ❖ The goal or task is not relevant to everyone.
- ❖ Some members are insecure
- ❖ Some members are dominant on the basis of caste, class, education or sex.

Problem 2- Subgroups occur within the group and they get involved in their own conflicts.

Possible causes- Existence of different value systems that becomes more important than the task of the group Existence of differences/ conflicts between individuals that existed prior to the formation of the group

B) An Appropriate Intervention

Having diagnosed the possible causes of the problem, the facilitator need to decide upon how s/he will help the group go forward. This conscious a it called facilitating. Simple methods of facilitating include the following action.

- ❖ Encouraging
- ❖ Bringing the conversation to the point
- ❖ Mediating and peacekeeping

- ❖ Maintaining order
- ❖ Requesting

But then in some cases, these alone are not enough. It is then that the facilitator needs to look deeper and understand clearly the unconscious processes and the levels of awareness within the members of the group, and of the group as a whole. Depending upon the facilitator's grasp of the situation, different styles of facilitation can be used (see Box 11.9).

Box 11.9 Some of the Essential Skills of Facilitator

In order to facilitate the learning process the facilitator needs some basic skills:

Listening: the ability to listen carefully and creatively; picking out positive aspects and problems, difficulties and tensions.

Observation: the ability to see what is happening; to understand nonverbal clues, to monitor the group's work objectively

Sensitivity/empathy: the ability to pick up implicit messages; to see problems through the eyes of the

members; to understand their feelings, ideas and values, to focus on structures and roles rather than personalities or competence.

Diagnosing: the ability to define the problem, to synthesize diverse data and form a working hypothesis to choose intervention and action.

Supporting / encouraging: the ability to provide verbal and non-verbal indicators of encouragement, affirmation, appreciation and caring - to assist in a joint search for solutions.

Challenging: the ability to confront, to disagree, and stop a process without being rude.

Openness: the ability to invite dialogue, to receive feedback, and to be prepared to examine one's own attitudes values and ideas and to change If necessary.

Modeling: the ability to include oneself as a model in the group, responding spontaneously, without being idealistic, or posing as an expert

With the above details of learning during the actual training, we come to Section 11.7 of Unit 11. This section will discuss

the issues of debriefing and consolidation.

11.7 Debriefing and Consolidation

Debriefing and consolidation following an experiential learning situation are very necessary. If the learners have gone through a moderate to intense emotional experience, it is necessary to allow them some time to get out of that emotional framework otherwise they can get too involved and carried away.

The trainer follows a broad theoretical framework related to the learning objectives and the content area. It forms the basis for debriefing and analysis. The objective is to put the debriefed information into a theoretical framework after analysis and additional information. It is essential that it be situated in/ related to real life.

- ❖ Debriefing consists of eliciting from the learner or learner group- their feelings, emotions, experiences and whatever else the trainer might feel

is necessary.

- ❖ The debriefed information must be noted down publicly (published).
- ❖ The trainer must provoke analysis on the information presented, enabling the derivation of broad principles (processing).
- ❖ The debriefed information needs to be put into a real life context, so that people can relate to it in a broader framework (generalizing).
- ❖ Wherever necessary the trainer must provide additional information for the learners to arrive at the broad principles (generalizing).
- ❖ The debriefed information needs to be put into a real life context, so that people can relate to it in a broader framework (application).

Activity 11.5

Select the last session of a workshop at your adult learning center and as per the following scheme for questioning, carry out a debriefing exercise.

A Scheme for questioning

- ❖ What did you see? How did you feel? What did you say during discussions?
- ❖ These questions help in bring out the participants perceptions and experiences. The information gathered is noted down on a board or chart paper.
- ❖ Why did you feel the way you did? What did you say? What did you do during the discussions?
- ❖ These questions enable participants to analyze the reasons and causes behind their behavior, perceptions, and experiences.
- ❖ Do such situations occur in real life, when? Has it happened to you?
- ❖ Questions like these try to relate the experience to reality and try to draw parallels with real life.
- ❖ Why do you think this happens?
- ❖ This is an attempt to analyze and derive principles and conclusions, which form the core of the new learning. It may be necessary at this point to provide additional information.

As a trainer it is important to note that one must complete the debriefing cycle in all the structured experience methods.

See an outline of steps involved in debriefing in Figure 11.2.

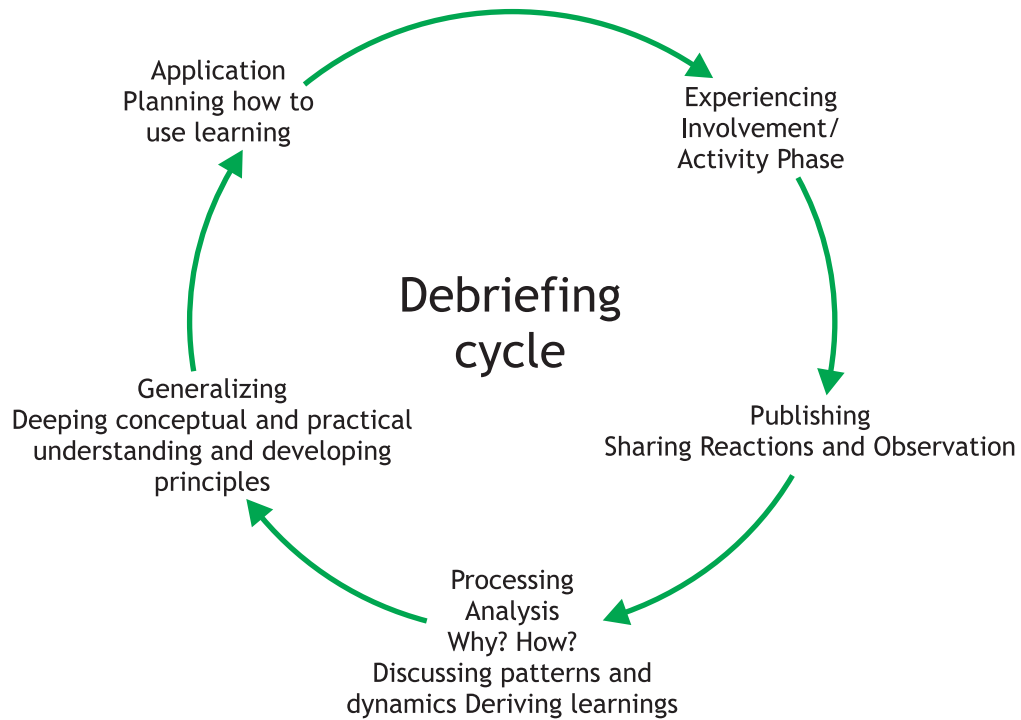


Figure 11.2 Debriefing Cycle

11.7.1 Important Considerations while Conducting Training

Even where a high quality design has been prepared, all physical arrangements have been made, learning materials readied, the real challenge in promoting learning comes during the training itself. In conducting training expertise in the subject - matter is important. It is very necessary to make sure that the trainers along with all the resource persons deal with the subject matter well. This is, of course, conventional wisdom too. In most conventional training programs, the trainers are experts in the given subject and bring a depth of knowledge to the learners. Beyond the expertise in the subject matter, there are several other significant considerations while conducting training within the framework of participatory training methodology. Read below about some of these considerations.

i) Conducive learning environment:

The first consideration relates to creating a conducive learning environment. Participants often come to a training programme with fears, doubts, expectations and confusion. Some are informed about the purpose and programme of the training, and some are not, some have been forcibly sent, some have come because they thought that the programme would be useful to them. As a result, the first task in a training programme is to prepare participants to become learners.

ii) Energy level of participants:

Participants should be excited about learning. They need to be encouraged to become active learners. Energy levels may be stimulated through a variety of interventions, change of pace and methods, through some energizers (like songs, physical exercises etc.).

iii) Psychological comfort and safety:

Another important aspect of the learning environment is a sense of psychological comfort and safety. Adults learn when they find that they have a reasonably comfortable learning environment. This is particularly relevant when the new information and learning challenges one's deep seated attitude, emotions and values; a change of behaviour, skills, and readjustment may be required.

Psychological safety can be significantly enhanced by promoting mutual co-operation and trust within the group, by building a level of rapport and confidence between learners and trainers and by ensuring risk taking by participants where mistakes may be committed in the process of learning (without fear of penalty).

iv) Building self esteem:

Learning is influenced by a variety of emotions. It can be fun, pleasurable, exciting; it can be painful, or create fear and doubts. The self-esteem of learners has a tremendous impact on how they learn. When learners have low self-esteem, they do not feel confident about their ability to learn and to speak out. A learning environment can contribute to the enhancement of their self-esteem, in ways that they can pursue learning.

v) Homogenous and heterogeneous groups:

There is no learning group where all the individual learners are alike. In fact even where strict criteria and screening procedures have been used for selection of learners for the training programme, individuals differ in their style of learning, pace of learning, their self-esteem, etc. This heterogeneity can both be a constraint as well as a resource within the learning group. It is important to recognize and understand this heterogeneity in order to facilitate individual or group learning.

11.7.2 Trainer's Role and Behavior

In participatory training methodology, a distinction has been made between a facilitator and a subject matter expert. A subject matter expert is the trainer who provides knowledge, concepts and builds skills on the subject matter at hand. The role of the facilitator of the learning process is very different. This role needs special preparation and is a major challenge in participatory training. Interventions aimed at strengthening the learning environment, monitoring the learning process, adapting the pace and depth of coverage etc. all requires skilful facilitation. Therefore, one of the first challenges of conducting a successful training program is preparation of the trainers to be facilitators.

11.8 Conclusion

In this unit we have described the learning environment of training that is participatory in spirit and practice and discussed the concepts and issues of group process in training. We learnt about the life cycles of groups. We illustrated the small group processes. We

also examined the role of group members, key elements in-group facilitation, and the process of debriefing and consolidation. Lastly we highlighted some important issues that we need to take into consideration while conducting any training. ‘

11.9 Apply What You Have Learnt

Reflect on what you have so far read and analyze your own experiences as an adult educator. Do your experiences corroborate what you have read? If yes, in what ways? If they do not, write down in 200 words in what ways your experiences do not corroborate with what you have read. Share your experiences

with fellow learners.

Secondly, suppose that as an adult educator, you need to organize a participatory training programme. Write a note on the important considerations you would keep in mind while organizing such a program.



12 PARTICIPATORY TRAINING METHODOLOGY AND MATERIALS

MANDAKINI PANT

Structure



- 12.1 Introduction
- 12.2 What, Why and How of Training Methodology and Materials
 - 12.2.1 Knowledge-based Learning Sessions
 - 12.2.2 Skills-based Learning Sessions
 - 12.2.3 Awareness Generating Sessions
- 12.3 Participatory Training Methods
- 12.4 Training Materials and Resources
- 12.5 Roles of Adult Educator
 - 12.5.1 Preparation of Adult Educator
 - 12.5.2 Understanding Self
 - 12.5.3 Planning for Self-Development
- 12.6 Conclusion
- 12.7 Apply What You Have Learnt

Learning Objectives



After going through Unit 12, it is expected that you would be able to

- ❖ Discuss the various ways of selecting a method for holding different types of learning sessions with adult learners.
- ❖ Describe the range of participatory training methods and materials for use in adult learning.
- ❖ Understanding different roles of adult educator and learn the ways to plan self-development.

12.1 Introduction

Unit 12 deals with methodology and materials of participatory training. Adult educators know very well that there is no one method and material for making adult learning sessions successful and effective. Your understanding of various methods and materials for using in different contexts of adult learning lead you to a more varied and interesting

way of holding the attention of adult learners. In the last analysis the exercise of planning for your own self-development appears to be a key for your success as the more you have a feeling of self-confidence and clarity of your professional goals the better is going to be your success in making adult learning processes more effective.

12.2 What and How of Training Methodology and Materials

To answer the 'what' question, you may say that training methods and materials are the techniques and resources the adult educator uses to implement the workshop and transfer new knowledge, skills, and attitudes to participants.

Many at time it is useful to differentiate between the methods, tools/aids and techniques in order to use them effectively. See Box 12.1 for differences between methods, aids, equipments and techniques.

Box 12.1 Difference between Methods, Aids, Equipments and Techniques

Methods

Refer to how subject matter is going to be dealt with in a broad sense. e.g. group discussion, lecture, role play, demonstration, etc

Tools/ Aids

Refer to the various supporting materials that are used in the course of training e.g. slides, posters, film clips, models, etc.

Equipments

Refer to the infrastructure which helps in utilizing aids i.e. over head projectors, slide projectors, etc.

Techniques

Refer to the variations of the method, e.g. under the broad heading of Small Group Discussion (SGDs), the method used could be plenary, brainstorming, fishbowl, etc.

In order to answer the 'how' question, you can point out that active learning workshops use a variety of training methods in order to engage participants in the learning process.

When choosing teaching methods for a particular session, you may consider the following questions.

- ❖ Is the method suitable for the objectives?
- ❖ Does the method require more background knowledge or skills than the participants possess?
- ❖ How much time does it take to prepare and then to use it in the learning session?
- ❖ Is that sort of time available with the adult educator and adult learners?
- ❖ How much space does the learning session take?

- ❖ Is that kind of space available at the venue of learning sessions?
- ❖ Is the method appropriate for the size of the learning group?
- ❖ What kind of teaching materials does it require?
- ❖ Are those materials available?
- ❖ Does the method require special skills to use?
- ❖ Does the adult educator possess these skills?

12.2.1 Knowledge-based Learning Sessions

The broad factor guiding the selection of methods is the focus of learning. If the focus of learning is increasing knowledge then the methods used may be lectures, field visits, demonstrations, self-study etc.

Adult educators need to keep in mind that they need to talk about only those

facts which the participants need to know. It is important to get the participants' attention before explaining why they need to know the topic. Tell a story that shows why it is important.

Give a summary. Explain the main themes you are going to cover.

Present the facts and information. Use handouts to reinforce the talk. Participants learn more by listening and actively participating than by taking detailed written notes. Ask participants to tell stories about how the facts will be used. Among the materials to be used,

whenever possible, use audio-visual aids such as

Chalk board	Photographs
Flip chart	Overheads
Models	Slides
Posters	Video

Plan an exercise for participants to practice the knowledge they learned. See Box 12.2 for examples of exercises for talking about knowledge-based lessons.

Box 12.2 Examples of Exercises for Knowledge-based Lessons

- ❖ If the lesson includes anatomy, put a chart on the wall and ask individual learners to explain the name and function of relevant body parts.
- ❖ Ask participants to pull the name of an organ from a bag, place it correctly on the chart and describe its function.
- ❖ Ask participants how they will use this knowledge to improve their work performance.
- ❖ Ask individual or small groups of students what would you do if...-or- How would you...?
- ❖ Then have them present their conclusions to the rest of the participants.
- ❖ Ask participants to share myths about the facts, which you talked about, and then explain why the myths are not true.

12.2.2 Skills-based Learning Sessions

If the focus of learning is to increase skills, the methods used are more of

practice sessions, demonstrations, apprenticeship and learning by doing. See Box 12.3 for examples of the kind of activities such sessions can include.

Box 12.3 Examples of Activities during Skills-based Learning Sessions

- ❖ Name the skill. Ask if participants have for it any other name(s) in local language(s).
- ❖ Tell why it is important. Ask if participants have in mind other reasons for its importance.
- ❖ Explain when to use it. Ask participants if they use the skill in any other context.
- ❖ Describe the steps involved in performing the skill. Ask the participants if they include some other steps in performing the skill.
- ❖ Demonstrate the skill. Ask the participants to demonstrate the skill as understood by them.
- ❖ The demonstration must use effective methods, which are applicable to the work environments of the participants. Ask the participants if there are other effective methods to master the skill.

- ❖ Use only equipment, which is available to participants in the field. Ask participants to name equipments available locally for mastering the skill.
- ❖ All participants must be able to see what you are doing. It is possible that one of the participants may be able to or may want to demonstrate the various parts of the skill. Invite such participants to demonstrate all or some operations.
- ❖ Explain what you are doing (a written handout with pictures will help reinforce the explanation). Ask participants to draw pictures of what the skill is supposed to involve.
- ❖ Arrange practice sessions.
- ❖ Come to the most important part of conducting skills-based learning sessions and take time to practice. Make all participants to practice the skill.
- ❖ Each participant must receive feedback from you as well as from fellow learners.

12.2.3 Awareness Generating Sessions

If the focus of learning is to generate awareness then the methods used would be role-plays, small group discussion, case studies, simulation, learning games, structured exercises etc. One's own experiences, both past and present and others' experiences form an important source of learning. Hence the experiential learning methods provide an opportunity for learners to experience, share reactions and observations, reflect upon implications and consequences, discuss patterns and dynamics, develop practical and

conceptual understanding and apply it to the real life situations.

Besides the focus of learning, there are some other important considerations for selecting methods, such as who are the learners, what are their backgrounds? Are the knowledge and experience base of learners being used? Which methods are helpful in building an environment conducive to learning at a particular point of time? How can individual and collective learning be ensured etc? Other factors that play an important role are time, space, competence of facilitators, group size, etc.

Activity 12.1

Consider the kind of learning sessions you have held at your adult learning setup. Are there any kinds other than mentioned above? Write a short note of 300 words on the kinds of method you have used for various types of learning sessions during your career as adult educator.

12.3 Participatory Training Methods

Participatory training has several methods which are in vogue in adult learning. We will discuss the following more popular methods in this section.

- a) Lecture
- b) Case Study
- c) Role Play
- d) Simulation

- e) Instruments
- f) Learning Games
- a) Lecture**

The lecture method is an effective way to introduce new information or concepts to a group of learners. The learners always appreciate a concise, stimulating and well - delivered lecture.

The lecture method is primarily used to build upon the learners' existing base of knowledge. The lecture must always be suited to the learners' level. Asking some relevant and elective questions can help elicit information about this. Thereafter, the adult educator will have to make constant efforts to situate the new information in the context of the training by continuously providing examples and illustrations to relate it to the learners' context.

Lectures are useful for conveying new information and concepts to the learners and for providing context so that learners can relate what has been learnt to a conceptual framework. Lectures are also good for stimulating and motivating learners for further enquiry and for presenting a specialized body of external information.

To lecture effectively, the lecturer needs

to prepare for the lecture, become very familiar with the subject matter, identify and prepare supporting aids to illustrate the points. One needs to provide examples to link the subject matter to the lives of the learners and ask questions to check whether the learners are following. A good lecture provokes the learners to ask questions and note key points. It is advisable that the lecturer maintains eye contact with the learners to assess whether they are following or not, whether they are interested or bored. The seating arrangement has to be such that all can see the aids equally well and hear the lecture and maintain time stipulations. It is important to be aware of one's own body movements and facial expressions and speak clearly, loudly and use simple language. See Box 12.4 for advantages and disadvantages of lecture method.

Box 12.4 Advantages and Disadvantages of Lecture Method

Advantages

- ❖ Allows the presentation of facts, information and concepts in a relatively short span of time.
- ❖ Makes possible interaction of learners with multiple resource persons with different points of view.
- ❖ Is possible to use for illiterate learners.
- ❖ A diverse range of supportive materials can be used to support the content areas e.g. slides, charts, posters, etc.
- ❖ A large number of learners can be accommodated at one time.

Disadvantages

- ❖ The world view of the speaker dominates the knowledge.
- ❖ It does not promote interaction in most cases.
- ❖ The input may be too abstract if not related to real life situations.
- ❖ The pace of learning is determined by the lecturer.

b) Case Study

In the case study method, the group gets an opportunity to look at others' experiences in the form of a case. The learners reflect upon and analyze these

experiences to derive new ideas. The learner's own experiences, values, feelings form the basis for analysis of others' experiences. The adult educator may present case studies in written or verbal forms or even through the

medium of films or songs, depending upon the background and experiential level of learners.

In order to use the case study method, the adult educator may present the case study to the group. One way of presenting the case study is to divide the group into smaller groups and give each group the task (question) to reflect and discuss. Then each group's views may be presented and consolidated in a collective session.

Among the reasons for using the case study method you may point out that the case study method helps to convey complex theoretical concepts in a simple

way. It makes the group to reflect on its own situation in the context of others' experiences and gives a chance to discuss complex situations. This exercise sharpens learners' analytical and diagnostic skills and exposes them to situations they might not ordinarily experience in their own lives. It exposes learners to similar experiences elsewhere to enable them feel a sense of solidarity and validation. In addition, it helps in creating new knowledge through collective reflection, analysis and synthesis. See Box 12.5 for advantages and disadvantages of case study method.

Box 12.5 Advantages and Disadvantages of Case Study Method

Advantages

- ❖ Simple
- ❖ Can be used with illiterates and relatively unsophisticated people.
- ❖ Can be used for cognitive learning too.
- ❖ Low cost, culturally appropriate.

Disadvantages

- ❖ May be difficult to find an appropriate case study.
- ❖ The case study may be too general to focus on a specific issue.
- ❖ Case studies written by some one else contain the writers perceptions, feelings and ideologies which may lead to distortion of the objective reality.
- ❖ Hypothetical or prepared case studies may be too idealistic.

c) Role Play

One of the most common training methods is the role-play. Role-play is useful where learners share a somewhat similar experience, which is difficult to recall because of its emotional nature. You can also use it where the uniform possibility of recall is less likely among the learners. Role-play as a structured experience; it means that learning takes place from re-enactment of past experiences. It is a powerful training method if the focus of learning is to generate awareness.

The method of role-play is useful as it

helps learners utilize their experiences of real life situations. The enactment is helpful in developing awareness at individual and group levels. Through role play it becomes easier to discuss complex social issues in a non threatening environment.

In order to use role-play effectively, you need to select a suitable role play depending on the purpose of learning and identify role enactors/performers. Next, you need to prepare briefs and explain the situation to the learners and tell the audience all the points to be noted. Now is the time to set the stage and start

role-play. After the play you can consolidate and debrief. See Box 12.6 for

Box 12.5 for advantages and disadvantages of role-play method.

Box 12.6 Advantages and Disadvantages of Role-play Method

Advantages

- ❖ It is energizing.
- ❖ It helps the suppressed and illiterate to express their feelings.
- ❖ It is simple and low cost learning tool.
- ❖ It focuses on problems which are real.
- ❖ It presents complex issues simply and in a short while.
- ❖ It does not need materials/ props or advance. preparation

Disadvantages

- ❖ There is a possibility of the role play becoming entertainment which vitiates learning.
- ❖ Participants can get too involved in their roles and later loose objectivity during analysis.
- ❖ Acting can become an end in itself and participants can overact or distort the roles.
- ❖ If points for observations are not clear, it may dilute the focus of learning.

Role-play is used in a variety of ways. A small group enacts role-play about a situation while other learners watch the role-play. A discussion follows that enactment. In this case, the role-play is similar to a demonstration where learning occurs through observation. The adult educators themselves, or a few outsiders or a handful of learners, with or without adult educators, can enact such a role-play.

You can also use role-play to stimulate discussion on complex issues. A brief enactment by adult educators or learners or both, can be used to stimulate further group discussion on similar issues and experiences that learners share. This method of learning is essentially group discussion where role-play merely acts as a stimulant or catalyst for the discussion that follows. Its use in this case is similar to an aid e.g. charts, video clipping, etc.

In certain situations, a role-play is also used to practice skills. For example, you can practice how to motivate adult learners by enacting different roles. The prime method of learning here is

practicing and receiving feedback from learners and adult educators after that practice. You can also use a role-play as a re-enactment of past experiences. Learners may enact a past situation with which they are familiar.

d) Simulation

Simulation is a method based on 'here and now' experience shared by all learners. It involves assigning definite roles to each participant and having them act out a situation according to the given roles. It is carried on long enough to generate responses and reactions based on real feelings as participants need to genuinely 'get into their role'. However, learning takes place without any serious risk because the situation is after all 'make-believe'.

The original meaning of the method is derived from the situation used to train aircraft pilots. Since real life training is too risky, any error during learning would prove fatal, realistic conditions of air and pressure are created inside a 'simulator' cockpit, and the pilot learns how to fly.

You may use simulation to understand complex societal issues and to learn in a situation which is very similar to real life. Here learning takes place at different levels. Simulation involves “pre-simulation” phase in which you need to select a simulation according to the purpose of learning and develop a conceptual framework. Then you prepare a list of rules/ instructions and briefs for all roles and assign roles to different learners. Try to include all learners, as simulations does not require audience and define the situations and events in which the characters will interact. There may be more than one situation/ event.

Decide the location for simulation. The site/s chosen need to be as close as possible to real life sites of the chosen situations. You need to keep necessary props ready at hand, to be used for different roles.

For conducting a simulation, you need to assign roles, give each person the appropriate role brief. Ask the participants

to study their roles and try to ‘become’ the role. It is not a good idea to let different roles study each other’s briefs. Yes, you need to prepare name tags or some other appropriate means of identifying the different roles. Then brief the participants about the situation and let them start acting according to their interpretation of the role. Stop the simulation when appropriate, or when the essential part is over, or if it is getting out of hand.

In post-simulation phase, it is better to give the participants time to get out of their roles. Then ask the participants to share their feelings by posing direct questions, for instance, what happened to you during the simulation, how you felt etc. You may try to draw parallels with real life while analyzing the patterns in the data and collate the participants’ feelings. Finally collect necessary inputs and summarize the entire proceedings. See Box 12.7 for advantages and disadvantages of simulation method.

Box 12.7 Advantages and Disadvantages of Simulation Method

Advantages

- ❖ Allows an exploration of real life situations, social processes and behaviors in a relatively non threatening manner/ situation.
- ❖ It allows for the study of very complex social processes.
- ❖ It is entirely controlled by the learners’ pace.
- ❖ It involves activity and universal participation.
- ❖ Learning takes place at the awareness level

Disadvantages

- ❖ It requires that participants cooperate and internalize the roles.
- ❖ It is a difficult method and requires an experienced and skilled adult educator to conduct it.
- ❖ Mismatch of roles may lead to poor performances by the learners.
- ❖ Critical skills are needed to handle feelings generated in the process.

e) Instruments

‘Instruments’ are usually in the printed format containing clear instructions and a series of questions, either with multiple choices, or requiring brief replies. Participants fill in the

questionnaire individually or in twos/ threes for each other. There are instructions at the end of the instruments explaining how to examine answers, assign scores and tally them. The connotations of different scores are also clarified.

The purpose is to generate data about each learner. However, it is left to the learners to decide how to use this information. Some examples of instruments are the personality trait

inventory, interpersonal perception form, T-P questionnaire for Leadership, FIRO-B, etc. See Box 12.8 for advantages and disadvantages of instruments method.

Box 12.8 Advantages and Disadvantages of Instruments Method

Advantages

- ❖ Can be a very effective method for learning more about one's own self through systematic self-examination, reflection, and in cases, feedback.
- ❖ The learner does not feel external pressure or compulsion.
- ❖ Learning takes place at the individual's own pace according to his/her interest and inclination.

Disadvantages

- ❖ Can only be used with a group which is highly literate
- ❖ Needs a certain amount of honesty and genuine interest of the learner to generate meaningful data
- ❖ Works better with people who can learn intellectually at the level of abstractions
- ❖ Very difficult to design instruments.

f) Learning Games

Learning games are seemingly fun activities involving all participants. There are rules and regulations and the games may or may not include a competitive element. You may use games to convey feelings and processes which are implied within the game being played, e.g. trust games, leadership games and so on. After the game is over, it is essential that the feelings of the participants are debriefed and consolidated; otherwise

it will remain either an icebreaker or an energizer.

The reason for playing learning games is to explain group processes involving issues of trust, social relationships and so on. You can play the learning games by explaining the game and involving the learners in the game. After the game, you need to consolidate, debrief and derive learning. See Box 12.9 for advantages and disadvantages of learning games method.

Box 12.9 Advantages and Disadvantages of Learning Games Method

Advantages

- ❖ It is lively, fun and involves everyone's participation.
- ❖ Complex issues can be explained in a simple manner.
- ❖ It allows the participants to experience the matter under consideration within the course of the training itself, (also called here-and-now experience).

Disadvantages

- ❖ Finding or designing appropriate games is not very easy.
- ❖ The focus of the game must be clear to the adult educator otherwise debriefing will be confused.
- ❖ May generate lot of feelings obstructing learning.
- ❖ Entertaining without learning is not the objective.

Other Methods

Besides the methods discussed above, you may also look at the following other methods which are useful in some cases.

- i. Demonstrations
- ii. Field visits
- iii. Apprenticeship Practice

i) Demonstrations

Demonstrations refer to methods in which the learners are provided with an opportunity to observe for themselves the object or processes that they wish to learn. It can be real-life or make believe situations or models. This method is useful in conveying complex information simply, as seeing and understanding is considerably easier than hearing and understanding. Examples include - demonstrating what a biogas plant or a sanitary latrine is through a model, demonstration by the adult educator on how to conduct an interview demonstrating how to conduct safe deliveries to dais (TBA) - through models, etc.

ii) Field Visits

Field visits refer to demonstrations in

practical situations i.e. where the subject matter actually occurs or happens in real life. Some examples of field visits are as follows - taking the learners to a hospital in the course of health training, or taking learners to villages in the course of a Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) training, or taking community level workers to the block office for training on local government etc. The emphasis again is on observing, asking questions and understanding.

iii) Apprenticeship Practice

Apprenticeship and practice are methods of paramount importance for skill training. The difference between the two lies in that practice is done in controlled situations while apprenticeship is done in real life situations and is usually of longer duration. It is essential in both methods that the learner be supervised by the adult educator and given feedback. These two methods can be used for any skill. In the course of training, it is easier to incorporate practice, while apprenticeship can be an entire training in itself.

Activity 12.2

You may have used all or some of the methods described above. Which of the methods have you found most useful? Give reasons to justify their frequent use by you.

12.4 Training Materials and Resources

When planning which training materials to use, the adult educator may consider the following questions.

- ❖ What materials are available?
- ❖ Will the material facilitate active learning?
- ❖ What can the training facility accommodate?
- ❖ Does the adult educator know how to use the material?

- ❖ Can the participants learn how to use the material?

Types of training materials include written materials which are useful when teaching knowledge. If they are not available at the appropriate learning level, the adult educator or adult educator may have to develop new materials. Examples of written materials are equipment instructions, lists for

decision-making skills, and blank charts for record-keeping. While developing and using written materials, make sure that they contain only the information that participants need to know and they are clear. Here, as layout is very important, you need to keep pages looking 'clean' and uncluttered and use language and diagrams appropriate to participants' level of knowledge. For example, use graphs if participants can read a graph.

Audio-visual materials are useful for teaching knowledge and skills. Examples of audio-visual materials are

Chalk board	Photographs
Flip chart	Overheads
Chart and Diagrams	Slides
Models	Video

While choosing audio-visual materials, you need to consider how the material would enhance active learning and if the material is appropriate to the knowledge level of the participants. Also consider how you will use the material and if it is available for the training. You need to ensure that all the participants are able to see and hear the material.

In case the method requires any supplemental materials, ensure their availability. To show a film you need a screen or blank white wall. To use a flip chart you may want to use different color markers. Make sure that the facilities are appropriate for use of the material.

Activity 12.3

Considering the popularity of information and communication technologies in almost all walks of life, identify at least five new materials that would help you in your profession.

12.5 Roles of Adult Educators

Given the learning agenda, an adult educator has to play several critical important roles to ensure that the learners and learning process are at the centre of all training. The educator needs to ensure that there is adequate stimulation to critical analytical faculties of learners and there are occasions to value, analyze, share and reflect upon the experiences of learners. In the process learners feel empowered and there is enhancement of their self-image. Try and create and nurture conditions of learning.

The adult educator also needs to keep in mind that these multiple roles are played not only during the training, but also prior to the training and after the training as well. Each of the roles during training and after the training requires a particular set of critical competencies, comprising three components, namely, knowledge, awareness and skills. An effective performance of any role involves the use of multiple competencies.

Table 12.1 Roles of Adult Educator

<p style="text-align: center;">Training designer and planner</p> <p>Assessing learning needs and evolving learning objectives</p> <p>Planning strategy of training Working out the detailed contents, sequencing them and choosing appropriate methods Involving learners in the designing phase identifying and preparing resource persons Preparing and selecting learning materials and aids</p> <p>Preparing self and the adult educator-team delegating responsibilities for training</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Manager</p> <p>Mobilizing financial resources Planning dates/venue Scheduling logistics and required Administrative support Ensuring communication with learners, resource persons regarding the venue, travel details etc. Planning and co-coordinating arrangements for field trips, etc. Arranging for needed support systems at the venue (separate formations for men and women; arrangements for children accompanying mothers)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Facilitator</p> <p>Facilitating group processes, to keep the group together and let it grow (participation, communication, decision-making, leadership, conflict resolution, etc.)</p> <p>Summarizing, synthesizing information Appreciating and encouraging individuals and the group as whole.</p> <p>Initiating discussions, articulating unsolved group issues. Creating a learning environment Pursuing, nudging, pushing, cajoling, building their confidence so that participants can Perform beyond their existing potential Managing the heterogeneity within the group</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Educator</p> <p>Providing new information and concepts Eliciting learners' experiences and analysis by setting up structures, asking questions, etc., Synthesizing, consolidation and conceptualizing the new information and analysis Directing, managing structured learning experiences -role-plays, simulations, discussions, etc. Using learning aids effectively video-camera, tapes, flash cards, audio -visual aids, etc.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Friend, philosopher, counselor and guide</p> <p>Being accessible to learners, listening to them, their anxieties, thoughts, problems, joys, by being a sounding board Sharing one's own life experiences with the learners Providing a sense of direction, by giving feedback Developing a close rapport with learners and building their trust and confidence Being a sounding-board when required responding positively and understanding</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Learner</p> <p>Paying attention to what others are sharing being open to and accepting differing frameworks of analysis and perspectives Seeking additional information, clarifications, asking questions Acknowledging others' abilities and appreciating them Accepting "learning structures" set up by others during the training and supporting each learner</p>

<p>the origins of the anxieties or problems of the learner Setting up sessions to enhance the self-confidence and self-esteem of the concerned individuals. in an informal manner Showing solidarity, holding hands, offering a shoulder to cry on, being sensitive to and responding to a crisis if any</p>	
<p>Recorder and documenter</p> <p>Observing keenly the flow of content and processes taking place Maintaining detailed roles on a regular basis Involving learners in the recording/documenting efforts Exchanging roles with co-adult educators and incorporating it into further planning of sessions Learning more in depth about individuals, group, learning process, etc. Using data for monitoring, evaluation purposes, Addressing additional issues of individuals and groups that may arise in the process.</p>	<p>Evaluator</p> <p>Planning evaluation/monitoring mechanisms Involving learners in the evaluation process Soliciting formal and informal reviews to assess every event and ongoing process Matching feedback with objectives of the session and assessing if learners are learning Sharing reflections/analysis with co-adult educators and feeding it into further planning Providing relevant feedback to the adult educator team and learners to facilitate the learning process.</p>
<p>Follow-up co-coordinator</p> <p>Communicating at regular intervals Disseminating feedback from individuals and organizations to feed into the next training Assessing future learning needs and planning additional events for the same Providing support through participation, involvement in designing, preparing strategy and materials, etc. Reflecting and evaluating the training outcome with co-adult educators</p>	<p>Report writer</p> <p>Planning a reporting format (from learners' needs expressed by learners) Organizing all the needed information, notes, and flip charts for report-writing. Preparing separate reports for different constituencies, if need be (i.e. fund providers, learners, etc.) Disseminating it to both learners and wider audiences.</p>

As is evident in Table 12.1, the adult educator has to play multiple roles. This requires a very systematic deliberate and planned process of training adult educators in the context of participatory training.

12.5.1 Adult Educators' Training

The role of adult educator in participatory training is much more radical and critical than the role of adult

educator in traditional training. Participatory adult educator has to be much more resourceful, competent and creative to fulfill his/ her task as facilitator-manager of the training processes. The adult educators need to systematically prepare to effectively play the multiple roles, fulfill the engrossing functions and shoulder the demanding responsibilities incumbent on them. Three key aspects of adult educator's

training include i) learning the theory of adult learning, ii) developing skills as a facilitator and iii) self-development of the adult educator. In fact the third is the most important, since the other two are of no use in the absence of the third one. Let us talk a little more about this aspect in the next sub-section.

12.5.2 Understanding Self

It is important to understand the self in the context of participatory training. It is generally agreed that the self has three broad aspects. These three constantly interact with each other causing confusion or congruence depending whether they are in harmony.

i) The Cognitive Self: This refers to our mental or intellectual capacities to store and process information, our memory and logical abilities.

ii) The Affective Self: This refers to our emotional side, our capacity to feel and express emotions.

iii) The Behavioral Self: This refers to our behavior aspects, our actions, skills and expressed behavior.

Understanding self is important for developing congruence between cognitive, affective and behavioral aspects of self and for developing sensitivity towards learners and understanding their self development process. It is important for developing faith in others' capacity to learn, grow and change and for building up the self-esteem of the learners into a realistic and positive self-concept.

It is only when we personally experience the transformation of the self and a sense of personal growth, that we as adult educators in participatory training are convinced that others can also achieve the same.

Self development of your role as a facilitator implies different things. In reality, these different meanings may overlap, but it is useful to understand them distinctively. Here we will discuss some of the main implications of self-development.

Self-development implies developing a positive and healthy appreciation of ones capabilities, limitations and the self. It means overcoming the negative self-concept in some cases, and excessively unrealistic self-concept in others.

Self- development means the art of acquiring internal control over oneself. In many cases, we depend on others to define ourselves. We need to develop our own definition of ourselves and not allow our definition of self-concept to be exclusively and totally determined by others. It involves creating a sense of initiative and self-control in each person. Self-development entails the development of the cognitive, affective and the behavioral aspects of us. This implies developing and sharpening our cognitive capacity, becoming sensitive to ones own emotions and feelings and developing the ability to articulate and express them and sharpening emotional capacities.

Self-development is to create a sense of congruence between different aspects of self. This implies an internal congruence and consistency between cognitive, affective and behavioral aspects. This also implies that our behavioral aspect represents authentically our cognitive and affective aspects and our actions are congruent with our thoughts and feelings. This is one of the major challenges in self-development.

Self Development has two important aspects, understanding one self and

changing one self. Understanding one self requires collection of information about “one’s own self”, whereas change of behavior requires self-disclosure. As adult educators, we need to develop “openness” in ourselves, and feedback and self-disclosure become essential in this process. Feedback from others and self-disclosure are reciprocal activities crucial for self-development. Let us learn in brief a bit more about feedback and self-disclosure.

Feedback is a verbal or non-verbal communication with a person or group which provides others with information on how their behavior affects you. Feedback is also a reaction by others usually in terms of their feelings and perceptions, about how your behavior is affecting them. Self-disclosure is a process of sharing of “me” with others.

Feedback is information given to a person (or a group or an organization) about how one affects others. It helps one become more aware, both of one’s strengths and weaknesses. It does not tell one what one should do, but it raises questions and helps one to decide whether to change one’s behavior, so that one can be more effective and better able to achieve what one wants. If feedback is given in a positive way it can be helpful. But if it is given ineffectively, it is not only unhelpful, but can also be quite destructive.

12.5.3 Planning for Self-Development

Planning for self-development usually involves identifying areas that require development. One can identify aspects

about oneself that one would like to develop; for example, I want to reduce my aggressiveness or I would like to be able to say no without feeling guilty, etc. Prioritize these needs and assess their importance over the next few months. There may be several aspects that one would like to develop. It helps to assess what is more important and needs immediate attention. Choose one priority area to begin with. Identify obstacles in self and in environment. Then you can try and identify the factors that are likely to block the process of self-development. This could involve looking inside one’s behavioral patterns, attitudes, temperaments etc. The environment, other people and situations can sometimes create obstacles in the process of self-development.

The next logical step is to decide how to go about improving an aspect of self. This includes detailed planning of activities to be carried out in order to achieve the goal. A time frame also needs to be developed for this plan. You may seek others’ help. Self-development plans invariably necessitate seeking help from other persons. It is rather impossible to develop oneself in isolation, all by oneself. We need the help of others, our colleagues, family members, etc. to be able to engage in self-improvement activities.

Any change process needs regularly monitoring. In some form or other self-development process also needs close monitoring. You need to evolve a mechanism for such monitoring at the time of planning itself.

Activity 12.4

Do you consider self-development as an important dimension of participatory training? As an adult educator, have you ever contemplated a serious effort to undertake self-development?

12.6 Conclusion

We highlighted key-training methods and materials used in the training process. We discussed the multiple roles

of an adult educator. Finally we explained the need and process of self-development of adult educator.

12.7 Apply What You Have Learnt

As adult educator you may want to receive feedback and you may also tell adult learners about its significance in their self-development because as you have already learnt that feedback is a way of giving help. It is a corrective mechanism for the person who wants to learn and make sure that there is a good match between his/ her behavior and intentions. It is a means of increasing a person's autonomy and establishing one's identity -to answer

the question "Who am I?" Giving and receiving feedback is an important activity in one's professional life. As a practical exercise, after completing the study of all the units of Course 1, and after going through the following guidelines for giving feedback in Box 12.10, provide your feedback on first four units of the course. You may follow the guidelines and prepare your feedback.

Box 12.10 Guidelines for Giving Feedback

- ❖ Do be specific. Give examples and data. For example, "When you interrupted me just now I felt annoyed". The other person is able to make use of such information if s/he chooses to do so.
- ❖ Do describe your own feelings and reactions. For example, "I felt hurt." This is what you actually know.
- ❖ Do think of the needs of the other person and of what will be useful to him/her. Feedback should be constructive.
- ❖ Do speak only of behavior, which the other person could change, for example, her/ his habit of interrupting. This is within her/his control.
- ❖ Do choose the right time, climate and company to give feedback. It is most useful! Effective immediately after the event.
- ❖ Do give feedback when the other person asks for it. Even better is to ask her/him exactly what s/he wants to know.
- ❖ Do encourage her/him to check with anyone else who was present about the accuracy of the feedback. This can be done in a group. Feedback is more effective if it is received from several sources.
- ❖ Do ask the receiver if s/he understands what you are saying even though s/he may not accept it.
- ❖ Don't make general statements, such as, "I feel annoyed because you never listen to me." Unless you can give some specific examples, the receiver may not understand or believe what you are telling her/him.
- ❖ Don't describe the other person's feelings or motives or intentions. For example, "You wanted to hurt me". You do not know this: it is only your guess or interpretation. Such feedback will probably be rejected.
- ❖ Don't judge the other person's actions. For example "You were wrong to shout at me," Statements like this will only produce a defensive reaction.
- ❖ Don't make general evaluative statements about the other person's character. For example, "You are dominating and inconsiderate". The person who is told this will probably react defensively.



ROLE OF ICTS IN EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT: POTENTIAL, PITFALLS AND CHALLENGES

USHA VYASULU REDDI

Structure



- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 The Potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)
 - 13.2.1 Definition of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)
 - 13.2.2 ICTs and Education
 - 13.2.3 Strengths and Weaknesses of ICTs
- 13.4 Some Common Myths about ICTs
- 13.5 Using ICTs in Education
- 13.6 Evaluating ICTs in Education
- 13.7 Enhancing Learning through Use of ICTs
- 13.8 Conclusion
- 13.9 Apply What You Have Learnt

Learning Objectives



After studying Unit 13, it is expected that you would be to

- ❖ Define and describe different ICTs.
- ❖ Identify the various characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses of different ICTs.
- ❖ Understand, apply, and evaluate learning from ICTs when these are applied in the context of adult learning.

13.1 Introduction

Unit 13 provides PALDIN learners with an introduction to media and information and communication technologies (ICTs) and to their use in education, with particular reference to developing countries. A close look at the ICTs is critical particularly in the context of global development goals, the

increasing demand of education for all, and the inability of existing educational systems to meet such a demand without support from the ICTs. The unit discusses the role of ICTs in education, their characteristics, strengths and weaknesses, and success factors when using ICTs in education. The unit is

designed to facilitate your decisions about the use of ICTs in classroom and non formal settings, and to be able to defend your use of the ICTs to improve the quality and enhance reach to

educational opportunities both for learners in formal settings and as tools to support other learning programmes for adults.

Reflect

As a parent and an educator, you have seen that many young learners seem to spend a lot of time with the television and the computer. When given some projects, they provide information collected from the Internet instead of the textbook. Do you think this much exposure to media is useful? Do you think the media are educating the learners? Reflect on this and identify both the advantages and disadvantages of the role of media in the life of learners.

Activity 13.1

As said earlier, the assumption is that you are already quite familiar with the media scene in India. The idea of Activity 13.1 is to know a) whether you are already sufficiently familiar with media, b) if you are prepared to take decisions about the use of these media in implementing programs at an adult learning setup. Please answer the following questions as honestly as you can in 'yes' or 'no'.

Question

Answer YES / NO

1. Do you listen to radio and/or watch television in your home?
2. Do you have no access to a computer, whether at home or at a kiosk?
3. Have you never seen a computer?
4. Do you have an e mail address?
5. Do you know what the Internet is?
6. Do you think ICTs can be used effectively for training and learning?
7. Is it your job to carry out adult learning programs and the program participants' duty to learn?
8. Are you not concerned how an adult learns, just so long as you cover all the components of the program?
9. Is making the plan to integrate the media in adult learning programs too time consuming?
10. Are no media-based programmes available in the field of adult learning?
11. Are you able to complete adult learning programs well enough without instructional aids?
13. Do you not know how to operate the machines used in media-based learning?
13. Would you not use any ICT content in adult learning programs, even if it was available?
14. Do you think there is no point in talking about ICTs because it is simply not available/ accessible in Indian conditions where power supply is so scant?

Now let us see how you fared! Did you answer yes to all the questions above? If you have answered NO to most questions, you are ready to learn more about how to use ICTs effectively in your work. If you answered YES to most questions, then Unit 13 will be very useful in helping you to become aware of and to understand what ICTs are all about and to use them in your work. Unit 13 will guide you in shaping yourself as the close-to-excellent and evolving adult educator who can also facilitate those co-learners who were unable to answer some questions correctly.

Reflect

Reflect on your answers to the statements in Activity 13.1 to understand why you chose the answers you did.

13.2 The Potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

Today, from the time we awaken in the morning to the time before we sleep, we are surrounded by media, such as newspapers, radio, television, and computers. Sometimes we are not even aware that we are surrounded by these media. All these media come under the overall umbrella of what are known as today's ICTs. Knowing and using ICTs is important in today's fast changing knowledge society, but we very often are confused about what these media are.

13.2.1 Definition of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are often associated with the most sophisticated and expensive computer-based technologies. But ICTs also encompass the more conventional technologies such as radio, television and telephone technology. While definitions of ICTs are varied, it might be useful to accept the definition provided by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): 'ICTs are basically information-handling tools- a varied set of goods, applications and services that are used to produce, store, process, distribute and exchange information. They include the 'old' ICTs of radio, television and telephone, and the 'new' ICTs of computers, satellite and wireless technology and the Internet. These different tools are now able to work together, and combine to form our

'networked world' - a massive infrastructure of interconnected telephone services, standardized computing hardware, the internet, radio and television, which reaches into every corner of the globe'.

When we talk of ICTs, we refer not only to the latest computer and Internet based technologies, but also to simple audio visual aids such as the transparency and slides, tape and cassette recorders and radio; video cassettes and television; and film. These older and more familiar technologies are referred to under the collective heading of "analogue media" while the newer computer and Internet based technologies are called the "digital media".

However, in today's world, with the increased convergence or blending of the engineering designs and with the coming together of the satellite and the computer, the dividing lines between these different media are becoming blurred and consequently, the way people define and refer to ICTs is also getting blurred.

Often, the definition of ICTs is also done in terms of "old" and "new" as if to distinguish between the analogue and digital.

But what is "old and what is "new"? Livingstone (1999), in an extensive exploration of the idea of newness, has argued that the notion of "new" can

either be seen with reference to the “newness of technology” or in the context of “what’s new for society” about these media. Livingstone further argues that what is new for the western world is not necessarily so for the rest of the world. Within a social context, the introduction of radio or television may be as “new” as the introduction of Internet. While there is much euphoria

about the ICTs, after more than half a century of research, social scientists are still sceptical about tall and ill defined claims about potential societal changes that may follow a technological innovation. This means that ‘new’ cannot merely be defined either in terms of time and time scales or in terms of the technology innovation.

Activity 13.2

Everyday, you are exposed to different media, from the time you get up in the morning to the time when you go to sleep. Think about the different media or ICTs you are exposed to; and list them into categories of “old” and “new”. Write down the reasons for your listing in two columns against old and new.

13.2.2 ICTs and Education

Do the ICTs have a role in education? We can argue both ways. Supporters of the view that ICTs have a role in education, especially adult learning, have many arguments that they put forward and most of these arguments centre on issues of the global and Indian contexts, the changing nature of the learner and demand of education for all, and the reality that the existing educational system cannot cope with the demand for education on the one hand, and the issues of access, equity, and resources on the other.

The context: Liberalization, privatization, and globalization constitute the current social, economic, technological and political space within which television and all other media have to exist, survive, and function. Revolutions in information and communication technologies have reduced national boundaries to meaningless lines drawn on maps. And in the new scenarios, education has been identified as one of the twelve main services, which need to be opened up for free flow of trade between

countries. The form of this flow will become clear only when GATS comes into full force after rounds of negotiations among participating countries. Then, more than now, knowledge is expected to become a tradable commodity; and it will be essential that Indian educators keep pace with the change, or else perish in the face of competition from multinational forces in all fields of education and learning, including adult learning.

At the same time, changes in the capabilities, needs, and interests of the user; changes in the medium and its content, the close interdependence of the media and the competition of each medium to survive, and changes in the availability and attractiveness of accessible alternatives; interact freely with social, economic and political and technological contexts.

The learner community: India’s demographic mosaic consists of an increasing demand for education for a population, half of which is below 15 years of age, 75 per cent rural, a literacy rate of about 60 per cent; and a linguistic break-up of 15 different

major languages. The demand for education far outstrips the conventional system's ability to provide it, leaving no alternative to the use of technology in education.

We are at a critical junction, when the new technologies of communication - from the individualized computer assisted learning systems to the more mass directed radio and television today offer an unparalleled opportunity to reconsider conventional educational and learning practices and institutions. The notion that teaching and learning can be taken out of the confines of existing schools and colleges, that teaching can be individualized and insensitive to geoclimatic distances is one which has emerged out of the telecommunications revolution sweeping across the world in the 1980s and 1990s. And yet, the urban-rural divide in terms of *access*, *equity*, and *resources* will continue to be the main issues that Indian educators, particularly adult educators will have to address as the needs of the learning community in the new social, economic and political contexts will change.

In the new educational system, there are likely to be four levels of learners. The first level will consist of students, who, able to afford the high cost of education, will obtain it from either public or private institutions of higher education. They will be getting the best of the facilities, and will soon form educational elites. The second level of learners will consist of intelligent and competent students, who unable to afford the cost of education, will obtain it from existing public institutions and will soon be competing with the first level for membership in the educational elite. A third level of students will consist of the academically and financially poor students, who will seek access to

education from lower quality institutions of higher learning. And the last group of learners would be most of the illiterate and the poor, whom you will be addressing as part of your work. Current ways of imparting adult education use extensive ground work in the field and require both large numbers of trained personnel as well as committed individuals working in a world where access to technology is going to determine the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

We no longer have a choice. It is no longer an "if" but "how" to deploy the technologies optimally. Information and communication technology application constitutes an absolute necessity, given huge dispersed populations in a sub continent; inadequate resources and mind boggling needs. The new technologies offer us the chance to telescope decades of infrastructure building and development activities by providing us with the advantage of high speed delivery with no dilution in quality; wide reach; individualization of learning in a anytime, anywhere situation; and interactivity, a low per unit cost. These technologies and facilities can be equally used for language teaching, for literacy and adult learning.

This brings the role of the teachers or educators into focus. The adult educator is a key person in the whole process of learning and transacting education and a gateway to the learner. The responsibilities of the teachers or adult educators are many, and very often they feel threatened and further challenged when told that they have to use ICTs, sometimes even feeling that they may well lose their jobs or be replaced by the ICTs.

12.2.3 Strengths and Weaknesses of ICTs

Like all innovations that we have come to accept, ICTs also have strengths and weaknesses. We should list these because it is important to know what they are especially if we are to plan and use them effectively.

Some of the strengths of the ICTs include

- ❖ **Individualization of learning:** This means that people learn as individuals and not as a homogenous group. ICTs allow each individual to relate to the medium and its content.
- ❖ **Interactivity:** Interactivity is the way in which a person can relate to the content, go forward and backward in the content, start at any point depending upon prior knowledge instead of always in a sequential way.
- ❖ **Low per unit cost:** Per person, ICTs reduce the cost of education from very high to very low.
- ❖ **Distance and climate insensitive:** It does not matter where you are, or how the weather is, you can still access and learn from ICTs.
- ❖ **Can serve multiple teaching functions and diverse audiences:** ICTs, especially the computer and Internet based can be useful in drill and practice; to help diagnose and solve problems, for accessing information and knowledge about various related themes.
- ❖ **High speed delivery, wide reach at low cost:** There is instant delivery of information.
- ❖ **Uniform quality:** If content is well produced and is of good quality, the same quality can be delivered to the rich and the poor, the urban and the

rural equally and at the same low cost.

But ICTs also have weaknesses which we must understand. Some of these include

- ❖ **High infrastructure and start up costs:** It costs money to build ICT systems and to maintain them.
- ❖ **Tend toward centralized uniform content in economies of scale:** The larger the numbers, the lower the cost. This means that sometimes we try to reach large numbers so we make content common, not taking into account individual differences.
- ❖ **Are not ideally location and problem sensitive:** Address problems in a general way, but cannot, without special effort, solve local and culturally sensitive problems.
- ❖ **Problems of reach, access, remain:** Not everyone has equal access; so not everyone benefits equally from the use of ICTs.
- ❖ **Tend to create new class of knowledge rich/knowledge poor:** Those who have access and knowledge through the media become richer and those who do not become poorer, widening the “knowledge or digital gap” between rich and poor.
- ❖ **Essentially delivery systems:** A medium is different from the content; and often we forget that we can deliver any content, because ICTs are essentially meant only to deliver content, not to change attitudes or bring about behaviour change.
- ❖ **Hard to assess impact:** Learning from ICT delivered content is difficult to assess since such learning is of a multidimensional and long term kind,

rather than from immediate learning assessment as in a classroom test.

- ❖ **Officers, trainers need reorientation and retraining:** Just as people learn to use ICTs, trainers and officers also need training - something they sometimes resent.
- ❖ **Call for attitudinal change to understanding of teaching and learning:** These are different media and have a different way of teaching from what we are accustomed to— therefore, they need different ways

of understanding what teaching and learning is all about

And so, they are a mixed bag and it is necessary that we recognize both their strengths and weaknesses, before planning to use them in our adult learning setup. It is more important that we recognize because if we use a technology thinking it to be ideal one, but not recognizing its limitations, we are likely to fail in our effort and then to believe that all ICTs are useless and inadequate in education.

Activity 13.3

As an individual you still are unsure about the potential of media such as radio and television for adult learning. But, you have been told by your superior officer that from the next financial year, radio and television will be used for adult learning. What are the arguments that you would come up with to support your views if

- a) You are required to convince others that they should also try to use radio and television.
- b) You would have to convince your superior of the ineffectiveness of these media.

13.3 Different Types of ICT/ Media Technologies

We can study ICTs them in terms of the technologies, i.e. the delivery systems or in terms of their content. Let us look at the different types of ICTs/Media Technologies first .

Delivery systems: Based upon their characteristics, media technologies can be grouped into two categories, namely,

synchronous and asynchronous (See Table 13.1). Synchronous media require all participants to be together at the same time even though in different locations. Asynchronous ICTs allow for participants in the learning process to be at “different times” and “different places”

Table 13.1 Types of Media/ICT Technologies used in Education

Synchronous Media	Asynchronous Media
Audio-graphics	Audio and video tapes and CDs
Audio conferencing, as in a telephone conference	E mail
Broadcast radio and television	Computer file transfers
Teleconferencing	Virtual conferences
Computer conferencing such as chat and Internet telephony	Multimedia products, off line
	Web based learning formats

Types of Media /ICT Content: Just as we can divide ICT technologies into two

types, educational content is also categorized into two different types of

educational content - general awareness and instructional content. Table 13.2

describes the different features of educational and instructional content.

Table 13.2 Types of Educational Content

Educational	Instructional
Broad audiences awareness orientation Nature of learning is broad, multidimensional, even incidental process, and summative methods	Clearly defined target E n r i c h m e n t , Clear Objectives Target related format and treatment Evaluation critical, through formative,

When a decision is taken to use ICTs for educational purposes, we must be able to define and describe for what purpose the content will be used and also be very clear as to what delivery system we are going to use. Such a decision should not be based on the technologies but

on the conditions and contexts in which we seek to use the ICTs; e.g. access to media by the learners, etc.

Factors that will determine the choice of ICT use and of the content are important. We must ensure that there is adequate reach and access.

Activity 13.4

Look around you, in your house, your neighbours, and in the community. What are the different ICTs available? Categorize each in terms of whether it is synchronous or asynchronous; and in terms of its content. Analyze the content. List the ICTs suitable for use for education within your community. List those not suitable. Give justifications for each of your choices.

13.4 Some Common Myths about ICTs

❖ **Access:** A first myth is that today's ICTs enable us to transcend the barriers of reach and provide access. The reach of any medium is not the same as access. A 100 per cent of reach of radio or a 90 per cent reach of television does not mean that listeners or viewers have access to the medium. For instance, if community radio has a reach of 25 kilometres radio from the station, but there is no FM radio set within the transmission area, there is reach, but no access. Similarly, if the television set is placed in a location that women cannot access, for social and cultural reasons, reach is not the same as access. If the

timing of a broadcast is wrong, there is no access. Or, if there is no electricity in a village, there is no access. In addition to the conditions of socio cultural factors, poverty, illiteracy, and time, mobility and relevance are key factors influencing access.

❖ **Ownership and Control:** Access is also determined by patterns of ownership and control. A second myth is about people, especially poor, illiterate, rural women, not being able to handle technology - therefore ownership and control cannot be given to them. Ownership and control of the means of communication bring involvement

and commitment. They enable people to use the technologies to give voice to their own needs and to create their own materials. And when ownership and control is transferred to the community, the likelihood of change is greater and the ICTs break down barriers when technology is demystified.

- ❖ **Technology driven vs. people driven:** A third myth places the technology first. “The technology worked, but the effort did not yield results” is a common assessment of projects using ICTs. This is because the bulk of investment in any project generally goes toward such overhead costs and few resources are left for project activities. People issues must be addressed first. Choice and use of ICTs depends upon the investment in people first, rather than on the deployment of sophisticated ICT based “solutions” without adequate attention to the people issues.
- ❖ **Content matters:** That content for technology is readily available, and if not it is easy to develop is the fourth misconception about ICTs. A dangerous myth because content is at the heart of the issue. There are two aspects of content development that merit attention. First, much has been said about relevant, timely, local content. There simply is not enough useful and relevant content available; especially content that addresses the realities and needs of women and girls. Content takes time and costs money to produce. Multimedia content suitable to be used by the new ICTs takes longer and costs more. If we have to deliver

knowledge in local languages, in this part of the world, even fonts in local languages are not readily available; and if available, cannot be integrated easily in to existing multimedia packages easily.

- ❖ **Participation:** Who determines what is relevant, timely and local? Unless it is the learner, there is less chance of actual use. Relevant, appropriate, time and problem solving content is critical. This has to be developed in a partnership with the learners; otherwise, it will not be used, because it is not rooted in ground realities.
- ❖ **Appropriate ICTs:** Project managers in many ICT based efforts have yet to determine what is the most appropriate medium to deliver knowledge? Appropriateness of medium and content is related to issues of reach and access; technologies of both hardware and software content relevance, cultural acceptability and usability.
- ❖ **Ground support:** The lessons of history tell us any medium can be used to bring about awareness and to “open a window to the world”. However, without strong ground support, media initiatives can fail to deliver. Ground support includes community mobilization and participation; timely availability of support materials, whether of fertilizers or books or literacy primers. Using a teleconference, as a technology intervention is fine, provided that ground support has ensured that there are learners at the receiving end and that follow through activities are carried out. Otherwise, it is a colossal waste of time and money.

Activity 13.5

The head of your department has informed that you will be the coordinator for the ICT based teaching programme being conducted at your adult learning setup for four months. Taking a look at the factors described in Section 13.4 of the lesson, what are the different things you have to do to ensure success of the proposed ICT based teaching programme. What kind of ground support will you plan, organize and ensure?

13.5 Using ICTs in Education

What does using ICTs in education, especially adult learning, mean? This is a good question to begin our discussion of ICTs with. There are three ways in which ICT in education is considered in current thinking. These are ICT education; ICT supported education, and ICT enabled education.

ICT Education: This is the most common understanding of the field of ICTs in education. Essentially, it refers to the creation of human resource to meet the IT needs of the knowledge economy. In developing countries of Asia, each country is trying to create a pool of manpower to address job opportunities in computers—hardware and software, creating and training people in computer engineering. Very often, an ICT in Education policy of a government describes the steps by which computers will be placed in schools, how teachers and students will be provided the basic computer programming skills to cater to the growing job market in computer based technologies.

ICT Supported Education: A large number of distance education universities and programmes use ICT to support the print content that they

deliver to students. These include broadcast audio and video such as radio and television programmes, audio and video tapes delivered to students as part of a learning kit, and in more recent times, multimedia content such as lessons which are delivered off line, i.e. on CDs. This is also sometimes called multimedia education, where multiple media are used to support learning.

ICT Enabled Education: Any educational programme that is purely delivered through ICTs, or with ICT delivered content as the primary backbone of the teaching-learning process, such as on line courses through the web, is ICT enabled education. In simple words, this form of education requires ICT access and requires that the learner use ICTs as a primary or basic medium of instruction.

When deciding to use ICTs, you must always decide the purpose for which you have made the decision and what you expect to achieve from the content that will be produced. Is it to teach computer skills, to support the learning process, or to instruct through the ICTs itself?

Activity 13.6

In continuation with Activity 13.5, how will you establish the purpose of the proposed ICT based training programme? Will you ask your son and daughter to attend the programme? Why or why not?

13.6 Evaluating ICTs in Education

If, as we have seen in the earlier part of this lesson, using ICTs for education, especially adult learning, is a complex process involving a lot of careful choices and decision making without which we cannot succeed, then why use ICTs in education at all?

We have already seen that the strengths of the ICTs include expanding reach and access, while retaining uniform quality. And that ICT content can be, if carefully made, suit the audience it is intended for.

Half a century of research into learning from media has revealed that there are no undifferentiated effects and that learning from media is not a direct cause effect relationship. Learning from any form of media intervention, whether print or computer enabled, is multidimensional, non linear, and indirect, unexpected and critically, it is long term. It is of an enriching and even incidental kind. And it is the user or learner, not the content producer or delivery agency, who determine the extent and nature of benefit. If the media technology fails to meet needs, it will be replaced or substituted by another medium, another activity. It is necessary that we recognize this aspect of learning from media because no learner, no matter how poor, illiterate, or deprived is going to accept any content which does not meet felt needs or provide some gratification.

Hardly any results will be visible in the short term. Results, if any, are not of a direct, cause effect variety. If ICTs are to be effective as learning tools, they have to be used in a long-term sustained manner; and learning from media often provides unexpected results.

Despite all this history, we need to evaluate ICTs and ICT content before taking any decision to use them in adult learning settings. What we try to evaluate, whether it is readily available content, or material that is going to be prepared is essentially

- ❖ **Knowledge**, i.e. what has been learned. And we do this through knowledge tests and longitudinal testing.
- ❖ **Understanding**, i.e. what has been understood, testing to check if learner can rephrase in own terms.
- ❖ **Application**, i.e. has the learner been able to apply what has been learned; i.e. solve problems.

Very often, in educational evaluation and testing, immediate testing is done or an experimental design is followed. In immediate testing, we give a test immediately after teaching the lesson and then judge whether the person has learned the content through scores on this test. If we give a test before teaching the lesson and then immediately after teaching, we are using a simple experimental design.

What do we know about the use of ICTs in education, especially adult learning, in India? India has a vibrant system in the use of ICTs and is considered a world leader. For instance, a glance at the information and communication technologies scenario would show that today, there is a system with

- ❖ India's own satellite system providing round the clock multipurpose services
- ❖ Nearly 100 per cent reach of radio
- ❖ A satellite to cable and terrestrial system of television, with above 50

channels in different languages
within the private and public sector

- ❖ One of the largest television systems in the world
- ❖ About four 24 hour dedicated satellite to cable educational television channels
- ❖ A 24 hour TDCC channel available for use in teleconference support for education
- ❖ A private sector technology channel covering information technology and bio technology
- ❖ State level initiatives underway for the use of satellite based systems

on the Ku Band in almost all the states of the country, capable of providing bandwidth for data, voice and picture transmission through the EDUSAT network

- ❖ Wide reaching telephone access, through PCOs throughout the country
- ❖ The fastest growing sector of the economy being that of information and communication.

And so we have the ICT systems in place. The question now remains is - how do we best use them. We will briefly explore how to use ICTs in Section 13.7. Before moving on to the section let us complete Activity 13.8.

Activity 13.7

Go to a nearby music and CD library or store. Ask the store for any educational multimedia product in a subject of your choice. Examine it in terms of its

- ❖ Strengths
- ❖ Weaknesses
- ❖ Potential users and uses
- ❖ Culture and context specificity

13.7 Enhancing Learning through use of ICTs - What We Have Learnt

There are many aspects of ICT use in adult learning in India in which we already have sufficient knowledge, based on experience of using different media for more than forty years for educational and developmental purposes. Let us look at what we know.

The technology works: Twenty five years of satellite broadcasting and more than ten years of teleconferencing, and five years of computer based systems has shown that the technological end is the strongest part of the system in India. The technology works but there

is room for improvement. Findings from all the exercises has shown that there is much to be improved in the technical quality. Generally speaking, there are fairly good facilities at the teaching or the provider's end. The same could not be said of the receiving/ learner's end where there was inadequate space for viewers, disruptions in power supply, and an undependable telephone line, and a varying reception quality of data, video and audio in transmitted programmes and interaction.

Content matters: Since the primary purpose of using the technologies in adult learning is to disseminate particular contents in the form of learning packages, the single most important element in the entire process is the content of the programmes or

package of programmes. We know that content must be of good quality and relevant to the needs, learning levels, and life experiences of the learners and in local languages for there to be maximum use.

13.8 Conclusion

To summarize, when using ICTs in your adult learning work, make sure and

- ❖ Mix, supplement with different media
- ❖ Mix and experiment with formats and treatments
- ❖ Greater emphasis upon substance, less on style
- ❖ Use of graphics, animation
- ❖ Summarizing and recap of main points
- ❖ Build in interactivity

Unit 13 has attempted to highlight the factors that an adult educator or adult learner may usefully keep in mind while choosing the appropriate medium and appropriate content. Elsewhere in the world, determinants of choice are **quality, utility, price, and innovative content**. In India, we can add **availability and local relevance** to these criteria. You can also choose the delivery medium, keeping in mind the inherent characteristics of each medium.

In selecting already existing educational programmes, choice of the programme, in addition to the above mentioned criteria, you would do better look for an evaluation based on questions such as

- ❖ Are the instructional objectives as stated or implied in the lesson clear to the viewer?

- ❖ Does the content of the programme relate closely to the main objectives?
- ❖ Does the amount of time taken to develop each concept, procedure, or example seem appropriate for the intended audience?
- ❖ Is the content organised and so structured as to facilitate learning?
- ❖ Is the material based on expert, up to date professional information?
- ❖ Is the vocabulary level appropriate for the intended audience?
- ❖ Does the presentation provide for optimum repetition of the main idea?
- ❖ Does the programme effectively use pictures, film clips, demonstrations, diagrams and other graphics?
- ❖ Is the production quality of the programme good? Is there appropriate integration of audio and video?
- ❖ What is the quality of the presenter, in terms of expertise, ability to present material?
- ❖ Are the techniques designed to provide viewer participation?
- ❖ Does the presentation motivate the learner to do supplementary work, etc.?
- ❖ Is there any testing incorporated into the programme?

- ❖ Is there any provision for testing the learning gain from the programme?

Keeping in mind that merely the selection of the medium is not necessarily going to enhance learning outcomes, and that each medium has its strengths and weaknesses, a mix of media would be ideal for any distant learner. Criteria for selecting the medium of delivery include aspects such

as the reach of the medium, its availability, its ruggedness, the ease with which it can be used by the individual learner or the counsellor at a distant location, and cost effectiveness (both for the institution as well as for the learner). Any medium which draws the learner into a participatory learning situation is likely to be more readily accepted by the learners.

13.9 Apply What You Have Learnt

We now come to the last part of Unit 13. It has to do with the application of one's learning to one's profession as well as everyday life. This effort helps the learner to internalize one's knowledge and skills.

Choice of media is difficult, especially in the absence of inter-institutional efforts. Such a problem is compounded by learner demands for user friendly, low end delivery methods. This may mean return to the old, familiar and tested media such as radio. Most importantly, choice of media is dependent upon the effectiveness of the

medium in meeting learner demands rather than merely on what is the most modern method available at the time.

Suppose you are the coordinator of PALDIN programme of study and you wish to convert it into a multi-media-based learning package. You will need funds to carry out your plan. A funding agency has asked you to submit a proposal that gives justification for conversion and states clearly with reasons what types of ICT you want to use. Prepare a detailed proposal covering both demands of the funding agency.



USE OF ICTS IN LITERACY AND LIFELONG LEARNING

ANITA DIGHE

Structure

- 14.1 Introduction
- 14.2 Context of a Rapidly Changing World
- 14.3 Why use ICTs for Literacy Programs?
 - 14.3.1 What is meant by ICTs?
 - 14.3.2 Current use of ICTs in Literacy Programs in E-9 Countries
 - 14.3.3 Broad trends in use of ICTs in Literacy Programs
- 14.4 Case Studies of Projects Using ICTs, the Indian Experience
- 14.5 Role of ICTs in Literacy programs
- 14.6 Strategies for Using ICTs as a Tool to Achieve Literacy Decade Goals
- 14.7 Conclusion: Beyond Literacy
- 14.8 Apply What You Have Learnt

Learning Objectives

After going through Unit 14, it is expected that you will be able to

- ❖ Work out the potential and role of ICTs in literacy programs
- ❖ Highlight the strengths and weaknesses of literacy programs that use ICTs
- ❖ Describe characteristics, concepts, outcomes and methods of participatory research.

14.1 Introduction

Unit 13 discussed the role of ICTs in education with particular reference to adult learning and Unit 14, the last unit of the course, takes you to forefront of current developments in the sphere of lifelong learning. After explaining the context of far-reaching social, economic and political changes on a global scale, the unit introduces the rationale for using information and communication

technologies (ICTs) in literacy programs. Further, it discusses the potential and role of ICTs in the field of literacy. While elaborating the strengths and weaknesses of literacy programs, the unit directs PALDIN learners to the use of ICTs in their work. The hope is that this practice will facilitate your work and make it more effective and more efficient.

14.2 Context of a Rapidly Changing World

As you will agree, rapid transformations have taken place in the world in the past few years. We are now increasingly part of a globalized world that is affecting all aspects of our lives- social, economic, cultural and political. Likewise, the communication and information technologies (ICTs) have brought about enormous changes in our lives. Thus, middle class families in most Third World

countries now have better access to information and news than ever before. Due to access to technology, we are now able to remain in touch with our family members, and friends in various parts of the world. Likewise, it is now possible for us to buy designer clothes from the Internet, inasmuch as it is possible to seek/share medical advice on care of a loved one with cancer or HIV/AIDS.

Reflection

Reflect on what changes technology has brought about in your life within the last ten years. How has your life changed? Is the change for the better or for the worse? In which aspects of your life is the change positive? And in which aspects is it negative?

Access to technology, however, is highly unequal. This is evident when we realize that there are more telephones in Tokyo or in New York than in all of sub-Saharan Africa. A computer in some parts of the world can cost a month's salary or more. This differential in access to technology is known as the 'digital divide'. The digital divide is not just an issue of the polarization of the information rich versus the information poor. It is also a divide between men and women everywhere. Even with regard to

Internet users, in most countries, the number of Internet users is miniscule. According to the Telecommunications Union (ITU) statistics released in 2002 on female Internet usage, in poorer countries, women represent a much smaller proportion of even this insignificant number. While the users tend to be young, urban based, English speaking who are also overwhelmingly male, majority of women live in rural areas where connectivity is rare or even non-existent.

Activity 14.1

Take a quick tour of the village/*basti* in which you are working and make a table showing in separate columns the number of homes that have a (i) telephone (ii) mobile phone (iii) radio (iv) TV (v) computer. Also, show in the table the economic class (upper, middle and lower) and caste (SC, ST, OBC, General) background of these homes. Make a special column in the table to show the number of women in each home with access to each of these technologies? Write a short report of 500 words on the basis of your observations. If possible, compare your report with those of other PALDIN learners.

14.3 Why use ICTs for Literacy Programs?

In spite of the vital importance of literacy in terms of its benefits for individuals, communities and nations, a vast number of people remain illiterate. While progress has been made over the

past 60 years towards achieving universal literacy, the poorest and most marginalized groups of people have yet to be reached.

In 2002, the United Nations declared

the decade between 2003 and 2012 the ‘United Nations Literacy Decade.’ The aim of the Decade is to bring literacy to all. The overall target for the Literacy Decade is the UNESCO Education for All (EFA) goal of increasing literacy rates by 50 per cent 2015.

Many people are insufficiently literate; they lack the written skills for expression and comprehension that enable them to learn and thereby to improve their daily lives. Some people lack literacy skills because they have not had the opportunity or the means to attend school; others because their

schooling was cut short or was of poor quality. These people are almost all poor, two-thirds are women; most are older, almost all live in low-income households in developing countries, and most belong to linguistic and cultural minority groups.

The rapid expansion and growth of ICTs have now brought unprecedented opportunities for achieving greater educational access and reach. Given this potential, it is necessary that attention be paid to how ICTs can contribute to increasing access to literacy and improve the quality of literacy education.

Reflection

Reflect on some of the ways in which technology can be used for acquisition of literacy. Are you familiar with any project in which technology was used for literacy?

14.3.1 What is meant by ICTs?

ICTs are often associated with high-tech devices such as computers and software, but ICTs also encompass more conventional technologies such as radio, television, and telephone technology.

The term ICTs refers to forms of technologies that are used to transmit, store, create, share or exchange information. This broad definition of ICTs includes such technologies as radio, television, DVD, telephone (both fixed and mobile), satellite systems, computer and network hardware and software; as well as the equipment and services associated with these technologies, such as videoconferencing and electronic mail.

14.3.2 Current use of ICTS in Literacy Programs in some E-9 countries

In order to understand the use of ICT in literacy programs, in 2004 UNESCO,

Bangkok, commissioned case studies from seven of the nine most populous E-9 countries of the world that are still faced with the problem of adult illiteracy. These case studies from China, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Egypt, Mexico and Brazil, examined initiatives that use ICT as a tool to improve literacy and highlight innovative practices, where applicable (see references to the case studies in the list of references, denoted by the name of each of the seven countries).

The case studies highlight that adult literacy programs as part of educational policy and practice have generally remained a neglected area for policy makers and planners in most countries. This is particularly so with regard to India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Evidently their commitment and investment in adult literacy programs is not commensurate with the massive problem of adult illiteracy faced in these countries. Since these countries are far

from achieving EFA goals, they are still struggling to expand primary and secondary education and to address quality issues. Consequently, these priorities take precedence over considerations such as those relating to adult illiteracy.

With regard to ICTs, there are problems relating to those of infrastructure. The country studies from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Egypt and China refer to a limited telecommunications infrastructure. Problems of bandwidth capacity, non-availability of computers, poor transportation network, including those relating to uninterrupted power supply, have hampered the use of ICT even in school education. Lack of sufficient financial resources is a major constraining factor.

The country study from Egypt has assessed the reasons for the non-use of ICT by literacy teachers. These include: i) financial constraints, ii) scarcity of trained manpower, iii) lack of technical and maintenance personnel, iv) inadequate number of specialists in use of ICT for literacy, and (v) negative attitude of the educational personnel at various levels and their unwillingness to change.

While India's leadership in the application of computer technology is well acknowledged, it has only made sporadic efforts in the use of ICT in adult literacy programs. This is also true of Bangladesh where even though NGOs have initiated most innovative work in education, there is still limited use of ICT in literacy programs. Also, such initiatives have largely been donor-funded, pilot-based, and small scale. As a result, as pilot projects, they become a major cause for quality initiatives not being sustained.

There are other problems with regard to the use of ICT in literacy programs. These relate to problems of perception. Thus, there are those countries where ICTs are seen as add-ons to the education system. In other words, there is little recognition that ICT can be used to supplement and complement the conventional education delivery system or processes, or that they can be used to improve the quality of teacher training programs. As a result, few teachers have been provided with training on how to integrate ICT into the teaching/learning process.

14.3.3 Broad Trends in the Use of ICTs in Literacy Programs

Some of the following broad trends emerge from these country studies with regard to the use of ICTs in literacy programs.

- ❖ Most countries do not use ICTs in literacy programs. Nor have they formulated policies for integration of ICTs in adult literacy programs.
- ❖ Most countries have problems with regard to financial resources and lack of technological infrastructure.
- ❖ There is one characteristic that is common to almost all countries. The ICTs used are typically basic ones - radio and television. When computers or the Internet are involved, they are for restricted, targeted users.
- ❖ There is much greater use of ICTs, particularly in school education. The use of ICTs in community learning centers is still limited.
- ❖ Most ICT projects for adult literacy are pilot projects and are often funded by foreign/international agencies. They suffer from problems of sustainability.
- ❖ Not much attention has been paid

to gender issues. There is no effort to address issues of access, content,

impact of technology insofar as women are concerned.

14.4 Case studies of Literacy projects using ICTs - the Indian experience

In India there have been experiments in using radio, television, video cassettes for educational and instructional purposes. But there has been no consistent use of technology in adult literacy programs. For details on this subject see Dighe and Reddi 2006. Three pilot projects in India titled 'Khilti Kaliyan,' 'PREAL' and 'Chauraha' attempted to use television and radio for teaching literacy to adults, particularly adult women. While these

were innovative initiatives and highlighted the potential of media in addressing the problem of adult illiteracy, the fact remains that these initiatives were thwarted due to lack of political and administrative commitment, inadequate planning and management effort and lack of concerted coordination at various levels. Box 14.1, 14.2 and 14.3 on the three projects are based on Ghosh (2006).

Box 14.1 Khilti Kaliyan

This 24 part serial aimed at women in the age group of 15-35 years. It was made with the intention of encouraging them to recognize the need for literacy and the changes that literacy would initiate in their lives. The serial was based on an experimental literacy primer by the same name. It was developed for women learners, and dealt with themes and issues pertaining to the lives of rural women. In the course of its effort to complement the primer, the TV serial established a link with the real problems of social, economic and political deprivation and oppression faced by women. Thus, the narrative of *Khilti Kaliyan* forced the audience to consider the position of women in society and the reasons for their unequal status.

Although made with the two main objectives of attracting women learners to adult education centers and enriching the learning process, *Khilti Kaliyan* went beyond that in its potential 'as a radical new effort to draw women into the mainstream by transforming education into a real tool of development and change.' The TV serial was telecast by Delhi Doordarshan Kendra once a week over 24 weeks. However, it was telecast without adequate preparation to ensure that adequate TV viewing facilities, and the literacy primers were available at the adult education centers. Nor were the adult education instructors trained in using the films in conjunction with the primer being taught in class.

Source: Avik Ghosh, Avik 2006. *Communication Technology and Human Development*, New Delhi: Sage Publications

Box 14.2 PREAL (Project in Radio Education for Adult Literacy)

PREAL was operational in 16 selected districts of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Weekly programs under the title *Nai Pahal* was broadcast from eight AIR (All India Radio) stations that covered these districts. The objective of PREAL was to study the effectiveness of using radio lessons to enrich the learning experience of women learners in adult education centers (AECs) and thereby sustaining their interest in attending

the classes regularly and achieving the prescribed literacy norms. Particular emphasis was laid on reinforcement of reading ability through a planned and systematically graded reading drill that was inducted into every lesson that was broadcast. The instructional content was in standard Hindi but the spoken dialect of the particular region was also used to enrich program content, vocabulary and cultural specificity. In tribal districts, however, literacy was initiated in the local tribal language and vocabulary and then gradually built up to standard Hindi. Five hundred AECs in non-tribal districts and 300 AECs in tribal districts were identified for each AIR station, making a total of 3,800 AECs.

PREAL encountered several problems. The AECs did not function regularly. Sometimes, the literacy instructor was not present and at other times, the learners were not there or the two-in-one sets had problems or the batteries were weak. The organization and management of listening sessions at the AEC were also poor and therefore exposure to PREAL broadcasts was not regular. Consequently, the effectiveness of PREAL in terms of reinforcing reading ability was limited. In conclusion, it can be said that the management of PREAL was weak in comparison to the magnitude and complexity of the project. The decision-makers in the government, both at the Centre and at the state levels, did not fully appreciate the scale of significance of the project.

Source: Avik Ghosh, Avik 2006. *Communication Technology and Human Development*, New Delhi: Sage Publications

Box 14.3 *Chauraha*, an Instructional TV Serial

Chauraha was an ambitious project of the National Literacy Mission. This TV serial attempted to teach reading and writing the Devnagari (Hindi) script. It was based on the belief the instruction through a powerful audio-visual medium like television would quicken the pace of learning and adults could be made literate in a shorter span of time. *Chauraha* was a set of 40 15-minute TV film episodes that, for the first time in India, used sophisticated computer animation techniques to teach Hindi writing within the overall framework of a narrative storyline. The technique was to show an easily identifiable image from daily life (or a graphic representation) and then superimpose a letter that could be associated with it.

The storyline of *Chauraha* followed the pattern of a TV serial filled with emotional content as the main characters went through their travails in life. Its theme was woven around the value of education. *Chauraha* combined direct instruction with awareness on various development issues and did so in an entertaining and enjoyable manner.

The lesson from the *Chauraha* experience was that planning and developing good quality materials were not sufficient for cost-effective application of communication technology using a sophisticated medium like television. Preparing the ground, ensuring availability of the hard ware, sustaining learner motivation, providing supplementary print materials, training the instructors to use the materials and design other learning activities had to be an integral part of the planning process.

Source: Avik Ghosh, Avik 2006. *Communication Technology and Human Development*, New Delhi: Sage Publications

The Tata Computer-based Literacy program (CBFL) uses a mix of methods, including computer software, animated

graphics, multimedia presentations and flashcards, to teach reading skills (for details see Box 14.4).

Box 14.4 The Tata Computer-based Functional Literacy Program

In this program, computers deliver the lessons in multi-media form, but these are supplemented with textbooks. Audio voiceovers explain how letters combine to give structure and meaning to various words and pronounce the words.

The emphasis is on words rather than alphabets. Lessons are designed to be visually stimulating and entertaining, using elements such as puppets. The lessons are based on material developed by the National Literacy Mission. The lessons focus on different languages, even dialects

Under the project, a number of learning centers have been established. Each centre has a computer and an instructor. Because the project relies on computer programs, it has less need for highly trained teachers, which is an advantage in areas which lack teachers. A typical class has 15 to 20 people and is held in the evening hours.

Source: <http://www.totaliteracy.com>

Bridges to the Future Initiative (BFI) was designed to improve basic skills of literacy and vocational skills of youth and young adults, in poor communities. It

uses innovative ICT tools and methodologies to promote adult learning (for details see Box 14.5).

Box 14.5 Bridges to the Future Initiative (BFI)

While great strides in India education have been made, it is now clear that many schools are able to offer only inadequate quality of instruction, leading to a primary school drop-out rate of between 35-50% across the poorest states of India, including in Andhra Pradesh where the BFI has been operating since 2003. Thus, the main target are the tens of millions of disadvantaged youth (ages 9-20 years) who are at risk of never getting a good job, performing poorly in trades that are education-dependent (especially those that change with the knowledge economy), and suffering a variety of health consequences due to poor education and income. Many of these youth (especially girls and young women) have had some schooling, but often too poor in quality for these individuals to achieve a functional literacy ability.

The BFI model is designed to take advantage of already-existing ICT infrastructure, largely in secondary schools, and create content to which such out-of-school youth have access. The instructional model builds on the oral competence of the learners in their mother-tongue, Telugu, the majority language in the state. As part of the BFI, a major impact assessment- a longitudinal study- has been undertaken to follow BFI out-of-school youth, and other youth in control groups, to measure skills and knowledge acquisition. Up to March 2005, over 200 youth (age 10-20 years, about 60% girls) participated in the BFI program. Results indicate that the participating youth are learning literacy skills at an accelerated pace and show greatly enhanced motivation and retention. Further, results suggest that those youth with least schooling- especially girls- show the most gain in performance, and many of these have left the BFI program to return to complete their primary schooling. The BFI in India (along with a companion project in South Africa) was designed to demonstrate that cost-effective solutions can and should be developed for the most challenging situations.

Source: Wagner, Daniel (ed). *Monitoring and Evaluation of ICT in Education Projects: A Handbook for Developing Countries*, p. 96

The Commonwealth of Learning Literacy project was undertaken on pilot basis. It took place in two sites each in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and

Tamilnadu and it highlighted how ICTs can play an enabling role in literacy programs (for details see Box 14.6).

Box 14.6 The Commonwealth of Learning Literacy Project (COLLIT)

Commonwealth of Learning (COL) received support from British Department of International Development (DFID) to undertake a pilot project in India and Ghana to explore ways by which literacy programs might be enhanced through the use of appropriate technologies. The three year pilot project which began in July 1999 was implemented through the 'technology-based community learning centre' model. The concept of a community-based learning centre, where various types of ICT equipment could be deployed, managed and accessed by members of the community, where learning could be facilitated and where locally relevant learning materials could be developed, was a central ingredient in the COLLIT project. The impact of the project was most visible on the people involved in operating the learning centers, most of whom had no prior exposure to computers and other ICTs. By the end of the project, the facilitators and staff at the learning centre, in both countries, emerged as well-respected ICT-trained literacy instructors with experience in using the equipment to develop locally relevant instructional materials. The COLLIT project also demonstrated that given the opportunity, learners are quite capable of using ICTs in ways that not only help them achieve educational goals, but that are also remarkably motivating and applicable to other facets of their lives.

Source: Farrell, Glen (ed.) 2004, *ICT and Literacy: Who Benefits?* Vancouver: Commonwealth of Learning,

In Same Language Sub-titling (SLS), the lyrics of film songs shown on television appear as sub-titles in the same language as the audio, on the television screen. Capitalizing on the insatiable appetite most adults and children have for film-based entertainment, SLS ensures that the nascent reading skills of those who are barely literate or semi-literate, are reinforced in even the remotest villages

of India.

The M.S. Swaminathan Village Knowledge Centers project is an innovative project in India that has a pro-nature, pro-poor, pro-women and pro-livelihood orientation. The project has shown how learners can develop locally relevant content with the use of technology. For details see Box 14.7.

Box 14.7 Village Knowledge Centre in Madurai district

Implemented by the Asia-Pacific Program of Education for All (APPEAL) through the UNESCO Bangkok office, the 'ICT Applications for Non-Formal Education' project supports the use of ICT in non-formal education, so as to enable learners to expand their livelihood opportunities and assist them in improving their quality of life.

The project supports the development of Community Learning Centers (CLC) and Village Knowledge Centers (VKC), and encourages equipping these centers with appropriate ICT. The project also supports the provision by these centers of literacy and basic education courses which utilize relevant ICTs

The literacy course offered in the Madurai VKC begins with a lesson on how to use a digital camera. Participants photograph people and objects in their daily lives, including family, household items and surroundings. In the next lesson, participants learn how to

put their photographs into slide presentations and how to store them on CD-ROMs, using the computers in the VKC. Then, with the help of the trainer, learners pair each photograph with a letter of the alphabet. The slides are used as learning material in literacy courses and print-outs are also prepared so as to enable learners to practice and build their literacy skills outside the VKC.

Source: www.unescobkk.org/education/ict/nfe

14.5 Role of ICTs in Promoting Literacy

On the basis of the country studies that highlight best practices in the use of ICTs for literacy programs, as well as other experiences around the world, particularly in school education, it is averred that ICTs have the potential to play the following specific roles in promoting literacy (see UNESCO 2006).

- ❖ **Enhancing learning:** ICT can be used as a tool for acquisition of literacy skills. For example, radio, when used in combination with printed course material, can make literacy lessons more true-to-life and interesting. Also, this combination of audio and visual stimuli is more effective than visual stimuli alone in enhancing vocabulary and sentence construction skills and can aid information processing and memory.
- ❖ **Broadening access to literacy education:** Access to literacy education may be limited, or may be denied, for a number of reasons. These include social, cultural, political and geographical factors, as well as lack of time to attend classes, lack of qualified teachers, lack of literacy materials in local languages, and issues such as delay in receipt of feedback and results.
- ❖ **Creating local content:** ICTs can enable the rapid and cost-effective creation and distribution of socially, culturally and linguistically appropriate learning content. For example, word processing software can be used to modify literacy education material that has been developed elsewhere to make it available in local languages and on locally relevant subjects.
- ❖ **Professional development of teachers:** Qualified and trained teachers represent the key to quality teaching and learner motivation. However, in many countries professional expertise is limited and thinly distributed particularly for the provision of non-formal literacy education. While ICTs cannot be substitute for teachers, ICTs can supplement and support teachers by reducing their workload and enhancing their lessons.
- ❖ **Cultivating a literacy conducive environment:** For literacy to become widespread in a society, written material should also be readily available in daily life and accessible to all. Such environment cultivates opportunities for coming into contact with, and creating, written material and thereby reinforces and promotes the development of literacy skills.

14.6 Strategies for Using ICTs as a Tool to Achieve Literacy Decade Goals

On the basis of the experiences thus far, it should be possible to formulate following

strategies to use ICTs meaningfully in literacy programs.

Formulating a Policy for Integrating ICT in Adult Literacy Programs

Rather than regarding ICT as add-ons, there is need to formulate a policy that integrates ICT in the adult literacy programs. With regard to literacy, there are two aspects that the policy would have to address. A rights-based approach to literacy would have to be promoted. For, it has to be recognized that Education for All cannot be guaranteed until right to literacy becomes a fundamental right of all citizens- women and men. This would have major implications insofar as women's literacy programs are concerned. With a rights-based approach, the thrust in a women's literacy program, would be on women's empowerment, organization-building, and forming alliances with like-minded groups. Secondly, since the problem of illiteracy is inextricably linked to that of poverty, it would be necessary to deal with the problem of poverty centrally. If poverty becomes the main focus of intervention, then an expanded vision of literacy and livelihoods education, in the overall process of lifelong learning, would become critical. It is equally important that the policy be clear about the relationships between literacy programs and other sectors. This would entail mainstreaming literacy across sectors, ministries, agencies, and facilitating implementation of literacy programs that are cross-cutting and inclusive. Women's literacy programs would have to be embedded as part of a larger effort towards social, economic and political empowerment. This important policy perspective will determine the way in which gender and literacy programs will be implemented and the manner in which ICTs would be integrated in such programs.

Providing Infrastructure and Access to Technology

Literacy programs have suffered from paucity of financial resources and political will. Even with regard to access to technology, pressures to put hardware and Internet access in the formal schools, would be overwhelming. Thus, the United Nations Decade provides an opportunity to policy makers to focus attention on the poor, the illiterate and the low-literate population, and this priority could extend as well to the ICT domain. Community technology centers are an efficient way of making this access available to rural communities. The use of effective and appropriate technologies can play a significant role in creating a learning environment. The investment in such Community Learning Centers can be worthwhile if such centers become Community Literacy Centers as well. Special efforts would have to be made to ensure that such centers are physically and socially accessible to women.

Ensuring Community Participation through ICT Projects

ICT projects, like any rural development project, must ensure sustained and ongoing consultations with members of the community, particularly the poor members, and women among them, so that they take crucial decisions relating to physical location, timing and use of ICTs. The poor benefit from ICTs when they know and control both technology and related know-how. Beside providing access to information, there would be need to increase the 'voice' and participation of the poor, particularly women, in various decision-making processes. It is important for the poor to use ICTs to share knowledge and to build networks.

Developing Learner-centered and Context-specific ICT Tools

In order to reach the unreached and the most excluded groups, programs will need to be tailored so as to address their diverse needs. Building learning demand is a major challenge in the field of adult literacy, basic and adult education. ICT can play an important role in arousing interest and enthusiasm, and engaging learners when they pay attention to the specific needs of varied learners. Women's participation in such programs goes up the more diverse the education program is and includes topics that are relevant to their daily lives.

Developing Useful and Relevant Content

As mentioned above, it is important that the content of any ICT-based literacy program should address local needs related to health, nutrition, family welfare, employment, agricultural production and so forth- information that people with new literacy skills could use to improve their lives. ICT-based programs must first and foremost be about learning, and about building a learning environment.

Ensuring Professional Development of Literacy Personnel

The professional development of administrators, directors, and literacy personnel at various levels is critical to improvement in literacy, basic and adult education programs. Since adult literacy programs in most countries are largely volunteer-based, and since the quality of training such personnel is generally not satisfactory, there is a compelling reason for addressing the issue of professionalization of the literacy personnel. ICT tools can help greatly in this area. While there exist on-line distance education courses for teachers in the formal system, there is much that ICT can do for the professional development and growth of the literacy personnel.

Ensuring that Research, Monitoring and Evaluation are built into Program Design:

There is a dire need to know what works and what does not work, with a focus on the poor. Feminists have averred that the learning styles of women are different. It is therefore necessary to build research into program design so that meaningful insights can be obtained for on-going program improvement. The Brazilian experience has shown the value of participation of researchers since the inception of a program. Universities and research institutions can play a significant role in assisting in outcome evaluation and monitoring processes that would help in determining whether further investments are required. Also, collaborative research would be necessary to promote promising innovations.

Ensuring Multi Stake-holder Partnerships

Since ICT projects require huge financial investments for setting up technological infrastructure; it is possible that in the order of priorities for most governments, the claims of the poor to participate in the information economy, would get short-changed. A strong political commitment would therefore be critical to ensure that the share of the poor and the disadvantaged in the gains from ICTs is accorded primacy. It is possible that partnerships between government, NGOs and private sector would be necessary so that the respective strengths of each player can be leveraged. The principal role of the government, however, would be to facilitate the creation as well as equitable diffusion of infrastructure and the adaptation and up scaling of successful pilot projects. The private sector could play an important role in supporting development of content and applications in local languages relevant to people's

needs. NGOs could partner with the government for enabling participation of the poor, illiterate women, in the various initiatives and also facilitate their capacity building.

Ensuring Sustainability of ICT-based Literacy Programs

One of the serious problems of such initiatives, which are largely pilot projects funded by international agencies, is that of their sustainability. What is the mechanism for ensuring that ICT-based projects become sustainable? There is no single answer to this question. On the one hand, there are proponents who advise that the ICT-based projects must become commercially viable by levying fees for those who avail of the services provided. While there is merit in this argument,

there is no gainsaying the fact that any fee-driven Community Learning Centre would automatically exclude the poor and the marginalized groups, particularly poor women. That is the reason why the MEVyT project of the Mexican government does not charge any fees to the users. On the other hand, involvement of the community, right from the time of locating physical space and installing the equipment and taking charge of its maintenance and administration, fosters a sense of ownership on the part of the community. The Mexican experience has shown how sustainability of projects can be ensured through community involvement, but more importantly, how government commitment and government funds are still essential.

14.7 Conclusion: Beyond Literacy

In today's fast changing complex world, it would not be enough to acquire the traditional skills of reading, writing and numeracy. Developments in technology are taking place so rapidly that the perceptions about what it means to be a literate person are also changing. As use of ICTs grows, it would be necessary for people, women particularly, to go beyond literacy to develop the skills that

would be necessary to utilize the new technologies effectively and productively for their own empowerment. The challenge for the educationists would be to constantly anticipate and to plan educational programs that would enable adults to cope with and take advantage of the rapid advances made possible by technology for the betterment of their lives and conditions.

14.8 Apply What You Have Learnt

You have now read about the varied experiences in the use of ICTs in literacy programs. If you were asked to use ICTs in your literacy project, describe how you would proceed, keeping some of the lessons learnt in use of ICTs in literacy

programs, in mind. Write a short essay of 1000 words, focusing on choice of technology, issues relating to access, development of content, enlisting community participation, ensuring sustainability, etc.



References and Further Reading

PALDIN learners, please note that the references in the list below refer to the sources used by course developers for writing the units of Course 1. Some of the references have been added as further reading. Those of you interested in reading more and going to the sources of information in PALDIN course material will find this list very useful.

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