



## A critical analysis of adult education curriculum

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Deepak Kumar Pradhan, <sup>2</sup>Dr. Sujata Acharya

<sup>1</sup>Lecturer in Education, Sukinda College, Sukinda, Jajpur, Odisha, India

<sup>2</sup>Principal, Adwaita Mission Training College, Bihar, India

### Abstract

The main objective of this paper is to analysis adult education curriculum (Primer) and find out the gender biasness in the curriculum. From the analysis it was observed that out of nine units of total literacy primer one, six units were gender friendly and remaining three were gender biased. Out of this three, two supported the female gender and one supported the male gender on the other hand out of nine units of total literacy Programme primer two five units were gender friendly and only four units were gender biased. Out of the four genders biased content one supported to the female and three unit's content supported to the male. However Out of nine units of six units of primer three were gender friendly and only four units were gender biased. Out of four genders biased units three units supported to female and only one supported to male. In case of post literacy primer one, out of 9 units, 5units were gender friendly and four units were gender biased. Out of the three units both two unit support to the male and one unit supported female whereas out of nine units of post-literacy primer two, five units were gender friendly and four units were gender biased. Out of 4 units both three unit support to the female and only one unit supported to the male. On the other hand out of ten units of continuing education book, five units were covers prose and two unit poem and three unit cover story. From these ten units 5 units were gender friendly and five units were gender biased. Out of which four units support to the female and two units support to the male. From the analysis it was observed that all most of the primers are not full filling the needs of the tribal women. However most of the lessons are poem and female biased lesson. Furthermore observed that same content also repeat again and again, Content of the primer does not include the tribal cultural life.

**Keywords:** curriculum, gender bias, gender friendly, primer

### Introduction

In the process of the evolution of educational system, three pertinent question are often put i.e. Why, What and How of education? In other words it implies: Why education is given? What is being taught? How it is taught? Here the first question refers to the objectives, the second refers to the curriculum and the third refers to the method of teaching. Etymologically, the term curriculum is derived from the Latin word 'currier' which means course usually 'race course'. People refer curriculum as course of studies though course of studies and curriculum are not same. Thus curriculum is a border concept than that of syllabus. Course of study comes under the purview of curriculum. It includes both the curricular activities and the co-curricular activities. The curricular activities refer to all the activity which is organized in side of the class room for example teaching-learning activities in the classroom. Co-curricular activity refers to all the activities which are organized outside of the classroom for example debating, dramatics, speech, games and sports, swimming, scouting. Curriculum is a constantly changing set of document, teaching materials, classroom aids, progress instruments, evaluations, and lesson plans that result from the process of curriculum development and classroom practice (Sample, 1990) [6].

The curriculum construction principle for the formal system of education differs from that of adult education. Research studies (Nayak, 1977 and Singh, 2008) [2, 12] have shown that the major cause of not achieving the desirable success in the adult education programmes was that the curricula framed was not based on the need, interest and expectations of the learners.

Some other major drawbacks of curricula of the adult education are (1) Special emphasis was given on the traditional literacy, which includes reading, writing and arithmetic (2) There was uniformity in the contents of the curricula which were used both for the tribals and for the general section of the people (3) The curricula was inappropriate in linking the learners with the main stream of development process and raising their functional skills. (4) The subject of the curricula was indifferent to the environment of the learners (Singh, 2007) [17].

Generally there are three types of curriculum followed in adult education such as (i) centralized curriculum (ii) modified curriculum (iii) decentralized curriculum. Centralized curriculum is pre-determined by a central institute. Modified curriculum is pre-determined, but the volunteer teacher has the liberty for the modifications of the contents according to the adult learners. Decentralized curriculum is the best curriculum for adult education programmes. In this type of curriculum adult learners interest, need, expectations, attitude and aptitudes are taken into consideration. Decentralized curriculum has certain characteristics which should be internalized by the functionaries developing the curriculum. It attaches special significance to the pace and flexibility of learners, so that the learners become an active partner in getting the benefit from the programme. The curriculum should be set with reference to their acquired awareness, functional skill and literacy, so that these elements are reflected in the curriculum (Singh, 2000). From the above it is clear that centralized curriculum used in formal System of

education whereas both modified curriculum and decentralized curriculum are mostly used in non-formal system of education. Sahoo and Dwivedi (1998) has divided the adult education curriculum into two types (a) General and (b) Special curriculum. General curriculum covers 3 major issues (i) Literacy (ii) Health and Hygiene and (iii) Social Awareness. It covers the entire population of adult illiterates. Special curriculum is concerned with functional literacy programmes especially for developing knowledge and skills about various vocations in which the inhabitants are engaged and these are to be imparted through various systematic activities. It relates to different occupational groups. The curriculum may include (i) Home Science (ii) Tailoring, Sewing and Embroidery (iii) Small Scale Business Management (iv) Farming with special reference to horticultural and agricultural needs (v) Mechanical skills with the special reference to the automobiles and (vi) Masonary and carpentry.

The National Literacy Mission divided the curriculum of adult education into two parts such as academic and vocational subjects (1) Level-one is the curriculum consists of four subjects namely a language, Environmental studies, Mathematics and Vocational Subjects. (2) Level-two are the curriculum consists of five subjects namely Language, Social Studies, Science, Mathematics and Vocational subjects.

The following are the steps for the construction of Adult Education Curriculum (UNESCO, 1988) [20]. These are (1) Recognize the clearly stated national goals for development and policies for adult education; (2) Identifying target groups in accordance with the national goals; (3) Identifying the communities where target groups are located; (4) Survey these communities to: (a) Study the physical, socio-cultural and economic aspects; (b) Studying the developmental needs; (c) Identifying the developmental inputs already affected; (d) Discover the felt and real needs of the community as a whole and the target group in particular; (e) Identifying factors and problems inhibiting development; (f) Identifying the agencies and structure responsible for development; (g) Identifying material and human resource in the community; (5) Analyzing the survey data;(6) Formulate a curriculum to: (a) Proposing strategies, both educational and developmental to fulfill the

needs of the community in general and the target group in particular; (b) Translating the needs and strategies into learning objectives and methodologies; (c) Formulating content areas. (d) Delineable the literacy, awareness and functionality tasks to be performed by the various developmental and educational agencies; (e) Identifying media to be utilised or commissioned for each content and learning unit resources in the community; (7) Writing the appropriate materials for each content and learning unit; (8) Devising evaluation tools to evaluate the curriculum through the teaching -learning process (Principle of Curriculum Design for Literacy Design, UNESCO, 1988) [20].

The content is the organized information that is presented to the learners by a teacher in educational activity through verbal and visual means. In the process learners receive only the subject matter presented and therefore closed to the other stimuli's prevailing in the surroundings (Saraswathi, 1978) [7]. The content of the curriculum are divided into two parts (1) Manifest and (2) Latent content. Manifest is that content which is presented by the teacher-same materials to all though the reception by the individual members of the class may vary. Latent content is composed of all the emotional and intellectual associations linked with the past experience of the learners. Adult education programme content is suited to an adult learner or a group of learners provided if it satisfies the needs, motives, expectations, values, interest, energy, self-perception and predispositions of the individual and the group of programme participants.

**Objective of the study**

To study the curriculum and find out the gender biasness in the curriculum framed for literacy programme in Odisha

**Research Methodology**

This paper focuses on (i.e.) to study the curriculum and find out the gender biasness in the curriculum framed for literacy programme. The Primers of Total Literacy Campaign, Post Literacy Programme and Continuing Education Programme are analyzed based on their contents to find out gender biasness. The unit wise analyses have done for the purpose of analysis and interpretation of data.

**Table 1:** Content of the Adult Education with special reference to Improved Pace and Content of Learning (IPCL) Curriculum

Main Areas	Specific Topics
(1) National integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Communal harmony</li> <li>▪ Equality of all men</li> <li>▪ Humanistic approach to castes</li> <li>▪ Equal rights to all-secularism</li> <li>▪ Democracy</li> <li>▪ unity in diversity</li> <li>▪ Our heritage-Freedom struggle in India</li> <li>▪ Life sketches of freedom fighters</li> <li>▪ Geography of India.</li> </ul>
(2) Women's Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Women and men are equal</li> <li>▪ Women's role in decision making</li> <li>▪ Right of women to take up non stereo</li> <li>▪ Type roles, credit to women's traditional work</li> <li>▪ Education of girls,</li> <li>▪ Life sketch of women noted for their contribution in any area</li> <li>▪ Legal rights of women</li> <li>▪ Equal wages for equal work</li> <li>▪ Welfare programme for women's development</li> <li>▪ Agencies helping women.</li> </ul>

(3) Conservation of Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grow more trees</li> <li>▪ Bad effects of deforestation</li> <li>▪ Air pollution and its prevention</li> <li>▪ Water pollution and its prevention</li> <li>▪ Man and environment relationship.</li> </ul>
(4) Population Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Small family is a happy family</li> <li>▪ Right age of marriage</li> <li>▪ Delayed arrival of first baby</li> <li>▪ Spacing between two children</li> <li>▪ Boy and girl are equal</li> <li>▪ Mothers care- Children’s care</li> <li>▪ Customs and beliefs related to mothers health issues, male/female babies etc</li> <li>▪ Effect of population growth on resources/ development.</li> </ul>
(5) Development of Scientific temper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Superstitions, taboos and beliefs</li> <li>▪ Solar eclipse</li> <li>▪ Lunar eclipse</li> <li>▪ Relation between forests and rains</li> </ul>
(6) Health issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need to keep the baby clean</li> <li>▪ Need to keep the house and surrounding clean</li> <li>▪ Safe drinking water-Prevention of diarrhoea</li> <li>▪ Nutrition deficiency problems</li> <li>▪ Low cost nutritious food</li> <li>▪ First aid</li> <li>▪ TB etc</li> <li>▪ Spitting, defecation, and urinating indiscriminately</li> </ul>
(7) Social Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Drinking</li> <li>▪ Indebtedness</li> <li>▪ Bonded labour</li> <li>▪ Child labour</li> <li>▪ Child marriage</li> <li>▪ Devadasi custom</li> <li>▪ History/geography of a district and state</li> <li>▪ Panchayati raj</li> </ul>
(8) Economic Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Development Programmes</li> <li>▪ Loan Facilities-co-operation</li> <li>▪ Filling money order from</li> <li>▪ Filling bank and official forms</li> </ul>
(9) Entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Poems</li> <li>▪ Stories\fiction</li> <li>▪ Jokes</li> <li>▪ Puzzles</li> <li>▪ Picture stories</li> <li>▪ Games</li> </ul>

Source: Handbook of Developing IPCL Material, National Literacy Mission, 2005.

**Analysis and main finding of the study**

**Content analysis of the Total Literacy Campaign primer, Post-Literacy Programme primer and Continuing Education book of Bolangir District of Odisha**

The Primers of TLC, PLP and CEP are analyzed based on their contents to find out gender biasness. The unit wise analyses have done for the purpose of analysis and interpretation of data. The main finding is based upon the primer analysis of the literacy programme - total literacy campaign, post-literacy programme and continuing education programme five primers and one book were analyzed. Three primers from the total-literacy programme, two primers from post-literacy programme and one book from the continuing education programme.

**Total Literacy Campaign Primer One**

Primer one covered nine prose units. It covered the following areas: Basic needs, Health and Environment, Social institution, Employment, Subsidiary occupation, Society and

development, Agriculture and modern techniques of Agriculture, Importance of literacy for the farmers, population education, environment education and national integration. Out of these nine units, six units were gender friendly and remaining three were gender biased. Out of this three, two supported the female gender and one supported the male gender. Primers one also covers counting from 1-50, Simple addition in two digits and subtractions. Synthetic, Analytic and Eclectic methods were used for teaching to the target group.

**Total Literacy Campaign Primer Two**

Primer two covered nine prose units. It covered the following areas related to, society and development, scientific temper, superstition, migration from rural to urban areas, Health and environment, Social institution, Importance of family, knowledge as power, society and its development. From these nine units, five units were gender friendly and only four units were gender biased. Out of the four genders based content one supported to the female and three unit’s content supported the

male. It also covered counting 51-1000, addition and subtraction and up to three digit (100), Rs. Ps addition and subtraction, litre, ml and Cm. Analytic method and eclectic method were used for teaching and elicit.

### **Total Literacy Campaign Primer Three**

Out of nine units, eight units were covered prose and only one units covered poems. It deals with power of literacy, Social problems, cooperative movement, Fundamental right and constitution, Civic Sense, Communication and geographical features of the State and District. Out of nine units six units were gender friendly and only four units were gender biased. Out of four genders biased units three units supported to female and only one supported to male. It also covered watch reading, multiplication table, Basic ideas of area and simple sums, Division. Analytic method and eclectic method were used for teaching and elicit.

### **Post-literacy Programme Primer One**

Bolangir District primer covered the following areas: National Integration, community harmony, cultural aspect of Odisha, religious festivals of the Odisha, conservation of environment, humanism, Puraskara (Prize), Tulasi, Dhaga Dhamali. Honesty, History of Ashok, farming, Health and Environment, importance of Women, Social institution, Employment, Subsidiary occupation, Society and its development, Agriculture and modern techniques of Agriculture, Importance of literacy and Importance of the farmer. Out of ten units, five units covered prose, two unit poems and two unit stories. From this 9 unit 5units were gender friendly and four units were gender biased. Out of the three units both two unit support to the male and one unit supported female. It also covered watch reading, multiplication table, Basic ideas of area and simple sums, Division. Analytic method and eclectic method were used for teaching and elicit.

### **Post-literacy Programme Primer Two**

Primer two covered the following areas: children's care, Safe drinking water, Air pollution and its prevention, women and men are equal, unity in diversity, Cleanliness', man and environment relationship. Nutrition deficiency problems, our heritage and spacing between two children. Out of nine units, eight units covered prose and only one poem. Deals with power of literacy, social problems, cooperative movement, Fundamental right and constitution, civic sense, communication and geographical features of the State and District. From these nine units five units were gender friendly and four units were gender biased. Out of 4 units both three unit support to the female and only one unit supported to the male. It also covered watch reading, multiplication table, Basic ideas of area and simple sums, Division. Analytic method and eclectic method were used for teaching and elicit.

### **Continuing Education Programme Book**

Continuing education book covered Democracy, Loan Facilities, National issues, women s role in decision making bad effects of deforestation, boy and girl are equal, Mothers care, children's care, Superstitions, taboos and beliefs, Legal right of women, Effect of population growth on resources/development mothers and child care. Out of ten units five units were covers prose and two unit poem and three unit

cover story. From these ten units 5 units were gender friendly and five units were gender biased. Out of which four units support to the female and two unit support to the male. It also covered watch reading, multiplication table, Basic ideas of area and simple sums, Division. Synthetic method, Analytic method and eclectic method were used for teaching.

### **Discussion of Result**

Discussion of the result in this section is based on contents analyses of the Primers of Total Literacy Campagien, PLP and CEP book and find out gender biasness. From the analysis it was observed that out of nine units of total literacy primer one, six units were gender friendly and remaining three were gender biased. Out of this three, two supported the female gender and one supported the male gender on the other hand out of nine units of total literacy programme primer two five units were gender friendly and only four units were gender biased. Out of the four genders biased content one supported to the female and three unit's content supported to the male. However

Out of nine units of six units of primer three were gender friendly and only four units were gender biased. Out of four genders biased units three units supported to female and only one supported to male.

In case of post literacy primer one, out of 9 units, 5units were gender friendly and four units were gender biased. Out of the three units both two unit support to the male and one unit supported female whereas out of nine units of post-literacy primer two, five units were gender friendly and four units were gender biased. Out of 4 units both three unit support to the female and only one unit supported to the male. On the other hand out of ten units of continuing education book, five units were covers prose and two unit poem and three unit cover story. From these ten units 5 units were gender friendly and five units were gender biased. Out of which four units support to the female and two units support to the male. From the analysis it was observed that all most of the primers are not full filling the needs of the tribal women. However most of the lessons are poem and female biased lesson. Furthermore observed that same content also repeat again and again, Content of the primer does not include the tribal cultural life.

### **Suggestion for Curriculum Construction in Adult Education**

The curricula of the primers used for the teaching adults must not constitute standard material by the government. They should be constructed by the social workers in the constructed by the social workers in the locality who are well aware of the socio-economic and cultural position of a particular community to whom the literacy programme is intended. While constructing the curricula, sociological, economic or cultural studies, if any should be realized upon. Need-based material may thus be prepared where the learners themselves can contribute. This approach, where learner are taken into consideration in the matter of what is to be taught to them, is already.

The primers should not be treated as a means for publicity and propaganda of development programmes launched by the government. Instead of giving information and messages as pre-packaged truths the primers should initiate discussion among learners by which they learn to ask questions and challenge the existing notions regarding the role and position of women in the society. Instead of portraying women in

traditional role models, new models with proper illustrations should be presented to enable them to conceive of a new society with a better position for women. Primers should be prepared in such a way that they act as effective vehicles for archiving attitudinal changes in both men and women in how they see themselves. At least half the committee for preparation of primers should consist of women members who are either activists or academicians with feminist perspectives, and who are also aware of the issues and challenges before the learners to whom the programme is meant

State Resource Center for adult education should take concrete steps in controlling the quality of primers all over the state. The proof of the primer should be verified by the expert committee and during such verification attention should be given on the quality of paper size of letter, picture, clarity of picture, open space, layout of page, illustration, proper writing of captions etc. primer frame worker should change the old format of the primer and in future production the size of primers should be as per the guideline. Steps should be taken to give color pictures in the inner pages of both types of primers. Uniformity in use of words, vowels and conjunct letters maintained while primers are presented, management and information system should be strengthened and utilized to activate the process of primer development.

### Conclusion

It is also observed from the present, study the curriculum of adult education is not suitable for the tribal women learner. Almost fifty percent of the content is gender biased in nature. The content of the primer also did not include the tribal aspects of their society. For this reason they do not have any interest to attain the literacy classes. Content of the curriculum is written in Odia language which is difficult to understand to them.

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