

जन साक्षरता (Journal)



राज्य संसाधन केन्द्र, प्रौढ शिक्षा
भारतीय ग्रामीण महिला संघ, इंदौर

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प्राक्कथन

सम्मानपूर्वक एवं गरिमापूर्ण जीवन जीने का अधिकार नागरिकों को मूलभूत अधिकार है। अक्षर संसार से जुड़े व्यक्तियों को शिक्षा जीवन जीने के अधिकार की राह प्रशस्त करती है।

जीवन जीने का अधिकार मानव अधिकार की सूची में प्रमुख माना जाता है। देश-दुनिया में मानव अधिकारों के सार्वभौगिक घोषणा पत्र को जारी हुए लगभग 63 वर्ष बीत गए हैं। इन वर्षों में जैसे-जैसे साक्षरता/शिक्षा की दर में वृद्धि हुई, वैसे-वैसे मानवाधिकार के क्षेत्र में निश्चित ही तरक्की हुई है। आमजन में जागरूकता बढ़ी है। लेकिन इसके बावजूद मानव अधिकारों का हनन जारी है। इसमें अब घरेलू हिंसा और मानसिक प्रताड़ना जैसे पहलु भी जुड़ गए हैं।

सामाजिक चेतना और अधिकारों को सशक्त करने के लिए कई कानूनी प्रावधान और कार्यक्रमों का क्रियान्वयन होता रहा है। मुफ्त और अनिवार्य शिक्षा का अधिकार भी दिया गया है, लेकिन यह देखना जरूरी है कि इस अधिकार के अनुरूप शिक्षा की बुनियादी संरचना किस प्रकार तैयार की गई है।

‘शिक्षा हमारा अधिकार’ को पुख्ता करने के लिए जरूरी है कि 6 से 14 साल तक के करीबन 20 करोड़ बच्चों की प्राथमिक शिक्षा हेतु पर्याप्त विद्यालय, कमरे, प्रशिक्षित शिक्षक और गुणवत्तायुक्त सुविधाएं उपलब्ध हो। वहीं देश के 40 प्रतिशत बस्तियों में विद्यालय और 46 प्रतिशत सरकारी विद्यालयों में किशोरियों के लिए शौचालय की व्यवस्थाएं उपलब्ध हो।

यही वजह है कि सामाजिक धारणाओं, घरेलू कामकाजों और शिक्षा में बुनियादी व्यवस्था के अभावों में देश की आधी लड़कियों के पास अधिकार तो है लेकिन बगैर शिक्षा के। लड़कियों के पिछड़ेपन को लड़कियों की कमजोरी नहीं बल्कि उनके सामने मौजूद परिस्थितियों के रूप में देखा जाए।

जागरूक युवाओं को ही साक्षरता की डगर पर चलते हुए कुछ निश्चयात्मक कदम उठाने होंगे और एक ऐसा सामाजिक दबाव पैदा करना होगा, जिससे शिक्षा के अधिकार के साथ सम्मानपूर्वक जीवन जीने का अधिकार भी सुनिश्चित हो सकें।

Literacy in the context of the Constitution

Mass education, land reforms, and women's equity/empowerment were the three pronged strategies on which the constitution makers of India had visualised the socio-economic transformation of a free India. This was evident from the initial steps that the government took, such as the zamindari abolition Act, community development programmes, and the Hindu Code Bill [which envisaged empowerment of women through the right to inherit on an equal basis with other male siblings]. The Constitution makers felt that the future and hope of mankind lie in educational advancement and a Welfare State has to make suitable provision for the same. Advocates of State supported education in the past have usually rested their case predominantly on the two extra economic considerations of equality of opportunity and social cohesion. That is, the state being responsible for ensuring that the disadvantaged sections got the preferred weightage and discriminations in this field does not lead to a rupture in the social fabric of the society.

The term Literacy means the ability to read and write with understanding in any language. A person who can merely read but cannot write is not classified as literate. The literacy level of the country at the time of independence was only 29.45 per cent, with male literacy at 39.45 per cent and female literacy at 18.69 per cent. Census 2001 the All-India figure as 65.38 per cent; male literacy stands at 75.85 %; and female literacy at 54.16 %. While examining literacy rates, it should be kept in mind that literacy rates for the decades 1951, 1961, and 1971 relate to population aged five and above and for 1981, 1991 and 2001, to population aged seven and above.

Attempting a Definition

In a letter to the International League for the Rational Education of Children, on 14 August 1908, Rabindranath Tagore argued for viewing education as 'a right which enables individuals and communities to act on reflection'. The relevance of this kind of a definition over many others is that (a) it treats education as a fundamental right; (b) takes care of the social dimension of

education; (c) emphasises the importance of critical enquiry, and (d) stresses upon the link between education and social action.

Literacy as a component of the development process is central and fundamental to many state sponsored programmes in less developed countries. An illiterate person is poorly placed in the matter of accessing useful information or resisting misinformation. This also prevents him/her from accessing the benefits of the development process. In a general way, an illiterate person is less able to transform and use the information inputs to avail the freedoms/choices in enhancing the quality of her life. Right to education is now a fundamental right. The concern for education, i.e. universalisation of elementary education, has been on a back burner for a long time, though periodic lip service in the form of recommendations of various commissions and committees have been paid.

By improving people's ability to acquire and use information, education deepens their understanding of themselves and the world, enriches their minds by broadening their experiences, and improves the choices they make as consumers, producers and citizens. Education strengthens their ability to meet their wants and those of their family by increasing their productivity and their potential to achieve a higher standard of living. By improving people's confidence and their ability to create and innovate, it multiplies their opportunities for personal and social achievement.

Joy of learning and social well being are the other factors, which makes it imperative on the part of the state to guarantee compulsory education. In the first case, the right to education has to be understood as education of a certain quality. Here care must be taken to ensure that the girl child is not deprived of such joys because of social and customary practices. Regarding the second point, it has been established that child mortality rates and better health care flourish quickly in a literate environment. The case of Kerala, the most literate state, where infant mortality rate is 14 per 1000 live births and Madhya Pradesh, one of the most backward states, where it stands at 97. Live childbirths are indicators for a host of social and economic situations along with health and nutrition level of mother.

While dealing with issues of disease, population growth, and

environmental awareness, it has been found that, an educated mother is much better placed in disseminating these values in the household and the community at large. In fact, there is no doubt that education is one of the prime vehicles of social progress. The single most important contribution of literacy/education is that it not only removes disabilities, it also positively endows the person with certain abilities. Another reason as to how literacy enhances individual well being is by strengthening the self-esteem of a person.

Universal elementary education is a necessary component for social justice. India has a long history of educational disparities being used to consolidate social inequalities based on caste, class, and gender. Privileged social groups still have better access to education and opportunities and these further help to consolidate their position.

Fundamental Right to Education

The 93rd Amendment Act makes the right to education a fundamental right for children in the age group of 6-14. It is to be kept in mind that the rhetoric of universalisation of education is going hand in hand with an increasing retreat of the state's commitment for welfare measures. In recent years there has been a tremendous growth in the number of private schools. These schools, mostly teaching in English medium, claim to be better equipped than the government run schools. Related to this is the issue of teaching medium, which has been discussed in some details below. Here it would suffice to say that people from all sections of the Indian society now consider education in English medium to be a passport to better job opportunity and social mobility. This state of affairs is not just an indictment of the government, though it has the primary responsibility of translating the right to education into reality. But political parties, civil society organisations, and social movements have also failed to challenge this apathetic attitude of the government. The right to education is, ultimately, a social responsibility and when it is violated, everyone is responsible. The majority of children to be covered by this Act are from Schedule Castes, Schedule Tribes and other Backward Class communities. The fundamental right to free education will have paramount importance to them, but that section of the society also has a large number who are above 14 and illiterate. It is worth sparing a thought about the fundamental nature of this right.

The universal free and compulsory education should have become a reality in India by 1960. Article 45 of the Indian Constitution says: 'The State shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years'. But that Constitutional obligation has not been fulfilled, mostly due to an apathetic attitude of the state.

In the 93rd Amendment Act, the provision for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in the age group of 0-6 has been included in the Directive Principles of the State Policy. But the ECCE in the 0-6 years is a part of the fundamental right to education, and shapes the most vital period of the child's development.

Further, the Act says, "The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the state may, by law, determine". This might be used by the state to dilute the quality of education by resorting to second class alternatives like single teacher schools, Education Guarantee Scheme, para teachers, etc.

The Act does not specify the financial allocation to impart free and compulsory education to all the children in the age group between 6-14 years, let alone the 0-6 age group. And it does not define exactly what is meant by the term 'free', because we know that parents do incur a lot of expenses regarding books, uniforms etc. even if the fees are waved off.

The Government of India appointed a committee under Tapas Majumdar to look into the viability of universal elementary education. The Committee recommended that in poor rural India the Government should give utmost importance to the formal village school instead of pursuing low cost education to attain the stage of Universal Elementary Education (UEE) with uniform quality.

Literacy and Human Rights

Literacy is now part of the Human Rights Dialogue. Now most of the nations of the world have also accepted their obligation to provide at least free elementary education to their citizens. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall

be compulsory. Technical and Professional education shall be generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

This Right is also repeated in the UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child which seeks to ensure “Right to free and compulsory education at least in the elementary stages and education to promote general culture, abilities, judgment and sense of responsibility to become a useful member of society and opportunity to recreation, and play to attain the same purpose as of education”.

India has ratified the above, and these have thus the power of domestic laws. From the Human Rights perspective, constitutional guarantees arise automatically.

Literacy and Human Development

The investment potential on human capital has now been recognized. According to World Bank’s assessment for 192 countries, physical capital on an average accounts only for 16% of total wealth. More important is natural wealth, which accounts for 20%. And more important still is human capital, which accounts for 64%. Literacy is now part of the Human Development Index, as it is a cumulative measure of several factors that contribute to human development.

Education is an integral part of national development. Education and development are linked in a variety of ways. First, education, as stated earlier, is a human right, the exercise of which is essential for individual development and fulfillment. The capacity of an individual to contribute to societal development is made possible and enhanced by his or her development as an individual. In this light, education is also a basic need. It is also a means by which other needs, both collective and individual, are realized. Thus, education is the instrument by which the skills and productive capacities are developed and endowed. Without organized literacy action, illiteracy will continue to exist along with the associated ills of poverty and underdevelopment. Experience has shown that determined literacy action is the exception and that more often, literacy campaigns are ‘turned on’ and ‘turned off’ in line with short-term policy changes. Hence the need for Constitutional reform and guarantees in terms of the 93rd amendment Act.

Education for Social transformation

The Indian Constitution has recognized the significance of education for social transformation and social justice. The Preamble affirms liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship and equality of status and opportunity and to promote amongst the people a feeling of fraternity, ensuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation. Literacy forms the cornerstone for making the provision of equality of opportunity a reality.

There have been specific amendments to the Constitution affecting education, as in the 42nd, 73rd, 74th, 83rd and 93rd Amendment Acts. These amendments pertain to provisions to enable education being included in the Concurrent List, devolution of powers to local bodies and making elementary education a Fundamental Right formally.

Equality of educational opportunity

‘Equality of Opportunity’ is a basic feature of the Constitution. This has been interpreted as “equality of education” which itself is subject to a variety of interpretations, each leading to different policy outcomes. In particular, “equality of education” may mean equality of access to education, equality of educational facilities or equality of educational performance. Our Courts have struggled in the face of affirmative action or what is known as ‘positive discrimination’ in favour of the deprived sections, while at the same time preserving the needs of quality of education and fair play.

Adult Education

Eradication of illiteracy has been one of the major national concerns of the Government of India since independence. During the first five-year plan, the program of Social Education, inclusive of literacy, was introduced as part of the Community Development Program (1952). The States made efforts of varied types for the spread of literacy. Among these, the Gram Shikshan Mohim initiated in Satara District of Maharashtra in 1959, was one of the successful mass campaigns. It aimed at completing literacy work village-by-village within a short period of 3 to 6 months, through the services of primary school teachers and middle school and high school students, who volunteered for the job, and supported by the entire community. It achieved a good deal of success but suffered

from the lack of follow-up due to financial constraints and some of its good work was lost as a consequence.

The issue was dealt at length by the Education Commission headed by D. S. Kothari, (1964-66) which emphasized the importance of spreading literacy as fast as possible. The Commission also observed that "literacy if it is to be worthwhile, must be functional". It suggested expansion of universal schooling of five-year duration for the age group 6 – 11; provision of part-time education for those children of age group 11 – 14, who had either missed schooling or dropped out of school prematurely; provision of part-time general and vocational education to the younger adults of age group 15 – 30; use of mass media as a powerful tool of environment building for literacy; setting up of libraries; need for follow up program; active role of universities and voluntary organisation at the State and district levels. A multi-pronged approach of universalisation of elementary education and universal adult literacy was adopted for achieving total literacy.

The National Literacy Mission (NLM) came into existence in the mid 1980s. The policy paper spoke of a comprehensive approach to development in which literacy figured as one of the key components. The approach was based on people's participation and the programme was subject to social audit. In 1989, the district-based Total Literacy Campaigns (TLC) were launched as a program strategy for the National Literacy Mission. It was a time bound programme that banked on mass voluntary participation. The Total Literacy Campaigns, initially at least, managed to evoke popular participation, though here again, the lack of a follow up schemes and the problem of sustaining the momentum largely defeated its objective. The lack of visible success is also due to the attitude of the government reflected in the areas of allocating money for the programme, providing institutional back up, and proper coordination and planning.

Into The Future

Education faces the task of adapting to the needs of the times. With the Information technology revolution in the country, it has become necessary that education should now provide technical knowledge to the students to avail of the widening employment opportunity. The UNESCO also emphasises the need for "continu-

ous renewal” of education in order to remain relevant. The source of such renewal is the ‘ the heritage of collective experience and values which education transmits to the new generations’.

Educational Technology

The tools and techniques available for imparting education are undergoing change. The phrase ‘Educational Technology’ was defined by the National Council of Educational Technology (UK) as the development, application, evaluation of systems, techniques and aids to improve the process of human learning. It emphasises on new ideas and innovations in the field of education with the help of modern technology. There are two approaches – hardware and software - in educational technology. The hardware approach is based on the application of engineering principles for developing electromechanical equipment like motion pictures, tape recorders, teaching machines, computers, videotape, closed circuit television, etc. The software approach uses the principle of psychology for behaviour modification purposes. These approaches are used for mass education as well as individual instruction. Television is the most obvious example of mass instructional technology. Teaching machines are examples of individual instructional technology.

In order to reach out to a large number of people, who find it difficult to attend formal learning schemes, the concept of distance learning has been evolved. Learning at one’s own convenience in terms of time, pace and resources is provided in this system. With the increasing use of satellites and other avenues of communication, the student is no longer hindered by lack of access. But this is still limited to the urban populace.

Technology is an enabling tool. The use of computers in education opens up the concept of interactive teaching. Experience at MS Swaminathan Research Foundation as well as in many villages in Pondicherry and Madhya Pradesh have demonstrated that a high level of formal education is not necessary to gain operational computer literacy, and as a functional education tool, it is valuable.

Updating is one of the important aspects of renewal in the education process. There needs to be a continuous and sustained effort from all concerned. Knowledge expands and values undergo change. The policy makers should be open enough to adapt to the

changing situation. The experience of the developed countries in this regard has been to provide those aids, which facilitate education process. These may include guaranteeing a decent livelihood, health care, minimum nutrition level or other material benefits. The Japanese model of education reforms which focussed on long term administrative reforms, structural reform of elementary education, and a continuous process of adaptation to the changing ideas and techniques in education is often cited as a success story.

Functional Literacy through Modern Information Technology

Conventional methods of education involves mastering a script, learning words and sentences, etc., that have no direct relationship to everyday life of the learners. The learning process has to be directly relevant and useful to them. The Education Division of the Tata Consultancy Services claims to have evolved a system where the learners are exposed to a set of about 500 words and pictures that have a direct relevance to them. By repeated exposure of these words and pictures, the learners become familiar with them and learn to recognize them. This method of learning enables them to even read newspapers and magazines and activates an interest to know more. If necessary, they can then join a formal education program. Video projections and large computer screens aid such learning process. Developing a model of learning which takes care of the lacuna of the existing system and at the same time be effective and useful is a matter of debate. But such models may be developed for specifically deprived sections of the society.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Universalization of Education: Need for Consensus

There is general consensus about the need for universalisation of education. Cutting across political ideologies, all governments have declared it as their priority. This has now been made an important component of National Human Development Initiative (NHDI) and also the Prime Minister's Special Action Plan. In a situation when the need for strong political commitment is being increasingly felt, one cannot but feel cynical, given the track record of the government in this regard. What is required is ensuring irreversibility and giving a sense of perspective by not distorting history. Planning the contents of curriculum for the young mind that

gets easily swayed by 'what is taught' rather than 'what is desirable to teach', is probably more difficult. The commitment of the various political parties on universalization of elementary education must also converge into a consensus on content and dissemination.

Sunset laws

Sunset law is a concept borrowed from the American history. The idea is of a time bound, self-retiring government program with a clear objective and financial provisions. This also serves as an accountability tool. Our Constitution makers had prescribed time limits for a number of provisions. These time limits have been treated rather lightly or extended to suit the convenience of governance. In matters of education, these sunset laws should be adhered to, and the degree of accountability to the people's forum respected.

Is it necessary to make certain provisions unambiguous at least in matters of education, as not to be dependent on judicial activism? Can we expect a Constitutional amendment to accelerate 'the demand for accountability in the system of education, particularly from its bureaucracy?'

Some suggestions

The scope of the Preamble itself could be enlarged so that the fruits of education reach one and all without fear, favour or discrimination. Enlarging the Preamble can give it the nature of a basic feature of the constitution, which would be difficult to tamper with. In a constitutional democracy it is the duty of the state to provide protection to the culture and social mores of the minority.

With the vast changes taking place in the world of knowledge and communication, it might be worthwhile to incorporate a new right, as Right to Knowledge. Its practical implication will be for the State to set up libraries or information centres accessible to one and all. A model of a typical Knowledge Centre for Information Management has been developed for the Union Territory of Pondicherry. In a collaborative project between International Literacy Institute and Indira Gandhi National Open University entitled, Bridges to the Future Initiative (BFI), there is a mention of medium-term development of Community Learning and Technology Centres (CLTC). With the coming of a digital age, these may be the new versions of libraries-cum-community access

centres. This can serve as a model. The Right to Knowledge is broader than the Right to Know which has already been derived from the existing Fundamental Rights.

There is a strong case for ensuring autonomy for the education budget. Some sanctity should be attached to the core provision, and such factors as the teacher's salaries being charged on Consolidated Fund of States could be considered. In a study of elementary education in Gujarat, The Indian Institute of Management had made one such recommendation to protect the salaries of elementary school teachers and their budget. In fact, there is a case for a special provision in the Constitution for protecting the service condition of teachers, as in the case of Civil Servants as contained in Articles 311 and 312. There should be also a provision to ensure their political neutrality as in the case of civil servants, as most of the teachers are paid by the state. In Germany, all teachers are paid directly from State funds. A similar provision for recruitment through a Public Service Commission could also be considered. In short, the kind of autonomy granted to Judicial Institutions could be extended to teachers and teaching institutions. This does not mean that government should give money and sit back. Government has to function as an involved and engaged critic of education as of all other institutions in the society.

There is need for a regular Education Commission like a Finance Commission, reporting to Parliament to review and update the systems. A Constitutional Provision similar to that of the Finance Commission can be considered. It is interesting to look back and note that the 1913 Government of India Education Policy had envisaged such a regular body.



In the present Journal, all the views are solely of the authors and State Resource Centre is not responsible regarding any controversy.

Saakshar Bharat and Literacy Among Tribes: The Road Ahead

- Raju Narayana Swamy I.A.S.

Socially and educationally the Scheduled Tribes (ST's) are among the most disadvantaged groups in India. The Constitution of India has incorporated certain provisions for promoting the educational and economic interests of scheduled tribes. Saakshar Bharat, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, two major schemes of the Government, designed to eliminate illiteracy in the population have not made any significant impact on their levels of literacy. Illiteracy in turn is a bottleneck in any agenda for economic development.

One shortcoming that stands out in the approach of the government to the education of the scheduled tribes is bling uniformity in its prescription for 573 scheduled tribes (ST's) living in different parts of India speaking more than 270 languages and maintaining exclusive identities. The 67.7 million people classified as 'Scheduled Tribe' in India are generally considered to be 'Adivasi', literally meaning 'Indigenous People' or original inhabitants: the term 'Schedule' is coterminous with 'Adivasi'. 'Scheduled Tribe' is an administrative term used for the purpose of 'administering' certain specific constitutional privileges, protection and benefits for specific section of peoples historically considered disadvantaged and 'backward'. However, this administrative term does not exactly denote all the peoples called 'Adivasi'.

According to 2001 census STs accounted for 84.32 million-equivalent to 8.2 per cent of the country's total population. Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Jharkand, Chhatisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Karnataka are the states having the largest number of Scheduled Tribes. Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal, Dadra & Nagar Haveli are predominantly Tribal States/ UTs where STs constitute more than 60 per cent of their total population. No STs are notified in Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi and Pondicherry. In terms of rural dispersal 1,05,295 have more than 50 per cent ST population in the country while 3.23 lakh villages do not have any ST population.

Scheduled Tribes and Literacy

A review of literacy rates among ST population in comparison with that of the general population indicates a growing gap between literacy rates of these to sections. Realising that Scheduled Tribes are one of the most deprived and marginalized groups with respect to education, a host of programmes and measures have been initiated ever since independence in India. The agenda for the Government as regards literacy for 2009-2014 has been set in the address of the Hon'ble President of India to the Parliament on the 4th of June 2009: "...it will be a new overarching country-wide literacy programme which will strive to create a literate society through a variety of teaching learning programmes for non-literate and neo-literate adults in the age group of 15 years and above, the prime focus being women."

This is in consonance with the policy directions and strategy considerations that have been outlined by UNESCO in its document "Literacy for Life". The Four policy recommendations are:

- a. Consider literacy policy as central to the entire EFA frame work
- b. Develop a three pronged policy for literate societies
- c. Reckon with multi lingualism
- d. Place literacy firmly within education sector plans and poverty reduction strategies.

Going through the goals, special focus areas and targets of 'Sakshar Bharat' the following mandates merit special mention:

- a. reduce social disparities
- b. give special focus on SCs, STs, minorities and tribal areas
- c. cover within the overall target 14 million SCs, 8 million STs and 12 million Muslims.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Mission

A major literacy programme that covers the scheduled tribes is Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) Mission. The tenth Five-Year plan launched the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) (Education-for-All Movement) to meet the goal of education for all by committing to provide useful and relevant elementary education for all children in

the six to fourteen age group. The SSA's goal is Universalisation of Elementary Education through a time-bound approach, in partnership with State governments. Its aim is to provide quality elementary education for all children in the six to fourteen age groups.

Saakshar Bharat Mission

Saakshar Bharat Mission is a new variant of National Literacy Mission launched on 8th September, 2009 by the Government of India. It covers, in a phased manner, all such districts in the country that have adult female literacy rate 50 per cent or less. The principal target of the mission is to impart functional literacy to 70 million adults in the age group of 15 years and beyond. Auxiliary target of the mission is to cover 1.5 million adults under basic education program and equal number under vocational (skill development) program. Within these targets, the mission primarily focuses on, but is not limited to women, Scheduled Caste (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), minorities, other disadvantaged groups. The Mission will provide comprehensive opportunities for adult education primarily to women with focus on disadvantaged groups, especially SCs, STs and minorities, in rural areas. The mission has four broad objectives:

- (1) Impart functional literacy and numeracy to non-literate and non-numerate adults.
- (2) Enable the neo-literate adults to continue this learning beyond basic literacy and reach levels equivalent to formal education system.
- (3) Impart non- and neo-literates relevant skill development programmes to improve their earning and living conditions.
- (4) Promote a learning society by providing opportunities to neo-literate adults for continuing education.

Scheduled Caste (15%), Scheduled Tribe (8%) and Minorities (20%) together constitute more than 40 per cent of India's population. In terms of illiteracy, SC's constitutes 20.5 per cent and STs 12 per cent. Targets have been fixed taking into account not only the share of their population, but also their share of the neo-literate population and commensurate resources are to be invested for raising their literacy level (Saakshar Bharat, (n.d.)). Public expen-

diture (Centre and States) on education is only around 3.6 per cent of GDP. After the Tenth Plan the number of out-of-school children declined from 32 to 7 million, indicating that SSA brought an additional 25 million children into the education system during this plan period. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for elementary schools (Classes I-VIII) increased from 81.6 per cent in 2001-02 to 94.9 per cent in 2004-05. The drop out rate of the scheduled tribe students according to 1991 census report is 78.6 percent. The question that naturally arises is "Is a different approach needed to make the programme a success as regards the disadvantaged groups?" The answer is to be found in the light of the experience of the National Literacy Mission which since its inception in 1988 has only got within its ambit 12 per cent of the STs out of the total of 127.45 million persons which it claims to have made literate. The literacy rate for STs has gone up from 8.5 per cent (male-13.8%, female-3.2%) in 1961 to 29.6 percent (male-40.6%, female-18.2%) in 1991 and to 40 percent (male-59%, female-37%) in 1999-2000 as per the 55th Round of National Sample Survey.

A review of literacy rates among ST population in comparison with that of the general population indicates a growing gap between literacy rates of these communities. Along with this are the problems of intra and inter-state/district variations in the literacy rates amongst STs. While the national average literacy rate in 1991 was 52.21 per cent, it was lowest for the Scheduled Tribes which was 29.60 per cent (Scheduled Castes 37.34 per cent). The literacy level of STs in comparison to the general population during 1971-2001 was as shown below.

LITERACY RATES OF STs AND TOTAL POPULATION
(1961-2001)

Category	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
Total Population*	24.02	29.45	36.23	52.21	64.84
Scheduled Tribes	8.53	11.30	16.35	29.60	47.10
Gap between STs & Total Population	15.49	18.15	19.88	22.61	17.74

Between 1961 and 2001, the literacy rate of STs increased 5.32 times, while that of the total population increased 2.69 times. However the gap between the literacy rates of STs and of the general population continued between 1961 and 2001 almost at the same level of 17.70 per cent and above, but with marginal variations. The educational gaps may be viewed as due to the differences in the provisions of educational facilities, socio-economic status of the parents, lack of aspiration for education, geographical isolation, lack of communication and social distance. Article 45 of the Indian Constitution had incorporated free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14 within 10 years of adoption of the Constitution as a Directive Principle of State Policy. However, the literacy rates among the ST's in independent India through 1961-2001 indicate that they do not seem to have made appreciable advance in literacy and education.

**LITERACY RATE AMONG SCHEDULE TRIBES
IN SELECT STATES**

(1961, 1971, 1981, 1991 & 2001)

State/UTs	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
Bihar (lowest)	9.16	11.64	16.99	26.78	28.17
Kerala	17.26	25.72	31.79	36.01	64.35
Lakshadweep	22.27	41.37	53.13	80.59	86.14
Mizoram(Highest)	----	53.49	59.63	82.71	89.34
India	8.54	11.29	16.35	29.60	47.10

It may be noted from the above table that the lowest level of literacy among Scheduled Tribes is in Bihar and the highest is in Mizoram. Lakshadweep follows Mizoram with a literacy rate of 86.14 percent. In census 2001. A number of states including Assam (62.52%), Manipur (65.85 %), and Nagaland (65.95%) in the northeast and Kerala (64.35 %) in the south show have relatively higher levels of literacy rate among STs.

Tribal Women and Education

Tribal women in Indian society have been contributing positively to the local economy by participating actively along with men in the pursuit of economic activities to earn their livelihood. In spite of their significant role in the economy the rate of enrolment in primary or secondary schools and dropout rates among them are alarmingly high. While women's literacy rate is lower than men's for all communities, in the case of tribes, they are awfully very low. The tribal women's literacy rates for example in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa is around ten per cent while in states like Rajasthan it is as low as four per cent (male literacy-33.29%).

Mizoram records the highest per centage of literacy level among tribal women, followed by Lakshadweep with a literacy level of 71.72 per cent. The states which have a high overall literacy level have a low gender differential. While in Rajasthan there is a vast gender differential- as much as 29 per centage points between male and female literacy (33 per cent and 4 per cent respectively). in Mizoram and Lakshadweep the gender differential is 9 and 19 per centage points respectively. The male literacy in Mizoram and Lakshadweep is 86 and 90 per cent respectively, the female literacy level in these two places is 78 and 71 per cent respectively. As against this Kerala a difference of 8 per centage points with the literacy level of men recorded at 63 per cent against 51 per cent among women.

Dropout Rates among STs

Being born in lower castes continues to exert a powerful influence on the attainment of socio-economic well being among the people of India. This is reflected in almost all the social and economic development indicators for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes vis-à-vis the rest of the population in India (Bajpai, Nirupam & Goyal, Sangeeta , 2004, p.7.). The dropout rate, which is another crucial indicator in the field of educational development, also shows that there has been a steady decline in respect to ST category. The STs have had a very high dropout rate-- 57.36 in classes I to V, 72.80 in classes I to VIII and 82.96 in classes I to X during 1998-99. Also the gap between the general population and STs was found to be widening from 13.67 in 1990-91 to 15.52 in 1998-99 at the secondary level.

We thus find that although the dropout rates have been showing a declining trend among STs in classes I to VIII from 78.6 per cent in 1990-91 to 72.8 per cent in 1998-99, yet the same is still very high, when compared to 60.9 per cent and 56.82 per cent respectively for the same years for general categories, indicating a gap of 17.7 and 16.6 per cent. Several reasons are attributed for this phenomenon; uneducated parents, lack of concern about education, non-availability of educational facilities etc.

Economic Factors

Economic factors are responsible for lack of interest among tribal people in getting education. Since most of the tribal people are living in poverty, it is not easy for most of them to send their children to school. "A study on factors affecting tribal education in India with special reference to Kerala" has pointed out the poverty factor which hinders the tribal children from accessing education (Dimensional Problem of Tribal Students in India with Special Reference to Kerala State, 2008). The incidence of poverty among STs continues to be very high at 47.30 per cent in rural areas and 33.30 per cent in urban areas, compared to 28.30 per cent and 25.70 percent respectively in respect to total population in 2004-05. A large number of STs who are living below the poverty line are landless, with no productive assets and with no access to sustainable employment and minimum wages.

Almost a third of the main workers who were from the ST were agricultural labourers compared to an average of one fifth in the aggregate population. Agricultural labourers have been identified as the group that is the most susceptible to chronic poverty. There has been an increasing unrest among the tribals. Radical/Extremist movements among tribes are already operating in many parts of the country, a consequence of extreme and chronic deprivation in turn stemming from a failure to receive benefits and facilities. Livelihood and survival could be two major questions at the household level that influence the choice of sending the child to school.

Role of Teachers

According to the report of the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2008), the quality of teaching in the elementary schools is not high. Teacher absenteeism is widespread, teachers are not adequately

trained and the quality of pedagogy is also very poor. The teachers employed for imparting education to the tribal children evince little appreciation for the tribal ways of life and value system. The acceptance of teachers by the community as one of them is critical for increasing participation in schooling in tribal areas. An understanding of tribal cultures and practices and familiarity with their language are important for teachers to gain this recognition. Appointing teachers from the tribal community itself can reduce the cultural gap between the teacher and the taught. Different states have different schemes for appointing community teachers like-Shikshak (under Basti Shala Scheme in Maharashtra), Guruji (under EGS in Madhya Pradesh), Shikshan Sevak (Maharashtra), Vidya Upasak Yojana (Himachal Pradesh),,, Andariki Vidya Volunteer Scheme (Andhra Pradesh), Lok Shikshak (Bihar), Shiksha Mitra Yojana (Uttar Pradesh), Shiksha Karmi Scheme (Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan) etc. The recommendations of Vinoba Gautam, Co-ordinator, UN/Government Janashala Programme outlined in his study needs special mention in this context. According to him, major reasons for school dropouts are:

1. In most states the medium of instruction is the regional language. Most tribal children do not understand the text books which are generally in the regional language.

2. Appointment of non-tribal teachers in tribal children's school is another problem. The teachers do not know the language the children speak and the children do not understand the teacher's language. (Vinoba Gautam, 2003)

The study highlights the experience of Assam which was the first state to prepare teacher training modules for the Bodo-tribal language in 1995. It also highlights the Madhya Pradesh experience where teachers' handbooks have been prepared in three languages-Gondi, Kuduk and Bhil. Supplementary TLM for tribal children has been developed in Jhabua district using local cultural form i.e. folk tales, riddles etc. The paper also talks about the Karnataka experience wherein the textbook for class I and II have been developed in Soliga language and the Maharashtra experience where tribal language dictionaries have been developed.

Geographical location of the school is another significant factor bearing on whether a child will attend school, how far she will

continue in school and in what type of school. Availability of schools with easy access have been relatively poor for ST children as compared to other communities. Most of the primary schools in the tribal areas are single teacher-managed and the presence of the teacher in the school is more an exception than a rule. The interest of tribal people in the education of their children also depends considerably on the timing of school hours in different seasons. It should not clash with their livelihood activities.

Lack of Facilities

It has been found that physical / infrastructural facilities are generally inadequate and particularly deplorable in schools accessed by the STs. Buildings are dilapidated with no basic furniture and teaching equipments. The schools are also poorly and irregularly functioning. There are reports from rural Punjab, Orissa, and Rajasthan that reveal shortage of basics such as classrooms, drinking water facilities and teachers. Reports of neglect, indifference, greater teacher absenteeism from Dalit and tribal dominated schools have accumulated, pointing to the grim reality that exists on the ground. Further there are indications from Maharashtra that government rural schools have a better shape than urban municipal schools. This is because most rural schools have a mix of higher and lower castes/classes whereas in urban areas where there the range of choice is greater, the municipal schools cater almost exclusively to the poor, lower castes and tribes (National Focus Group on Problems of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Children p.22.)

Nature of Curriculum

Appropriate school experiences can indeed make a significant difference to learning and the lives of ST's. Content of the curriculum and internal operations are thus key issues to be addressed. While everyone expects education to respond effectively to old and new challenges, we have seen that all vital ingredients of education are gone astray for tribes. The 'minimum levels of learning' model compromises quality in no uncertain measure. Issues of educational quality are fundamental to both effective equal opportunity and democratic value formation, but are deplorably ignored. The education system with its insistence on a common language as a means of achieving a common nationhood has been instrumental in the destruction of tribal language, culture and identity.

Conclusion

State policy and bureaucracy together have failed to provide both quantitatively and qualitatively the most essential need of our tribal population namely, education. Subvention for education by the government undoubtedly represented a shift from mass exclusion to mass inclusion. But this has been exceedingly delayed, weak and highly prejudiced. Scheduled Tribe children are largely dead beat at the primary level itself. There occurs an effective physical exclusion of these children or they achieve low levels of schooling, which do not necessarily ensure learning. At the very outset the relationship between cultural and educational goals needs to be publicly debated with a view to come to terms with questions of cultural difference, culture-fair education and a host of epistemological and ethical issues in tribal education.. Expansion of culturally sensitive educational programmes is the need of the hour.

Suggestions

There is need to identify areas and groups which continue to suffer marked exclusion and neglect to facilitate a more focussed implementation of positive discrimination policies. Emphasis should be given on investing in greater financial and educational resources for the educational development of tribals. The medium of teaching should be the mother tongue with the aid of bi-lingual primers prepared in a decentralized manner. The teacher should be oriented to the richness of the heritage and culture of the tribals. Also focus should be on the quality of education. Knowledge along with application and comprehension of the surrounding environment is necessary. A uni-dimensional, statistic-oriented approach will relegate the vital quality dimension. The measures to promote inclusion need to be derived from a holistic perspective. The key to the education of our tribes requires not merely classroom transaction but synergy in the mobilization of community resources, political will and bureaucratic toning up. (Experiments in Education)



Panchayat Participation in Saakshar Bharat Programmes

- Tanu Shikha Arya

The Saakshar Bharat Mission (SBM) aims at 80% literacy and reduction of regional, social and gender disparities in literacy rates by extending the coverage of the programme to the 15+age group. The Human Resource Development (HRD) minister Kapil Sibal announce in 2009 that “We aim to bring the country’s literacy level to 80% by 2017”. The underlying assumption is that only the achievement of adult literacy can help India to meet the education For All (EFA) goals within the next five year plan. The Saakshar Bharat scheme attempts to cover seven crore non-literate adults, of whom six crore are women. Since illiteracy is far more widespread in the rural areas, the programme will concentrate on these areas, especially on the districts having low (i e, 50% and below) female literacy rates. “Literate India ” is the new slogan of the programme which envisages fund flows of Rs. 6,000 crore in 365 low literacy districts located in 28 states/union territories of the country. The broader objective of this refurbished adult literacy programme is to create a “knowledge society”. The programme will run in active participation with the state governments unlike in the past when it was run directly by the centre through different agencies at the district level. At the same meeting in 2009, Kapil Sibal said: “We are structurally changing the mission and adopting new strategies. We have decide to implement the new scheme with the help of panchayati raj institutions.” In compliance with the 73 Constitutional Amendment, panchayati raj institutions (PRIs) will be the fulcrum of adult literacy and skill development programmes as documente in the guidebook for gram panchayats. Therefore, the implementation of this programme has been entrusted to gram panchayats at the grass roots level and other PRIs at the district and subdistrict levels. Nearly 1,70,000 gram panchayats in about 365 districts will be coverd in a phase manner. Each gram panchayat will constitute a panchayat lok shiksha samiti (people’s education committee) an similar types of samitis will be formed at the block and district levels to implement the programme.

The samiti will consist of 17-20 members from various strata of the community. It will include the chairperson (head of the panchayat), vice-chairperson (to be selected from among the members; 50% of them have to be women), all members of the shiksha samiti of the gram panchayat, women elected representatives of the panchayat, head master/teacher from the local school chosen by the panchayat, representatives of the community (with proportionate representation from the schedule castes (SCs)/schedule tribes (STs)/minorities), mahila mandal/self-help group (SHG) members, social activists, opinion-makers (government employees doctors, etc), a member secretary and secretariat (two full time contractual employees, i e, senior prerak and prerak). This core group of "active persons " will be responsible for all the activities enumerated in the SBM document prepared by the NLMA .

The proposed samitis are supposed to initiate activities like the formulation of project proposals for the establishment of lok shiksha kendras (literacy centres) followed by their management and the organisation and documentation of the activities at this literacy centre along with environment building tasks of adult literacy programmes. Their micro level tasks include the identification of non-literates, selection and training of literacy educators, sourcing a supply of teaching-learning materials, supervision of literacy classes, evaluation, etc. In carrying out these tasks they will get support from the block lok shiksha samitis/zilla lok shiksha samitis and also from the resource support groups and the state resource centres (SRCs) for adult and continuing education. These together have to guarantee a smooth functioning of the adult literacy programmes at the grass roots level. In sum, basically the SBM document recommends putting the gram panchayat institutions in charge of "literacy " along with "education" (under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, or the SSA) to achieve EFA in the country. If the above-mentioned recommendations are implemented in toto, it is expected that India would achieve the EFA goal before the scheduled time.

Concerns

The foremost factor which the programme has either ignored or neglected is that gram panchayats are already overburdened with a multitude of roles and responsibilities, ranging

from preparation of budgets, activities related to agriculture, land supervision, irrigation, animal husbandry, dairy, poultry, forestry, cottage industry, housing, employment, drinking water, roads, electricity, poverty alleviation, etc, which are entrusted to them. We will not discuss here whether they manage to carry out these tasks or not. Instead the point of concern is that the gram panchayat is a self-governing body of local persons who might be experts in local level management of resources and community well-being but should not be mistaken to be managers of adult literacy programmes. I would suggest that each gram panchayat demand a full-time, qualified programme manager for “overseeing” the work of the education committees and literacy centres. The gram panchayat cannot be the sole implementing as well as monitoring agency for the adult literacy programme. Instead, it should demand that the adult education programme manager facilitate management of activities and dissemination of information to various functionaries and beneficiaries. This suggestion is not meant to question the competence and creditability of the gram panchayats but to point out the sea difference between “education ” and “literacy ” in india (since the SSA is parallel to adult education). Constituent members of the panchayat lok shiksha samitis are members of the shiksha samiti (education committee) of the gram panchayat and also head masters/teachers of the local schools who cannot be asked for paradigmatic fluctuations in implementing learning programmes for both children and adults simultaneously. The structure and system of functioning of universal elementary education and non-formal adult literacy programmes is very different. Due to this fundamental difference between the formal school education system and the nonformal adult education system of learning one needs separate programme managers to realise the objective of the creation of a knowledge society.

Second, as mentione above the principal target of the adult education programme is the “willing ” non-literate adults in the age group of 15 years and beyond .The elementary education under SSA however “compulsorily ” targets all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years. Once again I address the difference in the attitude an perception of the targeted beneficiaries of the programme. In the formal school system the beneficiaries of education (children) have

little or no choice in deciding the structure and system of education. On the other hand, the non-formal system of education being imparted through the lok shiksha kendra is largely dictated by the perception and attitude of the recipients of adult literacy (adults). Therefore, one should not rule out the possibility of differences between one or all the members of the panchayat lok shiksha samitis and the target groups, i.e., women / SC / ST / minorities / adolescents. Thus acceptance of the managerial role of the panchayat lok shiksha samitis is risky in the present scenario where panchayat members are involved in a plethora of programmes and schemes.

The third and related lacuna in the programme is related to the intricacies of the functioning of these samitis in harmony with other support groups like the block and district lok shiksha samiti, and the State Resource Centre for Adult and Continuing Education. Will the support groups be at the beck and call of each and every panchayat samiti to provide the recommended support in planning, implementation, management, documentation and evaluation related activities?

Making PRI Members Literate

The objectives of the literacy programme acknowledge that the elected non-literate PRI representatives should be endowed with literacy skills so that the quality of governance at the grass roots level increases manifold along with addressing the literacy needs of the target group. Such a focused approach towards the elected non-literate PRI deserves admiration but also causes concern. The attempt to facilitate literacy among the PRI representatives is heartening but will they, the “managers” of the adult literacy programme, prefer to sit and participate in 300 hours of adult learning programmes along with other fellow illiterates? Again, what will be the difference between the “implementers” and “recipients” of the programme if both are sailing in the same boat of illiteracy in most of the cases? One cannot analyse the exact situation as data on the literacy level of the PRI functionaries is inadequate.

Moreover, one can ask: What comes first, the illiterate mass or the literacy of the PRI representatives? Let us consider both the

options. The NLMA decides to facilitate the acquiring of literacy skills by all the non-literate PRI representatives in order to set an example and as a part of environment building activity for community mobilisation. In this situation, what drives the on-literate PRI representatives to participate in literacy activities apart from should dering a multitude of responsibilities? Scarcity of time will be the most plausible excuse to avoid literacy classes. Does our governance propose any mandate to have at least “literate ” if not “educated” representatives in the gram panchayat? The present proposal of putting them in charge of the adult literacy programme does not include the condition to have only literate/educate members in the panchayat lok shiksha samiti. In the second scenario, the PRI s remain as the implementers an managers of the adult literacy programme with a key role in environment building activities. In that case what tools will they adopt for community mobilisation to motivate the targete non-literates to get involve in literacy programmes? Why would non-literate adults desire literacy skills when their fellow men and women in the gram panchayats (power) are better placed despite being illiterate? What shall be the fate of the programme and the literacy centre when the target recipients question the reliability of the programme being managed by non-literate members? Does the fundamental difference between making children and adults literate render all programmes, policies and practices (PPP) defunct? Will literacy educators and preraks work under uneducate /non-literate managers? What shall be the outcome of the evaluation an assessment (of the learners and trainers) being conducte by such members of the samiti? The fourth and final lacuna of the programme is the absence of a monitoring system. Neither the NLMA ’s SBM 2012 document nor the guidebook deals with the evaluation of the functioning of the panchayat lok shiksha samiti. These concerns should be kept in mind while seeking remedies to eradicate illiteracy. This is one of the most urgent tasks to be accomplishe in India.



Rural Women Empowerment and Entrepreneurship Development

- Sathiabama. K

The emergence of women entrepreneurs and their contribution to the national economy is quite visible in India. The number of women entrepreneurs has grown over a period of time, especially in the 1990s. Women entrepreneurs need to be lauded for their increased utilization of modern technology, increased investments, finding a niche in the export market, creating a sizable employment for others and setting the trend for other women entrepreneurs in the organized sector. While women entrepreneurs have demonstrated their potential, the fact remains that they are capable of contributing much more than what they already are. Women's entrepreneurship needs to be studied separately for two main reasons. The first reason is that women's entrepreneurship has been recognised during the last decade as an important untapped source of economic growth. Women entrepreneurs create new jobs for themselves and others and also by being different. They also provide the society with different solutions to management, organisation and business problems as well as to the exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities. The second reason is that the topic of women in entrepreneurship has been largely neglected both in society in general and in the social sciences. Not only have women lower participation rates in entrepreneurship than men but they also generally choose to start and manage firms in different industries than men tend to do.

Development of the society is directly related with the Income Generation Capacity of its members with agriculture, as the key income generation activity the entrepreneurship on farm and home can directly affect the income of a major chunk of our population. The growth of modernization processes such as industrialization, technical change; urbanization and migration further encourage it. Entrepreneurship on small scale is the only solution to the problems of unemployment and proper utilization of both human and non-human resources and improving the living condition of the poor masses [Prabha Sigh, 2009].

The micro finance is agenda for empowering poor women. Micro enterprises are an integral part of planned strategy for securing balanced development of the economy of the poor women. Rural women's participation in agro-based activities is much more than what statistics reveal. This is mainly due to the fact that most of the work done by the women at farm and home is disguised as daily chores. Mechanization and easy availability of labour provide more time to energetic women to engage themselves in self-employment or entrepreneur ventures. Rural women are having human and non-human resources to take up an enterprise need one an innovative mind and motivation. Entrepreneurship is the only solution to the growing employment among rural youth. It helps to generate employment for a number of people within their own social system. This is more beneficial for women in rural areas as it enables them to add to the family income while taking care of their own home and livestock centered task. Rural women possess abundant resources to take up enterprises. She has the benefit of easy availability of arm and livestock based raw materials and other resources.

Hence, she can effectively undertake both the production and processing oriented enterprises. Entrepreneurship development among rural women helps to enhance their personal capabilities and increase decision-making status in the family and society as a whole.

Entrepreneurship Development of Rural Women Through Self Help Groups

Women comprise half of human resources they have been identified as key agents of sustainable development and women's equality is as central to a more holistic approach towards stabilizing new patterns and process of development that are sustainable. [Birendra Kumar Jha, 2009]. The contribution of women and their role in the family as well as in the economic development and social transformation are pivotal. Women constitute 90 per cent of total marginal workers of the country. Rural women who are engaged in agriculture form 78 per cent of all women in regular work [Harendar Kumar, 2009]. Experience of NIRD action research projects reveal that, the operational aspects, such as the extent of enabling that goes into the community self help processes and sharpening the mind set of women.

Men and the project administrators are low or critical components that determine their extent to which empowerment may or may not take place. The role of micro-credit is to, improve the socio and economic development of women and improve the status of women in households and communities. The micro entrepreneurships are strengthening the women empowerment and remove the gender inequalities. Self Help Group's micro credit mechanism makes the members to involve in other community development activities. Micro credit is promoting the small scale business enterprises and its major aim is to alleviate poverty by income generating activities among women and poor. Therefore, they could achieve self-sufficiency.

Now-a-days economic development is one of the factors that have changed the entire scenario of social and cultural environment within the country especially for the women. The rural women are engaged in small-scale entrepreneurship programme with the help of Self Help Groups. Through that they were economically empowered and attaining status in family and community.

Rural women play a vital role in farm and home system. She contributes substantially in the physical aspect of farming, livestock management, post harvest and allied activities. Her direct and indirect contribution at the farm and home level along with livestock management operation has not only help to save their assets but also led to increase the family income. She performs various farm, livestock, post harvest and allied activities and possesses skills and indigenous knowledge in these areas. The women were empowering themselves technically to cope with the changing times and productively using their free time and existing skills for setting and sustaining enterprises. They were engaged in starting individual or collective income generation programme with the help of self-help group. This will not only generate income for them but also improve the decision-making capabilities that led to overall empowerment.

Areas of Micro-Enterprise Development

Depending on number of factors ranging from landholdings, subsidiary occupations, agro climatic conditions and socio-personal characteristics of the rural women and her family member the areas of micro-enterprises also differ from place to place. The micro enterprises are classified under three major heads:

1. Micro Enterprise development related to agriculture and allied agricultural activities like cultivating to organic vegetables, flowers, oil seeds and seed production are some of the areas besides taking up mushroom growing and bee – keeping. Some more areas can be like dehydration of fruits and vegetables, canning or bottling of pickles, chutneys, jams, squashes, dairy and other products that are ready to eat.

2. Micro-Enterprise development related to livestock management activities like dairy farming, poultry farm, livestock feed production and production of vermi composting using the animal waste can be an important area in which women can utilize both her technical skills and raw materials from the farm and livestock to earn substantial income and small scale agro-processing units.

3. Micro – Enterprise development related to household based operations like knitting, stitching, weaving, embroidery, bakery and flour milling, petty shops, food preparation and preservation.

Advantages of Entrepreneurship among Rural Women

Empowering women particularly rural women is a challenge. Micro enterprises in rural area can help to meet these challenges. Micro – enterprises not only enhance national productivity, generate employment but also help to develop economic independence, personal and social capabilities among rural women. Following are some of the personal and social capabilities, which were developed as result of taking up enterprise among rural women.

- ◆ Economic empowerment
- ◆ Improved standard of living
- ◆ Self confidence
- ◆ Enhance awareness
- ◆ Sense of achievement
- ◆ Increased social interaction
- ◆ Engaged in political activities
- ◆ Increased participation level in gram sabha meeting
- ◆ Improvement in leadership qualities
- ◆ Involvement in solving problems related to women and community
- ◆ Decision making capacity in family and community

Economic empowerment of women by micro entrepreneurship led to the empowerment of women in many things such as socio-economic opportunity, property rights, political representation, social equality, personal right, family development, market development, community development and at last the nation development.

Conclusion

Women's entrepreneurship is both about women's position in society and about the role of entrepreneurship in the same society. Women entrepreneurs faced many obstacles specifically in market their product (including family responsibilities) that have to be overcome in order to give them access to the same opportunities as men. In addition, in some countries, women may experience obstacles with respect to holding property and entering contracts. Increased participation of women in the labour force is a prerequisite for improving the position of women in society and self-employed women. Particularly the entry of rural women in micro enterprises will be encouraged and aggravated. Rural women can do wonders by their effectual and competent involvement in entrepreneurial activities. The rural women are having basic indigenous knowledge, skill, potential and resources to establish and manage enterprise. Now, what is the need is knowledge regarding accessibility to loans, various funding agencies procedure regarding certification, awareness on government welfare programmes, motivation, technical skill and support from family, government and other organization. More over Formation and strengthening of rural women Entrepreneurs network must be encouraged. Women entrepreneur networks are major sources of knowledge about women's entrepreneurship and they are increasingly recognized as a valuable tool for its development and promotion. This network helps to give lectures, printed material imparting first hand technical knowledge in production, processing, procurement, management and marketing among the other women. This will motivate other rural women to engage in micro entrepreneurship with the right assistance and they can strengthen their capacities besides adding to the family income and national productivity.



Empowerment of Adolescent Girls

Women constitute nearly half of the population of the country, but gender disparities in socio-cultural spheres have adversely affected a balanced equitable development. These disparities get reflected in important social development indicators such as health, nutrition, literacy, educational attainments, skill levels, occupational status etc. The same is also reflected in the situation of Adolescent girl.

The Adolescent girls in the 10-19 years constitute almost 47 per cent of the total population of Adolescents in the country. But their development is fraught with varied problems. Almost 50% of women marry before the legal age of 18 verses 10% of young men. Overall, one in six women in age group of 15-19 have begun childbearing. Early childbearing is most common in rural areas and among women with no education. Around 41% of all maternal deaths take place among those aged 15-24. 56% adolescent girls are anemic (verses 30% adolescent boys). Anemic adolescent mothers are at a higher risk of miscarriages, maternal mortality and still-births and low-weight babies. The drop-out rates among the girls are quite high. 21% adolescent girls and 8% adolescent boys have no education. Dropout rates among girls are high largely due to distance from schools, male teachers, sanitation facilities at school, early marriage and early assumption of domestic responsibilities etc.

Adolescent Girls are a core resource for national growth. Investment in their health and development is investment in the greater well-being of the country. Considering that several of these girls are out of school, get married early, face discrimination in accessing health, education and other services, work in vulnerable situation, and are influenced by peer pressure, they need special attention. The public health challenges for adolescents, which include pregnancy, risk of maternal and infant mortality, sexually transmitted diseases, reproductive tract infections, rapidly rising incidence of HIV, etc., require influencing the health-seeking behavior of AGs. They need to be looked at in terms of their needs both as a group as well as individuals as they are the productive members of the society in future. Recognizing the unmet needs of AGs, Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls

Sabla has been launched as a comprehensive intervention for Adolescent girls in the age-group of 11-18, with a focus on out of school girls. To begin with, the Scheme is being implemented in 200 districts of the country on a pilot basis.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development has formulated the SABLA scheme to address multi-dimensional problems of adolescent girls between 11 to 18 years. The Government has approved a cumulative 7075 ICDS projects and 14 lakh Anganwadi Centres across the country. Of these, a total of 7012 projects and 13.67 lakh AWCs have been sanctioned as on May 2010. Out of the approved ICDS, 6560 are operational. Keeping in view the expansion under the Scheme, the allocation for ICDS was enhanced from the Budget Estimates of Rs. 8,162 crore to Rs. 8700 crore for the year 2010-11.

50:50 per cent sharing between the Centre and the States of nutrition provision (600 calories and 18 to 29 gram of protein) at the rate of Rs.5 per beneficiary per day for 300 days a year for 11 to 14 years out of school girls and all girls in the age of 15 to 18 years. A provision of Rs.3.8 lakh per ICDS project per annum has been made for various components of the scheme like training kit at each Angawadi center, National Health Education, Life Skill Education, purchase of Iron Folic Acid Tablet for mothers. Continuation of Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY) in remaining districts from funds of SABLA and utilization of savings available under KSY and RGSEAG-SABLA in 200 districts are the other salient features of the Scheme.

Key Areas of Sabla Scheme

Using the ICDS platform, this scheme is reaching out to nearly 1crore adolescent girls between 11-18 years of age in 200 districts across the country with an integrated package of services. Sabla aims at all-round development of adolescent girls of 11-18 years (with a focus on all out-of-school AGs) by making them self reliant. At the Anganwadi Center, supplementary nutrition providing 600 Kcal and 18-20 g of protein and micronutrients is provided every day at the anganwadi centers either as hot cooked meal or as take home rations to out of school adolescent girls in 11-14 years and all girls between 15-18 years for 300 days in a year.

In addition, out of school adolescent girls are being provided non-nutrition services which include life skills education, supervised weekly IFA (100 mg of elemental iron and 0.5 mg of folic acid) supplementation and nutrition counselling, sexual and reproductive health education and counseling, skills in leadership, problem solving, decision making and accessing public services. In addition, older adolescent girls (16 - 18 year olds) are being given vocational training to make them self reliant. The Scheme also emphasizes convergence of services under various programmes such as Health, Education, Youth affairs and Sports, and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) to achieve the programme objectives.

With the support of community-based frontline workers (anganwadi workers) and civil society groups, adolescent girls have been organized in groups called Kishori Samoohs. Each Samooh is led by a peer leader (Kishori Sakhi) and meet at least 5-6 hours a week to receive programme services and function as a peer support group. Every girl enrolled in Sabla are given a Kishori Card, an entitlement tool to monitor girls access to and uptake of the services under Sabla. The non-nutrition services under the Sabla programme interventions also reach out to the non-school going adolescent girls through adolescent groups i.e., Kishori Samoohs meetings. Each adolescent group comprises of 15-25 adolescent girls led by peer leaders i.e., Kishori Sakhi and their two associates i.e., Sahelis. The Sakhis and Sahelis are imparted training and serve as a peer monitor/educator for adolescent girls. They serve the group for one year and each girl will have a term of four months as a Sakhi on rotational basis. The AGs also participate in day to day activities of AWC like Pre School, Education, growth monitoring and SNP and facilitate the AWW in other activities. They also accompany the AWW for home visits (2-3 girls at a time) which serves as a training ground for future.

Sabla endeavors to have AGs with enhanced self esteem, improved nutrition and health status with enhanced skills and the capacity to make informed choices. Through various schemes including, Sabla, the government is investing in the health, nutrition and development needs of adolescent girls to advance their rights to education, health and protection which will help to them to build a future of gender equality and justice. All this, will in turn help in building of a self-reliant and confident women citizenry. □

मानव विकास में पिछड़ता भारत

- डॉ. रामप्रताप गुप्ता

यूएनडीपी की मानव विकास रिपोर्ट सन् 2011 ने चेतावनी दी है कि अगर हमने जलवायु परिवर्तन पर रोक लगाने के लिए प्रभावी कदम नहीं उठाए तो सबसे गरीब राष्ट्रों की सन् 2050 तक विकास प्रक्रिया रुक जाएगी और विश्व के राष्ट्रों के मध्य तथा उनके भीतर आय के वितरण की विषमता में और भी वृद्धि हो जाएगी। यह रिपोर्ट इस तथ्य को भी रेखांकित करती है कि हम जो भी कार्य करते हैं, वह विश्व की 7 अरब आबादी को प्रतिकूल या अनुकूल रूप से प्रभावित करते हैं। यूएनडीपी के प्रशासक हेलन क्लार्क का कहना है कि हमारे अनसोचे कदमों के कारण जलवायु में परिवर्तन और प्राकृतिक परिवेश के विनाश के कारण विकासशील राष्ट्रों में आय और स्वास्थ्य में सुधार के प्रयास खतरे में पड़ जाएंगे।

मानव विकास सूचकांकों की गणना के लिए तीन घटकों को शामिल किया जाता है, पहला है दीर्घ स्वस्थ जीवन, दूसरा है ज्ञान और शिक्षा तक पहुंच और तीसरा है समुचित जीवन स्तर। अगर इन तीन घटकों के आधार पर निर्मित सूचकांकों में स्वास्थ्य और शिक्षा की सुविधाओं तक पहुंच और आय के वितरण की विषमता को भी समायोजित कर लिया जाए तो वर्तमान में मानव विकास सूचकांकों की दृष्टि से प्रथम दस राष्ट्र - ऑस्ट्रेलिया, संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका, कनाडा, जर्मनी, जापान, फ्रांस, इटली, इंग्लैंड, चिली और अर्जेंटीना में से कुछ राष्ट्र विश्व के प्रथम 20 राष्ट्रों की सूची से भी बाहर हो जाएंगे। अमेरिका और इजराइल के क्रम में गिरावट मुख्यतः आय वितरण की विषमता के कारण होगी। अमेरिका के संबंध में स्वास्थ्य सुविधाओं में विषमता का भी महत्व है। दक्षिणी कोरिया के संदर्भ में शिक्षा तक पहुंच में विषमता समायोजित मानव विकास सूचकांक में गिरावट के लिए जिम्मेदार होगी। यूएनडीपी के प्रमुख सांख्यिकीविद् मिलोरड कोवो सेविक का कहना है कि आय वितरण की विषमता के मानव विकास सूचकांकों की गणना में शामिल किये जाने से हम मात्र औसत के स्थान पर समाज के सभी वर्गों के विकास स्तर का बेहतर

अनुमान लगा सकते हैं। उनका यह भी कहना है कि आय वितरण की विषमता के साथ-साथ अनेक राष्ट्रों में जनता के शिक्षा और स्वास्थ्य सुविधाओं तक पहुंच में भी भारी विषमताएं हैं। इनमें व्याप्त विषमताएं मानव कल्याण को प्रमुखता से प्रभावित करती हैं। अतः विषमता के साथ समायोजन करने वाले मानव विकास सूचकांक ही बेहतर होंगे। ये समाज के सभी वर्गों के विकास को बेहतर ढंग से प्रस्तुत करते हैं।

अगर हम भारत की बात करें तो सन् 2011 में इसका मानव विकास सूचकांक 0.547 है और इस दृष्टि से इसे मध्यम श्रेणी के मानव विकास सूचकांकों वाले राष्ट्रों में शामिल किया जाता है और विश्व के 187 राष्ट्रों में इसका स्थान 134 वां आता है। जब हम इसमें आय वितरण की विषमता को भी समायोजित करते हैं तो यह 28 प्रतिशत गिरकर मात्र 0.392 ही रह जाता है। हम भारत में लैंगिक विषमता सूचकांक की बात करें तो सन् 2011 में इसका आकार 0.617 के बराबर आता है और विश्व के 146 राष्ट्रों में भारत का स्थान 129वां आता है।

मानव विकास रिपोर्ट के अनुसार भारत की संसद में 10.7 स्थान महिलाओं के पास हैं, 26.6 प्रतिशत महिलाएं ही हायर सेकेण्डरी या इससे उच्च स्तर की शिक्षा प्राप्त कर पाती हैं, जबकि पुरुषों के संदर्भ में यह आंकड़ा 50.4 प्रतिशत का है। श्रम बाजार में पुरुषों की 81.5 प्रतिशत की भागीदारी के मुकाबले महिलाओं की भागीदारी 32.8 प्रतिशत ही है। महिलाओं को प्रजनन संबंधी खतरे भी उठाने पड़ते हैं, प्रति एक लाख जीवित प्रसवों में प्रतिवर्ष 230 महिलाएं अकाल मृत्यु का शिकार हो जाती हैं। इन सब तथ्यों को देखते हुए मानव विकास प्रतिवेदन सन् 2001 में बहुआयामी गरीबी सूचकांकों की गणना की थी। बहुआयामी गरीबी सूचकांक परिवारों की शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य और रहन-सहन के स्तर की दृष्टि से लोगों के बहिष्कार को प्रदर्शित करता है। भारत के संदर्भ में इस तरह के आंकड़े सन् 2005 से ही उपलब्ध हैं। भारत में 53.7 प्रतिशत लोग इस तरह के बहुआयामी पिछड़ेपन के शिकार हैं और इसके अलावा 16.4 प्रतिशत लोगों में इस तरह के पिछड़ेपन के शिकार होने की प्रबल संभावनाएं मौजूद हैं। भारत में गरीबी के मापदण्ड को लेकर इस समय विवाद हो रहे हैं

और अलग-अलग मापदंडों पर प्रतिशत में काफी अंतर बताया जा रहा है। परंतु मानव विकास की दृष्टि से बहुआयामी बहिष्कार के शिकार लोगों के प्रतिशत का 53.7 होना शासकों की आंखें खोल देने वाला है।

मानव विकास प्रतिवेदन का कहना है कि सर्वाधिक गरीब लोग बहिष्कार का दोहरा भार वहन करने के लिए बाध्य होते हैं। वे पर्यावरण के प्रभावों के शिकार होते ही हैं, साथ ही उन्हें अपने आवास में वायु प्रदूषण, अशुद्ध पेयजल तथा शौचालयों के अभाव में खुले में शौच करने के दुष्प्रभावों को भी झेलना पड़ता है। रिपोर्ट के अनुसार गरीबी के कारण खाना पकाने की गैस, शुद्ध पेयजल और मूलभूत साफ-सफाई की सुविधाओं के अभाव का भी इन्हें अलग से शिकार होना पड़ता है। इस दृष्टि से गरीब आबादी का इनसे बहिष्कार अपने आप में महत्वपूर्ण तो है ही, यह मानव अधिकारों का उल्लंघन भी है। इस प्रकार के बहिष्कारों को दूर करने से आम आदमी की कार्यकुशलता में वृद्धि भी होगी और मानव विकास की दिशा में भी प्रगति होगी, सूचकांक भी बेहतर होंगे।

अनेक राष्ट्रों में गरीब वर्गों को इस तरह के वचन से मुक्त करने के लिए निश्चित ही वित्त की भी आवश्यकता होगी जो गरीब राष्ट्रों के लिए एक बड़ी समस्या होती है। मानव विकास प्रतिवेदन में इसके लिए भी एक रास्ता सुझाया है। अंतर्राष्ट्रीय व्यापार की तुलना में विश्व में मुद्राओं का लेनदेन कई गुना होता है, अतः रिपोर्ट का सुझाव है कि अगर अंतर्राष्ट्रीय मुद्राओं के लेनदेन पर 0.005 प्रतिशत भी कर लगा दिया जाए तो उससे 40 अरब डॉलर एकत्रित हो सकेंगे जो वर्तमान में प्रदत्त विदेशी सहायता को मिलाकर 130 अरब डॉलर के बराबर हो जायेंगे। जलवायु परिवर्तन के साथ समायोजन करने के लिए भी विकासशील राष्ट्रों एवं सहाराई राष्ट्रों को 105 अरब डॉलर की आवश्यकता होगी। अतः अंतर्राष्ट्रीय लेनदेन पर 0.005 प्रतिशत का कर इस दिशा में सहायक सिद्ध हो सकेगा।

रिपोर्ट आम जनता के पर्यावरणीय अधिकारों का संविधान में प्रावधान की आवश्यकता को भी प्रतिपादित करती है। अतएव मूलभूत अधिकारों में भी पर्यावरणीय अधिकारों को शामिल किया जा सकता है। (सप्रेस)

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शिक्षा एवं सम्प्रेषण

- रूपनारायण काबरा

पाश्चात्य शिक्षा शास्त्री 'रेडन' के अनुसार 'शिक्षा एक परिपक्व व्यक्ति द्वारा अपरिपक्व पर शिक्षण, अनुदेश एवं अनुशासन द्वारा डाला गया वह सुनिश्चित एवं सुनियोजित सम्प्रेषण और प्रभाव है, जिससे कि मानवगत शारीरिक, बौद्धिक, सौन्दर्य - बोधात्मक, सामाजिक एवं आध्यात्मिक शक्तियों का वैयक्तिक एवं सामाजिक आवश्यकतानुसार सम्यक एवं समरस विकास हो जो कि शिक्षार्थी के सृष्टा से आत्मसाक्षात्कार की दिशा में निर्दिष्ट हो।'

शिक्षा वस्तुतः कोई पाठ्यक्रम या डिग्री मात्र नहीं है। शिक्षा की संरचना तो जीविका तक सीमित न होकर जीवन के लक्ष्य को स्पष्ट करने में, जीवन को सार्थक रूप से जीने में है। विभिन्न प्रकार के पाठ्यक्रम भी साधन हैं कुछ सीखने के। प्राणी जिस साधन प्रणाली से ज्ञान उपार्जित करता है वह भी समग्र शिक्षा का एक अंग है। व्यक्ति बिना सिखाये भी वातावरण से, परिस्थिति से, अनुभव से, देखकर और सुनकर भी काफी कुछ सीख लेता है। ज्ञान - विज्ञान एवं दर्शन से मन-मस्तिष्क में एक प्रकार का संस्कार उत्पन्न करना ही शिक्षा का अभीष्ट है। 'नास्ति विद्या समं चक्षु' विद्या के समान दूसरा नेत्र नहीं है। शिक्षा यदि संस्कारित नहीं करती है तो वह शिक्षा अपने आप में अपूर्ण है।

शिक्षा एक सुव्यवस्थित सम्प्रेषण प्रक्रिया है, जो सीखने और बनने की प्रेरणा देती है। एक भय रहित, स्नेह-संपूरित एवं बालक के व्यक्तित्व एवं उसकी आत्म छवि के प्रति सम्मान भाव वाला वातावरण ही खुलकर सीखने को प्रोत्साहित करता है। शारीरिक, मानसिक एवं संवेगात्मक किसी प्रकार का भी भय अधिगम एवं विकास को रोकता है। प्रभावी सम्प्रेषण हेतु वातावरण एवं परिवेश को बाल-केन्द्रित एवं समुदाय से प्रासंगिक होना होगा। बच्चों और सिखाने वालों के मस्तिष्क में यह तथ्य स्पष्ट होना चाहिए कि सीखना केवल कक्षाओं में ही नहीं होता है। सीखना तो कहीं भी हो सकता है, किसी से भी हो सकता है, आवश्यकता है सीखने की प्यास की। सीखना मूलतः एक अन्तःक्रिया है जो बाह्य कारकों से प्रभावित होती है- सकारात्मक रूप में और

नकारात्मक रूप में भी। सीखने की चाह वाले के लिए बाह्य कारक बिखरे पड़े हैं। दत्तात्रेय के जो 24 गुरु थे उनमें मधुमक्खी, साँप, अजगर, श्वान, हाथी, भ्रमर, कबूतर इत्यादि शामिल थे। सिखाने वाले कारक अर्थात् पाठ्यक्रम, विद्यालय शिक्षक और परीक्षा क्यों नहीं इस सत्य को स्वीकारते कि हर बालक अपने अलग तरीके से सीखता है, उसकी अपनी गति होती है तथा समझने की अपनी गहराई। कुछ बच्चे अकेले अच्छा सीखते हैं और कुछ साथियों के समूह में और कुछ अनुकरण करके।

प्रकृति अपने आप में मूलतः समष्टि है। हवा, पानी, नदी-नाले, पेड़-पौधे, पर्वत, वन्यजीव अलग-अलग होते हुए भी सब एक-दूसरे से संबद्ध भी हैं और एक का अस्तित्व दूसरे के अस्तित्व से प्रभावित है। सब मिलकर ही तो प्रकृति है, अन्यथा प्रकृति अपने आप में कुछ भी तो नहीं है। इसी प्रकार शिक्षा को भी समष्टिगत होना है, समकालिक होना है। इस प्रकार की शिक्षा में बालक जीवन के विभिन्न कौशल और ज्ञान को सीखता चला जायेगा बिना संतुष्टि के सीखते रहने की अनवरत चाह लिए हुए। शिक्षा को भी गंगा की धारा की भाँति होना है, जिसमें न जाने कितनी धाराएं मिलती हैं और गंगा बहती है। नित नूतनता के साथ परिवेश से प्रभावित होती हुई और परिवेश को प्रभावित करते हुए। ऐसी ही है शिक्षा की धारा जो नए आयामों की तलाश में नए तटों का निर्माण करती चलती है।

शिक्षा को सर्वोन्मुखी होना ही है और बच्चे को निरन्तर स्वास्थ्य, जीवन-मूल्य, कार्य करने की भावना, श्रमनिष्ठा, सृजनात्मकता, तर्कयुक्त चिन्तन, सम्प्रेषण एवं अभिव्यक्ति कौशल, साहसिकता तथा परिवर्तन के साथ सामन्जस्य भी सीखते रहना है। यदि बालक में सीखते रहने की प्रवृत्ति विकसित की जा सके तो वही होगी शिक्षण की सफलता की निष्पत्ति। लेकिन दुर्भाग्यवश पाठ्यक्रम एवं परीक्षा के घेरे के बाहर न शिक्षा देने वाले झाँकते हैं और न ही अपने छात्रों को प्रेरित करते हैं। एक नदी अपने उद्गम से ऊपर नहीं बह सकती और यह भी सत्य है कि यदि गंगा गंगौत्री पर ही गंदी होगी तो प्रवाह एवं प्रभाव पवित्र कैसे होगा। हमारी समग्र शैक्षिक संरचना ही दिशाशून्य है।

वर्तमान शिक्षा बहुआयामी है, पाठ्यक्रम की दृष्टि से महत्वाकांक्षी है,

विभिन्न प्रकार के प्रशिक्षण हैं, सब कुछ है पर फिर भी आज के तथाकथित शिक्षितों में जीवन की धारा आदर्श से विपरीत बह रही है। ईश्वर और धर्म में अविश्वास, संयम का अभाव, प्राचीनता एवं परम्परा के प्रति विद्वेष, गुरुजनों के प्रति अश्रद्धा, विलासिता एवं वासना की ओर बढ़ता आकर्षण, प्रदर्शन एवं उपभोगवाद से अनुराग तथा नैतिक साहस, निर्भीकता एवं निष्पक्षता से आज का मानव दूर हटता जा रहा है। अहिंसा, करुणा, अपरिग्रह, श्रम, सहिष्णुता एवं संयम विलुप्त होते जा रहे हैं। दुनिया छोटी होती जा रही है पर दिलों की दूरी बढ़ रही है हम अपने अथवा निकटतम अपनों में ही सिमटते जा रहे हैं। क्या यही शिक्षा है ?

शिक्षा की चर्चा करते वक्त यह समझना आवश्यक है कि व्यक्ति का मनोवैज्ञानिक संगठन है उसके मूल्यों का ढाँचा। आज मनुष्य के व्यक्तिगत या सामूहिक व्यवहार में सुसम्बद्धता एवं सात्विकता नहीं है। खान-पान परिवर्तन, परिवेश प्रभाव, भोगवाद एवं असहिष्णुता के कारण शिक्षित व्यक्ति भी बर्बर, हिंसक, स्वार्थपूर्ण एवं संकीर्ण व्यवहार करते देखे जाते हैं, फिर शिक्षा का प्रभाव कहाँ गया ? शिक्षा के सम्प्रेषण में कोई न कोई कमी, कहीं न कहीं तो है ही तभी तो शिक्षित होकर भी व्यवहार में अशिक्षित ही रह जाते हैं।

विकास और शिक्षा में भी तालमेल स्पष्ट नजर नहीं आता है तभी तो विकसित देशों में रंगभेद की मानसिकता, बढ़ते अपराध, स्वच्छंद यौनाचार, अश्लील साहित्य एवं हिंसा की प्रवृत्तियाँ जोर पकड़ती जा रही हैं। हम आधुनिकता को प्रगति मानते हैं पर हमारी इन्सानियत गिरती जा रही है, यह कैसा विकास है ?

शिक्षा प्रयोगवाद, परिवर्तन एवं प्रगति का माध्यम है। ऐसा परिवर्तन जो श्रेष्ठ विचारों को संजोये, साथ ही अपनी सनातन संस्कृति के स्थाई तत्वों को वर्तमान से जोड़ सके। हमें यह देखना होगा कि हमारी शिक्षा प्रक्रिया, शैक्षिक संरचना तथा प्रगति में क्या संबंध है।

यह तथ्य स्पष्ट होना ही चाहिए कि शिक्षा वस्तुतः वह नहीं है जो हम सीखते हैं, शिक्षा वह है जो हम बनते हैं। आवश्यक यह नहीं है कि हम छात्रों को हमारी पूर्व संचित जानकारी दें। वस्तुतः उनमें वह योग्यता पैदा करनी है

कि अपने सारे जीवन में वह जानकारी प्राप्त करता रहे। अपने और दूसरों के अनुभव से लाभ उठाए। बच्चों को केवल इसलिए तैयार नहीं करना है कि आज की स्थिति का सामना कैसे करें बल्कि उनमें वह योग्यता हो कि बदलती स्थिति में वह कैसे अपने पैर जमाए रखें कि किसी भी धारा में बह न जाए। कोई भी धारा या हवा नई आए, पैर तो जमीन पर ही रहने चाहिए। शिक्षा एक सम्प्रेषण है, प्रभाव है, चेतना है, शिक्षा स्वयं मंजिल नहीं, एक सफर है, एक धारा है जिसे बहते रहना है नए आयामों की तलाश में, नए तटों का निर्माण करते हुए। छात्र तो शिक्षा का परिणाम है, न कारण है, न कारक।

शिक्षा के औपचारिक एवं वास्तविक लक्ष्य क्या है, क्या होना चाहिए, क्यों इन लक्ष्यों की पूर्ति नहीं हो रही है, इन्हीं सब समस्याओं का विवेचन किया जाना है। बालक के समस्या मूलक बनने में अभिभावक कहाँ तक उत्तरदायी है? बालक आपसे चाहता क्या है? वह जो चाहता है उसे देने का आपके पास वक्त है क्या?

सीखने में पिछड़े बालकों की समस्याओं का निदान और उनके उपचारी शिक्षण पर भी काफी कुछ सोचा गया है। यह सत्य है कि जब तक शिक्षकों में पिछड़े बालकों को समझने की दिशा में सही दृष्टिकोण, सहानुभूति, धैर्य, उत्साह एवं लगन नहीं होगी, कोई भी उपचारी शिक्षण का कार्यक्रम सफल नहीं हो सकेगा।

शिक्षा का मुख्य साधन विद्यालय विशाल समाज का लघु संस्करण ही तो है। अतः बुनियादी मूल्यों का बीजारोपण - अंकुरण वहीं होना चाहिए पर मूल्य-शिक्षा का एकमात्र अभिकरण विद्यालय ही नहीं अपितु हमारा घर-परिवार, परिजन, अभिभावक, समाज, राजनेता, मासमीडिया सभी को यह काम करना है और पूरे सामंजस्य के साथ।

हमारा काल - परिप्रेक्ष्य बहुत असंतुलित है। स्कूलों में हम मूलतः अतीत-प्रभावित ही हैं। वर्तमान एवं भविष्य की ओर हमारी गति अत्यल्प है। परिवर्तन की तीव्र गति को देखते हुए हम दूसरी पीढ़ी के लिए यह नहीं कह सकते कि कल भी आज जैसा ही होगा।

मूलकथ्य सार रूप में कुछ इस प्रकार है -

- ◆ मूल्यों की शिक्षा का प्रथम केन्द्र तो घर ही है लेकिन विद्यालय सबसे प्रभावी माना जा सकता है।
- ◆ चरित्र हमारे आचरण का समेकित स्वरूप ही तो है। आचरण हमारे चरित्र की प्रयोगशाला है। मूल्यों को इस प्रयोगशाला से ही तो गुजरना है।
- ◆ काश, हम बच्चों को समझाने की बजाए खुद को समझें, खुद का उपचार करे।
- ◆ शिक्षा का उद्देश्य है मुक्त चिंतन, मूल्य-अभिप्रेत जीवन, चुनौतियों से जूझना एवं नवीन सृजन की दिशा देना।
- ◆ शैक्षिक संस्थाओं को मूल रूप में शैक्षिक संस्था ही बने रहना है, राजनीति से नहीं जुड़ना है।
- ◆ अभिभावकों को स्कूल जाना चाहिए- समर्थन, सहयोग एवं संपर्क के लिये।
- ◆ सहकारिता समाधान है समस्याओं का और मार्ग है उस मंजिल का जहाँ शांति सहअस्तित्व और समृद्धि है।
- ◆ शिक्षा में नैतिक पक्ष की अवहेलना का ही परिणाम है कि हम आज चाँद-सितारों तक तो जा पहुँचे हैं पर धरती पर इंसान की तरह चलना भूलते ही जा रहे हैं।
- ◆ अभिभावकों को चाहिए कि अपने बच्चों के लिये वे ही लक्ष्य निर्धारित करें जिन्हें प्राप्त करने की उनकी क्षमता है।
- ◆ जब आपका बच्चा निर्णय न ले सकने की स्थिति में हो तब ही मदद कीजिये। अपने निर्णय, अपना अनुभव उस पर मत थोपिये।
- ◆ स्वाध्याय, सभ्यता एवं संस्कृति के विकास की आधारशिला है।
- ◆ मानवीय संवेदनाओं का फलीभूत रूप ही शिक्षा, शिक्षक एवं शिक्षार्थी की सफलता है और इसी में निहित है व्यापक, अपेक्षित सामाजिक परिवर्तन।
- ◆ अन्तरावलोकन अपेक्षित ही नहीं अपरिहार्य भी है।

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विकेन्द्रित शिक्षा प्रशासन

- प्रो. कालिका यादव, अर्चना जैन

फेयोल के अनुसार

‘वह प्रत्येक कार्य जिसमें अधीनस्थ की भूमिका के महत्व में वृद्धि होती है, विकेन्द्रीकरण है।’

कीथडेविस के अनुसार

‘संगठन की छोटी से छोटी इकाई, जहाँ तक की व्यवहारिक हो, सत्ता एवं दायित्व का वितरण विकेन्द्रीकरण कहलाता है।’

जनतांत्रिक देशों की अवधारणा है कि व्यक्तिगत भिन्नता के आधार पर व्यक्ति को विकास के अवसर देने पर ही उसका सर्वोन्मुखी विकास संभव है, ऐसे व्यक्तियों द्वारा ही राष्ट्र का विकास संभव है। अमेरिका, ब्रिटेन तथा भारत के शिक्षा प्रशासन इसके उदाहरण हैं। इन देशों में राज्य अपनी नीतियों तथा सुविधा के अनुरूप शिक्षा की व्यवस्था करते हैं। शैक्षिक नवाचार विकेन्द्रित व्यवस्था में ही विकसित होते हैं।

राष्ट्रपिता महात्मा गांधी विकेन्द्रीकरण के हिमायती थे। वे चाहते थे कि हमारे यहां संचालित सभी योजनाओं का लाभ राष्ट्र के सभी गरीब-अमीर लोगों को मिले, इसीलिए उन्होंने विकेन्द्रीकरण के प्रचार-प्रसार में रुचि दिखाई।

विकेन्द्रीकरण की व्याख्या करते हुए जे.पी. सूद ने लिखा है- यदि हम पूरे समाज को समान रूप से किसी तथ्य, विचार प्रणाली, विचार से हिंसा नहीं पहुंचाना चाहते तो हम एक राज्यहीन समाज की रूपरेखा पर विचार कर सकते हैं। इसमें गांवों में बसे हुए समूह होंगे, जिसमें गौरवपूर्ण शांतिमय जीवन का आधार स्वेच्छापूर्ण सहयोग होगा, प्रत्येक गांव में एक गांव पंचायत होगी जिसके पास अपनी सुरक्षा एवं मूलभूत आवश्यकताओं की पूर्ति की पूर्णतः सामर्थ्य होगी। उनकी जीवन प्रणालियां पिरामिड जैसी न होकर वृत्त सदृश होंगी। यह एक ऐसा वृत्त होगा जिसका केन्द्र व्यक्ति होगा, जो अपने को ग्राम के प्रति बलिदान करने हेतु तत्पर रहेगा। इससे ‘वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्’ की आदर्श

भावना का उदय होगा। इस वृत्त की सबसे बाहरी परिधि आंतरिक वृत्त को कुचलने में अपनी शक्ति का प्रयोग नहीं कर पायेगी बल्कि अपने अंतर्गत सबको शक्ति प्रदान करेगी। इस व्यवस्था की मुख्य विशेषता व्यक्तिगत स्वतंत्रता होगी यही विकेन्द्रीकरण का आदर्श रूप है।

गांधी दर्शन की विकेन्द्रीकरण की भावना के अनुरूप आज शिक्षा को भी विकेन्द्रीकृत कर दिया गया है। इससे ग्रामीण क्षेत्र में बसे हुए लोगों की जन सहभागिता सुनिश्चित हुई है। भारत ग्रामीणों का देश है, अतः यहां विकेन्द्रीकरण से शिक्षा के प्रति लोगों में आकर्षण उत्पन्न होगा। हमारे संविधान में 73वें संशोधन के द्वारा पंचायतों को अधिक अधिकार सम्पन्न बनाया गया है तथा संविधान के 74वें संशोधन द्वारा शहरी क्षेत्रों में नगर पालिकाओं को अन्य कार्यों के साथ-साथ स्थानीय स्तर की दिशा के प्रशासन में वृहद् अधिकार दिए गए हैं। उक्त दोनों संविधान संशोधनों में शक्तियों के विकेन्द्रीकरण का मूल ढाँचा दिया हुआ है। इन्हीं संशोधनों के आधार पर राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति 1986, जिसे 1992 संशोधित किया गया, बल्कि तदनुसार 1992 का कार्य हेतु कार्यक्रम (Programme of Action, 1992) भी बना, जिसकी अनुशंसा के परिचालन में श्री वीरप्पा मोइली (कर्नाटक के मुख्यमंत्री) की अध्यक्षता में केन्द्रीय शिक्षा बोर्ड (Central Advisory Board of Education) की एक समिति (C.A.B.E. Committee) बनी जिसने अनेक बैठकें आयोजित कर विकेन्द्रीकरण शिक्षा के लिए आवश्यक सुझाव दिये। इसका विस्तृत विवरण Encyclopedia of Educational Planning and Development (ले. आर.के. रघुराम) ने वाल्यूम 4-5 में दिया है। साथ ही साथ शिक्षा, उद्योग, व्यापार प्रशासन को भी विकेन्द्रीकरण युक्त एवं पारदर्शी बनाने पर विचार चल रहा है। विकेन्द्रीकरण को विभिन्न नामों से भी जाना जाता है, यथा-देश की दो तिहाई जनता को सुख देने वाली प्रणाली, मुक्ति का इच्छापत्र, जनसहभागी प्रणाली आदि।

लाभ

1. शिक्षा के विकेन्द्रीकरण से जनसहभागिता में वृद्धि होगी, परिणामस्वरूप शिक्षा सर्वजन सुलभ होगी एवं इससे विभिन्न योजनाओं के क्रियान्वयन में मदद मिलेगी।

2. विकेन्द्रीकरण से जनमानस में उत्साह एवं नवीन स्फूर्ति आएगी परिणामस्वरूप देश पूर्ण साक्षर बन सकेगा।
3. विकेन्द्रीकरण से देश की विविधता सम्पन्न सांस्कृतिक परम्पराओं, भाषाओं की रक्षा हो सकेगी। साथ ही साथ स्थानीय लोक संस्कृति की भी रक्षा होगी।
4. शिक्षा के विकेन्द्रीकरण से दलित, शोषित व्यक्ति शिक्षा के मूल अधिकार को प्राप्त कर सकेंगे और राष्ट्र की मुख्य धारा में आ सकेंगे।
5. विकेन्द्रीकरण से जन भावना का आदर होगा, लोग खुशी से शिक्षा के प्रति समर्पित होंगे, समस्याओं का समाधान होगा तथा शैक्षिक गुणवत्ता बनाए रखने में मदद मिलेगी।
6. विकेन्द्रीकरण से शिक्षा का आर्थिक व्यय-भार स्थानीय निकायों एवं संस्थाओं पर हो जाता है।
7. विकेन्द्रीकरण से केन्द्रीय स्तर पर कार्यभार कम हो जाता है, जिससे उन्हें नई योजनाएँ बनाने, नीति निर्धारण करने, विभिन्न विभागों में समन्वय स्थापित करने, योजनाओं के क्रियान्वयन में मानीटरिंग करने आदि का समय दिया जाता है।
8. अधीनस्थ स्तर पर कार्यभार सौंपने से उनमें उत्तरदायित्व की भावना विकसित होती है।
9. विकेन्द्रीकरण व्यवस्था में प्रत्येक स्तर के अधिकार ऊपर से प्राप्त आदेशों का पालन करने के स्थान पर स्वयं समस्या निदान पर चिंतन करते हैं। जिनसे उनके आत्म-विश्वास में वृद्धि होती है।
10. विकेन्द्रीकरण प्रजातांत्रिक व्यवस्था है जिसमें परस्पर सौहार्द बना रहता है। प्रत्येक को अपने-अपने कर्तव्यों का बोध बना रहता है।
11. अनौपचारिक संबंधों एवं संगठन संरचना के विकास में विकेन्द्रीकरण पद्धति सहायक है।
12. कार्य संचालन में गति आती है।

हानियाँ -

1. संगठन की एकरूपता प्रभावित होती है।

2. शैक्षणिक प्रबंध व्ययों में वृद्धि होती है।
3. उच्च स्तरीय नियंत्रण के अभाव में वित्तीय अव्यवस्थाएँ फैलती हैं।
4. उच्चस्तरीय नियंत्रण नहीं रहने से अनुशासन में भी शिथिलता आ सकती है।
5. विशेषज्ञों की सेवाओं का आदान-प्रदान नहीं हो पाता है।
6. द्विरावृत्ति (Duplication) तथा अतिव्यापन (Over lapping) की संभावनाएँ बढ़ जाती हैं।
7. विकेन्द्रीकृत परीक्षा पद्धति से शैक्षणिक स्तर की समानता प्रभावित होती है। प्रत्येक संस्था या संगठन अपने छात्रों के परीक्षा परिणाम अच्छे बनाने की प्रवृत्ति के कारण मूल्यांकन में शिथिलता बरतने हेतु प्रोत्साहित होंगे।
8. विकेन्द्रीकृत पद्धति में पाठ्यक्रम की समानता भी नहीं रह पाती।

विभिन्न मान्यताओं एवं विचारों को ध्यान में रखकर भारत सरकार भी शिक्षा के विकेन्द्रीकरण को प्रमुखता दे रही है। यह प्रसन्नता का विषय है कि इसी क्रम में उसने 73 वें संविधान संशोधन के द्वारा पंचायतों को विकेन्द्रित करके स्थानीय संस्थाओं को सुदृढ़ बना दिया है। विभिन्न पंचवर्षीय योजनाओं और सामुदायिक विकास कार्यक्रमों में माध्यम से ग्राम के साथ-साथ शिक्षा के विकेन्द्रीकरणयुक्त बनाने पर बल दे रही है। ग्राम पंचायतों की समितियों द्वारा विद्यालयों का निर्माण करवाया जा रहा है। सरकार अब ग्रामीण विकास पर ज्यादा बल भी दे रही है। पंचवर्षीय योजनाओं में ग्रामीण विकास कार्यक्रम पर अरबों रुपये का प्रावधान किया है तथा बजट में हर साल धनराशि बढ़ाई जा रही है। इस प्रकार सरकार शिक्षा के विकेन्द्रीकरण हेतु प्रयत्नशील है। संभवतः यह सब राममूर्ति समिति 1990 के सुझाव का प्रतिफल है जिसमें कहा गया था कि शैक्षिक प्रबंधन एवं नियोजन को विकेन्द्रित किया जाए इससे प्राथमिक से लेकर विश्वविद्यालय तक की अनेक समस्याओं का समाधान हो सकेगा। इससे शिक्षा सर्वजन सुलभ हो सकेगी। संस्थाओं की आवश्यकताओं का ज्ञान हो सकेगा, स्थानीय विषयवस्तु से परिचय प्राप्त होगा। शिक्षा जनभावना के अनुरूप होगी जिससे शिक्षा अपने उद्देश्यों की पूर्ति में सफल हो सकेगी।

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