



Adult & Continuing Education for the Overall Development of an Individual – Ref : Jyothirgamaya Nilambur Panchayat, Malapuram, Kerala

KEYWORDS

Adult Education, Continuing Education

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ABSTRACT

Education means 'to draw out', facilitating realization of self-potential and latent talents of an individual. Education is the most powerful weapon to fight against ignorance and illiteracy and to bring about a lasting social change, for a country's progress is measured by its level of education. Nilambur Grama Panchayat (Currently municipality) in Malappuram District of Kerala State conducted a detailed survey in their Grama Panchayat (2006) about the status of literacy rate including other factors like health and socio-economic factors of the Panchayat. The survey revealed that more than 1500 people of the Grama Panchayat were either illiterate or educated below 4th standard. Among the identified group, 1000 were illiterate or semi literate and 500 were educated below 4th standard i.e., the drop outs from primary classes. Most of them have no document for proving their age, original name and other details. So they can't apply for agriculture and old age pension, loans etc. Illiteracy is one of the basic reasons for most of the problems amongst these people. The urgency of giving literacy and primary education was felt as the first step towards achieving the goal.

The current study is an evaluation of the project Jyothirgamaya. This study highlights on the role played by education in the lives of adults who constitute more than half the percentage of population. The study also helps to understand the influence of education in their social and family life and the overall development of the individual. The research design used for the study is descriptive in nature. It describes the role played by education in the development of an individual in all walks of life. Through the development of individuals the society can be developed. The universe of the study was 1500 and the researcher conducted her study among 150 samples, age 18-50 which was selected through Tippets Table which comes under probability sampling. The study reveals the importance of education in fighting against social evils, increasing their importance and role in panchayat and other government offices, and involvement in income generation programmes like ayalkoottam (neighborhood groups), kudumbasree etc. Also the study showed that social evils like dowry, child marriage, domestic violence etc was decreased.

INTRODUCTION:

"Adult education is the education of grown up men and women who are more than 18yrs old. Education for adults mainly aims at those who could not get any formal education in the early days of their lives". Adult literacy for all who need must be an urgent priority. Because there are so many adult population having no access or little access to knowledge. Most of them are illiterates or a partial literate who doesn't even know to read and write even their names or to sign an important document. This illiteracy is making them more and more backward and most of them are getting cheated in one way or other in every walks of their life. Meeting the basic learning needs of adults is a key element in reducing world poverty.

NEED & IMPORTANCE OF ADULT EDUCATION:

Adult education brings a new hope for the illiterate masses who failed to get education during their school years. Though a well-defined programme of adult education, the illiterate adults can hope to take part in the day to day activities of their country. Education widens the intellectual and political horizon of the illiterates. It is also needed to set the cultural tone of the community and makes the adult life more happy and joyful and worthwhile. Adult education is needed to satisfy the recreational needs of rural adults. Adult education is needed to train the adult in co-operative living. Education does not end with schooling. It is a lifelong process.

The main objective of the project Jyothirgamaya was to

achieve education with the level of 4th standard for all the people in the age group of 15 to 50 in the panchayat of Nilambur (now municipality) and to create conducive atmosphere for all the overall progress in the socio-cultural status of the people in the Grama Panchayat. Another important objective was to promote the backward classes especially Scheduled Community in their social, educational and economical field and to start Income Generation Activities for the selected group who successfully complete the training.

The current study is an evaluation of the project Jyothirgamaya. The study highlights on the role played by education in the lives of adults who constitute more than half the percentage of population. The study may help to understand the influence of education in their social and family life. It also focuses on their eagerness and quest being educated. People who liked to get education were kept away from schools in their childhood because of various reasons. Many of them wander in the corridors of panchayats and village offices for basic needs like shelter, food (ration), sanitation etc. But the situation becomes worse when they are asked to sign a paper or to fill a paper or when they are asked about their date of birth etc. Many of them don't have an identity that they have lived on this earth. Only these conditions of people can be changed through education. Keeping this on focus Nilambur Grama Panchayat educated all the adults of the panchayat and the panchayat was declared as the first grama panchayat in India that have achieved total primary education. Therefore

the researcher felt that it is an important and current topic to conduct the study. The aim is To Study the role of Adult and Continuing Education in Rural Development. .

OBJECTIVES OF THE CURRENT STUDY:

- To study the effectiveness of the project “ Jyothirgamaya”.
- To know the satisfaction of respondents in allied activities of Jyothirgamaya.
- To know the satisfaction of respondents regarding resources of Jyothirgamaya.
- To know about Jyothirgamaya and its relation to rural development.

Research Methodology:

The research design used for the study is **descriptive in nature**. It describes the role played by education in the development of an individual in all walks of life. The universe consists of 1608 learners/beneficiaries of Jyothirgamaya. **The sampling method** used is Tippet's Table which comes under probability sampling method. . By using this method 150 respondents were selected from the Jyothirgamaya beneficiaries between the age 18 and 50 and interview was conducted . The tool used for this study was **semi-structured interview schedule**. It was prepared by extensive literature review on the topic of adult and Continuing Education.

Major Findings

Out of 150 respondents taken for study, majority of the learners were females which are substantiated by the records of Jyothirgamaya Project. It may be due to the fact that two to three decades back female children were generally made to do house work and were baby sitters. Because of lack of awareness on the importance of education and poor economic background most of their siblings were also not send to school. Even though most of the respondents did not have their schooling, they were interested in education. Some of the reasons for not attending schools in childhood are lack of parent's interest, lack of schools in neighborhood, gender bias, poverty, no transportation facilities and restrictions from society. Some respondents had health problems in childhood and their parents were not interested to take them to doctors because of ignorance on diseases and good hygiene practices.

It is also seen that most of them are married and are coolie workers. Most of them have seven to nine members in their family. Since there is lack of education and lack of awareness on family planning the number of children are more. Monthly income of the family falls between 4000 and 5000 rupees.

There were 150 study centers in total so as to accommodate minimum of 10 learners per centre and so most of the respondents have 10 learners in the study centre. All were given primary education and they were able to put their signature and name in documents after Jyothirgamaya which is a proof that they have lived on this earth. Most of the respondents are confident enough to read and write up to 4th standard level. Most of the respondents wish to continue their education because they knew that without education it is hard to live in the society. The younger generations in the family are sent to school and respondents who get enough time assist them (up to 4th standard) in their studies. This is an added knowledge to them and also helps them to revise what they have studied. It is found that the respondents who are interested in reading and writing are motivating other illiterates to learn letters.

Many of the respondents have joined Self Help Groups and some have started their own small scale business like catering service etc, which help them to earn a better living. Hence they agree that family issues related to lack of money have decreased a lot. After getting educated they are able to handle family problems more carefully because their level of perception has increased. Some of the respondents has stopped alcoholism, chain smoking and use of other tobacco related products have stopped a lot after attending awareness classes. Respondents especially women who were not able to involve in public matters and to take decisions are able to involve in public matters and to face officials after they are educated.

Some of the respondents felt that Jyothirgamaya centers are places of social relation where they can share their tensions, worries and happiness with the peers. They feel that implementation of this type of programme will be good for other panchayats. Through vocational training, awareness classes and empowerment the standard of living of the learners have increased a lot- mentally, socially and economically.

Chi square test was done to find the association between age and the interest to learn and the test found to be negative. Most of them are actively participating in the welfare programmes of the panchayat. Learners also expressed their interest to continue education and to contribute more to the society. . Keeping Jyothirgamaya as base the Panchayat was motivated in introducing various other programmes like Health Card for the Elderly and Children (using this health card they can avail free treatment and medicines), Karate classes for girl children, Youth wings in each wards, One learner One Tree Plan (one learner will plant a sapling and nurture it as a ecological commitment), Oppathinoppan (It is a programme for the upliftment of the disadvantaged).etc..

CONCLUSION:

Jyothirgamaya project implemented in Nilambur Panchayat was a great success that governor R.L Bhatia declared Nilambur as the first Grama Panchayat in India to achieve Total Primary Education in 2008. After the programme learners have achieved reading and writing Malayalam, English and Numerical operations. The awareness classes on Health and Hygiene, Sanitation, Human Rights etc have made a tremendous change in their life. After being empowered they proclaimed Nilambur as Dowry Free Village where dowry will not be given or taken at any grounds. For this they have opened a website where people can register their names (www.dowryfreevillage.com). The learners have joined self help Groups and have started small scale business like saree designing, catering, candle making etc which e learners expressed that their self confidence, self reliance and social responsibility are considerably improved.

From the researchers experience it can be concluded that Jyothirgamaya-Adult Continuing Education Programme not only imparted Primary education to the learners but also helped in their holistic development. Such programmes should be taken into account and can be implemented all over India

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