

MAE-002
POLICY PLANNING
AND IMPLEMENTATION
OF ADULT EDUCATION
IN INDIA



**Emerging Scenario for Adult Education
and Lifelong Learning: Policy Perspective**

5

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MAE-002
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IMPLEMENTATION OF
ADULT EDUCATION IN
INDIA

Block

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BLOCK 5 EMERGING SCENARIO FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING: POLICY PERSPECTIVE

Introduction to Block 5

Blocks 1 to 4 of course MAE-002 dealt in detail with different aspects of policy planning and implementation of adult education in India in its historical perspective. However, subsequent developments such as launching of the National Education Policy 2020 (popularly called NEP 2020) on 29 July 2020 outlined the vision of new education system of India. This has infused changes in the perspective of adult education and lifelong learning as well. This perspective cannot be ignored as it has implications for adult education policy planning and implementation in India. In view of these developments in education in general and adult education in particular, Block 5 here attempts to deal with the current policy perspective of adult education and lifelong learning. This Block has the following two units.

Unit 17 titled “*Chapter 21 of National Education Policy 2020: Major Implications for Adult Education*” presents a brief holistic picture of integration of adult education with formal education institutions with emphasis on the nature, character and potential of adult education institutional structure in India during 1947-2019. It also presents some important glimpses of the potential offerings for adult education and lifelong learning in NEP 2020 by highlighting the relevant curricular framework for adult education, the proposed nature of adult education centres at different levels and the technological applications in implementation of adult education under New India Literacy Programme (NILP) popularly known as ULLAS (Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society). Further, it highlights the role being played by the Cell for National Centre for Literacy (CNCL) under NCERT in implementation of NILP.

Unit 18 titled “*Education for All (Adult Education): New India Literacy Programme*” highlights many programmes/schemes such as Social Education, Gram Shikshan Mohim, Farmer’s Functional Literacy Project, National Adult Education Programme, Rural Functional Literacy Project & Mass Programme of Functional Literacy, National Literacy Mission, Saakshar Bharat, and Padhna Likhna Abhiyan, among others, initiated by the Government of India and the State Governments for promotion of literacy and adult education in India, as a result which its overall literacy rate touched 74.04 per cent in 2011. For further acceleration of the efforts, the Government of India adopted New India Literacy Programme (Nav Bharat Saksharata Karyakram) for the Financial Years 2022-23 to 2026-27. It has five components: (i) Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, (ii) Critical Life Skills, (iii) Vocational Skills Development, (iv) Basic Education, and (v) Continuing Education. The National Council of Educational Research and Training and its separate Cell for National Centre for Literacy are providing the logistic support such as material development, online registration for teachers and students, evaluation, etc., in respect of the first two components in particular and the other three components in general. This is reason that, under NILP, Adult Education is now replaced as Education for All, particularly all those outside the formal system. It also highlights the need

for India's participation in the international assessment in the current global context of EFA too. Since India agreed to be part of PISA, it is also the time that India joins PIAAC too as NILP is not confined to literacy alone. And, New India has all potential to join all such international assessments to keep it competing more and growing more to become robust in this regard. All these aspects are dealt with in this Unit.

After working through this Block, you will be able to:

- Examine the nature, character and potential of adult education institutional structure in India during 1947-2019;
- Develop critical understanding of the intended and ongoing efforts aimed at integration of adult education with the existing formal education institutions as per NEP 2020;
- Critically analyse the significance of the technological applications in implementation of adult education in India;
- Develop an understanding of the rationale behind the introduction of new nomenclature of "Education for All" instead of "Adult Education";
- Assess the role of different national agencies like NCERT, Cell for National Centre for Literacy (CNCL), etc in implementation of NILP; and
- Realize the need for and significance of India's participation in international assessments.

THE PEOPLE'S
UNIVERSITY

UNIT-17 CHAPTER 21 OF NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020: MAJOR IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATION

Structure

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17.0 INTRODUCTION

Blocks 1 to 4 of this Course (i.e. MAE-002) have presented to you a comprehensive picture of *Policy Planning and Implementation of Adult Education in India*. From Block-4, you can clearly notice or recall that the focus was laid on the role and significance of Post-Literacy and Continuing Education (Unit-13), Institutionalisation of Continuing Education (Unit-14), Reading Materials for Neo-literates and Semi-literates (Unit-15) and Libraries in Post-literacy and Continuing Education (Unit-16). However, recently, the National Education Policy 2020 has given special emphasis on institutionalization of adult education by way of integrating the totality of efforts of adult literacy, post-literacy, continuing education and lifelong learning through the existing institutional structures at both the levels of educational system, viz. school education and higher education. Further, Chapter 21 of this Policy is particularly

devoted for promoting ‘Adult Education’ and ‘Lifelong Learning’ as two key areas of focus.

From Blocks 1 and 2 of course MAE-002, you might have developed a clear understanding that adult education is an important aspect of education, which is mandated by the country’s Constitutional provisions and the consequent education policies. “However, when the Constitutional directive for free and compulsory education to the citizens receives inadequate attention by the State and when the national education policies and programmes including adult education are not implemented fully in letter and spirit, it is quite but natural that the processes of amendments, reviews and revisions of the same do happen periodically, if not with definite periodicity. At the same time, latest developments in the field of (adult) education at global and national levels also do speed up these processes. Nevertheless, the success or otherwise of the efforts in education in general and adult education in particular depends ultimately upon the vision, commitment and contributions of all those involved at all levels of policy making and implementation, and more so those at the helm of affairs” (Lakshmi Reddy, 2023, p.3). The educational journey of India with all its failures resulting in the unfulfilled targets of constitutional mandate for education cascaded into three education policies over the decades which paved the way towards gradual and periodical changes, praiseworthy and otherwise too, in the field of adult education in particular. Out of the three education policies, the current policy (NEP 2020) aims at structural integration of the formal and non-formal educational institutions at different levels across the country on long-term and permanent basis for full exploitation of technological applications in implementation of adult education.

In this Unit, (i.e. Unit-17) of this current Block (i.e. Block-5: Emerging Scenario for Adult Education and Lifelong Learning: Policy Perspective) of this course deals with major implications of Chapter 21 of NEP 2020 with special reference to adult education and lifelong learning.

17.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, we expect you to be able to:

- Examine the nature, character and potential of adult education institutional structure in India during 1947-2019;
- Develop critical understanding of the intended and ongoing efforts aimed at Integration of adult education with the existing formal education institutions as per NEP 2020;
- Discuss the nature and role of adult education centres that are likely to emerge at different levels as a part of formal educational system; and
- Critically analyse the significance of the technological applications in implementation of adult education in India.

17.2 INTEGRATION OF ADULT EDUCATION WITH FORMAL EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

Integration of adult education with formal education institutions can be understood by tracing the roots of educational efforts in India based on the constitutional mandate.

17.2.1 Constitutional Mandate for Education: Current Status

While independent India's journey started on 15th August 1947, the Constitution of India was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 26th November 1949 which came into force on 26th January, 1950. In 2022, after a long journey of 75 years since its independence, India celebrated "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav" to commemorate its freedom movement and freedom fighters. Meanwhile, since inception, the Constitution of India has got amended more than hundred times (as of October 2021, there have been 105 amendments). From educational context point of view, out of all these developments, the Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 is of great significance, whereby Article 21A (Right to Education) got inserted after Article 21 as a fundamental right, a new Article (Provision of early childhood care and education to children below the age of six years) substituted Article 45, and Article 51A got an additional clause (k) added to it after clause (j) as a fundamental duty. Consequently, after seven years of such an amendment, "The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009" has been enacted, the spirit of which actually extends the right to free and compulsory education beyond the age group of six to fourteen, thus encompassing the 'right of adults' also to similar education, particularly for those adults who did not have or lost the opportunity for education in their childhood and transcended the age for formal education, and now feel the need for pursuing it. Salutes to all the national endeavours with all the mixed results in education, including adult education (Lakshmi Reddy, 2023, p. 4).

17.2.2 Educational Policies: Place of Adult Education – Towards Lifelong Learning

In the long journey of independent India, till 2019, the country witnessed a few national policies on education, viz. 1968, 1986 and the revised 1992. It is now witnessing National Education Policy 2020. All through, under different policies, those people who remained outside or had fallen out of conventional education system effectively formed the target groups for non-formal education or got shifted to adult education of different levels and kinds. This journey of independent India, starting with no national education policy, without any common pattern of education resulted in complex structure [with (10/11)+(1/2)+(2/3) patterns] not having any common curriculum framework during 1947-67, moved on to become a system with 10+2+3 pattern/structure of education with common *Curriculum for Ten-Year School: A Framework*, 1975 during 1968-85 under 1968 policy to re-confirmed 10+2+3 structure during 1986-2019 under 1986 / 1992 policies with many curricular frameworks -- *Curriculum for Ten-Year School: A Framework*, 1975, *National Curriculum for Elementary and*

*Secondary Education: A Framework, 1988, National Curriculum Framework for School Education, 2000 and National Curriculum Framework, 2005. Though ‘Early Childhood Care and Education’ and ‘Adult Education’ were stressed in these policies, there were no separate Curriculum Frameworks nor was there any common curriculum framework mandated/developed for these two areas since independence till 2020. **One of the significant aspects of NEP 2020 is that, it mandated development of separate National Curriculum Frameworks for both ‘Early Childhood Care and Education’ and ‘Adult Education’.** NEP (p.3) emphasizes: “The highest priority of the education system will be to achieve universal foundational literacy and numeracy in primary school by 2025. The gap between the current state of learning outcomes and what is required must be bridged through undertaking major reforms that bring the highest quality, equity, and integrity into the system, from early childhood care and education through higher education. The aim must be for India to have an education system by 2040 that is second to none, *with equitable access to the highest-quality education for all learners regardless of social or economic background*”. It is no doubt a commendable policy commitment to highest-quality education for all learners!*

The current policy further states: “The ability to read and write, and perform basic operations with numbers, is a necessary foundation and an indispensable prerequisite for all future schooling and lifelong learning. However, various governmental, as well as non-governmental surveys, indicate that we are currently in a **learning crisis**: a large proportion of students currently in elementary school -- estimated to be over 5 crore in number -- have not attained foundational literacy and numeracy, i.e., the ability to read and comprehend basic text and the ability to carry out basic addition and subtraction with Indian numerals.” (p.8) ***Given such a state of affairs in the matter of learning outcomes of formal school students, it is needless to talk about the learning outcomes of target groups of adults of particular literacy and/or adult education programme(s) and mission(s) of various kinds*** starting from Social Education Programme (SEP) through Farmers’ Functional Literacy Programme (FFLP), Workers’ Education, National Adult Education Programme (NAEP), National Literacy Mission (NLM), Saakshar Bharat (SB), and Padhna Likana Abhiyan (PLA), among others, during the same journey. As per United Nations report (UNESCO, 2014, p.71): “India has by far the largest population of illiterate adults, 287 million, amounting to 37% of the global total.” Nevertheless, with just about 2 in 10 (18.33%) Indians being literate in 1950, now in 2022, the figures turned into opposite, i.e. 8 in 10 (77.70%) are literate (timesofindia.com), which is, no doubt, a great achievement. And, ***NEP 2020 aims to achieve 100% literacy in a few years ahead. It is truly a laudable goal aimed at raising further the base-level to fully literate-India for moving towards irreversible, advanced adult education through lifelong learning for all in the country.***

17.2.3 Nature, Character and Potential of Adult Education Institutional Structure in India during 1947-2019: An Overview

It is worthwhile here to have a brief overview of the potential structures of the past that played crucial role in promotion of adult education in India.

During 1947 to 1967: There was no uniform pattern of school education. So, it was too early to think of any common national curriculum framework for school education, let alone any such thing for adult education in particular. However, the introduction of five year plans began to pay significant attention to promotion of adult education and there was clear display of the Government's initiative to promote adult education in the form of social education to begin with. *Janata Colleges, Community Centres, Farmers' Clubs and Mahila Samitis* were launched. *Social Education Officers' Training Centres* took care of training of the functionaries of social education programme at the grassroots level, while *National Fundamental Education Centre (NFEC)*, established in 1956 discharged the functions of training, orientation and research, material production, clearing house activities, etc in the field of adult education. NFEC was subsequently converted into *Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE)* in the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). In the voluntary sector, *Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA)* which was established in 1938 as a voluntary organization continued to play its dynamic role in the field of adult education, of course to till date.

During 1968-1985: This period which witnessed the first ever National Policy on Education 1968 emphasized adoption of a broadly uniform educational structure (10+2+3 pattern) in all parts of the country, with the higher secondary stage of two years being located in schools, colleges or both according to local conditions. The *Curriculum for Ten-Year School: A Framework*, 1975 (NCERT, 1975) was developed covering 10 years of school education. The policy also laid emphasis on '*Spread of Literacy and Adult Education*'. There were significant developments in the form of social education, farmers' education, workers' education, and education for youth, among others, for promotion of functional literacy linked with development. Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE) was taken over by Ministry of Education and Culture and renamed it as *Directorate of Adult Education (DAE)*, which in fact was a turning point in the history of adult education in India because a separate resource support structure for adult education came into existence at the national level. Subsequently, state and district level resource support structures such as *State Resource Centres (SRCs)* at state level, *District Resource Units (DRUs)* as a part of *District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs)* at district level emerged in the field of adult education. Of course, it is a widely known fact that a lot remained to be done to make the DRUs and DIETs fully functional in many districts across the country. *Departments of Adult, Continuing Education and Extension (DACEEs)* have been established in certain Universities. Many Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) came into existence and received adequate support from government to play their roles in different ways in promotion of literacy, adult education and continuing education. During this period, the first ever national level programme namely, *National Adult Education Programme* was launched in 1978 leading to very planned development of adult education resource support structures at different levels aimed at institutionalization of adult education and enhancing their potential contribution to adult education. It has also **fostered the collaboration between formal educational institutions such as schools, colleges and universities and other implementing agencies of adult education**. It was the period of collaboration of adult education institutions with various institutions in different sectors and thus brought in unprecedented reforms in the field of adult education.

During 1986-2019: NEP 1986 and the Programme of Action (POA) 1992 re-confirmed the common pattern of education (10+2+3) for the entire country, which came into operation extensively during this period. Three different national curriculum frameworks for school education followed in tune with the relevant policy requirements/directives. These are: *National Curriculum for Elementary and Secondary Education: A Framework* (NCERT, 1988) developed in response to NPE 1986; *National Curriculum Framework for School Education* (NCERT, 2000) as per the mandate of POA 1992; and *National Curriculum Framework 2005* (NCERT, 2005) in the light of the report, “Learning Without Burden” (1993). Though ***‘Early Childhood Care and Education’ and ‘Adult Education’ were stressed in all these policies, no separate Curriculum Frameworks were mandated/developed for these two areas in the process of their implementation.*** Thus, as far as adult education was concerned, there were no curricular frameworks for adult education or for training of adult educators/functionaries at different levels. Of course, there was no dearth of programme-specific orientation and training of the functionaries by the specific resource support structures at different levels – DAE, SRCs, DIETs/DRUs, and Jana Shikshan Nilayam (JSNs), among others. *National Institute of Adult Education* (NIAE) was established in 1991 at national level, subsequently *Jan Shikshan Sansthan*s (JSSs) at district level, *Continuing Education Centres* (CECs) at grassroots level were also established. More than hundred DACEEs came into existence at University level during this period. As a result, ample variety of literacy materials in the form of primers, including Improved Pace and Content of Learning (IPCL), post-literacy and continuing education materials as well as audio-video programmes were developed by DAE at national level, SRCs at state level, Zilla Saksharatha Samitis (ZSSs) and DIETs/DRUs at district level and Jan Shikshan Nilayams (JSSs), among others, at grassroots level in cooperation with and support of other agencies including voluntary organizations involved in implementation of literacy missions or adult education programmes. ***It was the vibrant period of intensive and extensive campaigns and operations marked by involvement of various institutions and resource support structures at different levels across the entire country for promotion of basic literacy, post-literacy and continuing education among adults leading them towards their lifelong learning.***

Nevertheless, most undesirable development towards the end of second decade of 21st century is that the number of DACEEs got reduced drastically, and most of the existing ones have also been renamed as *Departments of Lifelong Learning and Extension* (DLLEs). Further, crucial resource support structures such as SRCs at state level received a death blow. Thus, ***as far as institutionalization of resource support structures is concerned, the absence of SRCs at state level is a big lacuna at present in the field of adult education.*** Establishment of DRUs as part of DIETs at district level remained an unfulfilled dream for decades, and even the DIETs in all districts are yet to be established. Above all, the very nomenclature of adult education programmes too transitioned from erstwhile broad concepts of *Social Education* through Adult Education to *National Literacy Mission* to *Saakshar Bharat* and, finally, to *Padhna Likhna Abhiyan*. Such ‘Abhiyan’ is conceptually a retrogressive step as it reduced the very concept of literacy to *reading and writing* (Padhna Likhna in its Hindi translation form) that purged arithmetic from literacy (Saaksharatha). However,

equivalency programmes with some acceptable mechanism for recognition of prior learning have gradually become popular during this period. Equivalency Programmes for Basic Education popularly called the Open Basic Education (OBE) has been on offer for both children in the 6-14 age-group and out-of-school adults in the 15+ age-group. It is implemented at the national level through the *National Institute of Open Schooling* (NIOS) and at state level by the different *State Open Schools* (SOSs) across the country. *This equivalency programme (OBE) has three levels, A, B and C, which are equivalent to classes 3, 5 and 8 respectively of the formal education system.*

From the above discussion, we can clearly notice that by the end of National Education Policy 1986, and the revised 1992, the nation could see a significant development in the form of the equivalency of the three levels, *A, B and C of adult, non-formal and/or open school education with classes 3, 5 and 8 respectively of the formal education system.* Yet, there has been no integration of institutional structures of formal and non-formal education at different levels.

Now, with the launch of National Education Policy 2020, the stage is set for such efforts of integration of institutional structures of formal and non-formal education at more levels by including the equivalency programmes at the levels of classes 8 and 12, which are discussed among other things in the following section.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Write the answer in the space given below the question.

b) Check your answer with the one given under “Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’ Questions” of this Unit.

1. What are the three levels of non-formal education, adult education and/or open school levels and their equivalent classes of the formal education system that existed prior to NEP 2020?

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17.3 NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020: CHAPTER 21 AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Here, it is appropriate to look at some of the general provisions of NEP 2020 that have implications for adult education in general, and Chapter 21 of it, which specially focuses on ‘adult education and lifelong learning’ in particular. In this section, we will attempt to present some glimpses of the potential offerings of NEP 2020 with regard to adult education and lifelong learning.

17.3.1 Glimpses of the Potential Offerings for Adult Education and Lifelong Learning

Adult education and lifelong learning received greater fillip in the overall context of education. These are presented in brief below.

i) Promotion of lifelong learning opportunities

Current global trend in education is to promote lifelong learning. India too posited its new education policy in the context of lifelong learning. For instance, the global education development agenda reflected in the Goal 4 (SDG4) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by India in 2015 seeks to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” by 2030. Such a lofty goal will require the entire education system to be reconfigured to support and foster learning, so that all of the critical targets and goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can be achieved (NEP, p.3) effectively.

ii) Integration of adult education efforts with formal school system and higher education institutions

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) actually forms true basis not only for childhood education but also for adult education and lifelong learning as it will have strong effect on education of adults in their later life. “The architecture of the brain forms from the prenatal period to age 5, and so this is an important stage for developing cognitive and socio-behavioral skills”. (World Bank, 2018; See https://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/10.1596/978-1-4648-1328-3_ch4). Under NEP 2020, in the new 5+3+3+4 structure, a strong base of ECCE is also included, which is aimed at promoting better overall learning, development, and well-being (p.7). Further, the Policy states: The above four stages are purely curricular and pedagogical, designed to optimize learning for students based on the cognitive development of children; they will inform the development of National and State curricula and teaching-learning strategies at each stage, but parallel changes to physical infrastructure will not be required (p.12). But the emerging reality in implementation is already treading all together a different path in the field. For example, in the state of Andhra Pradesh which has taken a lead in implementing NEP 2020, there exist three types of institutions in the new education system – *Pre-Primary Schools* (PP1 and PP2), *Foundational Schools* (PP1, PP2, Preparatory Class I, Classes 1 and 2) and *Secondary Schools* (Classes 3 to 10/12). What sort of names of schools would appear in other states is interesting to watch! Nevertheless, what is important to note under NEP 2020 is that the structure of new education system has great relevance to adult education infrastructure at grassroots level as the Government of India intends to use school systems also to reach out to the maximum number of non-literates under New India Literacy Programme (NILP).

In addition, with rise in life expectancy and old-age population including the active superannuating people as an emerging trend at global level, it is also time to establish University of the Third Age (U3A) to enlist their effective engagement for their own welfare and of the society, as no prior qualifications and no subsequent certificates feature in this approach to ‘*learning for its own sake*’. This type of learning from ECCE through U3A, which can ‘*prolong*

active life in old age’ also has the true potential to make lifelong learning a perfect reality engaging the people of all the ages in learning throughout the length and breadth of their lives.

Aligned with the recommendations of National Education Policy 2020 (Para 5.23) a new centrally sponsored scheme on ‘Education for All’ (Adult Education) – “*New India Literacy Programme*” (NILP) has been designed, which is renamed as *Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society* (ULLAS). The scheme will cover five components of ‘Education for All’ as recommended by NEP, i.e. (i) Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, (ii) Critical Life Skills, (iii) Basic Education (Equivalency), (iv) Vocational Skill Development, and (v) Continuing Education. The scheme will use IT-based platforms and school systems to reach out to the maximum number of non-literates. It is expected to cover 5 crore non-literate adults, in the age group of 15 years and above in both online and offline mode in the country within five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26 (Government of India, 2021, p.102). So, the trend expected to emerge in the field of adult education under the new education policy is to integrate adult education infrastructure with formal school system and higher education institutions. For such an integration of adult education with school system it is essential to ensure that there comes into existence the prescribed structure of education (5+3+3+4) with uniform nomenclature of schools with appropriate combination of different levels/stages -- *Foundational School* (3 years Anganwadi/Pre-school/Balvatika + classes 1-2), *Preparatory School* (classes 3-5), *Middle School* (classes 6-8), *Secondary School* (classes 9-12) across the country. The well-established pattern of 10+2+3 education system along with present nomenclature of schools as exists today – *Primary School* (classes 1-5), *Elementary School* (classes 1-8), *Upper Primary/Middle School* (classes 1-8), *Secondary School* (classes 1-10), *Senior Secondary School* (classes 1-12), *Intermediate/Junior College* (classes 11-12) – calls for some standard realignment with new uniform nomenclature of schools across the country. Accomplishment of such school system with uniform nomenclature of schools is very crucial as it is also expected to reach out to the maximum number of non-literates through adult education with further realignment of formal school education with non-formal adult education.

Further, NEP 2020 intends to broad-base school education across all modes. *Here, it is essential to note that school education includes equivalent adult education through ODL mode as well.* “To facilitate learning for all students, with special emphasis on Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs), the scope of school education will be broadened to facilitate multiple pathways to learning involving both formal and non-formal education modes. Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Programmes offered by the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) and State Open Schools will be expanded and strengthened for meeting the learning needs of young people in India who are not able to attend a physical school. NIOS and State Open Schools will offer the following programmes in addition to the present programmes: *A, B and C levels* that are equivalent to **Grades 3, 5 and 8** of the formal school system; *secondary education programmes* that are equivalent to **Grades 10 and 12**; vocational education courses/programmes; and adult literacy and life-enrichment programmes. States will be encouraged to develop these offerings in regional languages by establishing new/strengthening existing State Institutes

of Open Schooling (SIOS)” (NEP, pp.10-11). Thus, *all adults who missed out education in their school age will have the full opportunity to accomplish the same now through NIOS and SOSs.*

iii) National Curriculum Framework for Adult Education (NCFAE)

As per National Education Policy 2020, development of NCFs and SCFs (NEP Paras 1.3, 4.30, 5.28, 21.5) is very crucial for implementation of the policy. The four National Curriculum Frameworks, viz., *National Curriculum Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education* (NCFECE) -- in two parts, namely, a sub-framework for 0-3 year-olds, and a sub-framework for 3-8 year-olds, *National Curriculum Framework for School Education* (NCFSE), *National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education* (NCFTE), and ***National Curriculum Framework for Adult Education (NCFAE)*** will provide broad guidelines in the area of ECCE, School Education, Teacher Education, and Adult Education for quality and equitable education. Most surprising lapse that needs to be noted here is that, **unlike NCFTE, there is no separate *National Curriculum Framework for Adult Educators*** who are to work at Adult Education Centres (AECs) as instructors/teachers at the community level and those to serve at AECs to be set up in HEIs. Further, to note is: “Vertical mobility of teachers based on merit will also be paramount; outstanding teachers with demonstrated leadership and management skills would be trained over time to take on academic leadership positions in schools, school complexes, BRCs, CRCs, BITEs, DIETs as well as relevant government departments” (p.22, Para 5.19). However, ***it does not provide for any definite framework towards such job security and mobility of adult education instructors/teachers at grassroots level, and also adult educators/educationists at higher levels.***

iv) Special Chapter within NEP 2020

NEP 2020 has also given special emphasis to adult education and lifelong learning by incorporating a special chapter (i.e. Chapter 21) in it.

Reflections about Chapter 21 under Part-III of NEP 2020: This chapter focuses on ‘adult education and lifelong learning’ as two key focus areas. The provisions (p.51, Paras 21.1, 21.2, 21.3 and 21.4 of NEP 2020) highlight: (i) the opportunity to attain foundational literacy, obtain an education, and pursue a livelihood as basic rights of every citizen and the significance of literacy and basic education vis-à-vis the progress of individuals, society and the nation; (ii) innumerable disadvantages that a non-literate member of a community suffers in different fronts in life and lists abilities required to overcome these disadvantages as an illustrative list of outcomes to be achieved through adoption of innovative measures for adult education; (iii) volunteerism and community involvement and mobilization as key success factors of adult literacy programmes, in conjunction with political will, organizational structure, proper planning, adequate financial support and high-quality capacity building of educators and volunteers, as well as contribution of successful literacy programmes to the growth of literacy among adults, to the increased demand for education for all children and to the greater community contribution to positive social change; and (iv) the need for strong and innovative government initiatives for adult education to facilitate community involvement and the smooth and beneficial integration of technology to expedite the aim of achieving 100% literacy in India.

What can be observed from conceptualization of these provisions related to adult education under NEP 2020 is that it does not differ much from that of literacy and basic education as defined in NAEP document (during 1968 policy period), or subsequently functional literacy as defined in NLM or Saakshar Bharat documents (during 1986 policy period). However, what mattered in common during these periods is the effective distortions of failures in implementation of these programmes or missions of adult education. *For instance, why was National Institute of Adult Education (NIAE) established in 1991 (in violation of the clearly laid down adult education policy provision) leading to litigation and finally to its closure as well rendering it 'erstwhile' (including demolition of the very building where NIAE was located/established)?* Further, no accountability was fixed on the concerned implementers who flouted the policy provisions in blatant manner. Similarly, the state level resource support structures in adult education such as State Resource Centres (SRCs), which were strengthened during the 1968 and 1986 policies, and POA 1992 had been weakened and made defunct in the field towards the end of the 1992 policy without even amending it in due manner, and prior to launch of new policy (i.e. NEP 2020). *Whether such undoing with NIAE and the SRCs was provided for in the very policies, or was it done with at least due amendments to the respective policy/policies? If not, why and how did such institutionalized structures get tampered with so easily and comfortably by the implementers of the very policy documents? In other words, why the same kind of consultation process as was done while making the policy was not followed while closing down or rendering them defunct?* Now also (i.e. under the extant new policy NEP 2020), can there be any guarantee that there will be effective implementation of NEP 2020 as far as Chapter 21 (adult education and lifelong learning) is concerned? One has to wait and watch how the structural integration of adult education infrastructure with that of the formal school system and HEIs proceeds and with what kind of functional consequences and accountability on the concerned at the helm of (new or changing) affairs.

When we read certain provisions of NEP 2020 such as: “Strong and innovative government initiatives for adult education to expedite this all-important aim of achieving 100% literacy” (p.51, Para 21.4) in conjunction with Paras 21.5, 21.6, 21.7, 21.8, 21.9 and 21.10, some hope lurks for positive developments such as the following in the field.

- **Adult education curriculum framework:** *Firstly*, an outstanding adult education curriculum framework will be developed by a new and well-supported constituent body of the NCERT that is dedicated to adult education, so as to develop synergy with and build upon NCERT’s existing expertise in establishing outstanding curricula for literacy, numeracy, basic education, vocational skills, and beyond. The curriculum framework for adult education will *include at least five types of programmes*, each with clearly defined outcomes: (a) *foundational literacy and numeracy*; (b) *critical life skills* (including financial literacy, digital literacy, commercial skills, health care and awareness, child care and education, and family welfare); (c) *vocational skills development* (with a view towards obtaining local employment); (d) *basic education* (including preparatory, middle, and secondary stage equivalency); and (e) *continuing education* (including engaging holistic adult education courses in arts, sciences, technology,

culture, sports, and recreation, as well as other topics of interest or use to local learners, such as more advanced material on critical life skills). The framework would keep in mind that adults in many cases will require rather different teaching-learning methods and materials than those designed for children (pp.51-52, Para 21.5). These provisions any way are not new when compared with the earlier programmes such as: Literacy programmes (Total Literacy and Post-literacy), Equivalency Programmes (EPs), Income Generating Programmes (IGPs), Quality of Life Improvement Programmes (QLIPs), and Individual Interest Promotion Programmes (IIPPs). If at all there is any difference in these types of programmes, it is all in renaming and re-ordering these programmes with some minor changes in descriptions of the components included into them. However, one can only hope that these innovative initiatives will collect at least all the (basic) literacy, post-literacy and continuing education materials hither to developed and used by DAE and erstwhile SRCs, Zilla Saksharata Samitis, among others, as a part of implementation of literacy and adult education programmes/missions since 1960s till date and put them in public domain in the form of a dedicated portal or adult education e-gyankosh for the benefit of adult learners of the country, as a part of comprehensive e-resource base under the new policy provision on adult education and lifelong learning.

- ***Adult education centres and their personnel at different levels:*** Secondly, suitable infrastructure will be ensured so that all interested adults will have access to adult education and lifelong learning. A key initiative in this direction will be to use schools/ school complexes after school hours and on weekends and public library spaces for adult education courses which will be ICT-equipped when possible and for other community engagement and enrichment activities. The sharing of infrastructure for school, higher, adult, and vocational education, and for other community and volunteer activities, will be critical for ensuring efficient use of both physical and human resources as well as for creating synergy among these five types of education and beyond. For these reasons, Adult Education Centres (AECs) could also be included within other public institutions such as HEIs, vocational training centres, etc. (p.52, Para 21.6). *But the policy is silent about who will man these centres, and what is the kind of eligibility criteria including additional qualifications required in the relevant discipline such as Post-Graduate Certificate, Post-Graduate Diploma or Master's in Adult Education and/or lifelong learning to be possessed/obtained by them for effective implementation of adult education.*
- ***Personnel training and curriculum transaction:*** Thirdly, the instructors/educators will be required to deliver the curriculum framework to mature learners for all five types of adult education as described in the Adult Education Curriculum Framework. These instructors will be trained by the National, State, and district level resource support institutions to organize and lead learning activities at Adult Education Centres, as well as coordinate with volunteer instructors. Qualified community members including from HEIs as part of each HEI's mission to engage with their local communities will be encouraged and welcomed to take a short training course and volunteer, as adult literacy instructors, or to serve as one-on-one volunteer tutors, and will be recognized for their critical service to the nation. States

will also work with NGOs and other community organizations to enhance efforts towards literacy and adult education (p.52, Para 21.7). As a part of this initiative, *National Centre for Adult Literacy (NCAL) has been established in NCERT, which is a centralized effort. If similar structures are established in the State and district level formal institutions on permanent basis, that will be a fulfillment of the long awaited boon to the field of adult education.* Of course, in this context, all the Departments of Adult, Continuing Education and Extension (DACEEs) and/or the renamed Departments of Lifelong Learning and Extension (DLLEs) in different Universities also need to play an active and dynamic role to address the issues of professionalisation of adult education and protect the interests of their products (alumni) as well as the disciplines of ‘adult education’ and ‘lifelong learning’ *by paving the way for establishment of similar Departments in all the colleges across the country.*

- **Ensuring community participation:** *Fourthly*, all efforts will be undertaken to ensure the participation of community members in adult education. Social workers/counsellors travelling through their communities to track and ensure participation of non-enrolled students and dropouts will also be requested, during their travels, to gather data of parents, adolescents, and others interested in adult education opportunities both as learners and as teachers/tutors. The social workers/counsellors will then connect them with local Adult Education Centres (AECs). Opportunities for adult education will also be widely publicized, through advertisements and announcements and through events and initiatives of NGOs and other local organizations (p.52, Para 21.8). It calls for active involvement of community-based organizations with community-specific mechanisms, the modalities of which are required to be worked out in clear terms for ensuring such participation. In this context, the now defunct SRCs in different states, which find no mention in the new policy, can also play their role as voluntary organizations by forming a ‘*National Consortium of SRCs*’ as their volunteer effort and by encouraging formation of ‘*State Consortium of NGOs*’ in each state and ‘*District Consortium of NGOs*’ in each district to chalk out their self-styled dynamic agenda to continue to serve as a crucial resource support system of its own kind and character to demonstrate their latent potential in appropriate manner in the larger interest of the nation.

v) **Towards Operationalisation/Implementation of Adult Education and Lifelong Learning**

A new centrally sponsored programme on Education for All (erstwhile known as Adult Education) named New India Literacy Programme (NILP) under NEP 2020, recently renamed as Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society (ULLAS), has been approved by the Government of India with a financial outlay of Rs.1037.90 crore for implementation during FYs 2022-23 to 2026-27, in alignment with the recommendations of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The scheme is targeted at all non-literates of age 15 years and above (<https://dsel.education.gov.in/scheme/nilp>).

In view of all the above, the significant place accorded to adult education in NEP 2020 needs to be understood mainly from the critical point of view of

its intended integration with formal educational institutions at different levels. “Fundamental principles of NEP 2020 include: synergy in curriculum across all levels of education from early childhood care and education to school education to higher education” (NEP, p.5). Towards this end, *the policy exhaustively provides for not only national curriculum frameworks for different levels of school education but also for teacher education*. To be precise, in addition to providing for NCFTE, it provides for training of workers/teachers of ECCE: i) Current Anganwadi workers/teachers through a systematic effort in accordance with the curricular/pedagogical framework (NCPFECCE); ii) Anganwadi workers/teachers with qualifications of 10+2 and above with *a 6-month certificate programme in ECCE*; and iii) Those with lower educational qualifications with *a one-year diploma programme* covering early literacy, numeracy, and other relevant aspects of ECCE.

Lack of institutionalised and recognized programme for personnel training and development: One serious lapse is that, though the policy also provides for NCFAE, it does not provide for any specific curriculum framework for training of adult educators/instructors (like NCFTAE) nor it provides for integration of their training components with NCFTE. In other words, *integration of ‘adult education’ and ‘lifelong learning’ components with NCFTE at all levels is a critical point worth serious consideration by all the teacher educationists and adult educationists and other concerned implementers of the policy*. For instance, the 4-Year Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP), a dual-major holistic Bachelor’s degree offering B.A. B.Ed., B.Sc. B.Ed., and B.Com. B.Ed. have been operationalised from the academic session 2022-23. By 2030, ITEP will be offered by multidisciplinary institutions and will become the minimal degree qualification for school teachers. Further, NEP 2020 proposes diverse teacher education programmes, both pre-service and in-service, including *B.Ed. (2-year and 1-year duration), M.Ed., and Ph.D. degrees in education*, all in the multi-disciplinary institutions. Multidisciplinary higher education institutions offering the 4-year in-class integrated B.Ed. programme and having accreditation for ODL may also offer high-quality ITEP and B.Ed. programmes in blended or ODL mode. But regarding adult education, though it provides for NCFAE, it is silent about the curricular frameworks for training of adult educators/instructors (NCFTAE). Since teaching adults is tougher than teaching children in the school, it would be more meaningful if NCTE can make it mandatory for all the institutions offering any of the teacher education programmes mentioned above, i.e. 4-Year ITEP, B.Ed. (2-year and 1-year duration), and M.Ed. to incorporate ‘adult education’ and ‘lifelong learning’ as compulsory courses in their curriculum. Further, such integration would be helpful in effective utilization of the services of the trained teachers during evenings, week-ends and holidays for teaching of adults and the community. In addition, even in all Bachelor of Arts (General Education), and Master of Arts (General Education) programmes, which are not professional programmes like B.Ed./M.Ed., it is more meaningful to mandate inclusion of the two courses. ‘Adult Education’ and ‘Lifelong Learning’ as compulsory courses, or at least as optional/elective courses in their programme frameworks. *Such mandates by NCTE to include ‘Adult Education’ and ‘Lifelong Learning’ as compulsory courses in the case of all professional teacher training/education programmes (i.e. 4-Year ITEP, B.Ed. 2-year and 1-year durations), and in*

all non-professional programmes [i.e. Bachelor of Arts (General Education), and Master of Arts (General Education)] would strengthen not only teachers' understanding of adult education but also their role in effective implementation of adult education and lifelong learning programmes. Adult educators and educationists can only hope such mandate follows from NCTE which can pave the way for ever-lasting and very sound integration of adult education with school education and higher education, and also various streams of the system in the country!

As per NEP, 2020 (Para 21.5), National Centre for Adult Literacy (NCAL) has been established in NCERT which is mainly responsible for the development of Primers, other online and offline learning resources and the development of the first National Curriculum Framework for Adult Education. The NCAL has prepared Primers on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) in Hindi. Process for the preparation of E-Primers, E-contents, Audio-Videos of Adult Education is also going on. AE Bureau, NCAL, NIOS, and DAE will collaborate with various Ministries/Departments to prepare Teaching-Learning materials (TLM)/Primers for Critical Life Skills, Basic Education, and Continuing Education under convergence. TLM/Courses for Vocational Skills Development will be provided by the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship for the beneficiaries of NILP (Government of India, 2021, p.72).

While NEP 2020 talks about five major areas with respect to Education for All, viz., Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, Critical life skills, Vocational Skills Development, Basic Education and Continuing Education, the Cell for National Centre for Literacy (CNCL) constituted in NCERT in March 2021 is dedicated to 'Education for All' (previously referred to as Adult Education), to develop resource material, both print and non-print, for foundational literacy and numeracy along with critical life skills. The cell works in accordance with Ministry of Education's centrally sponsored scheme – New India Literacy Program (Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram), popularly known as ULLAS, and focuses on the learners aged 15 years and above, who haven't had the opportunity to become literate and educate themselves. The cell works for adult learners by keeping the focus on two major areas -- Foundational Literacy and Numeracy and Critical Life Skills -- by developing various resource materials such as Primer titled ULLAS in four volumes, Margdarshika, worksheets, assessment items, video programs based on primer, audio programs on critical life skills, promotional material such as jingle, documentaries, flyers, monograms, informative booklet, etc. (<https://ncert.nic.in/cncl/>).

New India Literacy Program (Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram) - ULLAS Resources



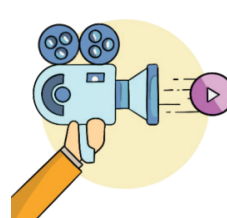
Praveshika



Worksheet



Assessment &
Evaluation



Video Programs



**Margdarshika
For Volunteer
Teachers**

**Guidelines for
Development of
Primer**

Learning Outcomes

Source: <https://ncert.nic.in/cncl/>

The cell aims at working towards achieving the goal of 100% literacy as recommended by National Education Policy, 2020. Keeping this vision in mind, the cell organized various workshops and training programs for educators, key resource persons and master trainers of various states, including orientation workshops for all the regions (Ibid). In the same light, the cell envisions to develop synergy with and build upon the existing expertise in developing various resource materials for Foundational Literacy and Numeracy and Critical Life Skills, while also covering the areas of Vocational Skills Development, Basic Education and Continuing Education. For the effective implementation and dissemination of Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram, the cell plans to further develop detailed guidelines, handbook, audio-video programs, story books, posters, pamphlets, monographs, etc., while working in co-ordination with the states (Ibid).

However, it would be very useful if a special portal is developed by evolving an appropriate strategy for collecting and uploading of different types of literacy, post-literacy and continuing education material, among others including various audio and video programmes developed earlier by DAE, then different SRCs and ZSS and other institutions in different States/UTs. Such a portal can play a promising role in sustaining, promoting and enriching the skills of adult learners. This would facilitate more personalised and self-learning-based training of their choice in open and distance learning mode for their involvement in teaching and learning in adult education.

17.3.2 Technological Applications in Implementation of Adult Education

NEP 2020 in Chapter 21 also provides for technological applications such as the following in implementation of adult education.

i) Ensuring availability, accessibility and affordability to books and other materials

NEP 2020 lays special emphasis on improving the availability and accessibility of books to inculcate the habit of reading within our communities and educational institutions. This Policy recommends that all communities and educational institutions -- schools, colleges, universities and public libraries -- will be

strengthened and modernized to ensure an adequate supply of books that cater to the needs and interests of all students, including persons with disabilities and other differently-abled persons. The Central and State governments will take steps to ensure that books are made accessible and affordable to all across the country including socio-economically disadvantaged areas as well as those living in rural and remote areas. Both public and private sector agencies/institutions will devise strategies to improve the quality and attractiveness of books published in all Indian languages. Steps will be taken to enhance online accessibility of library books and further broad-basing of digital libraries. For ensuring vibrant libraries in communities and educational institutions, it will be imperative to make available adequate library staff and also devise appropriate career pathways and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for them. Other steps will include strengthening all existing libraries, setting up rural libraries and reading rooms in disadvantaged regions, making widely available reading material in Indian languages, opening children's libraries and mobile libraries, establishing social book clubs across India and across subjects, and fostering greater collaborations between education institutions and libraries (p.52, Para 21.9). As such efforts did not become a reality during the periods of the previous policies, it can only be hoped that these provisions are translated into a reality on sustainable basis at least during this policy period. If it happens, that will be a remarkable contribution to the field of adult education.

ii) ICT-driven initiatives

NEP 2020 (Chapter 21) stresses on leveraging technology to strengthen and even undertake the above mentioned initiatives. Quality technology-based options for adult learning such as apps, online courses/modules, satellite-based TV channels, online books, and ICT-equipped libraries and Adult Education Centres, etc. will be developed, through government and philanthropic initiatives as well as through crowd sourcing and competitions. In many cases, quality adult education could thereby be conducted in an online or blended mode (pp.52-53, Para 21.10). While the quality technology-based options are always attractive, ultimately it is only effective implementation of this kind of provisions that will have long-lasting impact on promotion of lifelong learning among all adult learners in this ICT-driven world. Further, recognition and accreditation of prior learning of all categories of adults through effective integration of the formal, non-formal and informal systems of learning and education only can provide an effective mechanism for realization of their dreams of lifelong learning.

NILP, popularly called ULLAS, is to be implemented through volunteerism. The learners will be encouraged to access the content in local languages in online mode through DIKSHA platform in NCERT. Government/Aided schools registered under UDISE which are run by the State/UT Governments are the units of implementation of the scheme. The scheme will cover non-literates of the age of 15 years and above in all State/UTs in the country. The target for Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) for FYs 2022-27 is 5 (five) crore learners @ 1.00 crore learners per year by using "Online Teaching, Learning and Assessment System (OTLAS)" in which a learner/volunteer teacher may register himself/herself with essential information like name, date of birth, gender, mobile number, Aadhaar number, etc for online teaching, learning and assessment. The scheme has commenced from 1st April, 2022 which is to be

implemented in the next five years. As mentioned elsewhere above, the scheme has five main components, viz. Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, Critical Life Skills, Basic Education (Equivalency), Vocational Skills Development and Continuing Education which are necessary for a citizen of the 21st century (https://dsel.education.gov.in/sites/default/files/2023-01/Draft_Guidelines_of_NILP.pdf). This shift to online mode is a significant change with online initiative in implementation of the scheme.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Write the answer in the space given below the question.

b) Check your answer with the one given under “Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’ Questions” of this Unit.

2. What are the five types of programmes that form the part of National Curriculum Framework for Adult Education (NCFAE) as per NEP 2020?

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3. What are the broad ICT-driven initiatives that NEP 2020 stresses for leveraging technology for promoting adult learning?

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17.4 LET US SUM UP

In this Unit, we have presented a holistic picture of integration of adult education with formal education institutions with emphasis on the nature, character and potential of adult education institutional structure in India during 1947-2019. Further, it presented some glimpses of the potential offerings for adult education and lifelong learning in NEP 2020 by highlighting the relevant curricular framework, the proposed nature of adult education centres at different levels and the technological applications in implementation of adult education under New India Literacy Programme (NILP) popularly known as ULLAS. In implementation of NILP/ULLAS, the role being played by the Cell for National Centre for Literacy (CNCL) under NCERT has also been highlighted.

When the implementation of NEP 2020 is gearing up the country to become ‘Vishwa Guru’ in education, it is appropriate to take note of one very important development in this context. On January 28, 2019, the Government of India (GOI) signed an agreement with the Organization for Economic Cooperation

and Development (OECD) to participate in the 2021 administration of its *Programme for International Student Assessment* (PISA). PISA is a triennial international survey based on competency assessment that aims to evaluate education systems worldwide by testing the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students in Mathematics, Science, and Reading. In the similar way, the Government of India (GOI) needs to move further to sign another agreement with the same OECD for '*Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies*' (PIAAC) to put Indian adult learners' skills also for testing on international footing as this survey measures adults' proficiency in key information processing skills -- literacy, numeracy and problem-solving. Further, all the adults of different ages need to be enabled to promote their learning, living and working environments with gender equity and equality to move on the path of sustainable lifelong learning. Since NEP 2020 is making its strides now, it is time to subject not only 15-year-old students but also all adult learners to the respective international surveys/assessment programmes so as to enable them to compete and shine in the international arena.

17.5 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS' QUESTIONS

1. There are three levels viz., A, B and C of adult, non-formal and/or open school education having equivalency with classes 3, 5 and 8 respectively of the formal education system that existed prior to NEP 2020.
2. National Curriculum Framework for Adult Education (NCFAE) as per NEP 2020 includes at least five types of programmes, each with clearly defined outcomes: (a) foundational literacy and numeracy; (b) critical life skills (including financial literacy, digital literacy, commercial skills, health care and awareness, child care and education, and family welfare); (c) vocational skills development (with a view towards obtaining local employment); (d) basic education (including preparatory, middle, and secondary stage equivalency); and (e) continuing education (including engaging in holistic adult education courses in arts, sciences, technology, culture, sports, and recreation, as well as other topics of interest or use to local learners, such as more advanced material on critical life skills).
3. NEP 2020 (Chapter 21) stresses on leveraging technology to strengthen and even undertake certain quality technology-based options for adult learning such as apps, online courses/modules, satellite-based TV channels, online books, and ICT-equipped libraries and Adult Education Centres, etc. through government and philanthropic initiatives as well as through crowd sourcing and competitions. It also stresses on conducting quality adult education in an online or blended mode.

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<https://dsel.education.gov.in/about-us> -- Retrieved on 27-10-2022.

https://dsel.education.gov.in/sites/default/files/2023-01/Draft_Guidelines_of_NILP.pdf -- Retrieved on 12-9-2024.

Suggested Readings

<https://dsel.education.gov.in/scheme/nilp>

<https://ncert.nic.in/cncl/>

<https://nilp.education.gov.in/nilp#/>

17.7 UNIT-END EXERCISES

In your own interest, you may prepare the answers to the following questions which may be useful as a part of your preparation for your term-end examinations.

- 1) What is the status of education in general and adult education in particular as per the constitutional mandate?
- 2) Describe the nature, character and potential of adult education institutional structure in India during 1947-2019.
- 3) Discuss the status of integration of adult education with formal education institutions with an emphasis on the shift in the nature and character prior to 2020.
- 4) Explain the major shift in integration of adult education with formal education institutions under NEP 2020 in terms of adult education centres as proposed at different levels.
- 5) What is the emerging trend with regard to the technological applications in implementation of adult education?

17.8 UNIT-END ACTIVITY

If you like to further enhance your interest, you may attempt to perform the following activity.

- 1) Keep updating yourself about the developments with regard to New India Literacy Program (Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram) now popularly known as ULLAS (Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society) by visiting the following websites:
 - a) <https://ncert.nic.in/cncl/>
 - b) <https://dsel.education.gov.in/scheme/nilp>

UNIT 18 EDUCATION FOR ALL (ADULT EDUCATION): NEW INDIA LITERACY PROGRAMME

Structure

- 18.0 Introduction
- 18.1 Objectives
- 18.2 Role of Niti Aayog
- 18.3 New India Literacy Programme
- 18.4 Specific Role of NCERT/ CNCL in NILP
- 18.5 Need for Participation of Adult Learners in International Assessment
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18.0 INTRODUCTION

We hope you have understood the shift in policy focus in “Unit-17: Chapter 21 of National Education Policy 2020: Major Implications for Adult Education” with special reference to both Adult Education and Lifelong Learning in India. In order to cope up with different aspects of adult education and successfully deal with the modern terminology in the context of current scenario of education for all, we also need to have clear understanding of education for all from the perspective of adult education, as it is being so implemented, as a part of NEP 2020 in India.-

Adult Education in India traditionally extended the opportunity of education to those adults who have earlier lost the opportunity of formal education and transcended the age of formal education and now feel the need for learning. The main focus of Adult Education had been on its bottom tier of education, which was “Basic literacy”. The reason for this was that at the time of Independence of the country in 1947, around 86% of the population of India was not literate. A series of programmes and schemes for promotion of adult literacy were initiated by the Government of India from 1951 onwards.

Social Education 1951-56: The programme gave importance to literacy, extension, general education, leadership training and social consciousness.

Gram Shikshan Mohim 1959: A movement for promotion of literacy in the rural areas in the state of Maharashtra started which aimed at imparting basic

literacy skills within a period of four months.

Farmer's Functional Literacy Project (FFLP) 1967-68: An inter-ministerial project for farmers' training and functional literacy was started during this period.

Functional Literacy for Adult Women (FLAW) 1975-76: The scheme included a component which enabled illiterate adult women to acquire functional skills along with literacy to gain better awareness of health, hygiene, child care practices and so on, and in the process it facilitated attitudinal changes.

National Adult Education Programme (NAEP) 1978: First nation-wide literacy programme was taken up at macro level to eradicate illiteracy through project approach, with a massive programme aimed at educating 100 million non-literate adults in the age-group of 15-35 years within a time frame of 5 years.

Rural Functional Literacy Project (RFLP) & Mass Programme of Functional Literacy (MPFL) 1986: These were aimed at imparting functional literacy to all illiterate persons in the age group of 15-35 years who were living in the rural areas by organizing a specified number of literacy centres. These were launched on May 1, 1986 by involving National Service Scheme (NSS) and other students in colleges and universities.

National Literacy Mission (NLM) 1988: It was launched on 5th May, 1988 as a country-wide programme for promoting adult literacy in mission mode to impart functional literacy to non-literates in the country in the age group of 15-35 years in a time bound manner. To promote Adult Education, particularly in 15-35 age-group, through voluntary sector, the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, has been providing support to Voluntary Agencies (VA) through two separate schemes, namely (i) Assistance to Voluntary Agencies in the field of Adult Education, and (ii) Jan Shikshan Sansthan. The former was conceptualized as an overarching programme to encourage innovation and creativity in literacy and continuing education. It included establishment of State Resource Centers in different States for providing technical and academic support to adult education. Jan Shikshan Sansthan, on the other hand, provide vocational education skill development training to those having no or rudimentary level of education. Since the inception of the NLM in 1988, about 127.45 million persons were made literate and 597 districts of the country were covered under Total Literacy Campaign till March, 2007 and 485 districts were covered under Post Literacy Phase. 328 districts were covered under the Continuing Education Programme under which 1,97,612 Continuing Education Centres (CECs) and 20,939 Nodal CECs were set up. The then ongoing schemes of the National Literacy Mission were concluded in the month of September, 2009 and subsequently a new variant of the scheme, Saakshar Bharat, was launched.

Saakshar Bharat: Saakshar Bharat Mission was launched on 8 September 2009, as a centrally sponsored scheme. It aimed to recast India's National Literacy Mission to focus on the literacy of women. The Scheme of Adult Education and Skill Development, also launched on 8th September, 2009 itself, was further extended for implementation during 11th and 12th Five Year Plans and concluded on 31.3.2018. The principal target was to impart Functional Literacy

to 70 million non-literates. The Saakshar Bharat had 4 broader objectives, viz. to impart functional literacy to non-literate and non-numerate adults; to enable the neo-literate adults to continue their learning beyond basic literacy and acquire equivalency to formal educational system; to offer to non- and neo-literates relevant skill development programmes to improve their earning and living conditions while learning, and to promote a learning society by providing opportunities to neo-literates for continuing education. Under the Saakshar Bharat programme around 7.64 crore non-literates had been certified as literates since 2009.

Padhna Likhna Abhiyan: The scheme was approved on 25.04.2020 for implementation in Financial Year 2020-21 in the midst of Covid-19 pandemic with a financial outlay of Rs.142.61 crore to impart Functional Literacy to 57 lakh non-literates of the age group 15 years and above in the country in both rural and urban areas. The scheme was implemented in 33 States/UTs during Financial Years 2020-22 with a one year extension till 31.03.2022 (NILP Guidelines, 2023).

The term “Adult Education” is now replaced by “Education for All”. This change has been found necessitated in view of the fact that the term “Adult Education” is not appropriate for use for all non-literates of 15 years and above age group including all adults and the elders or senior citizens as well. The term “Education For All” will also include younger non-literates who could not avail school education for any reason and are not covered by the Right to Education Act, 2009. Accordingly, the term “Education for All” will henceforth be used in place of “Adult Education” (NILP Guidelines, 2023).

New India Literacy Programme (NILP): A new centrally sponsored scheme on Education for All (erstwhile known as Adult Education), named “New India Literacy Programme (NILP)”, has been approved by the Government of India with a financial outlay of Rs.1037.90 crore for its implementation during FYs 2022-23 to 2026-27, in alignment with the recommendations of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The scheme is targeted at all non-literates of age 15 years and above. The scheme has five components, namely;

- i) Foundational Literacy and Numeracy,
- ii) Critical Life Skills (which include, financial literacy, digital literacy, legal literacy, healthcare and awareness, childcare and education, family welfare, etc.),
- iii) Basic Education [includes preparatory (classes 3-5), middle (classes 6-8), and secondary stage (classes 9-12) equivalency],
- iv) Vocational Skills (Skill development will be a part of the continuous learning process for neo-literates to obtain local employment),
- v) Continuing Education (This includes engaging holistic adult education courses in arts, sciences, technology, culture, sports, recreation as well as other topics of interest or use to local learners).

The scheme is to be implemented through volunteerism. The learners will be encouraged to access the content in local languages in online mode through *Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing* (DIKSHA) platform in

NCERT. Government/Aided schools registered under UDISE are the units of implementation of the scheme which are run by the State/UT Governments (DSEL, 2023).

In Unit 18 here, the above aspects of Education For All (Adult Education) with emphasis on NILP will be discussed. Before you proceed further, if need be, we advise you to read the glossary of terms (Section 18.11) given at the end of this unit. It will enable you to have a full grasp of what you read in the following sections.

18.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, we expect you to be able to:

- Develop an understanding of the rationale behind the introduction of new nomenclature of “Education for All” instead of “Adult Education”;
- Explore the functional aspects and activities under the Education for All;
- Assess the role of different national agencies like NCERT, Cell for National Centre for Literacy (CNCL), etc; and
- Realize the need for and significance of participation of adult learners in International Assessment.

18.2 ROLE OF NITI AAYOG

National Institution for Transforming India (NITI), popularly called NITI Aayog, is a policy think tank of the Indian government which provides inputs regarding the different programmes and policies of the government. It gives relevant advice to the centre and state governments as well as to the Union Territories. This institution was formed in the year 2015 through a resolution of the Union Cabinet and is chaired by the Prime Minister of India and the Chief Ministers of all States and Union Territories along with the legislatures and Lt. Governors of other Union Territories as its members (Adithyan, 2023).

Education is the cornerstone of any nation’s progress and development. NITI Aayog formulates and implements policies that drive sustainable and inclusive growth. It has taken significant strides in reforming the education sector in India, focusing on enhancing accessibility, affordability, and quality of education.

i) **NITI Aayog and Education:** Given below are NITI Aayog’s initiatives and interventions in education, and also their impact on the nation’s youth and the future of India.

- ***Empowering the Next Generation:*** NITI Aayog’s primary objective in the education sector is to equip future generations with the skills and knowledge necessary to thrive in the 21st century. By emphasizing inclusive and equitable education, NITI Aayog aims to bridge the existing gaps and provide equal opportunities to all children, regardless of their socio-economic background.
- ***Transforming the Curriculum for Holistic Development:*** Under NITI Aayog’s guidance, a comprehensive review of the national curriculum framework is being conducted. The goal is to ensure that

the curriculum is aligned with the needs of the modern world, focusing on academic excellence and the holistic development of students. This includes integrating critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and digital literacy into the core curriculum.

- ***Skill Development for Employability:*** NITI Aayog recognizes the importance of equipping students with relevant skills to enhance their employability. Vocational training programs are being integrated into the education system, offering students practical skills and hands-on experience. The initiatives aim to bridge the gap between industry and academia, preparing students for the demands of the evolving job market.
- ***Promoting Entrepreneurship & Innovation:*** NITI Aayog fosters an entrepreneurial culture among students by promoting innovation and start-up initiatives. By providing support and mentorship, NITI Aayog encourages students to explore their entrepreneurial potential, driving economic growth and job creation. This emphasis on entrepreneurship instills a spirit of self-reliance and problem-solving among the youth.
- ***Enhancing Digital Literacy & Technological Integration:*** Technological literacy is crucial for success in various domains in the digital age. NITI Aayog recognizes this and is actively working towards enhancing digital literacy across schools and colleges. This includes providing access to digital infrastructure, promoting the use of educational technology, and training teachers to integrate technology into classroom instruction effectively. These efforts empower students with essential digital skills and prepare them for a technology-driven future.
- ***Promoting Inclusive Education & Reducing Disparities:*** NITI Aayog places significant emphasis on inclusive education, aiming to address the disparities in access and quality of education. By identifying and addressing the specific needs of marginalized communities, including children with disabilities and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, NITI Aayog strives to ensure equal educational opportunities for all. This involves targeted interventions, such as scholarships, infrastructure development in remote areas, and the provision of special education services.
- ***Strengthening Early Childhood Education:*** Recognizing the critical importance of ECCE, NITI Aayog focuses on strengthening early learning programs. This includes expanding access to quality pre-primary education, promoting parental engagement, and training early childhood educators. By investing in early childhood education, NITI Aayog aims to lay a strong foundation for lifelong learning and development.
- ***Addressing Gender Disparities in Education:*** NITI Aayog is committed to promoting gender equality in education. Efforts are underway to address the existing gender disparities, ensuring equal access and opportunities for girls. This includes initiatives like scholarships for

girl students, creating safe and inclusive learning environments, and promoting girls in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields.

- **Strengthening Education Infrastructure & Governance:** NITI Aayog recognizes the need for robust infrastructure and effective governance in the education sector. Infrastructure development and construction of schools, colleges and libraries are the key focus areas. Additionally, NITI Aayog works towards improving the governance structure, promoting transparency, accountability and efficient management of educational institutions.

NITI Aayog's initiatives in the education sector are driving significant reforms and shaping the future of education in India. By focusing on holistic development, digital literacy, inclusive education, and infrastructure enhancement, NITI Aayog aims to provide a transformative learning experience for the nation's youth. Through their comprehensive vision and strategic interventions, NITI Aayog empowers the next generation with the skills, knowledge, and opportunities necessary for a brighter and more prosperous future (Mehta, 2023).

- ii) **NITI Aayog and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG):** Sustainable development refers to a comprehensive approach that aims to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It involves balancing economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection to create a harmonious and resilient society (Jain, 2023).

NITI Aayog has the twin mandates -- to oversee the adoption and monitoring of the SDGs in the country and to promote competitive and cooperative federalism among States and UTs. The task at hand for NITI Aayog is not just to periodically collect data on SDGs but also to proactively realize the goals and targets. The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has already undertaken a parallel exercise of interaction with the Ministries to evolve indicators reflecting the SDG goals and targets.

NITI Aayog in consultation with MoSPI has prepared a draft mapping of the goals and targets as an initial step. Further, the centrally sponsored schemes, including the 'core of the core', 'core' and 'optional' schemes implemented by the States, and some of the recent initiatives undertaken by the Central Government have been mapped. Moreover, Ministries and States are implementing central sector schemes and state schemes, respectively, aligned with one or more SDGs. (NPI, 2023).

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Write the answer in the space given below the question.

b) Check your answer with the one given under "Answers to 'Check Your Progress' Questions" of this Unit.

1. What is NITI Aayog? What is the main role of NITI Aayog?

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18.3 NEW INDIA LITERACY PROGRAMME

National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has recommendations for Adult Education and Lifelong Learning. Accordingly, the Government approved a new scheme “New India Literacy Programme” for the period of five years during FYs 2022-2027 to align with NEP 2020, and Budget Announcements 2021-22 had been made to enable increased access to resources, including online modules covering the entire gamut of adult education.

The objectives of the scheme are: to impart not only foundational literacy and numeracy but also to cover other components which are necessary for a citizen of 21st century such as critical life skills (including financial literacy, digital literacy, commercial skills, health care and awareness, child care and education, and family welfare); vocational skills development (with a view towards obtaining local employment); basic education (including preparatory, middle, and secondary stage equivalency); and continuing education (including engaging in holistic adult education courses in arts, sciences, technology, culture, sports, and recreation as well as other topics of interest or use to local learners, such as more advanced material on critical life skills).

The scheme is to be implemented through volunteerism through online mode. The training, orientation, and workshops of volunteers, may be organized through face-to-face mode. All material and resources shall be provided digitally for easy access to registered volunteers through easily accessible digital modes, viz, TV, radio, cell phone-based free/open-source Apps/portals, etc.

The scheme is to cover non-literates of the age of 15 years and above in all state/UTs in the country. The target for Foundational Literacy and Numeracy for FYs 2022-27 is 5 (five) crore learners, one crore per year by using “Online Teaching, Learning and Assessment System (OTLAS)” in collaboration with National Informatics Centre, NCERT and NIOS in which a learner may register himself/herself with essential information like name, date of birth, gender, Aadhaar number, mobile number, etc.

The estimated total outlay of “New India Literacy Programme” is Rs.1037.90 crore which includes Central share of Rs.700 crore and State share of Rs.337.90 crore respectively for the FYs 2022 -27.

Salient Features of NILP: These include the following.

- i) School will be Unit for implementation of the scheme.
- ii) Schools will to be used for conducting survey of beneficiaries and Voluntary Teachers (VTs).
- iii) Different strategies are to be adopted for different age-cohorts. Flexibility for States/UTs will be provided to undertake innovative activities.

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Perspective**

- iv) Foundational Literacy and Numeracy will be imparted through Critical Life Skills to all non-literates in the age-group of 15 years and above.
- v) Use of technologies to impart Adult Education for wider coverage of the scheme.
- vi) Performance Grading Index (PGI) for State/UT and district level will show the performance of States and UTs to implement the scheme and achievements on yearly basis by weighing both the physical and financial progress through the UDISE portal.
- vii) Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)/Philanthropic Support may be received by hosting ICT support, providing volunteer support, opening facilitation centres for learners and for providing IT access to economically weak learners in the form of cell phones, etc.
- viii) Priority and Saturation in Literacy: The age-cohort of 15-35 will be saturated first, followed by ages 35 and above. Priority will be given in terms of categories to the Girls and women, SC/ST/OBC/Minorities, Persons with Special Needs (Divyangjans), Marginalized/Nomadic/construction workers/laborers/etc., who can substantially and immediately benefit from adult education. In terms of location/area, the focus shall be on all aspirational districts of NITI Aayog, districts with literacy rates less than the National/State average, districts with female literacy rates less than 60% as per the 2011 Census, Districts/Blocks with large SC/ST/Minority population, Educationally Backward Blocks, Left Wing Extremism Affected districts.
- ix) Convergence with Ministries and Departments, among others, for effective implementation of NILP: These include Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) - Digital Literacy; Department of Financial Services/Ministry of Finance (DFS/MoF) - Financial Literacy; Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MoSDE) - Skilling; Department of Justice/Ministry of Law and Justice (DoJ/MoLJ) - Legal Literacy; Ministry of Defence (MoD) - Involvement of NCC Volunteer and Ex- Servicemen; Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MoYAS) - Involvement of NYKS, NSS, Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) - NRLM and DDU-GKY; Ministry of Coal (MoC) - Involvement of Cooperative Societies, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) - Health and Hygiene Literacy; National Disaster Management Authority / Ministry of Home Affairs (NDMA/MHA) - Disaster Management; MoMA - for implementing among Minorities; Department of Higher Education (DoHE) - Continuing Education; Ministry of Culture - Libraries, Cultural Literacy; Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) - For Panchayat support, Rural Libraries; Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) - Involvement of Anganwadi Workers; and Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) - Implementing in Tribal areas, etc.

NILP as Janandolan: In order to make it a mass movement, the programme involves the following.

- i) Three crore students/children of around 7 lakh schools registered under UDISE along with about 50 lakh teachers of Government, Aided and

Private schools will participate as volunteers.

- ii) An estimated 20 lakh students from Teacher Education and Higher Education Institutions will be actively involved as volunteers.
- iii) Support will be garnered from PRIs, Anganwadi workers, ASHA workers and an estimated 50 lakh NYSK, NSS and NCC volunteers.
- iv) There will be involvement of community, participation of philanthropic/ CSR organizations through volunteerism and through Vidyanjali portal.
- v) States/UTs will promote individual / family / village / district success stories through various platforms.
- vi) It will utilize all types of media – Electronic, Print, Folk and Inter-personal platforms including social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, TV channels, radio, etc.
- vii) Central Portal to be developed by NIC for aggregated data capturing equipped with Mobile App, Online Survey Module, Physical and Financial Modules, and Monitoring Framework, etc.
- viii) Assessment of Literacy will be conducted using scientific format to capture the real-life learning and skills for functional literacy. Assessment on demand will also be made through OTLAS and e-certificate jointly e-signed by NIOS and NLMA will be issued to the learner.
- ix) Annual Achievement Survey of Learning Outcomes will be done by samples of 500-1000 randomly selected learners from each state/UT and Outcome-Output Monitoring Framework (OOMF).

As a progressive step, it has also been decided that from now onwards the term “Education For All” will be used in place of “Adult Education” by the Ministry to cover all non-literates of 15 years and above age group. As per Census 2011, the absolute number of non-literates of the country in 15 years and above age group is 25.76 crore (Male 9.08 crore, Female 16.68 crore). In consideration of the progress of persons certified as literates being to the tune of 7.64 crore under the Saakshar Bharat programme implemented during 2009-10 to 2017-18, it is estimated that currently around 18.12 crore adults are still non-literate in India (PIB, 2022). NILP will cover all these left over non-literate adults, among all others of the target group.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Write the answer in the space given below the question.

b) Check your answer with the one given under “Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’ Questions” of this Unit.

2. What are the aims and objectives of New India Literacy Program?

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18.4 SPECIFIC ROLE OF NCERT/CNCL IN NILP

Cell for National Centre for Literacy (CNCL) was constituted in *National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)* in March 2021 as per the recommendations of National Education Policy 2020. It is dedicated to ‘Education for All’ (Adult Education) to develop resource material, both print and non-print, for Foundational Literacy and Numeracy along with Critical Life Skills. The cell works in accordance with Ministry of Education’s centrally sponsored scheme – New India Literacy Program (Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram), popularly known as Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society (ULLAS), that focuses on the learners aged 15 years and above, who haven’t had the opportunity to educate themselves.

As stated elsewhere above, National Educational Policy (NEP) 2020 talks about five major areas with respect to Education for All, viz., Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, Critical life skills, Vocational Skills Development, Basic Education and Continuing Education. CNCL works for adult learners by keeping the focus on two major areas -- Foundational Literacy and Numeracy and Critical Life Skills – and developed various resource materials such as Primer titled UJAAS in four volumes, Margdarshika, worksheets, assessment items, video programs based on primer, audio programs on critical life skills, plus promotional material such as jingle, documentaries, flyers, monograms, informative booklet, etc.

The Cell works in accordance with the Ministry of Education’s program – New India Literacy Program (Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram) designed and developed for implementation during FYs 2022-27. NILP provides an opportunity to attain Foundational Literacy and Numeracy through Critical Life Skills and paves way for the learner to perform varied tasks in daily life, ranging from carrying out basic financial transactions, being aware of one’s own right to communicate and comprehend public information, etc. Apart from daily life tasks, another most important opportunity which the learner gets through Education for All is to pursue employment in medium or high productivity sectors that require literacy (Review of RMAE, 2022).

CNCL aims at working towards achieving the goal of 100% literacy as recommended by National Education Policy, 2020. Keeping this vision in mind, the cell organized various workshops and training programs for educators, key resource persons and master trainers of various states, including orientation workshops for all the regions. In the same light, the Cell envisions to develop synergy with and build upon the existing expertise in developing various resource materials for Foundational Literacy and Numeracy and Critical Life Skills, while also covering the areas of Vocational Skills Development, Basic Education and Continuing Education. For the effective implementation and dissemination of Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram, the cell plans to further develop detailed guidelines, handbooks, audio-video programs, story books, posters, pamphlets, monographs, etc., while working in co-ordination with the states.

The primary objective of the scheme, New India Literacy Program popularly being promoted as ULLAS for a period of five years from 2022-2027, is to empower all adults aged 15 years and above, who have not had the opportunity to educate themselves and to enable them to contribute to the growth of the country. It not only allows the learners to acquire reading, writing and numeracy skills but also to enrich them with an understanding of critical life skills while encouraging lifelong learning. The scheme is being implemented through volunteerism, promoting social responsibility and a sense of duty or Kartavyabodh. Furthermore, the learners are encouraged to access the content in regional languages on Education for All Vertical on DIKSHA Portal as well as through the ULLAS mobile app.

ULLAS continues to act as a beacon of hope, illuminating the path to education and personal growth. The curriculum therefore is designed keeping in mind the socio-cultural-economic context of the learners, which allows for greater affinity and pride amongst them. ULLAS also incorporates experiential learning in its teaching methods for volunteer-teachers, making the entire process more engaging and meaningful, simultaneously providing practical value to learning. Along with this, the scheme acknowledges the efforts of the learners as well as the volunteer-teachers through certificates which indubitably boost their confidence and motivate them to keep moving forward in life.

This scheme is thus much more than a literacy program; it is a movement, a drive towards a bright future and empowered citizens. It believes that literacy is a fundamental human right and strives to make this right accessible to all. The learners who embark on this journey not only learn to read and write but are also be able to make a significant difference in their lives, their livelihoods and their communities. Each word read, every number calculated and every thought understood brings them one step closer to their dreams and shall continue to do it in the future as well (CNCL, 2024).

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Write the answer in the space given below the question.

b) Check your answer with the one given under “Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’ Questions” of this Unit.

3. What are the key roles of NCERT in the context of NILP?

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4. How is the Cell for National Centre for Literacy connected with NILP?

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18.5 NEED FOR PARTICIPATION OF ADULT LEARNERS IN INTERNATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Since NEP 2020 aims at making Indian education system globally competitive and qualitative, it needs to participate not only in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) that pertains to formal system, but also in the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) in the current context of Education for All in India.

i) The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA): It is a worldwide study by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in member and non-member nations intended to evaluate educational systems by measuring 15-year-old school pupils' scholastic performance in mathematics, science, and reading. It was first performed in 2000 and then repeated every three years. Its aim is to provide comparable data with a view to enabling countries to improve their education policies and outcomes. It measures problem solving and cognition (Berger, 2014).

PISA 2018 was the seventh in this series of assessments. While the eighth assessment was originally planned for 2021, the PISA Governing Board postponed the assessment to 2022 because of the many difficulties education systems faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The PISA 2022 results represent outcomes from the 8th cycle of PISA since its inception in 2000. PISA has been conducted every 3 years except for a 1-year delay in the current cycle (from 2021 to 2022) due to the pandemic.

Since the year 2000 over 70 countries and economies have participated in PISA. Every three years, a randomly selected group of fifteen-year-olds take tests in key subjects – reading, mathematics and science -- with focus given to one subject in each year of assessment. The focus was reading in 2000, mathematics in 2003, science in 2006, and later reading again in 2009, mathematics in 2012, science in 2015 assessment, and so on. In this process, the students and school principals also fill in background questionnaires to provide information on the students' family background and the way their schools are organized. In some countries/economies, parents fill in a questionnaire as well. PISA is unique because it develops tests which are not directly linked to the school curriculum and provides context through the background questionnaires which can help analysts interpret the results. The tests are designed to assess how well students, at the end of compulsory education, can apply their knowledge to real-life situations and can therefore fully participate in society. PISA data provides governments with a powerful tool to shape their policy making (OECD, 2023).

India has signed the agreement in 2019 with OECD for India's participation in Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), 2021. Following are some of the important features of India's participation in PISA:

- i) Schools run by Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) and schools in the UT of Chandigarh will participate.
- ii) Within the country (or specific geography to be covered in case of large countries), PISA covers a sample of 15-year-old students representing all forms of schooling, i.e. public, private, private-aided, etc.
- iii) PISA is a competency-based assessment which unlike content-based assessment, measures the extent to which students have acquired key competencies that are essential for full participation in modern societies. It would lead to recognition and acceptability of Indian students and prepare them for the global economy in the 21st century.
- iv) Learning from participation in PISA will help to introduce competency-based examination reforms in the school system and help move away from rote learning. The CBSE and NCERT will be part of the process and activities leading to the actual test.

More than 80 countries, including 44 middle-income countries, have participated in the assessment since the first round of testing in 2000. The list of registered countries includes Brazil, China (certain areas like Shanghai and Beijing) and countries from South-East Asia like Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam. (PIB, 2019) The results of the 2022 data collection were released by OECD in December 2023 (OECD Results, 2023).

ii) Programme of International Assessment for Adult Competencies (PIAAC): India needs to sign another agreement with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) for ‘Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies’ (PIAAC) to put Indian adult learners’ skills also for testing on international footing as this survey measures adults’ proficiency in key information-processing skills — literacy, numeracy and problem solving. Further, all the adults of different ages need to be enabled to promote their learning, living and working environments with gender equity and equality to move on the path of sustainable lifelong learning. Since NEP 2020 is making its strides now, it is time to subject not only 15-year-old students but also all adult learners to the respective international surveys/assessment programmes so as to enable them to compete and shine in the international arena (Reddy, 2023). Let us hope India will rise to the occasion to be in the international assessments.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Write the answer in the space given below the question.

b) Check your answer with the one given under “Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’ Questions” of this Unit.

5. What is the need and importance of participation in PIAAC?

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18.6 LET US SUM UP

At the time of independence, the overall literacy rate of India was around 14 per cent. Government of India and many provincial Governments initiated many programmes/schemes for promoting literacy. The major programmes/schemes were Social Education, Gram Shikshan Mohim, Farmer's Functional Literacy Project, National Adult Education Programme, Rural Functional Literacy Project & Mass Programme of Functional Literacy, National Literacy Mission, Saakshar Bharat, and Padhna Likhna Abhiyan. As a result, overall literacy rate of India reached 74.04 per cent in 2011. For further acceleration, the Government of India adopted New India Literacy Programme for the Financial Years 2022-23 to 2026-27. The National Council of Educational Research and Training and its separate Cell for National Centre for Literacy are providing the logistic support such as material development, online registration for teachers and students, evaluation, etc. It would lead to recognition and acceptability of Indian students and prepare them for the global economy in the 21st century. Learning from participation in PIAAC will help us to introduce competency-based performance reforms in the system of EFA and help move away from rote learning. While India became a part of PISA a couple of years ago and again planning to be a part of next round of PISA, which is a welcome step for getting globally recognized and competitive. But in the context of EFA in the current context too, it is important for India to join the PIAAC as well in the same line. Such joining is also very relevant as the entire programme is not confined to literacy alone. Now it has five components: (i) Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, (ii) Critical Life Skills, (iii) Vocational Skills Development, (iv) Basic Education, and (v) Continuing Education. This is reason that, under NILP, Adult Education is now replaced as Education for All, particularly all those outside the formal system. New India has all potential to join all such international assessments to keep itself growing more and to become more robust in this regard.

18.7 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS' QUESTIONS

1. NITI Aayog or the National Institution for Transforming India is a policy think tank of the Indian government which provides inputs regarding different programmes and policies of the government.

NITI Aayog has the twin mandate, to oversee the adoption and monitoring of the SDGs in the country and to promote competitive and cooperative federalism among States and UTs. The task at hand for NITI Aayog is not just to periodically collect data on SDGs but also to proactively realize the set goals and targets.

2. Based on the National Education Policy 2020 and Sustainable Development Goals, the Central Government has launched the "New India Literacy Program" (NILP) which aims to cover a target of five crore non-literates

in the age group of 15 years and above. The Scheme has five components: (i) Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, (ii) Critical Life Skills, (iii) Vocational Skills Development, (iv) Basic Education, and (v) Continuing Education.

The specific objective of the NILP include achievement of 100% literacy by 2030 by providing basic education, easy numeracy, life skills, skill development, livelihood opportunities and continuing education to all illiterate people in India.

3. The key roles of NCERT in the context of NILP are given below :
 - a) Cell for National Centre for Literacy (CNCL) under NCERT has developed resource material, both print and non-print, for Foundational Literacy and Numeracy along with Critical Life Skills.
 - b) The cell has developed various resource materials such as Primer titled UJAAS in four volumes, Margdarshika, worksheets, assessment items, video programs based on primer, audio program on critical life skills, promotional material such as jingle, documentaries, flyers, monograms, informative booklet, etc.
 - c) Developing various resource materials on Vocational Skills Development, Basic Education and Continuing Education, such as detailed guidelines, handbook, audio-video programs, story books, posters, pamphlets, monographs, etc.
4. The National Educational Policy (NEP), 2020 specifies five major areas with respect to Education for All, viz., Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, Critical life skills, Vocational Skills Development, Basic Education and Continuing Education. CNCL works for adult learners by keeping the focus on two major areas -- Foundational Literacy and Numeracy and Critical Life Skills -- by developing various resource materials such as Primer titled UJAAS in four volumes, Margdarshika, worksheets, assessment items, video programs based on primer, audio programs on critical life skills, promotional material such as jingle, documentaries, flyers, monograms, informative booklet, etc.

The Cell aims at working towards achieving the goal of 100% literacy as recommended by National Education Policy, 2020. Keeping this vision in mind, the Cell organized various workshops and training programs for educators, key resource persons and master trainers of various states, including orientation workshops for all the regions.

5. In order to make the parity of Adult Competencies of Indian adult learners' skills such as literacy, numeracy and problem-solving with the international standard, participation in PIAAC is essential. Further, all the adults of different ages need to be enabled to promote their learning, living and working environments with gender equity and equality to move on the path of sustainable lifelong learning. Since NEP 2020 is making its strides now, it is time to subject not only 15-year-old students but also all adult learners to the respective international surveys/assessment programmes so as to enable them to compete and shine in the international arena.

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18.9 UNIT-END EXERCISES

In your own interest, you may prepare the answers to the following questions which may be useful as a part of your preparation for your term-end examinations.

1. What was the former name of NITI Aayog?
2. What is the main motto of NITI Aayog?
3. Why is NITI Aayog called think tank?
4. What is the age limit of target group for New India Literacy Program?
5. Who are the beneficiaries of New India Literacy Program?
6. What are the components of the NILP scheme?
7. What are the functions of CNCL of NCERT in the context of NILP?
8. What is the full form for PISA?
9. What is the aim of PISA?
10. Does India participate in PISA?
11. What are the key features of PISA?
12. What are the weaknesses of PISA?
13. What is PIAAC?
14. What is the relevance of PIAAC to strengthening of the programmes like NILP?

18.10 UNIT-END ACTIVITY

If you like to further enhance your interest, you may attempt to perform the following activity.

You can take on to teach 3-4 non-literates of 15 years and above per year voluntarily. Register your name as Volunteer Teacher on NILP Portal/OTLAS. Also register your learner on the Central portal/Mobile app of ULLAS where a learner registers to access online classes. After six months of initiation of this activity, write a report regarding the progress of the learner.

18.11 GLOSSARY

Basic Education: Basic Education, with reference to ULLAS (Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram) refers to the informal or non-formal education of learners of 15 years and above in the country. This alludes to preparatory stage (Classes III to V), middle stage (Classes VI to VIII) and secondary stage (Classes IX to XII) equivalency being implemented in a collaborative manner between NCERT/SCERTs and NIOS/SIOS.

Continuing Education: Continuing Education, which is part of Lifelong Learning, includes engaging in holistic adult education courses in arts, sciences, technology, culture, sports, recreation, as well as any other subject area, hobby, craft or skill. It comprises post-secondary learning activities providing the learners the flexibility to acquire knowledge of their areas of interest at any point of time in their lives.

Critical Life skills: Critical Life skills are the essential abilities that allow an individual to deal effectively with the everyday challenges and prosper in life. These include significant skills such as Financial Literacy, Legal Literacy, Digital Literacy, Environmental Literacy, Disaster Management, Commercial Skills, Child Care and Education, Health and Family Welfare matters like effective parenting, first-aid, management of road traffic, filling up important forms and documents like voter registration and many more.

Foundational Literacy and Numeracy: Literacy is not only limited to reading and writing but is also a tool for meaningful engagement with society that is critical to economic development as well as individual and community well-being. Foundational literacy refers to the skills involved in reading, speaking, writing and interpreting our thoughts. Similarly, numeracy is the ability to perform basic arithmetic operations like addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Both are equally essential in empowering and improving people's lives.

Vocational Skill Development: Vocational Education is a part of the skill development process for adult neo-literates with a view towards obtaining local employment, re-skilling and up-skilling. It is designed for learners to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies specific to a particular occupation or trade or class of occupations to progress in life.