

## CHAPTER II

### CONCEPT OF ADULT EDUCATION

The concept of Adult Education has undergone changes through the ages. The definition has been variedly defined by different persons. So there has been a lot of controversies in defining the concept of adult education. So an attempt is made here to discuss the some of the views.

In Indian view the term Adult Education is very remote. In ancient India Adult Education was in the form of stories. But in course of time, it has been designated in different names such as Literacy Education, Night Education, Gram Shikshan Mohim, Farmers Functional Literacy, Adult Education, Non-Formal Education etc. The changed design of adult education has enlarged the scope of its content. Before independence adult education was equated with adult literacy that is learning of 3 R's - Reading, Writing and arithmetic.

In the year 1949 the concept of adult education was designated as social education. Maulana Abulkaalam Azad the then Education Minister clarified the meaning of social education at the seminar on Rural Adult Education Organised by UNESCO as follows.

"BY education we mean education for the complete man. It will give him literacy so that knowledge of the world may become accessible to him. It will teach him how to harmonise

himself with his environment and make the best use of the physical conditions in which he substitute. It intended to teach him improved crafts and modes of production that he can achieve economic betterment. It aims at teaching him the rudiments of hygiene both for the individual and the community so that our democratic life may be healthy and prosperous. The last but not the least, this education should give him training in citizenship so that, he obtains some insight into the affairs of the world and can help his Government to take decisions which will make for peace and progress."<sup>1</sup>

From the above view adult education is not confined to literacy only. It included peoples awareness of their surroundings, problems, rights and duties. Prof. Humayun Kabir has also defined social education as follows :-

"As course of study directed towards the production of consciousness of citizenship among the people and the promotion of social solidarity among them. It is not content with the introduction of literacy among grownup literates but aims at the production of educated mind among the masses. As a natural corollary it seeks to inculcate in them a lively sense of rights and duties of citizenship both as individuals and members of the community."<sup>2</sup>

The above definition is a comprehensive one as it concerns with social health, economic, agricultural, moral and spiritual development of man.

At the national level another mile stone in the field of adult education has been the launching in 1967 - 68 of a three dimensional Integrated programme of Farmers Training and Functional Literacy. This was for the first time that Central Ministry namely agriculture, Information and Broadcasting and Education co-ordinated their efforts in giving relevant education including functional literacy to the farmers in the high yielding crop variety programme areas. Basic idea under this concept is that there is a direct correlation between physical and human ingredients in agriculture, between agricultural inputs and the upgrading of human resources. In other words this is an integrated approach to a comprehensive rural development programme. The main goal of this concept was to support and strengthen the basic national objectives namely self sufficiency in food, increase in crop production and growth of agricultural productivity. This concept was consistent with the policy of the UNESCO in the field of adult education. So it is relevant here to give its salient features and significance in the following paragraphs.

UNESCO had launched An Experimental World of Literacy Programme in the mid 1960's and interpreted the Functional Literacy as follows :-

It is defined that, "A person is a literate when he has acquired the essential knowledge and skills which would enable him to engage in all those activities in which literacy

is required for effective functioning in his group and community and whose attainment in reading and writing and arithmetic makes it possible for him to continue to use these skills towards his own and the development of the community."<sup>3</sup>

One of the recent innovations of significance to developing countries is the concept of linking education to development. The concept of literacy assumes that,

1. Literacy is not an end itself, but has a meaning only as a component of a larger scheme, composed of physical as well as educational inputs.
2. a programme of functional literacy has to help the farmer in his life and work, individual behaviour and community action, and in understanding and using complex technologies.
3. adults involved in improved farming practices would be interested in literacy if it comes to them as a part of knowledge necessary for their agricultural betterment and increased income.
4. functional literacy curriculum is a composite one including reading, writing, numeracy, social - economic knowledge, agricultural know-how and practical experience, Functional literacy is, therefore, conceived in the context of social and economic priorities planned and implemented as an integral part of a development programme.

A significant step in the field of Adult Education in country has been the launching of National Adult Education

Programme on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1978. The programme has based on the following three principles :-

1. Literacy
2. Functional Literacy
3. Social awareness

Of these principles, the first namely two literacy and functional literacy already has been discussed above. Now it is necessary here to discuss in brief the concept of social awareness. Anil Bordia in his book National Adult Education Programme defined the concept as follows :-

"Social awareness including about the impediments to development, about laws and Government policies and the need for the poor and illiterate to organise themselves for pursuit of their legitimate interests and for the group action. This concept is very broad and it includes 5 steps namely

1. awareness about the problem faced,
2. study of the problem,
3. formations of hypothesis to solve the problem,
4. locally available the means to solve the problems.
5. integrated efforts by whole community to solve the problem. Thus this concept has both contemplative and dynamic aspects.

It is obvious from the above discussion that each concept had originally conceived of its educational value. Each

concept bears a close resemblance to formal system of schooling such as literacy classes, condensed courses, leadership training and vocational training programmes which are organised to improve upon the informal learning process. Thus adult education is playing its role in bringing large number of young people and adults into main stream of national progress, towards its development goals. The concept of adult education was introduced to encompass a massive unorthodox efforts some significant adult education programme like adult literacy, farmers functional literacy informal education, non formal education and finally National Adult Education Programme for the age group 15 - 35 years was introduced for implementation in India.

#### UNESCO'S DEFINITION

"The term adult education denotes the entire body of organised education process, whatever content, level and method, where the formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education schools, colleges and Universities as well as in apprenticeship, where by persons regarded the adults by the society to which they belong to develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical knowledge or professional qualifications and bring about changes in their attitudes or behaviour in the twofold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social economic and cultural development."<sup>3</sup>

From the above definition it is clear that Adult Education embraces all forms of educative experiences needed by the adult learners according to their variety of interest and requirements, at the different levels of ability, and in their changing roles and responsibility through out life. This definition is more conclusive.

A critical analysis of the above leads to conclusion is that the concept of adult education has changed from time to time, according to the needs of the nation and the people. all have agreed upon one point that, adult education should be relevant to fulfil national objective and help the adult to solve his professional social, economic and political problems of life.

## REFERENCES

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