

CHAPTER TWO
ADULT EDUCATION AT STATE LEVEL

The first objective of the study is to survey the historical aspects leading to the development of the Rural Functional Literacy Project (RFLP). Therefore, the adult education programs prior to the starting of RFLP were briefly reviewed. Besides giving the origin of RFLP, its organizational and administrative aspects which are similar to the National Adult Education Program are also briefly described in this chapter.

Tamilnadu has had its share of illiteracy as did all other states of India. At the time of India's independence in 1947, Tamilnadu was part of the erstwhile Madras presidency, which comprised a few areas heavily with Telugu and Kannada speaking people. After the linguistic agitations, the old Madras presidency was trifurcated on linguistic grounds. The Telugu and Kanada speaking areas were detached and incorporated with the respective two states of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. The remaining area with predominantly Tamil speaking people was renamed as Tamilnadu state with its former capital of Madras remaining in it and continued to be the capital of Tamilnadu.

The illiteracy problems of the then Madras Presidency had been correspondingly parallel to other parts of India. So was that of a newly formed state of Tamilnadu. Since independence of the country, the schemes which have been discussed earlier had been applied in Tamilnadu also when it was part of Madras presidency. Considerable strides to literatize the illiterates had been made. Its earlier successes and/or failures had been part of the universal adult education plan of India. However, let us discuss adult education in the light of it since its new formation as Tamilnadu.

As stated earlier in the report that while the number of literates arose, paradoxically, the number of illiterates also arose because of increase in population. Similar situation applied to Tamilnadu also. The two reasons attributable to this social phenomenon may be - 1. the growth of population, and 2. those enrolled in the formal elementary educational system have been dropping out of it incompletely thus, relapsing into illiteracy.

I LITERACY SCENE IN TAMILNADU : According to the 1981 census of India, the population of Tamilnadu has been reported as 483 lakhs of which 244 lakhs have been males and 239 lakhs as females. The literacy percentages of the state for 1971 and 1981 are mentioned along with those of India for observation as under:

Census Year	India		Total	Tamilnadu		Total
	Men	Women		Men	Women	
1971	39.51	18.44	28.98	51.78	26.36	39.07
1981	46.74	24.88	35.81	57.19	34.12	45.66

Though the literacy rate of Tamilnadu is higher than that of all India and 1981 the literacy percentage increased than that of 1971 figure, there are more illiterates now than in the previous decade. Of the 64 lakhs of reported illiterates, 40 lakhs were estimated to be in the age group of 15-35. This is an important segment of the population because of its productive years. Another dimension of disparity, as can be noticed, is the literacy percentages between men: women as 2:1 ratio, which is frightening.

For the overall development of the state as being the ultimate goal, the state government has been cognizant that

such goal can be reached to not only with participation of the privileged minority segment of the people but also with the bulk of the masses who have remained illiterates. They must be drawn into the mainstream of the society for intelligent participation in all schemes of development for the state. Such participation on their part should be wholehearted, cooperative with enthusiasm and proper understanding. Education would be the only instrument through which such desire and understanding could be generated into them for such participation into the developing schemes.

Hence a top priority has been given to the implementation of the non-formal and adult education programs by the government among its executory list towards such development. But to educate the illiterates has been a stupendous task; it has required concerted efforts of the Government and voluntary agencies in tackling the problem. Since independence of the country, several programs have been tailored for various groups. Some were modified to suit various locations, some were abandoned completely; some were partially discarded; some were replaced with the new ones; while some have been amalgamated with others to form new programs.

II TAMILNADU STATE LEVEL PROGRAMS IN RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT :
 At the outset, in 1948-49, a first try-out Adult Education project was introduced in a few selected areas with the objective of wiping out illiteracy. This was aimed to develop in the adults the ability to read and understand the contents of a simple daily newspapers. The program was opened to the age group of 13 to 49. But it was not expanded and so it was short lived.

Thereafter, other dimensions were realized, that because of the diversity in ages, vocations, individual likes and

dislikes, aptitudes, and the needs of the literates; various programs should be embarked suitably for the various age groups and relevant to the local situations in different places instead of one program for everyone.

In 1954-55, another modified scheme of adult education was introduced in a few selected areas for community development. This was for the age-group 8 to 18 years. It was abandoned after its completion of 3 years.

In 1968-69, a new scheme namely, the Farmers' Education and Functional Literacy Program was introduced as a tryout in 60 centres for 6 months in one block of Udumpet Taluk of Coimbatore. The objective was to help the farmers about efficient human inputs in the farming; high yielding varieties; to acquire necessary knowledge and skills to keep their accounts; to fill their own application forms by themselves, be able to read simple materials about the improved methods of agriculture, improved varieties of seeds, and improved implements. There was an enrolment of 2,283 farmers in it and it was reasonably successful.

This scheme was somewhat revised from the 6 months long to a 10 months period and was extended to 7 more districts - Thanjavur, North Arcot, South Arcot, Tirunelveli, Madurai, Trichy and Chengleput. 630 centres were opened in the selected 8 blocks which brought in 19,000 enrollees. Of these, 5,000 centers were in 3 blocks of North Arcot namely, 1. Arcot, 2. Walaja, and 3. Polur (Directorate of Non-formal and Adult Education, Tamilnadu, Adult Education in Action). This program was implemented with a joint effort of the Departments of education; social welfare; agriculture; and information and public relations. The services of all these departments were utilized in the orientation courses for teachers and supervisors

of the centers. At the end of 10 months, the evaluation of learners reflected reasonably good attainment on their part, which was encouraging.

In August 1975, another 4 months crash program of mass education was launched in Salem district. Though several thousands of adults were literatised to some extent, it was realized that such programs would not have much impact in keeping them as literates and they would lapse into illiteracy again unless illiterates attended it for a longer duration to prevent them from falling into illiteracy. It was, therefore, discontinued.

In 1975-76, a third modified scheme of functional education for illiterates and semi-illiterate adults for the age group of 15-25 was first introduced in two districts - Tiruchirappalli and Coimbatore. Subsequently, it was extended to 6 more districts - Salem, North Arcot, South Arcot, Dharmapuri, Ramenathapuram, and Tirunelveli. This program continued till the announcement of new NAEP program in April 1977, when the newly elected Central Government formulated its own national policy towards wiping out illiteracy from the entire nation through the Adult Education. Janata Government gave Adult Education a very high priority than the previous Governments did.

III NATIONAL ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM

A. CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE FRAME WORK : NAEP was conceptualized with a correlation between working, living, and learning which was borrowed from Gandhiji's basic education (Nai Taleem). There were other ideas, such as, relevance to the environment and learners' needs; flexibility regarding duration, time, location, instructional arrangements, etc., and diversification in curriculum, teaching and learning

materials, as essential features of the non-formal education which were also borrowed from Nai Taleem. According to Gandhiji 'Education is that which liberates through educator who being as the means was an ultimate for development of the country (NAEP Outline, 1978).

Thus, the conceptual framework of NAEP was concretized with emphasis on three components in its contents - 1. literacy and numeracy of a sufficient level to enable the learners to continue self learning with self reliance (see Appendix A); 2. social awareness about the impediments to development, laws, government policies, and need for the poor and illiterates to organize themselves for pursuit of their legitimate interests, and for group action; and 3. functional development of an individual as a producer, worker, member of the family, a civic minded citizen of a democratic political system.

B. THE VARIOUS TYPES OF PROGRAMS : With India's size and with a long tradition of pluralism, and its federal polity, it was inconceivable that a uniform type of adult education programs be launched in the country. The need for flexibility in the programs was expected due to regional diversities. Therefore, the implementing agencies were permitted to organize programs, which were deemed suitable to the local environmental needs and interests of the learners. Broadly, the categories which were considered as feasible were - 1. literacy with assured follow-up; 2. conventional functional literacy; 3. functional literacy as supportive of a dominant development program; and 4. literacy for conscientizing and formation of organizations of the poor (NAEP Outline, 1978).

C. OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE NAEP : The activities were actually organized through adult education centers in villages and urban communities. Priority was to be given to women,

SC and ST groups of people, viz. the first centers to be established were to be for women, SC and ST. The same priority was to be given to the selection of instructors and supervisory staff. The instructor was to be paid an honorarium of Rs.50/- per mensem (although it has been raised to Rs. 100/- since 1985). The instructor was to be assisted by the field level government functionaries as well as other knowledgeable persons. For example, the instructor could secure services of the village level worker (VLM) or an agricultural extension officer when there is a discussion on improved agricultural practices. Likewise, auxiliary nurse, midwife, or staff from the primary health center were to be acquired for lessons on health, and family planning; functionaries of cooperative societies or commercial banks were to be invited to discuss on the various credit plans. An adult education center was to be a center for not only literacy learning but also to involve participants in the process of development, recreational and cultural activities. A period of 300-350 hours in a span of 9-10 months was expected for a center to impart the relevant material.

Post literacy and follow up activities form an essential and integrated part of the adult education program. Preparations were to be made to organize continuing education prior to the conclusion of the centers. The centers would provide books and reading room facilities, training courses for prevention of relapse into illiteracy.

The responsibility of organizing an adult education center was expected to be entrusted to whosoever is best equipped to shoulder. The honorarium of Rs.50/- was so meagre that the work of an instructor was viewed as almost voluntary. It was thought that the school teachers could be

very useful if they happen to reside around in the vicinity to run centers if they have the inclination towards dedication. Local youth also could be suitable too if they have an inclination towards dedication. This could generate a scope for full employment if youths could do some work, such as, community health workers, or milk recorders, or village pre-school child care in-charge. The students were another suitable source thought of being helpful, who could participate in this program in a big way on a purely voluntary basis. Besides, ex-servicemen, and other retired personnel could also partake in the instructional responsibilities.

As far as the responsibility for running of projects was concerned, voluntary agencies were considered as the most appropriate to run them. Because most of these agencies usually had contact with the people, and they could secure bands of committed workers. In addition to the voluntary agencies, educational institutions - particularly universities and colleges - could take up responsibility for organization of adult education activities. Another source for contribution of service to the adult education program was that of students. They could do so on part time basis to supplement the instructional program and by running child care centers for women while they participated in the adult education centers. Organization of post literacy and follow up programs, particularly in urban areas, was to be the responsibility mainly of students. Non-student youth were also to be involved in the program. Besides, employers were expected to organize programs for their workers. Local bodies, i.e., the municipalities and panchayat rajs, which usually have close contact with the people of the area, could be very appropriate implementing agencies. In areas where none of these agencies were able to take up implementation responsibility, state governments would shoulder the responsibility. In so doing,

the government was expected to make judicious selection of the various project functionaries and to let those functionaries operate with maximum possible autonomy.

IV STATE LEVEL RESPONSIBILITY - NAEP : The principal responsibility for planning and administration of the NAEP was to rest with state governments. In so doing, state governments had to secure cooperation of the various agencies, such as, the political parties, labor and youth organizations, and also the individuals having interest in the program. Directorate of Adult Education was instituted. This directorate while worked autonomously, formed part of the Directorate of School Education. It was provisioned with adequate staff and facilities. Funds for strengthening of the administrative set-up, the state as well as for the district levels were provided by the central government. The functions of the State Directorates of A.E. may be broadly stated to be responsible for as follows:

- A. To implement the programs in the state within the framework of objectives of the NAEP and the targets set by the state government
- B. In coordination with the SRC, to ensure that adequate arrangements exist for resource support to the program, particularly with regards to instructional material and training
- C. To oversee the programs implemented by the various agencies and to be particularly responsible for those run by the state government
- D. To provide secretariat to the State Board of Adult Education

E. To ensure proper monitoring and evaluation; and on the basis of data collected and/or received from the various evaluating agencies and also from the studies made by the internal agencies, to keep the state government apprised regarding the status of the program.

While discharging the functions, the State Government and the SRC are to be advised by the State Board of Adult Education (SBAE). The SBAE is headed by the Chief Minister or the Education Minister of the state. SBAE includes the ministers responsible for major development programs (e.g., rural development, agriculture, health and family planning; cooperation and community development); political leaders, educators, adult education experts, social works, etc. As the SBAE was not to meet frequently, the need was felt for creation of another group which could effectively oversee implementation of the program in the state. Consequently, the 'steering committee headed by the chief secretary of state has been set up in the state. It functions as the means to sort out administrative bottlenecks and improve coordination of the adult education with other development programs.

In 1978, under its new policy, the State Government discontinued two former programs - 1. 'Farmers' Functional Literacy Program (FFLP)' and 2. 'Non-formal Education program (NFEP) and instead introduced one new scheme, called as the Rural Functional Literacy Project (RFLP). The RFLP is similar to the NAEP. Besides implementing RFLP, the government subsidized programs run by voluntary agencies, students and non-student youths (Directorate of Non-Formal and Adult Education, Tamilnadu, Adult Education in Action).

In 1982, another scheme, Shramik Vidyapeeth (Polyvalent Adult Education Center) was established. Under this scheme,

workshops and learning centers were instituted in industries - administrative as well as assembly lines, where additional training was imparted for efficient inputs of the manpower, materials, and for more efficient outputs.

In Tamilnadu, there are two A.E. programs for illiterates namely, 1. The SAEP, and 2. RFLP which are implemented simultaneously under the government auspices. Both of them may be considered as sister projects/programs because both are almost identical in all respects, except, in its unit structure. That is, the SAEP (State Adult Education Project) is implemented in one block only at a time instead of in three blocks as in the case of RFLP (Rural Functional Literacy Project). SAEP is headed by a project officer with three supervisors and 100 animators for 100 centers in one block, whereas, the RFLP is also headed by a project officer (PO) but with 10 supervisors and 300 animators for 300 centers in three blocks. The other difference is that the PO of RFLP is allotted a jeep for his work, to enable him to cover his wider territory of three blocks, whereas the PO of SAEP is not allotted a jeep because of his smaller area of one block. The one major distinction is that the SAEP is partially financed by the state government, whereas, the RFLP is not financed by the State Government. It is 100 per cent centrally financed.

After re-election of another Government in 1980, the new administration continued to give high priority to the Adult Educational aspect among the national development schemes, as can be evidenced with the point No. 16 of the Prime Minister's 20 Point Program and the Minimum Needs Program of the sixth 5 year plan, which have also been forediscussed.

According to the national plan, the statewide break-down of the suggested targets for coverage of the illiterate people in Tamilnadu are as under.

Plan	Year	Illiterates	Total
VI	1982-83	396,000	
	1983-84	425,000	
	1984-85	550,000	1,371,000
VII	1985-90	5,000,000	6,371,000

V ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE ADULT EDUCATION IN TAMILNADU:

There has been a realization that to literatize millions of illiterate people would be a herculean task. To educate them through the non-formal and Adult Educational schemes would be beyond the scope of the normally established department of education. The Government thought that to get the job done well and successfully, a separate department should be established, which would concentrate on implementing the Adult Education Programs. The Government geared itself to set up a separate elaborate machinery within the department of education.

Prior to setting up such permanent machinery initially in 1972, a board was instituted. This was named as the Tamilnadu Board of Continuing Education. It was placed under a veteran educator, Dr. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah. The board was to survey the whole situation and recommend to the Government as to the type of separate administration which should be set up; and other ramifications, such as, of bringing all the voluntary agencies conducting the Adult Education Programs under the same auspices. The board after a survey came out with a document called 'Towards a Functional Learning Society'

which bore recommendations of opening some organizations and supplementary organizations which in a concerted effort would successfully implement the Adult Education Programs. Thus, in 1976, State Resource Center (SRC) was set up as a private sector but under the Tamilnadu Board of Continuing Education. The SRC was to provide resource support to the various non-formal and adult education programs.

In the same year of 1976, a separate department, namely the Directorate of Non-Formal and Adult Education was set up to embark upon some pragmatic schemes of the non-formal education. The department also had another responsibility. That was to spread Universal Primary Education for the age group 6 to 14 there has been a largescale dropouts; also the unenrolled children; and to see that a flexible, out of school, non-formal system of education extended to such group of children. Subsequently, a hierarchy of subordinate parallel machineries were also set up elaborately at the State, district, and project levels. Each had certain functions of overseeing and evaluating the various Adult Education schemes.

In 1978, another department, namely, the State Board of non-formal and Adult Education was established. Its functions were to coordinate the various departments and agencies involved in Adult Education; and to monitor them through district boards of Adult Education, which were also opened at the district level.

A district Adult Education Officer (DAEO) was appointed for each district, and under him several project officers (PO) and Assistant Project Officers (APO) were appointed for each project. All these people were to implement and monitor the Adult Education programs. Under each project officer, ten supervisors were appointed, each of whom was assigned 30 centers and their 30 respective animators to supervise.

Additionally, steering committees were formed at the state and district levels, which were to counsel, guide in the problems that may arise at each level from time to time. In 1981, another section, a 'Publication Wing' under the directorate was started to publish suitable materials for the learners of the A.E. programs.

VI ADULT EDUCATION AT DISTRICT LEVEL : The role of district level administration is to coordinate -

- A. among the various adult education activities within the district;
- B. between the formal system of education and adult education programs; and
- C. between adult education projects and the various developmental agencies.

The district administration is also responsible for organising evaluation and monitoring of the program; and to ensure that the timely reporting of progress takes place.

The head of the adult education program in the district is the district collector (who is also known by various other names - A. District Development Officer, B. District Magistrate, C. the district Chief Executive Officer, etc. Owing to his position, he could best oversee the implementation of the program. Each district is also provided with a district Adult Education Officer (DAEO). He is assisted by a small staff. The decision to keep the DAEO office small was taken with a view to reducing bureaucratization and encouraging personal contact between the DAEO and project staff. The DAEO is also the coordinator of the district resource unit, which was proposed to be set up in all districts as decentralized resource development agencies.

In all districts, there is to be a district education committee (DAEC), which is charged with the responsibility to coordinate and oversee the program. The district development officer, otherwise also known as the collector, is the chairman of the DAEC and its membership includes adult education project officers, junior or assistant development officers (e.g., those dealing with A. agriculture, B. cooperation, C. health and family planning, etc.), and persons drawn from the system of higher education, trade unionists, social workers, etc. (Bordia, Planning and Administration of National Literacy Programs).

VII LATEST DEVELOPMENT OF NAEP AFTER 1978-80 AS A SCHEME OF RFLP AND ITS SALIENT FEATURES :

A. OBJECTIVES : Total development of individual's personality with a view to

1. Removing handicaps to individual's growth
2. To provide for continuing education for self reliance -
 - a. to upgrade the functional skills
 - b. to raise the level of social awareness.

The important thing is that the literacy functional development and social awareness becomes the three components of the program. All are aimed at the total development of individual's personality with a focus on illiterate persons belonging to the economically and socially deprived sections.

Unlike in the past programs of adult literacy, the sole objectives of which were that of

1. Removal of handicap of the dependence on others.
 2. To replace thumb impression by signature.
 3. To be able to read and write simple letters, etc.
- whereas the objectives of the past functional literacy program was

1. To usher in 'green revolution', i.e., increasing agricultural production particularly in the HYVP (high yielding variety products) crops.
2. Literacy was one of the means for achieving the objectives of green revolution.
3. The other means were the practical farmers training and demonstration. and
4. The communications of knowledge and skills through radio broadcasts.

As can be noted that both programs of the past were limited in scope; they were either theoretical only or practical only. Whereas, the current objectives have been revised to amalgamate the theoretical and practical aspects. It is the combination of both to form one integrated unit, each learning on the other, and as inseparable, which only would develop a person as a whole rather than his portion only.

B. COVERAGE : The current RFLP's emphasis is on

1. those economically and socially deprived sections of the society, particularly the SC and ST groups, and women,
2. the age group of 15-35 years.

C. CONTENT : The content of RFLP is linked to

1. Imparting of literacy skills; and
2. Functional development in broader sense of not merely linking it to occupation, but also to such other functions as performed by the individuals in his daily life; and thereby
3. Raising the level of social awareness through the various means.

Whereas, the content of past program was just imparting reading and writing skills without particular socio-economic objective, except to remove dependence of illiterate adults on others in matters of written communication; and that on functional literacy program was directly related to functional upgradation of specific occupational groups viz., farmers engaged in the cultivation of HYVP. Crops in selected geographical areas.

D. APPROACH : It has both, mass and selective approaches with an equal emphasis on both, the mass coverage and quality. RFLP is a mass based program with the quality of planning; and implementation of a selective program.

Unlike the old program, which had only a mass approach with the main aim of reaching the largest number of illiterate adults. The quality aspect was left out.

Whereas in the functional literacy program, there was also one approach, the selective approach with an emphasis on quality only - not on numbers. It catered to selected areas and selected learners groups who were already engaged in a specific occupation.

E. METHODOLOGY : The methodology is all comprehensive and integrated methodology and approach are applied to bring about a fundamental change in the process of socio-economic development from a 'situation in which the poor remain passive spectators at the fringe of development activity, to in its stead, be at its center and as active participants' (Policy Statement, NAEP Ministry of Education).

Unlike in the past program, wherein, the methodology was the old traditional school methods and approaches. Whereas, the functional literacy program of the past, although had the

three dimensional integrated approach involving the use of 1. literacy skills, 2. practical training, and 3. demonstration and communication of mass media through radio for transmission of relevant knowledge and skills were used; but they all had aimed at the same goal, viz., increasing the agricultural productivity of farmers engaged in the cultivation of HYVP.

F. STRATEGY : A fundamental change in the strategy is the conception of RFLP as people's own program with illiterate adults at its center. These illiterates are the subjects as well as objects of the RFLP. Since it is their own program, they should maximize their efforts to realize their own fortunes; and indeed such incentive motivates their full involvement. The whole program is to be viewed more as people's movement and not something given from above.

Unlike the past program, the strategy of which was almost to stigmatize them, i.e., a welfare from the state which exists in a welfare government wherein the government is a giver of certain inputs and facilities; and the people are the recipients and users of such facilities and inputs. It was likewise in the past functional literacy program.

G. COORDINATION : Lastly, the current RFLP has a wider involvement of 1. all development departments; 2. voluntary organizations; 3. youths and individuals; and 4. universities and colleges.

Unlike the old program where only the education department and the implementing agency were involved. Similarly, the involvement of functional literacy program was limited to the extent that it was a joint program of 1. education, 2. agriculture, and 3. communication ministries only.