

## rural masses

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Literacy is a kind of technology not easy to be acquired by a person alone. True it is that by virtue of the modern technology, through computer, talking cards etc. self learning system for literacy may be made available. But how many of the actual clientele can have the access to such costly technologies. For vast majority of the illiterate population instructor-based training system is the only way of acquiring literacy. For this purpose infrastructure and management system is needed for the operation of the National Literacy Programme. Primers, chalkboards, support materials and services are needed for conducting the literacy classes. People must have to be made aware of the availability of these facilities through publicity and they are to be also mobilised to cooperate in the programme.

The motivation for literacy is needed for different types of people. (a) to motivate the literate people to organise or manage literacy programmes; (b) to motivate the literate persons to work as instructors or teachers in the literacy programme, (c) to motivate the rich people and the key persons in the government or society to provide fund and facilities for the purpose; (d) to motivate the actual clientele — the illiterate mass — for active participation in receiving literacy lessons. This group may be of either sex but in two major age groups — (a) those aged between 10-16 years with basic literacy may be fed in the formal channel of education, and (b) the adults who are more keen to have functional literacy and is not that much serious to be in formal channel of education. There is a basic problem with this age groups. After literacy, if they be left alone, they may forget their learning skill. Hence publicity is needed to inspire the neo-literates to go through follow-up books and material.

Publicity is needed to make the people aware of the need for literacy, as well as to inform the illiterate people about the facilities available at their door step. However, wonderful the national literacy programme may be, unless the clientele are made aware of its importance, how can we expect to make the project a success? Hence publicity is essential to make the literacy programme a success.

The different types of publicity media materials may be enlisted are: a) print media: (i) newspapers, (ii) pamphlets, (iii) posters; b) Electronic media: (i) cinema, (ii) radio, (iii) TV, (iv) audio/video cassettes and c) other media: (i) folk media, (ii) meeting or conference, (iii) face-to-face contact.

Newspapers and weeklies or

monthlies may play vital role in literacy campaign but its power is limited to the educated mass only. The purpose is to motivate them to carry on the activities connected to the literacy programme. It can also be used as the media for communicating message to the literate mass. It may also be used as powerful tool for continuing education for neo-literates. Because of the literacy barrier it may not have direct effect on illiterate clientele but its power for information and motivation campaign is enormous.

Small pamphlets carrying short messages and information connected to the literacy programme may be printed and distributed in reasonable quantities for organising the literacy campaign and also to communicate the important messages. Pamphlets with block letters and simple language can also be used for helping the neo-literates continue their literacy.

Posters with short messages and even without any written language but with pictorial information, can easily be used on large scale for information, propaganda and motivational purposes. Posters with only clear pictorial presentation can also carry messages to the illiterate persons too. This is one of the very cheap ways of communication.

Cinema is one of the most popular way of mass entertainment. In Bangladesh there are more than 400 commercial cinema houses scattered all over the country, even in some upazila headquarters. Well thought and well planned short literacy films may be shown in all the cinema houses before starting the commercial film, so that the common cinema goers, vast majority of which are illiterate, can receive the message of literacy. Through the films, since the message is carried through audio-visual method, there is no barrier of literacy.

Message through film can be

conveyed to both the literates and illiterates. Film made on 16 mm format can be screened for small groups through portable projectors or mobile units.

In a Third World country, radio is one of the most powerful mass media for propaganda purpose. Here, there is also no barrier of literacy. Through the centralised broadcasting, the message can be conveyed to thousands of audience living even in remotest part of the country. Through radio the importance of literacy can easily be conveyed in the form of drama, discussion, short talk, interviews etc. Besides the national broadcasts, regional broadcasts can also be arranged in local dialect to motivate the people on regional basis.

Television is one of the most

powerful audio-visual mass media for communication.

Here, since the sound and picture go together, it is more

powerful than the radio broadcasting.

The problem is of prohibitive cost of the receiver sets. But now-a-days community listening sets are available in different unions making the communication a bit easier.

Through TV message can also

be communicated to the illiterates. Short drama talk, discussion programmes, etc. can be broadcast through national network of television.

The country is flat and is a

compact piece of land, as a result of which, ground relay

stations are sufficient for covering the entire country under

the network. Here there is no

need of satellite broadcasting.

This is an added advantage

over here.

Audio cassette has got its

own place in the field of

publicity. It is a very

powerful tool for publicity

in small groups.

The recorded message and suc-

cess stories of one place can

easily be transplanted from

one area to the other through

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Kabi, Jari, Gambira etc. are

very popular folk media in ru-

ral areas. The literacy mes-

sure for publicity and motiva-

tional purposes can be very

effectively communicated in ru-

ral Bangladesh through all

these folk media. Even Jatra,

Palagan, puppets etc. can also

play vital role for motivational

purposes. Folk songs can also

be broadcast through Radio

and TV net work for mass scale

publicity. They can also be or-

ganised locally for information,

education and motivation pur-

poses.

Through meeting and person-

al contact the literacy message

can be communicated in a

very effective way. Through

the national infrastructure this

face-to-face contact is almost

impossible. This is an area

where NGOs can play vital

role, especially the mosque-

connected institution can carry

on this type of jobs more

effectively. On every Friday,

the Imam can explain to the

rural audience attending the

weekly prayer about the im-

portance of literacy. Besides,

the representatives of local

government and local leaders

can also play vital role in face-

to-face contact. The local hat,

bazar (market place) can be

used for the purpose.

The national publicity and

propaganda may be conducted

at three levels: (a) central

(b) regional and (c) local.

For central publicity national

mass media such as Radio,

TV, film services etc. can be

used. The campaign may gain

ground if it is blessed with the

direct message from the Head

of the State. National symbols

and signature tune can be used

for every publicity activities in

connection with literacy cam-

aign. Short messages may be

repeated through TV and Ra-

dio. National dailies may be

used for the motivational pur-

pose of the managerial staffs

connected to the literacy pro-

gramme. National awards may

be declared for successful li-

teracy workers. Short informative

films may be released through

all the commercial cinema

houses. Centrally published

posters and pamphlets may be

distributed throughout the

country.

For regional publicity, local

radio station, local newspapers

etc. may play vital role. Be-

sides regional folk media team

may be organised for using

folk song and folk drama for

information, educational and

motivational purposes, posters,

pamphlets, meetings etc. can

also play vital role for the re-

gional propaganda.

Local level publicity may be

done through meetings and

face-to-face contact. For this

purpose local authorities in-

cluding local NGOs, local leaders,

religious leaders etc. can play

vital role.

Publicity is needed in all

broadbased activities, but pro-

per infrastructure and sincere

work by individual is the key

to all success. Publicity with-

out support service may create

frustration. Hence publicity is

to be done upto that level the

support service can be made

available. Country-wide litera-

cy campaign should be taken

as national programme for

which concerted effort of both

the government and the people

is needed.