



## ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES IN CONTINUE EDUCATION IN INDIA

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### **Abstract**

*Ours is the second largest most populous country of the world and dominated by rural population. Illiteracy and ignorance have been the major issues which have hampered the pace and process of the development. Being an agrarian society, illiteracy has also adversely affected the economy of the country and the same has subsequently resulted in terms of slow the progress of industrialisation due to unskilled and semi-skilled workforce. Therefore, the need for liquidation of illiteracy is being highlighted since long. The present paper highlights the background of the significance of continuing education, content, programmes and agencies of continuing education as well as a role of universities in promoting continuing education. The present paper has its implications for developmental agencies, functionaries of adults & life-long learning departments and university system to evolve such a mechanism including designing of need based content, activities and programmes of continuing education so that besides acquisition of minimum learning skills and development of awareness regarding the existing contemporary issues, level of skill development and technical know-how among adult/workforce of our country is ensured.*

**Keywords:** Continue Education, Role of Universities.

### **Introduction**

Illiteracy is regarded as one of the serious impediments in the development of our country. Since independence, it has been recognised as one of the major problems of the country and till date, it keeps on multiplying itself in its intensity. After the independence of our country, the percentage of literacy has increased from 16% to about 73% in 2011, whereas the illiteracy has increased in absolute numbers. Similarly, universalization of elementary education has also remained a dream as children's education depends to a great extent, upon the parental level of education. Likewise, there has not been a mass involvement of people in the country's developmental programmes and by and large the country's developmental process is below expectations and we are facing serious challenging one after another. All this point to the fact that liquidation of illiteracy demands our immediate attention and there is also a need to have an effective programme of continue education.

Education is a continuous and lifelong process which begin at the birth and end with death. education is not a barrier for learning which means that education is not only confined to childhood but it is equally important for adults as well as. Ours is a democratic country and without education, democracy is meaningless. Education generally aims at enlightening the mind, which in turn, enables the individual to attain a status in order to become the responsible and functional member of the society. It is education not the freedom that makes any Nation great but in the context of our country, the present situation is not distressing but disgraceful too. Act 26, UNO (1948) proclaimed that education is the birth right of everyone, whatever his has age may be.



Man has to learn continuously throughout his life through performing different roles in different circumstances/contexts. Therefore, a well organised structure of continuous education is essentially to be learned for the purpose in order to meet the growing needs of vocational and professional skills. Moreover, the continuous education is also required to be responsive to meet the wide range of learning interests of different age groups with specific reference to the gender, occupational background and level. The main aims of continuous education is up-gradation of skills and development of awareness as well as technical and occupational know how among people.

### **Continuing Education**

‘Continuing education’ stresses on the unity of the concept of education, both child and adult, and indicates that it continues throughout life though the phrase has also come to have at least two other rather narrow meanings- all education for adults returning to the educational system, and professional vocationally orientated training programmes at an advanced level for adults who have already received a good deal of education. It is also known as adult education, lifelong learning or lifelong education, recurrent education, and non-formal education. It implies all out of school education for any group of any age, it refers not merely to the format of this direction but to the contents, which seem to be more life related than the traditional school curriculum.

In case of those adults who had not been enrolled in schools, adult education can serve as a substitute for the elementary education they missed. It serves as compliment to elementary/professional education for those who received incomplete education. It is considered as prolongation of education in case of those whom it enables to meet the contemporary need and challenges.

Continuing education can be defined in different ways. In one sense, continuing education is an education informally available along with formal education which the children or adolescents are already receiving. From another point of view, continuing education means education for those who have completed their formal learning and still retain their motivation and intellectual curiosity to continue the process of self-education. There is another latest interpretation of continuing education in the context of adult education in our country where it has to be oriented towards literacy, skill development and social awareness. It serves as further education to those categories of individuals who are already trained or having high level training.

In fact, continuing education serves as an important strategy of human resource development. According to NPE-1986, “Continuing education means Post Literacy for neo-literates (who have just acquired literacy skills or have become literate recently) and school drop-outs for retention of literacy skills, continuation of their learning beyond elementary literacy and application of this learning for improving their living conditions. But in true sense continuing education goes beyond post literacy”.

### **Need of Continuing Education in Modern Era**

Learning is life long process and is not only confined to one’s youth or to class room or school and colleges. Toynbee has rightly remarked, “A civilization survives only so long as it makes adequate response to the challenges of its time”. In the slowly changing culture much of the



learning that one needs to adopt to his cultures and physical environment can take place in the years of childhood and youth. Further learning that is necessary can be acquired incidentally during a normal life time, beyond this, the amount and nature of learning required depend largely upon the rapidity of change in the outer world. When major changes occur in the physical or cultural environment, man must adjust to them. He must learn or perish. By learning and using the educational process throughout his life, man can (i) assure maximum personal development, (ii) learn how to control the products and processes of science and technology maximally for his own benefit and (iii) perfect his ability to live democratically in all areas of human relationship (Kempfer, 1955). Continuing education is required to offer the programme to meet a wide range of learning interest of persons of different ages, sex, occupation, regions. Its main aim is up- gradation of skills and development of knowledge among people.

### **Content and Programme of Continuing Education**

The content and programmes of continuing education should be designed according to the felt needs and requirements of different target groups and categories of workers, the content and programmes of continuing education can be broadly classified under three categories:

- (i) **Development of awareness of general interest related to contemporary issues/aspects:** Certain programmes should be developed in order to help people in becoming increasingly aware of current and social problems in a contemporary world; promote the social, economic literacy cultural and intellectual enrichment of the community; organise activities with reference to special interest groups like youth, housewives, retired people to enable them to make productive use of their time.
- (ii) **Programmes of functional literacy and numeracy, post literacy and supplementary education:** For developing the basic education and skill, there should be organised different social awareness and motivational programmes; functional literacy course; post literacy programmes; skills and craft development courses' supplementary activities to motivate the community.
- (iii) **Hand-on-experience by organising special training programmes to developing and improving professional skills:** This can be achieved through creating opportunities for in-service on the job training and refresher courses to help the people to update their academic and professional knowledge in order to keep pace with rapid change; training programmes for industrial workers, technicians, vocational staff and administrative personnel. Development of these skills would generate self-employment and self-reliance. Material of continuing education activities be developed in the light of above mentioned contents and programmes of continuing education for different categories of people according to their needs, interests and problems.

### **Agencies of Continuing Education**

The Government of India decided in February, 1988 to establish Jana Shiksan Nilayam (JSN) all over the country to institutionalise post-literacy and continuing education. In JSNs, there is provision of library, reading room, recreational activities, charcha mandal and T.V. etc. Apart from JSNs there are other agencies as well as for continuous education which are as follows:



- Radio, television and films also serve the purpose of continuing education and recreation.
- Extension education department, especially of agricultural universities, organising extension programmes and programmes of continuing education for workers and the professionals.
- Public libraries, reading rooms and mobile library serving as important agencies of continuing education.
- Department of adult education, health, agriculture, industries, Rural development, Baking, Dairy and Animal husbandry.
- Family, Society and Social environment.
- Universities, engineering, colleges, polytechnics, medical education serving in the direction of continuing education of people e.g. in many foreign countries centre were established in this regard like South Africa, the retired doctors, engineering, civil servants, teachers were providing the training to students and youth for academic and professional skill development.

### **Role of Universities in Promoting Continuous Education**

In this paper, role of universities in promotion of continuous education is particularly being highlighted universities, besides teacher and research, have third dimension and need to take care of i.e. extension, which covers continuing education as one of its integral component. University system can take lead and provide leadership in this regard, because of well-established infrastructural facilities including labs, equipment and resources as well as trained man powered and functionaries students with bubbling energy, creativity and talent. Continuing education has very wide scope and utility in the context of modern era of science and technology. Universities can experiment the innovative ideas, new technologies, techniques to cater the needs and interest of various groups in the community.

Mr. Asher Delon, an UNESCO expert, while addressing a conference on continuing education set out the following principles to be kept in mind while setting the priorities to organise continue education program through universities:

- To lay emphasis on those aspects and programmes which no other agency could perform better or more effectively.
- To concentrate on the programmes oriented towards the removal of poverty and reduction of disparity.
- Updating of knowledge and skills
- Participation in development.
- To base the programmes on real educational needs so as to make them more useful to the consumers/learners.
- To emphasise learning more than teaching.
- To open the universities to the communities

Universities are expected to perform their roles in the promotion of continuous education in surroundings. There can be a number of ways to organise and provide the different activities and programmes of continuous education by the Universities, particularly in rural areas and their surroundings.



- University having the training manpower of teachers and students for the purpose of motivating the illiterate people of learning/acquiring literacy and professional skills.
- There can be provided functional literacy and also organised classes of neo-literate.
- There can be organised extension lectures by specialist of different fields such as agriculture, animal husbandry, handloom industries, science and technology, and also social sciences.
- University can organise skill development programmes for different age groups, keeping in view their vocational needs and backgrounds.
- University can also organise awareness development programmes related to health natural, diet, child caring, rearing practices and hygienic living.
- Development of relevant, need based suitable teaching-learning material for different age groups. Keeping in view, the reading interests of the different target groups. Similarly, the preparation of reading materials for neo-literate, has been great challenge in the promotion of literacy moments/drive including literacy campaign, Saakshar Bharat, Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat, Unnat Bharat Abhiyan and therefore, the universities are expected to take up the leadership role in this context.
- Capacity building and skills development, universities can also organised short term courses, workshops for craftsmen, artist, skill workers in order to update their level of technical knowhow as well as further up-gradation of their skills through hand-on-experience.
- Organisation of training programmes can also be done by the universities by social service volunteer for their services in the welfare activities of the local communities.
- University can establish linkage and coordination with different agencies of district/state level for giving the further movement and direction in this context of different ongoing Governments welfare programmes and schemes.
- Prepared short films/documentary for training purpose of farmers which may be developed and designed by science department and faculty in proper co-ordination with Krishi Kendras as per need and requirements of nearby villages.
- Universities may organise various awareness programmes like soils & crop related information, social issues, health, hygienic, cleanliness, plantation, drinking water, educational issues, legal literacy, political awareness etc. by using the facilities/resources available journalism and mass media department.
- Vocational programmes/training can be organised by universities for small crafts so that community members may enhances their earning.
- Resources sharing policies may be formulated by the universities so that the best use of resources may be done by the nearby villages for example University, School of Education can develop various resource centres/labs- ICT Labs, Language Lab, Psychology Lab, Mathematics, Art and Craft, Social Science and health & physical education resource centre. Theses may be used by various needy departments and nearby government schools for improving the quality of teaching-learning process and can also provide hand-on-training to the students and adults as well.

## Conclusion



On the basis of above discussion, it may be concluded that continuing education programmes deserve immediate and due attention so that adult population of the country can avail ample opportunities for learning different tasks and can upgrade their level of skills, which in turn, may prove beneficial from the point of their self-reliance and ability to earn through different earning generating sources. Universities can play an important and significant role in all round development of community by organising various types of programmes/activities like mass awareness, orientation, occupational & professional training about agriculture, social, educational and health issues. Special help groups may be created by the universities to help various groups of community for better understanding of the problems and solutions of the same by use of scientific advancement and technology.

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