
UNIT 1 ADULT EDUCATION: THE BASIC CONCEPT, TERMS, FEATURES AND OBJECTIVES

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Right now you are beginning your academic journey through your programme. You are in Unit-1 of Block-1 of Course-MAE-001 of the programme. When you had decided to choose this Programme (PGDAE) you must have had your own concept or meaning of “adult” and “adult education”. Your concept of ‘adult’ could be right or wrong or partially correct and you will so appreciate it after you understood these concepts clearly in this Unit.

To begin with, we all know that, as human beings, we go through four important stages in life - childhood, teenage, adulthood and old age. We further know for certain that the teenage stage is between thirteen and nineteen, while adulthood, in general, is the longest, most productive and significant stage falling in between teenage and old age. Thus, adults constitute a large chunk of most of the societies and perform diverse and dynamic roles in various spheres of their life. Historically, it is they who have contributed to the growth, transformation and transmission of civilisation over the ages. It is all the result of their (adult) education and hence adult education is as old as human civilisation itself. Therefore, in simple terms, the entire education received by, and spread over the adulthood of, any individual is nothing but adult education. We are all adults with different levels of maturity – biologically, socially, economically, politically, culturally, morally, and so on. As adults our place, role and contribution remain significant and dynamic in every sphere of life. Adult education, as an essential and integral part of overall education of an individual, is dynamic and begins with the onset of adulthood and is co-extensive with the adult life of an individual. Thus, its forms, relevance, meaning, nature, objectives, functions, approaches, curriculum, duration, coverage, etc keep on changing from time to time in a given society or country. The changing socio-cultural, geographic, economic, political, cultural, moral and other conditions determine its overall place and organisation in a society. It is also important for you to know that although adult education, as an academic subject and as a field of specialisation of the discipline of education, has emerged only recently it has now established itself as a discipline and a profession in its own capacity. You will realise all this by the time you complete your journey through this programme.

In this unit we will discuss in detail about adult, adult education, its features, goals and objectives, relevant terms used in adult education and other related matters.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, it is expected that you will be able to:

- Understand the concepts of ‘adult’ and ‘adult education’;
- Explain the meaning of different, but relevant terms used in adult education;
- Distinguish between and among different terms used in literacy and adult education;
- Describe the need, significance and characteristic features of adult education; and
- State the goals and objectives of adult education.

1.2 CONCEPT OF ADULT EDUCATION

You can understand the concept “adult education” better if you first understand the concept ‘adult’ very clearly. We will therefore focus first on “adult”. In simple terms, we can define “adult” as a person who has attained physical, mental, emotional and social maturity or legal age for marriage, or for franchise or voting right. But can we say for certain that every person who has attained physical maturity only, or legal age of adulthood can be considered to be mature adult of that society or country? Or can we say at what age a person will definitely become

an adult, in terms of maturity? The answer is 'No'. But at the same time, as mentioned above, we can be sure of one thing that we are all adults with different levels of maturity and belong to the most significant and productive age group – physically, socially, mentally, economically, politically, morally culturally, and so on. Nevertheless, we need to remember that maturity is an endless process and in general it increases with one's age, experience and knowledge.

In the context of adult education, the concept '**adult**' remained inadequately defined because of the multiplicity of criteria used in defining it. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (1995) defines adult as: 1. (a) grown to full size or strength; (b) intellectually and emotionally mature; 2. Legally, old enough to vote, marry, etc. Various other definitions given by different adult educationists (Wiltshire, 1966; Cameron, 1969; Apps, 1979; Shingi, 1980; Knowles, 1980; Legge, 1982; Jarvis, 1990) have also taken into account different criteria, often two or more, like age (legal or otherwise), experience and/or maturity (physical/biological, social, psychological, etc), citizenship with full rights and duties, and so on. Also, the legal age of adulthood for franchise, marriage, etc of males and females varies from country to country. For instance, the legal age of adulthood in the United Kingdom is 18 years. In India, the legal age for franchise (voting right) is 18 years, while the legal age for marriage of males is 21 years and for females it is 18 years. All these definitions reveal that it is very difficult to define the concept 'adult', theoretically or draw practical boundaries, and thereby render it to remain 'ideal' rather than practicable. Notwithstanding the fact that no one definition defines 'adult' adequately or exhaustively, some have classified adulthood into stages and defined each stage separately (Erikson, 1963; Sheehy, 1976). This is mainly because of the fact that the transition from childhood to adulthood is gradual, not sudden, and the rate of transition varies throughout life from individual to individual and from environment to environment. Therefore, drawing clear demarcating lines between childhood – when it ends, and adulthood – when it starts and ends – by any one criterion or all criteria together, is a very difficult task. Thus, adulthood by itself is not definitive because of its continuous transition throughout life. In this context, we need to consider the question whether it is essential to have such distinction between child and adult as raised by Legge (1982, p.3). It is also important for us to recall some actions of a few children, wherein they reflect maturity of an adult and some actions of some adults which reflect immaturity of a child. You can thus see "child-man" or "man-child" in terms of their maturity. But, cybercoitus interruptus (May 9, 2007, see <http://ask.metafilter.com/>) draws one clear distinction between adults and juveniles - "I think real adults take responsibility for and clean up their own messes (emotional, domestic, culinary, environmental, whatever), unless physically or mentally incapacitated. Juveniles, whatever their physical ages, make someone else clean up after them".

Characteristics of an Adult: At this juncture, we need to have a clear understanding of the diverse and comprehensive traits or characteristics by which a person can be called an adult. An adult, therefore, is a person who:

- i) is of certain age (legal or otherwise);
- ii) is mature (physically, mentally, emotionally, intellectually and morally);
- iii) is sensible and has the ability to act rationally and responsibly by understanding his/her own rights and limitations and of others;

- iv) can exercise self-control or restrain oneself;
- v) can focus with partial or full personal sacrifice on public cause of great importance;
- vi) can make balanced choices in picking and choosing actions involving not only gains and pleasures, but also loss, danger and pains;
- vii) owns up responsibility for his/her own actions;
- viii) can get to be a kid, youth, adult or the old as and when required and continue to exist as adult;
- ix) identifies one's own strengths and weaknesses; and
- x) acts and reacts with kindness, compassion and reason and with long-term perspective/goal towards self-actualisation.

Reflection

With your understanding of the concept of "adult" and based on your observations of the members of your community, can you identify the persons who are adults by:

- a) physical maturity; b) mental maturity; c) legal age for marriage, and d) legal age for franchise.

Compare the characteristics of each of the above identified persons with the characteristics of an adult mentioned above and arrive at the conclusion as to who is/are really adult(s).

How to become an adult? Here comes the role of education – adult education. Remember that becoming an adult is not a one-time affair, and it is a life-long process as it comes mostly from age, observation and experience over the lifetime of an individual. This in a nutshell is the crux of adult education. You will now agree that adult education has always been there in every society and country; may be in different forms. Thus, adult education is not of recent origin, but has gained currency in recent times because of its growing need, significance, organised presence, acceptability and popularity. Every man and woman feels familiar with their own concept of adult education, but when asked to define it, a majority of them feel real difficulty. Don't you also feel so? Perhaps, yes. So what then is adult education.

Misconception about adult education: In the developing countries where illiteracy is a major problem, the meaning of the term 'adult education' is widely misconceived only as adult literacy i. e. something to do with imparting of only literacy to adults. Thus, it is not surprising that, in practice too, adult education is more often referred to as 'adult literacy' in developing countries. Literacy generally refers to reading, writing and arithmetic skills of a person with understanding, in the language (s)he normally speaks or uses. In fact, adult education is literacy plus many other things. It includes the development of functionality and awareness in relation to various different aspects of life. Another misconception is whether adult education comes under formal education system (school, college, university, etc) or under non-formal education system, that is outside the formal education system or under both. Surely, the scope of adult education is very wide and includes both the systems and more. Its activities range from leisure time spent in reading to attending classes as remedial learning, from learning literacy to achieving or acquiring a formal certificate, a diploma or a university degree;

from learning on the job to free-lance learning, etc. So, different people in different countries have called adult education by different names such as liberal education, basic education, remedial education, vocational education, avocational education, literacy education, continuing education, lifelong education, and so on. But, the term “adult education” has, in fact, become a generic or more common term to mean and include a wide range of things for adults. Nevertheless, adult education has currently come into wide use throughout the world; yet, the concept is among the most problematic ones in the field. Therefore, Sharan and Phyllis (1989, p.15) are right when they say “It is rare to come upon a single sentence that will do justice to the full range of this phenomenon of adult education, or that will satisfy the many different kinds of practitioners who call themselves adult educators.” This is so because all these practitioners feel that this need not be considered a problem at all.

Although different countries use different terms, ‘adult education’ has been recognised as an acceptable term for many. As mentioned above, the term ‘adult education’ has been used to refer to different things in different countries. For instance, it is used to refer to ‘liberal education for adults’ in the United Kingdom, whereas in the United States it has the wider connotation of ‘education of adults’, whether it be vocational or otherwise. In India the populace has widely (mis)conceived it as literacy education for adults (old people), because of the magnitude of illiteracy. The Government’s literacy drives are also concentrated more on eradication of illiteracy. ‘Government of India has also called it by different names at different times – community education, adult literacy, adult education, workers’ education, etc. As early as 1952 UNESCO had stated in its “International Directory of Adult Education” that, in essence, adult education is so closely related to the social, political, economic, geographic and cultural conditions of each country that no uniform or precise definition can be arrived at. As Aggarwal (1989, p.1) rightly points out, “adult education cannot be explained or understood in a vacuum. It has to be seen in the cultural context and in the nature of the activity.” Added to this, the concept is expressed through different terms — ‘adult education’ ‘education of adults’ and ‘education for adults’. One may wonder, whether they mean one and the same or are they different!

1.2.1 Adult Education

‘Adult education’ has been variously defined by different people and institutions. It is more useful for us to have a look at a few definitions quoted and analysed by Lakshmi Reddy (2000, pp.4-8) from different view points. According to him, some have defined it as education that starts at a particular stage or level of education. According to Lindeman (1961) adult education, more accurately defined, begins where vocational education leaves off. Adult education offers some, who were not privileged, a last chance to learn. Some feel a need for training in basic skills of learning so they enroll for learning, reading, writing and arithmetic. If we examine this definition we will find the following essential elements that characterise it.

- i) It is post-vocational education.
- ii) It is education for the deprived classes.
- iii) It is training in basic skills of learning i. e. literacy.

Some others have defined adult education by looking at it as a process. The Exeter Conference 1969 defines it as the process whereby persons who no longer (or did not) attend school on a regular and full-time basis (unless full-time programmes are especially designed for adults) undertake sequential and organised activities within a conscious intention of bringing about changes in information, knowledge, understanding or skills, appreciation and attitudes, or for the purpose of identifying and solving personal or community problems (Liveright and Haygood, 1969, p.8). In this definition, we can observe that there are two elements that characterise it, viz.

- i) Part-time or full-time process.
- ii) Sequential and organised activities.

On the contrary there are other definitions which do not link adult education with any level and treat it as an activity or a programme or a process that encompasses so many things. According to Paulo Freire (1970) adult education "is a cultural action for freedom." It means, it is a liberating force for adults. Freedman (1972, quoted in Jarvis, 1990) considers adult education as a process which is part of cultural development, primarily the establishment of a means of communication between the cultural systems of transmitters (inventors, research workers, creative minds) and the cultural system of the receivers, i. e. groups for whom adult education is intended. We will find that there are two important elements in this definition.

- i) A process which is part of cultural development.
- ii) Communication between transmitters and receivers.

According to Faure et al (1972) the normal culmination of the education process is adult education. There is one characteristic element in this definition i. e. terminal education for adults. But, in view of the Education Committee of the OECD (1973) "adult education refers to any learning activity or programme deliberately designed for adults. Its ambit is taken as spanning non-vocational, vocational, general, non-formal, and community education and it is not restricted to any particular level." As we can see this definition includes three essential elements:

- i) All activities and programmes for adults.
- ii) General, non-formal, vocational and non-vocational education.
- iii) Not-restricted to any particular level.

The General Conference of UNESCO (UNESCO, 1976) comprehensively defines adult education as the "entire body of organised educational processes, whatever content, level and method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges and universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adults by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their attitudes or behaviour in the two-fold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development". We can very clearly notice the following essential elements in this definition:

- i) It includes all organised educational processes;
- ii) It encompasses all content, levels and methods;

- iii) It includes formal or non-formal education for adults;
- iv) It prolongs or replaces initial education in schools, colleges and universities;
- v) It develops abilities, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours; and
- vi) It develops adults in two-fold manner – full personal development and participation in development process.

Adult education is also regarded as the provision of largely, non-vocational education for people who have left school and are not formally registered for a college and university course leading to certification. Day-time or evening tuition may be provided by an Extra-Mural or Extension Department or a college or a university or by other institutions such as trade unions or the Workers Educational Association. It may take place in college or secondary school premises and may cover wide range of cultural, recreational, community and sporting activities. Some writers have defined adult education by viewing it as a self or others-directed efforts aimed at finding solutions to certain problems. Self-directed in the sense that it is a voluntary, serious and frequently organised effort of adult individuals and groups to find, through educational means, information, attitudes, understanding and skills helpful in diagnosing and solving their vocational, personal, familial and civic problems. According to Sharma (1984, pp.15-16) adult education takes into itself both self-education whereby a learner is responsible for management of his/her learning activities, and others-directed education whereby a teacher, leader, media, or some other educational agent is primarily responsible for the management of learning. While recognising this enlarged application of the term 'adult education', most writers limit their investigation to those activities of men and women, who are guided and shaped for a definite period of time by the desire to learn. This definition is characterised by three essential elements.

- i) Self-directed or others-directed.
- ii) Guided by desire to learn and shaped to teach.
- iii) Problem-solving.

Kundu (1986, p.16) states that "adult education is a development oriented education which can be planned and designed by others as well as the learners themselves. The adult learner, to a great extent can assert in regard to content, methodology, place and time of learning." The three characteristic elements that we can notice in this definition are:

- i) Organised by adults themselves or by others.
- ii) Learner-centred.
- iii) Development-oriented.

In Eire the 'Murphy Committee' defined adult education as the provision and utilisation of facilities whereby those who are no longer participants in the full-time school system may learn whatever they need to learn at any period of their lives. Adult education, thus, is the organised provision of learning situations to mature men and women with the purpose of enabling them to enlarge and to interpret their own living experience for solving their own and the community problems (de Castell, et al. 1989). In this definition one can observe two approaches.

- i) Cafeteria education, a choice based provision and utilisation of learning situations.
- ii) Learning throughout life of mature people for solving their own and community problems.

Thus, some of these definitions of adult education restrict it to mere provision of educational facilities out of which the learners pick and choose according to their needs, interests, etc making for a *cafeteria approach* to education. If we go on to quote and analyse, we have many definitions offered by other adult educationists. Hence, for the present we accept the widely accepted definition offered by UNESCO which was the result of some collective international thinking of the adult educationists. What then is education of adults?

1.2.2 Education of Adults

Like many academics, you too might have got a doubt as to whether there is any difference between adult education and education of adults. It is, of course, interesting too to know whether there does exist any difference in the usage of these two terms. Can these be used interchangeably or are they different? Perhaps, it is not even out of context to look at different views expressed in this regard. According to Jarvis (1990a, pp.29-32) the term 'education of adults' tends to be used to refer to all 'education' of 'adults'. In other words, its meaning relates to the conceptual understanding of both 'education' and 'adult'. The term 'adult education' carries specific connotations in the United Kingdom, which imply that it is liberal education, and carries a stereotype of being middle-class, leisure time pursuit. It must be recognised that the term 'adult education' has a social definition as being a form of liberal education undertaken by those people who are regarded as adults. Therefore, it is more a social rather than a conceptual definition, and that is why it is important to distinguish between 'adult education' and the 'education of adults'. In this view 'education of adults' is wider than 'adult education'. However, the definition of 'adult' still complicates this discussion. Nevertheless, he ends up saying that what is called 'education of adults' in the United Kingdom is synonymous to 'adult education' in the United States. What then is education for adults?

1.2.3 Education for Adults

According to Deleon (1970) adult education includes all kinds of education for adults – in schools and out of school, formal and informal, full-time and part-time, for persons who no longer attend schools as well as for those who never attended a school, and so on. We can see through this definition that it is more precise, comprehensive and all embracing. Ansari (1996, p.56) views adult education as education for adults outside the formal system not leading to qualification; education for adults outside the formal system leading to qualification; and deliberate provision of education for adults within the formal system. According to Lakshmi Reddy (2000, pp.7-8) "adult education is part-time or full-time education for men and women of all ages either organised by themselves or provided by schools, learning centres, or other agencies which enable them to improve their general or professional knowledge, skills and abilities by either continuing their education or resuming their initial or incomplete education of previous years. Adult education is, thus, usually more flexible in its structure than traditional, mandatory education. Adult education may offer credits towards higher education degrees or do not offer any degrees or credits. Its

clientele include all those adults who have never been to school, who have dropped out of school or who are continuing their education in formal, non-formal or vocational educational institutions of different kinds or who are seeking employment or who are engaged in different occupations or professions”.

As Lakshmi Reddy, (2000, pp.28-29) further puts it “Though UNESCO’s (1976) definition of adult education is widely accepted, the concept ‘adult education’, like the concept ‘adult’ has yet to have a universally accepted definition. The different definitions of adult education (Lindeman, 1961; Liveright and Haygood, 1969; Deleon, 1970; Nyerere, 1971; OECD, 1971; UNESCO, 1970a) include adults who are: i) illiterates and literates, irrespective of their occupation, socio-economic background, etc, and ii) undertaking educational activities in non-vocational, vocational, general, formal, non-formal and/or informal education system on full-time or part-time basis organised by adults for themselves or by others for adults. These definitions embrace education leading or not leading to degrees, certificates, etc, covering a wide range of subjects and activities. Most of these definitions are concerned with promotion of knowledge, skills, attitudes, capacities, etc. for the development and/or welfare of individuals, society and/or nation. However, there is no unanimity on definition of adult education either from the view point of class of its clientele/target groups, nature, aims, objectives, form, type, subjects, scope, stages or levels.”

Having looked at different views on definitions of ‘adult education’ and ‘education of adults’, we understand that though they are generic terms, they are used in different countries to include a wide variety of activities, experiences, efforts, approaches, processes and programmes for adults, which cover different spheres of lives of different groups or cultural systems. They, therefore, reflect the differences in the historical, political, social and cultural conditions of different countries.

But, we need to be very clear that whichever of these three terms — ‘adult education’, ‘education of adults’ and ‘education for adults’ — is used by any one, in general it includes all kinds and forms of education for adults i. e. for their growth, development, welfare and transformation. So, we should not have any confusion about these terms or about the distinction between and among these terms as they are used interchangeably by different people in different countries, either inadvertently or intentionally to mean one and the same. In this course material also hereafter use of any one of these three terms wherever used, means one and the same, unless it is specifically mentioned otherwise.

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) Define adult education. Explain the difference, if any, between the terms ‘adult education’, ‘education of adults’ and ‘education for adults’.

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making education more accessible to different kinds and types of learners. In other words, non-formal education, as implied by the term, is supposed to be available outside the formal or conventional system with enhanced access to many learners. While Hartnett (op. cit) calls it non-traditional education and defines it as a “set of learning experiences free of time and space limitations”, Coombs et al (op. cit) call it non-formal education and define it as “any organised educational activity outside the established formal system – whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity – that is intended to serve identifiable learning clientele and learning objectives”. To clarify this definition further, the same authors distinguished non-formal education from informal education. They defined *informal education* as “the truly lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in his or her environment – from family and neighbours from work and play, from the market place, the library, and the mass media.” However, Radcliffe and Colletta (1989, p.60) state that “in practice no hard lines of demarcation exist between formal, non-formal and informal education: while many activities may be perceived as falling exclusively into one category alone, many share aspects of two or all of them.”

Non-formal education, like formal education, can also be organised at any level, ranging from primary education in schools to higher education in Universities or institutions of higher learning. It can be offered by existing formal institutions by relaxing the formalities or by establishing specialised structures or institutions outside these institutions. You are, perhaps, aware of Institutes of Correspondence Courses, Directorates of Distance Education in conventional Universities, and Open School, State Open Universities, State Resource Centres for Adult Education and so on outside the formal system. All these are examples (and part) of non-formal education system in India. Of course the Open University is the more current term coined to refer to an institution providing higher education in more open, flexible or non-formal manner through the distance mode.

1.3.3 De-schooling

Population growth on one hand and lack of commensurate expansion of school system with its rigidities on the other, amongst many other things, have deprived many people of their access to education. It is in this context some educational thinkers have focused their thinking on taking education out of the physical environs of the school. Ivan Illich (1971 – Deschooling Society) was the main exponent of such school of thought called ‘de-schooling’. De-schooling is the philosophy that underlines non-formal or open education. In simple terms it means bringing education out of the confines of school. In other words, it espouses free education shorn of all rigidities of formal system such as one point entry or single point admission, regular attendance, definite and common syllabus, rigid timings/periods of teaching and learning, examinations and so on. It prescribes relevant, flexible, systematic and diversified education for the learners with diverse needs and interests.

You may have a doubt here. What is the difference between non-formal education, open education and de-schooling? In fact, these terms are synonymous and espouse the same philosophy. Open learning/education emphasises openness of leaning/educational opportunities, non-formal education emphasises freeing of education from all the formalities/rigidities; while ‘de-schooling’ emphasises on

bringing education outside the physical environs of the schools, which in broad sense includes all the educational institutions.

1.3.4 Lifelong Education

In its broadest sense lifelong education includes all processes by which an individual acquires formal, non-formal and informal education continually or continuously throughout adulthood, for necessary career development and valuable personal enrichment. It is far from being limited to the period of attendance at a school for education and learning. It extends throughout life, includes all skills and branches of knowledge, uses all possible means and gives the opportunity to all people for full development of their personality.

Life-long education is the provision and utilisation of educational experiences throughout a person's life. It implies learning throughout life and, therefore, denotes an overall scheme aimed both at restructuring the existing education system and at developing the entire educational potential inside and outside the education system. Its rationale is in part the same as that for adult education, except that it intrinsically involves a radical reform of organisation, form and content of all other phases of education, and also implies a greater recognition of the educational functions of non-educational agencies.

The UNESCO report 'Learning to Be' (Faure et al, 1972) is the leading policy document on lifelong education. It contains a coherent philosophy developed about man, education and society to which the idea of lifelong learning was related. It adopts an optimistic view of education to change society. Eagerness to learn, 'libido sciendi' is deeply rooted in human nature and once external obstacles are removed it will provide the necessary motivation for lifelong learning. The society of the future will be a 'learning society' the culture of future society will be 'scientific humanism'. Every individual must be in a position to keep learning throughout life. The idea of life-long education is the key-stone of the learning society. Life-long education will be the master concept for educational policies in the years to come for both developed and developing countries. Life-long education in the fullest sense of the term means that business, industrial and agricultural firms will have extensive educational functions.

There appear to be two approaches to lifelong education in contemporary literature. One that stretches 'initial education' to what is termed 'further education' and the other that stretches the concept even forward throughout life using the concept of 'continuing education'. It thus stretches from initial education to further education to continuing education.

It is a process that begins in childhood and continues through out life. It includes formal, informal and non-formal education received by the individual. The educational and learning processes in which children, young people and adults of all ages are involved in the course of their lives, in whatever form, should be considered as a whole constituting into lifelong education (UNESCO, 1976). Lifelong education is the concept that education is not a once-for-all experience confined to the initial cycle of full-time education commenced in childhood, but a process that must continue throughout life. Life itself is a continuous learning process, but each person also needs specific opportunities for further and new education, both vocational and general, throughout life. In order that an individual may adapt to change in his own circumstances (marriage, parenthood, professional

situation, old age, etc.), may achieve his fullest potential for individual development and may keep abreast of technical and social change. Lifelong education comprehends both individual's intentional and incidental learning experiences.

Dave (1976, p.34) regards lifelong education as 'a process of accomplishing personal, social and professional development throughout the life span of individuals in order to enhance the quality of life of both individuals and their collectives. It includes formal, non-formal and informal patterns of learning throughout the life cycle of an individual for the conscious and continuous enhancement of the quality of life of his own and that of his society.' According to Jarvis (1990, p.35) lifelong education is any planned series of incidents having a humanistic bases directed towards the participants' learning and understanding that may occur at any stage in the life span. Reviewing certain approaches and underlying philosophies he expresses that lifelong education is a concept and an idea which remains rather meaningless unless it is actually implemented.

Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century (Delors, 1996) reiterates the role of education in personal and social development, particularly in the context of globalisation. It proposes learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be as the four pillars, the foundations, of education which can tap all the hidden talents of every person in any society. It emphasises that such lifelong learning will be one of the keys to meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century.

What then is *Education Permanente*? It is, in fact, a French term for 'lifelong education'. French law specifies that higher education must be open to former students as well as mature students who have not previously had the opportunity of higher education, even if they do not have necessary entrance qualifications i.e. through a system of lifelong education. It implies that the education system needs to be remade to meet people's lifelong but discontinuous needs, which might recur in personal, social, academic or vocational life. In this sense lifelong education means the same as recurrent education? Let us look at the concept of recurrent education.

1.3.5 Recurrent Education

Recurrent education and its affiliated concepts have been the most debated educational issues. They have been presented as the panacea of all the ills of ailing educational systems and of old ideas.

Recurrent education has been called 'the first new idea in education in this century' (Houghton, 1974). Recurrent education, organised in Europe, is understood primarily as the development of a national policy that would provide citizens with opportunities to alternative periods of work with periods of formal training throughout their lives. In general the learning experiences are to be related to goals. But according to Kallen (1979, p.45) the only new thing about recurrent education is its recurrence. The concept of 'recurrent education' has been launched as an alternative strategy in 1968, first by Olof Palme, at that time Swedish Minister of Education, in his address to the conference of European Ministers of Education held at Versailles, and later in many Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) reports.

There is some argument about the definition of the term 'recurrent education' which is perhaps summarised by the following rather tautologous suggestions that recurrent education is 'the distribution of education over the lifespan of the individual in a recurring way' (OECD, 1973, p.7). This means lifelong education is nothing but recurrent education over the life span, interspersed with work and/or leisure. However, this is a little broader than the earlier definition proposed by OECD that recurrent education 'is formal and preferably full-time education for adults who want to resume their education, interrupted earlier for a variety of reasons (Jarvis, 1990, p.40). Does it mean second chance formal education to those deprived of education? According to Kallen (1990, pp.45-6) there are two major risks that have to be avoided in writing on definitions and distinctions' in the field. The first relates to the temptation to see distinctions where there are none or where they are irrelevant to educational policy and practice. Much of the literature about the issues ignores the distinctions between recurrent, permanent and lifelong education and even treats the terms as interchangeable. The second risk that must be avoided is that of reconstructing history.

One of the most significant features of recurrent education is that the individual is regarded as having a right to a specified amount of formal education during his life-time, and that this need not all be completed during the formative years, within the period of initial education. It is also regarded as a radical, moral strategy for lifelong education. Unlike continuing education which appears to occur in piece-meal manner in response to expressed or perceived needs, etc, recurrent educationists regard their approach to be a comprehensive alternative strategy for what are at present three unrelated sectors: a) conventional post-literacy educational system, b) on the job training of all kinds, and c) adult education (OECD, 1973, p.25 quoted in Jarvis, 1990, p.41).

Recurrent education is the organisation of lifelong education into periods of systematic study alternating with extended periods of other activity, e.g. work or leisure. Policy instruments of recurrent education fall into two categories: educational and non-educational. The educational strategies are to some extent elaborated. It is stressed that 'the introduction of recurrent education ... must be part of a wider policy for educational change in which all types and levels are carefully coordinated. Recurrent education will necessitate reforms in curricula and structure, both at the compulsory and post-compulsory levels. It also implies bringing upper secondary and post-secondary education together into one flexible and integrated system. The non-educational measures include financing policies, educational leave and measures on the labour market and inside industry, as well as impact on transport, housing, medical care and culture (Kallen, 1979, pp.49-52).

According to (Jarvis, 1990, p.35-44) recurrent education has two major strands of philosophy: a more radical one that regards it as a strategy for the reform of the whole educational system and the other, perhaps also a conservative stand, is less ambitious in its claims preferring rather to regard it as a reformist approach to implementing lifelong education. There is, therefore, a marked difference in the philosophy of the two stands and yet they both recognise that while education may not be co-terminus with initial education, it should be lifelong, a right that all people should receive and that sufficient provision should be made for them to do so. He raises three major questions: To what extent is continuing education conceptually different from lifelong education? Is continuing education actually

synonymous with further education? What is the relationship between continuing and recurrent education?

Here, we feel it necessary to understand the concepts 'further education' and 'continuing education', at least to see through the substance in the above questions raised above by Jarvis.

1.3.6 Further Education

Indian Education Commission (1964-66) observes that education does not end with schooling but it is a long process. The adult today is in need of an understanding of the rapidly changing world and the growing complexion of society. Even those who have the most sophisticated education must continue to learn or else, the alternative is, face obsolescence.

In the United Kingdom further education is a general term used to describe full-time or part-time education for those who have completed their secondary education, higher education (i.e. academic or professional education for students over 18 with university entrance or equivalent qualifications) and adult education. Traditionally this refers to the 16-19 years old 'young adult' but now it is much broader. 'Liberal adult education' is often a sector of further education and many 'colleges of further education' have departments of adult education. Additionally, a great deal of 'continuing education' with 'vocational' education is provided by these colleges. But, in the Federal Republic of Germany further education covers 'adult education', 'continuing education' and 'vocational retraining', and is defined as all forms of continuation or resumption of studies after completion of the first educational phase of varying duration and, as a rule after, taking full-time employment. It is for adults of all age groups and educational qualifications, and may be 'vocational' or 'general' (Jarvis, 1990a). Further education is, thus, offered primarily for adults of all ages at post-secondary levels; it includes extensive programmes designed to keep such professionals as attorneys, physicians and engineers up-to-date in their fields. It also includes many varieties of degree programmes designed especially for adults, career counselling and counselling for career change services, and programmes of non-credit courses. Thus, further education is treated as education for the professionals and for those seeking counselling for careers.

Let us now see how further education is different from continuing education.

1.3.7 Continuing Education

We know that knowledge is not stagnant and constant, it is ever growing, expanding, exploding and multiplying. All individuals whether literate or illiterate, student or teacher, employer, employee or unemployee require endless education throughout life in order to keep abreast of new knowledge for their survival, growth and development. At the present rate of growth in knowledge, it is calculated that knowledge doubles every five years. This necessitates constant learning on the part of an individual to keep himself up-to-date in his field or the developments in general.

Venables (1976, p.19) defines continuing education as inclusive of all learning opportunities which can be taken up after full-time, compulsory schooling has ceased. They can be full-time or part-time and will include both vocational and non-vocational study. According to Legge, (1982, p.8), "Continuing education

seems to have reference to some kind of retraining when needed, for example, in a new job. It certainly presupposes that some education has gone before, presumably initial education, which has first to be completed." According to these definitions it is clear that continuing education starts after certain level of schooling while lifelong education is broader as it subsumes continuing education.

Continuing education includes those learning opportunities that are taken up after full-time schooling has ended, or those learning opportunities that are taken up after the completion of initial education. It is, in fact, an all-embracing term and it has assumed currency in the 1980s, although 'continuing professional education' is also employed in the case of post-basic vocational education'. The German Education Council define it as 'the continuation or resumption of organised learning after the completion of an initial educational phase of varying length' (Jarvis, 1990a).

Continuing education is education offered to or undertaken by persons who have completed the cycle of full-time education in childhood. It is a synonym of adult education. It is a term used in the United States to denote the entire range of elementary, secondary and post-secondary educational opportunities offered by public and private agencies, whereby participants of any age engage in academic, vocational, leisure time and personal development activities (DAE, 1992, p.13).

Mandatory Continuing Education is the practice by which members of a profession are compelled to attend 'continuing professional education' in order to retain the license to practice. Usually the profession stipulates the extent of their obligation, e.g. at least one 'refresher course' every five years. In America, a large number of professions are introducing mandatory continuing education, and in some states it is required to register to practice in that state. *Open Continuing Education* is the term used in the Federal Republic of Germany to mean the continuation or resumption of *organised* learning after the completion of any kind of primary or secondary education. This definition is very close to that of 'continuing education' in the United Kingdom although in practice in Germany this term appears to be closer to 'initial adult education'.

In India and in the United Kingdom Departments or Centres of Adult and Continuing Education exist in different Universities. What then does the term 'Adult and Continuing Education' denote? Is it different from adult education and continuing education? In fact, it is a fusion of the two terms 'adult education' and 'continuing education'. It is an attempt to end the historic division between 'adult liberal education' and 'vocational education' in the United Kingdom, and to illustrate that both are about the 'education of adults'. Conceptually this is valid, but it was seen by some as a sign that 'liberal adult education' had little future. (Jarvis, 1990a).

Is there any difference between life-long education, further education and continuing education? According to Jarvis (1990, pp.36-7) lifelong education makes no distinction between initial and post-initial education where as continuing education refers only to the later part of life-long education and is, only one branch of education. Continuing education, however, is not the same as further education for a number of reasons: further education is post-compulsory but not necessarily post-initial; further education tends to imply a specific level of study whereas continuing education does not; further education is usually pre-vocational, vocational or academic while conceptually continuing education need not be directed towards any course assessment or award.

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 i) Explain the difference, if any, between ‘De-schooling’, ‘Non-formal
Education’ and ‘Open Education’.

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ii) Explain ‘Lifelong Education’ and ‘Recurrent Education’.

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While technological advancements have come to the aid of policy makers and promoters of education for all, the adults with ability to study on their own or independently are the most benefited ones. There are now different modes of education that have interface with technology. Let us discuss a few such current concepts of adult education, which are the results of technological interface.

1.3.8 Correspondence Education

Correspondence education can be said to be one of the earliest and institutionalised means of providing distance education. Learning materials prepared by a few trained subject experts are supplied to the learners by post for reading, alongside giving them some reading and writing assignments. To develop in them the feel of formal school/classroom atmosphere, contact classes/programmes are conducted at some convenient places where the learners and the instructors come together for face-to-face personal interaction. At the end of the course, examinations are conducted and certificates, degrees, or diplomas are awarded to successful candidates.

Correspondence education, a form of education organised through the written medium, began in Britain as early as 1840. Pitman started teaching shorthand through correspondence in England towards the end of the nineteenth century. In America there were attempts to introduce it in 1873 but it really began with Chautauqua in 1879 (Jarvis, 1990a).

Correspondence education consists of “batches of study materials sent by post to the student who then completes the required reading and exercises, and returns the latter to the college for assessment by an appointed personal tutor. The exercises are marked and the student receives comments, advice and general guidance” (Legge, 1982, p.86). From the above definition, the following essential elements can be observed.

- i) Supply of study materials along with writing exercises/assignments by post to students.
- ii) Returning of written exercises/assignments by the students.
- iii) Assessment of and feedback on exercises/assignments by the tutor.

We can thus find in this definition that there is an organised educational instruction and interaction made possible through printed and/or written material sent by post.

Correspondence education is education conducted through postal services with or without face-to-face contact between teacher and learners. Teaching is done by written or tape-recorded material sent to the learner, whose progress is monitored through written or taped exercises sent to the teacher, who corrects them and returns them to the learner with criticism and advice. It is also called correspondence study (Titmus, 1989). This definition is slightly more advanced in the sense that it brings in electronic media within the purview of correspondence education.

From the above definitions it is very clear that correspondence education is a means of education for those who are literates and with certain level of basic skills of self-reading and writing as well as with some kind of mastery over the written language, and also with some educational qualifications already possessed by them. Usually these learners are relatively more mature and are in a position to learn on their own through self-study or self-understanding of the printed materials and/or the electronic materials supplied to them. It is, thus, education mainly for adults or others who are literate with ability for self-study. To be brief and precise, it is an education offered for literates with certain educational qualifications through correspondence mode of teaching and learning. There may or may not be provision for face-to-face contact between the teacher and the learner.

1.3.9 Distance Education

In simple terms, the system of education in which education is imparted from a place to a distant learner is called distance education, The institutionalised education offered by or received from the correspondence/distance education institutions and open universities falls under ‘distance education’. Now, let us look at some of the definitions of distance education for clarity and better understanding about it, and also of the subtle differences, if any, between correspondence education and distance education.

Different definitions of distance education have been offered by different distance educationists. Distance education has been variously described as correspondence education, open education, open learning, etc. According to Dohmen (1967, p.9 quoted in Keegan, 1986, p.39) distance education is a systematically organised form of self-study in which student counselling, presentation of learning materials and securing and supervision of students' success is carried out by a team of teachers, each of whom has specific responsibilities.

Moore (1972, quoted in Tight, 1990, p.156) defines distance teaching as "the family of instructional methods in which the teaching behaviours are executed apart from the learning behaviours, including those which in a contiguous situation would be performed in the learners' presence, so that communication between the teacher and the learner must be facilitated by print, electronic, mechanical or other devices". According to him transactional distance is a function of two variables called 'dialogue' – which describes the extent to which the learner and educator are able to respond to each other, and 'structure' – which measures an educational programme's responsiveness to learners' individual needs. Combining dialogue and structure he developed four types of distance teaching programmes: i) programmes with no dialogue and no structure (-D -S); ii) programmes with no dialogue but with structure (-D +S), iii) programmes with dialogue and structure (+D +S) and, iv) programmes with dialogue and no structure (+D -S). +D and +S represent dialogue and structure respectively and -D and -S represent no dialogue and no structure.

But, according to Boyd, et al (1980) distance between the teacher and learner is not merely geographical and educational but psychological as well. It is a 'transactional distance' in the relationship of the two partners in the educational enterprise. Borah (1990, pp.vii-viii) opines that distance is not to be seen as a poor relation or distant cousin of the formal system. It is a system of non-formal education in its own right. It has its own philosophy, its own goals and its own methodology. If the formal system has served the society fruitfully, so does the system of distance education hope to do so. It does not compete with the formal system, but supplements it. It caters to those sections of society which, either being located in far-flung remote areas or because of economic compulsions, cannot take advantage of the formal system. It also provides another opportunity to those members of the community who have had to discontinue their education at one point or the other because of any reason whatsoever. It provides the support services, guidance and counselling, and libraries through study centres. This definition is, perhaps, more general in nature and its approach is based on philosophical point of view.

According to Peters (1973, p.206 quoted in Keegan, 1986, p.41) distance teaching/ education is a method of imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes which is rationalised by the application of division of labour and organisational principles as well as by the extensive use of technological media, especially for the purpose of reproducing high quality teaching materials which makes it possible to instruct great numbers of students at the same time wherever they live. It is an industrialised form of teaching and learning. In this context, you can compare this definition with IGNOU as an educational industry so that you can better understand and appreciate this definition. You can engage your fellow student as well in this discussion, whenever you find a chance to meet them.

Erdoes, (1975) defines distance education as a 'method of teaching in which the teacher bears the responsibility of imparting knowledge and skills to a student, who does not receive instructions orally, but who studies in a place and at a distance determined by his individual circumstances. According to Homberg (1977) distance education include various forms of study at all levels which are not under the continuous, immediate, supervision of tutors present with their students in lecture rooms or on the premises. Nevertheless, the distance education method benefits from the planning, guidance and tuition of a tutorial organisation.

Distance education is a means of providing learning experiences for students through the use of self-instructional materials and access to educational resources, the use of which is largely determined by the student and which allow the student for the most part, to choose the time, place and circumstances of learning (Gough, 1981, p.10).

Keegan (1986, p.49) describes distance education as a form of education characterised by:

- the quasi-permanent separation of teacher and learner throughout the length of the learning process; this distinguishes it from conventional face-to-face education;
- the influence of an educational organisation both in the planning and preparation of learning materials and in the provision of student support services; this distinguishes it from private study and teach-yourself programmes;
- the use of technological media; print, audio, video or computer to unite teacher and learner and carry the content of the course;
- the provision of two-way communication so that the student may benefit from or even initiate dialogue; this distinguishes it from other uses of technology in education; and
- the quasi-permanent absence of the learning group throughout the length of the learning process so that people are usually taught as individuals and not in groups, with the possibility of occasional meetings for both didactic and socialisation purposes.

Though we may feel difficulty to call it a definition, his (Keegan's) above description of distance education is very comprehensive and includes all the essential elements that characterise distance education. He further points out that, it is important to be able to say whether distance education is to be regarded the same as or different from University without walls, extra-mural studies, experiential learning, off-campus education, open learning, extended campus, etc.

The term 'distance education' has now become a generic term for forms of education in which the teachers and students are separated by geographical distance and communication is through correspondence or other forms of technology, e.g. satellite, computer, electronic mail, etc. The distance and open education interfaced with interactive technology is a major advance in the provision of part-time higher education for adults. It provides open access to higher education and has no formal entry requirements. It aims at utilising multi-media resources for enhancing access to education.

The latest among the distance teaching institutions of higher education are the open universities. You being a student of IGNOU, a national open university in India, it is of some interest to you in this context to know that the first University to engage in distance teaching was the University of Queensland in Australia, which began its distance education programmes in 1911. In the 1950s the University of New England in Armidale, Australia had included within its charter a 'distance education' remit. This later has become the model upon which some other universities have developed. Thus, the developments in distance education led to the establishment of a more evolved or advanced institution for adult education called Open University. There is a real sense in which the Open University in the United Kingdom acted as a catalyst in the formation of these institutions, with many of them being founded in the 1970s and 1980s. Throughout the world there has been a remarkable development of these universities, all offering various degree programmes.

Nevertheless, what we can notice is that these Open Universities are in turn establishing separate distance education units and offering specialised programmes through distance education. You may be further aware that there are Directorates/Schools of Distance Education established even in the conventional universities. It would be meaningful and contextual for you to understand the concept of open education/learning and distinguish it from distance education.

1.3.10 Open Learning/Education

Open learning is the title given to more flexible methods of study, and teaching in which there is openness in access, content, delivery system and assessment. There are colleges or provider-based systems in which learners attend centres; local-based systems with 'flexi-study' and support but the learning is undertaken in the learners' homes; and 'distance learning systems' (Jarvis, 1990a). From this we understand that open learning/education underlines a philosophy which provides for open education or open teaching and learning which can be offered either through distance learning system or the contiguous system by introducing an element of openness or flexibility in it. The learning/teaching can be either at the provider (individual or institution) of learning opportunities, or at home or the place where the learner is. In the case of the provider-based system, it refers to the formal or conventional institutions and in the latter case it refers to the distance methods and modes. According to Borah (1990, p.vii) open education is characterised by relaxed or no rigid entry qualifications, learning according to one's own pace and convenience, flexibility in the choice of courses, and use of modern and appropriate educational and communicative technology. It means open learning/education can be offered either through distance learning systems or the contiguous system by introducing an element of openness or flexibility.

You may ask an important question here - whether open education is part of distance education or vice versa? Or, are there differences between the two? Escotet (1983, p.144) distinguishes open education from distance education. According to him open education is particularly characterised by the removal of restrictions, exclusions and privileges; by the accreditation of students' previous experiences; by the flexibility of the management of the time variable; and by substantial change in the traditional relationship between professors and students. On the other hand, distance education is a modality which provides education without the necessity of regular class participation, where the individual is responsible for his own learning.

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) Explain the difference between the following:

i) 'Correspondence Education' and 'Distance Education'.

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ii) 'Distance Education' and 'Open Education'.

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1.4 SOME SPECIFIC TERMS USED IN ADULT EDUCATION

You may recall that in Section 1.2 above, we have defined the term 'literacy' in our attempt to define adult education. As you move on further into the subject or discipline of adult education you will come across many different terms related to literacy. We will, however, confine our discussion here to some specific terms that you may come across very commonly in the literature of adult education.

1.4.1 Literacy: Literate, Illiterate, Numerate and Innumerate

As we have discussed in section 1.2, adult education in developing countries has often concentrated on promotion of literacy, amongst others things. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (1995) defines literacy as ability to read and write. Definitions of *literacy* given by Laubach (1971, p.536), Bormuth (1978, p.125), Oyedji et al (1982, p.1), Directorate of Adult Education (1992, p.29)

commonly refer to reading, writing and counting or arithmetic skills of a person with understanding in the language (s)he normally speaks or uses. So, there is not much hesitation for many to accept that a *literate* is one who has the ability to read, write and compute, with understanding in one's language. And, an *illiterate* is one who does not have the ability to read, write and compute.

It does not stop there. We also find terms 'numerate' and 'innumerate' based on the term 'literate'. A person who can use paper and pen/pencil (includes slate and slate pencil) for arithmetic purposes is called *numerate*, and the one who cannot do so and solely depends on mental/oral calculations is called an *innumerate* (Carragher et al., 1985; Graham and Ellika, 1991). A vegetable vendor who is an illiterate but has good ability to do mental calculations in dealing with his customers is a perfect example of an innumerate.

1.4.2 Functional Literacy, Functionality and Literacy Diversity

Having understood literate and illiterate, you need to remember the fact that all literates may not be functional literates, i.e. not able to use literacy in their living and working conditions. *Functional illiterate* is one 'who has not acquired the basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic and, thus, is unable to participate actively in those activities within society which require such skills' (DAE, 1992). Some are good in using their literacy skills and some are not good (or bad) in using them. Perhaps, in view of this Lakshmi Reddy (2000, p.31) introduces the terms *ill-literate* and *well-literate* as synonymous to the terms 'functional illiterate' and 'functional literate' respectively.

In simple terms, literacy that is functional can be called functional literacy. *Functional literacy* has also been defined in various ways. The final report of the World Conference of Education Ministers on the Eradication of Illiteracy organised by UNESCO in Tehran in 1965 (UNESCO, 1976, quoted in St. John Hunter, 1987, p.25) contains the following statement which can be considered as its official definition of functional literacy:

The very process of learning to read and write should be made an opportunity for acquiring information that can be used for improving standards; reading and writing should lead not only to elementary general knowledge but to training for work, increased productivity, a greater participation in civil life and a better understanding of the surrounding world and should ultimately open the way to basic human culture.

Other definitions considered functional literacy in terms of:

- a) the goals to be accomplished by literacy in life (Heath, 1989, p.17);
- b) the ability to use literacy and engage in such activities which require literacy skills (Jarvis, 1990);
- c) self-reliance in literacy and numeracy coupled with awareness of and participation in the wide range of development and welfare activities (National Literacy Mission, GOI, 1988, p.14);
- d) the completion of certain years of schooling (Cairns, 1977; Cipolla, 1969);
- e) occupational and life skills for economic, social and cultural development and liberation (Freire, 1970), and so on.

It must, however, be noted that there it is not easy to compare functionality of literacy across different cultures because of the differences across cultures in the process, methodology of acquisition and its measurement and comparison. Hence, Resnick and Resnick (1977) has rightly noticed that the concepts of literacy and criteria for its achievement have varied significantly over time, place and populace.

Notwithstanding the above, serious attempts have been made to distinguish literacy from functional literacy. Kundu (1986, p.40) and Okenimkpe (1992, p.34) argue that functional literacy follows literacy, implying thereby that functional literacy is later stage of literacy. The World Conference of Education Ministers held in 1965 used functional literacy for designating second form of literacy. To avoid confusion even between basic literacy and traditional literacy Okenimkpe (1989) uses the term initial literacy in place of basic literacy. The Education Commission (1964-66) in its report 'Education and National Development' expresses the view that if literacy is to be worthwhile it must be functional, indicating thereby that, literacy should promote functionality. The UNESCO report (1976) on the Experimental World Literacy Programme questions whether functional literacy can be applied in a society with diverse vocational interests. In its publication, *Functional Literacy – Why and How* (UNESCO, 1976a, pp.9-10) attempts to provide an understanding of the distinction between traditional and functional literacy. According to it *traditional literacy* is a separatist activity which is diffuse, non-intensive, standardised and rigid, while functional literacy is (not an end in itself) integrative and intensive which aims directly for knowledge of practical/technical utility and promotion of development. We can see here that this may, theoretically, seem sound, but in practice the distinction is always an illusion.

Okenimkpe (1992, pp.32-42) discusses at length the theoretical soundness, practical difficulties and unconvincing victories of functional literacy, and advocates the promotion of traditional literacy expressing the belief that it is capable of achieving the same goals as is functional literacy. Thus, all the exercises to define and differentiate literacy and functional literacy seem to be futile, more particularly, from the practical point of view as there appears, hardly, to be any clear distinction between the two. Hence, till today, the two terms are used distinctly by some and interchangeably by others, leaving no scope for any sort of discussion. Furthermore, making out absolute differences between illiteracy and functional illiteracy may indeed be a difficult task.

Moreover, if functional literacy is considered as a later stage of literacy, it seems to differ very little from another term 'post-literacy'. One of the working groups during the First International Orientation Seminar held at Nairobi from 16-27 August, 1982 (Dave et al, 1985, p.320) defined *post-literacy* as "an integrating learning process to assist literates to retain, improve and apply their basic knowledge, attitudes and skills for the satisfaction of their basic needs, and to permit them to continue education through a self-directed process for improvement of their quality of life (personal and societal)". By comparing this with the definitions of functional literacy one may struggle in vain to differentiate between the two terms because both functional literacy and post-literacy stress integrating and applying learning for improving quality of life.

Recent literature on literacy lists many types of literacy (literacy diversity) such as computer literacy, legal literacy, visual literacy, information literacy, communication literacy, scientific literacy, social literacy, multi-cultural literacy,

global literacy, etc used in different contexts. You will learn about them if you start discussing with others, or reading some material related to these concepts.

1.4.3 Pedagogy, Andragogy and Humanagogy

You will find the word 'pedagogy' commonly used in the literature of education. Pedagogy (derived from the Greek word *paid* meaning 'child' and *agogy* meaning 'leader of') literally means the art and science of teaching children. But, in many people's mind and even in the dictionary, pedagogy is defined as 'the art and science of teaching'. Thus, the children part of the definition got lost. Even in books on adult education references are found on the pedagogy of adult education, without any apparent discomfort over the contradiction in terms (Knowles, 1985, p.53).

Some adult educationists prefer to use the term andragogy instead of adult education. 'Andragogy' (from Greek word *aner* meaning 'man') was first used in Europe. Eventually, the term andragogy was introduced by Knowles, called the father of andragogy, for the first time in adult educational literature in the United States. Presently, andragogy is in vogue parallel to pedagogy and synonymous with adult education. Knowles (1990, p.55), defines andragogy, as 'the art and science of helping adults to learn'. Titmus et al (1979) put it as "... the art and science of helping adults to learn, and the study of adult education theory, processes and technology to that end." There is now, considerable amount of literature available, and growing on andragogy and adult education.

There has been, however, enough debate on the use of the term 'andragogy' as parallel to pedagogy implying that pedagogy includes andragogy. While Cross (1981, pp.220-228), with his criticism on andragogy, questions the use of 'andragogy' saying that it is not a theory at all, Jarvis (1990) defines **Educational gerontology** and **penal andragogy** almost in a similar way as the scientific study and practice of education among and about the elderly or the older adults. 'Kapp distinguished andragogy from **social pedagogy** (basic education for the disadvantaged or handicapped adults) referring to andragogy as the normal and natural process of continuing education for adults' (Jayagopal, 1985, p.17). You will find many more terms like **social andragogy, family andragogy, military andragogy, industrial andragogy**, etc.? To put an end to this debate Knudson (1979, pp.281-284) proposes '**Humanagogy**', as a solution to the pedagogy-andragogy issue. If we accept this, from the growing literature and practice we can say that humanagogy encompasses child education (pedagogy), adult education (andragogy), special education (social pedagogy/andragogy), education of the old/aged, (educational gerontology) etc., as its divisions. All this is to suggest you that the growing literature is presumably an indication of pace of conceptual development in the field of adult 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"

4) Distinguish between:

i) Traditional literacy and functional literacy

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1.5.2 Nature and Characteristics

Adult education is very dynamic in its nature. Its role, purposes and functions will change with changing situations and conditions of adults. Accordingly its nature and character also undergo changes. Broadly, the nature and characteristic features of adult education are as follows.

- i) **Adult education is purposive:** It (adult education) has a definite purpose specific to the given context. Without purpose it does not have any existence.
- ii) **It is community-specific:** Adult education is community-based and assumes great significance in particular context(s), and it need not be equally relevant to other communities in similar contexts.
- iii) **It is culture-specific:** The nature, objectives and types of adult education required for adults would vary from culture to culture.
- iv) **It is need-based and problem-solving:** Adult education takes into account the dominant needs and prevalent problems of the communities and aims at addressing them in effective ways.
- v) **It is participatory:** It involves adults at different levels and stages of planning, implementation and evaluation of adult education activities meant for their progress, development and welfare.
- vi) **It is flexible and relevant:** In many respects adult education incorporates the element of flexibility so that the adults would feel at home and comfortable to acquire education that has relevance to their living, working and development.
- vii) **It is action – oriented:** Adult education is not simply education for the sake of education. Education for action is the motto, if adults have to act for transforming their own situations or conditions.
- viii) **It is dynamic, change-oriented and transformative:** Adult education is very dynamic and, change-oriented, primarily aimed at bringing in social, economic, political and cultural transformation of the adults, their society and nation.
- ix) **It is an awareness building and conscientisation process:** It helps to enhance the level of adults' awareness and conscientisation and prompts them to action for change. It helps in emancipating or liberating adults from their current problems and situation.
- x) **It is experiential:** It is basically conceived and offered taking into account the experiences of adults.
- xi) **It is welfare and development oriented:** It promotes rational and informed decision with a view to promote the welfare and development - social, economic, political and cultural - of individuals, groups, society and nation.
- xii) **It is goal-directed:** It is directed by the goals set by adults for themselves, or by others for them, or by the nation for them and helps in achieving them.
- xiii) **It is learner-centred, systematic and flexible:** It is a systematically organised process, using diverse methods and techniques of teaching and learning with an in-built element or component of flexibility for promotion of more learner-centred educational activities.

- xiv) **It is a network building activity:** It is very effective in building the network of adults, their groups, activities and associations in the particular context and situation in which the adults live, earn and learn.
- xv) **It is quality-of-life or standard-of-living oriented:** It aims at enabling the adults to use all their networks – personal, social, professional, political, etc – for raising their quality of life and standard of living.
- xvi) **It is an education for empowerment:** Adult education is an effective tool for empowerment of adults.

1.6 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF ADULT EDUCATION

While goals are long-term targets, objectives are more immediate ones.

Major objectives of adult education include:

- i) **Imparting literacy of diverse types** – It includes basic literacy, scientific literacy, economic literacy, technological literacy, visual literacy, information literacy, multicultural literacy, global literacy, legal literacy, computer literacy, and so on. You have learnt about language literacy or basic literacy. You will learn about other types of literacy at higher levels of your educational pursuits.
- ii) **Generating Awareness on various matters/subjects** – It includes awareness about one's self, community, society and the nation; about individual, relational, and collective roles and responsibilities; about social, economic, political, cultural, environmental, developmental, health, hygiene, etc; about peace, welfare, and harmonious growth and development of the individual, family, community, nation and the world, amongst other things; and
- iii) **Promoting Functionality** - It includes application of individual, collective, community, corporate, national and international knowledge, skills, attitudes, practices, resources, etc for addressing the felt needs, for solving the problems, for promoting larger public participation in various activities and for bringing out social, economic, cultural, political transformation for raising the general level or standard of living of the individual, community, nation and the world.

The goals of adult education are: to increase the quality of life of an individual and enable him/her to realise his/her full potential for self-realisation; to raise the standard of living of the families, communities, societies and nations; to promote peace and communal harmony in the multi-cultural global village; and to enhance the pace of development and welfare of the individual nations and the international community as a whole.

1.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have discussed the concepts of adult, adult education and literacy, different terms related to adult education, some specific terms used in literacy and adult education. We have also discussed the significance, nature and characteristic features, goals and objectives of adult education. It is hoped you are very clear about what we have discussed here.

1.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1) Adult education has been variously defined by different adult educationists. The definition offered by the General Conference of UNESCO held in 1976 is the widely accepted definition, if not universally accepted. It elaborates the term adult education and comprehensively defines it as the “entire body of organised educational processes, whatever content, level and method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges and universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adults by the society to which they belong, develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their attitudes or behaviour in the two-fold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development. In other words, the essential elements of adult education are as follows:
- i) It includes all organised educational processes;
 - ii) It encompasses all content, levels and methods;
 - iii) It includes formal or non-formal education for adults;
 - iv) It prolongs or replaces initial education in schools, colleges and universities;
 - v) It develops abilities, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours;
 - vi) It aims at two-fold development – full personal development of adults and their participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development.

The three terms — ‘adult education’, ‘education of adults’ and ‘education for adults’ — are used interchangeably or distinctly by different people in different countries either inadvertently or intentionally to mean one and the same and each term includes all kinds and forms of education for adults i.e. for their growth, development, welfare and transformation in particular and their societies, nations and the globe in general.

- 2) i) The terms open education, non-formal education and de-schooling are almost synonymous and espouse the same philosophy. Open learning/education emphasises openness of learning/educational opportunities - non-formal education emphasises freeing of education from all the formalities/rigidities; while ‘de-schooling’ emphasises on bringing education outside the physical environs of the schools, which in a broad sense includes all the educational institutions.
- ii) Life-long education is the provision and utilisation of educational experiences throughout a person’s life. It implies learning throughout life and, therefore, denotes an over all scheme aimed both at restructuring the existing education system and at developing the entire educational potential inside and outside the education system. Its rationale is in part the same as that for adult education, except that it intrinsically involves a radical reform of organisation, form and content of all other phases of education, and also implies a greater recognition of the educational functions of non-educational agencies. Recurrent education, organised in Europe, is understood primarily as the development of a national policy that would provide citizens with

opportunities to alternative periods of work with periods of formal training throughout their lives. Life-long education is thus broader in its concept than recurrent education as the latter appears to be primarily meant for periodical training of those engaged in some kind of work through conventional institutions, while the former is meant for all the people in general, through out life through diverse institutions – formal, non-formal and informal.

- 3) i) Correspondence education is one of the earliest and institutionalised means of providing distance education in which learning materials prepared by a few trained subject experts are supplied to the learners by post for reading, alongside giving them some reading and writing assignments. To develop in them the feel of formal school/classroom atmosphere, contact classes/programmes are conducted at some convenient places where the learners and the instructors will have the chance for mutual interaction. In other words, correspondence education is education conducted through the postal services with or without face-to-face contact between teacher and learners. Teaching is done by written or tape-recorded material sent to the learner, whose progress is monitored through written or taped exercises sent to the teacher, who corrects them and returns them to the learner with criticism and advice. At the end of the course, examinations are conducted and certificates, degrees, or diplomas are awarded to the successful candidates.

According to Keegan (1986) distance education is a form of education characterised by:

- the quasi-permanent separation of teacher and learner throughout the length of the learning process; this distinguishes it from conventional face-to-face education;
 - the influence of an educational organisation both in the planning and preparation of learning materials and in the provision of student support services; this distinguishes it from private study and teach-yourself programmes;
 - the use of technical media; print, audio, video or computer to unite teacher and learner and carry the content of the course;
 - the provision of two-way communication so that the student may benefit from or even initiate dialogue; this distinguishes it from other uses of technology in education;
 - the quasi-permanent absence of the learning group throughout the length of the learning process so that people are usually taught as individuals and not in groups, with the possibility of occasional meetings for both didactic and socialisation purposes.
- ii) Open education is particularly characterised by the removal of restrictions, exclusions and privileges; by the accreditation of students' previous experiences; by the flexibility of the management of the time variable; and by substantial change in the traditional relationship between professors and students. On the other hand, distance education is a modality which promotes learning without the necessity of regular class participation, where the individual is responsible for his own learning. Open education underlines a philosophy while distance education is a form or mode of education.

- 4) i) Literacy means the ability to read and write. *Traditional literacy* as defined by Laubach (1971, p.536), Bormuth (1978, p.125), Oyedeji et al (1982, p.1), Directorate of Adult Education (1992, p.29) commonly refers to reading, writing and, counting or arithmetic skills of a person with understanding in the language (s)he normally speaks or communicates. According to UNESCO functional literacy is defined as follows:

The very process of learning to read and write should be made an opportunity for acquiring information that can be used for improving standards; reading and writing should lead not only to elementary general knowledge but to training for work, increased productivity, a greater participation in civil life and a better understanding of the surrounding world and should ultimately open the way to basic human culture.

- ii) *Literate* is a person who has the ability to read, write and compute with understanding in his/her language. A person who can use paper and pen/pencil (includes slate and slate pencil) for arithmetic purposes is called *numerate*, and the one who cannot do so and solely depends on mental/oral calculations is called an *innumerate*.

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Suggested Readings

<http://www.literacyexchange.net>

<http://www.unesco.org/education/aladin/paldin>

<http://www.ask.metafilter.com>