

CHAPTER III

HISTORICAL RETROSPECT

In the present chapter the past history of adult education in India with special reference to Satara District and Satara Taluka has been discussed.

III.1 ADULT EDUCATION (1860 - 1927)

In India adult education began in the middle of the nineteenth Century. The night school had begun to appear by, 1860, and the Indian Education Commission of 1882 popularly known as the Hunter Commission, noted their existence in Madras, Bombay and Bengal provinces. But by the end of century their number had declined and it was not a notable movement until after the end of the first world war. The Hartog committee reported in 1927 that there were over 11,000 institutions for adult education in British India. Afterwards, as a result of political agitation, economic depression, the number of institutions fell to about two thousand. In Mysore Sir M. Visavasvaraya, the Dewan of Mysore State, made an earnest effort for the education of adults, by starting night schools and establishing circulating libraries.

In Bengal, Rabindranath Tagore also started a campaign against illiteracy. He trained a number of enthusiastic young men and sent them to the villages for the uplift of the villagers. Inspired by Tagore's experiment a Christian worker H. R. Hamely started a similar campaign in Bombay too.

Literacy campaigns were started in different states. Night schools were opened in the Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, besides Bengal and Bombay provinces. The Adult Education Movement reached its Zenith in the Punjab in the year 1926 - 27 and in India in 1927 - 28.

III.2 PERIOD OF DECLINE (1927 - 37)

The world Depression of 1929, and the political disturbances were two contributory factors of its decline. The adult education movement had practically failed. As many as 95 % of the adult schools had been closed. In Punjab the number of schools declined from 3,784 in 1927 to 189 in 1936 - 37. ²

III.3 PERIOD OF PROGRESS (1937 - 47)

The movement for adult literacy got a fresh impetus by the visit of Dr. Frank Lauback and Mr. and Mrs. Williams to India. They had a rich experience and active interest in the field of adult education. Dr. Lauback gave a new slogan, "Each one teach one so that India shall be literate soon." ³

In 1937 when popular ministry was formed the Government played a crucial role in promoting adult education. It gave adult education not only a new life, but a new orientation too. The Government of all the States led by the Congress party, accepted adult education as a responsibility of the Government. And for the first time in the history of India,

Adult Education became the responsibility of the Government as a part of the formal education system. During this period adult education was not confined to mere literacy, but it became citizenship education.

The most important event prior to independence was that, which has a favourable impact on the future development of the adult education movement, was the founding of the Indian Adult Education Association in 1939. Then it became a forum for exchange of views and opinion on adult education. It began to impress upon public bodies and the Government about the importance of adult education. The association was a voluntary organisation. It assisted the Government and voluntary agencies in formulating policies and programmes of adult and continuing education.

III.4 ADULT EDUCATION IN POST - INDEPENDENCE

The Central Advisory Board of Education (C. A. B. E.) held a conference in January 1948. In that conference Moulana Azad the then Education Minister Stated, "After a realisation of our independence we cannot, however, be content with programmes which were considered adequate for the old regime."⁴

In 1947 when the ministry assumed the office, a Regional Social Education Committee was formed to replace the old provincial Board of Adult Education. The then Bombay province was divided into three regions for the administrative convenience as follows :-

One for Maharashtra Districts, one for Gujarat Districts and one for Karnataka Districts. Mr. Baburao Jagtap a well known educationist worked as the chairman of the committee. After a careful consideration the committee included a number of new programmes such as Bhajan, Dramatics, Sports etc and activities besides literacy in Adult Education. Thus it has widened the scope of Adult Education, in the name of Social Education.

III.5 GRAM SHIKSHAN MOHIM

A new experiment in Social Education called Gram Shikshan Mohim was tried in Satara District and in the state of Maharashtra. Its twin objects were to remove adult illiteracy and to achieve all round development of the village.⁵

The result's of the experiment, it is said, proved successful beyond expectation and so the scheme was introduced through out the Maharashtra in 1961. The three main aspects of the Gram Shikshan Mohim were as follows :-

- a. "Eradication of illiteracy of the adults within an age group of 14 - 35 years by starting social education and home classes.
- b. Retaining of literacy and knowledge gained by the villagers through circulating library schemes.
- c. Bringing about all sided development of the village through social education centres."⁶

The campaign aimed at making the whole village literate within a period of about 4 months. The whole village was to be considered as cent per cent literate only when all the adults men and women in the age-group 14-50 have achieved literacy by attending the classes conducted under the scheme of Gram Shikshan Mohim in the village. There was a suitable organisation for the implementation of the scheme called Gram Shikshan executive committee of 10-15 members. The Sarapanch of the village was the president and the Head Master of its primary school acted as a secretary. The villagers attaining cent per cent literacy under the scheme were very eager to celebrate the Gram Gaurav Samarambha. On the day the whole village was well decorated. Since the inception of the Gram Shikshan Mohim a large number of villages in the various districts of Maharashtra State had been covered under the scheme. It was observed that 1,257 villages were covered under the scheme.⁷

The following table shows the number of villages achieved 100 per cent literacy in Satara District.

HUNDRED PERCENT LITERACY COVERED

| No of Villages upto 31 st March 1963 | Men | Women | Total |
|--|-------|-------|----------|
| | 4,892 | 9,640 | 14,532 . |

III.6 FARMERS TRAINING AND FUNCTIONAL LITERACY

In 1968 literacy was linked with production through the launching of the programme and farmers training and functional literacy. This programme was a mile stone in the field of adult education because it has widened the scope. This programme has three major components.

- a. "Farmers training implementation by Ministry of Agriculture.
- b. Functional Literacy implemented by Ministry of Education.
- c. Farm Broadcasting implemented by Ministry of Information."

The aim of this programme was to achieve self-sufficiency in the food, increase in crop production and growth of agricultural productivity. This was also called a programme of 3 F S. Food production, Functional Literacy and Family Planning.⁹ This programme of functional literacy covered about 3,60,000 farmers during the year 1969 - 70.¹⁰

III.7 NON - FORMAL EDUCATION FOR WOMEN

During the year 1975, the international Women's year a great stress was laid on developing the concept of Non-formal Education (N. F. E.). Indian Adult Education Association, was the first to emphasis the need for educating women to achieve countries development in economic, social fields.

The major thrust of the programme was to provide education in:-

1. Health and Hygiene.
2. Food and nutrition.
3. Home management and Child care.
4. Civic education.
5. Vocational and Occupational skills.

III.8 NATIONAL ADULT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

On 2nd October 1978 one, most ambitious adult education programme was launched with the object of providing adult education to 100 million adults in the age-group of 15-35 years within a period of 5 years.

TABLE I

STATEMENT OF N. A. E. P. FOR 100 MILLION ADULTS

| Sr. No. | Year | Annual Coverage in Million | Cumulative Coverage in Million |
|---------|---------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | 1978-79 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| 2 | 1979-80 | 4.5 | 6.0 |
| 3 | 1980-81 | 9.0 | 15.0 |
| 4 | 1981-82 | 18.0 | 33.0 |
| 5 | 1982-83 | 32.0 | 65.0 |
| 6 | 1983-84 | 35.0 | 100.0 |

III.9 NATIONAL LITERACY MISSION (1988)

This programme was launched in the month of May 1988 to impart functional literacy to 80 million illiterate peoples, 30 million by 1990 and additional 50 million by 1995. The

mission has given the following components of Functional Literacy.

1. Achieving self-reliance in literacy and numeracy.
 2. Acquiring skills to improve the economic status and general well-being.
 3. Becoming aware of the causes of their deprivation.
- National Literacy Mission concentrated on the age-group 15-35.

III.10 JAN SHIKSHAN NILAYAM (J. S. N.)

As provided in the National Literacy Mission document Government of India decided in February 1988, to establish Jan Shikshan Nilayam all over the country. The intention behind establishing them was to institutionalise post literacy and continuing education. Jan Shikshan Nilayam includes programmes which were being organised as part of farmers training programmes rural radio forum and charcha mandalas, youth clubs, Mahila mandalas, village library. Main objectives of the scheme were as follows :-

1. Provision of facilities for retention, continuing education and application of functional literacy.
2. Creation of awareness about national concerns such as national integration, women's equality.
3. Improvement of economic condition and general well being, as well as improvement of productivity.
4. Recreation and healthy living.

ADULT EDUCATION IN SATARA DISTRICT

In Satara District during the pre independence period a number of adult classes were started in the rural areas. Most of them were conducted at night in the school buildings mostly by the primary teachers. The content of the adult education was limited to the 3 R's. During the post-independence period under the pattern of social education new adult classes were started and they were conducted by primary teachers. During the first five year plan the number of the adult centres were increased as more and more financial assistance and encouragement were given under the Community Development Plan. The Gram Shikshan Mohim which was envolved in these district, brought about revolutionary change among the people. The number of the schools and their working has already been discussed above. It has said, a great impact on the development and extension of educational facilities of the district. In as-much-as the number of secondary schools and colleges has greatly increased in 1960's. Further 1980's under the National Adult Education Programme the number of adult centres increased from 462 to 1,080. The corresponding number of the learners during the same period increased from 13,865 to 32,702. A special feature of these activities was that, of the 32,702 total learners, the numbers of the women and the male learners were 25,798 and 7,400 respectively. This means more emphasis was given on the female education in the field of adult education. The various aspects of the development of adult education in 1980's has been discussed at length in separate chapter.

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