

## **Spirituality in Adult Learning**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

*The basic aim of adult education is to educate adult for life and make him conscious so that he can effectively play his diverse roles as a citizen of the country. Adult education, therefore, is considered not only as the instrument of development on progress, but also of reconstruction and changes. It is not only the means to convert an illiterate into a literate, but also to help human beings to lead a meaningful life and contribute to the promotion and well-being of society.*

*The present study was designed to investigate the role of spirituality in the practice of adult learning. The objective of the present study is to how adult learner perceived the role of spirituality in their learning. For analyzing the objective, the investigator had adopted survey and analytical method. The data was collected with the help of the tool developed by the investigator. The results show that the majority of the adult learners perceive that spirituality has contributed and linked to their learning.*

**KEY WORDS:** *Role, Spirituality, Adult learning.*

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### **I. INTRODUCTION:**

Saakshar Bharat Mission-2012, a centrally sponsored scheme of the Department of School Education and Literacy (DSEL), Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India was launched by the then Prime Minister Dr. Manmohon Singh on the International Literacy Day, 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2009 has laid its foundation on the concept of adult education. The concept has brought a new hope for adults who could not get opportunity of receiving education during their school years by making changes in various facets of the lives of adults. It is essential that the masses may be trained in various habits to enable them to lead a happier life. Literacy will provide them to liberate from the chains of ignorance. Adult education would bring them in close contact with their community and country's cultural heritage.

Its main aims to further emphasis adult education specially of women by extending educational option to those adults who having lost the opportunity of formal education and transcended the age of formal education, now feel a need for learning of any type including Literacy, Basic Education (equivalency to formal education), Vocational Education (skill development). The principle target of the mission is to impart functional literacy to 70 million adults in the age-group of 15 years and beyond by the end of 2017. Auxiliary target of the mission is to cover 1.5 million adults under basic educational program and equal number under vocational like skill development program. Within these targets, the mission will primarily focus on, but not limited to women, SC, ST, Minorities, other disadvantaged groups and adolescents in rural areas in low literacy states will be other focus groups. The SBM program came into operation from 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2009 and implemented in 365 districts across India and the four districts of Manipur were included in the list.

In Manipur, Saakshar Bharat Mission (SBM) also called National Female Literacy Mission was launched on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2010 by then Hon'ble Education Minister Shri L. Jayentakumar Singh at T.T. Indoor Stadium, Thoubal and the same was launched simultaneously in the three hill district namely Chandel, Senapati and Tamenglong. Out of 9 districts in Manipur, only 4 districts namely one district in valley (Thoubal) and three districts in hill (Chandel, Senapati, Tamenglong) was taken up because of the fact that the program was undertaken on the basis of adult women literacy rate of 50% or below in the districts of the country as per 2001 census.

### **Significance of the study:**

This study is undertaken to ascertain the impact of adult education programme singly focusing on the latest and recently completed literacy programme popularly known as 'Saakshar Bharat Mission-2012' in four districts of Manipur. It is a new variant of National Literacy Mission in which the primary target is to raise women literacy and to narrow the gender disparity in literacy by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012.

The main purpose of the study was to understand how adult learners perceived the role of spirituality in their learning and analyze the attitude of adult learners towards adult education programme in four districts of Manipur namely Thoubal, Chandel, Tamenglong and Senapati district where SBM were implemented. Although

the meaning of spirituality has been addressed in many disciplines, there is in general a lack of research which identifies the role of spirituality in the learning process. This study shows that spirituality provides a positive influence on the learning of adult learner in the adult education programme; therefore, volunteer teacher (VT's) should be able to increase ways of making learner aware of their own spirituality as well as how their own spirituality can help the spiritual needs of others. In enhancing to make a thorough, comprehensive and analytical study, objectives of the study, methodology to be adopted, sampling to be taken up, the tools to be employed etc were laid down by the investigator.

**Objectives:**

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To how adult learners perceived the role of spirituality in their learning.
2. To analyze the attitude of adult learners towards literacy campaign.

**Sample:**

The random sampling was done to the areas where Saakshar Bharat Mission program were opened in Manipur i.e. Thoubal, Chandel, Tamenglong and Senapati district. A total of 200 adult learners (50 each in districts) were selected.

**Tools:**

In the present study, the methodology will be based on data collected from the questionnaires technique supplemented by Interview Schedule was adopted as tools for collection of the required data from the adult learners.

**Source of Data:**

In the present study, the investigator used both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected from the personal interview with the respondents. The secondary data was collected from the reference books, reports, journal, articles and other portal websites etc.

**II. METHODOLOGY:**

In order to make an indepth study of the present work, the investigator has been adopted a survey and analytical method. The tools like interview schedule were framed and developed for the purpose of collection of data information through various sources including adult learners. The tool like Interview schedule for adult learner was developed by the investigator.

**III. FINDINGS:**

The findings of the present study have provided insight into understanding how adult learners perceived the role of spirituality in their learning and analyze the attitude of adult learners towards literacy campaign. With this view, the respondents provided answers to questions specifically designed to obtain the information.

1. All the respondents in the present study responded that spirituality as a relationship with a higher power which engendered a sense of connection to other people. They also responded that the role of spirituality is utmost important in their learning because spirituality very much influenced our thinking that guides in making any decisions.
2. There is difference in their rate of progress among the learner. This difference is mainly due to difference in spirituality in learning, ability to learn, background of experiences, command of language, condition of health, ability to hear and see etc.
3. Majority of the adult learners responded that spirituality and religion has contributed and linked to their learning.
4. It is very interesting to note that majority of the adult learner also feel that participation in the adult education program has increased their own knowledge and consequently realized social, economic and political status. It also provided knowledge of social awareness and functionality.
5. The study also found that adult learners belonging to higher economic status surpassed lower economic status. So, poor economic family learner have inferiority complex to attend the literacy class.
6. It is observed that there are a number of potential learners in the villages even they are heavily engaged in their day-to-day household duties. Something in concrete forms should be done so as to bring them to the nearest adult education centres.
7. It is also found that they wanted earning for their livelihood, instead of learning and could not deviate from their normal works.

8. The study also reported that in rural areas, almost all the learners never turn-up to their adult education centres during cultivating and harvesting seasons, as they were engaged in agricultural works.
9. Responding to the question about how they integrate spirituality in their teaching, some respondents responded that spirituality is important because it is always there and bring spirituality to a learning experience whether it's acknowledged or not. Some adult learners also responded that they integrates spirituality in teaching because their worldview is spiritually based and complements the importance of making lateral connections with learners, referring to instructors attempting to meet learners on the same level rather than a hierarchical or vertical educator-learner relationship.
10. Among the respondents, spirituality is the ultimate source of success for a student in adult education program. For many participants, spirituality was an aid for recalling information to past memories. This spirituality does not preclude preparation by the learner which is essential. If the adult learner has prepared for learning, the belief is that God will help the teaching learning successfully. Additionally, as reported by the participants, spirituality helps reduce stress, induce calmness and instill confidence.
11. All adult educators in our sample found spirituality is an awareness of a transcendent force or energy that is beyond self. They feel that spirituality is an awareness that honors a life force that is happening through everything all the time. Spirituality existed for the learners as a dynamic force that acted in and through their lives.
12. In respect of integrating spirituality in adult education, all the adult respondents belief that spirituality resides in the individual and that a personal grounding in this dimension affects the experience in the classroom. There were, however, differences in how these beliefs influenced practice.
13. Majority of the respondents responded that they felt their spirituality through prayer helps them recall the information. An example they pray ritually in the morning and at night but also before they go into adult education centre. Some respondents also felt more confident as a result of their spirituality because confidence and assurance that if they makes the effort then everything will be all right.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION:**

In Manipur, a massive programme of adult education has been successfully implementing since the establishment of the Directorate of Adult Education in 1980. The department has concluded Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) programme in all nine districts in 2007 and also concluded Post Literacy Programme (PLP) in all the districts of the state in 2008-2009. The main objectives of these programmes were to eradicate illiteracy and retention of literacy among illiterate adults in the age group of 15-35 years and above. With the launching of the Saakshar Bharat on the 8<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2009 all over the county, the Directorate of Adult Education, Government of Manipur was also intimated to begin the implementation of Saakshar Bharat Mission 2012 in four districts of the state i.e. Thoubal, Chandel, Tamenglong and Senapati districts where adult female literacy rate is below 50% base on 2001 Census of India.

From the study, it can be concluded that spirituality is one of the ways people construct knowledge and meaning. It works in consort with the affective, the rational or cognitive, and the unconscious and symbolic domains. To ignore it, particularly in how it relates to teaching for personal and social transformation, is to ignore an important aspect of human experience and avenue of learning and meaning-making. This is why spirituality is important to the work of adult learning.

The study also concluded that the theme of spiritual include social justice, the generally held adult education perspective to address whole learning, adults seek meaning to questions about life and to what they are learning.

It can also be concluded that spirituality is a relationship with a higher power which engendered a sense of connection to other people. The adult learners responded that the role of spirituality is utmost important in their learning because spirituality is very much influenced in our thinking and that guides in making any decisions in our life.

It is also concluded that there are a number of potential learners in the villages even they are heavily engaged in their day-to-day household duties. Something in concrete forms should be done so as to bring them to the nearest adult education centres.

#### **V. SUGGESTIONS:**

1. Adult learners were need to motivate and making them clear about importance of adult education for the development of individual in particular and society in general.
2. Adult learners were not self-motivated and there was need to create awareness among illiterate adults to join literacy class.
3. The number of adult education centres should be increased in order to achieve the target of covering all illiterate adults for Education for All in our country.

## **VI. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The following are some of the recommendations of the present study:

1. A study could be conducted on whether or not the perception of a higher power is the most predominant perception of spirituality with a different group of adult learners like Hindu, Christian, Muslim, weaker sections of society.
2. Proper motivation of learners is the most important factor in teaching. In adult education, it is compulsion which keeps a person within a learning situation and encouraging them to learn.
3. There is a need of proper motivational techniques in order to enrolled properly and make the learners progressive in learning activities for being literate.

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