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# Primary Education, Mass Literacy, Family Planning And Women's Programme In Ten Intensive Shawnirvar Thanas Of Bangladesh

VOL. I

REPORT

BANGLADESH ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY EDUCATION (BACE)
HOUSE 20, ROAD 7, DHANMONDI, DACCA.
APRIL 1981.

# PRIMARY EDUCATION, MASS LITERACY, FAMILY PLANNING AND WOMEN'S PROGRAMME IN TEN INTENSIVE SHAWNIRVAR THANAS OF BANGLADESH

Vol. I

REPORT

*With the compliments of*
*Bangladesh Association for*
*Community Education (BACE)*

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Table of Contents

Vol.


| | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| Foreword | | (i) |
| Acknowledgement | | (ii) |
| Section 1. | Overview and Summary of Findings | 1 - 7 |
| Section 2. | Primary Education | 8 - 14 |
| Section 3. | Family Planning and Women's Programmes | 15-21 |
| Section 4. | Mass Literacy | 22 - 26 |
| Section 5. | Opinion leaders' View | 27 - 30 |


Vol. II


| | |
|---|---|
| List of Tables | i - v |
| Tables | 1 - 45 |
| Appendixes | 46 - 47 |


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## FOREWORD

I have the pleasure of presenting the evaluation report on Primary Education, Mass Literacy, Family Planning and Women's Programme in ten Shawnirvar Intensive Thanas, conducted by the Bangladesh Association for Community Education.

I congratulate Dr. Ellen Sattar, Vice-Chairman, BACE under whose guidance the survey was conducted and the report has been finalised. I also appreciate painstaking hardwork of the Project Manager, Mr. Wahidur Rahman and all others in BACE and the Proggani Consultants Ltd. who participated in the survey work.

The major findings clearly indicate the positive impact of Shawnirvar movement on rural development. I hope that the report will be useful to the Shawnirvar workers and all those interested in community participation in rural development.

Mr. M. Selim
Education Adviser to the Ministry of
Education and Chairman, Bangladesh
Association for Community Education.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The generous help from the consultants and professional staff of M/S. Proggani Consultants Ltd., especially Mr. Ajmal H. Ahmed and Mrs. Rezia Ahmed, also Mr. H.A. Rabib, Field Operation Manager and Mr. Mofazzal Hossain, Statistician-in-charge Editing and Tabulation Section deserves our thanks.

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The Shawnirvar workers who assisted survey teams and the respondents who participated in the survey deserve our gratitude.

Wahidur Rahman
Project Manager
BACE

# Primary Education, Mass Literacy, Family Planning and Women's Programmes in Shawnirvar Thanas of Bangladesh

Section 1

## Overview and Summary of Findings

### Overview

One of the major focus of the Government in pursuing a rural development strategy is to organise efforts to achieve goals of universal primary school enrolment and literacy, and increased family planning acceptance rates in the rural areas. Such a strategy presupposes a village level organisation to initiate, organize and implement sectoral programmes by ensuring community participation. At the back-drop of growing awareness among concerned citizens about the importance of community participation, the Shawnirvar movement grew and spread in many areas of the country. The Shawnirvar movement encompases the idea of local level participation in rural development activities and the creation of effective demand for various services provided by the Government. A Shawnirvar village is expected to be more organized in terms of rural, social and economic development programmes because of participatory role on the part of community leaders as well as the recipients of services.

Any solution of the problem of ever increasing population and mass illiteracy in the villages needs full support of rural communities. In Bangladesh family planning acceptors are about 16% percent of fertile couples. Only 50% percent of rural children enrol in primary schools and less than one third of those stay long enough to attain literacy. Adult literacy rates for males and females are 30% and 12% percent respectively and 24% for the whole population. In all these areas there is an acute need for improvement. Gradually, these fields became integral parts of Shawnirvar programme although the Shawnirvar movement in its early phase concentrated mainly on agricultural development.

Education and family planning are among basic rights of people. Rural development strategy should aim at providing services to fulfill these basic needs. Conventional top-down development approach has its limitations in ensuring participation of rural masses. The Shawnirvar movement made a serious attempt to ensure participation of rural people in development activities.

If the Shawnirvar villages offer a viable approach to improve literacy, primary school enrolment and retention, and to increase family planning acceptance and continuation rates, then those aspects of successful Shawnirvar activities need careful analysis and in particular the factors which may account for success should be identified.

The Bangladesh Association for Community Education was entrusted with the task of studying ten Shawnirvar villages selected from each of the ten intensive Shawnirvar thanas. The study was conducted keeping the following objectives : to identify particular factors which may account for success in Shawnirvar villages of family planning acceptance and increased female activities, mass literacy and primary school enrolment. The survey investigated the following hypotheses.

Hypotheses :

(1) that in Shawnirvar villages there will be higher enrolment and greater retention of pupils in primary education than usual;

(2) that in Shawnirvar villages there will be a higher level and more sustained participation rate in mass literacy programmes than in the country in general;

(3) that in Shawnirvar villages, the rates of family planning acceptance and continuation will be higher than in the rest of the country in general;

(4) that women's activities will have increased after the introduction of Shawnirvar programme;

(5) that mass literacy programmes will be more successful in Shawnirvar areas than in the rest of the country;

(6) that in Shawnirvar areas opinion leaders will be aware of rural needs and articulate ways to fulfill those needs.

Methodology

The survey area covered ten Shawnirvar villages in ten intensive Shawnirvar thanas of the country. From a list of the Shawnirvar villages in those thanas one village from each thana was selected at random, for the purpose of the study. The list of villages is given at Appendix 'A'. Questionnaire were designed and used for primary education, mass literacy, family planning, women's programme and responses of opinion leaders.

A separate questionnaire was designed to collect data on school facility, teaching method, school enrolment and attendance covering the primary education.

In one village there was no primary school, one school in adjacent village was selected for survey. In each case, the headmaster of the primary school was interviewed for collecting necessary information.

The second set of questionnaire was designed to collect information on the performance of mass literacy programme. On mass literacy fifteen percent heads of households were interviewed. In those villages, where sample size on fifteen percent basis, was less than fifty, at least fifty heads of households were selected for interviewing. Following this procedure, the sample of 527 households were selected from the 2,606 listed households and the overall sampling function was 20%.

The third set of questionnaire was designed to collect information on the performance of family planning acceptance and continuation rate and also level of activities under women's programme and 15% of all fertile couples were selected at random for interview. In case the sample size of 15% of fertile couples was less than fifty, more persons were interviewed to make the sample size fifty. Thus 500 out of 1,880 fertile couples of the survey villages were interviewed giving a sample size of 26.6%.

The fourth set of questionnaire was designed to collect views of opinion leaders such as Co-operative Manager, Mosque Imam, Gram Prodhan and Shawnirvar workers on primary education, mass literacy, family planning, women's programme, and co-operation of officials and non-officials in rural development activities.

Summary of Findings and Recommendations:

Primary Education

Eleven rural schools in ten Shawnirvar thanas were surveyed. All the schools were semi-pucca at varying conditions of repairs. Generally these schools were better furnished and better equipped than other rural primary schools. Over half the schools had attached cultivated land or fish ponds and used the income for school maintenance. Teachers in these schools were better educated and had a higher proportion of trained teachers than the national average.

Class size for grades 2-5 is higher than average, distribution of students between grades is better than usual and grade 5 is much larger than usual. Cohort retention of the 1976 cohort is the same as the national level. Enrolment is far better than the national average, 274 per school. Percentage of girls enrolled is 44 compared with a national average of 38. Half of these schools had opened an infant class between 1976-80.

The general conclusion reached is that primary education in the Shawnirvar areas is superior to general rural primary education. The schools in Shawnirvar areas were found to be better when compared with the recent FREPD survey and with BANEBIS data. One may therefore, conclude that Shawnirvar has a strong positive impact on primary education.

Recommendation:

(1) Stop repetition; promote students automatically each year.
(2) Open infant classes in or near primary schools.
(3) Involve the local community in primary education.
(4) Encourage income generating activities to raise funds for maintenance, furniture and equipment.
(5) Annual follow up of these schools to monitor performance should be made by Shawnirvar.

Mass Literacy:

The literacy rate in Shawnirvar villages is 48% as compared to national literacy rate of 24%. Moreover it was found in Shawnirvar villages that another 35% knew alphabets and how to sign names. This information adds a new dimension to mass literacy programme.

Out of 527 heads of households interviewed, 87 percent were literate. About 59% of them had formal schooling, 37% acquired literacy by participating in mass literacy programme and the remaining 3.5% earned literacy skill with the help of family members and relatives. Out of 322 illiterate adult members of households, 74% were willing to join mass literacy programme. The rest mentioned their inability to participate in the programme due to old age difficulties, eye-sight, lack of facilities or unfavourable time schedules.

The vast majority (about 89%) of the respondents acknowledged that Shawnirvar programme had considerable influence on the removal of illiteracy, 9% were, however, indifferent or ignorant of mass literacy programme and 1% had a negative view. A high level of participation of respondents(69%) in rural

development programmes organised in their villages is indicative of extensive community participation in Shawnirvar activities.

Recommendations:

(1) Though small there being still some indifference or ignorance about mass literacy programme, further intensive motivational activities are needed.

(2) Shawnirvar mass literacy programme must be closely coordinated with the Shawnirvar Gram Sarkar.

(3) All the local institutions such as mosques, schools, youth organisation, cooperative and other local institutions must be involved in the literacy programme.

(4) Literacy campaigns should be linked up with seasonal agricultural activities, school holidays, etc.

(5) Officers of the Ministry of Education and attached Departments should monitor progress of mass literacy programme activities in Shawnirvar areas during official tours and visits.

(6) Primary school teachers and local P.T.I. should be made responsible for implementation and evaluation work.

(7) Emphasis should be given on religious obligation of becoming educated.

Family Planning and Women's activities:

Five hundred fertile couples out of 1880 (26.6%) were interviewed. Individuals interviewed constituted 50% male and 50% female. To test level of female activities under women's programme, female respondents and wives of male respondents were interviewed. In addition 527 heads of households, 20% from a list of 2606 households, were interviewed regarding adult female members' (aged 14 years and above) activities. Mean age of male respondents was 35 years, while the average age of female respondents was 28 years. Difference in mean age between male and female respondents was about 7 years. This difference of age is an indication of male-female difference of age at the time of marriage. A majority (45.8%) of male respondents were engaged in farming. About 20% were businessmen, 15.8% were day labourers and 15.0% were engaged in salaried jobs and only 4 men (0.8%) were fully unemployed. Nearly all female respondents and wives of male respondents were housewives (95.4%); only 3 women (0.6%) were engaged in salaried services; and 20 women(4.0%) were engaged in some other

occupations

The overall average number of living children for all respondents is 2.8. The average number of live-births does not differ much between occupational categories. The relatively well-off families seem to have more live-births. Couples where both husbands and wives were illiterate, the average number of living children were higher than those one or both were literate. The contraceptive practices was 50.8% of fertile couples. This compares with the current national average practice level of 16 percent. Consistent with this high contraception prevalance, the birth rate as estimated from the fertility history of the couples of preceedings 12 months is 34.2% for 1000 population. The rate of infant mortality in the area is low at 76.3 per 1000 live births as compared to the national average of 142.

The exponential population growth rate as estimated by the difference between 1974 census population and this survey is 1.67% percent. It is assumed that there has been little or no migration, in or out, in the survey villages. Female activities have also increased considerably in Shawnirvar villages, particularly in income-earning, social services and female participation in rural development activities.

Recommendations:

(1) Motivational work together with supply of contraception should be continued.

(2) Further motivational work is needed to counteract religious feelings.

(3) More promotional and supportive activities are needed to mobilize women's productive forces.

(4) The importance of conventional and traditional family planning methods should be emphasized in the national family planning programme.

(5) The crucial role of Shawnirvar Gram Sarkars and Community Leaders in family planning must be acknowledged and effectively utilized by the government.

Attitude of opinion leaders:

The survey interviewed Gram Prodhans, cooperative managers, Mosque Imams and Shawnirvar workers on their attitude towards primary education, mass literacy, family planning, women's programme, and cooperation of officials and non-officials on rural development. Twenty-three percent of the opinion leaders had about one year's experience; 25% had experience between one to two years; and the rest 53% had been associated with the Shawnirvar programme for more than three years.

On the issue of primary education and the mass literacy programme the majority of the opinion leaders held a favourable view. Most of them opined that position had improved after introduction of Shawnirvar programmes. Some of the leaders (about 3-5%) recommended offering incentives such as prizes for better performance among villages. Only 15% stated that the role of U.P. Chairman was not significant. There was no adverse opinion about the role of the TEO and the C.O.(Dev.). All opinion leaders supported family planning and 35% indicated that religious views were a problem for a more effective family planning programme.

## Section 2

### Primary Education

The purpose of this investigation was to test the hypothesis that in Shawnirvar villages there would be a higher enrolment and greater retention of pupils in primary education than usual.

The eleven schools surveyed were located in the Shawnirvar thanas. Their names and locations are given in appendix B. There were variations between them. Schools in the northern districts having poorer facilities, less enrolment, less retention and more repetition; whereas other schools enroled students in higher numbers and were well equipped with furniture and teaching aids. This report states the average; like all averages it covers variations but serves to indicate general trends and the overall pattern found in these widely dispersed schools. The only factor they have in common is that each is located in an area which has had some Shawnirvar activities.

Throughout this report the average of the Shawnirvar schools is compared with national averages where ever possible. The Foundation for Research in Educational Planning and Development published an Interim Report of a national sample survey on education in 1979. The National Foundation for Research in Human Resource Development published a report on Primary Education in 1980. Both these reports are used for comparative data. Other sources of comparative data include the Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics and the 1977 survey of Primary Education by the Institute of Education and Research.

Abbreviations used in this section of the report:

| | |
|---|---|
| FREPD | Foundation for Research in Educational Planning and Development. |
| NFRHRD | National Foundation for Research in Human Resource Development. |
| BANBEIS | Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics. |
| I.E.R. | Institute of Education and Research. |

Location and Condition

There does not appear to be much relationship between the location and condition of the school, and its enrolment. Five of the schools were in relatively isolated locations with few or no supporting social infrastructures nearby. Four had superior locations near main roads, other educational institutions, bazars and post offices. The locations of the remaining two were fair.

Physical conditions of all the schools varied; all were semi-pucca, seven were in good condition meaning that they were totally secure, two were fair and two were in poor condition of repairs.

Seven schools had land in varying accounts and six used it for income generating purposes such as growing rice, vegetables and fruits or rearing fish. Income varied between Tk. 37/- to over Tk. 3,000/-. Excluding the latter school, the average income was Tk. 274/- . Income was spent on the schools themselves, for repairs and maintenance of the building and equipment. In those which did not gain any such income, teachers and students ate the produce.

Equipment and Furniture.

The schools were adequately equipped with furniture but none had enough benches for the number of students enrolled to sit in comfort. They averaged 18 high benches and 20 low benches each.

An average total of 38 benches per school is far in excess of the national average. The primary schools surveyed by FREPD in 1979 averaged 12 benches each. Table 1 shows the comparative data. The schools in Shawnirvar areas are better on average than the FREPD schools. They have more blackboards, almirahs, desks and chairs than the average. They averaged one almirah each, six blackboards, six chairs, and four teachers' desks, over twice the number of furniture per school than was found in the FREPD survey schools.

With respect to equipment the schools in the Shawnirvar areas varied considerably. Four had globes, seven had wall maps, five had charts, three had a first aid kit, one had games equipment, one had many agricultural tools and three had some science equipment. This shows the Shawnirvar schools to be about the same as the schools in the FREPD study. They are slightly better equipped with respect to agricultural and scientific aids.

Teachers

In the eleven Shawnirvar schools surveyed 47 percent of the teachers were qualified at S.S.C. only and 52 percent were qualified at H.S.C. or higher. In rural Bangladesh 56 percent of all teachers are qualified at S.S.C. and 34 percent are H.S.C. or higher. This shows the teachers in the Shawnirvar schools are better educated than the rural national average. Moreover, 90 percent of these teachers are trained compared with the national average of 72 percent. Table 3 shows a comparison with the national average rural teaching force.

Teachers' Problems

Headmasters were asked to give their opinion about the kinds of problems faced by the teachers.

Few mentioned more than one or two, some said there were none of significance. The main problem was always financial either for the teachers or because the school had no money for needed furniture or equipment. The second most common problem was a concern for accommodation, either the school premises was too small for the number of students or there was not enough seating accommodation. In two cases the heavy load of the mass literacy campaign was mentioned.

Enrolment

Total enrolment in the eleven primary schools in 1980 is shown in Table 4. It was 3013 with an average of 274 per school as compared to an average of 168 per school in the FREPD study.

In the Shawnirvar schools teacher : student ratio is high, 1:45. This is the natural result of high enrolment. The FREPD study found a teacher: student ratio of 1:38, a reflection of the lower enrolment in these schools.

Table 5 shows the enrolment over a five year period. Such figures do indicate a general pattern. The five year period has been one of political stability, good harvests and only two minor natural calamities, a drought in 1979 and some flooding in 1980.

The enrolment totals show increases in 1977 and then a drop in 1978. Since then enrolment has increased again slightly and has passed the 1976 levels. The 1978 drop in enrolment may be accounted for by the increased price of text books which came into force then; prices were increased by four times. Class one enrolment figures in Table 6 further illustrates this point, enrolments are almost static since 1978.

Fluctuating enrolment figures 1976-80 are found in the national statistics. The Shawnirvar schools merely reflect the general pattern but at a higher than average level of total enrolment.

This better enrolment position is further borne out if the average class size is compared with the national average. Table 7 shows that the class size is significantly higher than the national average, particularly in classes 2-5. The class 5 average is 27 compared with a national average of 19. This means more children are coming into the Shawnirvar schools and more are being retained in the system. These areas should be increasing their overall literacy rate faster than the nation as a whole for children retained up to class 5 will keep their literacy skills into adulthood.

Also, distribution of students between classes is better in the Shawnirvar schools. A norm of distribution should be 20 percent in each class. Table 8 shows the percentage of distribution in the Shawnirvar schools and the national average. Although the Shawnirvar schools display the same pattern of massive concentration of students in the lower grades, the magnitude is slightly less and the distribution between classes is closer to the norm than the national average. Class one has 35 percent of enrolment and class five 11 percent compared with 41 percent and 9 percent respectively at the national level.

Four of these schools had a student composition of over fifty percent from the poor and landless families. This is higher than the usual rural schools which have an estimated one-third from such families.

Retention

Cohort retention of the 1976 cohort in the Shawnirvar schools is 30 percent the same as the national average. Table 9 shows the retention rate in the Shawnirvar schools of the 1976 cohort. The corresponding drop-out rate of 70 percent is not an improvement over the rural primary schools in general.

The 1977 cohort has done slightly better than the 1976, retaining 41 percent of students up to grade 4, compared with 1976 national cohort retention of 38 percent to grade 4. This might mean slightly better retention to grade 5 in 1981.

Repetition

Repetition is one of the worst problems in the primary schools. In the Shawnirvar schools it averages 13 percent of total enrolment(see Table 10). There was wide variation in the schools' rate of repetition, some had abolished it altogether, in some it was about 20 percent. The only comparable national data

available was published by I.E.R. in 1977 based on 1974 data, which gave a repetition rate of 17% for rural schools(Table II).

Girls' and infants' enrolment.

The Shawnirvar primary schools enrol more girl students than usual. Girls account for a high 44 percent of total enrolment in 1980 compared with the national average of 38 percent.

A significiant fact about enrolment is that the number of students in the infant class has grown over the past six years from 62 to 482. This is an indication of the desire for education and of the schools' accommodation to that desire. The infant class is like Kindergarten(K.G.) and it prepares the students with the basic skills of reading and writing so that they are better prepared to enter class one.

There were five attached infant classes in 1980 among the eleven schools and in addition two more schools received students who had attended separate "feeder schools" nearby. Thus in seven of these schools students entering 1 or 2 had some educational experience already.

Impact of Shawnirvar

Out of the eleven schools surveyed, heads of ten stated that the position of primary education had improved since the introduction of Shawnirvar programme into the area. One found no change. About half of the positive responses found slight change for the better and the remaining half found a great deal of change for the better.

Conclusion.

This survey of eleven schools in 10 dispersed Shawnirvar thanas found many factors which the schools had in common. Half were located in areas where the social infrustructure was good with other public institutions nearby and good communications and transportation facilities available. All these schools were better furnished and better equipped than the average rural school. Several had raised their own funds for these items.

Teachers in these schools were 90 percent trained and were educated to higher levels than average for rural primary teachers. Probably better educated and well motivated teachers were attracted to and stayed in these schools.

Six of the seven land-owning schools seized their opportunity to generate some income either in cash or kind. These Shawnirvar schools generated a useful amount of money for educational purposes.

Enrolment in 1980 in these schools was higher than average, as was the ratio of girl students enrolled. Class size and distribution of enrolment between classes, were better than the national average. Thus the hypothesis that Shawnirvar villages will have better enrolment has been found correct.

Cohort retention 1976-80 is the same as the national average and retention of the 1977 cohort looked slightly better up to class 4. Other positive facts which emerged from the survey were that repetition in the Shawnirvar schools averages 13 percent, and that many of the Shawnirvar schools have opened infant class during the past five years. In a largely pre-literate society like Bangladesh the infant class is a much needed institution giving the children a headstart for later educational growth. The Head Teachers were generally of the opinion that Shawnirvar had had a positive impact upon the state of primary education.

The primary schools in the Shawnirvar areas are showing a general pattern which, in the years to come, should grow stronger and lead to higher levels of retention. The students are being moved through the Shawnirvar schools in larger numbers, class 1 has a reduced percentage of total enrolment, class 5 is larger than usual, and more infant classes are being opened. All these signs are positive. They should lead these areas to having higher literacy rates than the rural average.

Shawnirvar had paid little attention to education until the past three years. Schools were viewed as places in which to store surplus rice in the early days of the movement. Today education is seen as an integral part of total rural development. Shawnirvar's indirect impact on primary education in the 2-3 years it has been in existence is an example of how general development efforts can benefit more people through greater participation, especially of the disadvantaged groups, girls and students from poor and landless families.

Primary education in the Shawnirvar areas is better in many ways than primary education in non-Shawnirvar areas. Attendance at school is an indirect measure of socio-economic status. As more children in Shawnirvar areas attend school, the general level of socio-economic development in those areas must have been advancing over the past half decade and is obviously superior to rural Bangladesh in general.

General Recommendations

(1) Stop repetition; promote students automatically each year.

(2) Open infant classes in or near primary schools.

(3) Involve the local community in primary education.

(4) Encourage income generating activities to raise funds for maintenance, furniture and equipment.

(5) Annual follow up of these schools to monitor performance should be made by Shawnirvar.

## Section 3

## Family Planning and Women's Programmes

The purpose of this survey was to test the hypotheses that(i) in Shawnirvar villages the number of family planning acceptors and contraceptive pervalance rate are higher than usual and (ii) female activities have increased after the introduction of Shawnirvar programme.

The survey covered 10 Shawnirvar villages selected at random in 10 intensive Shawnirvar thanas.(Appendix 'A' shows the list of villages.) Five hundred out of 1,880 fertile couples, or 26.6% of which half male and half female, were interviewed. Five hundred twenty seven family heads, 20% from a list of 2,606 households, were interviewed regarding activities of adult female members (aged 14 and above). The villages had been under Shawnirvar programme from 2 to 6 years. For comparison, Bangladesh Fertility Survey'75 and Contraceptive Prevalance Survey'79 and national data from the Planning Commission were used.

### Socio-demographic Characterestics:

#### Age

Mean age of male respondents was 35 years, while the average age of female respondents was 28 years (Table 12). Difference in mean age between male and female respondents was about 7 years. This difference of age was indicative of the difference of ages at the time of marriage between male and female spouses. The highest number of male respondents, 44.8% were between the age group of 30-39 years and those of the female respondents 51.6% fell in the age groups of 20-29 years. This indicates the age difference of male and female respondents respectively. Out of the total 250 female respondents, 129 or 51.6% were in the age group of 20-29 years and only 31 or 12% were in the age group of 15-19 years. This probably shows a trend of late marriage among the males and females in Shawnirvar villages.

#### Occupation

A majority (45.8%) of male respondents and husbands of female respondents were engaged in farming; 20% were businessmen; 15.8% were day-labourers and 15.0% were engaged in salaried services. It is significant to note that only 4 men (0.8%) were fully unemployed. Nearly all the female respondents and wives of male respondents were housewives (95.4%). Only 3 women (0.6%) were engaged in salaried services and 20 (4.0%) were engaged in some other occupations(Table 13

As housewives, the female members play a vital role in the upbringing of their children, agricultural activities and food processing.

Education

The literacy rate among the male respondents and husbands of female respondents were 62.4% and that among female respondents and wives of male respondents 44.8% (Table 14). About 30% of male respondents and husbands of female respondents had shakwargan/Barnoprichay (signing names/knowledge of alphabets), while 42.6% female respondents and wives of male respondents had also shakhwargan/Barnoparichay. The next highest group (23.4% and 21.8%), of male and female respondents respectively had attained primary education. The literacy rate was much above the national average of 30% and 12% respectively for males and females.

Religion

Eighty four percent of the respondents were Muslims and 16% were Hindus. This represents almost national ratio for Muslims and Hindus (Table 15).

Duration of married life and number of living children.

Table 16 shows that the average number of living children, as expected, is positively associated with the length of married life. The average number of living children is only 0.7 for those married for 4 years, which gradually increased to 1.9, 3.5, 4.5 and 6.5 for those married for 5-9, 10-14, 15-19 and 20 years or more respectively. The overall average number of children for all respondents is 2.8.

Occupation and number of live-birth.

The average number of live-births does not differ much between occupational categories, such as farming, day-labourer, businessmen and service holders (Table 17). Barring the small number of cases in the unemployed category, the business group shows the largest average number of live-births at 3.5, followed by day-labourer at 3.1, service-holders at 3.1 and farmers at 3.0. The relatively well-off families seem to have more live-births.

Educational level and number of live-birth

As shown in Table 18, couples where both husbands and wives are illiterate, the average number of living children were higher (3.3), than those where one or both were literate (3.0).

Birth, infant mortality and growth rate

Table 19 shows that 131 respondents (26.2%) had a live-birth in the preceeding 12 months period. Taking the total population of the survey-area 14,420 and total fertile couples 1880 and estimating the total number of births among all the fertile couples is ( $\frac{1880}{500}$ x 131) = 493. Thus the CBR for the Shawnirvar villages under study is calculated at ( $\frac{493}{14420}$ x 1000) = 34.2 per 1000 population. *

Infant mortality rate.

Infant mortality rate in Shawnirvar villages (Table 20), is 76.3 per thousand. Ten respondents had infant deaths during the preceding 12 months. Applying this 10 infant deaths to the total number of live-births (131), the infant mortality rate (IMR) is calculated ( $\frac{10}{131}$ x 1000) at 76.3 per 1000 live-births. This is much lower than the national average of 142.

Population Growth Rate

Table 21 shows the estimated annual rate of population growth in the Shawnirvar villages at 1.67%. The rate of population increase in the village is calculated by the difference between the 1974 Census data and the population size as per 1980 household survey (Table 21). This, however, does not represent the rate of natural increases. Our observation in the villages suggest that there was no significant out or in-migration in these villages. Therefore, the rate of growth is an approximation of the rate of natural increase.

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*Calculation :-

Number of couples = 500, live birth = 131.

Total fertile couples = 1880, Total population = 14,420

$Bt = \frac{1880}{500} \times 131 = 3.76 \times 131 = 492.52 = 493$

$CBR = \frac{Bt}{Pt} \times 1000 = \frac{493}{14420} \times 1000 = 34.2$ per thousand

TABLE 22

Crude birth rate and population growth rate in the Shawnirvar villages

| Year | Rate | Bangladesh[1] | Shawnirvar villages[2] |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1979-80 | Crude Birth rate | 43.25 | 34.2 |
| 1979-80 | Growth rate | 2.65% | 1.67% |

Sources 1. Second Five Year Plan, Table 17.3 P-37
2. BACE study Table 21

The annual rate of natural increase of population for the Shawnirvar villages is 1.67% as compared to the national rate of 2.65%. The estimated crude birth rate for Shawnirvar villages is 34.2 as against 43.25 for the country. Thus there is a significant difference in fertility behaviour in the Shawnirvar areas as compared to the national averages.

Family planning knowledge

Nearly all the respondents (96%) were aware of family planning (Table23). The higher rate of literacy and a high level of awareness about family planning are indicative of positive influence of Shawnirvar information and motivation activities. An analysis of the remaining 22 respondents who were not aware of family planning reveals that half of them were above 50 years of age, mostly farmers (54.6%) and largely illiterate (Tables 24 to 26).

Sources of Family Planning Knowledge

When asked about the sources of family planning knowledge, 33.0% mentioned family planning workers, 30.1% Shawnirvar activities, 9.2% radio/newspapers and the remaining 27.2% through neighbour/relatives/friends/husbands and others (Table 27).

Family Planning Practice

Overall 50.8% of all respondents reported practicing family planning at the time of interview(Table 28). Of them, a higher proportion of females (54.7%) as compared to males (46.8%), were practicing contraception. This level of contraceptive practice is about 3 times higher than the current estimated national average of 16% of fertile couples.

Method preference

As stated above, 50.8% of the male and female respondents in the sample reported to be current users of family planning. When asked about the name of the methods they were practicing, 69.2% preferred conventional methods of pills (35%) and condoms (34.2%); 10.7% have accepted permanent methods, such as tubectomy or vasectomy and 10% are practicing traditional methods such as safe period or rhythm method and withdrawal (Table 29). The table below shows the relative method mix of the family planning practices of BACE survey as compared to BFS (1979) and CPS (1979). It is noteable that condoms have become increasingly important and traditional methods are being substituted by modern conventional methods.

TABLE 30

Method mix of family planning practices.

| Method | BFS '75 | CPS '79 | BACE '80 |
|---|---|---|---|
| IUD | 6.3% | 2.0% | 0.4% |
| Oral Pill | 35.8% | 35.3% | 35.0% |
| Condom | 9.5% | 10.4% | 34.2% |
| Sterilisation | 10.5% | 24.2% | 10.7% |
| Traditional and other methods | 37.8% | 28.1% | 19.7% |

Reasons for not practicing family planning

Nearly half of the total respondents replied to a question asking for specific reasons for not practicing family planning. Of them, 36% male and 41.9% female, specified that it was not needed. More children were wanted by 32.3%; while 4.5% was afraid of using a method continuously; 4.3% felt that it was bad for their health; 5% felt that it was against religion; and lack of knowledge or apprehension was added by 11.1% (Table 31).

Opinion on future use of method.

Of those who were not practicing contraception, 112 respondents (47.7%) indicated their desire to practice family planning in the future. The remaining 44.2%, however, expressed their opinion in the negative (Table 32).

Source of encouragement and inspiration.

When asked about the sources of encouragement that helped them accepting family planning, most cited as family planning workers(28.0%) and Shawnirvar workers (34.2%) as the major source of encouragement, while 17.3% felt that husband-wife communication was a useful source of mutual encouragement in

practicing family planning (Table 33). It appears from the distribution of responses that family planning field workers, as well as Shawnirvar group meetings were constant source of influence and regular feed-back for their choice of a particular method (Table 34).

Opinion on Shawnirvar and Family Planning.

When asked whether they feel that activities of Shawnirvar programme in the village have contributed towards increasing the number of family planning acceptors, 179 acceptors (74%) replied in the affirmative (Table 35). In other words many of the male and female adopters belonging to the villages share a common feeling that acceptance rate of family planning method had increased during the recent years, i.e. after the introduction of Shawnirvar programme in their villages. Sixteen percent acceptors did not have any idea about the influence of Shawnirvar, while only 5% percent respondents of this question had a negative opinion.

Shawnirvar Activities in the village in respect of family planning.

Seventy seven percent of the respondents (Table 36) felt that activities of Shawnirvar organisation in the area of family planning were mainly motivational, while 8.2% opined that Shawnirvar activities relate to both motivation and supply of contraception.

In fact, the Shawnirvar workers were eager to spread family planning information and to educate eligible couples about the utility of various family planning methods. Sixty five percent of the respondents (Table 34) opined that they would adopt family planning method, being inspired by the Shawnirvar objectives of population control and family planning.

Women's Programme:

Table 37 shows that 8.6% female respondents were engaged in income-earning activities before Shawnirvar programme, while 10.8% were engaged in such activities afterwards with average monthly income of Tk. 116.6 (Table 38). Membership in female organisations such as women's cooperatives, mother's clubs etc. increased considerably after Shawnirvar programme, 22.2% as against 0.8% before Shawnirvar (Table 39). Respondents (65.8%) having membership were engaged in activities such as farming, pisciculture, vegetable and fruit plantation, livestock rearing and handicrafts (Table 40).

On income-generating activities fifty-three respondents (10.1%) replied in the affirmative as against thirty three (6.3%) before Shawnirvar (Table 41). They were engaged in activities, such as handicrafts, paddy husking, tailoring, domestic services and making of shati food, etc.(Tables 42 and 44). Their average

monthly income was Tk. 108.6 as against Tk. 98.3 before Shawnirvar (Table 43).

Nearly twenty percent responded that adult female members of their households were members of organisations like cooperative and other social organisations (Table 45). One hundred and three adult females were members of different organisations like samabay samity, suta samity, women's welfare, Mohila samity, etc. as against only 4 before shawnirvar (Table 46). They are now engaged in activities like handloom, weaving, poultry, farming and livestock rearing, etc. (Table 47).

Concluding remarks.

With higher percentage of contraception practice, 50.8%, low birth rate of 34.2 per thousand and annual population growth rate at 1.67%, the hypothesis that Shawnirvar areas had higher levels of family planning acceptors and contraceptive prevalance appears to be sound.

The low infant mortality rate 76.3 per thousand and 34.2 live-birth as against 142 and 43.25 of national average respectively prove the effect of better sanitation, better mother-child health care and better nutrition in Shawnirvar villages. The low infant mortality has a positive impact on lower fertility behaviour.

In female activities there has been substantial increase in women's involvement in social and economic fields. In the field of new income-earning activities though the achievement is small, its potential for development is extremely important.

Recommendations.

(1) Motivational work together with supply of contraception should be continued.

(2) Further motivational work is needed to counteract religious feelings.

(3) More promotional and supportive activities are needed to mobilise women's productive forces.

(4) The importance of conventional and traditional family planning methods should be emphasized in the national family planning programme.

(5) The crucial role of Shawnirvar Gram Sharkars and community leaders in family planning must be acknowledged and effectively utilized by the Government.

## Section 4

## Mass Literacy

The purpose of this survey was to test the hypothesis that participation of the community in the mass literacy programme was greater in Shawnirvar villages than in other ordinary villages. The study was carried out in a sample of households selected randomly from the ten Shawnirvar villages. The ten Shawnirvar villages were also selected randomly, taking one from each of the ten intensive Shawnirvar thanas. Appendix 'A' shows names of villages.

The following sampling procedure was accepted. The households in each of the selected Shawnirvar villages were listed. Fifteen percent of the households was drawn from the above list of households. Not fewer than fifty households were sampled from any of the villages. Following this procedure, the sample of 527 households were selected from the 2,606 households. Thus the overall sampling function was 20%. All heads of the sampled households were interviewed using a structured questionnaire.

The size of literate population of the country for 1974 was 22.3 percent and the current estimate is about 24%. The purpose of Mass Literacy programme is to spread literacy among all adult males and females. The main focus of the programme is on rural illiterates. The interviews were conducted among the adult heads of rural households with a view to finding the level of community participation and the effectiveness of the programme in the Shawnirvar villages.

### Age

The age structure of the household heads interviewed (See Table 48) has been shown in three broad categories as junior adult (aged 15-29) adult (aged 30-44) and senior adult (aged 45 and above). Thus it is found that only about 22 percent of the household heads were junior adults, while the proportions of the adults and the senior adults were 33 percent and 44 percent respectively. The estimated mean age of the entire group was about 41.1 years.

Table 49

Age structure of the Household's Heads.

n = 527

| Categories | Age groups | Percentages |
|---|---|---|
| Junior Adult | 15-29 years | 22.77 |
| Adult | 30-44 " | 33.02 |
| Senior Adult | 45 and above | 44.2 |
| Total | | 100.00 |

Mean age = 41.1 years.

Household size

The reported size of an average household among Shawnirvar villages was 5.53 members (Table 50). The proportion of the households having 3 members or less was 23 percent. Households being grouped as small (3 members or less), medium (4-6 members), and large (over 6 members), the respective composition were 23%, 47% and 30% respectively as shown in table 51.

Table 51

Household size

| Size | Percentage |
|---|---|
| 3 members or less | 22.96 |
| 4 to 6 members | 46.86 |
| 7 member or more | 30.17 |
| Total | 100% |

Average size = 5.53

Income

Table 52 indicates that 7.4% of the households have an annual income of 2,000 less, 40.2 percent Tk. 2001 - 4,000, 37.4 percent Tk. 4001 - 8,000, 9.5 percent Tk. 8001 - 12,000 and 5.5 percent above Tk. 12,000. The median annual income is within the range of Tk. 4,001 to Tk. 8,000. The annual household income is almost symmetrically distributed in the Shawnirvar villages. The per capita annual income comes to Tk. 966 with an average household size of 5.53.

Land Holding

About 30 percent of the households had no cultivable or cultivated land, while another 35 percent had one acre or less. The number of landless families (holding less than 0.5 acre) is estimated at 40% and 2.4 percent holdings were more than 7 acre. Average households had 1.31 acres of cultivated land(Table 53).

Literacy

Following the 1974 census the term literacy has been defined as persons able to read and write in any language. Forty eight percent of the population in the sampled households were literate according to the above definition. There were another 35 percent who had the knowledge of alphabets or knowing how to sign their names. About 17 percent could neither read and write nor sign their names(Table 54).

The survey indicates that the literacy rate in Shawnirvar villages is twice the national literacy rate i.e. 48% in Shawnirvar villages as compared to the national average literacy rate of 24%.

In Shawnirvar villages, although there was a general improvement in literacy rates, the males benefited more than the females. The male literacy rate was 53.81 percent, while female literacy rate was 40.40 percent. The male-female national literacy rates in 1974 were 30% and 12% respectively. The difference in literacy between the sexes, therefore, has become narrower in Shawnirvar villages.

Table 55

Literacy Rates Among the Sampled Population(11 years and above)

( in percentages)

| | Illiterate | Barnoprichay/ Shakwargan | Literate | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 11.2 | 31.7 | 57.1 | 100.00 |
| Female | 24.0 | 37.9 | 38.1 | 100.00 |
| Total | 17. | 34.5 | 48.5 | 100.00 |

Shawnirvar and Adult literacy

The survey also indicates a more direct evidence showing the positive impact of Shawnirvar programme on literacy. The proportion of illiterate among aged groups 11 years and more in the sample villages had been 768 before the Shawnirvar programme and it came down to 322 afterwards bringing down the number of illiterates by 58% (Table 57).

Contribution of the Mass Literacy Programme

About 87% of the household heads interviewed reported that they were literate. About 59 percent of these respondents had formal education, and about 37 percent earned their literacy skill by participating in the mass literacy programme. Only 3.5 percent of those respondents reported that they earned their literacy skill with the help of their parents, brothers or relatives. These findings undoubtedly suggest that the mass literacy programme made a substantial contribution in removing illiteracy in the Shawnirvar villages. (Table 58).

Of 322 illiterate persons, 239 (74%) indicated their willingness to join the mass literacy programme. (Table 59) The rest mentioned their inability to participate in the programme due to old age difficulties, eye-sight, lack of facilities or unfavourable time schedules. This may, therefore, be taken as the further evidence as to the effectiveness of the mass literacy programme as an important instrument in improving the level of literacy among the rural population.

The vast majority (about 89 percent) of the respondents acknowledged that the Shawnirvar programme had considerable influence on the improvement of the level of literacy. There were, however, 9 percent of the respondents who were either indifferent to, or ignorant about the mass literacy programmes in their villages. Only one percent of the respondents did not acknowledge that the mass literacy programme had any impact on the literacy level. (Table 60)

Opinion on Shawnirvar

About ninety percent of the respondents held a high opinion about the role of Shawnirvar in respect of Mass Literacy. Their positive feeling and interest mark their sense of identification with the Shawnirvar movement and their involvement in the mass literacy programme. (Table 61)

Rural Social Work

The programme goal of Shawnirvar is to improve socio-economic conditions among the rural people by inducing them to practice self reliant principles. Shawnirvar has introduced various social development programme such as mass literacy, family planning, child care, primary health, nutrition, etc. The survey shows that over 69 percent of the respondents had participated in these development programmes. This is an indication of the high level of participation by the community in Shawnirvar programmes. ( Table 62 )

Conclusions

The literacy rate in Shawnirvar villages is 48% as compared to the national literacy rate of 24%. Moreover it was found in Shawnirvar villages that another 35% knew alphabets and how to sign names. This information adds a new dimension to the mass literacy programme.

Out of 527 heads of households interviewed, 87 percent were literate. About 59% of them had formal schooling, 37% acquired literacy by participating in mass literacy programme and the remaining 3.5% earned literacy skill with the help of parents, brother and relatives. Out of 322 illiterate adult members of households, 239 (74%) were willing to join literacy programme. The rest mentioned their inability to participate in the programme due to old age difficulties, eye-sight, lack of facilities or unfavourable time schedules.

The vast majority (about 89%) of the respondents acknowledged that the Shawnirvar programme had considerable influence on the removal of illiteracy; 9% were indifferent or ignorent of mass literacy programme and only 1% had negative view.

With 69% participation of respondents in rural development programmes organised in their villages is indicative of extensive community participation in Shawnirvar activities.

Recommendations

(1) Though negligible, there being still some percentage of indifference or ignorance about mass literacy programme further intensive motivational activities are needed.

(2) Shawnirvar mass literacy programme must be closely coordinated with the Shawnirvar Gram Sarkar.

(3) All the local institutions such as mosques, schools, youth organisation, cooperatives, clubs must be involved in the literacy programme.

(4) Literacy campaigns should be linked up with seasonal agricultural activities, school holidays, etc.

(5) Officers of the Ministry of Education and attached Departments should monitor progress of mass literacy programme activities in Shawnirvar areas during official tours and visits.

(6) Primary school teachers and local P.T.I. should be made responsible for implementation and evaluation work.

(7) Emphasis should be given on religious obligation of becoming educated.

## Section 5

### Opinion Leaders

Besides the heads of households and fertile couples, the survey considered a number of opinion leaders comprising of Shawnirvar workers, village Cooperative Managers, Shawnirvar Gram Prodhans and a few religious leaders, a total of 39 in all (Table 63). They were asked to express their opinion on the performance of mass literacy programme, family planning programme and primary school enrolment in their respective villages.

About 50 percent of the selected opinion leaders had about two years and remaining 50 percent opinion leaders had more than two years experience with Shawnirvar activities (Table 64).

### Primary Education

Ninety-two percent of the opinion leaders including the Mosque Imams opined that attainment of universal literacy in their villages was a part of Shawnirvar programme. The remaining 8 percent maintained negative opinion on the issue. On the question of universal primary education, 100 percent opinion leaders maintained that attainment of universal primary school enrolment was a part of the Shawnirvar programme. Fifty-one percent of opinion leaders had a high opinion about present school enrolment and attendence compared with the situation before Shawnirvar; 31 percent maintained that the situation was good compared with previous condition, while 15 percent felt there had been no change (Table 65).

With respect to teachers' attendance at the primary schools most of the opinion leaders observed a positive difference in teachers' attendance compared with the situation before Shawnirvar (Table 66).

While considering the question on the role of Shawnirvar on primary education, 97 percent opinion leaders felt that the programme had inspired, motivated and encouraged the parents and villagers to send their children to primary school. The programme had provided some necessary chalks, books, pencils and dusters, as a means of contributing to the needs of schools and also had checked regular attendance of teachers (Table 67).

Mass Literacy

About 31 percent of the opinion leaders felt that mass literacy was required to achieve the goals of rural development work. Nearly 26 percent replied that illiterate villagers were made literate through mass literacy programme. Almost an equal number of respondents felt that it was a very useful programme for their community at large (Table 68).

While identifying problems that obstructed the way of attaining mass literacy, 36 percent held that inadequate supply of educational equipment was a major problem. Several felt that poor rural people are tired after a day's work and hence cannot associate themselves with the mass literacy programme conducted during the evening hours. Besides these, lack of interest of primary teachers and government officers, as well as old age were other minor problems in attaining mass literacy (Table 69). It is noticeable that 25 percent of the respondents indicated that there were no problems hindering mass literacy programmes.

While suggesting measures to overcome the difficulties of mass literacy programme, 14 percent opinion leaders asked for arranging oil lamp and equal number of leaders suggested for motivating the villagers. Nearly 18 percent opinion leaders felt that improving socio-economic life of the people could help remove difficulties in attaining mass literacy programme. About 3.5 percent opined for offering incentives, such as prizes for better performance among villagers(Table 7 Sixty-nine percent of the opinion leaders viewed that mobilization and motivation of illiterate people in attaining mass literacy was the single important role of Shawnirvar. Night school for males and females was yet another important role of Shawnirvar programme in the opinion of 23 percent of the respondents.

Role of UP Chairman/TEO/CO(Dev)

Nearly 54 percent of the opinion leaders viewed that the U.P.Chairman's role was to motivate, supervise and encourage the people towards attaining mass literacy. Another 26 percent viewed that the role of UP Chairman was to supply equipment required for executing mass literacy programme in the intensive Shawnirvar villagds, the remainder felt that the role was not very significant (Table 71).

The role of Thana Education Officers, viewed by 46 percent of the respondent was by and large to supervise, to inspire and to encourage the village workers about the utility of mass literacy (Table 72). A significant number, 33 percent, voiced the opinion that the TEO had no role to play in mass literacy. About 33 percent felt that the role of circle officer (Dev) was to supervise, to motivate

and to inspire the organizers as well as the participants of mass literacy programme (Table 73). It is significant that 53 percent of respondents reported that CO (Dev) had no role in respect to mass literacy.

Family Planning

When asked about their feelings about family planning programme, 51 percent of the opinion leaders viewed in favour of knowing and adopting family planning by all eligible couples, while 41 percent felt that it was a useful and effective programme in their respective areas. Most of them, however, favoured adoption of family planning by all eligible couples (Table 74). Over 90 percent of the opinion leaders considerd that family planning programme was a part of Shawnirvar. While identifying the role of Shawnirvar in family planning, over 90 percent also held the view that the programme was oriented to motivate people to accept family planning and to extend all possible help towards attaining the goal of family planning in the Shawnirvar programme.

While considering the obstacles of limited acceptance of family planning, 35 percent of the leaders stated that religious views were a major problem and 20 percent of the leaders considered that the problem lies in inadequate and irregular supply of medical drugs and contraceptives. A few commented about non-cooperation between family planning and Shawnirvar workers but without dispersing the blame to a particular side (Table 75).

While suggesting the ways of handling the problem, 40 percent recommended for employing experienced doctors in the programme, and 20 percent emphasized the need of adequate supply of medicine and contraceptives and yet another 20 percent focussed on the need of better understanding and cooperation between family planning and Shawnirvar workers (Table 76).

When asked about the reasons of the good performance of family planning in Shawnirvar villages, 55 percent viewed that eligible couples understood the benefit of a small family and that prejudice related to family planning acceptance was removed to a great extent (Table 77).

Women's Programme

According to the opinion leaders the average enrolment of primary and secondary level female students in the Shawnirvar villages increased by more than 50 percent after Shawnirvar. The average number of women who were earning cash income by producing marketable goods such as handicrafts also increased by more than 50 percent. The number of women's cooperative societies had increased. Most of these women's cooperative societies are engaged in rice

processing, sewing, knitting,etc. (Table 78). Among the various types of women's social service groups in the Shawnirvar villages that contribute to income-earning facility of rural women, more prominent groups are Mahila Samity, dheki project and social welfare society. All these female groups help to employ rural women in rice processing, sewing, knitting, poultry, handicraft and family welfare work aiming at improving the quality of life at family level.

Conclusions

On the basic issues like primary education, mass literacy participation, family planning and female activities, the majority of the opinion leaders appear conscious about the importance of the programme as an organizational and motivational tool for rural development. Though negligible, there appears still some negative or indifferent views. More motivitional work is needed to enlist support of opinion leaders for success of the programme.