

CHAPTER - II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Since there are varying interpretations for the term 'Non-formal Education', a wide spectrum of studies are available all over the world. Since the concept of NFE entered the Indian scene only in 1970's it has a history of less than a decade in our country. This is the reason that researchers have been concentrating their attention in this emerging area only of late. In this review, only those studies conducted in India relating to the age-group 9-14, have been reported by the researcher since his present study is one such similar effort.

2.1 The Context of Non-formal Education Programmes in India :

NFE programmes relating to the age-group 9-14 were essentially prompted by the findings regarding formal education particularly with reference to the problem of wastage and stagnation. Thus it is appropriate to give an over view of studies related to wastage and stagnation in the formal scheme which actually provided the context for the operation of NFE programmes. The problems of wastage, stagnation and drop-out have been studied in almost all states of India. Since the researches on the problems of wastage, stagnation and drop-out

are substantial and cover almost all parts of the country, the findings are considerably representative of the Indian population.

S.I.E., Gurgaon (1969) conducted a study on wastage and stagnation. It was found that poverty, caste, poor educational background of parents, poor quality of teaching, faulty admission policy, death of parents, undernourishment, mental retardation were some of the reasons for wastage and stagnation. The study also reported that grade I had the highest percentage of wastage i.e., 31.0 per cent.

Pratap et al (1970) observed that there was highest absenteeism in the months of January, February, April and October which coincided with agricultural operations, festival celebrations and marriage seasons. The study also revealed that Government Schools showed the highest percentage of wastage.

Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Andhra Pradesh (1970) conducted a study which endorsed the findings of Pratap et al. Sarkar (1980) investigated the reasons for children to drop-out. It was found that school environment did not contribute to the rate of drop-out. Pillai, Benjamin and Nair (1980) arrived at similar conclusions. Their study revealed that the incidence of drop-out is more among SC/ST and other backward communities. It was also found that large size family also exerts its influence on the drop-out rate.

Kasinath (1980) found that the incidence of non-enrolment, non-attendance and drop-out is greater in rural areas than in urban areas. His study also revealed that the attracting and holding power of poorly equipped schools with poor school climate is much less than that of schools which are better endowed with these facilities.

Vathsala (1981) identified drop-outs as having low-acceptance and achievement. She found that they have a neurotic predisposition. Potential drop-outs were more in rural schools than in urban schools. The parents of potential drop-outs were indifferent to education.

Naik (1981) conducted a survey relating to children in the age-group 6-14. The survey revealed the causes as to why each non-attending child was not able to receive education and to identify measures needed to enable him to attend school, either on a full-time formal basis or on a part-time non-formal basis.

Nayantara (1981) found that drop-out rate is more among girls than boys. The drop-out rate in illiterate families was more than that in literate families. Gupta (1982) came out with the observation that vicinity of children to schools is a favourable factor to check the drop-out rate.

An overall analysis of the above studies reveals that there are several reasons for wastage, stagnation and drop-out in our country. The reasons are irrelevant curricula, faulty methods of teaching, poor economic background, mental retardation, poor health etc. Thus we find that the causes of wastage and stagnation, as the above studies have revealed, are either economic, social or institutional.

The alarming rate of wastage and stagnation, as revealed by the above studies, has necessitated the formulation of non-formal education programmes for children of the age-group 9-14. The schools in the formal set up alone cannot cover all children who are left out of the educational set up. The non-formal education programmes have to supplement the formal set up in the gigantic task of universalising elementary education. This is the reason as to why NFE programmes have come to stay in our country particularly in the context of universalization of elementary education.

2.2 Research and Developmental Activities Related to NFE Programmes :

As discussed in Chapter-I, the investigator has identified the different dimensions in his study as

- (1) organisation and functioning of non-formal education centres,
- (2) Curricular materials followed in the NFE centres,
- (3) Teaching-learning processes adopted in the NFE centres,

and (4) Effectiveness of the NFE programme in terms of learners' achievement and perceptions. An attempt is made here to present the research studies conducted in the area of NFE under the same heads mentioned above.

2.2.1 Organisation and Functioning :

Saraswathi (1979) made a case-study of a non-formal education centre at Thamaraiyadi in Tamilnadu. The clientele covered children of the age-group 6-14 . She studied the probable reasons for motivation of the pupils attending the NFE centre. She also analysed the programme in terms of the suggestions given for motivation and identified the possible reasons for motivation in the centre. It was found that an atmosphere to receive the educational programme was created at the centre. The study indicated that the programme was open and flexible in terms of time-schedule ^{and} learning experiences provided.

Indian Institute of Education, Pune (Naik, 1979) conducted an action research project for universalization of primary education for out-of-school children. A household survey investigated the economic and educational status of the families in the project areas and identified illiterate and semi-literate out-of-school children. The project envisaged to organise a system of planning, monitoring and supervision of part-time primary education in collaboration with the

community, utilising local resources to the extent possible. Classes were held between 7 and 10 p.m. and in most of the cases the local community took the responsibility of lighting arrangements. Teachers were drawn from within the community so that they could collaborate with the local community in organising the activities of the NFE centre. The classes were provided with rent-free accommodation by the community in school rooms, private houses, temples, panchayat offices, cow-sheds and similar structures. Each class was supplied with a small light-weight blackboard which the teacher could take from group to group. A folding flannel-graph of double foolscap size, with pockets for holding language and numeracy materials was supplied to each NFE centre. A set of hardboard cut-outs of all the letters of the alphabet, vowel signs and numerals could also be used with the flannel graph, if the situation demanded. A canvas bag was designed to carry the blackboard and all other teaching-learning equipment. Teaching-learning materials such as primers, readers, slates and slate pencils were supplied to each NFE centre well within time so that instruction would not suffer.

Sujatha (1980) investigated into the constraints on education of the Nellore District yanadis with a view to suggest some strategies of non-formal education. She traced the historical development and the existing facilities of education for yanadis. She also studied the enrolment pattern among the

yanadi children of the age-group 6-11 and probed into the extent of absenteeism, wastage and stagnation. It was found that the rate of drop-out was very high among girls and in mixed villages.

Sivarejan (1982) conducted a study pertaining to the facilities and constraints in providing non-formal education for Harijans. He tried to find out the extent of interest in education among Harijans. He studied the nature of Harijan families, their environment and the nature of their involvement in education. He also tried to locate the reasons for the high rate of drop-out among Harijan students. The study revealed that inappropriate home condition and lack of motivation were two major factors affecting the education of Harijans. The major reasons attributed to the phenomenon of dropping out were: looking after the younger ones in the family, helping parents in house hold affairs and economic backwardness.

A review of the foregoing studies shows that researchers have concentrated upon various factors of organisation and functioning such as establishment of NFE centres, time and duration, physical facilities, timely supply of teaching-learning materials etc. Some studies have also concentrated upon the enrolment pattern and the motivational factors in respect of children attending the NFE centres. Some studies have also come out with the observation that the causes of heavy drop-out are the poverty of parents, illiteracy among them and other social problems.

2.2.2 Curricular Materials :

One pilot project widely known as Bhumiadhar project was taken up by NCERT in nine villages of Nainital district in Uttar Pradesh (Rawat and Gupta, 1974). There were 98 drop-outs in Bhumiadhar village. It was thought that the children should be given some fundamental knowledge in language, arithmetic, environmental studies including science and social sciences, art, work-experience and health education and accordingly materials were prepared. The materials thus prepared were used at the NFE centre for instructional purposes and it was found that the result in the children's progress was marvelous. By and large, it was noticed that this project was instrumental in bringing a change in the learning pursuits of children. The credit of making this programme a success, as reported by the project personnel, should go to the active participation and help rendered by the community as a whole.

Chickermans (1979) developed a scheme for elementary non-formal education for out of school children, after an analysis of content and its organisation for achieving a certain level of academic standard in elementary non-formal education centres. He developed materials including a few curricular inputs in order to gear up the level of academic standard in elementary non-formal education centres. It was found that universalization could be achieved through part-time

education for out of school children; part-time education should be of three categories, one catering to the majority who dropped out before class IV, the second being general education for those who left after class IV but would be going in for secondary education, and the third being vocational education for those who left after class IV, who desire to take up a vocation.

Naik (1979) developed an activity-based curriculum for out-of-school children and tried the same in the non-formal education centres. A unit analysis of the prescribed government curriculum was done first and then suitable units for the part-time classes were included. History, geography, and science merged into one another as integrated knowledge of human environment, natural phenomena, and human affairs. Study of language and mathematics was related to rural pupils' day-to-day life. Command on language, numeracy and reasoning was the major aim. Activities were organised on Independence Day, Republic Day and Gandhi Jayanthi which gave a feedback to the curricular inputs. Attempt was made to use primers and readers in order to take the pupils from familiar language and content towards the comprehension of the standard language of the region and unfamiliar material. Specially prepared sets of supplementary reading materials were also liberally provide new types teaching-learning materials relevant to the learning situation.

The UNICEF aided project on Comprehensive Access to Primary Education (CAPE) taken up by NCERT (1979) is a new venture not only because it is for those children who remained neglected so far, but also because it follows a new strategy and approach. An attempt has been made in this project to reach out to the out-of-school children and educate them, wherever they are, without making it obligatory for them to come to schools. There is, however, provision for them to come back to schools, if they^{so} desire. The learning materials for these children are not discipline - oriented text-books, but consist of short duration teaching modules based on their specific needs and problems. The learning materials are aimed more at improving their quality of life rather than teaching them the three R's. Four principles are kept in view while developing the curriculum for this project. They are relevance, flexibility, local specificity and socially useful productive work and social service. The major consideration of the project is for learners from the disadvantaged population, girls and learners from scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and backward classes belonging to the age-group 6-14.

Sharma (1980) developed an effective model of non-formal education for rural development. He tried to relate non-formal, formal and informal education in the rural context. Five NFE facilitators and five administrators were considered for data collection. For administration of questionnaires, fortythree

drop-outs and nineteen children enrolled for schooling were selected. It was found that the involvement of teachers, some NFE students and community workers in curriculum planning and material development reduced the drop-out rate in the centres. A systems model developed during the training programme was effective in developing understanding of the NFE teachers and the programmes.

Mullick (1981) developed learning materials on the principles of programmed learning for non-formal education of girls in rural areas in the age-group 11-14 pertaining to health education. It was found that the try-out of the tape-slide programme on 11 to 14 year old girls was a viable means of teaching illiterates without the assistance of a teacher. The study also revealed that tape-slide presentation made the lesson interesting and proved more useful in large classes.

An overall analysis of the studies mentioned above indicates that there is emphasis on the life-experiences of pupils and functional knowledge in the curricular materials developed and tried by the researchers. Some studies have tried to develop materials which can bridge the gap between formal and non-formal set up so that pupils could switch over to the formal system, if they so desire. There are some studies which have attempted to develop an activity-oriented curriculum so that difficult concepts related to science and arithmetic could be made concrete. By and large, it can be

inferred that the above studies have made a headway in preparing and trying out new curricular materials in a meaningful way.

2.2.3 Teaching-Learning Processes :

Chickermane (1964) conducted an experimental study pertaining to teaching in single-teacher schools. In the experimental group, he divided the entire academic work into two parts — classes and houses. Classes were meant for instruction and houses for activities. In the control group, the classes were taught in the usual and traditional lines. Students' progress was assessed periodically. The study revealed that the new experimental method yielded better results than the traditional method.

Saraswathi (1979) conducted a case-study of a NFE centre in Tamilnadu. As part of the study, she studied the teaching-learning processes adopted in the NFE centre. It was found that the above processes were related to the life-experiences of pupils. The study revealed that the environmental approach yielded better results as compared to the other traditional methods. She also came out with the observation that the teaching-learning processes should relate to the local needs of children.

Naik (1979) adopted some dynamic methods of teaching in the action research project conducted by the Indian Institute

of Education, Pune. She came out with the observation that group methods promote congenial teacher-pupil relations. The teacher can move from group to group for observing and guiding each pupil and personal contact can be well established. Attempt was made to introduce the process of interaction among the pupils themselves in each group. This type of discussion helped pupils to learn things better. The teacher, however, was the acknowledged guide and referee of the class. As far as evaluation is concerned, in addition to daily evaluation of pupil-achievement during group work, the project evolved a stress-free device of periodical evaluation in which the pupils' progress in each area of learning could be assessed in a relaxed, non-examination atmosphere. It was a distinct feature of this project that no home-work was given to the learners. All their note books were deposited in the centre itself and a few independent study periods were so arranged that pupils could do the additional work by way of exercises in the NFE centre itself.

Argal (1980) collected information from non-formal education centres run by Government Basic Training Institutes of Dhopal Division to test the effectiveness of a few methods of teaching. A survey questionnaire was prepared to know the views of and suggestions from teachers, students, parents and officers of the department of education related to NFE centres. It was found that most of the teachers used question-answer technique. Some teachers used demonstration and play-way methods. Very few parents enquired about the progress of children.

Sharma (1980), while developing a model of non-formal education for rural development, tried to evolve instructional methodologies and a battery of evaluative tools for evaluation of non-formal education. He found that a majority of teachers needed orientation in teaching methodology and individualised instruction. A systems model developed during the training programme was effective in developing understanding of the NFE teacher and the programmes.

A review of the foregoing studies shows that the traditional methods of teaching do not work in the NFE centres since the nature of the clientele is entirely different. The above studies have either tried group methods or education through work activities. These studies have also recommended for suitable evaluative techniques in non-formal education. We also get a clue that there should be a feedback from evaluation to the teaching process so that the NFE teacher could try modified teaching techniques from time to time.

2.2.4 Effectiveness :

Bhumidhar Project taken up by the N.C.E.R.T., New Delhi in Uttar Pradesh, Rawat, (1979) attempted to take care of drop-outs, which, in the opinion of the community members, was due to education not being related with needs of life. The community participation and help rendered by the community went a longway in motivating parents to send their children who had dropped

out earlier from the school to come to the centre. It was noticed that children acquired a very good functional knowledge after they attended the NFE centres.

Indian Institute of Education, Pune (Naik, 1979) conducted an action research project for universalization of Elementary education for out-of school children. Skills of scientific enquiry, co-operation, and problem-solving were transmitted. In this project, simplicity and thrift, co-operation instead of competition, self-esteem and self-reliance along with social sensitivity and self-government by consensus, were emphasised as traditional values embedded in the Indian culture. The project, in fact, identified within the learners' communities, non-professional teacher's and this not only established good cultural rapport between teachers and learners but utilized and developed the educated resources of the community.

Karnataka took a radical step in the field of primary education with the introduction of the Ungraded School System - a unique experiment in classes education (DSERT, 1982). Basically designed to aid the slow learner, the ungraded system which was introduced in just three schools purely on an experimental basis by the D.S.E.R.T., Bangalore way back in 1974, gained^a lot of momentum and at present, the scheme is in operation in 119 schools covering all districts of Karnataka State.

The main features of the scheme are:

1. There will be no grades or classes in the schools.
2. Every student will be given self-learning lessons.
3. Every student will be given all encouragement to see that he learns and progresses according to his ability and speed of learning.
4. The learning atmosphere would also attract the children that they would attend the classes without absenting themselves.
5. Backward children will be given the utmost care, individual attention, encouragement and help for learning.
6. The tendency on the part of the student to drop-out is checked.
7. There will be no annual examinations at the end of the year and as such, fear of failure is eliminated.

An evaluation of the ungraded school system project in Karnataka State has indicated a phenomenal improvement in the attendance of children, with no student dropping out of school. This is the reason why this scheme became popular. Since the schools were started only in the selected backward rural areas in the various districts of Karnataka State, the rural people were benefited very much. Government also took steps to see that the teachers in the ungraded system are not transferred to other schools.

In Madhya Pradesh, the largest state in our country from the point of physical size, lot of work has been done in the field of NFE. They have introduced a model also which is known as Madhya Pradesh Model w.e.f. 1975 (SCERT, 1975).

The objectives of this programme are: (1) To make primary education available to such children of age-group 9-14 who never went to schools, (2) To enable such students to complete primary education who dropped out before completing the stage.

The main characteristics of this programme are as follows:

1. To make it possible for the drop-outs to cover the five years, primary stage in two years.
2. To arrange schooling in such a way that earning and learning may go hand in hand.
3. To enable these students to get into the main stream of education, if they so desire.
4. There is complete freedom to hold classes at any place and at any time suitable and convenient to the students.
5. There is no class system.
6. There is no annual examination but only in-built evaluation.

Several steps were taken during the sixth plan period for the universalisation of elementary education, particularly after the working group on Universalisation of Elementary Education submitted its report in September, 1977. One of these

steps was the introduction of non-formal education (NFE) project by the NCERT at the instance of the ministry of education in June, 1978. Consequent upon the responsibility given to the NCERT, experimental NFE programmes were launched throughout the country (NCERT, 1982). Steps were taken to start NFE centres by the NCERT in the four regions of the country through the four R.C.E.'s and the field offices; they were asked to start 10 centres, on an average, in each state of their respective regions. The project attempted to bring about improvement in the quality of life of the children and also enable them to enter the main stream of education, wherever possible. As the project was of experimental nature, it was decided by the NCERT either to close down these centres or hand these over to the states from June, 1982 onwards.

Gupta, Grewal and Rajput (1981) conducted a survey of environmental awareness among children of rural and urban areas of non-formal education centres. They found that the differences between FR (formal education - rural) and FU (formal education - Urban) and NFR (Non-formal Education - rural) and NU on environmental awareness was significant and was in favour of FR and NFR. The aspects included in the environmental awareness were: source of getting cotton, edible portion of tomato plant, animal for watching and house, effect of weather on the growth of plants, shape of earth etc.

Pillay (1982) investigated into the impact of non-graded units upon primary school drop-outs. A sample of 875 teachers was selected from 150 primary schools of the four southern districts of Tamilnadu, Madhurai, Ramnad, Thirunelveli and Kanyakumari. Data were gathered with the help of enrolment enquiry proforma, a non-graded unit reaction scale along with an interview schedule developed for the study. It was found that the non-graded units introduced in the primary schools of Tamilnadu helped minimise the number of drop-outs and the teachers favoured the non-graded system.

A review of the above studies reveals that the non-graded system which advocates classless education has become popular. Some studies have attempted to inculcate in the learners values like equality, freedom, social justice, dignity of the individual, brotherhood, secularism and adherence to democratic processes. A few studies have attempted multiple entry into the formal system of education.

2.3 Overall Review :

An overall-review of the studies in non-formal education for the age-group 9-14, presented in this chapter, indicate, that most of them are in the form of status studies. Such a thing is bound to happen particularly when a new area is taking shape. Since the history of non-formal education is

less than that of a decade in our country, researchers have been concentrating their attention on NFE only recently. In fact, most of the studies presented under this review are of survey type. The sampling procedures adopted in many studies do not seem to be adequate. In most of the cases, data have been collected through questionnaires and interview schedules. In very few cases, observation technique has been tried. In view of these methodological limitations, attempts are necessary for conducting in depth and experimental studies in the emerging area of non-formal education.

The present study is an attempt to evaluate the programme of non-formal education for out of school children in one of the districts of Karnataka State. In this study, in addition to the questionnaires and interview schedules administered for the participants of the programme, the investigator has adopted the technique of observation as well. The present research study attempts to find out the effectiveness of the NFE programme in terms of the learners' achievement and their own perceptions. Methodological details of the study, such as, techniques, sample, instrumentation and procedure of data analysis are given in the next chapter.

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