

PROGRAMMES IN CONTINUING EDUCATION CENTRES AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND GIRL CHILDREN

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Abstract

Education plays a pivotal role in empowering women in the rural areas of India. 'Women Empowerment' expounds gender equality and a prosperous and peaceful global society in the near future. The different programs for women are extension of education, beyond the school going age, to improve the quality of life through equivalency education, income generation, individual interest promotion, life quality improvement, NIRBHAYA and SUCCESS programs. These programs for rural women, adolescent girls and underachievers posits that all the programs helped them comprehensively in multi-dimensional empowerment.

Key Words: *Women empowerment, Continuing education centre, NIRBHAYA, SUCCESS program, etc.*

Introduction

Life is a continuous process of adjustment by which man makes harmonious existence with ever changing socio-cultural environment. The task of education is to equip individuals with skills and competencies necessary for their empowerment (Aggarwal, 2002). Continuing education helps an individual to keep up-to-date with new knowledge. In order to improve their quality of life and raise their income, the villagers and neo-literates need to continue to develop their knowledge and skills through continuous education. It enables the learner to make continuous adjustment with ever changing and ever-growing knowledge-driven digital world. It keeps people professionally alive, growing and productive (Abdul Kalam, 2006).

In India, the new scheme of continuing education is taking shape in the background of extensive literacy campaigns launched in various parts of the country after the establishment of National Literacy Mission in May 1988, although the idea of post literacy and continuing education evolved much earlier (Sivadasan, 1987). Realizing the absence of a learning environment, adult education program was envisioned as one year of basic literacy followed by four months of post literacy program.

Women Empowerment – Need and Status

Unless women are empowered, the issues related to health, literacy, and population will remain unsolved problems of the developing countries and especially in Indian. Empowerment refers to enabling people to take charge of their own lives. For women, it emphasizes the importance of increasing their power and taking control over decisions and issues. Empowerment is the expansion of assets and capabilities of women to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India admitted that '*education of a boy is the education of one person, but the education of a girl is the education of the entire family*'. The major objectives of Women Empowerment programs are; to develop sense of internal strength and self-confidence to face the realities of life, to improve the performances by delegating responsibility, to give

authority and autonomy to choose and to make self-decisions, to enhance the participation in decision-making at all levels, to influence the direction of social change, to contribute towards national development, etc.

Education liberates women from the clutches of inequalities. It is a force to reduce gender inequalities and access to mobility, share in decision-making and contributes to national development. Education enhances women's productivity in the farm and non-farm sectors. In the home, women's education has a greater effect on family welfare than men's education. The most significant means to empower women is 'Education' (Kundu, 1984).

The development indicators of women in Kerala are relatively very high compared to the rest of the country. The sex ratio as well as the literacy rate and the life expectancy rate of women in Kerala are the highest in the country (Sreedharamenon, 1996). Despite all these accolades gender disparity still persists; social inhibitions and customs restrict women from taking their proper role in the development process of the country. In respect of the work participation ratio, the women in Kerala occupy a position which is far below the national average (Padma & Vasantha, 2005). A significant feature of Kerala's unemployment situation is that women outnumber men (18.72 men, 23.13 women).

Differential wage structure, decline in the sex ratio of the girl children, unequal property rights, violence against women and insufficient representation of women in governance are the crucial issues being faced by the people. The Continuing Education Centre established for post literacy, empowerment, lifelong education, etc. selects those components which are suitable to the beneficiaries in their area. It is useful to find out the impact of each component in terms of objectives and with reference to women. This may help to develop proper guidelines and good practice for the existing system which may in turn improve the quality of life of the ordinary women folk and thereby improve national progress (Jayakumar, 1996).

Programmes for Empowerment of Women and Girls

Education plays a pivotal role in empowering women. This 'women empowerment' is for attaining a very simple and obvious target i.e gender equality and a prosperous, developed, happy global society in the near future. Women's education is an indicator of educational development of a region (Liat & Hofit, 2011). The Multi-dimensional programs for Empowerment of Women offered, initiated, supported or co-ordinated are present here. They are; Continuing Education Programs, Library for Rural Mothers, SUCCESS program for underachievers and Nirbhaya (A Safety awareness and Counseling for adolescent girls and women). The influence of all these programs is analyzed descriptively. This is not purely a research study; but a series of programs and projects undertaken by a team in collaboration with Local Self Governments, Educational Offices, NGOs, etc. The influence of these programs on different aspects women empowerment, social renaissance, employment, rural development, peaceful problem solving, etc are analyzed here.

1. Continuing Education Programs

The high literacy rate and strong grassroots democracy in the southern states are significant factors for the success of continuing education. Under the grassroots democratic system, local self-government, comprising elected members of the community, plan and implement the development schemes. These elected bodies, located at the district, block and village levels, are called district, block and village panchayats respectively (Sivadasan, 1987). The elected members of these committees represent people from all sections of society including women and marginalized groups. They are sensitive to the needs of people, who are in a position to influence action through their representatives.

The concept of continuing education program has been accepted as a means of bringing about change in the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behavior of beneficiaries especially, the women learners. It can be said that continuing education programs aim at improving the quality of life of the learners by

imparting adequate knowledge along with providing various opportunities for obtaining occupational skills (Jayakumar, 1996). This creates confidence among women which is the first step towards their empowerment.

Continuing education is an extension of education, formal or non-formal, part-time or fulltime for young people and adults beyond the school learning age, aiming at the achievement of certain specific knowledge, attitudes or skills, which may improve the quality of life in personal, social, economic, political, cultural, technical and scientific aspects of life. In brief continuing education is expected to improve the quality of life (Mohapatia, 1987). Continuing education includes; Literacy education for illiterates, post literacy and continuing education for literates, higher educational opportunities for school and college drop-outs and refresher education for specialists and so on (Supriya, 2006). The major programs in Kerala under Lifelong Education and Awareness Program (LEAP) are;

- Equivalency Education Program
- Income Generating Program
- Quality of Life Improvement Program
- Individual Interest Promotion Program

The services offered by a faculty team in Meenachil Continuing Education Center fulfills the motto “each one teach one”. In Kerala, the government is offering 4th standard, 7th standard and 10th standard equivalency examinations for the adult persons through continuing education centers and other agencies (Sivadasan, 1987). The teachers of this college prepare the illiterates and neo-literates to appear for the equivalency examinations at different levels.

It is my humble expectation that the findings of the present study would point out the necessity of strengthening and updating continuing educational program as an instrument for enhancing the empowerment of its beneficiaries. This study is of great help to the government authorities and local bodies to adopt necessary steps for improving the quality and efficiency of Continuing Education Programs. Moreover, it would encourage concerned authorities to examine the effectiveness of various programs carried out from time to time so that necessary modifications and suitable changes might be made to revitalize the process.

2. LIBRARY FOR RURAL MOTHERS

Awareness to all sections of the society is one of the major activities to be organized as part of the extension activities, specifically to the rural women (Ruhela, 2000). The extension services of the college with respect to the establishment of a rural library for mothers aims at; to spread literacy among adult women, to give education on the principles and rules of hygiene and health, to arrange occupational and industrial education in order to raise the economic status of the adults, and to develop a good sense of citizenship among the adults by making them conscious of their rights and duties. Rural development strengthen social and communal harmony, and enable everyone to study his or her role as parent and a member of the community; as a wage earner and as a responsible citizen and transform the society through controlling social evils and practices (Abdul Kalam, 2006).

In association with Meenachil Continuing Education Centre, Meenachil Public Library and Meenachil Aided Lower Primary School, we started a project for mothers of school children and neo-literates of Meenachil area, a Rural Library for them called *Library for Rural Mothers*. I am in charge of extension activities and co-ordinates all the activities of the Continuing Education Center and Library for Rural Mothers under the extension stream of the college. The teacher trainees and teacher educators of the college donate books for the library. Every year the book bank is updated by the teacher trainees and is verified by the headmaster of the rural school, Meenachil Aided Lower Primary School. The record is kept in the college also. A reading competition is conducted for the beneficiaries of the library. The data

(opinion) for this paper is collected from 48 women (mothers & neo-literates) beneficiaries of the *library for rural mothers*.

3. SUCCESS - A PROGRAM FOR UNDER ACHIEVERS

Learning is very important or crucial for human being. Without it we can neither adapt to our environment nor survive. The term 'learning' covers every modification in behavior to meet environmental requirements. The efficiency and effectiveness of learning depend on many factors. The conditions influencing the efficiency of the learners and their success are: age, sex, maturation, readiness, motivation, socio-economic status, personality traits, physical features, psychological factors, etc. No method can be universally accepted as the best method. The method should be selected on the basis of age, physical and psychological conditions of the learner, the nature of the learning material, the nature of the environment, etc (NCERT, 2005).

Physical and psychological conditions prevailing in the home have a significant effect in children's learning. Poor family environment adversely affect learning. Conditions in the school, quality of teachers, quality of the syllabus, etc affect learning efficiency. Good working conditions such as fresh air, light, absence of distraction, absence of fear, anxiety, etc are important for effective learning. Classroom climate i.e., the psychological condition prevailing in the class or the relationships between teacher and students, between students, between teachers, etc, affect learning. Community influences learning and in culturally disadvantaged societies learning is retarded (Abdul Kalam, 2009).

Educational backwardness and under achievement may due to a complex of causes. Some possible causes are; *Home Environment* – Adverse home environment influences children's educational attainment. Children of poor families suffer from malnutrition due to want of proper food. They do not get proper education at home. Poverty, illiteracy of parents, frequent conflicts and quarrels amongst family members, alcoholism and broken homes, divorce or death of parents contributes towards educational backwardness of children. *Social Environment* – Besides home, other social agencies like clubs, television, radio, religious and other social places greatly influence the scholastic attainment of the children. *School Environment* – Defective examination system, uninteresting methods of teaching, lack of proper guidance and motivation often make a child truant from school. Prolonged absence or irregular attendance in school contributes to the backwardness of the child. *Defective Intelligence* – The low intelligence was the cause of backwardness in 60% of the cases. *Physical Defects* – Physical deformities, poor health, faulty hearing, defective eyesight and impaired speech seriously interfere with children's educational attainment. *Lack of Motivation* – Lack of care and concern from teachers, parents and peer group, lack of commitment from the part of the teachers and school authorities, etc. (NPE, 1986)

The under achievers from Pala Educational District were selected with the help of the District Educational Officer and the Head masters of the schools. Each school identified the under achievers and the backward children in schools and at least five from each school were send to the college for participating in the SUCCESS program. Special preference was given to the girl children. 224 adolescent children (standard ten) participated in the program. The program started with a motivation class by me and the second session was on SUCCESS opportunities and challenges. A counseling session was also conducted for the children and was led by 35 teacher educators from the college. The program provided scientific training for writing the examination, designing the future, selecting good career and problem solving in life.

4. NIRBHAYA – A SAFETY AWARENESS & COUNSELING FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS

The Government of India and different state governments proposed and initiated the program called NIRBHAYA (no fear/without fear), a safety project for women and adolescent girls due to increasing atrocities among women. Discrimination against women has contributed to gender wage differentials, with Indian women on average earning 64% of what their male counterparts earn for the same occupation and

level of qualification. Discrimination against women has led to their lack of autonomy and authority. Although equal rights are given to women, equality may not be well implemented. In practice, land and property rights are weakly enforced, with customary laws widely practiced in rural areas.

The problem of violence against women is not new. Women in the Indian society have been victims of humiliation, torture and exploitation. Gender discrimination is an act of discriminating an individual on the basis of sex. Ideologies, institutional practices and the existing norms in society have contributed much to their harassment. Violence against women may be categorized as; *Criminal violence*- rape, abduction, murder etc; *Domestic violence*- dowry deaths, wife battering, sexual abuse, maltreatment of widows or elderly women; *Social violence*- forcing the wife/daughter-in-law to go for female infanticide and infanticide, refusing to give a share to women in property, forcing a young widow to commit sati, harassing the daughter-in-law to bring more dowry (Morshedul, Towfiqua, Ismail & Golam, 2011).

NIRBHAYA is a program for women safety and security in India. The Government of Kerala offers the program and was under taken by local self-governments to ensure safety and security for adolescent girls and women. Under my leadership the college undertook a 'safety cum counseling program for adolescent girls in Mutholy Grama Panchayat of Kottayam district in Kerala state. 78 adolescent girls participated in the program. The awareness on self-defense, problem solving, decision making, study habits were given. 35 teacher educators and trained counselors provided counseling services to them. It was platform for sharing, caring and loving.

The present investigation is expected to through light on the contribution of continuing education program, SUCCESS (training program for underachievers) and NIRBHAYA (Safety Awareness and Counseling) program to the empowerment and growth of its beneficiaries especially adolescent girls and rural women. After the introduction of Panchayat Raj system in India especially in Kerala state, Local self governments have been actively involved in the development of these programmes. St. Thomas College of Teacher Education, Pala, Kerala is in the forefront of all the community development programs proposed by government of Kerala and India. Emphasis was laid on education as an instrument for socio-economic development of various sections (Supriya, 2006). The study will also provide an understanding of the influence of continuing education program for the development of the women beneficiaries.

Major Objective of the Study

1. To analyze the opinion of the Preraks and the Beneficiaries of the Continuing Education Programs on the Empowerment of Women.
2. To study the benefits of Library for Rural Mothers established in Meenachil Village in Kerala state in the Empowerment of Women Beneficiaries.
3. To study impact of SUCCESS program conducted for underachievers in Pala Educational District in Kerala state.
4. To study influence of NIRBHAYA (Safety Awareness and Counseling program) for adolescent girls in Kerala state.

Methodology of the Study

The present study was a qualitative survey study; but the training given in peace value model is quasi-experimental. This is not purely a research study; but a series of programs and projects undertaken by me and the college in collaboration with Local Self Governments, Educational Offices, NGOs, etc. The influence of these programs is analyzed here descriptively.

The investigator visited the Continuing Education Centre in Kottayam district and interviewed the preraks and assistant preraks from different Panchayats of Kottayam district of Kerala state. At the same time the data is collected from preraks, assistant areraks, women beneficiaries with the help of Interview Schedule for preraks and assistant preraks, and Questionnaire for Beneficiaries of Continuing Education Programmes. The problem solving session on Peace Value Model were also given to the beneficiaries.

Opinions were collected from the beneficiaries of Library established for Rural Mothers in Meenachil Village in Kerala state. The data related to the impact of the major programs for the underachievers (SUCCESS) and the adolescent girls (NIRBHAYA) were collected after the completion of the program. The influences of these programs were analyzed descriptively.

Sample of the Study

The population selected by the investigator is all the beneficiaries of the Continuing Education Programs, Library for Rural Mothers, NIRBHAYA and SUCCESS Program in the rural population of different panchatays (local self governments) in Kerala state. The sample distribution is given in table 2.

Table 2

Sample selected for different women empowerment programs

Sl. No.	Program	Type	No
1.	Continuing Education Programs	Preraks (Local level women motivators)	30
		Women Beneficiaries	200
2.	Library for Rural Mothers	Rural Mothers & Neo-Literates	46
3.	NIRBHAYA Program	Adolescent Girls	78
4.	SUCCESS Program	Under Achievers	224

Tools Used

In the proposed study the investigator prepared and used the following tools.

1. Interview Schedule for Preraks and Assistant Preraks.
2. Questionnaire for Beneficiaries of Continuing Education Programmes.
3. Opinionnaire for the beneficiaries of NIRBHAYA and SUCCESS program.

Statistical Techniques

The data were analyzed by using the statistical techniques such as number, mean, SD and percentage. As mentioned earlier, this multi-dimensional programs use descriptive statistics mainly. But for analyzing the fourth objective, 't' test also was used with the help of SPSS 20th version.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The first, second and third objective was analyzed descriptively. The fourth objective uses inferential statistics.

I. Opinion of the Preraks and the Beneficiaries of the Continuing Education Programs on the Empowerment of Women

1. In continuing education centres all the preraks are conducting classes for 10th, 7th, 4th std equivalency examinations.
2. 97% of the beneficiaries are interested in writing equivalency examination.
3. All the preraks opinioned that the beneficiaries of Continuing Education are giving more attention in the education of their children. 50% were of the opinion that they are participating PTA meetings, 17% encourage their children to go libraries, 23% encourage their children to watch TV programmes related to education.

4. The investigator asked the preraks about various Financial Development Programmes conducted in their Continuing Education Centers. 47% of the preraks are conducting tailoring and embroidery classes, 33% are attending type writing classes, 17% in book binding and 3% in matchbox making.
5. 48% of the preraks were of the opinion that the beneficiaries were able to find profitable job, 17% of the preraks were of the opinion that the beneficiaries were effectively utilize opportunities, 32% of the preraks were of the opinion that the beneficiaries were contributed for economic development and the rest of 2% of the preraks were of the opinion that the beneficiaries were the effectively utilize the leisure time.
6. The investigator asked the preraks, whether they encourage the beneficiaries in making handicrafts. 41% of the preraks are provide loans, 28% of the preraks are provide marketing facilities, 21% of the preraks are provide raw materials and rest of the 10% of the preraks are encourage handicrafts in other ways.
7. 83% preraks said that, the beneficiaries are receiving the benefits of health insurance under their Continuing Education Centres.
8. The study showed that 63% of the preraks are conducting yoga classes under their Continuing Education Centre.
9. The investigator observes that the 47% of the preraks are conducting awareness classes to improve the quality of life of the beneficiaries, while 33% said that they are conducting citizenship training and 20% said that they are conducting seminars.
10. 95% of preraks said that through Continuing Education the Quality of life of the beneficiaries has improved.
11. The beneficiaries were asked whether they seek the advice of others when they have to take some important decisions in their life. It is clear that, 99% of the beneficiaries seek the advice of others. Most of them (56%) discuss it with their family members, 25% discuss with respected persons in the society, 9% discuss with Preraks and 10% discuss with friends.
12. Among the beneficiaries of Continuing Education Programme, 38% of the beneficiaries got training to take important decision from awareness classes, 5% from discussions, 13% from Continuing Education 4% from special training and 40% from personality development programme conducted by Continuing Education Centre.
13. The beneficiaries were asked to give the reason for joining Continuing Education Class. The data showed that 8% of the beneficiaries joined Continuing Education class to learn to sign, 29% to learn to read and write, 16% to earn more, 1% to spent time, 2% to calculate and 44% beneficiaries joined Continuing Education to read, write, calculate and earn more.
14. Among the beneficiaries of Continuing Education Programme, 88% have written equivalency examination.
15. 87% of the beneficiaries were received knowledge about the consumer rights through continuing education program.
16. 85% of beneficiaries were aware about widow pension, old age pension and pension for agriculturalists.
17. The study revealed that 84% were aware about the India's relation with the neighbouring countries.
18. Among the beneficiaries of Continuing Education, 79% were of the opinion that Financial Development Programmes (FDP) helped the beneficiaries to do their job in a better way. The study revealed that 92% of the beneficiaries had received training for new job.
19. The study revealed that 87% of the beneficiaries were of the opinion that Continuing Education helped for the improvement of their job.
20. Regarding scholarship for the minorities, 74% were having the knowledge of such facilities. The participants of Continuing Education are supposed to take interest in their children's studies, so they should not face the difficulties.
21. The data showed that the majority (87%) of the beneficiaries take interest in their children's education.

22. 40% of the beneficiaries providing learning facilities at home, 25% of the beneficiaries arranging tuition classes for their children, 20% of the beneficiaries encouraging them to study, 10% of the beneficiaries taking active part in PTA.
23. Data revealed that 96% of beneficiaries were aware about the legal age of marriage of girls.
24. The study revealed that, 93% of the beneficiaries engage in social work. Majority 82% said that social organization has helped their study centers.
25. The study revealed that 12% of beneficiaries have very good relation with neighbors, 58% of the beneficiaries have good relation with neighbors, 13% have moderate relation with neighbor and the rest of the 7% has indifferent relation with neighbors. Majority, (80%) of the beneficiaries said that they help their neighbors in various ways.
26. Regarding the reaction of beneficiaries against injustice and crime, the data revealed that 96% of the beneficiaries felt there is a need to react against injustice and crime. Similarly with regard to participation in public function, 75% participate in the public functions.
27. The present study showed that majority, (95%) celebrate the days of national importance. 78% of the beneficiaries were members of some of the cultural organizations.
28. 56% of the beneficiaries were found to treat themselves when they are ill. The data showed that major part 51% were dependent on Allopathic treatment, 15% on homeo treatment 29% on Ayurveda, 5% on naturopathy. Interestingly, 64% of the beneficiaries keep a separate account for health care.
29. The study revealed that 94% of the beneficiaries were aware of environmental pollution.
30. 51% of the beneficiaries make sure that they eat nutritious food. Also, 97% of the beneficiaries include meat, fish, egg, milk and fruits along with vegetables as a part of their diet.
31. The study revealed that 64% of beneficiaries are aware of population explosion. Interestingly, 84% of the beneficiaries believe in small family norm. Also, 92% of the beneficiaries have positive attitude towards family planning, 7% of the beneficiaries have negative attitude towards family planning and 1% of the beneficiaries have no knowledge about family planning.
32. The study revealed that 86% of the beneficiaries have participated in awareness classes. The 76% of the beneficiaries participated in community development programme.
33. Regarding the social activities, the data revealed that 51% of the beneficiaries engage in social work.
34. The study revealed that 89% of the beneficiaries were aware about Life Quality Improvement Programmes conducted under their Continuing Education Centre.
35. 91% beneficiaries believe in superstitions. But 89% of the beneficiaries were against abortion of girl child. Also 90% were aware of the value system existing in India.

II. The benefits of Library for Rural Mothers in the Empowerment of Women Beneficiaries

1. All beneficiaries opined that the use of the rural library spread literacy among adult women.
2. 88% of the beneficiaries of the library got awareness on the principles and rules of hygiene and health.
3. 67% of the neo-literates said that they got occupational and industrial education in order to raise the economic status of them.
4. 94% of the beneficiaries developed a good sense of citizenship and are conscious of their rights and duties.
5. 68% women agreed that the library helped them for functional literacy.
6. 98% of women beneficiaries said that the programs improved the quality of leadership among them in their village activities.
7. 78% said that the continuous reading of good books strengthen social and communal harmony among them.

8. 86% of the beneficiaries agreed that the books had given them proper means of recreation and amusement, keeping in view the requirements of the individuals and the society.
9. 63% opined that their reading enabled them to transform the society through controlling social evils and practices.
10. 86% suggested that this library would help them to orient the people towards national development.
11. 97% said that these types of rural experiments will help them to develop the reading habits of rural women and neo-literates.
12. 94% of the beneficiaries suggested that the local self governments should undertake such projects in every village and should conduct reading and writing competitions, etc.

III. The impact of SUCCESS program conducted for underachievers

1. All the students said that the training given is a memorable event in their life.
2. 64% opined that the motivation class enabled them for continuous reading of good books to achieve more results in their examination.
3. 76% of the students said that they could share their personal and academic problems in the counseling session.
4. 83% opined that they will consult their teacher in the concerned schools for clarifying their doubts.
5. 86% of the girls said that they increased their confidence level to write the examination, managing the time, etc.
6. 94% opined that the motivation class enabled them to take good decisions on self-study and achieving good results in their examination.

IV. The influence of NIRBHAYA (Safety Awareness and Counseling) program for adolescent girls

1. 94% of adolescent girls said that after the training program they got awareness on the government project called NIRBHAYA.
2. 71% said that self-defense is the best strategy for women safety and security for girls. 29% opined that legal protection only can give safety for women. 82% said that the developing the moral background (moral male and moral female) in the society is the best strategy for women safety and security.
3. 98% opined that the atrocities against women in India are increasing.
4. 61% said that discrimination against women has led to their lack of autonomy and authority.
5. All the adolescent girls said that the counseling program given to them was more useful. Majority of them (77%) said that they receive the personal counseling first time.
6. 89% said that the problems in society with respect to women and girls are not effectively handled in the school and college curriculum. They opined that, it is necessary to include the discussions on the problem of dowry, abduction, rape, substance abuse, human traffic, etc. in the higher level meeting and should reach at the grass root levels.

SUGGESTIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The above elaborated multi-dimensional programs meant for rural women of Kerala, adolescent girls and underachievers posits that all the programs helped them comprehensively in multi-dimensional empowerment, specifically in problem solving in the context of peace conflicting situation. The analysis and interpretation of the data gives some suggestions and contributions to the society.

1. The influence of the series of programs conducted revealed that the women are getting benefits from Continuing Education Programs. So it is better to take necessary action to increase the number of Continuing Education Centers and provide need based training in Kerala and other states of India to empower the rural women.

2. Continuing the education of the women beneficiaries after their 4th /7th /10th standard examinations shall be extended for higher education. The higher education institutions should include these groups also for higher levels of lifelong learning.
3. The library instituted for rural mothers and neo-literates significantly influenced the multi-dimensional empowerment of women. So such facilities should be given in all villages under local self governments and social service projects.
4. The under achievers undergone SUCCESS program said that they could share their personal and academic problems in the counseling session. So in every educational institution, training is to be implemented for motivation, counseling and personal achievement.
5. The government program called NIRBHAYA is to be implemented in every village in collaboration with police department, educational institutions, religious organization, social groups, etc. From the school level itself the self-defense practices are to be given for girls.
6. As majority of the sample said that the problems in society with respect to women and girls are not effectively handled in the school and college curriculum. They opined that, it is necessary to include the discussions on the problem of dowry, abduction, rape, substance abuse, human traffic, etc. in the higher level meetings and should reach at the grass root levels. So it is necessary to include the problems of the hour in the curriculum for open deliberations for a better peaceful future.

Conclusion

The programs persuasively revealed that the Continuing Education Program contribute much in the multi-dimensional development of the rural women and paves way for further research in the area of lifelong education mainly in the areas of empowerment of women. The projects like library for rural mothers, SUCCESS, NIRBHAYA, etc improve the quality of life, income generation, individual interest promotion among the rural women and these enable them in solving the problems in the context of peace conflicting situation. Let me conclude with the words of the father of the nation – Mahatma Gandhi, 'We must be the change we wish to see in the world'.

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