



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Empowerment of Rural Women: Place of Adult Education

Dr. S. Vijaya Vardhini
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, DRAVIDIAN UNIVERSITY

KUPPAM, CHITHOOR .A.P. 517425

"In order to awaken people, it is the women who has to be awakened, once she moves, the country moves and thus we build the India of tomorrow"

- Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru

Introduction:

India is the most populous country in the world. Almost half of its population is women. If the country wants to develop itself both men and women should take active part in all the Developmental Programmes. If women are not brought into mainstream society, the policies or the programmes initiated by the National and respective State Governments may not result in achieving the expected outcomes. Therefore, empowering the women folk is an essential requirement to make them as active participants in the developmental processes. Unfortunately the women in particular, more specifically the women belonging to SC, ST and Minorities are lagging behind in the economic and educational front. Further, they are alienated from the mainstream society and hence they are not taking active part in the developmental programmes as expected.

This situation hampers the development of the Nation and its realization of new millennium goals. To overcome such a situation the policy makers at the National level realized the importance of educating the women in a stipulated time frame. Accordingly the NLMA, MHRD, Government of India launched a massive programme in the name of 'Saakshar Bharat' focusing on making the people beyond 15 years of age as literates. The programme primarily aimed at to cover the women particularly hailing from SC, ST & minority communities. The Saakshar Bharat programme besides eradicating illiteracy also aimed at the development of awareness among women in the areas like financial, legal, electoral literacies and disaster management etc.,.

The government of India allocated around Rs. 6,000 crores during 11th plan period. The NLMA after thorough deliberations with the stake holders, experts in the field of adult education and from other allied areas prepared an action plan. The NLMA made all the efforts to ensure that the targets as stipulated in the action plan are realised in a given time frame. In the process several appraisal studies were also conducted in order to assess the effectiveness of the literacy programmes. Appraisal studies conducted by different agencies observed that at many places the Saakshar Bharat could not achieve the intended outcomes and the erstwhile state of Andhra Pradesh is not exception in this regard.

Need of the Study:

India is one of the Largest Democratic countries in the world. For the survival and sustenance of the Democracy, it is necessary that its people should be educated. Education is the most powerful instrument of social change and National Development. However it is necessary to visualize that there are several factors, internal and external that operates to limit or enhance its impact on the society. Educational influence on the society is related to the factors such as socio / economic standards of living and cultural compatibility of the system of education.

At present the system of education in our county is organized through three different modes such as formal, non-formal and extension education. Non-formal education mainly consists of adult education. The extension education programs are organized by different bodies both at the national, state and institutional level.

In our country, a vast majority of our population particularly women are illiterate. Keeping in view this fact the Government of India launched NAEP in 1977. Subsequently, the program is modified to contextualize the peasantry and the women belonging to minority communities, scheduled caste and scheduled tribes. The Saakshar Bharat programme also identified the above groups as the priority area and targeted them to liberate from the clings of illiteracy and ignorance. In this context NLM initiated several programmes to bring this group of women into the main stream society by empowering through literacy and continuing education programmes.

It is often observed in the implementation of these programmes, the problems faced by the rural women are becoming a big hindrance. Most of the rural women depend on physical labour for their livelihood. The ill health and mal nutrition, early pregnancy and lack of required space between pregnancy to pregnancy, child rearing, cultural taboos, religious convictions, lack of support from the elders and men folk of the family are the serious deterrents in the successful implementation of adult education programmes in general and more particularly programmes meant for women. In view of such a perplexing situation in implementation of Adult Education Programmes particularly to this designated group of women, the present study " Empowerment of Rural Women: Place of Adult Education" was undertaken.

Objectives:

1. To identify the problems faced by the rural women in attending Adult Education programmes
2. To find out significant difference if any in the problems faced by the rural women in attending Adult Education programmes due to variation in their, (i) Age, (ii) community and (iii) sex and size of the family.

Hypothesis:

There exists significant difference in the problems faced by the rural women in attending Adult Education programmes with reference to their demographic factors.

Methodology:

Keeping in view the objectives and scope of the study the investigators felt it is appropriate to use normative survey method and collected the data from the identified sample.

Sample:

To study the present problem, the investigator, selected the villages which are having Adult Education Centres from the two districts of Andhra Pradesh i.e. Chittoor and Anantapur. From each district two mandals were identified from each mandal two villages were identified from each village 25 adult illiterate women were selected by using simple random sampling technique. Thus the total sample consists of 100 illiterate rural women

Tool:

For the purpose of the study the Investigator developed a schedule and established its validity and reliability. The statements in the schedule are grouped under three dimensions (iii) Items related to Awareness (ii) Family related problems (iii) Process related problems.

Establishment of Validity and Reliability:

After conducting pilot study the reliability of the schedule was established by using split half method. The correlation coefficient between the two sets of scores is 0.991 which is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the schedule may be considered as having high degree of significance.

Data Analysis:

The collected data was analyzed by using appropriate statistical techniques like calculating percentages, mean, S.D. 't' test and 'f' ratio.

Results and Discussions:**Table: 1 Awareness related problems**

S. No.	Problems related to awareness attending Adult Education Centres	Yes	No
i.	Motivation towards attending Adult Education Centres	65 (65%)	35 (35%)
ii.	Awareness on adult education programmes	59 (59%)	41(41%)
iii.	Value returns in terms of application of knowledge in daily life activities	72 (72%)	28 (28%)

From table No - 1, it is observed that majority of the rural women expressed that they are not aware of adult education programmes (59%) and hence not motivated to attend Adult Education centres (65%). Further they do not have

proper knowledge and understanding about the value returns of education in general and adult education in particular.

Table: 2 Family related problems

Sl. No.	Problems related family	Yes	No
i.	Domestic work	(75) 75%	(25) 25%
ii.	Cooperation from the family members	(62) 62%	(38) 38%
iii.	Family related social issues	(51)51%	(49) 49%

From table -2, it is seen that majority of the illiterate rural women expressed that due to their domestic work (75%) they are unable to attend the adult education centres. Further cooperation from the family members (62%) and family related social issues (51 %) demotivated and unable to attend the adult education centres, though they are willing to learn.

Table - 3: Process related Problems

Sl. No.	Process related Problems	Yes	No
i.	Lack of infrastructure	62 (61%)	38 (38%)
ii.	Inadequate instructional material	64 (64%)	36 (36%)
iii.	Poor instructional strategies	75(75%)	25(25%)

From table No.3, it is evident that majority of rural women expressed that lack of infrastructural facilities (62%) Inadequate instructional materials (64%) are the reasons for not attending the adult education classes regularly. In addition to these the poor instruction given by the young instructors (75%) is considered to be a serious problem encountered by the rural women in the context of adult education.

Testing of Hypothesis : The Hypothesis 'There exists significant difference in the problems faced by the rural women in attending Adult Education Centres with reference to their demographic factors' is splitting to three sub hypotheses on the basis of demographic variables included in the study. Each sub-hypothesis is tested using appropriate statistical techniq and hypothesis wise results are presented below.

Hypothesis IA: There exists significant difference in the problems related attending Adult Education Centres among rural women due to variation in their Age.

Table - 4: Age of the rural women and their attendance atAECs

S.No.	Age	Mean.	S.D	Tvalue
1.	15 -40 years	98.5	4.94	3.03@
2.	41 years and above	92.5	13.43	

In table No.4, the responses of the rural women are calculated and presented. The obtained t value is 3.03 which is less than the table value i.e. 12.706 which is not significant at 0.05 level. Hence, it can be said that the formulated hypothesis is rejected. It can also be seen that compared to the mean values of the rural women of 15 - 40 years of Age revealed more problems (M 98.5) related to attending adult education centres than the women who are in the age group of 41 years and above. It may be due to the domestic work, child rearing, family responsibilities etc. of 15-40 years women, which are not allowing them to attend adult education centres.

Hypothesis IB : There exists significant difference in the problems related to attending adult education centres among rural women due to variation in their size of the family.

Table -5 : Size of the family and Attendance to the AECs by the rural women

S. No.	Size of the family	Mean	S.D	tvalue
1.	Large family	89.5	9.16	2.42@
2.	Small family	96.13	9.19	

In table:5, the expressed responses of rural women with respect to the size of the family were calculated and presented. The obtained 't' value is 2.42 which is less than the table value i.e. 12.706 and not significant at 0.05 level. Hence it can be stated that the formulated hypothesis is rejected.

Further, it is also seen that the rural women belonging to small family (M-96.13) expressed more problems in compared to their counter parts coming from the large families (M -89.5) in attending the adult education centres. It may be due to the non availability of other family members to share the domestic work and also to take care the siblings in the family by the elders.

Hypothesis IC: There exists significant difference in the problems related to attending adult education centres among rural women due to variation in their community.

Table - 6 : Caste background of the rural women and their attendance at the AECs.

S.No.	Community	Mean	S.D	f ratio
1.	OC	92.5	13.43	5.48@
2.	BC	97	7.07	
3.	SC&ST	99.5	2.12	

In table No.6, the responses of the rural women belonging to different communities and the problems in attending adult education centres were calculated and presented. The obtained 'f' ratio is 5.48 is greater than the table value i.e. 4.303 and it is significant at 0.05 level. Therefore it can be said that the formulated hypothesis is accepted. It can also be seen that compared to the mean values of OC, BC and SC & ST rural women, SC & ST women exhibited more problems in attending adult education centers than their counter parts belonging to OC,

BC communities. It may be due to non cooperation from the family members more particularly their husbands. Further, the economic status of the family demand the SC & ST women to work longer duration when compared to other women coming from BC / OC communities.

Findings:

1. Majority of the rural women were not motivated to attend the adult education centres, as they are not properly informed about the importance of adult education in their life.
2. Majority of rural women expressed that they are working for their livelihood besides supporting their family. Therefore, it is difficult for them to attend adult education centres.
3. Age of the rural women revealed that majority of the women fall under the age group of 20 years - 40 years. Further, they are not getting the required support from their husbands and elder members of their family in attending adult education centres .
 - ❖ Majority of the women expressed that the incharge of the centres are quite young and most of the time they are not available, when ever they like to attend the adult education centres .
 - ❖ Majority of the women exhibited that lack of infrastructure and inadequate instructional materials are also considered to be the constraints in attending adult education centers.

Conclusion:

It is observed from the present study, though the Govt. of India, NLMA launched a massive programme in the name of 'Saakshar Bharat' to eradicate illiteracy among the 15 and above years of age more particularly the women, belonging to SC/ST/BC and Minority communities, the attendance of the women to AECs from this target group is not very satisfactory. Unless, measures are initiated to ensure the enrolment of these women, the programme can never be successful. The planners and practitioners of 'Saakshar Bharat' should come out with strategies which will ensure massive enrolment among these groups. In this direction, massive campaign involving traditional cultural groups and folk songs will motivate women towards adult education. Further, the State and National Governments should link up the welfare and other programmes meant for these groups with adult education. State Department of adult Education is to be revamped, particularly in identification of village level preraks. The commitment with conviction of the incumbent should be taken as an yard stick for their appointment instead of political or caste considerations. Further, the monitoring system is to be strengthened so as to ensure the realization of targets within the given time frame. The women with NIOS certification are to be preferred in providing the benefits under various schemes. The same is to be given wide publicity. Unless, the implementing agencies address the identified problems, which are acting as deterrents, for these women in attending AECs, it can never be a successful programme aiming at the eradication of illiteracy in our country.

It is very unfortunate to note that literacy among the adults and more particularly women will directly contribute to the development of the society. Adult educator being an effective means is neglected both by national and state governments, in the recent past. Being well aware of the facts of illiterate adults in the country, instead of revamping adults education the succession governments kept this powerful system into a cold storage. Therefore there is an urgent need to revive adult education

programmes with more vigour till the last person who is 15 years and above in the country are made literate. It is established over a period of time across the globe that education is the most effective tool for empowering the people. Without providing basic education what ever may be the strategies one may adopt can never succeed in empowering the people. No society can progress and move forward unless its population is educated and thereby empowered. Hence, adult education is to be used as a system to enable its people to become more productive in all respects and also to lead quality life.

References :

1. A Document on Saakshar Bharat Mission - 2012, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India, New Delhi.
2. Annual Reports of State Resource Centre, Hyderabad
3. Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education (Ed) T.Kumara Swamy, S.vUniversity, Tirupati.
4. A Source book on Adult Education, Directorate of Adult Education, Govt. of India, New Delhi.
5. Adult Education in India - Dr.B.Krishna Reddy, Crescent Publishers, New Delhi.

