

# **A Report of the Follow-up Field Survey for Assessment of Literacy Situation in Primary Education in Bangladesh, Nepal, and India**

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this paper is to record of the opinions and information presented by the experts and professionals concerning the development of literacy situation in Bangladesh, Nepal and India. The field survey was scheduled in 1991 after a UNESCO sponsored project titled the "Follow-up Field Survey for Assessment of Literacy Situation in Primary Education in the Selected Countries of Asia."

The field survey was conducted in the countries of Bangladesh (July 28-31, 1991), Nepal (July 31- Aug. 3, 1991), and India (Aug. 3-9, 1991) visiting major institutions related with the development of literacy situation. The authors found that (1) the maximum efforts were being taken to overcome the low literacy situation in three countries by the experts both the government and non-government organizations. This fact are clearly observed from the variety of programmes operated in the each country. (2) Even though, there are so many problems to solve the low literacy rate in these countries due to the lack of facilities, specialists and financial support.

## **1. Purpose of the Survey**

The purpose of this field survey was to undertake brief analysis of literacy situation and literacy materials available for use in primary education in the countries of Asia, particularly Bangladesh, India and Nepal. During the field survey, the authors had interviewed with a number of officials and specialists concerned in the development of basic education in the department of education, research and training institutions in each respected countries. The data and information collected during the field visit to government offices, institutions, and schools contributed to assess the current states and situations of the basic education in the respected three countries mentioned above.

Under this project, other two groups had conducted a similar field survey in the countries of China, Indonesia, The Philippines, and Thailand.

## 2. Methodologies

In this field survey, the data and information was collected by the direct interview method to the resource persons in their specialized positions concerning the development of basic education in the respected countries.

The authors' field survey was made after the consultation with officials and the specialists in the ministries/departments of education in each one of three countries.

More specifically, the authors conducted the field survey in the following framework; (i) To consult with personnels of ministry/departments of education in the selected three countries. (ii) To visit and consult with specialists responsible for development, training and research of educational (literacy) materials for primary schools. (iii) To consult with personnels of the non-government organizations involved in basic education. (iv) To collect and compile relevant literacy materials used for primary schools. (v) To visit and observe classes in primary schools and related programs in the field. (vi) To meet with the participants of the planning meeting, the project committee and officials and specialists associated with the project and review progress and finalize actions for initiation of envisaged for the project in countries involved. and (vii) Prepare a comprehensive final report.

## 3. The Low Literacy Rate at Risk

It is very regrettable to say that every one of the government statistics demonstrates the very low literacy rate in Bangladesh and Nepal, fairly low in India.

In Bangladesh, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics ed. (1990) presents the very perplexed picture as shown in Table I.

It is clearly understood from Table 1 that the literacy rate of both sex had decreased from 24.3% in 1974 to 23.8% in 1981. It might safely be said that this drop was brought in the change of definition of literacy. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (1990) states that 'the 1974 census defined literacy as the ability of both read and write in any language, while in 1981 Census a person was treated as literate if he could write a letter in any language. However, it is remarkable to see that the literacy rate could not be improved well for 8 years from 1974 to 81. A careful attention has to be put upon the literacy rate of female is about the half of that of male. It should be stressed that the gap in literacy rate between male and female population is another crucial issue.

**Table 1.** Literacy Rate for Population 5 Years and Above in Bangladesh (1974 and 1981 Population Censuses)

	1974		1981		
Both Sex	Male	Female	Both Sex	Male	Female
24.3%	32.9%	14.8%	23.8%	31.0%	16.0%

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics ed. (1990), p. 566.

**Table 2.** Literacy Rate in India: 1951-1991

Year	Both Sex	Males	Females
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86
1961	28.31	40.40	15.34
1971	34.45	45.95	21.97
1981	43.56 (41.42)	56.37 (53.45)	29.75 (28.46)
1991	52.11	63.86	39.42

Notes: 1. Literacy rates for 1951, 1961 and 1971 relate to population group aged five years and above. The rates for the years 1981 and 1991 relates to the population group aged seven years and above. The literacy rates for the population aged five years and above in 1981 have been shown in brackets.

2. The 1981 rates exclude Assam where the 1981 Census could not be conducted. The 1991 Census rates exclude Jammu and Kashmir where the 1991 Census is yet to be conducted.

Source: Nanda, A.R. ed. (1991), p. 59.

**Table 3.** Number of Literate and Illiterate among Population aged seven years and above - India: 1981-91 (in 000's)

Literate/Illiterate	Persons	Male	Female
<b>Literate</b>			
1981	233,947	156,953	76,994
1991	352,082	224,288	127,794
Increase in 1991 over 1981	118,135	67,335	50,800
<b>Illiterate</b>			
1981	301,933	120,902	181,031
1991	324,030	126,694	197,336
Increase in 1991 over 1981	22,097	5,792	16,305

Notes: 1. The figures exclude Assam and Jammu & Kashmir. For Assam, the 1991 figures are not available as the 1981 Census could not be held there, while for Jammu and Kashmir the 1991 figures are not yet available as the 1991 Census is yet to be conducted there.

2. Figures of literate population for 1991 are as per the provisional results of the 1991 Census. The figures of illiterate population aged seven years and above are estimated figures based on certain assumptions on population age structure and are likely to undergo change.

Source: Nanda, A.R. ed. (1991), p. 61.

The government source of Nepal tells us the literacy rate for 1990-91 is 39.2% (Total, 56.9% (Male) and 21.7% (Female)). These percentage shows the little higher rate than that of Bangladesh. Here again it must be noticed that the female literacy rate is less than the half of that of male.

Observing the increase in literacy rate in Bangladesh and Nepal, one might have a bright hope that

literacy situation in the countries in South Asia is being improved in the future. However, the reality is going to the opposite direction in India.

According to the Census of India 1991, it is clearly shown that the literacy rate has been improved since 1951 as shown in Table 2.

One might be shocked by realizing that the absolute number of illiterate people in India during the decade 1981-91 has been increased little more than 22 million of the population aged seven years and above. This dramatic figure can be seen in Table 3.

It is very unfortunate to understand that in India alone the illiterate people (population aged seven years and above) has increased in 22 million during the decade 1981-1991, and out of them more than 16 million was female population. This is not only the social problems in India, but also the big problems for the all human beings in the rest of the world.

#### **4. Government and Non-Government Organizations for Enhancing the Functional Literacy**

Many organizations both government and non-government are very active for the enhancement of the functional literacy in three countries we surveyed. We had an impression that the efforts by those organizations are reaching at the full stage with their high spirit and activities.

However it became very clear that the improvement of illiteracy situation has not been reached yet with the level of satisfaction. This might be attributed by the fact that there are many difficulties for the implementation of the effective ideas and programmes due to the under-development of socio-economic infrastructure in three countries.

The authors have made visit to many organizations and institutions in three countries in order to grasp the progress of programmes and projects concerning the functional literacy.

##### **4-1. A Case of Bangladesh**

###### **1. Ministry of Education (July 28, 1991: 14:00-15:00)**

Interviewed with Mr. Mohammad Abul Hossain, Director General. Dy. Director and Asst. Director, Directorate of Primary Education

1) In the course of discussion, major projects regarding the enhancing the literacy in the country were presented as follows; (1) General Education Programme—The project year is for 1991-95. The World Bank and UNESCO are the major sponsor of the project. (2) Mass Literacy Programme—It is the central project directly managed by the Government. (3) Comprehensive Primary Education—The problem here is the very high rate of drop-out from the schools. The drop-out at the 5th grade which is the final year of primary education is as high as 65.0%, though the enrolment at the 1st grade is 80.0% of the same age group. (4) A number of programmes for the improvement of literacy situation by the NGOs.

2) In terms of curriculum development, the discussion of National Curriculum was underway. The new curriculum will be introduced in the 1st grade in 1992, 2nd grade in 1993 and then grade by grade for the coming year. It is the government custom of this country that the Curriculum Committee is always discussing new curriculum at one time for two years.

3) It was very interested to note that there is a gap between the male and female teachers for their qualifications. For the secondary school teacher certificate, the requirement for male teachers is 12 years of education and one year of teacher training education. But for the female teachers, the requirement is 10 years of education and one year of teacher training education.

2. Mass Education Programme, Ministry of Education (July 29, 1991: 10:00–11:00)

Interviewed with: Prof. S.M. Saifuddin, Executive Director,

Mr. M.D. Nurul Islam Molla, Dy. Director (Planning),

Dr. Fazlur Rahman, Dy. Director (Training)

Mr. Sk.Golam Mostafa, Dy. Director (Administration)

Mr. Raushan Ara Begum, Dy. Director (Curriculum)

Mr. Asfa Banu, Asst. Director (Curriculum)

Mr. Nesar Ahmed, Asst. Director

1) The term 'Mass Education' in Bangladesh is used as an equal definition to 'Non-Formal Education', of which concept has been long neglected in the country. The programme and idea of Mass Education in Bangladesh was initially introduced in 1980. However, its programme could not present much progress, because the lack of experiences in adapting the more scientific approach.

2) The Ministry of Education decided to establish the office for Mass Education Programme in 1987, and formed the Implementing Committee at the Central Government. Under the Executive Director and four Deputy Directors (Administration, Curriculum, Planning, and Documentation) are organized. Today, it has 32 staffs in all in the office.

3) The target age group under the Mass Education Programme is the age group between 11 and 35, which is further divided into two groups, one for Adolescent (age 11–14) and the other for Adult (age 15 – 35). In a more strict sense, the government has the official definition for the different age groups, namely the children of 3–5 years old comes under the pre-school education; the 6–10 years old under the formal education, the 8–14 years old under the non-formal education, and the 15 years old and above under the mass education.

4) Subject areas: Reading, writing and arithmetic are the three important subject areas for the enhancing the level of basic education under the programme.

5) Reformation of the administrative system:

The Ministry of Education has commenced the new project for reforming the administrative system for enhancing the literacy education throughout the country. Under the new project, 64 district will be having the District Resource Center. Since 1987, Upazilla (Sub-District) Education Officer was responsible for the mass literacy programme as a part time job.

6) Achievement of the Mass Education Programme upto June 1991: There are two categories in the mass education center; one run by the government and the other by the NGOs. The number of working government centers count 4080 with 4080 teachers and 157,000 learners. The number of NGO's center counts 9114 with 9114 teachers and 361,000 learners. Thus the total number of centers for mass education is 13,194 with 13,194 teachers and 518,000 learners, in which 35% of the total is female learners.

7) The qualification of teacher at the center is the person completed 8 years of school education. They will work on voluntary base and be paid TK (Taka) 200 per month as salary.

8) The teachers at the center is being required to attend the training programme organized by the Government under the Mass Education Programme: Required training time period is 144 hours for the 1st level, 96 hours for the 2nd level, and 48 hours for the 3rd level, of which total period comes to 288 hours.

9) Achievement upto June 1991 by the Mass Education Programme: They have developed the followings; (1) Primer I, (2) Teacher's Guide of the Primer, (3) 4 types of posters, (4) One follow-up book, (5) One motivational book, (6) One directory on NGO's work, (7) Attendance-cum-Register Book, (8) Sub-vention Criteria, (9) Internal Evaluation of Mass Education Programme, and (10) Exercise book in press.

10) Teaching/Learning materials to be given to each center:

Under the Mass Education Programme, each center will receive the following ten items of teaching/ learning materials; For each learner, (1) Chalk Board, (2) Duster, (3) Primer (Text book), (4) Exercise book, (5) Pencil. And for each center, (1) Kerosene lantern, and (2) Chalks.

### 3. National Curriculum and Textbook Board, Ministry of Education

(July 29, 1991: 11:00-13:00)

Interviewed with Mr. Abdus Subhan, Chairman, NCTB and other nine curriculum specialists.

1) This office is primarily responsible for the development of national curriculum for elementary and secondary schools, and for the development of textbooks especially for primary schools in Bangladesh. There are 33 curriculum unit specialists, covering the four major fields; (1) Vocational and Non-formal education, (2) Primary Education, Secondary Education, and (4) Moral (Religious) Education.

2) Since the introduction of the Universal Primary Education Project in 1986, the Ministry of Education is trying to complete the implementation of primary education for the age group of 5 and over for five years based on the Constitution.

3) The revision of the National Curriculum began in 1986. The Ministry of Education developed 18 objectives and 54 Terminal Competencies, which was brought by the basic idea from British curriculum.

4) The revised national curriculum will be implemented in the 1st grade in 1992 along with the newly developed textbooks. It will take five years to implement the national curriculum at all grades from one to five.

5) Under the new National Curriculum, the subject-wise periods in a week is as follows; (1) Mother Tongue (Language): 6 period/6 days, (2) Mathematics: 6 period/6 days, (3) English: 3 period/6 days, (4) Environment study: 3 period/6 days for 1st to 3rd grades. Social Sciences: 3 period/6 days, Science: 3 period/6 days, (5) Religion which includes Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Christianity: 2 period/6 days, (6) Physical Education: 2 period/6 days, (7) Art and Craft: 2 period/6 days, and (8) Music: one period/6 days. It must be noted here that the schools in Bangladesh takes Friday as a holiday based on the Islamic calendar.

6) The standard school days in a year is 210 and 24 per week. The schooling hour and timing in a day is 4 period from 10:00 to 12:00 for 1st and 2nd graders, and 4 from 12:00-15:00 for 3rd period and 5th graders.

4. Bangladesh Literacy Society, NGO (July 30, 1991: 09:30–10:45)

Interviewed with: Professor Md. Osman Ghani, Founder Secretary and Dy. Secretary General.

1) The Society was established on November 23, 1975 after 4 years of personal management by Professor Osman Ghani in his firm belief that “education for all is the only remedy of all the prevailing problems in the country”. Since then with the strong leadership by Prof. Ghani, the Society has made a tremendous progress for the enhancement of literacy of the people in Bangladesh.

2) According to a draft report prepared for presentation on 23rd November, 1991, at the 16th founding anniversary of the Society, Prof. Ghani stated clearly the Society’s main aim and objectives as follows; BLS aims at social development through promoting social awareness, providing functional literacy education and skill development training to the illiterate population of the age group 11–35, specially those who belong to disadvantaged section, non-formal primary education for the disadvantaged (out of formal school system) adolescent and children along with non-formal primary school development assistance, population education and services for planned parenthood, developing libraries for the neo-literates in the Mass Reading Centers (Literacy Centers), community motivation for schooling of the un-schooled school-age children (6–10) under formal system, organizing community savings, and generating income out of the savings for at least Primary Education for the disadvantaged children. (pp. 1–2)

3) The Society started the first Night Literacy Center in a government primary school in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh. Today, the Society is managing over 500 literacy centers in the country. And over 600 volunteers are working as teachers and coordinators.

4) The Society has developed teaching/learning materials of over 18 different topics. Those materials are mostly life and vocation based one in order to provide the learners more needy knowledge and skills for the betterment of the living.

5. Dhaka Ahsania Mission, (NGO) (July 31, 1991: 09:30–11:00)

Interviewed with: Mr. Kazi Rafiqul Alam, Executive Director, and A Programme Officer.

1) Dhaka Ahsania Mission was established in 1958. The Mission works for socio-economic development of the poor-men, women and children in both rural and urban settings. It provides a package of development support services including education, skill development training, and credit for economic activities. The main thrust of the Mission is to provide education which is considered as entry point for all other socio-economic development. The education programme of the Mission has been designed in such a manner as to ultimately in transforming the illiterate population as development agent which is the ultimate goal of all activities of the Mission. (Dhaka Ahsania Mission ed., no date, p. 1)

2) The education programme of the Mission is a comprehensive and integrated one for the various ages, grouped as follows: (1) Non-formal Education Programme for the primary school age group children; (2) Non-formal Education Programme for the adolescents; and (3) Non-formal Education Programme for adults. The first one – Non-formal Education Programme for the primary age group children contains three sub-groups; (a) Pre-primary education (b) Early primary education; and (c) Primary education for the children. (Dhaka Ahsania Mission ed., no date, p. 1)

3) According to the information given by the Mission, it was operating 300 of non-formal education

centers with 28,668 students in 1988–89. The location of those centers are spread over 18 Upazillas (sub-district) in 5 districts.

4) The Mission is using the originally developed textbooks at the centers. Their textbooks are of course oriented to help learners the basic reading, writings, numeracy, and more practical matter for their living and vocations.

#### 4-2. A Case of Nepal

##### 1 Ministry of Education and Culture (July 31, 1991: 11:00–12:00)

Interviewed with: Mr. Dil B. Shrestha, Under Secretary, Adult Education Section.

1) The Adult Education Section is responsible to the basic literacy education for two age groups, namely, one group of age 15–45 years old, and the other of age 8–14 years old of out of school children. It covers government institutions and also non-government institutions.

2) For strengthening the literacy education in the country, the Adult Education Section had developed posters and four primers for the use of basic literacy education by 1985. One primer is the basic textbook which shall be used for 6 months course with 300 hours contents.

3) Since 1983, the Adult Education Section has been putting its focus on the basic literacy education for out of school children, especially for girl's education as the gap of the literacy rate between boys and girls are so big.

4) Mr. Shrestha pointed out the critical problem of high rate of drop-out from the primary school in Nepal. Only about 40% of children tend to complete 5th grade of primary education. The major reasons of drop-out from schooling, he suggested, (1) Less-interest by children in continuing schooling due to the lack of well trained teacher; (2) Girls easily give-up of schooling, which causes the relatively high rate of drop-out; and (3) Very poor household economy which does not allow the children to continue schooling. As a matter of fact, one of the very disturbing elements of basic literacy education in Nepal, Mr. Dil B. Shrestha told, is the traditional teaching method which is dominated by the rote memorization of the facts.

##### 2. The Curriculum and Textbooks and Supervision Development

Center (CTSDC), Government of Nepal (August 1, 1991: 15:15–17:00)

Interviewed with: Ms. Nani Hira Kansakar, Chief of CTSDC, Bimal L. Shrestha, Head, Primary Materials Unit and other unit specialists.

1) The major functions of the CTSDC is to develop curriculum as well as textbooks for the grades 1 to 10 of formal education.

2) The school system in Nepal was 3–4–3 system when the new school system first introduced in the country. This system was taken over by 5–2–3 in 1981. Since 1987, the 5–5 system has been established throughout the country. The first 5 years is taken as the primary education and the next 5 years as secondary education.

3) Since the introduction of the idea of the Universal Primary Education developed by the UNESCO into Nepal five years ago, several reformation projects of primary education had started.

4) The major objectives of reformation of primary education are (1) the development of the new



national curriculum, and (2) the new materials development.

5) In the course of discussion for reformation, people criticized three points on the old system. They are (1) overload, (2) poor illustration of the textbook, and (3) no-contents methodology in built. Over all, the traditional rote memorization was strongly criticized.

6) By the beginning of 1992, newly edited textbook for the 1st grade will be published for three subject areas, namely Literacy, Numeracy, and Society. A textbook and a work book is a set for each subject area. Other subject areas such as Science, Social Studies, Health Education, Environmental Education, Population Education, are under progress for the publication.

7) School year differs in regions; at Hill area: January – December, at Kathmandu Valley area: April – March. It has five school days and Saturday and Sunday are school holiday. It keeps 180 school days in a year. School hour is 30 periods (One period is 45 minutes) in a week for the 1st and 2nd graders. Every day, school begins at 10:00 and ends at 14:30. For the grades 3–5, 35 to 36 period per week system is applied.

8) Non-Formal Education (NFE) has been conducted in five different projects since 1987. (1) Out-of school children school, (2) Women Education Programme (WEP), (3) Adult Literacy Programme, (4) Village Learning Center, and (5) Environmental Education Programme.

9) Outline of the Out of School Children School;

The aim of out of school children school is to give a chance of learning to those who has no chance to go to the formal education school with any reasons. The target age group is 8–14 years old children. The important point of this programme is the linkage between the formal and non-formal educations. One child who complete 9 months course at an out of school children school will be able to join the 3rd grade class at a formal education school. Like wise, after 18 months schooling at an out of school children school, they will be able to join the 5th grade classes.

10) The standard curriculum at the out of school children school is so planned as 225 days in a year and 450 school hours, which means the two hours study per day at the centers.

11) A teacher of out of school children school must hold the Secondary School Certificate (SSC), which requires the completion of 10 years schooling.

12) The standard salary for teachers is 300 Nepal rupees per month in the case of a male teacher, and 400 rupees in the case of a female teacher. The salary gap between male and female teachers resulted in the difficulties of getting female teachers for women's education in Nepal.

3. Research Center for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID), Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu (August 1, 1991: 11:00–12:00)

Interviewed with Dr. Radha Krishna Joshi, Associate Professor & Senior Researcher.

1) The CERID was established in 1975 under the national Education Committee, Government of Nepal. It became a part of the Tribhuvan University in 1979 and is now one of the 4 Research Centers of the University. The CERID is an educational research organization that undertakes various research activities, evaluate research studies and innovative education projects.

2) The authors were very much impressed by their high spirit in conducting educational researches.

3) The research reports published by the CERID covers very wide range of field in education such as Educational Management and Planning, Curriculum and Instructions, Education and Rural Development, Higher Education, Educational Technology, Project Evaluation, Educational Evaluation, and

#### Educational Statistics.

4) One of the major reports entitled "Wastage in Primary Education in Nepal" was very informative research about the basic difficulties in developing primary education in Nepal.

#### 4-3. A Case of India

1. Indian Institute of Education (IIE) and State Resource Center for Non-Formal Education, Poona. (August 5: 10:00-16:30)

Interviewed with Professor Saytri Shahani, Director of IIE. Dr. Vasant Dhamankar, Dy. Director, State Resource Center for Non-Formal Education, IIE. Ms. Suman Karandikar. Madhu Patil, Artist; Mr. Balkrishna Bokil, Dist. Resource Unit.; Mr. Vasant Kulkarni, Specialist of Audio Visual.

1) The Indian Institute of Education was established in 1948 in Bombay. Its founder, J.P. Naik, conceived it as a dynamic center of research and action for the formulation of educational policies and programmes appropriate to the Indian situation, as also to similar situations in other developing countries. In 1976, the Institute was shifted to Poona, where better facilities became available for its growing programmes. It is now affiliated to the University of Poona for M. Phil. and Ph.D. Courses in Education. (IIE ed. no date)

2) There are six centers attached to the IIE. Those centers are (1) Center for Educational Studies, (2) State Resource Center for Non-Formal Education, (3) Center for Application of Science and Technology for Rural Development (CASTFORD), (4) Vidnyan Ashram in Pabal, (5) Shramik Vidya-peeth, and (6) G.D. Parikh Center for Educational Studies in Bombay. (IIE ed. no date)

3) The IIE is a center for the Asian Programme for Educational Innovation and Development (APEID). It has been conducting programmes relating to girl's primary education and non-formal primary education under contact with UNESCO/PROAP. (IIE ed. no date)

4) All the activities of the IIE has been deeply influenced by the founder, Dr. J.P. Naik's philosophy of democratic decentralization in education. His most concern was to keep the people's health in good condition and to provide a better education in rural areas.

5) The State Resource Center for Non-Formal Education aims at (1) Training of teachers, (2) Teaching/Learning material development for pre-literacy, basic literacy, past literacy, and continuing education, (3) Publication of 150 title textbooks, (4) Development of non-printed materials such as slide, audio-tape, video-tape. Target age group is 15-35's old. Most of them is the products for last 3 years.

6) Regarding the promotion of the non-formal education in India, IIE Model and MF (Madhya Pradesh) Model are very well known in the public. The IIE Model was developed in 1979-84 when Dr. Chitra Naik, then the daughter of Dr. J.P. Naik, the founder, became the Honorary Director of the IIE after taking the Directorship (1976-78).

7) The IIE Model for the non-formal education is well demonstrated in the book titled 'Developing Non-formal primary education - A Rewarding Experience' written by Dr. Chitra Naik in 1988.

8) There are several significances in the IIE. The first point is the emphasis on the development of locally relevant teaching materials. The second is that the selection of the project areas has deep concerns about the climatic factors to ensure the development of different agro-materials. The third is to expect the full community participation since the planning stage.

9) The IIE Model sets its objectives as follows; (1) To evolve a system of part-time primary education for out-of-school rural children in the 9–14 age-group. (2) To develop a suitable curriculum, (3) To produce relevant teaching learning materials, (4) To evolve materials, techniques and organization for training teachers of non-formal primary classes, and (5) To develop a community-based system of planning, organizing, monitoring, supervising and evaluating non-formal primary education. (Chitra Naik (1988), p. 10).

## 2. Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum

Research, Poona (August 5: 14:30–16:00)

Interviewed with Dr. Suresh G. Garsole, Special Officer for Geography.

1) Maharashtra State Bureau of Textbook Production and Curriculum Research was sponsored by the Government of Maharashtra on 27th January 1967 as per the recommendations of the Kothari Commission to provide quality textbooks for Standards I to VII and make them available for students at reasonable price. It is an autonomous body registered under the Societies Registrations Act, and Charitable trust under the Public Trust Act (MSBTPCR Brouchur).

2) Every state of India has the same institutions for the development of curriculum and textbooks for Standards I to IV.

3) Objectives of the State Bureau: (1) Plan, prepare and publish school textbooks in seven media of instruction i.e. Marathi, Hindi, English, Urdu, Gujarati, Kannada and Sindhi. (2) Stock, sell and distribute the textbooks published. (3) Plan, prepare and publish non-textual instructional materials and educational aids. (4) Undertake research and publish research materials in the areas of school textbooks and curriculum development. (Director of MSBTPCR ed. no date)

## 3. National Literacy Mission (NLM), Ministry of Human Resource and Development, New Delhi.

(August 7: 09:00–09:30)

Interviewed with Dr. L. Mishra, Joint Secretary

1) The National Literacy Mission was established on May 5, in 1988. The aim of the Mission is to promote the total literacy in India.

2) The category and the target group for the total literacy in India is as follows; (1) Universal Primary Education–6–8 Years old age group, (2) Non-Formal Education – 9–14 years old age group, and (3) Adult Education – 15–35 years old age.

3) The Mission's objective is to impart functional literacy to 80 million illiterate persons in 15 – 35 age group, 30 million by 1990 and additional 50 million by 1995. (MHRD ed. (1988), p. 14.)

4) The prescribed levels in three R's mentioned in the booklet (MHRD ed. (1989), p. 54.) is a very good sample for understanding the level of literacy to be attained in India. Readings: (a) Reading aloud with normal accent simple passage on a topic related to the interest of the learners at a speed of 30 words per minute. (b) Reading silently small paragraphs in simple language at a speed of 35 words per minutes. (c) Reading with understanding road signs, posters, simple instructions and newspapers for neo-literates etc. (d) Ability to follow simple written message relating to one's working and living environment.

Writing: (a) Copying with understanding at a speed of seven words per minute. (b) Taking dictation

at a speed of five words per minute. (c) Writing with proper spacing and alignment. (d) Writing independently short letters and applications and forms of day-to-day use to the learners.

Numeracy: (a) To read and write 1-100 numerals. (b) Doing simple calculations without fraction involving addition, subtraction, subtraction upto three digits and multiplication and divisions by two digits. (c) Working knowledge of metric units of weights, measures, currency, distance and area and units of time: (d) Broad idea of proportion and interest (without involving fractions) and their use in working and living conditions. (MHRD ed. (1989), pp. 54-55).

4. Central Institute of Education, Delhi University, and the Attached Primary School (August 7: 11:00-12:30)

Interviewed with Professors Nargis Panchapakesan and Jeradin and other Professors of the Institute.

1) The followings are the difficulties and problems disturbing the effectiveness in primary education in India which were mentioned by Prof. Jeradin: (1) Enrolment of children at the schools, (2) Retention of children at the schools, (3) Insufficient facilities of the schools (60% of primary schools in India has only one or two teachers.), (4) Low level of achievement, especially in the case of mathematics and language, (5) Disparities in level of primary education, (6) Curriculum of primary education (It is said that the curriculum of primary education is not practical but highly academic oriented. This question arises from the fact that 50% of children will stop schooling at 5th grade.), (7) Too many language education in the primary education. (According to the new curriculum implemented in 1986, all children has to begin three language study from 3rd grade.), (8) Too many single class in rural areas, (9) Budget problem (Imbalance of the budget between primary and secondary education (The ratio for primary and secondary was 55% to 45% in 1951. In 1990, the ratio is 29% for primary and 71% for secondary.

2) The Government of India introduced the new educational development policy in 1986 with the implementation of new national curriculum and two major projects for improving of quality of education. One project is the Operation Black Board which emphasis on (1) the improvement of school facilities with minimum 2 rooms and 2 teachers, and (2) on activity orientation method which includes the provision of science kits and books, and more stress on art work. Second project is to enhancing the training of teachers at the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET). In 1991, the training workshop was held at 200 districts.

5. National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi (NCERT) (August 7: 17:00-17:30)

Interviewed with Dr. K. Gopalan, Director.

1) The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) was established in New Delhi on 1st September 1961 for providing academic support in improving the quality of school education in India. It is the academic adviser to the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) of the Government of India. The Ministry draws upon NCERT's expertise while formulating and implementing policies and programmes in the areas of school and teacher education. Funded by the Government of India, this autonomous organization is registered under Societies Registration Act

(1860). (NCERT ed., 1991a).

2) The functions of the NCERT broadly relate to (a) research and development, (b) in-service and pre-service training and (c) extension and dissemination work – all these tuned to achieve the main objective of improving the quality of school education. The NCERT, therefore, (i) develops curriculum, instructional and exemplar materials, methods of teaching techniques of evaluation, teaching aids, kits and equipments, learning resources, etc; (ii) organizes pre-service training of teachers, teacher educators and other education personnels; (iii) conducts and promotes educational research; (iv) disseminates improved educational techniques and practices and research findings, and (v) acts as a clearing house for ideas and information on all matters relating to school education and teacher education (NCERT ed., 1991a)

3) The NCERT functions through six constituent units viz. (a) National Institute of Education (NIE), (b) Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET) – both located at New Delhi main campus – and four Regional Colleges of Education (RCEs) at Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar and Mysore. (NCERT ed., 1991a).

6. Department of Non-Formal Education, NCERT (August 7: 14:15–15:15)

Interviewed with Prof. C.J. Daswani, Head of the Department

Dr. Shrivastha, Education of SC/ST.

Dr. Sharma, Reader of Science and Environmental Studies.

Dr. Arora, Lecturer of Education.

Dr. Neerja Shukla, Reader of Psychology and Evaluation.

Dr. Awasthi, Anthropologist, Education SC/ST.

Dr. Chatunvedi, Language Education.

1) The Department of Non-Formal Education conducts the educational research mainly on the problems of out-of-school children for age group 6–14 years old. Today about 50 million of children is estimated as the out-of-school children out of 120 million of 6–14 years old age group.

2) There are about 300,000 non-formal education centers including the centers managed by NGOs. The 80% out of 300,000 centers are managed by the government.

3) The Department of Non-Formal Education focuses upon the development of curriculum and learning materials for four subject areas, namely, Language, Math, Science, and Environmental Studies,

4) One of the difficulties to overcome the universalization of primary education in India is to provide the quality of education to the scheduled tribes. In India, there are 212 scheduled tribes with 600 different languages. Here the most difficult matter is the selection of language to be used for textbooks and also for teaching media. The basic rule for language to be used is that if a tribes of their own language shall be used for more than 100,000 people, then their own language shall be used for instruction and textbook, The state official language shall be adopted for the primary level of education, if the population of a tribes is less than 100,000. The Department of Non-Formal Education so far developed the textbooks of five different tribal languages. The textbooks written in Gondi (Andra Pradesh), Lrula (Tamil Nadu), Soora (Orissa) are the examples.

5) The Dept. of Non-Formal Education is organizing a workshop of tribal languages for 60 teachers in a year.

6. Department of Pre-School and Elementary Education, NCERT (August 7: 15: 0-17:00)  
Interviewed with Prof. R. Muralidharan, Head of the Department

1) This Department focuses on the research and development for pre-school and elementary of formal education.

2) The reform of education in 1986 gave a great impact on the idea and principles of elementary education in India. For tradition, the educational methodology in India was paid attention on more teacher based one. Since the reformation, the new idea which pays more attention to the children based methodology. This change brought about the change in contents of textbooks which emphasis on more activities of children than the knowledge.

3) The department developed a language and a mathematics textbook with teachers guide in 1987-88. The revised edition will be published in 1993. They also developed a teacher's guide for the environmental studies. These textbooks and teacher's guides will be expected to be the models from which every state resource centers might learn for editing textbooks for the use in their state.

4) The department has developed a number of variety of textbooks and teaching materials for pre-school children. Some of them are; (1) About ten sheets for Early Childhood Education, (2) 8 varieties of language books, (3) 10 different story books, (4) An explaining sheet of seven colours, (5) 13 sets of self learning module of Hindi language. (6) 8 sets of self learning math. module.

7. Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET) NCERT, New Delhi (August 8: 11:30-12:30)  
Interviewed with Ms. Jai Chandiram and Joint Director.

1) The Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET) functions as one of the consultant units of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). It was set up in 1984 by the merger of the Center for Educational Technology and the Department of Teaching Aids of the NCERT with the objective of promoting the use of educational technology, particularly mass media, in the improvement and spread of education in the country and for the development alternative systems of education. (NCERT ed., 1991b, p. 1).

2) Functions of the CIET: (1) Designing alternative learning systems to deal with problems in education. (2) Orientation of educational planners, administrators and educators to the concept of educational technology and to the development, production and utilization of systems, programmes and materials through educational technology. (3) Training in specialized areas such as radio/audio/television/video production and low-cost teaching aids as well as use and maintenance of equipments. (4) Production of audio-visual educational materials in TV, Radio, Film and other low-cost aids. (5) Research and evaluation to test and improve systems, methods and materials. (6) Extension services for supplying and screening of educational films/video tapes/audio tapes to Doordarshan (National TV Network), and ET & T for transmission and sales. (7) Consultancy for educational technology and distance education programmes, and (8) Working as a coordinating agency and clearing house for educational technology with MHRD, State and International Organizations and UN agencies. (NCERT ed., 1991b, pp. 1-2)

3) Funding: CIET has been funded MHRD with assistance provided by UNDP/UNESCO/UNICEF. (NCERT ed., 1991b, p. 3.)

4) Major Activities: CIET is engaged in the development of an alterative system of education using

television through INSAT reach in- and out-of-school rural children and teachers.

The INSAT for Education Project covers six states, where State Institutes of Educational Technology (SIET) have been established. The ETV programmes produced by the CIET and SIETs are telecast viz INSAT and relayed by all high and low power transmissions in eleven states and the Union Territory of Chandigarh.

These programmes are produced and telecast for children the age-group 5–8 and 9–11 years and teachers. They are telecast daily, in the morning for three hours, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, six days in a week for about 300 school-days, including summer vacation, on a time-sharing basis (45 minutes per language). The programmes on Saturdays are meant for the teachers. (NCERT ed, 1991b, pp. 3–4)

5) Ms. Jai Chandiram, Joint Director of the CIET, stressed on the importance of development of educational materials with the package system, which includes printed materials, audio-visuals, audio-cassettes, videos, slides, etc. This package system will help teachers to choose the best method for class room where the level of facilities are very different from region to region, especially in the rural areas.

#### 8. Departments of Education in Social Sciences and Humanities

(DESS 8 H) National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) (August 8: 14:15–16:15)

Interviewed with Mr. V.K. Bajpai (English), Ms. Savita Sinha (Geography), Ms. Manjurani (Civics and Political Science), Dr. Bratna (Art Education), Mr. K.R.P. Singh (Physical Education), Ms. S. Luthra (Hindi), and Mr. S. Pandey (Hindi).

1) The DESS & H is responsible for the development of curriculum and textbooks for the formal education.

2) The DESS & H produces textbooks in four different languages, namely, Hindi, English, Urdu, and Sanskrit.

3) It must be noted that the language education is little complicated in India. The principal is the three language education in primary schools in India. The first language to be taught is the mother tongue of the region. The second language is English which start either 5th or 6th grade. The third language course starts at 7th grade in which Hindi or other state's language in India can be taught.

4) The standard period for the first language is 6 period per week. In the case of second language, standard period is 6 per week. Then the 3rd language is scheduled to teach 3 period per week.

5) The different language skills are observed for 2nd and 3rd languages: For the 2nd language, the skill development is expected, in order, as Listening-Speaking-Reading-Writing, and as for the 3rd language, Reading-Writing-Listening-Speaking in order.

#### 9. National Book Trust, India, New Delhi (August 9: 09:00–11:00)

Interviewed with Mr. Ananda Sarup, Chairman and Mr. Arvind Kumar, Director.

1) The National Book Trust, India was established in 1957 as a catalytic agency to promote the reading habit and disseminate information about the availability of books. To meet the needs of people of all ages all over the country, the Trust was also expected to publish books and encourage publishing in the private and public sections. (National Book Trust ed., no date)

2) The National Book Trust has published over 4,800 titles in the Indian languages and in English. The Trust now has a very large range of titles for all ages and segments of the population in 13 languages of India. (National Book Trust ed., no date)

3) Regarding the textbooks, the Trust is publishing supplementary books for the children over grade 3.

4) Major activities other than publishing books, the Trust is conducting Book Exhibitions and Book Fairs regularly at major cities of India since 1966. The Trust has over 250 staffs in 1991.

5) The Chairman told us that there is a very disturbing factors for the publication of books in India. This is simply because of the multi-language nature of society in India. The Trust is always facing the problem for translating one language into other 12 languages. It requires a very time consuming work along with the high cost of translation.

7) The Chairman has suggested us that the development of simultaneous translating software, so that the Trust will be able to cut the time and the cost of publication for activising its management.

## 5. Concluding Remarks

The authors were deeply impressed by the fact that every government and non-government organizations visited during the field survey were taking very strong initiatives to eradicate illiterate population in respected countries through various programmes. It might be noteworthy to understand that the definitions and their target age groups vary from country to country.

In Bangladesh, the Mass Education Programme since 1987 by the Ministry of Education was the key programme for eradicating illiterate population. The term of Mass Education was used as same as Non-Formal Education and its target age group was 11 to 35 years old.

In Nepal, the Adult Education Section in the Ministry of Education started the Non-Formal Education Programme since 1983, and covered the age group of 15 to 45 years old. The Ministry has been managing the non-formal education programme since 1987 in five different project areas such as the Out of School Children School, the Women Education Programme, the Adult Literacy Programme, the Village Learning Center, and the Environmental Education Programme. In India, the National Literacy Mission was established by the Ministry of Human Resource Development in 1988 to overcome the problems of illiteracy. The one of the interesting system can be seen in three categories of programmes covering the different age groups such as the Universal Primary Education (6–8 years old), the Non-Formal Education (9–14), and the Adult Education (15–35). However, the National Council of Educational Research and Training which is another government organization takes another criteria of age group 6–14 years old for the Non-Formal Education. The Indian Institute of Education which is the Maharashtra State government organization takes the age group of 15–35 years old for the Non-Formal Education Programme.

It might be said that the year 1987 for Bangladesh and Nepal, and 1988 for India was the terming point in the history for eradicating the illiterate population through the strong commitment of the central government in three countries of South Asia.

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