

**A NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR A WORKPLACE LITERACY  
PROGRAMME, INCORPORATING BASIC SKILLS TRAINING WITH JOB-  
RELATED INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL; WITHIN THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY.**

**BY  
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# PREFACE

Historically in South Africa, the education and social systems have worked together to deny black people both competencies and opportunities for significant participation. There are over nine million people in South Africa who cannot read or write. (Hutton, 1992) South Africa is not the only country with this problem, newly liberated countries have also had to respond to the problem of illiteracy. In South Africa many progressive organizations have initiated literacy work and have recognized the need for adult basic education.

Workplace literacy has become an important national issue. It is of concern to employees, employers, unions, vocational and adult educators. But what does it mean to workers on the shopfloor and how can they benefit from such programmes. In our increasingly technological society, different workplace demands are being placed on workers. Companies try to assist their workers by offering training and retraining programmes. It sounds good, a problem has been recognized and steps are being taken to fix it, but there is something missing. Little mention is being made of the needs and rights of workers themselves.

The objective of this study is to identify the literacy skills of workers and the necessity for determining job literacy requirements for employment positions.

Research has shown that the level of literacy in the workplace is not determined by a grade equivalent but by the literacy needs of the workplace. In trying to identify the above objective it is important to look at what is meant by workplace literacy as well as significance of workplace literacy and its importance within a social and economic context.

## **DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY**

I, hereby declare that this thesis, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, is my own original work and that it has not been submitted for any degree at another university.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALP	Adult Learning Project
ANC	African National Congress
BLL	Bureau of Literacy and Literature
CEP	Continuing Education Project
CET	Consulting Educators and Trainers
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
ELP	English Literacy Project
EWLP	Experimental World Literacy Programme
JOLT	Job Orientated Language Training
LEAP	Learning for Empowerment and Progress
NLC	National Literacy Co-operative
NMC	National Manpower Commission
NUMSA	National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa
PAC	Pan African Congress
SACP	South African Communist Party
SACTWU	South African Clothing and Textile Workers Union
TBVC	Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (independent homelands)
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USWE	Use, Speak and Write English

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION - APPROACHING LITERACY

Most working class people in third world countries can read and write fluently and are daily immersed in tides of print in the language they speak. What could be more natural, more taken for granted for this competent majority, than literacy? For them there is usually no distinction between seeing a notice and reading it, and probably less effort expended in writing down an item on a shopping list than calling it to mind in the first place. (Levine, 1986: 1)

There are about 900 million illiterate adults in the world. The highest illiteracy rates are found in the least developed countries, mainly Africa, and 60% of these people are women. India and China are two countries in which half the illiterate population can be found. (Lind and Johnston, 1986: 12) Literacy is considered as a basic human right that has to be struggled for collectively as a contribution to the creation of a more just society, within each nation and globally. Illiteracy is merely a reflection of marginalisation, exploitation and oppression. In South Africa this is an accurate assessment: the majority of the people who are illiterate are poor and black.

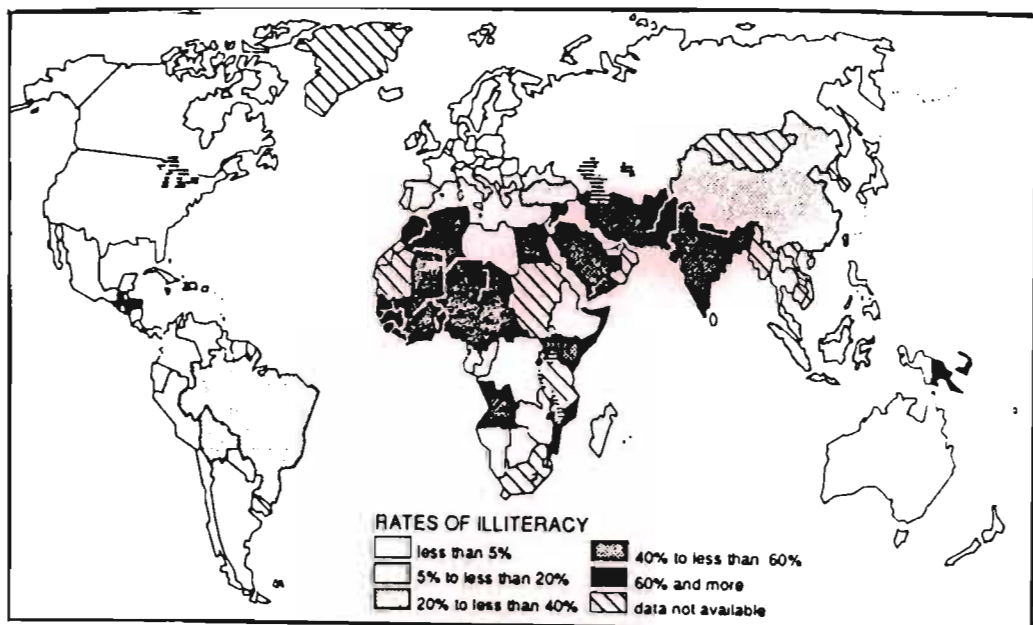


Figure 1. Map of Illiteracy (Hutton, 1992: 15)

The year 1990 was declared International Literacy Year and this was seen as the beginning of the Decade of Literacy by the United Nations. Many people believed that literacy was a good idea, yet their reasons for such beliefs were different. "The superficial nature of popular beliefs about literacy also expresses itself in the widely held conviction that everybody who has attended school can or at least should be able to manage any written communication." (Levine, 1986: 2).

In South Africa, this is not the case, most people, due to their economic conditions are forced to leave school at a very early age and seek employment. This results in the fact that they quickly forget the details of the learning process. Social concepts such as literacy and poverty are integrally tied to their labels. "Like jelly and sand, they are without intrinsic shape, defined and redefined by the vessels that hold them." (Venesky, Wagner and Ciliberti, 1990: ix).

Who is literate depends on how we define literacy - whether it is the minimal ability, evidenced by the oral pronunciation of a few simple lines from a primer, or a more advanced complex of skills, requiring numeracy, writing and reading together. For many terms in the English language, such uncertainty of denotation might be a challenge solely to academics, with outcomes evidenced only in a few esoteric journals and in the fine print at the end of a few dictionary entries. But for literacy the stakes are much higher, involving opportunities for personalised advancement, labour force participation, and national awareness.

The origins of discussions of literacy boundaries in social life go back several centuries."Ever since colonial explorers made it their mission civilatrice to bring imperial culture and education to poor, uncivilised, ignorant and illiterate "savages" around the world, there have existed political, cultural, moral, and instructional dimensions to the provision of literacy." (Venesky, et al, 1990: ix). Of course what constituted savagery depended greatly on the perspective of the colonists. A century or two later, when public education began in Europe, the same discourse appeared in the mother countries themselves - how to provide for the poor, uneducated and illiterate masses at home.

Obviously, the use of the term illiteracy in such descriptions of the poor and destitute cannot be seen in terms of the ruling classes' interest in the betterment of the people they ruled. Nonetheless, the category of illiteracy was certainly more accurate two centuries ago than it is today. What makes the definition of literacy so important now is the diversity of the communities in South Africa.

In approaching literacy Levine (1986) identifies three different approaches. In the first of these approaches comes what may be termed the 'competence' studies, which addresses the cognitive, linguistic and physiological foundations on which the individual builds reading and writing skills. Competence studies revolve around the question of how any individual is able to communicate via written symbols.

The competence perspective embodies a technological, 'how to' outlook and is not primarily concerned with the conceptual or definitional aspects of literacy. It is preoccupied with the problems of applying and measuring existing conceptions of literacy rather than innovation. (Levine, 1986: 7)

Whereas the studies of competence concentrate on the individual, internal dimensions of reading and writing, the second category, 'Contextual' studies, takes the psychological and linguistic mechanics of literacy for granted and seeks instead to describe its relationships with institutions and social structures in which it is embedded. The typical contextual study seeks to throw light on the way literacy serves, and is served, by particular historical or social situations.

The final approach, the 'critical - cultural' studies embrace two central concerns which, though not related, are not always equally developed in the same manner. The critical component of this approach is concerned with the way in which the distribution of literacy skills affects information available to individuals and groups, and the influence this has in turn on the the relationship between social classes, and between the individual and agencies of the state. In other words, it deals with the politics of literacy which are inevitably a combination of both dispassionate analysis and persuasive and interested argument. (Levine, 1986: 9)

# CHAPTER TWO

## A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

### **The Beginnings:**

Although no comprehensive understanding of literacy in any society could be attained without an account of its origins and development, the construction of such an account is often problematic.

A useful point at which to begin an account of the development of mass literacy within Western Europe is a consideration of the achievements of the Greek city states in antiquity. Although arguments have been put forth that India and China are to be the first truly literate societies, it seems certain that an exceptionally widespread institutionalisation of literacy was attained in Athens by 500 BC, within only two hundred years of the development of a phonemic writing system for Greek.

Havelock (1976) ( cited in Levine, 1986: 48) stated "that the civilisation created by the Greeks and Romans was the first on earth's surface which was founded upon the activity of the common reader; the first to be able to place the inscribed work in general circulation; the first, in short, to become literate in the full meaning of the term, and to transmit its literacy to us."

Historically, literacy shows itself to be linked to state formation, trade and cultural exchange, urbanization and economic expansion. During thousands of years the art of reading and writing remained a monopoly preserved for a special class of people or a small elite. When the industrial revolution started around 1750, almost 5000 years had passed since the art of writing was first initiated. Still 90% of the worlds population was deprived of this.

The invention of printing at the end of the 15th century made it technically possible to spread literacy to larger segments of the population. The printed word came about through the interaction between social and technical change. The Reformation and birth of Capital-

ism represented social struggles, where the written word was used to intimidate those in power, as well as the other way around.

"The rising bourgeois used the written word to help them effect their revolution and gain power... But once in power the bourgeois changes its attitude to writing - it became a method of control rather than rebellion." (Hoyles, 1977 in Lind and Johnston, 1986: 25)

Both economic and ideological-religious factors have influenced the growth and sometimes the stagnation of literacy. In Venice, a high rate of literacy was attained in the 15th and 16th centuries, because it was needed for navigation and soldiers needed to be literate to read gun manuals.

The inter-relationship between industrialization/urbanization and widespread literacy, did not seem to have a simple correlation, in terms of which came first. In the mid 19th century more than 50% of the adult population in most parts of Western Europe was literate, this meant that they could read and write and were thus functionally literate. However the countries which showed the highest literacy levels were not necessarily those countries which were advanced in industrialization. The relationship between industrialization and literacy seems to be dialectical, in that the former requires more advanced and more widespread knowledge and skills, while a certain level of education among broader sectors of the population facilitates industrialization, which in its turn creates conditions for and a need for more widespread schooling.

The mass literacy campaign of the USSR in 1919 and 1939, was the first attempt in history by a State to wipe out illiteracy among its adult population within a relatively short period of time. In 20 years illiteracy was reduced from 70% to 13%, this would definitely not have been the case during the Czarist monarchy. Again, we see that the driving force behind the campaign was the Revolution of 1917, its ideology and its purpose in changing a traditional socio-economic system into a socialist modern one.

Historically, then we see two principle "models" for the attainment of universal literacy within a nation. Firstly, there is the 'universal primary education' (UPE), which has the potential to gradually eradicate literacy in a nation. This model sees the state as as-

suming power over such a project and its resources and thus converting UPE from a right into a legally-enforced duty. Secondly, there is the 'accelerated' model which combines UPE with large scale literacy activities directed at adults. This model requires more state power and more economic sacrifices than the gradualist UPE strategy. (Lind & Johnston, 1986: 27)

**The South African situation:**

Literacy work in South Africa is very interesting, in terms of the political situation and the challenges facing the black people of this country. Although the 1985 census showed a 77% adult literacy rate, this is questionable, since many people avoided participating in the 1985 census, especially those who lived in the rural areas. Moreover, the TBVC states were not included, yet these states form part of the South African economy and society.

French (1990) (cited in Hutton, 1992) points out that the 1985 statistics are quite different. He states that only about 50% of black adults in South Africa are literate, if it is assumed that people have to have standard 3 or standard 5 to stay literate. He further states that standard 5 is a fairly low estimate, if we perceive literacy as being socially and culturally meaningful.

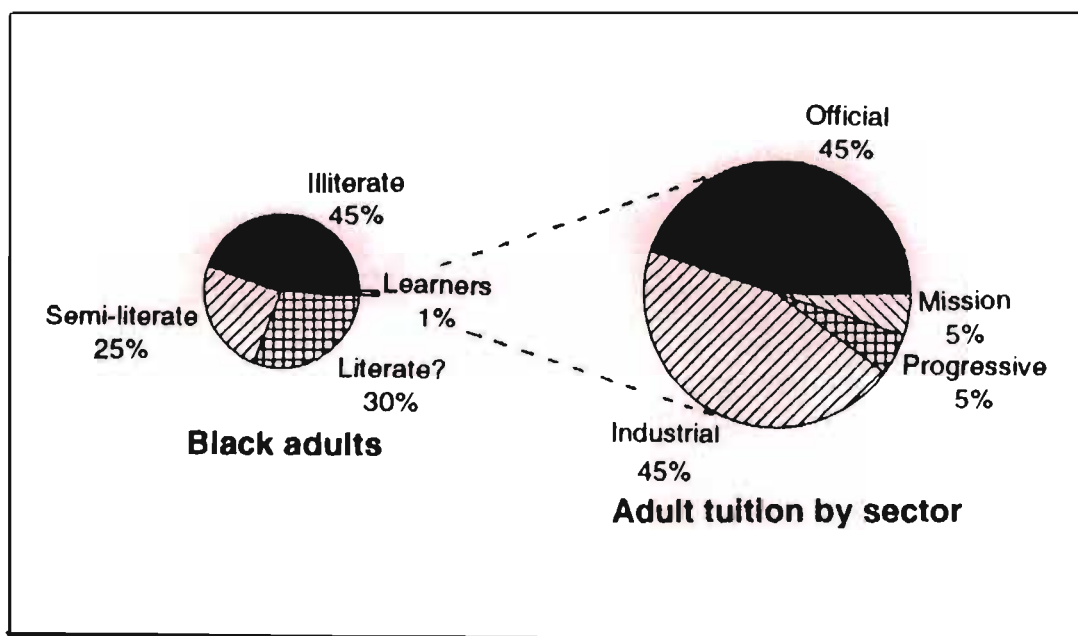


Figure 2. Estimated Scope of Literacy in South Africa (Hutton, 1992: 50)

According to the NMC Report in 1986:

- # 30% of the labour force had no education
- # 36% of the labour force had only primary education
- # 31% of the labour force had secondary education, (the majority being white)
- # only 3% of the labour force had tertiary education

(Learn and Teach Publication, 1991: 14)

The labour force is defined as all people working in the manufacturing and mining industry.

Hutton (1992: 55) "The apartheid system has been the greatest obstacle to literacy and has denied black people proper education. In the 1920's and 1930's there was a quest for Afrikaans to be established as an official language." At the same time the South African Communist Party (SACP) was involved in night schools on the Reef and their main concern was worker education, mainly in English and politics, rather than with basic literacy.

After the Second World War, things looked brighter, in favour of a new South Africa. Together with the help of the international communities night schools were encouraged. But this did not last long, in 1948, the Nationalist Party came into power and refused to support the night schools. The Nationalist Regime restricted peoples movements and banned the ANC, PAC and SACP. Even the non-governmental literacy organizations were somehow restricted to carry out their tasks.

Through peoples' struggles and non-governmental organizations, literacy campaigns were initiated. Today there are numerous organizations involved in literacy, but the two oldest that come to mind are the Bureau of Literacy and Literature (BLL) and Operation Upgrade. The progressive literacy organizations that form part of the National Literacy Co-operative (NLC) are Learn and Teach (which has been influenced by the works of Paulo Freire), Use, Speak and Write English (USWE), English Literacy Project (ELP) and The Adult Learning Project (ALP). (Hutton, 1992: 66)

It is hoped that with a legitimate government in power, evolutionary improvements in the standard of living of the exploited classes, can be promoted and significant inroads on illiteracy can be made.



# CHAPTER THREE

## DEFINITION OF LITERACY

In tackling the problem of a suitable definition for literacy and illiteracy, it is important not to start with unrealistic expectations about the possibility of achieving a simple formulation acceptable to all parties. Dictionary style definitions of literacy state that it is a capacity to read and write, and also the educated state that is achieved through the exercise of these skills. If some one can write something they can generally also read it, but the reverse is not necessarily the case.

People read and write for many different things for many reasons, in various contexts. The relevance of literacy varies dramatically according to the context. In Zaire the consequences of being illiterate are far less serious than they are in New York. So too, is the case with individuals, a rural farmer in South Africa can function very adequately without much reading and writing, but this might not be the case for an office worker in the city.

The concept of 'functional literacy' has been the major vehicle by means of which a utilitarian argument for broad-based, socially relevant literacy has been advanced. Gray (1956) defined functional literacy as follows: " a person is functionally literate when he has acquired the knowledge and skills in reading and writing which enable him to engage in all those activities in which literacy is normally assumed in his culture or group." cited in (Levine, 1986: 28).

This definition was intentionally relativist, setting a different threshold of literacy for each community. Gray's (ibid) formulation did not associate functional literacy training with work or any other specific social setting. He merely emphasised that the content of training should reflect the needs and motivation of the groups served and should aim at a self-sustaining standard.

"Defining literate/illiterate by linguistic boundaries falls in the realm of politics, not in the realm of science." (Venesky et al, 1990: x). But other dichotomies present thorny prob-

lems for an accurate scientific understanding of literacy. For example, what constitutes illiteracy in the workplace ? Only an in depth analysis of work can provide the answer. Yet, no matter how desirable it may be from an administrative or political perspective to set literacy standards for specific contexts, it is remarkably difficult to ascertain exactly what literacy skills might be required for specified performance levels.

Functionality was given a radically new meaning as a result of the 13th Session of the General Conference of Unesco in 1964. The Experimental World Literacy Programme (EWLP) strongly emphasised the economic and development potential of literacy: Briefly stated the essential elements of the new approach to literacy are the following:

(a) literacy programmes should be incorporated into, and correlated with, economic and social development plans;

(b) the eradication of illiteracy should start within the categories of population which are highly motivated and which need literacy for their own and country's benefit;

(c) literacy programmes should preferably be linked with economic priorities and carried out in areas undergoing rapid economic expansion;

(d) literacy programmes must impart not only reading and writing, but also professional and technical knowledge, thereby leading to a fuller participation of adults in economic and civil life;

(e) literacy must be an integral part of the overall educational system of the country;

(f) the financial needs of functional literacy should be met out of various resources, public and private, as well as provided for in economic investments;

(g) the literacy programmes of this new kind should aid in achieving main economic objectives, i.e. the increase in labour productivity, food production, industrialization, social and professional mobility, creation of new manpower, diversification of the economy.

(1966 UNESCO report quoted in Levine, 1986: 31)

The early manifesto of the literacy movement, A Right to Read, published in 1974, quoted with approval the US National Reading Centre's (USNRC) definition:

"A person is functionally literate when he has command of reading skills that permit

him to go about his daily activities successfully on the job, or to move about society normally with comprehension of the usual printed expression and messages he encounters.

(British Association of Settlements, 1974:5).

The argument was further taken by some progressive people who stated that to be literate meant that one had to have the ability to critically evaluate information, with the confidence to act on that understanding. In 1975, at the International Symposium of Literacy, held at Persepolis in Iran, a broader definition was recognized. This was Adopted as the "Persepolis Declaration" which gave a new meaning to the ideas on literacy.

The Persepolis Declaration defined literacy as:

"....not just the process of learning the skills of reading and writing and arithmetic, but a contribution to the liberation of man and his full development. Thus conceived, literacy creates the conditions for the acquisition of a critical consciousness within society in which man lives and of its aims; it also stimulates initiatives and his participation in the creation of projects capable of acting upon the world, of transforming it, and of defining the aims of an authentic human development. It should open the way to a mastery of techniques and human actions. Literacy is not an end in itself. It is a fundamental human right." (Hutton, 1992: 11)

In the South African case, the "Bantu Education " system did not contribute to the liberation of the people, instead it oppressed the people. It was a form of control rather than stimulation and creativity.

### **Workplace Literacy:**

No one definition of Workplace Literacy effectively satisfies the complex web of goals and needs of various and competing voices represented by this term. There does seem to be agreement by researchers that workplace literacy should be defined in the context of functional literacy. At its simplest level, workplace literacy is literacy training in a work setting

integrating basic skills training with job related instructional materials. However, research

in the area of workplace literacy has made the link between literacy and the job or occupation. Mikulecky (1990) discusses the literacy demands in the workplace, i.e. the literacy skills required to do the job.

Baar-Kessler (1984) defines job related literacy as an individual's ability to accomplish a specific task encountered on the job. Furthermore, Sticht (1975) defined functional literacy in terms of job-related demands as "the possession of those literacy skills needed to successfully perform some reading task imposed by external agent between the reader and the goal the reader wishes to obtain". (Patterson, 1989: 5)

The importance of the link between literacy skills and the job is particularly important when decisions are being made concerning content of training programmes. Thus the content as well as the context of literacy training must be considered. What constitutes "basic skills" also requires some explanation. Many researchers, consider basic skills to be those which should have been learned in schools, but in terms of the labour force, basic skills were identified by researchers like Patterson (1989), Sticht and Mikulecky (1984), as reading, writing, listening, speaking and mathematics at the level necessary to perform or advance on the job. The present research done in the South African textile industry, included reasoning, decision-making, problem-solving and teamwork, which have become a crucial part of industrial relations in companies. These skills were included to determine how often workers use these skills and at what level.

Apart from the three levels of literacy, viz. illiterate; functionally literate and marginally literate, the workplace has added another level of literacy under the category "manufacturing literacy" ( Mathes, 1988; 6) This is roughly defined as the ability to read and write at standard eight level, to speak and listen with clarity and understanding in a team or work group, to have mathematic skills and to have basic computer literacy skills. Manufacturing literacy and its more generic counterpart 'workplace literacy' may look similar to general basic literacy but they differ in intent. While general literacy looks to the general development of the individual, workplace literacy seeks to meet the goals of the individual and the employer at the same time. Therefore we need to differentiate among the three types of

literacy programmes: general adult, work-related and job-specific. See Appendix (i), (ii), (iii) for example of curriculum for the three types of programmes.

Thus the changing work environment and workers' ability to cope with it will be the driving force behind the need for literacy training in the workplace. The specific needs will vary from occupation to occupation and workplace to workplace. The discussion to follow on the major findings in the literature will provide some indication of the literacy skills required in the world of work and the relationship to job performance.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## FOUR MAJOR STRATEGIES

There are 4 major strategies, also known as approaches, which refer to the models of planning and implementation of literacy programmes. This chapter will look very briefly at the nature and objectives of the four approaches, which are:

- a). The Fundamental Education Approach (Basic education)
- b). The Selective-intensive Functional Approach (Launched through EWLP)
- c). The Conscientization Approach (inspired by Paulo Freire)
- d). The Mass Campaign Approach

It must be noted that all literacy programmes do not necessarily fit into these categories, furthermore all of these strategies focus on different aspects of literacy. The objectives of literacy programmes are very simple, firstly, activities inspired by a wish to make political changes; secondly, activities inspired by a wish to develop production and thirdly, activities intended to provide supply to demand, with a more "fundamental education" content. (Lind and Johnston, 1986: 49)

Keeping these objectives in mind, let us explore these strategies starting from a historical perspective, and thereafter looking at the details. What is also important for this study is to identify if any of these approaches is appropriate for the implementation of a literacy programme in the textile industry in South Africa.

### **The Fundamental Education Approach:**

This approach was first introduced by UNESCO as part of its community development programme. The programme was initially for both adults and children but not much planning was done. During the period 1946 - 1964, the question of language became significant. The use of vernacular languages was stressed as being the efficient vehicle of teaching. It was hoped that this would lead to improved teaching methods and eventually

a solution to the literacy programmes. The research done by William Gray (1969) cited in Lind and Johnston (1986: 51) concluded that there was no universal method and his study justified the necessity for programmes to be varied and for the methods to be according to particular needs.

This approach did not really come up with a suitable evaluation system and only produced very general assessments. It was considered as a failure in terms of its contribution to eradicating illiteracy. Therefore this approach is not suitable for the purposes of the S.A. textile industry. Furthermore, this approach does not look at workplace literacy programmes and therefore falls short of trying to assess the needs of workers.

### **The Selective - Intensive Functional Approach:**

In chapter three, the essential elements of this approach which strongly emphasised the economic and developmental potential of literacy, were examined. This strategy was used by EWLP in eleven countries from 1967 to 1972. The main objectives of the programmes were: "to test and demonstrate the economic and social returns of literacy and, more generally, to study the mutual relations and influences which exist or may be established or strengthened between literacy training - particularly working population and development." (UNDP/Unesco, 1976: 9)

Therefore, it meant that specific target groups were selected within specific economic activity and were given intensive training, in that they were limited to time and resources. This approach regarded education as an economic investment, since the functionality was to improve skills and the contents were work-orientated. This approach also emphasised evaluations, which were later criticised by Unesco for not having achieved the objectives. The outcome of the EWLP experience indicated that functionality was too technical, EWLP did see cultural, social and political aspects as important.

The criticisms by Unesco of the EWLP programme, included the kinds of teachers that were chosen, mainly from the professional ranks; the multiplicity of languages which created problems of translation and transcription. Lind and Johnston considered one of the

evaluator's recommendation worthwhile quoting:

“ Literacy policy and planning must seek to integrate national necessities with the needs expressed by different social groups. No literacy process can be effective unless these groups realize that literacy serves their own interest as well as those of the nation. For this reason, literacy must often be linked to changes in other fields, such as economic and social reforms ( it is useless to teach a farmer to increase productivity if the greater part of the fruit of this labour goes to a landlord) “ (Lind and Johnston, 1986: 54 )

This approach had been unsuccessful, except in the case of Tanzania where campaigns were held over a period of twelve years. The literacy activity in Tanzania was situated within a powerful mobilization process. Today this approach, the selective - intensive approach, is quite different. It was modified and includes experiences from other strategies. The concept of functionality became much broader and included awareness training , together with a larger content.

### **The Conscientisation Approach:**

The Freirian approach, as it is often referred to, has three basic concepts: conscientisation, dialogue and generative themes or codes. Human beings are the makers of culture, this forms the basic principle of conscientisation. Freire (1972 a) in his book «MDBU»Pedogogy of the Oppressed,«MDNM» talks about the processes through which people are able to understand the conditions which give rise to their oppression.

The educational process that Freire (ibid) uses is called dialogue - a process between the learner and educator. Education is not seen as something imposed from above, instead it is seen as a dialectical process between learner and educator. In order to make people realise and become conscientised, Freire used generative themes from real life situations, and in this way it conscientises as well as teaches reading and writing skills. Freire's literacy theory and practice aims at making it possible for the oppressed illiterates to become aware that they can change their own situation. Education is seen as an element in the necessary process of human liberation and is therefore not neutral. He states



" if learning to read and write is to constitute an act of knowing, the learners must assume from the beginning the role of creative subjects. It is not a matter of memorizing and repeating given syllables, words and phrases, but rather of reflecting critically on the process of reading and writing itself, and on the profound significance of language." (Freire, 1972 b: 29)

Freire's influence can be seen in many countries, example, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Nicaragua and Angola. It was seen as threat by conservative governments, including South Africa, where many of his works were banned. There are few government sponsored programmes which were inspired by Freire, example, Peru 1974 and Portugal 1976.

The criticism of this approach is that it makes great demands on teachers, who themselves are not critically conscious. It also fails to be implemented on a large scale and Freire himself does not explain how conscientisation translates into action. However, he later recognises the need for literacy education to be located within organisational structures and that it should have political aims. ( Lyster cited in Hutton, 1992: 39) He does not provide any theories or practical guidance on how to organise a literacy project administratively. Whilst this approach may not be suitable, since it is not job-related, Freire's ideas have proven to be a rallying point for literacy work in the 1970's and beyond.

### **The Mass Campaign Approach:**

This approach is not an easy one, particularly in revolutionary societies. It involves all sections of society in order to make adult men and women in a nation literate within a time frame. Literacy is seen as a means to a comprehensive set of ends - economic, social-structural, cultural and political. The Cuban campaign took place in 1961 and was awarded honourable mention by the Unesco Jury in 1967: " For one of the most remarkable efforts to mobilise public opinion in support of literacy work, as a result of which the country's illiteracy rate fell from 25% to 3,9 %." (Unesco, 1968: 74 )

In later years, new campaigns began in various countries. Seeing the success, an international Seminar for Campaigning for Literacy was held in Udaipur in 1982. A Literacy

Declaration calling for massive literacy efforts. Bhola (1983) states "that a campaign suggests urgency and it is not enough merely to teach skills linked to economic development if the poorer classes remain exploited. He further argues that a literacy campaign must be seen as a necessary part of a national strategy." (Bhola, 1983 : cited in Lind and Johnston)

A chronological table (see appendix iv) sets out the major international initiatives in the literacy field in the twentieth century. The table also provides a summary of the development of the approaches dealt with in this section.

The selective - intensive strategy is interesting, and if modified and carefully planned could be used for the implementation of a literacy programme in the textile industry in South Africa. The reason is that it is the only approach that takes into account the economic and social returns of literacy and the target groups are specific.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONTEXT OF LITERACY

#### **Literacy, Productivity and Economic Development:**

Adult literacy has become a vital component in economic development. We need to examine literacy in relation to productivity and economic development. Literacy-especially selective work-orientated literacy- is generally expected to produce several economic benefits. For the individual it should improve productivity, thus increasing wages and raising the standard of living. For the industrial enterprise, increased productivity of workers should reduce costs and raise profits.

Everywhere the illiterate is more likely to be unemployed than the literate; as technology grows increasingly more complex, this rule can become more applicable. When employed, the illiterate usually earn lower wages than other skilled workers. That literacy in itself automatically ensures employment or higher earnings, however, does not always follow. In some countries there is also considerable unemployment among those with medium or high levels of education."A study of textile workers in Bombay shows that literate workers perform day-to-day factory duties more efficiently than illiterates and demonstrate more understanding of the production process and a more developed sense of responsibility towards their work; however, in this setting literate workers do not, in fact, earn more or enjoy a higher standard of living than their illiterate counterparts." (Unesco, 1972: 31).

In South Africa, the textile industry employs mainly black, unskilled workers, with little or no education, and pays little wages. Workers have no other alternative employment because of the lack of education.

Therefore it is important to note that the new literate will have a better chance of obtaining employment and higher earnings if literacy training is co-ordinated with job placement or upgrading. One way to give the individual illiterate an economic incentive to

become literate is to make literacy a requirement for obtaining or holding desirable jobs or a prerequisite for access to vocational training. Many countries state that industry and the public sector generally refuse to hire illiterates. In Turkey, literacy requirement is regulated by law. A citizen without a primary-school certificate cannot occupy a post in the public sector. In Iran a bill was passed covering functional literacy. (Unesco, 1972: 32)

It must be remembered, however, that making literacy a requirement for employment or job improvement only forces the illiterates permanently outside the productive part of society unless, at the same time, opportunities are provided for him to acquire literacy. In Poland, for example, many companies hire illiterate or semi-literate people but require them to achieve a primary school level of instruction within a given period.

For industry, it seems that to employ literate people is definitely beneficial because literate workers contribute more to production than illiterate workers, as is the case in Bombay. But sometimes it's much cheaper for companies to hire people who are illiterate and have no skills, this saves the company money. The ideal situation would be to get companies to take responsibility for providing literacy instruction to their workers, in consultation with the unions concerned. The fact that some companies do provide literacy training voluntarily is a good indication, but it is time that workers became more involved in the learning process and planning. "In Niger, certain firms organize functional literacy classes; some allow workers two hours a day out of work schedule to attend these classes." (Unesco, 1972: 33).

A similar type of programme has been conducted in Spain. In many African countries literacy has been closely linked with the development of agricultural co-operatives. Studies by Unesco have indicated that as a result of these efforts and the work experience that follows, workers have developed new habits of thought and they and their families have acquired new nutritional practices and become familiar with the use of modern medical resources.

### **Literacy, Social Change and Motivation:**

Adult literacy exists in a social and cultural context and it is becoming increasingly evident, that any attack made on illiteracy, that ignores this context is likely to be a failure.

Sociologists and cultural anthropologists are helping to design literacy programmes for adults in given settings by asking questions about these settings. The kind of questions asked give an indication of social status; aspirations for the future; and what motivates people to attend literacy classes.

Many countries with high illiteracy rates note that to be illiterate, especially in the rural areas, is to belong to the majority. Where there is nothing to read, where oral communication and simple mental calculation have always sufficed and continue to suffice for everyday activities. In urban areas things are slightly different. Migrant workers find that the better jobs go to literates.

Literacy programmes must also consider, the attitudes of others in the illiterate's society towards programmes that are implemented. Women, for example, are sometimes not allowed to attend classes until their families or husbands are assured that they will meet only other women and that learning will not upset social order. Also it is difficult for women to attend night classes, because it is their "duty" to see to childcare, this was evident in the research done in the textile industry. Most men, in the South Africa, do not see their role as child-minders. Research undertaken by Jennifer Riria (1983) on rural women and literacy in Kenya and other countries shows that women's motivation in literacy is partly linked to changes in the social role of men and women. (Lind and Johnstone, 1986: 47)

With emigration of men to the cities, women have been left in charge of agriculture and general home improvement projects. Consequently women in this situation see the need for literacy because they see it as an instrument to coping in an understanding way with their responsibilities.

How does one change this? The issue of social and cultural significance of literacy education for rural people has been greatly influenced by the writings and teachings of

Paulo Freire, based on his experiences in Brazil and Chile. Freire sees literacy education as a process through which the illiterate becomes aware of his own creative powers and comes to view literacy as a tool for liberating and expressing these powers. For Freire (1987) literacy education involves a very basic change in the learner's self-image and in his view of society and his place and role in it.

Paulo Freire (1972) has provided one of the few practical and emancipatory models upon which to develop a radical philosophy of literacy and pedagogy. Within this perspective, literacy is not approached as merely a technical skill to be acquired, but as a necessary foundation for cultural action for freedom, a central aspect of what it means to be a self and socially constituted agent. " Most importantly, literacy for Freire is inherently a political project in which men and women assert their right and responsibility not only to read, understand and transform their own experiences, but also to reconstitute their relationship with the wider society." (Freire, 1987: 7)

Freire (1987) states that the issue of literacy and power does not begin and end with the process of learning how to read and write critically; instead, it begins with the fact that one's existence as part of a historically constructed practice within specific relations of power.

If literacy education is to bring the illiterate out of his shell and allow him to assign himself an active role in society, then society must be ready to accept his contribution. But this is not always the case. The study of the Bombay textile workers cited earlier, produces evidence that among the workers studied, the literates were more aware of their social duties and rights, took more active part in social organizations, and tended to approach problems in a more inquiring way. Yet the structure of the textile mills did not allow these workers to earn more than illiterate workers and many were becoming apathetic as a result.

What then are the motivations and attitudes towards literacy ? For the adult who works hard on the land, in a factory, or within the home, embarking on the major educational effort of acquiring literacy skills requires an enormous commitment of time, energy

and hope. The answer can be quite clear - when literacy is combined with acquisition of technical knowledge and skills that lead to higher productivity and better wages then people are motivated.

However we must not forget that economic gains is not the only strong motivation. A study in Kenya, by Jennifer Riria (1983) revealed that women want economic advancement and more self-reliance. There are many other reasons, such as, it is the desire for parents to help their children with school work; the desire to write letters to friends and family; literacy for women indirectly provides motivation for men to join classes - through pride, the husband of a literate woman does not want to be outdone!

## **LITERACY FOR WHAT PURPOSE?**

The purposes, uses and formats of literacy are varied and expanding. To a large extent, how literacy is used is determined by social contexts. It is becoming increasingly clear, according to Mikulecky cited in Venesky et al (1990: 24) that in general, literacy abilities only partially transfer from one context and format to others.

Traditional misconceptions about how literacy works and what it can and cannot achieve have influenced and limited our understanding of literacy. These same misconceptions have compromised the effectiveness of educational and policy decisions we make in relation to literacy. Guthrie and Kirsch (1983) identify one traditional misconception as the viewpoint that literacy is unitary, dichotomous, psychological capability that is learned with appropriate educational opportunity. One either gets literate or one does not.

Research has demonstrated the following points:

# Literacy processes vary widely to reflect the pluralism of social contexts in which literacy is used.

# Transfer of literacy abilities is severely limited by differences in format, social support networks, and required background information as one moves from context to context. (Venesky et al, 1990: 25). Both historical and sociological perspective provide clear examples of the overwhelming influence of context on literacy purposes, demands,

and processes. "A historical examination of many cultures suggest that literacy often begins as a means of recording and preserving the "holy words" that are initially read, memorized, and used with a minimum of interpretations". (Venesky et al, 1990, p.26). Literacy evolves to serve purposes of genealogy, government, commerce and communication.

Graff (1986) points out that there is little evidence that basic literacy, in itself, wields a magical transforming power for learning and life. It is more likely the case that written language can add power to our communication potential and that this increased potential can lead to the development and expansion of human potential. (Venesky et al, 1990: 26).

The contemporary line of reasoning claims that we are moving into an Information Age in which technological competence is central and mobility essential. Workplaces will have to change quickly to accommodate new technologies in order to remain competitive, and literacy is necessary for both learning and doing these new jobs. Fingeret (1983 : 135) argues that a number of jobs requiring little or no skills are declining and will continue to decline. In this scenario, illiterate adults, unable to work in these workplaces of the future, will keep South Africa from ascending to the top of the new global order. Furthermore, being unemployable even in the lower level jobs, illiterate adults are viewed as a double drag on the economy and a threat to national security. Obviously, these arguments ignore the realities of social classes and social structure. They also ignore the complex web of forces contributing to the present economic, political and social problems of South Africa and which deny the dignity of illiterate people.

The connection established between literacy and economic development provides the framework within which current attention is given to literacy education . Researchers like Mikulecky (1988) state that the lowest level of jobs is in the process of shifting and that literacy is necessary, not for social mobility, but for basic, entry level employment. This push is not about "empowerment" of people who are poor and disenfranchised; it is about redistribution of wealth and power across the country.

There is a profound ambivalence in our nation when it comes to adult literacy educa-



on; this ambivalence is connected to the potential social and political consequences of universal literacy. Universal literacy is now perceived as a necessity, which undermines literacy as a tool of the power elite and threatens that power base. Thus, as Fingeret cited in Venesky et al (1990) points out, a dilemma is posed: "Persons who have been in positions of powerlessness are the focus of efforts to provide them with tools that provide access to power - if only functional power by virtue of their now being able to do things they could not do previously." (Venesky et al, 1990: 37)

But once again we see that no one is talking of redistribution of power. Furthermore, the key to successful literacy education lies in the inherent characteristics and strengths of existing communities. To discuss the purposes of literacy as culturally relative is to recognize that, on a large societal level, literacy practices and functions vary among cultural groups. It points to the potential for literacy being used inappropriately for discrimination and gatekeeping.

### **Literacy for Participation in the Economy:**

Literacy for participation in the economy is usually discussed in conjunction with advocating or establishing adult education upgrading programmes. During the 1960's two Acts were passed, one in USA and one in Canada, which made provisions for such programmes. The Economic Opportunity Act was passed in the USA in 1964 and grew out of the "war of poverty". (Fagan, 1990: 3)

In Canada the Technical and Vocational Training and Occupation Act, the focus of which was employability, was passed in 1960. In this case individuals were expected to attain those skills and characteristics which would make them valuable to an employer. Initially many programmes had a heavy academic upgrading component. However, in 1981 Ottawa withdrew funding for programmes with an academic upgrading component below grade 8, which was believed to be a minimal entry level to a skills training programme. (Fagan, 1990: 3)

In more recent years publications and organizations have expressed concern for lack

of participation in the economy by many adults who lack the necessary literacy skills. It has been suggested that due to low levels of literacy, the USA is losing its competitive edge in the marketplace. (Sticht , 1988/89: 60-61)

Sticht (1986:2) stated that " millions of adult nonliterates... can't qualify for much of the work our technological economy demands. An estimated three-fourths of the currently unemployed are functionally nonliterate, seriously reducing the pool of competent persons for new hires. In addition, the promotability and mobility of many of the current employed are restricted for lack of the essential basic skill".

Thus "Adult literacy, is an essential element in overall development must be closely linked to economic and social priorities and to present and future manpower needs. All efforts should therefore tend towards functional literacy. Rather than an end in itself, literacy should be regarded as a way of preparing man for a social, civic and economic role that goes far beyond the limits of rudimentary literacy. It should lead not only to elementary knowledge but to training for work, increased productivity, a greater participation in civic life and a better understanding of the surrounding world, and should ultimately open the way to basic human culture." (Unesco document referred to in Jones 1988: 143)

### **Economic Objectives:**

Giving emphasis to literacy's economic potential can give rise to large scale programmes or to small highly selective projects, contrary to a situation where primarily political objectives automatically lead the state to large-scale activities. In general, the allocation of predominantly economic functions to literacy represents an evolutionary view of social change - the programme is redolent of expression such as "self help", "raising the standard of living", etc., implying a process of gradual improvement, rather than rapid social restructuring. (Lind and Johnston, 1986: 35)

On the one hand, predominantly economic objectives for literacy can result in a highly work-orientated programme, which tries to build an immediate link between theoretical study and productive practice, and which incorporates a large amount of technical informa-

expect immediate and direct economic results from it. In the post-literacy stage this expectation is transferred from "learning to read" into "reading to learn".

### **Literacy for the Workplace:**

There is a shift taking place in South African industry and mainly so in the textile sector which involves a change in technology and skills. There is little doubt that the occupational implications of possessing or lacking literacy skills are generally profound and thus the focus of this research is on the workers in the textile industry. At the time of the research, the industry had been greatly affected by the economic situation and severely reduced the opportunities for part-time and full-time work for people. Retrenchments had affected thousands of workers, thus it is sometimes assumed on common sense grounds that anyone who is illiterate will be lucky to find any type of legitimate employment. The jobs are changing so rapidly that the conventional wisdom that a product has three years from concept to marketing and a life of seven years has been replaced with knowledge that the product might have to be brought to the market within six months and will have a life of only eighteen months.

"The new basic skills, according to Mathes, include reading, writing, speaking, listening and computation at standard eight level and that additional skills of problem solving and computer literacy. Without these skills the worker is found to be limited in potential assignment and task. Although we must focus on those in the workplace who do not have fundamental literacy skills and an inability to read and compute at the lowest levels the above has implications toward the entire effort to upgrade workers including those who do not have adequate English speaking skills." (Mathes, 1986: 7)

In South Africa, literacy definitions are complicated by the fact that knowledge of a second language, usually English, is vital for survival and development as the ability to read and write in an African language. The manifestations of the literacy problem become apparent when the organization must take action, such as changing hiring standards, downgrading jobs, and increasing or decreasing salary levels, in order to fill positions and

hire qualified workers. Only occasionally is the lack of a literate workforce identified as the root cause of these problems.

Solutions to the problems of maintaining a qualified workforce are designed as a correlate of the context in which the worker is held. Those who consider the worker as a resource for the organization to get the job done and to be available to forward the organization's objectives have implemented work skills training programme designed not only to train the workers for the task at hand but also to provide for promotional opportunities. This however, only applies to workers in managerial capacity and this opportunity is rarely afforded to the semi and unskilled workers. In contrast, companies which consider that training programmes should support the worker in the broader context of their ability to function in the community view work skills literacy programmes in isolation as insufficient. This expanded view of the worker includes work skills literacy as well as personal literacy.

During the last decade, a good deal of research and opinion has become available on the level and type of literacy skills required for training and participation in the workplace. The present research , gives particular attention to what is known about the literacy demands in the workplace. It also focuses on what is known about the relationship of literacy skills to job performance and the degree to which literacy skills are generic or transferable from one setting to others.

# CHAPTER SIX

## METHODOLOGY

### Background:

Whilst the overall objective of this study is to identify the literacy skills of workers and the necessity for determining job literacy requirements for employment, we need to also identify the needs of workers with regard to a proposed development of a workplace literacy programme for the textile industry.

- ✉ The value of workplace literacy programmes in terms of using company resources more effectively and the impact of such programmes on quality and operating costs;
- ✉ The responsibility of workplace education (i.e. is literacy a management, union or a human resource issue ?);
- ✉ Awareness of workplace literacy problems and concerns within the company including what is present now and what is needed for the future;
- ✉ The relationship between considering workers as partners in the company or not and committing resources for such programmes;
- ✉ The development of the existing labour force in contrast to viewing labour as an unlimited resource;
- ✉ The need for literacy training based on a lack of quality and productivity in comparison to foreign competition.

The areas discussed above are crucial to the study because once the needs assessment is done then one is able to look at how the programme will be implemented and who will be responsible.

### Sample:

The 60 participants for this research study were selected through the random sampling process. This process ensures that every individual in the population has equal

chance of being drawn for the sample, and that bias will be reduced.

The interviews were conducted among semi-skilled and unskilled workers in the textile industry in Durban, Pinetown and Tongaat. Participants were selected at random and from the different shifts and represented a cross section of occupations within the production unit. The two companies that were contacted were the Frame Group and David Whiteheads.

**TABLE 1. Sample Breakdown According to Companies**

<b>COMPANY</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Frame Group	40	66.
David Whiteheads	20	33.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

The workforce at the Frame Group is larger than that of David Whiteheads and it was for this reason that the sample size of the Frame Group is bigger. The sample from David Whiteheads was chosen across the three shift system.

**TABLE 2. Sample Breakdown on the basis of Gender**

<b>COMPANY</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Frame Group	40	66.
David Whiteheads	20	33.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**Data Collection:**

Data was gathered in the form of one-on-one, in-depth, interviews. The interview process explored the worker's level of education; their fluency in the different languages;

basic skills in relation to the work they did; their reading, writing and mathematical ability and how this relates to their work; the methods by which they perform their work; beliefs related to literacy programmes and their availability to attend classes and what were the motivating factors.

"This is without doubt generally the most appropriate procedure, even though it introduces various sources of error and bias". (Moser & Kalton, 1986: 270)

Each interview was pre-scheduled, held at the factory premises, and lasted approximately fifteen (15) minutes. The workers were promised confidentiality in that no association with their names would be made to any specific commentary. The interviews were conducted during July - August 1992. The interview schedule asked both open and closed ended questions. The questionnaire is fully exhibited in Appendix (v).

### **Data Analysis:**

The fundamental question to ask about all research techniques are those dealing with the precision, reliability and relevance of the data and their analysis. Simple coding operations were used once all the interviews were completed. A large summary sheet was drawn up which contained all the data. Thereafter the data arranged in logical sequence and tables were drawn for each variable.

### **Critique of Methodological Problems:**

The pro and cons of the research can be summarised as follows:

Initially the research was to take place in four large companies within Natal: Frame Group; David Whiteheads; Romatex and Mooi River Textiles. All companies granted access well in advance, but during the period July to September there had been major problems at Romatex and even more so at Mooi River Textiles (MRT), which had been effected by the violence and this prevented the interviews from taking place. This, however, affected the sample size, which was originally eighty (80).

The sample size was then reduced to sixty (60) and the majority of the which were

from the Frame Group. There were problems in trying to get a representative sample at this company. The management tried to get workers who were involved in training and the matter was brought to the management's attention. Eventually, a somewhat representative sample was chosen from the various factories.

Language was a hinderance in some cases and this caused the interviews to be of longer duration. This was due to the fact that some of the interviewees could not speak English and therefore translation was essential. A further hinderance was that management staff, at Frametex, sat in on the interviews, this posed a serious problem to workers, in that they could not answer questions freely.

Noting that this is not a full-scale research study, but just a pilot study, the sample is fairly representative of the two companies. The reason for carrying out a pilot-study was that there was not enough time available to carry out interviews in other companies and furthermore the two companies, ie. Frame and David Whiteheads had already made some progress in the area of literacy, but had not found out the needs of workers.

Despite the problems, the interview method was ideal since it allows for flexibility. Bailey (1987: 174) states that the advantage of interview schedules is that the researcher is readily available to the respondents for clarification of questions. The researcher had to probe some questions in all interviews so as to reduce bias and thus maintain standardization of responses.



# CHAPTER SEVEN

## RESULTS

**TABLE 3. Biographical Data:**

<b>AGE LEVELS</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Under 35 yrs	31	52
Over 35 yrs	29	48

Although the percentage gap between the two age groups is slight, it is significant to note that the companies concerned employ a fairly young workforce.

<b>AGE LEVELS</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Under 35 yrs	31	52
Over 35 yrs	29	48

It is not unusual to find out that more men are employed in the industry than women. Even when women are employed they occupy the lower paying jobs.

<b>OCCUPATION</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Machinist	17	28
Examiners	13	22
Mechanics	8	13
Drivers	6	10
Foreman	1	2
General workers	7	12
Other jobs	8	13
<b>WAGES</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Monthly	25	42
Weekly	35	58

Most workers, 58% are weekly paid employees and this the case for most workers occupying the semi - skilled and unskilled positions.

**TABLE 4. Educational Data**

<b>OCCUPATION</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Machinist	17	28
Examiners	13	22
Mechanics	8	13
Drivers	6	10

### Language Fluency:

The diagrams below illustrate the level of literacy in the two main languages, English and Zulu. The other languages were not spoken as much. 85% of the participants could not speak, read or write Afrikaans and Xhosa.

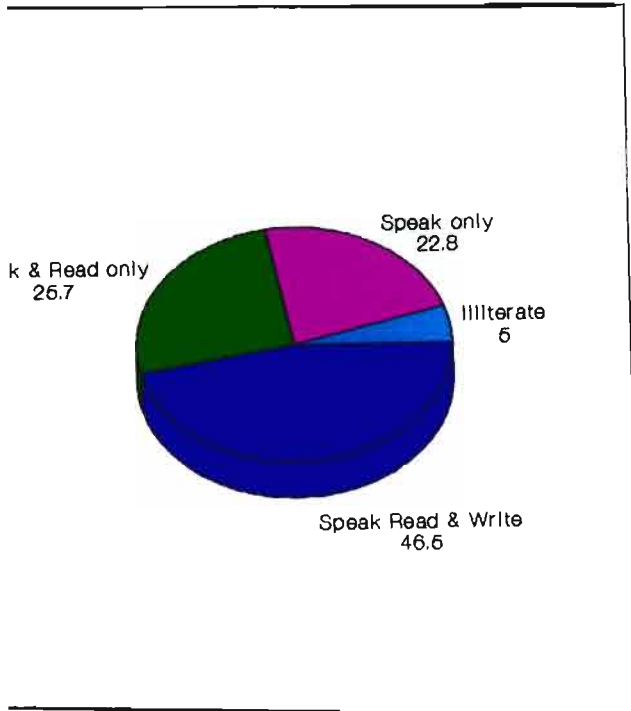


Figure 3. Literacy Rate in English

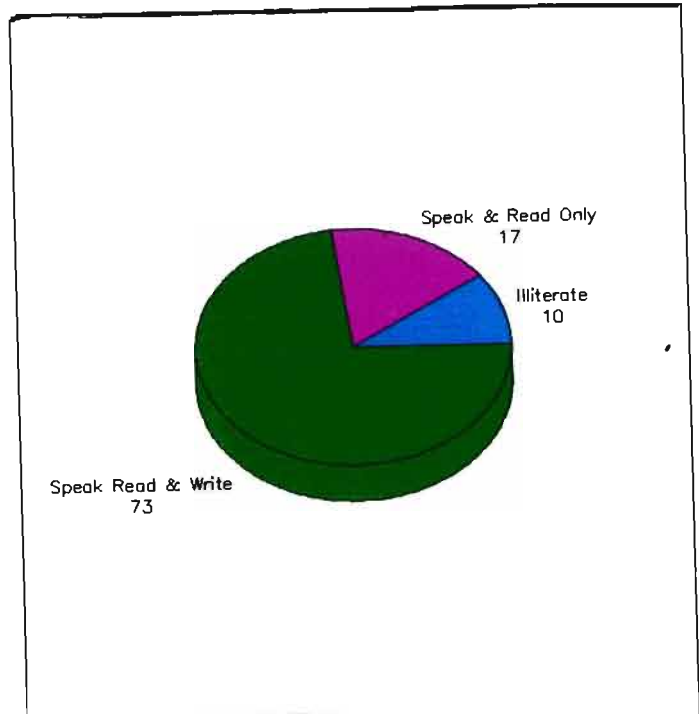


Figure 4. Literacy Rate in Zulu

Technological and managerial changes were reported to be occurring quite often. 45% of interviewees expressed concerns with regard to technological changes, in that it meant retrenchments. This issue affects largely the unskilled workers. Although some interviewees saw social change this did not really affect working conditions at the factory. Most interviewees felt that their job was not a very important job in the company and that it could be done by others in their absence.

The table below clearly indicates that only 5% of the interviewees were receiving training in a new job. Yet, 77% indicated that better equipment will make their job easier and 82% indicated that training would really help them perform better.

## Language Fluency:

## Language Fluency:

**TABLE 5. Manpower and Machinery related to Basic Skills:**

<b>CHANGES AT WORK:</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
No changes	7	12
Technical changes	42	70
Managerial changes	39	65
Social changes	4	7
Other	3	5
<b>TRAINING:</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
No training	35	58
In present job	20	33
In new job	5	9
<b>EQUIPMENT NECESSARY:</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
No response	4	7
Yes	46	77
No	10	16

<b>CHANGES AT WORK:</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
No changes	7	12
Technical changes	42	70
Managerial changes	39	65
Social changes	4	7

The results indicated that 93% of the interviewees worked under supervision and guidelines. This meant that even if they had no formal training, they learnt by watching

their superiors, this also accounted for the fact that they did not use operational manuals.

Table 6 gives a clear indication on the basic self-reported skills that interviewees have.

**TABLE 6. Methods and Materials related to Basic Skills:**

<b>COMMUNICATION SKILLS:</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	39	65
No	21	35
Verbal	50	85
Writing	10	15
<b>READING SKILLS:</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	29	48
No	31	52
<b>POPULAR READING:</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Newspaper	4	7
Pleasure	46	77
Work-related	10	16
Can't read	6	10

<b>COMMUNICATION SKILLS:</b>	<b>N</b>
Yes	39
No	21

**Mathematics:**

25% of the interviewees did not use mathematics as such, instead most calculations involved simple additions and subtractions. These people used calculators for such exercises. Most jobs did not require any complicated mathematics or computer knowledge.

**General:**

The participants were very interested in attending literacy classes. 98% of the participants/interviewees expressed their keenness in attending literacy programmes. On the question of location, 65% pointed out that the factory premises would be ideal to conduct such programmes. The reasons were that it was in close proximity to their homes and that they need to make use of the facilities available on the premises. The time - factor was very crucial. The table below gives a clear indication of day/time preferences:

**TABLE 7. Time Preferences**

<b>WEEK DAY</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Evening classes	9	15
Daytime classes	45	75
Not in favour	6	10
<b>WEEK-END</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Evening classes	3	5
Daytime classes	38	63
Not in favour	19	32

**TABLE 8. Motivating Factors:**

<b>WEEK DAY</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Evening classes	9	15
Daytime classes	45	75
Not in favour	6	10
<b>WEEK-END</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Evening classes	3	5
Daytime classes	38	63
Not in favour	19	32



The results clearly indicated that money was a significant motivating factor for 29% of the interviewees. Transport and education were also important factors. 15% of the interviewees felt that by attending literacy classes they would have a chance to better employment in the future. 13% of the interviewees, mainly women, saw child-care as a motivating factor. Self-confidence and the ability to teach others were not very popular motivating factors.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### DISCUSSION

Although the sample has 52% of the participants under the age of 35 years, the changing profile of the labour force is crucial. The labour market is a slow growing labour force with fewer younger workers. Employers will not be able to pick the cream of the crop to meet their requirements for skilled workers. This will result in greater reliance upon existing workers, some with deficient reading and writing skills.

Not only will workers be older, there will also be a larger proportion of adult females. 37% of the participants in this study were females. This figure is significant since the textile industry had for a very long time employed mostly males and only until very recently began to employ females.

While, overall, women are attaining higher educational levels, many have no more than a secondary education and limited occupational specific skills. The findings indicated that women in the textile industry, mainly occupy the positions of machinist and examiners. The present research has shown that woman's participation in literacy gives rise to new situations conducive to struggles around women's liberation. This allows woman to develop themselves and form support groups and this makes them equivalent with other members in society. It would also help enhance her role in the family. Women also have a chance to better employment opportunity. This also proves that women's participation in literacy is partly linked to the changes in the social role of men and women. The present findings are consistent with the research done by Jennifer Riria (1983) in Kenya.

What clearly has emerged from the research is that it is not only the population of people that do not have a high school diploma that is at risk. There is a significant portion of workers that have obtained secondary education (62%), but lack one or more of the identified basic skills. Therefore high school completion is not a prediction of success on the job. Furthermore the rate of technological change has become so rapid and so sophisticated that one cannot anticipate what people will need to know many years before the

act.

The workplace requires not only the ability to read, write and compute, but also the ability to use these skills in problem solving on the job. 92% of the workers were involved in verbal communication. Some of the interviewees are shopstewards and problem-solving was a key factor that concerned them. They felt that representation required much more than just reading and writing.

The research in the textile industry has revealed that reading, writing and computing skills in the workplace is needed at most times and in most occupations at a relatively high level. Some of the occupations examined required no reading or writing. Time spent reading print, charts, graphs, and computer terminals averaged nearly one to two hours daily. The common writing skills entailed writing of simple reports; using log-sheets to record production; recording faults in production; and filling in application forms.

Most of workplace reading, writing and computation is to accomplish tasks and make assessments. Rather than reading from a single text workers must gather information from several sources to solve problems, provide services and perform tasks.

Most workers found it difficult to understand operational manuals and learnt the practical way by watching others perform a task. It seems that workers are able to manage literacy requirements of their occupation because of repetition and familiarity with concepts, materials and tasks. When it comes to speaking, listening and writing on the job, clarity of communication is more important than formal grammar and usage.

Though workplace literacy demands are high, the vocational training literacy demands are even higher. The research study found that reading was a daily requirement of workers in training courses, in the workplace. However only 40% of the participants were involved in training at the time when the research was being carried out. Those who were in training programmes spent more time reading texts and manuals. This may cause the workers' performance in the programme not to be indicative of their performance on the job.

The research showed that 65% of the participants enjoyed reading the newspaper;

10% read purely for work purposes; 15% read for pleasure or to their children and 10% of the participants were illiterate, they could not read and write either in their mother-tongue or English. A comparison between occupational reading and traditional reading was found to be quite significant. As illustrated below, they were found to be quite different. Occupational reading is reading that is related to the work, whereas, traditional reading is more for pleasure.

OCCUPATIONAL READING	TRADITIONAL READING
The text may be read for different purposes by the employees.	People read for information or for entertainment.
Most job reading is from manuals, tables, etc.	They read books or magazines.
Most job related reading is for five minutes or less.	They read for relatively long periods of time.
Workers read for specific details and fact.	They read for pleasure and in detail.
Occupational reading is not an option activity.	Traditional reading has many options

Mathematic skills were virtually non-existence and did not seem to be the requirement for unskilled labour. A small percentage of workers did however use very simple calculations in their daily jobs. This meant either counting or simple calculations done with a calculator. Difficulties were overcome by the fact that 93% of the participants worked under supervision and received help from their superior.

Despite the outcry for economic gains from literacy programmes, workers had a list of reasons as to why they want to become literate. Some of these seemed quite specific: for

example, some workers felt the need to sign their own name, instead of the humiliating fingerprint that they have to give; parents wanted to help their children with school-work; others wanted to write letters to their friends and families, especially those workers who lived away from their families; get employment or a better job with higher wages and prestige; gain social prestige; avoid being cheated by knowing how to calculate or read contracts; strengthen self-confidence and make it possible to get further education. Workers are attracted to literacy programmes because it offers some form of education which could be helpful and which they did not receive before.

The questionnaire was also designed to ask specific questions about location and scheduling of literacy classes. These questions might seem trivial but it is crucial because the high rate of drop-out and poor attendance in the past was due to classes being held at places and times not suitable to potential learners. 65% of the participants indicated that they would like literacy classes to be held on site, i.e. the factory premises; 27% said that they would prefer schools or universities and only 8% indicated that they would prefer the classes to be held at the union office. This is not surprising at all, since union offices are not accessible to everyone and further more on the job training is more appropriate. The time factor was also important. Workers did not want evening classes because of the difficulty in obtaining transport back home. Women workers were concerned about baby-sitting problems as well as transport. 85% of the participants wanted classes to be held on a weekday and in the day-time.

The results clearly indicated that the level of literacy in the workplace is not determined by a standard equivalent but by the literacy needs of the workplace, and that it is different to that used in schools.

**Figure 5 below, shows a basic skills profile developed from the results of this study, in the textile industry.**

1. Basic literacy and Numeracy skills (reading, writing and computation)

- ☒ Read notes, job orders, schedules, charts and instructions
- ☒ Read to determine facts and opinions
- ☒ Write very brief notes and letters

2. Basic listening and Oral communication skills

- ☒ Receive facts or directions and give information
- ☒ Understand opinions or purposes
- ☒ State possible reasons which might cause certain faults

3. Creative thinking and problem - solving skills

- ☒ Ask probing questions, use reference manuals and show information
- ☒ Establish a priority in checking for problems
- ☒ implement solutions

4. Teamwork skills (Skills needed to work with others on the job)

- ☒ Work with supervisors and co-workers
- ☒ Sticking to a schedule and giving feedback
- ☒ Identify with norms, goals, values and culture of the group

*Figure 5 .A Basic Skills Profile*

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LITERACY AND THE WORKPLACE:**

In the early 1980s there were several indications from industry that education levels of the new and existing workers were inadequate. Employers reported high percentages of basic skills difficulties. In the US, industries reported increased economic problems resulting from workers who are unable to meet the literacy skills demand.

Industries in the US have spent millions to correct worker literacy mistakes. The most important concern of the company was the fact that many workers could not read safety signs - they could not not read instructions or follow directions. Thus, in many firms work-

ers with low literacy levels are being replaced. Furthermore, as new jobs are created and old jobs disappear, new levels and types of literacy skills for employment are also created. One indication of the changes in literacy skills required to participate in society in the changing nature of work. (Mikulecky, 1988; 12) As new jobs are created and old jobs disappear, new levels and types of literacy skills for employment are also created. The authors experience in the S.A. textile industry in particular, has shown that low literacy jobs are decreasing and the rate of retrenchment increasing, and therefore it will be increasingly difficult for workers to find adequate employment.

The emerging workplace is such, however, that providing a very specific connection between literacy skills and specific job tasks may not be productive since much of the work is undergoing change anyway. That is to say that a generic approach that includes the elements of reading, writing, speaking, listening and mathematic with decision making skills and basic computer literacy with a general workplace orientation, might be a much more effective use of employee time and enhance the cost effectiveness of the total effort. (Mathes, 1988: 8)

The cost of workplace literacy in the textile industry in South Africa might be quite high since it is estimated that up to 45% of the workforce must have involvement in basic workplace literacy at some level. The worker who is productive in the workplace can save a company a great deal of money.

While one of the reasons often cited for undertaking literacy training in the workplace has been improved job performance, the present research has not demonstrated that there is a direct or overwhelming relationship between literacy skills and job performance. It is quite clear that literacy requirements vary from occupation to occupation. Those jobs not requiring literacy skills will represent an increasingly smaller share of all work. Whilst we notice that there is no direct relationship between literacy skills and job performance, there have been cases where low literacy skills have resulted in costly losses for business.

## **How Transferable are literacy Skills?**

Mikulecky (1988) points out that for quite a while increased literacy skills training has been a requirement for on the job training. What has not been clear is how to most cost-effectively provide such training. There has been limited knowledge on how to design programmes to incorporate literacy skills into job training. The only solution seemed to be to send people to remedial school to learn the basic and thereafter they could be easily transferred to the workplace or vocational training.

Whilst the above might be the case, most workers in the S.A. textile industry would be able to learn better when the basics were intergrated with actual job training and that so called "school work" did not seem to transfer very well to actual workplace applications.

Even though there are similarities in jobs, transfer on the part of the learner is severely limited. This means that skills differ from task to task; a skill used in one task may be used differently in another. The strategies used to teach graphics is different. The point is that reading is not a unitary concept. The transference of one reading task to another depends on similarity of components.

Studies done by Mikulecky & Strange, (1986) and Sticht & Mikulecky, (1984), show that most effective job literacy training programmes appear to intergrate literacy skills with actual job training thereby avoiding the risk of mistakenly assuming transfer or mistakenly counting on generic skills. (Mikulecky, 1988: 27)



# CHAPTER NINE

## THE NEED FOR MANAGEMENT- LABOUR PARTNERSHIPS

### Critical Evaluation of Company sponsored Programmes:

Today a serious education and training gap exists. From this study it is quite clear that no literacy training is taking place in these two companies and that there is a conspicuous disparity between the skills employers say they want and the training they provide. It is not appropriate to make the public schools and training programmes assume major responsibility to close this gap. Updating the skills of employed workers is largely an employers obligation. In the early 1980's, an organization called Consulting Educators and Trainers (CET), offered month-long training courses for instructors; context-specific packages for factories and mines and professional consultation during implementation. Later this organization also provided literacy training, tailored to suit the industry's need. (Hutton, 1992: 72)

Other organizations like Genmin, JOLT, CEP and in 1990 LEAP, provided industrial literacy training. The earlier programmes offered to companies concentrated on bridging programmes for workers who already have sufficient education to go into further training. LEAP, however, was different. This organization promoted workplace democracy and worker participation in management decisions.

Although, it seemed good and the need recognized, something was missing - the lack of consultation with the learners themselves. The top-down approach prevailed which resulted in hostility and resentment.

French (1990) cited in Hutton (1992) outlines other major problems as follows:

- # Management's ignorance about literacy issues, workers learning needs, educational values, the nurturing of effective practices and their formative evaluation.
- # A general attachment to quick-fix ideas about learning with a consequent

failure of both the process and the product.

# Linked with this, a tendency to abandon rather than to evaluate and improve ailing programmes.

# A disjunction between high-level management's distanced and idealised commitment to literacy projects and a lack of commitment, or even hostility, on the part of local and line management to the project. # A general failure to manage the 'ecology' of literacy by combatting the disadvantages of the industrial setting for learning and fostering those factors which could enhance learning.

# The sheer pressure for productivity in settings not designed for education. South African industry generally allocates low priority to the training and development of workers, compared to major industrial powers. (Hutton, 1992: 74)

Whilst the points above are true of the industry, the trade unions did very little to initiate literacy programmes. Unions have been largely involved in political education and how to deal with shopfloor issues. Moreover, unions were suspicious of co-optation into programmes initiated by management.

### **The Role of the Trade Union in Upgrading Literacy in the Workplace:**

The year 1990 being the International Literacy Year, was also a year which changed the face of South Africa, dramatically. That year made way for many changes, including the launch of the Literacy campaign by COSATU. Literacy is now on the agenda of COSATU. Likewise, Ihron Rensburg, general secretary of the NECC says: "There is a clear need for literacy and adult education programmes to be located within our developing understanding of people's education for people's power." (Learn & Teach/ELP/LACOM Publication, 1991: 137)

Trade unions, have fairly recently, become involved in literacy programmes for workers within their industries. The National Union of Metal Workers (NUMSA) has been involved in workplace literacy plans, which have been successful. It must be noted that the most aggressive drives for worker education came from the unions. Pushing for education

and training has long been at the center of organized labour's history and tradition. The South African Clothing and Textile Workers Union (SACTWU), have become aware of the low literacy level within the textile industry and are keen to introduce a workplace literacy programme for its members.

However, in preparing for change a joint venture is necessary. Employers and unions each have interests that bring them to the table to plan for change in the workplace. Employers want a productive, profitable operation. Unions, on the other hand want to serve workers needs. Ideally, both goals can be met when both sides anticipate change and prepare for it together. Unions can help employers plan their response to new factors in the workplace. To bring their long-term organizational plans and strategies to life, employers need to enlist the help of workers, through their unions.

For employers, involving trade unions in the planning process is good management. It can minimize disruption and productivity losses by involving the affected workers through their union. For the union, an agenda for change can directly support the fundamental mission of service to the members. Unions will have to use the forum of labour-management relations to protect their members' employment rights in the face of changing work environment.

Unions will have to include demands for literacy in their national, regional or local agreements and they would have to demand such things as time-off; suitable venues and facilities; selection of teachers and get management to pay the expenses.

### **A Work-Centered Learning Strategy:**

Unions in South Africa, in particular SACTWU, have developed a highly successful worker-centered approach to education. Programmes have been developed around workers' needs and workers through their unions, determine the design of such programme, what they offer and how they are taught. Literacy programmes should be made part of the broader education and training services offered to all workers, regardless of their skill level.

The worker-centered strategy also recognizes that learning is a democratic, inclusive and open process. The programme content is as broad as possible, not limited to the most basic skill. Individual needs will have to be taken into account and each learner takes responsibility for setting his or her own learning goals. (Sarmiento & Kay, 1990: 25)

This approach enables workers to fulfil many different kinds of learning objectives - from occupational advancement to self-improvement. Furthermore, it will allow the worker to achieve the goals he or she has set out, for example, to be able to read to their children or gain confidence and assume greater control over their lives. Building on this concept of worker-centered learning, together with the research in the industry, the union can establish a workplace literacy programme that will stand as a model for other workers.

# CHAPTER TEN

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This research has been concerned with a needs assessment for a workplace literacy programme. It has discussed the historical perspective of literacy, the various definitions of literacy, and it examined literacy in an economic and social context. The research has shown the purpose of literacy and what the roles of business and labour should be with regard to the implementation of literacy programmes. It also looked at the relationship between literacy in the workplace and job performance. The results of the survey were useful in determining the skills levels of the workers.

Workplace literacy programmes are not new. The study has shown the need for a competitive workforce and the need for developing a workplace literacy programme, which will provide skills training and language training for nonnative English speakers.

Workplace -based programmes differ traditionally from classroom based literacy with a workplace component. This kind of programme will take place on the work site, in response to the needs identified by the participants in the study. Through the employers' perspective job-related literacy education is seen as education related to specific skills. Furthermore, literacy programmes have powerful potential for promoting learning. Literacy can reach people through the various approach discussed in chapter four but will also need some adaptation in terms of the specific needs of workers. Workers who cannot attend night classes will be allowed to attend classes during other specified times. The literacy programmes can be tailored to satisfy the needs and the interest of the workers concerned.

The problem of literacy within the workplace is far-reaching and complex. It includes the overall perception of literacy as an issue of concern within the organisation, the philosophy of how the business operates, strategies regarding hiring and retaining employees, and the overall commitment of the organisation to work skills literacy.

It is important to note the context in which the employees are held. If employees are said to be resources to “get the job done” and little more, then the support for literacy programmes is virtually non-existent. However, if we consider the employees as resources for the job at hand as well as for future positions, work skills training, and in many cases literacy programmes are supported and become an integral part to the overall planning and design of training programmes. What then is the context for a commitment to literacy programmes? There are basically three areas:

- a). “Get the job done” - in other words to maintain the status quo and the emphasis on maintaining production.
- b). “Work skills literacy” - developing skills and promoting the worker and looking to the future of the organisation.
- c). “Work skills literacy and personal literacy” - to develop skills, promote the worker and enhance the quality of the person’s life.

The distinctions that exist among these three areas are portrayed in the chart. (see appendix vi) (Omega Group Inc. 1989: 13)

The needs of the workplace differ from company to company. The needs of the textile industry is markedly different to that of the highly technological manufacturer of automobiles. One skill that has now become pervasive throughout all industries is the computer related skills and technology. The marked shift from the typewriter to a word-processor to a computer clearly indicates the move from old to new technology. Projections of jobs of the future call for greater attention to technology and therefore greater development of basic skills of reading comprehension, writing, mathematics, computer literacy, oral communication and listening levels exceeding standard 10. Mathes (1988) states that “workplace literacy is nothing more than a new “box of tools” to prepare the worker for the new and emerging jobs.” (Mathes, 1988: 8)

This study concentrated on the semi/unskilled workers, but do the companies recognize a need for basic skills training? In order to answer this question further research is

needed to determine employer attitudes with respect to literacy training in their workplace.

The present research has identified certain elements which are key success of a workplace literacy programme. Adults learn best what they can directly apply. Therefore, programme development should be based upon task analysis. Effective programmes will use job-related instructional materials and simulations as a teaching/learning strategy. It would not be productive for any company to allow its employees to take on new jobs without their basic tools. In today's and tomorrow's society, reading, writing, speaking, listening, mathematics, problem solving, and computer literacy have clearly become the tools of literacy in the workplace.

The Omega Group Inc. (1989) revealed some recommendations from Executives regarding literacy efforts:

1. Position literacy as everybody's problem. Major corporations can support their employees and encourage them to attend programmes.
2. Dramatise the story of workplace education within the schools, underscoring the importance of workplace literacy skills to students while they are still in school.
3. Educate businesses in the ways in which they can contribute and become involved.
4. Highlights the advantages that accrue to a company that invests in literacy.
5. Provide exposure to employers of the successful implementation of workplace literacy programmes and offer training to duplicate these success.
6. Provide additional funding for the school system to expand pre-school programmes.
7. Administer standardized achievement tests to all school-system, public and private.

The reason for this is that schools are failing. People are graduating without knowing the basics.

In conclusion, we must note that this study is just the beginning, and that the literacy field is a very complex one. Literacy is not something which can be taught overnight.

Hutton points out that reading and writing are fragile and perishable skills, which need to be integrated, sustained and actively supported in order to survive. ( Hutton, 1992: 258 )

An important point to remember is that literacy training in the workplace will not automatically increase production and improve the peoples' quality of life. We must remember that people are illiterate because they are poor and under privileged and therefore we cannot justify literacy as an agent for social change. However, if literacy is taught well enough, it will certainly have an impact on peoples' lives and in this way contribute to their development. People should not be given false hopes that literacy will make them rich and trouble free, instead there should be ways to sustain peoples' motivation for literacy.



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## **APPENDIX**

## Examples of Curriculum for Each Type of Literacy Program Reading<sup>1</sup>

<b>Program Type:</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Mid-Level</b>	<b>Complex</b>
<b>General</b>	Reads notice on AIDS and locates hotline number.	Reads several articles to determine community needs for AIDS patients.	Researches AIDS, makes recommendations on community actions and presents to local group.
<b>Work-Related</b>	Reads benefits package and identifies maternity benefits.	Reads and compares two different health plans' maternity benefits and selects the best coverage.	Participates on committee to assess maternity benefits packages, comes to a meeting prepared to recommend the best plan.
<b>Job-Specific</b>	Plant worker reads familiar directions in operations manual and performs the described tasks.	Plant worker reads unfamiliar directions in the operations manual of a new machine, refers to another manual for assistance in understanding the directions in the new manual and performs the described task.	Plant worker encounters a problem with a new machine, reads operations manual, reads repair guide, discusses the problem with a co-worker, determines cause of problem, reports information and his conclusion to his supervisor.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from MATRICES Consultants, Inc. Workplace Literacy Seminar Workbook, 1987. P.6-5.



## Math<sup>2</sup>

<b>Program Type:</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Mid-Level</b>	<b>Complex</b>
<b>General</b>	Adds cost of 2 items on menu.	Reads menu, figures cost of 3 items and subtracts cost of meal from \$10.00.	At lunch with co-workers, determines who ordered what, collects money from each person and calculates the change each should receive. Communicates these calculations to each co-worker.
<b>Work-Related</b>	Deposits money collected for retirement party in a designated account.	Calculates party costs by cost categories and total expenses.	Develops final budget plan to make presentation to committee about costs for retirement party.
<b>Job-Specific</b>	Production worker figures average weight of jars of popcorn on each hour of shift, adds total weight per hour and divides by number of jars per hour.	Production worker plots averages on graph and compares to company guidelines for jar weights.	Production worker determines why second hour showed overweight; reports findings to supervisor and discusses alternative solutions.

## Writing<sup>1</sup>

Program Type:	Basic	Mid-Level	Complex
<b>General</b>	Writes one or two paragraphs on how to choose a location for a summer vacation.	Reads several vacation guides on the National Parks. Writes to resorts in the parks to obtain information on price of rooms, meals included and activities.	Calls several travel agents to obtain information on package plans to National Parks. Takes notes and uses information to write a column for nature club newsletter.
<b>Work-Related</b>	Fills out an application for a special training program offered by company for employees interested in transferring to a newly formed department.	Writes to the head of the Training Department stating why employee's previous job experiences qualify him for the special training program.	Discusses training opportunities with the supervisor and the training director to obtain information and advice. Writes a letter to the new department head explaining his qualifications and interest in the new position.
<b>Job-Specific</b>	Customer service representative takes phone message for supervisor, records name, number of caller and reason for call.	Customer service representative handles request for information call. Looks up information in several sources and provides response to caller. Records what transpired.	Customer service representative receives complaint; assesses why caller has problem. Consults with others on staff to determine solution and explains to caller. When the caller is satisfied, transaction is summarized in a written report.

### International events and international literacy work

- 1920 - 1930s** Post-war Bolshevik revolution  
**1919 - 1939** USSR literacy campaign  
**1930 - 1940s** Economic depression  
Laubach missionary work in Philippines: literacy work used to win people over to Christianity.
- 1940 - 1950s**  
**1941** Laubach established Committee on World Literacy and Literature  
**1945** UN established  
**1946** Unesco established along with an education arm  
Unesco's two incompatible approaches to literacy:  
1. human rights (moral)  
2. growth, investment in human capital (material).  
**1945 - 1947** Mass literacy campaign in Vietnam
- 1950 - 1960s**  
Unesco's programme of fundamental education  
Start of anti-illiteracy campaigns in People's Republic of China  
**1955** Unesco abandons fundamental education in favour of development strategy  
Laubach establishes Laubach Literacy Inc.  
**Late 1950s** Decolonisation of Africa
- 1960 - 1970s**  
**Development decade:**  
Literacy seen as an investment in development  
Criticism of 'modernisation' = dependency theory (imperialism of West)  
**1961** Cuban literacy campaign  
Unesco's 10-year programme to establish universal literacy  
**1964** Unesco - EWLP 'functional literacy and skills training': 11 countries funded by 50 billion dollars from the UNDP  
**1967 - 1980** Brazilian literacy movement
- 1970 - 1980s**  
Spread of Freire's ideas  
**1974** EWLP funding stopped  
**1975** International symposium for literacy, Persepolis - flexibility, Freirean, case-by-case approach  
**1975 - 1985** Unesco gives more attention to schools
- 1980 - 1990s**  
**1980** Nicaraguan literacy campaign  
**1990** International Literacy Year - decade of literacy declared

INDUSTRIAL & LABOUR STUDIES (MASTERS)  
UNIVERSITY OF NATAL  
WORKPLACE LITERACY PROGRAMME  
NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

SECTION 1

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_

2. Age \_\_\_\_\_ yrs Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_

3. Sex M  F

4. Job title \_\_\_\_\_

5. Union \_\_\_\_\_

6. Company name \_\_\_\_\_

7. Salaried  Hourly employee

8. Level of Education

Primary  High school  University/College  None

9. Previous occupation

length of time \_\_\_\_\_ yrs

10. Are you fluent in the following languages ?

	SPEAK	READ	WRITE
English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Afrikaans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Zulu	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Xhosa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 2

1. Is your job description reflective of the work you do?

Yes  No  if not, how is it different \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you perform any other duties? Yes  No

3. What changes have you seen in your job ?

technological  managerial  social  other

4. How does your job fit in relation to other jobs in the company? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Are you receiving any training to help you learn about

a). your present job

b). new job

6. Are there changes you would make in work practices that would help you perform better ?

\_\_\_\_\_

7.a). Does the equipment you use help make the job easier ?

Yes  No

b). What would help you perform your job better ?

Different equipment

Different practices

Education

Training

8. What kinds of basic skills are needed to do your job?

computing

listening

problem-solving

speaking

reading

writing

team-building

9. How frequently do you use the basic skills identified?

	OFTEN	LESS OFTEN
computing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
listening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
problem-solving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
team-building	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Are there any job-related difficulties in the following areas?

	yes	no
safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
teamwork	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
other (specify) _____		

SECTION 3

1. Are you required to:

a. work independently  work in a team  work in a cell

b. work within guidelines or rules  work without structure  supervision

c. communicate with other individuals?

nonverbally  verbally  in writing  in a group

in a language other than your own language  by questioning

d. measure and record quality methods (eg. inspection)?

e. how frequently does your job duties or work environment change? often sometimes never

SECTION 4

1. Do you like to read ? yes  no

2. What kind of reading do you do ?

	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
PLEASURE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NEWSPAPER/MAGAZINES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TO CHILDREN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
WORK-RELATED	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you think your job will require more or less reading in the future ?

More  Less

4. Do you use writing skills ?

Yes  No

If yes, what kind ? (eg. letters, applications etc) \_\_\_\_\_

5. What kinds of written materials do use in your job ?

- Manuals
- Inventory sheets
- safety notices
- operating instructions
- handbooks

other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

6. What difficulty do you have when you use those written materials ?

hard to use  complex language  other problems

7. What training have you been given to help you use those materials ?

formal training  informal training  none

8. Do you use mathematic on a regular basis ?

Yes  No

If yes, what form ? (eg. calculators, balancing books etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

SECTION 5

1.a). Are you in any type of training programme ?

Yes  No

If Yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_

b). Are there plans for future training programmes ?

yes  No

2. Do you feel you have the necessary reading, writing, maths and communication skills to be successful in job-related, workplace literacy programme ?

	yes	no
Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maths	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. In general, do you think other people you work with might benefit from a job-related literacy programme

YES  NO  UNSURE

3. Would you be interested in a workplace literacy programme which will help you improve your skills and job performance ?

YES  NO  UNSURE

5. What might make you more likely to enroll for such a programme; ie. what kinds of incentives offered by your company or union would help you ? (eg. child-care; transport etc.)

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6. Where would you or a worker like yourself be most likely to attend classes ?

on site  school (in your area)  university  union office

7. What days and times would be most suitable to you ?

a). weekdays / evenings

weekdays / daytime

b). week-ends/ evenings

week-ends/ daytime