
UNIT 14 INSTITUTIONALISATION OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

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14.0 INTRODUCTION

Education is a continuous process taking place throughout the life of an individual. It is not confined to pre-specified times and places, but happens whenever a person reflects on the current situation, resolves to address a problem, to share an idea, or to gain an understanding. As the knowledge and skills enable the people to prosper throughout a life time, people will need continually to enhance their abilities, in order to address immediate problem and to participate in a process of continuing education and professional development. Life itself is a continuous learning process. But education, both general and vocational, throughout life, enables an individual to achieve his fullest potential for development. However, literacy is a catalyst for participation in social, cultural, political and economic activities and for learning throughout life. Further, Continuing education can provide educational facilities for all citizens to integrate learning, working and living. These three aspects of personal development must grow together so that overall quality of life improves and so that society as a whole becomes truly an 'educated' society in the best meaning of the term.

Continuing Education is one which occurs beyond initial education. This is a life-long process of learning for human resource development and ultimately to achieve better quality of life. Continuing education is a lifelong process, the self-fulfillment of an urge to keep pace with developments in one's professional life. It is a necessity rather than a luxury to maintain our competitive and globalised economy.

Recognising the need, a multiplicity of institutions are providing institutionalised mechanisms for continuing education. They include: government; universities/higher educational institutions; professional associations/organizations; employers and independent/private agencies; open/distance education institutions; etc. There are different facilitators for encouraging continuing education. They include: money incentives, flexible study mode, provision of job positions, provision of study leave, flexibility of course structure etc. The efficacy of a programme rests upon factors like provision of learning opportunities; awareness about facilities; availability, selection and training of personnel; adoption of suitable teaching methods; integration with development schemes; collaboration with government and non-government organisations including universities; and, of course, adequate funding.

It is easy to make someone literate but to sustain literacy is difficult. Therefore, organisation of post-literacy and continuing education is very important to sustain literacy and to enhance it further.

During the last 20 years, Total Literacy (TL) and Post Literacy Campaigns (PLC) have been implemented by the government in several districts throughout the country. As a follow-up, the government launched a Continuing Education scheme for neo-literates which was launched in January 1996 as a third phase of NLM. Continuing Education Centres (CECs) are established by the government to enable neo-literates to retain, improve and apply their basic knowledge and skills in fulfilling their day-to-day needs and aspirations. These centers are functioning as centres of activity related to education in the village. A CEC has to establish working relationship with NFE, Open School, Primary School, etc., which are functioning in the village. Continuing Education Centres also organise diversified vocational and life enrichment programmes on a part-time and short-term basis for the neo-literates and other general public. In Unit-13, the concept and scope lifelong learning, the role and significance of Post Literacy and Continuing Education (PL & CE) and various approaches to PL & CE were presented. In the present unit, institutionalization of continuing education will be presented.

14.1 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we attempt to present an overview of the concept, need, scope and types of continuing education. After having gone through this unit, you would be able to:

- Explain the need for continuing education and methods and media used in the context of continuing education;
- Understand the conditions necessary for the success of continuing education;
- Describe the status of the on-going continuing education scheme; and
- Understand the emerging trend of education, i. e., towards a learning society.

14.2 CONTINUING EDUCATION

Though we have studied some aspects of continuing education in the previous Unit, i. e. Unit 13, let us look at some more aspects of it.

14.2.1 Concept, Need and Importance of Continuing Education

In Unit 1 of Block 1 of Course MAE-001 we have introduced the concept of continuing education. Let us learn more about the concept of continuing education here.

- a) **Concept:** Continuing Education (CE) by definition is the provision of opportunities for people to continue their learning. This implies that if CE is to facilitate the development of a learning society, then society must provide a rich educational environment with a wide range of diverse resources and opportunities for learning, not only through the formal system but also through the informal educational sector (UNESCO: PROAP, 1988). Continuing education not only depends on literacy skills of people, it also rests on the provision of resources and opportunities for further learning. The richer and more diversified the learning environment, the greater will be the opportunity for continuing education. The non-formal system can play an important role in this regard.

UNESCO: PROAP (1993) had defined continuing education as a 'broad concept which includes all the learning opportunities all people want or need outside of basic literacy education and primary education'. This definition implies the following: i) continuing education is for literate youth and adults; ii) it is responsive to needs and wants; iii) it can include experiences provided by the formal, non-formal and informal education sub-sectors; and iv) it is defined in terms of 'opportunity' to engage in lifelong learning after the conclusion of primary schooling or its equivalent.

Continuing education can utilize non-formal education procedures but the two are not the same. The non-formal system is an alternative provision to help educationally deprived adults reach standards that are equivalent to those in the formal system. But continuing education is a provision for life-long education.

Continuing education is an indispensable aspect of the strategy of human resource development. The goal of a learning society is continuing education, which includes post-literacy for neo-literates and school dropouts, and for retention of literacy skills and continuation of learning.

- b) **Need and importance:** CE is a process by which life-long needs of the individuals are achieved. There is a need to learn continuously throughout life whether for continuous replenishment of knowledge, for intellectual satisfaction, for personal and professional progress, for gaining experience, or for the effective discharge of civic functions (Reddy, 1991). The purposes of continuing education are enumerated as follows:

- To consolidate and stabilise the skills gained by semi-literates and neo-literates so that they become adequately functional literates;
- To create scope for application of functional literacy in meeting the day-to-day needs of social intercourse;
- To disseminate information on developmental programmes so as to ensure the participation of people in these programmes;
- To create awareness about national concerns such as national integration, conservation and improvement of the environment, women's equality, observance of small family norm etc.; and

- To organize short-duration training programmes and orientation courses for providing vocational skills for improving productivity and economic status of people.

Continuing education is needed for the following purposes (Reddy, 2006):

- To upgrade levels of living through a process: improving knowledge, skills, better understanding of work environment, and world of work;
- To produce trained manpower and to bring about full and optimum development of human resources;
- To cater to the felt needs of all sections of society with particular reference to the needs of less privileged and under-privileged sections;
- To provide ample opportunities to engage in continuing lifelong learning;
- To improve the living conditions of marginalized and deprived sections of society;
- To meet the new challenges emerging everyday in today's world of unprecedented scientific discoveries;
- To realize the unlimited human potential for development in societal, local, national and global contexts;
- To expand the people's intellectual thinking;
- To develop a meaningful understanding of social conditions and social structures;
- To improve occupational proficiencies in order to enhance career development; and
- To create civic awareness and community service.

14.2.2 Scope of Continuing Education

The continuing education programmes and allied activities have a very wide scope. These programmes cover all aspects of life, catering to all sections of society, as well as and the national priority areas such as:

- Education for out-of-school youth;
- Population, health, nutrition, family life and environmental education for the masses;
- Science and technology;
- Professional education in the fields of law, medicine, agriculture, engineering, human relations, etc.
- Special programmes for women, workers, farmers, doctors, engineers and special interest groups.

Continuing education programmes cater to various clientele groups of learners. The clientele groups range from the least advanced to the most advanced in any walk of life. The clientele may be out-of-school youth, school dropouts, educated unemployed, skilled youth, professionals, semi-skilled workers, women's groups, occupational groups, etc. (Reddy, 1991).

14.2.3 Types of Continuing Education Programmes

Unless there are systematic programmes of continuing education for different categories, there is a little scope for a learning society. The following continuing

education programmes are suggestive for different categories of neo-literates whose needs are varied (Reddy, 1997):

- Post-literacy and remedial programmes for neo-literates and semi-literates;
- General basic education programmes for rural and urban communities;
- Developmental types of programmes for workers, parents, housewives, husbands, etc;
- Employment-oriented programmes for unemployed youth;
- Future-oriented programmes for workers, professionals, business leaders, villagers, etc., and
- Basic vocational programmes for rural and urban communities.

1) Post-Literacy and Remedial Programmes

Learners, who have reached a certain level or a grade-equivalent level within a literacy campaign, often fail to proceed beyond that grade, lose skills and knowledge and relapse into illiteracy. Under continuing education, post-literacy and remedial programmes should be organised to stabilise and strengthen the literacy skills of semi-literates and neo-literates. These programmes are aimed at the maintenance of basic literacy, numeracy and computation skills, enabling individuals to function effectively in society.

2) General Basic Education Programmes

Rural people need more general but still basic education programmes. These programmes could be in areas/subjects such as population education, health, the work environment, food production, and storage, farm management, alternative occupations for rural workers. But the urban communities need to be trained in industrial relations and the impact of city life on the home and family.

3) Developmental Types of Programmes

Programmes concerned only with reading, writing and calculating for their own sake have little meaning. Hence, the emphasis is on functional literacy which helps the development of traditional literacy skills, and ensures that such development occurs in areas reflecting socio-economic and cultural needs of the learners. Thus the developmental programmes should build both technical skills and functional knowledge. The development of one aspect adds to the development of the other. These developmental continuing education programmes are aimed at :

- i) Imparting individuals greater capacities as workers, parents, housewives, husbands and community members; and
- ii) Giving individuals opportunities to participate in and learn about their chosen social, cultural, spiritual, health, physical and artistic interests.

4) Employment-Oriented Programmes

The learners who have had some basic literacy, but are unemployed, because they lack sufficient skills for employment, need employment-oriented training. Continuing education programme should be available for such people to acquire the required skills for employment. Hence, employment-oriented programmes should be organised under continuing education for the neo-literate unemployed.

5) Future-Oriented Courses

These programmes endeavour to give new skills, knowledge and techniques to workers, professionals, business leaders, villagers, businessmen and planners, to equip them and their organisations for the growing social and technological changes.

6) Basic Vocational Programmes

These programmes are required for rural and urban communities. These could include carpentry, computer awareness, engine maintenance, plumbing, garment making, food preparation and crafts. Communities need to develop for consultative planning and decision making that involve all categories of citizens; only in this way, a society which is functioning as a learning society can deal with crises and develop alternative strategies.

14.2.4 Methods and Media Used for Continuing Education

Continuing education is a complex, extensive and most varied programme of learning. In order to make continuing education programme more effective, it must be flexible, learner-oriented, diversified in method and content, non-authoritarian and based on learners' needs and interests. All continuing education courses, particularly the courses leading to a degree, diploma or certificate require a lot of independent study activity. However, occasional tutorials, lectures, discussions, study tours etc., are a part of such courses. On the other hand courses, not leading to a degree or certificate, rely on methods such as extension lectures, seminars, conferences, symposia, forums, etc. All continuing education courses i. e., open university courses, correspondence courses, extra-mural studies and other programmes, involve some reading, project work, and independent study (Reddy, 1991).

Continuing education agencies may use a wide range of media and learning resources. Some of these could be particularly suitable for the neo-literates; others may deliberately focus on the development of higher levels of functions and skills. Some of the media as identified by R. H. Dave and his colleagues (1985) were presented in Section-13.2 of the preceding unit, i. e., Unit-13.

14.2.5 Providers of Continuing Education

The delivery of Continuing Education is carried out by a multiplicity of Institutions (Reddy, 2006), which are given below:

- Universities/Higher Education Institutions: Colleges, Evening Colleges, Correspondence Institutions, Adult, Continuing Education and Extension Departments;
- Open Universities/Distance Education Institutions such as National/State Open Universities, State Open Schools and National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS);
- Government Departments/Agencies like Adult & Continuing Education, Jana Shikshana Sansthans, Mahila Samakhya and Community Politechnics;
- Professional Associations/Organisations- National, State, Local;
- Employers / Employment settings such as Business firms, Social agencies, Hospitals, Hotels, Banks;

- Trade unions - Member education, Sponsored certificate / degree programs;
- Non-Governmental Organisation / Foundations: Profit / business motive, Co-operative self-help groups, Philanthropic, Social organizations;
- Independent / private agencies: Pre-service Training Institutions, In-service Training Institutes; and
- Mass Media Agencies such as Radio, TV, Film, Press, ICTs.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under "Answers to Check Your Progress".

1) i) Explain the concept and scope of continuing education.

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ii) What are the various types of continuing education programmes?

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iii) Explain the need for continuing education.

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iv) What are the various methods and media used for continuing education?

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v) Who are the providers of continuing education?

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14.3 CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR THE SUCCESS OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

The following conditions are necessary for the success of any Continuing Education Programme (Reddy, 1997):

- 1) **Literate Society:** Literacy is the basis for continuing education. It is true that unless people are literate they cannot engage in continuing education. Further, the literacy skills achieved at the conclusion of a basic literacy or post-literacy programme are insufficient for meaningful life-long learning, and that more advanced literacy skills need to be developed to make the continuing education phase more effective. Once the advanced literacy skills have been achieved, there must be opportunities for continuing education.
- 2) **Awareness among the Community People:** A lack of awareness is, of course, the reason that continuing education generally has a low priority. Hence, all people in the community need to be made aware that the resources spent on literacy programmes would be wasted, if people do not take advantage of the opportunities afforded by continuing education programmes. Only by increasing awareness of the significance of continuing education in personal and national development can the link between literacy and development be appreciated.
- 3) **Provision of Learning Opportunities for Continuing Education:** In a true learning society, sufficient learning opportunities should be available to all the learners who choose to undertake a range of programmes to meet their personal needs. Hence, systematic learning opportunities should be provided in a continuing education centre to bring maximum gain to the neo-literates.
- 4) **Training of Continuing Educators:** Systematic training of continuing educators is needed with constant coordination between all of the agencies involved. Continuing education, as a newly emerging profession, is to become profoundly important and training in this field must meet the highest standards.
- 5) **Adoption of Suitable Teaching Methods:** It is generally appreciated that adults have different styles of learning from school children and these styles must be catered for using appropriate teaching methodologies. In particular, non-formal learning involves generalised learning, whereas the competencies required by adults are specific to particular situations. The training methods such as self- instruction, group work, role play, simulation, etc., are generally appropriate for adults engaged in continuing education.
- 6) **Integration of Continuing Education with Development:** To make continuing education more effective, these programmes should be integrated with the developmental programmes and institutions, so that the learners of continuing education could utilise the developmental programmes and improve their quality of life.
- 7) **Funding and Resources:** To design and implement different continuing education programmes and implement sufficient funds and resources are needed. Hence, the funds need to be mobilised from the government and non-governmental organisations by submitting systematic proposals for continuing education.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under "Answers to Check Your Progress".

2) What are the conditions necessary for the success of continuing education?

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14.4 PRESENT STATUS OF CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMME

While Total Literacy Campaigns (TLCs) provide a uniform educational content for all sections of the society, continuing education would contain diverse and alternative programmes which would be suitable for a wide cross-section of the people, such as neo-literates and semi-literates seeking to continue their education, school drop-outs and passouts seeking to achieve equivalence with formal education, other persons in the community seeking to enhance their vocational functional skills, etc. Continuing education programmes would have to be tuned to the felt needs and demands of specific groups of neo-literates, taking into account their local conditions and resources.

National Literacy Mission had launched a scheme of continuing education for non-literates in December 1995 to cater to the continuing education needs of millions of neo-literates emerging from successful completion of literacy campaigns in several districts all over India (DAE, 1995). Continuing education programmes under the scheme are taken up only in those districts which have completed both the TLC and PLC phases and the external evaluation of the TLC has been conducted.

The main objective of the scheme is to institutionalize continuing education for neo-literates and to provide diversified programmes suited to their felt needs. Under this scheme, the Zilla Saksharatha Samithi has been given considerable freedom to develop its own programmes depending upon the prevailing socio-economic conditions, the needs of neo-literates, resources available, etc. Establishment of continuing education centres is the principal mode of implementing the CE programme.

The scheme aims at providing an institutionalised mechanism for continuing education through Continuing Education Centres (CECs) to enable the neo-literates to retain, improve and apply their basic knowledge and skills in fulfilling their needs and aspirations.

The main functions of Continuing Education Centres (CECs)/Nodal Continuing Education (NCECs) are as follows:

- Facilities for library and reading room for creation of an environment conducive to literacy and also for creating a learning society.
- Provision of facilities for retention of literacy skills and continuing education to enable learners to learn beyond basic literacy.
- Creating scope for application of functional literacy for improvement in living conditions and quality of life of the people.
- Imparting literacy skills to residual non-literates, semi-literates, drop-outs, etc.
- Dissemination of information on developmental programmes/schemes by establishing direct linkages between continuing education and development programmes, and also widening the scope for participation of traditionally deprived sections of the society in such programmes.
- Creation of awareness on the issues of national concerns, such as national integration, health and hygiene, conservation and improvement of environment, observation and improvement of environment, observance of the small family norm, etc.
- Improvement in economic conditions and general well-being of people/community by organising short duration training programmes, orientation courses and providing vocational skills.
- Organisation of cultural and recreational activities with effective community participation.

One CEC is set up for a population of 2000 to 2500. For a group of about 10-15 CECs, there is a Nodal CEC which monitors and oversees the activities of a cluster of CECs. Besides organizing the CECs, it also provides the opportunities to undertake diverse activities involving alternative and innovative approaches to cater to the needs of the continuing education learners. Target specific and Local specific activities such as Equivalency Programmes (EPs), Quality of Life Improvement Programmes (QLIPs), Income Generating Programmes (IGPs) and Individual Interest Promotion Programmes (IIPPs) could be organized for the beneficiaries of the programme.

The main functions of the CEC would include organizing a library and a reading room, conducting a learning centre/training centre and an information centre, organizing a 'churha mandal', and cultural/sports activities. The responsibilities of the CEC prarak include organising the CEC in such a way so as to enable diversified learners to utilise the facilities to the maximum; to monitor the neo-literates' progress and arrange a supply of reading materials to keep up with their needs; to organise simple and short-term programmes relating to subjects like health and family welfare, new developments in agriculture and veterinary science, conservation of energy, etc, to help interested learners to join open schools organised by National Open School or State Open School Society. The prarak

also has the responsibility of helping people gain vocational training by promoting linkages with development departments; conduct sports, games, recreational and cultural activities; equip the community with essential knowledge to help them improve their quality of life and to secure the services of various functionaries of other departments at the village level. It is essential that training of continuing educators be maintained with constant co-ordination between all agencies involved in the training programme.

14.4.1 Revised Scheme of Continuing Education

As stated above, NLM started the scheme of Continuing Education in 1995 as a fully funded centrally sponsored scheme. The structure of continuing education programme will be retained and further strengthened and expanded in scope and content (NLM, 2007). The scheme envisages 100 per cent assistance to the States for the first three years of the implementation. The State Governments were required to share 50 per cent of the expenditure during the 4th and 5th year of the project, and thereafter take over the total responsibility for the programme.

As a part of the revamped strategy of the National Literacy Mission during the XIth Plan the continuing education programme will be re-structured and merged with Jan Shiksha Abhiyaan to provide follow-up to the neo literates through library and reading room facilities in the second and third year of the campaign. The panchayati raj institutions would be approached to provide accommodation and other support. Convergence with other development programmes will be attempted to make literacy visibly linked to issues affecting the daily needs of life of a non-literate and aid in enrolment and retention.

Under the revised scheme, a continuing education centre will be set up for a population of 2,000-2,500 so that it caters to the needs of at least 500-1000 neo-literates. A nodal continuing education will be set up for a cluster of 10-15 continuing education centers.

The function of imparting basic literacy and transaction of literacy primers would be continued in the continuing education phase. The activity of teaching-learning for basic literacy would be available not only to dropouts and left-outs but also to new illiterate entrants in the age group 15-35.

The scheme will continue to be implemented by the Zilla Saksharta Samiti headed by the District Collector. However, the Zilla Saksharta Samiti may also be headed by a democratically elected chairman of the Zilla Parishad in states where a full-fledged Panchayati Raj system has been established. The implementing agencies, Voluntary agencies, Mahila Mandals, Panchayati Raj institutions, Nehru Yuvak Kendras, etc., for organizing continuing education centres, or nodal continuing education centres will be identified by the ZSS.

The scheme also envisages convergence with the programmes of Nehru Yuvak Kendras, National Service Scheme, National Service Volunteer Scheme, etc., at the grassroots level. The infrastructure of these institutions will, as far as possible, be utilized to facilitate the functioning of the scheme. (For other details including the patterns of financial assistance to CEC and NCEC, see Unit 1 of Block 2 of Course MAE-002).

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under "Answers to Check Your Progress".

3) i) Explain the present status of continuing education programme.

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ii) Explain the features of revised scheme of continuing education.

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14.5 AN EMERGING TREND: TOWARDS A LEARNING SOCIETY

Learning is the process of acquiring knowledge. As such, learning may stop at mere acquisition of knowledge or may proceed further toward acquiring newer skills or techniques and beyond. Thus, it is the acquired behaviour which is part and parcel of life — 'a process of living'. In the case of an individual, we can call learning as self-education. By a learning society, we mean existence of reading, writing and numeracy skills among the people. The idea of a learning society was first advanced in a UNESCO Report 'Learning to Be' (Faure, et al., 1972). According to this Report, a learning society is one in which all agencies

of a society are providers of education, not just those whose primary responsibility is education (e. g. schools). For example, while the primary responsibility of a factory is not education but the manufacture of goods, it can and should have an educational role as well. It can provide training for its employees and also can educate the general public about its processes and products, its environmental policies and its societal contributions. Another aspect of a learning society is that all citizens should be engaged in learning, taking full advantage of the opportunities provided by the learning society (UNESCO: PROAP, 1993). Therefore, today the idea of a learning society no longer seems to be an unrealistic ideal but a real possibility and an attainable goal through planned development.

If there exists a genuine learning society, then all its citizens must engage in education right from birth to death – education is lifelong. Purposive, self-planned and self-initiated learning becomes central to the lives of all adults. Each individual sets a series of learning objectives for oneself and then pursues these by all available means through the agencies provided by the learning society.

Two types of enabling factors, which are necessitated for a learning society, can be identified. They are: legal provision and learning environment. The persons who are involved in vocations need lifelong learning with constant updating of acquired knowledge. The prolonged life expectation of individuals is also creating new demands for learning all over the world.

Under legal provision, four kinds of laws/policies can help lifelong learning. They are: First, laws promoting wider access; Second, laws recognizing and promoting forms of education other than formal; Third, laws promoting the integration of different types of education; and Fourth, laws providing the framework for setting up specific structures of lifelong learning.

The second type of enabling factors relate to the learning environment. This may be analyzed at three levels: micro, meso and macro. The micro level refers to the environment closest to the learner: mother and the family. In the pre-industrial society this was the most dominant environment. The meso refers to the school, the community and the workplace, the dominant environment in the pre-knowledge based, industrial society. The macro refers to the societal, national and global contexts in the knowledge based society.

Scientists say that learning starts three weeks after conception during the pre-natal period. Mother's behavior during this period affects the development of the fetus. Use of drugs, smoking and drinking can cause birth defects and other long term harmful effects. The family environment is crucial in providing a foundation for the culture of learning. Although the importance of family is diminishing in modern society, the values of a family vis-à-vis learning are a key in ensuring that the base for lifelong learning is established.

The school environment lays the foundations for the basic learning skills including learning how to learn to facilitate sustainable learning throughout life. The physical, social and cultural environments provided by the school collectively facilitate or obstruct lifelong learning.

The community environment is another important factor influencing lifelong learning. The more diverse learning opportunities that are available in a community, the richer is the environment for learning. Even as self-directed

learning is a key element in lifelong learning, group learning approaches also have a significant role.

The ever changing needs of the workplace make the latter another enabling environment for lifelong learning. At the macro level, the changes in the geo-political order, the emergence of a market friendly society, the development of information and communication technology, the emergence of knowledge based information society and the phenomenon of globalization are calling for improvement in the learning environments, to enable the learner to expand the cognitive, affective and psycho-motor skills acquired during the basic education period.

Check Your Progress

Notes: a) Space given below the question is for writing your answer.

b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit under “Answers to Check Your Progress”.

4) What is the emerging trend in education around the world?

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14.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have presented an overview of the concept, scope and types of continuing education. An attempt has also been made to explain the need for continuing education and methods and media used in the context of continuing education. We have also presented the conditions necessary for the success of continuing education and the present status of on-going Continuing Education Scheme. Further, we have explained the emerging trend of education i. e., towards a learning society.

14.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1) i) Continuing Education (CE) by definition is the provision of opportunities for the people to continue their learning. UNESCO: PROAP (1987) has defined continuing education as a ‘broad concept which includes all the learning opportunities all people want or need outside of basic literacy education and primary education’. Continuing education can utilize the non-formal education procedures, but the two are not the same. The non-formal

system is an alternative provision to help educationally deprived adults reach standards that are equivalent to those in the formal sector. But continuing education is a provision for lifelong education to enrich the standard of living. Thus, it is an indispensable aspect of the strategy of human resource development.

The continuing education programmes and allied activities have a very wide scope and cover all aspects of life, catering to all sections of society and the national priority areas such as: education for out-of-school youth; population, health, nutrition, family life and environmental education for the masses; science and technology; professional education in the fields of law, medicine, agriculture, engineering, human relations, etc.; and special programmes for women, workers, farmers, doctors, engineers and special interest groups.

- ii) The various continuing education programmes are: 1. Post-literacy and Remedial programmes for neo-literates and semi-literates; 2. General basic education programmes for rural and urban communities 3. Developmental types of programmes for workers, parents, housewives, husbands, etc.; 4. Employment-oriented programmes for unemployed youth; 5. Future-oriented programmes for workers, professionals, business leaders, villagers, etc., and 6. Basic vocational programmes for rural and urban communities.
- iii) There is a need to learn continuously, throughout life, for the purpose of continuous replenishment of knowledge, for intellectual satisfaction, for personal and professional progress, for gaining experience, and for the effective discharge of civic functions. The purposes of continuing education are: to consolidate and stabilise the skills gained by functional literates; to create scope for application of functional literacy in meeting the day-to-day needs of social intercourse; to disseminate information on developmental programmes; to create awareness about national concerns such as national integration, women's equality, observance of small family norm, etc.; and to organize short-duration training programmes and orientation courses for providing vocational skills for improving productivity and economic conditions of people. Further, continuing education is needed for the following purposes: to upgrade standards of living; to produce trained manpower and to bring about full and optimum development of human resources; and to cater to the felt needs of all sections of society.
- iv) Continuing education is a complex, extensive and most varied programme of learning. It must be flexible, learner-oriented, diversified in method and content, non-authoritarian and based on learners' needs and interests. All the continuing education courses particularly the courses leading to a degree, a diploma or a certificate require a lot of independent study activity. However, occasional tutorials, lectures, discussions, study tours, etc., are part of the course. Whereas the courses not leading to a degree or a certificate rely on methods such as extension lectures, seminars, conferences, symposia, forums, etc. All continuing education courses i.e., open university courses, correspondence courses, extra-mural studies and other programmes, involve some reading, project work, and independent study.

Continuing education agencies may use a wide range of media and learning resources. Some of these could be particularly suitable for neo-literates; others may deliberately focus on the development of higher levels of functions and skills.

- v) The delivery of continuing education is carried out by a multiplicity of Institutions such as Universities/Higher Education Institutions (Colleges, Evening Colleges, Correspondence Institutions, Adult, Continuing Education and Extension Departments); Open Universities/Distance Education (National/State Open Universities, State/ National Open Schools); Government Departments/Agencies (Adult & Continuing Education, Jana Shikshan Sansthans, Mahila Samakhya and Community Politechnics); Professional Associations/Organisations (National, State, Local); Employers / Employment settings (Business firms, social agencies, Hospitals, Hotels, Banks); Trade unions (Member education, sponsored certificate / degree programmes); Non-Governmental Organisations / Foundations (Profit / business motive, Co-operative self-help groups, Philanthropic, Social); Independent/private agencies (Pre-service Training Institutions, In-service Training Institutes); and Mass Media Agencies (Radio, TV, Film, Press, ICTs).
- 2) The conditions necessary for the success of continuing education are: a) Literate Society - literacy is the basis for continuing education. It is true that unless people are literate they cannot engage in continuing education; b) Awareness among the community people should be created so as to make the people aware that they must utilise and apply their literacy skills in further learning; c) Sufficient learning opportunities should be available to all the learners who choose to undertake a range of programmes to meet their personal needs; d) Systematic training of continuing education functionaries is needed with constant coordination amongst all of the agencies involved; e) Adults have different styles of learning from those employed by school children and these styles must be catered for using appropriate teaching methodologies; f) Continuing education programmes should be integrated with the developmental programmes and institutions; g) To design different continuing education programmes, and to implement these programmes, sufficient funds and resources should be made available.
- 3) i) National Literacy Mission had launched a scheme of continuing education for non-literates in 1995 to cater to the continuing education needs of millions of neo-literates emerging from successful completion of literacy campaigns in several districts all over India. The scheme aims at providing an institutionalized mechanism for continuing education through Continuing Education Centers (CECs) to enable the neo-literates to retain, improve and apply their basic knowledge and skills in fulfilling their day-to-day needs and aspirations.

Each CE centre has been set up for a population of about 2500 which may include around 500-1000 neo-literates, drop-outs and pass-outs from primary school and NFE stream. CECs are set up in clusters of 10-15 with one of them being designated as nodal CEC which is headed by a Nodal Prerak. The main functions of the CEC would include organizing a library and a reading room, conducting a learning centre/training centre and an information centre, organizing a 'churha mandal' and cultural/sports activities.

The responsibilities of the CEC prerak include organising the CEC; to monitor the neo-literates' progress and arrange the supply of reading materials; to organize simple and short-term programmes relating to subjects like health and family welfare, new developments in agriculture and

veterinary science, conservation of energy, etc.; to help interested learners to join open schools; to help the people gain vocational training by promoting linkages with development departments; to conduct sports, games, recreational and cultural activities; to equip the community with essential knowledge so as to help them improve their quality of life; and to secure the services of various functionaries of other departments at the village level.

- ii) The continuing education programme will be re-structured and merged with Jan Shiksha Abhiyaan, which is a revamped strategy of the National Literacy Mission during the XIth Plan, to provide follow-up to the neo literates through library and reading room facilities. The panchayati raj institutions would be approached to provide accommodation and other support. Convergence with other development programmes will be attempted.

The scheme will continue to be implemented by the Zilla Saksharta Samiti headed by the District Collector or the elected Chairman of the Zilla Parishad. The implementing agencies such as Voluntary agencies, Mahila Mandals, Panchayati Raj institutions, Nehru Yuvak Kendras, etc., for continuing education centres will be identified by the ZSS. The scheme also envisages convergence with the programmes of Nehru Yuvak Kendras, National Service Scheme, National Service Volunteer Scheme, etc., at the grassroots level.

- 4) By a learning society, we mean existence of reading, writing and numeracy skills among the people. According to UNESCO Report, a learning society is one in which all agencies of a society are providers of education, not just those whose primary responsibility is education (e. g. schools). For example, while the primary responsibility of a factory is not education but the manufacture of goods, it can and should have an educational role as well. It can provide training for its employees and can also educate the general public about its processes and products, its environmental policies and its societal contributions. Another aspect of a learning society is that all citizens should be engaged in learning, taking full advantage of the opportunities provided by the learning society. If there exists a genuine learning society, then all its citizens must engage in education right from birth to death. Each individual sets a series of learning objectives for himself/herself and then pursues these by all available means through the agencies provided by the learning society.

There are two types of enabling factors, which are necessary for a learning society. They are: legal provision and learning environment. Under legal provision, four kinds of laws/policies can help lifelong learning. They are: first, laws promoting wider access; second, laws recognizing and promoting forms of education other than formal; third, laws promoting the integration of different types of education; and fourth, laws providing the framework for setting up specific structures of lifelong learning.

The second type of enabling factors relate to the learning environment. This may be analyzed at three levels: micro, meso and macro. The micro level refers to the environment closest to the learner: mother and the family. The meso refers to the school, the community and the workplace, the dominant environment in the pre-knowledge based, industrial society. The macro refers to the societal, national and global contexts in the knowledge based society.

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Suggested Readings

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