

THE RPC ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMME
FOR THE SPECIAL DIRECTORATE MEETING OF
THE 18TH FEBRUARY 1984

Basic Considerations

1. The Purpose

1.1. Aims of Worker-students

Inasmuch as worker-students are usually self-motivated, we can be sure that one motive is normally present: interest. They are interested in knowledge, not for its own sake, but as a means for social action, but this is not always the case with students having their first contact with workers' education. Workers education is only for those who readily appreciate its real aims and basic purpose and are prepared to do something about them, first by studying and then by using the knowledge they have gained.

- 1.2. Purposes of workers education - workers education always regards knowledge as a potential tool. The question to be answered is, have we recognised sufficiently the extent to which workers' education must equip workers to take an increasingly responsible part in securing political stability, growth and social justice in an ever more complex and dynamic society.

2. The Scope: The distinguishing features of workers' education and the limits of its scope are usually linked to its ultimate objective: useful social action by workerstudents. While adult education aims principally at broadening the general knowledge of the worker as an individual and as a member of the community as a whole, workers' education is addressed to the worker as such to improve his understanding of the problem which he, together with his fellow workers, has inevitably to tackle in society.

2.1. Components of worker education

- 2.1.1. Basic skills (e.g. to collect, sort out and express information of ideas; literacy).
- 2.1.2. Technical and vocational training.
- 2.1.3. Social economic education.
- 2.1.4. Cultural and scientific education.

2.2. The content of workers' education

- 2.2.1. Providing basic skills.
- 2.2.2. Arousing interest in and strengthening loyalty towards the programme.
- 2.2.3. Putting the work environment in their broader social and economic setting.
- 2.2.4. Training workers for responsible tasks.

3. The Teachers

A number of the essential attributes of a good workers' education tutor derive from the general characteristics of worker-students. He should be at least as interested in his students as he is in his subject, for only then will he keep their active interest in class. There is a major shortage of first-rate tutors in every national workers' movement, and artificial restrictions which may cut their numbers even further simply cannot be afforded. The suitability of such people will depend on their personality and also on the

major immediate objective of the particular study course. Given the sound knowledge, intellectual integrity, sympathy with the students and an interest in teaching, many tutors can, by making the effort, often overcome the lack of an experience. Special training schemes can certainly help in this process.

3.1. Training of Tutors

All courses should include instruction in techniques of adult education. The factual content of the programme depends upon the starting level of the potential tutors in the relevant subjects. The one cardinal rule is that every course should be planned as a step ~~by step~~ programme.

3.2. Suitability of worker teachers

Worker-teachers teach best when:

3.2.1. They have the right basic ATTITUDES

- a) Act as guide, counsellor and friend.
- b) Avoid school-type teacher-pupil relationships.
- c) Understand the aims and difficulties of worker-students.

3.2.2. They have the right basic OBJECTIVES

- a) Realise that the aim is to develop people, not just to give information.
- b) Remember that the long-term aim is useful social

3.2.3. They have the necessary FACTUAL INFORMATION

3.2.4. They engage in continuous EVALUATION of the teaching learning process in conjunction with the students.

3.2.5. They help students to plan follow-up activities

4. The Administrator

In fact, it is the administrator, in collaboration with the tutor, who has to persuade students to see beyond their sometimes trivial personal objectives and to develop an awareness of the broader purpose of adult education, as well as to guide them from their basic studies to more advanced work.

4.1. Efficiency

Efficiency is not enough. He must also have the proper appreciation of the value and ends of the whole educational process, which can spring only from genuine sympathy for and understanding of the adult needs.

4.2. Continuity

If resources are available to appoint a full-time coordinator of the programme would be a crucial step, as the right man will ensure continuing progress. It is quite different and not good enough to assign educational duties to a general tutor who already has too much to do, however willing and able he may be.

4.3. Duties

4.3.1. He must first assess the worker's educational movement and the general purposes for which the programme will be run.

4.3.2. Translate these general goals into long- and short-term programme objectives, deciding which are the priority tasks.

4.3.3. Identify the different categories of workers who he plans to educate and begin to prepare programmes and tutors to meet their needs.

4.3.4. Arrange for the training of tutors in methods, possibly in subjects they have to cover.

4.3.5. Supervise the progress of the course so as to ensure that sound techniques are being used and that the necessary tools and materials are available.

4.3.6. Since he should at the same time be arranging for evaluation and follow-up activities, and so on, he should also set about recruiting a team to whom he can delegate some of his responsibilities.

As we have said, it is clearly not good enough to assign the job of running adult education to a general tutor with other duties.

5. Evaluation of Programmes.

General indicators of success or failure:

- a) The continuous feed-back during the course.
- b) The level of Attendance at courses.
- c) If a) and b) sound a warning note, a simple INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE can be distributed at the next session by means of which students can grade the various components of the courses: content, methods used, audio-visual aids, group participation, discussion, progress etc.
- d) Other forms either than c) should be used to establish statistics on the number of students completing the course.
- e) A systematic follow-up surveys of former students.

CONCLUSION

- a) We recommend that with immediate effect, the recommendations of
 - i) sub-committee on Adult Education and ii) Commission on Adult Education of Workers Seminar be implemented.
 Any other considerations pertaining to our presentation as regards our outlook towards this programme, e.g. question of Coordinator, do not form a delay towards the basic need of satisfying the community.
- b) We recommend that the final decision making body on this matter address itself to the question of "take off" of the Programme as a priority.

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