

Source:- Developing Non-Formal Primary Education - A Rewarding Experience

Author: Naik, Chitra

CED .code R.N30.5

N30

DEVELOPING NON-FORMAL PRIMARY EDUCATION A REWARDING EXPERIENCE

This publication presents a summarized account of the action-research project on universalization of primary education conducted by the Indian Institute of Education from 1979 to 1984. More than 100 villages and habitations situated in five different agroclimatic areas of Pune district were covered for taking primary education to out-of-school children in the 9-14 age-group. As many as 4332 pupils (1095 boys and 3237 girls) were enrolled in part-time evening classes close to their homes. Of these pupils/ 4301 were engaged in full-time work either for wages or in household occupations and tasks. The initial survey of the five project areas conducted in 1979-80 showed that 3753 children of the 9-14 age-group were out of school. As the project progressed/ 579 children got added to the out-of-school group and joined the part-time classes. Three batches of classes were conducted/ each covering a two-year span. In the five year period of the project/ only 1035 pupils dropped out mainly due to marriage/ betrothal and migration. Regular testing of achievement showed good progress by the majority of the pupils. The classes were supported and supervised by the communities concerned. Towards the end of the project/ a demand has been voiced by local

leaders for more part-time education of girls and women. They also see the need for various types of continuing education/ both occupational and academic/ for all rural youth.

In 1985-86/ this action research project enters its second phase/ focused on diffusion of techniques and institutionalisation of the innovations evolved in the first phase. Officials of the Zilla Parishad/ State Government and personnel of voluntary agencies will be oriented towards adapting the innovations for organizing a viable system of primary education which emphasizes the quality and relevance of education. They would be expected to gain the understanding and skills essential to promote education as a collaborative enterprise of the officials/ community/ teachers/ and pupils. The orientation of the officials would help them to see that if one goes about it in the right way/ quality does not hamper quantity and that it is the two together that provide equality of educational opportunity.

This publication is based on the paper which I presented at a plenary session of the V World Congress on Comparative Education held in Paris on 2-6 July 1984 and also discussed in a seminar in Pedagogik Dritte Welt/ Frankfurt University/ Frankfurt/ in June 1984. The paper aroused considerable interest among the participants of the Congress/ particularly representatives of the Third World Countries which are facing the problem of universalization of primary education in circumstances of poverty similar to ours or even worse. The unconventional but theoretically sound teaching-learning techniques adopted in the project attracted the attention of educationists also. It is hoped that this publication will stimulate similar interest in other educationists/ educational planners, administrators, and voluntary workers who are anxious to reach the educationally unreached.

Chitra Naik
PROJECT DIRECTOR

Indian Institute of Education, Pune.
25th October, 1985.