



## Effect of Ageing on Literacy Under Total Literacy Campaign (TLC): A Case Study in Three Assembly Constituencies of Bishnupur District, Manipur

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### ABSTRACT

The present paper attempts to highlight the effect of ageing on literacy among the learners under the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) programme of the National Literacy Mission (NLM), Government of India. The NLM was launched on 5th May, 1988 by the late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. It was associated with a sense of urgency, seriousness and emphasis for adult education with fixed goals, a clear time frame and a defined target group in a mission mode of management. It also focussed on rural areas, particularly women and persons belonging to Scheduled Caste and Schedule Tribe. **Objectives:** The objective of the study was to test the hypothesis "With the increase in age of the learners, the literacy rate also increases". **Hypothesis:** The hypothesis was tested on the adult learners in the age group of 15-35 years and above who had completed or about to complete the literacy course. The data were analysed and interpreted through the statistical technique. **Method:** The present study adopted a case study approach under the descriptive method. The sample consisted of 900 adult learners, 300 learners each from three Assembly Constituencies namely, Bishnupur, Oinam and Kumbi under Bishnupur District, Manipur. The learners were selected from the records maintained by the literacy centres. **Results:** The results indicated that with the increase in age, the literacy rate was also decreases. Hence, the hypothesis was rejected. The findings of the study could be generalised in the literate population where similar situation exists.

### KEYWORDS

Effect, Ageing, Adult, Literate, Learner, Literacy.

### Introduction:

The Total Literacy Campaign was launched in January, 1989, at Ernakulam District of Kerala. The literacy campaign made 1.85 lakhs persons or the whole district fully literate and achieved the goals and objectives on the 4<sup>th</sup> February, 1990, along with the unique distinction of being the first district in the country to be fully literate. It led to the launching of a state wide campaign in Kerala as well as in other parts of the country.

The campaigns were area specific, time bound, volunteer based, cost-effective and outcome oriented. The idea of the campaign was to make a whole district fully literate within a stipulated time period (12 to 18 months). It was a new concept for promoting literacy in the country and also an attainment of pre-determined norms of literacy and numeracy. The learner was the focal point in the entire process and emphasis was not on mere literacy only. The programmes had a number of objectives apart from spreading literacy such as national integration, universal immunisation, women's empowerment, etc. The campaign was delivered through volunteers without any expectation of reward or incentive. So far, the total literacy campaign had been implementing in 448 districts out of the total of over 550 districts in the country.

Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) model is now accepted as the dominant strategy for eradication of adult illiteracy in India. These campaigns are area-specific, time-bound, volunteer-based, cost-effective and outcome-oriented. The thrust is on attainment of functional literacy through prescribed norms of literacy and numeracy. The learner is the focal point in the entire process and measurement of learning outcomes is continuous, informal, participative and non-threatening.

The three innovative features of the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) are (i) Mass Campaign Approach (ii) Participatory Approach and (iii) Voluntary Approach. The purpose of TLC is to promote learning for literacy. Literacy programmes are about teaching-learning to read and write, learning to count and learning to analyse one's own reality.

### Review of related literature:

It was found from various studies that dropout resulting from lack of motivation among adult learners was found by many studies (e.g., Bhandari and Mehta, 1974; Chalam, 1978; Hargopal and Sudershan, 1978; International Institute of Adult Literacy Methods, Tehran, Iran, 1980; Gomathimani, 1980; Ravinder, 1981; Rajyalakashmi, 1981; Roy and Nandi, 1981; Sudame and Bastia, 1981; Bisht, 1983; mishra, 1983; Sambaiha, 1983; Ganguli, 1984; Prasad, 1985; Reddy, 1986; Vanaja, 1989; Centre of Adult Education and Extension, University of Kerala, 1990; Saiyadain, Murthy and Singh, 1990). On the other hand, some studies also found lower literacy rate among aged learners as compared to the younger learners. For example, in the earliest study conducted by Rao et al. (1958) it was found that the interest in learning decreases with the increase in age group of the illiterate workers. Prakash (1978) also reported that young farmers achieved higher standard in reading and writing than the older farmers. Council for Social Development, India (1993) found the literacy rate to be higher among learners below the age group 15 years (92%) than that of the learners above the age group of 35 years (88%). In this way, aged learners have long been experiencing problems of literacy in most studies.

### Rationale of the Study:

The results of the study may be of practical value to the educational planners and policy makers in ascertaining the problems of adult learners, thereby helping to draw plan for effective implementation of the National Literacy Mission.

### Objective:

The objective of the study was to test the hypothesis "With the increase in age of the learners, the literacy rate also increases".

### Method:

The present study adopted a case study approach under the descriptive method.

**Sample:**

The present study was selected from three Assembly Constituencies under Bishnupur District of Manipur namely Bishnupur, Oinam and Kumbi assembly constituency with 300 learners each from the three Constituencies. Altogether 900 adult learners in the age group of 15-35 years and above were involved in the study. The hypothesis of the study was tested on the adult learners who had completed the courses or were about to complete the literacy course, as per records maintained by the literacy centres.

**Sources of Data:**

The learners who were enrolled in the literacy centres of the three Assembly Constituencies, as given above, during 2009-2012 and completed or yet to be completed the course were identified from the records maintained by the literacy centres in the basis of two age groups of 15-20 years and 20-25 years and above. And then the difference in the extent of literacy rate among the two groups of learners was determined.

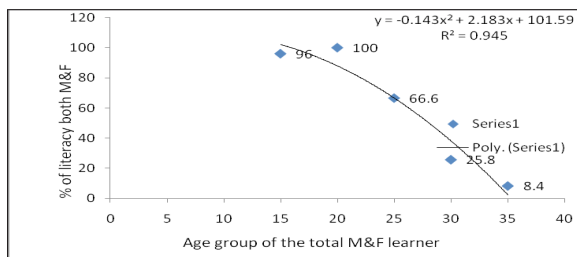
**Data Analysis:**

The data of the present study were analysed by using statistical techniques like regression analysis.

**Result and Discussion:**

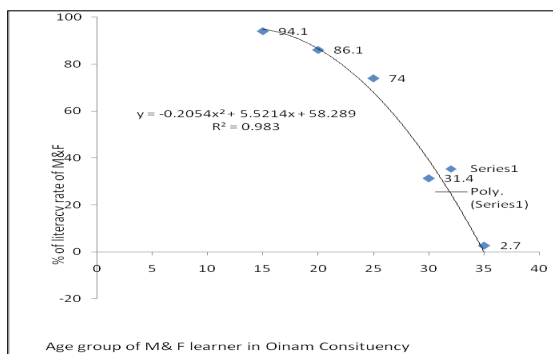
Hypothesis 1: "With the increase in the age of the learners, the literacy rate also increases".

**Table 1**  
**Bishnupur Assembly Constituency**  
**n=300**  
**Age group=15-35 years**



The relation between total male and female literacy and their age of 15-35 years was expressed by polynomial equation,  $y = -0.143x^2 + 2.183x + 101.59$ ;  $R^2 = 0.945$ . Here, the literacy rate was highest in the age group of 15-20 years and gradually decreases with the age increases. Hence, the hypothesis was rejected.

**Table 2**  
**Oinam Assembly Constituency**  
**n=300**

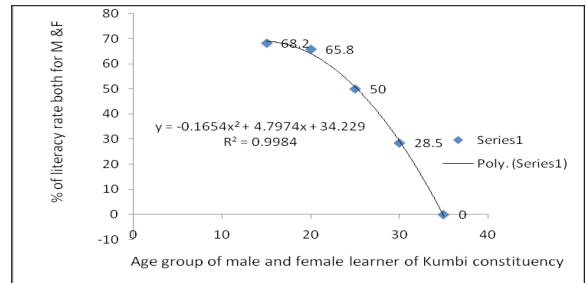


**Age group = 15-35 years & above**

Here, the literacy rate of male and female taken together was highest in the age group of 15-20 years, and those in the age group of 35 years and above are recorded to have lowest literacy rate as indicated by the polynomial equation,  $y = -0.205x^2 + 5.521x + 58.28$ ;  $R^2 = 0.983$ . Hence, this hypothesis was also rejected.

**Table 3 Kumbi Assembly Constituency**  
**n=300**

**Age group=15-35 years & above**



Here, the literacy rate of male and female taken together was highest in the age-group of 15-20 years and it gradually decreased as the age increases, while those in the age-group 35 years and above never responded. This is indicated by the equation,  $y = -0.165x^2 + 4.797x + 34.22$ ;  $R^2 = 0.998$ . Hence, the hypothesis was rejected.

**Conclusion:**

From the present study, it may be referred that with the increase in the age of the learners, the literacy rate was found to be decreased among the learners in all the three Assembly Constituencies. Hence, the hypothesis was rejected.

It may also be concluded that the literacy rate was found to be higher among learners below the age of 15 years (92%) than learners above the age group of 35 years (88%).

**Recommendations:**

It is a well-known fact that aged people have a lot of problems like lack of motivation, family problems, economic, health, shyness, lack of time, hard work and so on. Therefore, every effort needs to be made to improve their economic status. This should be the first priority. While doing so, imaginative teaching and learning, improvement in the infrastructure of the literacy centres, and implementation of the three objectives of the National Adult Education Programme (NAEP), such as literacy and numeracy, skill development programme and social awareness is of prime importance.

In the present literacy programme, too much emphasis is given on the literacy and numeracy. There was no skill development and social awareness programmes in all the literacy centres under study. It is high time to pay serious thought to the effective implementation of the programmes as a whole. It is strongly believed that the interest of the learners, which is a major problem in many studies, could be enhanced if the adult education programme is fully implemented. It is in this direction that the educational authorities need to move.

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