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ABSTRACT

A project to upgrade the vocational skills of Indian workers is presented. This project is designed to plan and develop integrated educational and training courses of various duration for workers and prospective workers, through the establishment of Polyvalent Centers. These centers are institutions providing opportunity for many-sided education and training to workers in industries, transport, hotels, restaurants, offices and home and other organizations. Objectives of the centers include: (1) enrichment of the lives of workers through knowledge and better understanding of their environment, (2) preparation of workers for more adequate vocational training through general education, (3) improvement of the vocational skill and technical knowledge of workers, and (4) development in workers the right perspective towards work. Each center will provide integrated educational and training courses of varied duration, conduct surveys and studies in the field of worker education, and provide consultation service to other organizations. Each center will have a management committee which will be set up by the state government or the agency concerned. Courses will be based on specific needs of workers. They will be offered on a part-time basis at a time and place convenient for the purpose of the participants. Each center will have only a nucleus of full-time staff for teaching, organization and administration of program. Appropriate teaching materials will be provided. The program will have a built-in process of evaluation. (CK)

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POLYVALENT ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE
(AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO ADULT EDUCATION FOR WORKERS)



DEPARTMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION
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RESEARCH & TRAINING
NEW DELHI

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POLYVALENT ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE
(An integrated approach to adult education for workers)

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ANNEXURE-A

An Estimated Budget Outline for the First Year
of a Polyvalent Centre

I. Introduction

Studies on economics of education, have shown the positive and direct correlation between education and productive efficiency of the worker and the consequent improvement of the economy. Although it has been recognised that adult education would contribute to the process of economic development, conscious and purposeful efforts in organising programmes based on this principle have been very meagre. The existing system of adult education for workers in India comprises broadly of Social Education (including literacy, civic and cultural education), trade union oriented Workers' Education (under the Central Board of Workers' Education) for development of leadership among the rank and file workers, and vocational education to a very limited extent under the Apprentices Act, and some *ad-hoc* training courses within industries programme. While these programmes have made some contributions in their respective spheres, an examination of these schemes reveals that the scope of each has been rather limited and the approach fragmentary, resulting in stress on single content area of adult education for workers. The worker as an adult individual, has to face multifaceted problems in his life, as citizen; as parent in the family; as member of organizations; as a direct producer; and as a consumer. Workers in India especially the current generation of workers have to live and work in a changing society different in kind from the traditional society based on the agrarian way of life. To be able to accept change and adapt more quickly to the changing conditions, workers must have an opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills, which will help them most in fulfilment of their material, cultural and intellectual advancement and adjustment in new settings.

2. In this context, continuing education and training of workers become very significant both basically and functionally, as the immediate increase in productivity and consequent improvement in economic growth, depend to a large extent on the output of

adult workers. In the situation obtaining in India in respect of urban growth and accelerated industrial development, what is needed appears to be an integrated programme of general and vocational education of workers based on the specific identification of certain crucial areas of learning intended to satisfy a variety of their educational needs.

3. Coinciding with the recognition of this need is an international trend of great significance in the field of adult education namely, the organization of continuing and integrated general education and vocational training of workers and middle line personnel. UNESCO has also emphasised the need for experimentation of such an approach in both developing and developed countries and indicated its deep interest in organization of such institutions of adult education for workers and potential workers. It is in this context that in response to UNESCO's deep interest and willingness to support the programme on a long-term basis, it was proposed to have a project based on "Polyvalent (many sided) Approach" to education and training of workers in an institutional form called the Polyvalent Education Centre which is to be wider in scope, flexible in organization and functional in its content.

II. The Beginning of the Project

4. UNESCO's assistance was offered for the purpose of developing the project known as 'Central Adult Education Organization and Polyvalent Centres' and the signing of an agreement between Government of India, Ministry of Education and UNESCO in November, 1964 marked the beginning of the project. The Programme envisaged the establishment of the Central Adult Education Organization and a network of Polyvalent Centres for conducting integrated courses in general education (including literacy), vocational education, and social education including civic, cultural and aesthetic aspects for industrial and other workers and those seeking employment.

5. Ultimately it was decided by the Ministry of Education, Government of India to establish a Central Adult Education Organization, as a Unit in the Department of Adult Education (previously National Fundamental Education Centre), in the

National Council of Educational Research and Training to plan, develop and guide the programme and set up Polyvalent Centres. The primary functions of the Central Adult Education Organization Unit are :

- i) To prepare operational plans for setting up Polyvalent Centres.
- ii) To provide continued guidance and assistance—and coordinating the work of Polyvalent Centres.
- iii) To train the staff of the Polyvalent Centres.
- iv) To arrange for the production of educational materials and A.V. Aids.
- v) To arrange for evaluation and studies.

iii Purpose of the Project

6. The purpose of the project is to plan and develop integrated educational and training courses of various duration for workers and prospective workers, through the establishment of Polyvalent Centres and thus demonstrate to the country—the State Governments, the industries, the trade unions, the adult education organizations, etc., how functionally valuable and to a fair measure financially self-sustaining programmes of continuing adult education can be organised for a large number of workers, having different levels of skills, educational background and in variety of settings, so as to make them better workers—by increasing their job competence leading to an increase in their productive ability and at the same time enriching their personal lives.

iv Polyvalent Centre: Main Features of Organization

i) Objectives :

7. A Polyvalent Centre is to be an institution providing opportunity for Polyvalent (many sided) education and training to workers in industries, transport, hotels, restaurants, offices and home and other organizations. Its main objectives will be as follows :

- a. To enrich the lives of workers through knowledge and better understanding of their environment
- b. To prepare them more adequately for vocational and technical training through general education
- c. To improve the vocational skill and technical knowledge of workers for raising their efficiency and increasing productive ability and
- d. To develop the right perspective in them towards work.

ii) Functions :

8. A Polyvalent Centre will have the functions as given below:

- a. To provide integrated educational and training courses of varied duration to the workers and prospective workers.
- b. To conduct surveys and studies in the field of education and training of workers.
- c. To provide consultation service to other organizations in the field of training and education of their workers.

iii) Management :

9. Each Polyvalent Centre will have a 'Management Committee', which will be set-up by the State Government or the agency concerned. The Management Committee will consist of members representing the interests of industries, trade unions, business concerns, workers organizations, State Departments of Labour, Education, and adult education agencies.

iv) Approach to Programming :

10. The educational and training courses of various duration, to be developed by a Polyvalent Centre, will be based on needs of particular group of workers, which will be systematically ascertained by the Centre. On the basis of specific requirements, course curricula will be designed in consultation with the competent and experienced subject matter specialists and the industries or organizations concerned, to offer education and training to workers in various fields such as the following :

1. Technical and vocational education.
2. Worker and his environment.
3. Education for family life and family planning.
4. Art, culture and personal enrichment.
5. Job safety.
6. Domestic and personal services.
7. General remedial adult education.
8. Secretarial services and business education.
9. Language courses of functional value.
10. Improving supervision and human relationships.
11. Workers' local, national and international understanding.
12. Employer—employee relationships and participation education.
13. Courses for the aged, pensioners and retirees.

v) *Time and Place of Conducting the Programmes :*

11. The courses of Polyvalent Centre will be offered on part-time basis, at a time and place convenient for the purpose to workers participating in the course. It is expected that industries, trade unions, and other organization interested in such courses will offer classroom facilities, furniture and some equipment to be used in the teaching—learning process. Wherever found necessary, facilities of school buildings during offschool hours, could also be utilised for the purpose of holding the class sessions.

vi) *Staff :*

12. A Polyvalent Centre will have only a nucleus of full-time staff for teaching, organization and administration of programme. As the courses are to be organised on part-time basis, there will be a liberal provision for obtaining the services of qualified, experienced and competent instructors, demonstrators, Supervisors, and Visiting Lecturers, on part-time basis for each course, according to its teaching requirements. It would be possible to get the services of engineers and other specialists

who are working in the field of their speciality in a factory or such organization, for teaching on part-time basis. This will help to make the instructions need-based and functionally useful. All staff members will be given orientation in the methods of teaching adult learners.

vii) Educational Material :

13. Appropriate teaching materials and aids, will be provided for teaching the courses. Such material will be specially prepared keeping in view the background of the students, the subject matter to be taught, the methods of teaching to be used, the time available etc.

viii) Evaluation :

14. The programme will have a built-in process of evaluating each course and its impact on learners as well as the overall effectiveness of the approach to programming in the project. For this purpose Polyvalent Centres will maintain records in a systematic manner and get the supporting services and necessary guidance from the Central Adult Education Organization.

ix) Financing :

15. The primary source of finance for each Polyvalent Centre initially will be the grants from the Union Ministry of Education, which will be made available through the National Council of Educational Research and Training. As a part of their long term assistance UNESCO may provide some of the essential equipment and audio-visual aids required in the programme, and services of Experts for the development of programme. Eventually, as the programmes of the Centre registers some progress, it should be possible to find another system of financing and getting the resources from factories, trade unions, and other organizations who sponsor their workers in the courses of the Polyvalent Centre. As the courses may help the individual workers in improving their ability of performance and making the horizontal or vertical mobility on the job possible, they may personally be found willing to contribute by way of nominal fee.

As the programme would serve the local needs of the working adults, Municipal Corporations and/or the State Departments of Education may provide the grants to sustain the maintenance of the Centre. Factories and other organizations should be ready to subscribe in cash or kind as they begin to see the value of these courses for training their man-power which will be in the ultimate interest of factory, as well as the worker. In terms of their cooperation, it would be possible to get material support such as the rent free use of class-room facilities, shortened working hours for those who participate in the courses, provision of equipment and tools needed in the organization of particular course, and the reimbursement of cost involved in the educational material supplied to the learners. Thus, a well developed system of sharing of financial and other needed resources for organizing the programmes, will go a long way in making the Polyvalent Centre a self supporting and self sustaining educational institution of economic and social significance.

x) Estimated Expenditure :

16. A Polyvalent Centre is estimated to cost about Rs 80,000/- in the first year. An estimated budget outline for the first year of a Polyvalent Centre is given at Annexure-A.

v Value of the the Programme of Polyvalent Centre

17. As education and training to be provided will be functionally job-related and productivity-oriented it would be found useful both by the workers as well as the employers.

18. As the training would be general and vocational in character, no diploma or degree will be given except a certificate of attendance.

19. Since the courses and programme will be organised on part-time basis and at different places which would be available for use on rent-free basis, and taught by part-time staff, it would not be necessary to have any large scale regular establishment apart from nucleus workshop equipment and specially devised educational materials. It is hoped that even for the cost of such equipment and materials eventually, the employers, workers'

organizations, or workers themselves and the State Departments of Education and Labour, would be found willing to contribute or share in an increasing measure so as to support and sustain the programmes continuously.

20. The Project as it progresses will have an unlimited scope, as it would be possible to organise scores of courses of varied duration at several places for large number of workers and thus reaching the benefits of education to the hitherto unreached working adults with meaningful integrated educational and training programmes without involvement of huge investment and the development of large scale establishments.

21. The programme will be valuable in indicating new directions to the continuing adult education of workers, specially in the context of urban growth and industrial development and provide a linkage between education and productivity, thus supporting the cause of investment in adult education on the basis of economic returns.

vi The Bombay Polyvalent Centre (Shramik Vidyapeeth) and its Working

22. The Polyvalent Centre (Shramik Vidyapeeth) at Bombay was established by NCERT as the first Polyvalent Centre in collaboration with the Bombay City Social Education Committee, Bombay, in the middle of 1967.

23. The academic staff of the Vidyapeeth consists of the Principal and two Lecturers, and a number of part-time instructors whose services are obtained according to the teaching requirements in each course organised by the Centre. The office working hours of the Centre are from 11.00 A.M. to 6.00 P.M., but the programmes are conducted in the forenoons/afternoons and in the evenings according to the convenience of the participating workers in each course.

24. The Centre has been organising integrated courses of various durations in a variety of fields such as the following:

- (i) A training course for workers in bench fitting and sheet metal work.

- ii) Course in trade training in textile weaving for plain loom weavers.
- iii) A course in secretarial services.
- iv) English language courses of functional value for workers.
- v) A marathi language course of functional value for non-marathi speaking industrial workers.
- vi) A course for education in family living and home crafts for women industrial workers.
- vii) A mechanical draftsmanship course for workers.
- viii) A training course for film projector operators.
- ix) A trade training course for weavers in auto-loom weaving.
- x) A course in supervision for foremen and supervisors in modern automobile industry.
- xi) A course in domestic services.
- xii) A course in industrial electricity.

25. In 1967-68 the enrolment was 300. It is expected to be about 1,000 in 1968-69 in different courses. In addition to courses mentioned above, on the request of the industries, public undertakings, trade unions and on the demand of workers, several new proposals for organising courses are under consideration by the Polyvalent Centre. The Centre has developed a systematic procedure for ascertaining the needs of particular groups of workers. For each of these courses a need-based curriculum and the educational materials are prepared in consultation with the subject matter specialists and with the help and guidance of the Central Adult Education Organization Unit.

26. The courses are organised in the premises of the factories, trade union buildings, schools and community centres and at different places where accommodation and facilities have been made available to the Centre for use on rent-free basis. In general, there has been a great appreciation of these courses resulting in demand for repeating the courses or developing many new ones. Recognizing the inherent value of these courses, the employers, trade unions and other organisations have been

providing material support such as well equipped class room facility, permission to use their machines and equipment for teaching-learning purposes for workers in the courses, shortening the working hours of those workers who have been sponsored in the courses and granting some provision for buying necessary tools, equipment and educational materials required in the organisation of these courses. In certain instances the Centre has been getting mimeographing and such other facilities from these organisations. In some courses the participating workers expressed their willingness to pay for the educational material if it was necessary.

27. There have been a number of factors which motivate the interest of the participants in attending to these courses. Some participants felt that they will be more efficient in the job and regarded training as valuable even though it was without award of any diploma. They hoped the training will enable them in getting increased wages in course of time. There were others who realised that attendance in these courses may be the first step in further education upto a recognised level. A group of participants observed that the course may enable them to make change in the job possible and they may secure better job. A group of foremen realised that to keep up the job they hold, the training was immensely useful and hence they appreciated the opportunity of re-training related to specific problem of their jobs.

28. From the several requests which are being received for organising the courses, from the willingness of employers, trade unions, and workers to augment the resources of the Centre and if found necessary to share even the cost involved in organising these courses to some extent, from the high motivation of participants in these courses and from the appreciation in general of the integrated approach in programming it can be said that the Polyvalent Centre at Bombay has considerable potentialities to expand in scope effectively.

29. The Polyvalent Centre (Shramik Vidyapeeth) Bombay is managed by a Shramik Vidyapeeth Samiti, consisting of 17 members representing various interests such as industries,