Non-formal education is steadily gaining in importance in the total educational complex in a community. At the same time there is a conscious effort of linking the educational goals with national development. These developments are going to have profound implications for library services. Some of these implications are discussed in the context of India.

The total educational complex of any nation may conveniently be divided into four major educational components: (1) Formal educational system consisting of school, colleges, and universities which forms the core of the educational complex; (2) Non-formal educational efforts such as adult education, farmer or worker training, extension work of various kinds etc.; (3) Informal education where people learn in a non-systematic way under the influence of socio-cultural institutions, political processes and the mass media; and (4) International education comprising knowledge gained outside of national boundaries. Dr. Rolland G. Paulston [1] views the total educational complex of a nation as concentric circles and graphically represents it as follows:

![Concentric circles of the educational complex circles.](image)

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WHAT IS NON-FORMAL EDUCATION?

Non-Formal Education has meant different things to different people depending on their points of view. Some people do not differentiate between Non-Formal Education and Informal Education. Several attempts are made to define Non-Formal Education in recent years. According to Philip H. Combs, it refers to 'any organized program of learning carried on outside the framework, rules and logistics of the formal education system.' [2] Rolland G. Paulston defines it, 'as structured, systematic, non-school, educational and training activities of relatively short duration in which sponsoring agencies seek concrete behavioral changes in fairly distinct target populations.' [3] McCall considers 'the entire range of learning experiences outside of the regular, graded school system' as Non-Formal Education. [4] As these definitions indicate, Non-Formal Education does indeed cover a great diversity of learning activities designed to serve many different learning objectives and learning clienteles in many places and at all ages. It has a continuous history parallel to the history of Man and certainly predates the coming of formal education. However, it has not received as much attention as it deserves in its own right or as Formal Education has received. In 1960's for a variety of reasons educationists began to pay more attention to the problems and potentialities of Non-Formal Education. This interest has become more pronounced in 1970's.

WHY NON-FORMAL EDUCATION?

Non-Formal Education is justified on two grounds; (1) Its potential to provide education for all, and (2) Its ability to remedy some of the drawbacks of Formal Education. Today, every country in the world is for mass education. Most of the developing countries plan to achieve universal primary education goals by
1980. Educational budgets of many countries have grown faster than their national budgets. Elementary Education has doubled and Secondary and Higher Education have quadrupled since 1950. Public investment in Education has grown from U.S. $1.5 billion in 1950 to approximately $12 billion in 1969 in less developed countries of Africa, Latin America and Asia,[5], (excluding Japan, the People's Republic of China, N. Korea and N. Vietnam). Yet, the goal is far beyond the reach of many nations. Annual rate of increase in enrollment in less developed countries during 1961 to 1968 was only 5.6% although the corresponding increase in public expenditure on education was 14%. [6]. Further, 50% of the students who entered the schools failed to complete the fourth grade. Indeed a high percentage dropped out during the first or second year thus giving no chance for an enduring effect of schooling. More than 45% of the age group are still outside school. There is a wide gap between the 'schooled' and 'the unschooled' populations in many countries, particularly the developing ones which has triggered undesirable socio-political and economic results. The cost of education is becoming higher and higher and even the rich countries are unable to provide more and better education though all recognize the need for universal education up to a certain level. Some educators like Ivan Illich are harshly criticizing the formal education system and have pronounced it a failure [7]. Moderates like Harbinson assert that Non-Formal Education "is the only means of filling the gap between the 'schooled' and the 'unschooled' populations." [8]

A look at the situation in case of India will help us to realize the nature, gravity as well as the urgency of the problem.

India: Growth of enrollment (in millions)[9]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>year</th>
<th>level</th>
<th>age group</th>
<th>enrollment</th>
<th>% of age group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960-61</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>6-11</td>
<td>34.99</td>
<td>62.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968-69</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>55.49</td>
<td>77.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>68.58</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-61</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968-69</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>12.27</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>18.10</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-61</td>
<td>9-11</td>
<td>14-17</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968-69</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>6.58</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>9.69</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-61</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>university</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968-69</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above figures give us an idea of our achievement in recent years. Although it marks substantial gains, it is far from satisfactory. It is not proposed to go into the question of what percentage of any age group should get in to formal education system. Also, statistics do not tell the whole story. The drop out number and rate as well as the level where it occurs is a very important factor in determining our success and unfortunately that is not encouraging. During 1960-70 the total educational expenditure in India increased by 11% annually. Literacy is increasing from year to year. However, the number of illiterates is also increasing. There were 333 million illiterates in 1961, while in 1971 there number rose to 368 million. In the age group 15-44 in 1961 there were 131 million illiterates while in the same age group which is very important for the development of the nation there were 150 million illiterates in 1972.[10] This is due to many reasons such as increase in population, lack of continuing education programmes which wipeout results of literacy campaigns etc.
There are more people of all age groups outside the school system rather than inside the school system. Yet, most of the resources of the country is spent on formal educational system with scant attention to the needs of the majority of people. This situation has caused the need to look beyond formal school systems for viable alternatives.

POTENTIAL OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AS "LIBERATING EDUCATION"

It is a widely prevailing assumption that education has a liberating influence. Education as we know it today began with 'Liberal Arts' and it was thought it 'liberated' any one who went through the process of getting it. Broadly speaking 'liberation' has atleast two connotations in this context. First, Education liberates us from ignorance. It gives us skills with which we can acquire more skills and/or information that could benefit self or others depending on the motives of the user. Secondly, Education may liberate one from any kind of exploitation, particularly socio-economic-political exploitation here and now. It could help in ending exploitation of an oppressed group through many ways such as, providing an awareness of the situation, helping articulation of one's own problems, providing leadership training, communication skills and developing the potential of such groups in using social agencies and established laws to their advantage.

Both Formal and Non-formal education have potential for providing 'liberating' education. However, by the very nature of things Formal education tends to promote status quo and does not seem to be very effective in promoting 'liberation' of the oppressed, more so if they also happen to be minorities, poor, or the helpless. On the other hand Non-formal education is not committed to maintain status quo in anything. It is apt to rush in where formal education fears to get in. It can provide knowledge and skills needed for the liberation of the oppressed without worrying about the consequences. The success of Danish Folk Schools in ending the misery of peasants under the direction of educators using unconventional methods is a classic example of what Non-formal education can do to the oppressed. They evoked a picture of reality as it ought to be, not as is or was. The work of Higher Lander Folk School located in Tennessee, U.S.A., is another example in this direction. It provides non-formal education based on helping economically oppressed and politically manipulated citizens to develop their own leaders and their own plans for securing better life. It has played an important role in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States and is now promoting community organization in Appalachia - the most poverty sticken, exploited region of the U.S.A. The freedom struggle was characterized by the use of non-formal education as the formal schools were controlled by the British and were out of nationalists' reach. At the present time large sections of Indian population is poor, suffering, and is subjected to exploitation of various types. Though the country is clamouring for social change and the government appears to approve and support social change, formal educational system has not succeeded in effecting the change. It is just possible Non-Formal education can help us in precipitating the great contemplated changes and promoting national development and is an area worthy of our exploration.

Non-Formal Education is able to reach all age groups at a lesser cost and can do some thing for the many that have no schooling or have very little of it. It is not highly structured and is voluntary thus conducive for learning in a free atmosphere. It is not meant for any one stage of life and can provide life long education at our will, which all education really is, or should be. It offers better opportunity for innovation or experimentation. It is nearer to life situations and its programmes do not outlast their usefulness. It can serve long range and short range objectives. It can more specifically be focussed on social and developmental programmes and trigger immediate behaviour change. It promotes greater peer learning. It can go where the people are and can operate in a flexible manner. It is need oriented and has no monopoly of anything. It does not promote elitism and is tied to productive activity. It utilizes the existing human and physical resources. Its proximity to work gives an opportunity to put to work what is learnt with no time lag. Voluntary organizations can play greater role and it is more suited for rural development. These reasons have precipitated the 'rediscovery' of Non-Formal Education and its role in national development. It is looked upon as the 'saviour' of the hopeless situation created by the failings of Formal Education. Of course, the many assumptions of Non-Formal Edu-
Education are yet to be fully tested. The World Bank has decided to give priority to Non-Formal Education programmes in extending its aid and support during 1970's although it supported Secondary Education in 1960's. [12]

EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The social purposes of education are clearly emphasized in India's educational goals. Education is consciously used as a tool for the realization of national aspirations. Educational goals today relate directly to the national problems: Self sufficiency in food; economic growth and full employment; social and national integration; and political development.

Education is viewed as an instrument of change. Economic growth is not merely a matter of physical resources or of training skilled workers. It needs the education of the whole population in new ways of life, thought, and work. Robert Heibroner describes the journey to economic development undertaken by a traditional society as the great ascent and points out that the essential condition for its success is 'human change on a grand scale.'[13]

In the words of the Educational Commission, 'If this change is to be achieved without violent revolution, there is one instrument and one instrument only, that can be used: education.'[14].

Promotion of democratic values and national consciousness are among the stated goals of Indian Education. The use of regional languages as medium of instruction without affecting the learning of English and other world languages is stressed. The importance of providing channels of internal and international communication. Educational progress is linked with the process of modernization and rapid social change. The Commission recognizes the relationship between Education and productivity and recommends liberal provision for science education, work experience oriented to technology and industry and vocationalization particularly at the secondary level. Secularism is another ideal of education in India at the present time. The importance of promoting a tolerant study of all religions in India - a multi-religious democratic state is stressed. A study of Science with its emphasis on an open mind, tolerance and objectivity are viewed conductive to the development of a secular outlook. Propagation of moral and spiritual values of the nation is not seen in any way opposed to modernization and educational system is expected to incorporate them and inculcate them. The spread of education is looked upon as one sure way to modernize quickly.

Full employment is yet another objective of Indian Education. The Commission bemoans the lack of direct link between education and employment and underscores the need to establish direct and indirect links between education and employment. It declares that 'every graduate should be given, along with his degree or diploma, an offer of an appointment as well. This offer need not be binding...[15]. There is wide spread un-employment of the educated in India at the present time. However, Blaug, Layard and Woodhall in a study have shown that secondary and higher education still pay off handsomely to the individual though the rate of return to society is far less satisfactory.[16]

PROBLEMS OF POVERTY AND EQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF NATIONAL GAINS

Wide spread poverty has been a persistent national problem faced by India. The national per capita income at current prices during the year 1968-69 was less than $70.00 and the per capita expenditure during the same year was around $40.00.[17] The National Plans for economic development accepted a national minimum income and assured the same to all with in the shortest time. However, they depended entirely on a high rate of economic growth to realize the stated goals. It is now realized that a high rate of economic growth is not a substitute for deliberate policies, economic development makes the rich far too rich before the poor can secure the minimum. Such wide disparities inevitably undermine the democratic foundations of economy. Unequal distribution of the gains of national development inevitably leads to growing inequality and a widening gulf between the rich and the poor. V.M. Dandekar states, 'The small gains of national development have not been equitably distributed among all sections of the population. The condition of the bottom 20% rural poor has remained more or less stagnant, The condition of the bottom 20% of the urban poor has definitely deteriorated and for another 20% of the urban population, it has remained more or less stagnant [18]. It has
benefited the upper middle and the richer sections much more than the middle, the lower middle and the poorer sections. [19].

IMPLICATIONS FOR LIBRARY SERVICE

The coming of Non-Formal Education to the forefront in 1970's and the conscious linking of Educational Goals (National Goals?) with National Development have profound implications for library service which is fast becoming a reality thanks to the pioneering efforts of leaders such as S.R. Ranganathan. Several States of the Indian Union have passed Library Laws and have provided a basis for the establishment and maintenance of library service to the people supported by state funds. The Five Year Plans of the country have given a place for library development. A time may come when a library will be within the reach of every citizen no matter where he or she lives. The Education Commission has emphasized the role of libraries and other social agencies in realizing the stated goals. Libraries can work with people of all ages, all levels and all groups creating an environment of equal access to information for all citizens 'on equal footing. '

The role of libraries is all the more important as more than half of our population is still illiterate and yet has to participate in the decision making process at national, state and local levels. As librarians we can no longer be satisfied to work with the literate 'habit' patrons that voluntarily come to the library. We need to worry about the literate people who do not come to the library and more so of the illiterate people who think that the library is not for them, but need a different type of library service involving nonbook materials. We have to outgrow earlier traditions of serving the few and acting as mere custodians of materials. We cannot afford to exist merely as a channel any longer if we intend to actively participate in national development. We need to be active change agents, now. Promoting change any where is a challenging job. It is more so in a tradition bound society used to slow change. Librarians in our country have to do just that.

We have to get rid of the notion that libraries are for the few literates willing to use them. They are not the service stations of the privileged few but are the service stations of the whole population, including the poor and the underprivileged. It is our obligation to bring such people and the illiterates into the library world. Libraries in the West are slowly recognizing this fact under the pressures of changed social environment. Terms such as 'social responsibility' and 'service to the under privileged' are appearing in library literature more frequently [20]. American Library Association has recently recognized a Round Table for 'Social Responsibilities', 'Librarians For Social Change' - a journal which recognizes the need to work for change in society has recently appeared in the United Kingdom. Our libraries, while in their infancy should vigorously try to avoid becoming middle class oriented institutions and attempt to become true representatives of all classes of people. A librarian can no longer be satisfied with the transfer of data with no knowledge of its relevance to the needs of the patron. He should work in co-operation with the available mass media such as films, pictures, newspapers, radio, records, tapes, harkathas, bhangas, music performances, holy discourses etc., and saturate the community with an awareness of its needs and make it difficult for them not to think about them. As a professional he should create a situation in which knowledge becomes kinetic and relates this knowledge to the social purpose. He should realize that his work will not end, but just begins with the signing out of library material to the individual. He has to look beyond the traditional corner stones of Librarianship; Acquisition, Organization, and Administration of materials and learn to look in new ways the concepts of service if he is going to be an effective change agent.

He should become a true community librarian. He should identify and use community interests and problems for the growth and development of people in the community. People learn better and faster when the knowledge sought is closely related to every day activities of the community. Involvement in community problems is the best way to achieve wide spread and enlighten citizen participation. The librarian should develop programs which stress the citizen's participation in the improvement of their physical and social environment. Libraries should provide space for community meetings and arrange short non-formal courses with an accent on literacy and vocationalization. They should develop into information centers and provide useful information concerning national, state and local
agencies, private and commercial services, employment opportunities and a host of other things that become important to society from time to time. The librarian will have to work in co-operation with the educators, social workers and other leaders in the community and should always avoid isolation.

This community development approach aims at changing the attitudes of people which is the need of the hour. Even at the cost of occasional irritation to the community, the librarian should become an activist and use the library as a method for helping the people to learn continuously rather than considering it just as another agency dispensing books at stipulated hours. Programs of library education should anticipate such approaches and aim at producing community librarians. Educators and practitioners in our field need to change in several ways so that we may be able to act as catalysts for change and do our part in precipitating 'human change on a grand scale - a prerequisite for 'the great ascent' of India. In so doing our libraries will truly become a cultural force contributing to the personal enrichment of citizens and to national development.

REFERENCES


[6] Ibid., p. 5.


[15] Ibid., p. 106


[19] Ibid., p. 28.