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Educational Concerns for Tribal Neo-Literates in Odisha State

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Abstract: *The present study intends to measure the current situation of adult education in general and tribal neo-literate education in particular in Odisha to strengthen the different skills of neo-literate. For the above purpose three objectives were taken into consideration along with same number of research questions. To justify the above matter many reports, articles and government documents were analyzed along with personal observations. It was found that many techniques were employed in the rural tribal areas by the government and non-government interventions for developing their skills and also the present study suggests some measures which will be fruitful for the future references like: Try to keep good eye contact with all the learners and interaction subsequently, Make every effort to guard against drop-outs from the literacy classes; Reinforce the learning acquisition continuously so as to minimize transmission loss etc.*

Keywords: *Tribal Neo-literate, Odisha State, Adult Education etc.*

Introduction

The main thrust of the Continuing Education Scheme is on providing further learning opportunities to neo-literates by setting up of Continuing Education Centres (CECs), which provide area specific, need-based opportunities for basic literacy, up gradation of literacy skills, pursuit of alternative educational programmes, vocational skills and also promote social and occupational development.

The basic literacy skills acquired by millions of neo-literates are at best fragile. There is a greater possibility of neo-literates regressing into partial or total illiteracy unless special efforts are continued to consolidate, sustain and possibly enhance their literacy levels. The first phase of basic literacy instruction and the second phase of consolidation, remediation and skill up gradation are now being treated as one integrated project, to ensure smooth progression from one stage to another to achieve continuity, efficiency and convergence. The National Literacy Mission aims at ensuring that the Total Literacy Campaigns and the Post-

literacy Programmes successfully move on to Continuing Education, which provides lifelong learning.

The Continuing Education Scheme provides a learning continuum to the efforts of Total Literacy and Post Literacy Programmes in the country. The main thrust is on providing further learning opportunities to neoliterates by setting up Continuing Education Centres (CECs), which provide area-specific, need-based opportunities for basic literacy, up gradation of literacy skills, pursuit of alternative educational programmes, vocational skills and also promote social and occupational development. The scheme also undertakes a number of important programmes such as – Equivalency programme facilitating the participants to acquire or upgrade their vocational skills and take up income-generating activities; Quality of life improvement programme to equip learners and the community with essential knowledge, attitude, values and skills to raise their standards of living; and Individual interest promotion programme providing opportunities for learners to participate and learn about their individually chosen social, health, physical, cultural, and artistic interests.

Review of Related Literature

Review of related literature is a very important phase of research purpose. The present review aims to cover such literature which may help to have a comprehensive view of adult education programme. As per the requirements of the present study, some of the worthwhile studies on adult education have been reviewed. Attri (2012) conducted a study on adult education. It dealt with concept and growth of literacy and adult education in India. It also dealt with the organization and training method in adult education and some of the programmes and practices of adult education in India and its neighboring countries. The books also contain thoughts of Tagore, Gandhi, Friere regarding the adult education and lifelong learning. The study also includes the formation and support of the governmental organization in the field of adult education. Bhaskaracharyulu & Atluri (2010) conducted a study on the empowerment of neo-literates. The book consists of some selected papers which were compiled and contributed by the distinguished scholars, academicians and administrators, the themes cover under the books are, literacy promotion programmes, education for all, vocational training programme, awareness programmes, sustainable education and value based education. Wadhwa (2000) conducted a study on the principles and purposes of adult education. Teaching of adults has gone beyond the teaching of alphabets and ample emphasis is being given to the development of social skills and professional skills among adults. Soundarapadian (2000) study on literacy campaign in India reveals some of the important problems in implementation of the TLC in Kamaranjan District of Tamil Nadu. They were non-availability space in homes; places were not suitable during the rainy and cold seasons. The rate of drop-outs in the backward regions was raised due to the migration of labours. The study suggests the following measures for the successful implementation of the TLC. The school building with lighting facilities may be used for the campaign in the evening. Learners may be motivated through employment oriented learning in TLC. The teacher learning phase may be selected suitably keeping in view of migrated labourers and student volunteers fully in the campaign. Lalthankungi (1997) conducted a study on the origin and development of adult education and also the level of literacy, numeracy awareness and functionality of the current learners, problems, role of the functionaries in Mizoram. Major findings were- the origin and development of the adult education programme in Mizoram can be traced back to 1894 when the Christian Missionaries advocated for the knowledge of 3R's through instructions in Sunday schools. Majority of the current learners in Sate Adult Education Programme, Rural Functional

Literacy Programme and colleges said that their main problem was insufficient lighting arrangement in the learning place or Adult education Centres. Saldanha (1992) studied on the Total Literacy Campaign in Sindhudurg District, Maharashtra, regional variations in the organizational characteristics of the programme and also the environmental and infrastructural characteristics of the different sample villages and Talukas in the District. Major findings are learner variables such as sex, age and community influenced the literacy rate negatively. Female instructors have a negative impact on the learning performance of males positioned at the level of excellence in literacy. The village literacy committee played a major role in the implementation of the literacy campaign. Sharma, (1990) conducted a study on the role of adult education as an instrument for creating mass consciousness and awareness among the weaker sections residing in rural areas and also studied on the role of adult education in shaping the socio-economic conditions and standard of living of the weaker sections in rural areas and also the strengths and weaknesses of adult education in general and to suggest measures for improvement. Major findings were the adult education programme contributed towards bringing about change in individuals. It facilitated the beneficiaries to read, write and do small calculations while marketing and become aware of social evils. Women were not generally attracted towards learning literacy skills. They could not sustain their interest because of their domestic responsibilities and the numbers of dropouts at the adult education centre were fairly large. Choudary (2012) conducted a study on adult learning which is related to the on-going programme of adult education would be of greater help to the district administrations and National Literacy Mission to chalk out effective strategies for promoting the literacy, post literacy and continuing education programmes. The main findings of the study is that the achievement of women learners was better in relation to men groups and the attitudes was also significantly influenced with the performance of the neo-literates in literacy skills. It is necessary to launch motivational campaigns, provide and based learning materials and organic income generating programmes. Pati (1989) conducted a study on analyzing of reading needs and interests of the adult neo-literates in the state of Orissa. The main objective of the study was to analyze the reading interest of the adult neo-literates and to classify the different categories of adult neo-literates. One of the main findings of the study was the reading preferences of the adult neo-literates were highly influenced by the local environment. Nagappa (1966) conducted an exploration into the reading needs and interests of adult neo-literates. He concluded that the method of presentation of new ideas had a high appeal to the neo-literates. He further concluded that reading interests can be maintained by opening, community literacy centres in various parts and supplying necessary materials.

Rational of the Study

There are many discussions on tribal neo-literates and literacy now a days but still are often confused because its role in the development of language and thoughts. An ability to read and write simple sentences is not requiring fulfilling the demand of living in a literate society. Despite national and international commitments to achieve a 50% reduction in illiteracy rate by 2015, India still has the largest population of illiterate adults (270 millions) according to EFA monitoring report. Majority of them are poor. There are considerable disparities in literacy attainment across region, gender, ethnicity, caste and linguistic minorities. So here researcher wanted to know the gaps and challenges in implementation level of adult education through this study and also this is the main thrust of this topic.

Research Questions

The study focused upon following research questions:

1. What are different plans and programmes are implemented in tribal areas of Odisha?

2. What are the problems/challenges in the path of proper implementation of programme in tribal areas?
3. How can problems overcome from those areas?

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To analytically study different plans and programmes for adult neo-literates
2. To highlight different challenges in tribal areas for proper implementation of this programme
3. To suggest some practical steps to overcome this and achieve the pre-fixed objectives

Methodology of the study

Design

Descriptive survey design used in the study as the investigators tried to get information about more than one variable also with better understanding of perceptions of stakeholders (Hittleman and Simon, 1997). Through this method information about conditions, situations and events that occur in the present can be obtained (UNESCO, 2005). Therefore, in the present study the investigator used this method to explore all possibilities to measure the impact and effectiveness of government implemented programmes with regarding to the tribal neo-literates and adult education, Also the problems and its eradication from the root.

Secondary Data Collection

The sources of secondary data are the published and unpublished reports. Data from secondary sources were gathered from books, articles, journals, published reports, and Government documents. Quantitative information with regard to current impact, issues on integrated policies and issues on tribal neo-literates adult education.

Programmes

Maulana Azad Talim-E-Balighan

Due to lower literacy rate 59.01% against 64.83% of national average, (as per 2001 census) Maulana Azad Talim-E-Balighan a Target Focused approach has launched by the National Literacy Mission especially for Muslim Minorities under Saakshar Bharat). Two consultative meetings were organized at Rayagada and Sambalpur. The participants in the meetings were officials from district education office, Leaders of Muslim Community, Linguistic, and Media Personalities.

Awareness on Saakshar Bharat Program and importance of literacy especially amongst the Muslim community was shared among the groups and also an interaction between govt. staff and Muslims community was organized emphasizing about various problems faced by the minority children in tribal due to poor literacy.

State Adult and Continuing Education Resource Centre (SACERC): The SACERC should be visualized and strengthened in such a manner that it can lend institutional umbrella to reach out to other institutional resources and draw upon expertise from other agencies and institutions and civil society for its varied intellectual, organizational and material resource requirement for literacy and adult education programmes. The personnel for the SACERC must be drawn from those with abundance of field experience.

National level: At the national level, there should be a National Authority on Adult and Continuing Education, and in order to imbibe and radiate the paradigm shift in adult education, the nodal agency should also be redesigned and re-designated as National Authority on Adult and Continuing Education from its current restricted connotation and ephemeral character, as National Literacy Mission Authority. The role at the national level would be multifarious, including making resources available for permanent structures and processes for adult and continuing education, enabling sharing of experiences among state and district functionaries, recognizing best practices and showcasing them.

National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education: The need for a proper research and resource centre at the national level with linkages with Universities and other institutions of research cannot be underestimated. **National Open School System:** The NIOS could provide Equivalency programme in the context of neo-literate adults, and also lend the system of recognition, accreditation, assessment and certification of prior learning. Providing an equivalency dimension vis-à-vis the formal education system would help to nurture further up gradation in the skill / knowledge area of prior learning.

Convergence

National Rural Health Mission (NRHM): ASHA:

Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA), under NRHM, now at 8, 09,637, is a huge force of grass roots level women workers whose intervention could be harnessed for the literacy and adult education programme. ASHA volunteers could also take part in mobilization and awareness building programs. The VTs, Preraks, and Coordinators at Block and District levels could be associated with ASHAs for health awareness creation and such other tasks. The school dropouts among ASHA volunteers could be encouraged to join the Equivalency programme. There has to be an interface and convergence between Adult Education Department and the NRHM network.

MGNREGA: Under MGNREGA, millions of unskilled rural workers are being employed – 39 million during 2010-11, majority of whom belong to the socio-economically disadvantaged sections like, the SCs, STs, Minorities and other disadvantaged sections and a large number of them are women. They also constitute a large percentage of country's illiterate population. Coordination with MGNREGA is necessary for getting a village wise list of job holders, creation of material and information dissemination on entitlements. The programme of adult education can be coupled with MNREGA for various purposes. Applying for the job-card, seeking work, operating bank accounts and reading of the Job cards, etc., have created an unprecedented demand among these workers for becoming literates. If organized properly along their needs, the processes of learning to read and write could be integrated with their daily life situations as workers in MNREGA. Work Supervisors having necessary competence and qualification can be trained for imparting functional literacy to these workers.

SABLA: The Ministry of Women and Child Development of Govt. of India launched "Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls – SABLA" initially in 200 districts on a pilot basis. The Sabla scheme aims to address the multi-dimensional needs of adolescent girls between 11 to 18 years, including their nutrition and health status, upgrading their life skills, home-based skills and vocational skills, etc. The scheme which will be implemented using the ICDS platform, through Aanganwadi Centres and its functionaries, could be converged with functional literacy, equivalency, vocational skill development and continuing education programmes for non-literate as well as literate girls in 15-18 age group either through the Anganwadi centers or Adult and Continuing Education Centres. The scope for

convergence is enormous as there are 7075 ICDS projects and 14 lakh Anganwadi Centres across the country.

Similar convergence must also be built into all forms of practice with the National Rural Livelihood Mission, Panchayati Raj Institutions, particularly since there are millions of elected women members in these institutions, Right to Information and the Right to Education that envisages School Management Committees to be mainly composed of parents of children, half of them women. Properly linked literacy programs can be a great way to prepare empowered and aware members (mostly women) of the PRI's and SMCs greatly benefiting governance and school education.

Organized Exhibitions at Tribal Haat

SRC, Rayagada has also organized exhibitions at daily tribal haat. It has organized an exhibition at Dasmantpur Haat on 27th February. People, who depend on haats, visited and discussed literacy. Exhibition of books, posters on different themes, published by SRCs and Agramee were exhibited and a meeting was also conducted on this occasion.

Last but not the least, brochures on different government schemes also distributed among the people who visited the exhibition.

Awareness Programmes on literacy for the Transgender

Many workshops for capacity building for Transgenders was organized on at the states different districts SRC office premise. Around 25 Transgender attended the meeting. Various problems faced by their community due to illiteracy discussed on the meeting. Resource persons enlightened the participants on the importance of literacy, reading habit, and legal literacy.

Kalajatha Programme (Street Play)

SRC, Rayagada with collaboration with Bharat Gyana Vigyan Samiti, (BGVS) Odisha conducted Kalajatha programme in remote villages of Rayagada, Koraput, and Nabarangpur districts of the state. A group consisted of some members performed theme-based Kalajatha on importance of literacy, Rights to Education, Rights to Information, MGNREGA, blind belief & superstitions, health and sanitation and etc in rural haat, and common places.

Teaching Learning Activities and Mobilizations of learners for Assessment Test

Many programmes also arranged in different parts of the state for teaching learning activities and concerned test of the neo-literates.

Writers' Workshop for Neo- Literates and Illiterates

It is also organized Writers' Workshop for the development of the books for the adults. Valuable suggestions were given by the participants regarding the publications of the books in vernacular languages which must be easier for those neo-literates; the subject matters of the reading materials should expose the masses to the art, culture, traditions of diverse groups; need for those kind of books to be published that can have a greater reach among the common people. It was suggested that chapters should be written in simple, lucid and concise manner.

Interactive Workshop on Saakshar Bharat among various Stakeholders at District Level

The major activities based on awareness building in district and sub-division level by SRCs. District level workshops on offering of Saakshar Bharat held at Gajapati, Rayagada and Nabarangpur. The main objective of the workshop is to focus on Saakshar Bharat, Role of

different Stakeholders in Saakshar Bharat Programme, Status of SB Programme and prepare a roadmap to facilitate the programme. In this program, District administration, academicians, PRI functionaries, Educationist, Members of Mahila Mandal, SHG groups, Media were invited in the workshop. This workshop built a positive environment to implement the programme in the district level.

Initial Problems Faced

Various problems initiated during pre-intervention of launching BLCs and NSs in the targeted areas are given below:

- Initial ignorance and shyness displayed by illiterates in joining literacy classes and more among the women
- The concentration and load of women was on earning their daily wages for meeting their day to day expenditure and essentials such as food, clothing and shelter also looked after their domestic households. They were also severely constrained more time with their daily chores and obligations and purely acted as domestic peers within 4 walls of home
- Facilities for running Literacy Centers were not readily available. So our task laid on imparting to Literacy Volunteers in their respective villages, who slowly began to show immense commitment and enthusiasm

Impact of Based Literacy Camp

- Apart from improvement in literacy status, the women in general were oriented to primary education and the priority of education in the society was accepted because of the programme.
- Literacy campaigns have stemmed towards social awareness among women regarding the importance of education, both for themselves as well as for their children. That enhances regular attendance in govt schools for the children as an impact from their parents on learning
- Large numbers of women have been participating whole-heartedly in the literacy campaigns as learners and volunteers. Because of the campaign mode and creation of a positive environment for literacy, women received a social sanction to participate in the literacy programs. As women came out of their homes and took part in the campaign with great enthusiasm, they involved on self-awareness and desired to gain knowledge of their own flock of women's issues.
- The literacy classes conducted under literacy campaigns have given women as opportunity to break the isolation and stigmatization that caused crucial impact from practical gender needs and a time bound reflection on serving all duties with pressure; rather they are obliged with the participatory learning and evacuate all pressure within themselves to learn individually and collectively by sharing one another. The newly acquired literacy skills have enhanced their ability to solve family problems and learned new skills. Women now could communicate towards feelings of more confidence and apt recognition to attract their mindset on more judicious manner and own their decision making tools that they learnt from literacy centres, as a basic part of functional literacy. That has been provided illiterate adult women, who have been denied access to formal schooling, with a great opportunity for reading, writing, increasing awareness levels and skills training. Literacy campaigns have thus actively promoted gender equity and have sought to empower them as to decision making

about themselves, their families and their communities. The impact of literacy on women's life has often been dramatic.

- Literacy campaigns have played a significant role in improving the status of women within their own families. Whereas traditionally, women have least role in the family decision making, through participation in literacy programs. That kept their sound involvement to express their emerging self-belief and exposed themselves within and without the family.

Suggestions for the better Neo-Literate Education

From the very beginning, we delivered some tips for the volunteers not to teach mechanically but must:

- Accord respect to the neo-literate;
- Discuss the broad issues and outcomes thrown up by each lesson;
- Make the teaching process motivational, entertaining and interactive;
- Take special care of tribal neo-literates with one-to-one sharing ;
- Try to keep good eye-contact with all the learners and interaction subsequently
- Make every effort to arrest against drop-outs from the literacy classes;
- Reinforce to the students continuously so as to minimize transmission loss;
- Be at all times regular themselves and attempt to inculcate regularity among the learners.
- Encourage each learner the capacity for self-learning;
- Stress constantly the aspect of self-reliance through functional & financial literacy, so that neo-literates (tribal) can progress themselves to higher education
- Development of teaching-learning and training materials for adult literacy programmes run by government and other agencies.
- Production and practice of IEC materials
- Translation of literature into vernacular language from other materials received from Government of India and others from time to time.
- Organizing training programme for trainers associated with then and education
- Organize environmental building programme to create interest amongst the learners to go for adult literacy programmes.
- Organize National Seminar and Workshop for various stakeholders.

Conclusion

Reading is an important activity in the process of learning. In the movement of human society, it has been given a greater importance and becoming one of the essential aspects of the functioning of human beings, who are collectively involved in the regulation of society and exposure of knowledge and revelation of literate society. Reading involves the people's participation growth literate society. So, reading shapes good personality, ideas, right thinking and attitude change. So, people who are involved in reading habit to create literate

society in our country. The above discussion reveals how important the reading habit is? and for creating the literate society, which helps for the development of any country.

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