THE ACT OF VOLUNTEERING: AN ADULT EDUCATOR'S PERSPECTIVE

JAMES A. DRAPER

The act of volunteering is discussed from the perspective of an adult educator. The paper is divided into three major interrelated parts. Part I lays the background for understanding the meanings of the term "adult education", defined in broad terms. This is followed by discussing the terms, "learning" and "education", since learning is the essence of adult education. This is followed by stating some of the assumptions, principles and philosophies which guide the practice of adult education. Part 11 discusses the link between adult education and volunteerism and the tradition of volunteering, of which India is notable. The paper ends with a look at the implications of volunteers seeing themselves as adult educators, with some knowledge of the principles and philosophies mentioned earlier in the paper.

James A. Draper, Ph.D., is Professor of Adult Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Canada. During 1964-66 he was an advisor to the University of Rajasthan, working with Indian colleagues in establishing the first university extension programme in India. During 1972-73 he was a fellow of the Indian Council for Social Science Research and during the same time was the Resident Director in India of the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute. Dr, Draper has visited India a number of times, and continues to pursue his research and writing on India.

Part I
The Essence and Guiding Values of Adult Education

The Meaning of Adult Education

The term "adult education" connotes two meanings:

- as a **field of study,** that is, as an academic discipline within the social sciences (Draper, 1988, 1989). The focus of these study programmes (masters and doctoral degrees) is on the development of theory and literature on learning and adult education based primarily on research. Adult education, as used here, has the basic characteristics of many other social sciences, for example, economics, political science, sociology, psychology. That is, each has a "world view", the focus of each discipline is on human behaviour (individually and as members of groups) and the approaches to research design are similar, representing appropriately both qualitative and quantitative aspects of data collection.
- as a **field of practice,** that is, the numerous programmes which facilitate adult learning offered by countless numbers of agencies and organisations, many of whom use volunteers to achieve their goals. Such programmes include (but go much beyond) literacy education for adults. In fact, non-literacy or non-basic education programmes far exceed adult literacy education. The diversity of practice of adult education is now widely acknowledged (Kundu, 1992; Draper, 1991, 1992; Bordia, 1973).

From the above, it can been seen that adult education, both as a field of study and a field of practice, includes any situation in which adults are learning, at any level, and would therefore include, for example, programmes for senior administrators, the training of factory workers, educational programmes within the Indian army,

continuing education programmes for professional groups, as well as the many programmes in which volunteer workers participate. All these and other settings are of interest to the adult educator-researcher. Since **education,** which is defined as **"intentional learning",** always takes place within a context, the adult educator is interested in and acknowledges those social, political, cultural, administrative, physical and environmental factors that influence the learning of adults. Adult education is concerned with the motivation people have for learning as well as the knowledge, skills or attitudes which are being acquired.

As a social science, adult education needs to be seen in its broadest form. On the other hand, adult education as a field of practice and as a programme area will undoubtedly need to focus on specific programmes for special target groups, depending on individual and societal needs and the resources available. For instance, in India, priority might be given to literacy education for men and women living in rural areas. Here, literacy education can be seen within the larger field of adult education. Focusing on literacy education is a matter of preference based on certain needs at a given point in time but **"literacy education" is not synonymous with "adult education".** It is the practice and not the definition of adult education which is restricting.

A World About Learning and Education

The essence of adult education is adult learning. That is, adult educators as researchers examine all those factors that influence or relate in any way to the intentional learning of adults. It is adult learning that adult educators strive to understand and facilitate. Since learning is essential for living, it becomes obvious that the learning of adults is not confined to:

• any specific time of day
• the place where learning takes place
• the methods used for teaching and learning
• the content, attitudes or skills to be acquired.

Generally speaking, as a field of study, adult education limits its research and programming to "adults" — young or old, although much of its research and literature may apply to children as well. The concept "adult" is culture-bound and determined by what constitutes adult roles a given society or a community at a given point in time.

Traditionally, the concept of "learning" incorporate three interrelated components:

• The **Cognitive component.** This includes the learning of content and subject-matter and is usually the focus of attention in many educational programmes (often to the neglect of the other two components).
• The **Affective component.** This refers to the learning of attitudes, values and feelings, and how to express these within one's cultural and social surroundings.
• The **Psycho-motor component.** This domain refers to the learning of specific skills and includes learning to read and write, to speak in public, to communicate (including the skills of listening), the skills of preparing and presenting a proposal for social action, or the learning of such motor skills as riding a bicycle, or using a typewriter or other piece of machinery.

"Learning" is a natural and lifelong process of absorbing from, experiencing and adapting to one's environment, as one acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge.

"Education", on the other hand, **is an attempt to organise and structure learning.** "Education" through planning and reflection is an intentional learning process, guided by predetermined goals which seek to bring about changes in attitudes. Education is influenced by values and in turn modifies values.

Adult educators know a great deal about "learning" (Barer-Stein, 1992). Learning is cumulative: a natural and individual process (only individuals learn, not groups) that involves change, implicit and explicit, personal to the individual; it is not always measurable and is frequently taken for granted; it involves understanding and ownership, and is active, not passive.

Just as unintentional learning can also be called "informal learning" (not informal education) we can speak of intentional learning as comprising either "non-formal" or "formal education". That is, non-formal education (NFE) refers to education (intentional learning) whose outcome does not include formal academic credit or certification. Formal education, on the other hand, refers to education whose outcome includes formal academic credit or certification. What distinguishes the two must be perceived from the intention of the learner and what is "formal" or "non-formal" is not limited to any particular location or institutional base. Most adult education is of a non-formal nature.

Assumptions

Each social science is based on a number of assumption unique to itself but overlapping with other sciences. These assumptions often become the basis for the hypotheses to be tested or the questions to be answered through research. Through critical analysis, these assumptions evolve and become redefined and refined. It is these tested or assumed assumptions that guide research and practice in adult education. Based on these assumptions, adult education associates yet distinguishes itself from other fields of study within the social sciences.

Given the breadth of its definition and mandate, it is essential that the primary assumptions underlying the field of study and practice in adult education will begin with assumptions about people as learners. Some of the assumptions made by adult educators are:

- All persons wish to improve the quality of their daily lives.
- People are able to describe and judge the conditions of their lives.
- All adults have living experiences which must be taken seriously.
- All adult groups, men, women, villagers, fishermen and the elderly, are heterogeneous, wherein each individual has different experiences and perspectives.
- Adult men and women are willing and able to learn and take responsibility for their own learning, and the learning of others.
- Adults are continuous learners. Learning is synonymous with and inseparable from living, regardless of whether these adults live in rural or urban areas or are parents, workers, soldiers, or research scholars.

- Average people are capable of being involved in, and able to contribute to, research.
- Any act of behaviour, any thought, any value expressed is always part of an individual's larger and total being. That is, individuals and communities act and react as an integrated whole even though, for the sake of convenience, the social sciences segment individuals and societies when undertaking research.
- Only individuals are capable of learning, and learning is theoretically, a voluntary act.
- Illiteracy or being "un-schooled" is not synonymous with being unlearned, uneducated, or ignorant. Rather, each human condition has reasons for its existence and illiteracy. Poverty and other human conditions are primarily due to a lack of opportunity to learn and to act.
- Adults are capable of being involved in a process of planning and implementing programmes for individual and social change aimed at improving the conditions of their daily living.
- Education, including adult education is not a neutral act. Intentional learning (education) attempts to bring about individual or social change. For individuals to become involved in education is a process of personal change. To change individuals or society is to alter the status quo. This is a political act since relationships between people are altered through learning.

As pointed out by the University Grants Commission (UGC) Working Group (1993), it is assumed that

- Education is a human right....(and) provides access to knowledge and understanding of skills. It is a life-long process for the development of harmonious personality to comprehend the ever widening and deepening spheres of human endeavours.

As with other members of the social sciences, adult education researchers also assume: that people are capable of responding to probing questions; that the daily lives of people are realistic (not superficial) expressions of their values and resources; that no human behaviour is without a cause or a context. It is also assumed that all people have had personal experiences with the social sciences. How many social scientists actually articulate this, and build upon this assumption? All people have had experience with education, that is teaching and learning; with sociology, — being members of groups and communities; with political science — power relationship between people; with economics — the handling of resources and so on.

Each of the assumptions mentioned above is complex and has tremendous implications for the way in which learning is planned, delivered, and evaluated. If each assumption is not articulated clearly, not understood and taken seriously, then the effectiveness and quality of working with adults by educators and other social scientists will diminish greatly.

Guiding Principles of Adult Education

The assumptions made about people and about learning determine the values and philosophical orientation that guide the practice of adult education. The purpose of adult education is to help people to make choices, to help them define their "world",

to help them to write their history, and to work with them to become involved in meaningful and relevant action and learning. A number of basic principles have been identified within adult education in order to guide volunteers and others working with people in examining problems and issues. These principles are numerous, well documented and discussed in many publications (Taylor, 1992). As with assumptions, these principles need to be critically examined and refined through research.

Some principles of adult education are:

- Adults learn best in environments which provide freedom to discover, develop trust and impose a minimum of insecurity.
- Adults learn best when what they are learning is relevant and meaningful, especially to their daily lives.
- Adults respond and learn best when they are treated with dignity and respect.
- Adults are most committed to participating in educational programmes when they have been involved in planning and setting goals for these programmes.

A far reaching goal of adult education is to bring about an equitable "learning society" in which people are learning to be themselves (Faure, et al., 1973). As a social science, adult education through research and reflection attempts to understand how to reach these goals and practice these principles.

Developing a Philosophy of Adult Education as Volunteers

Why should we consider philosophy? In attempting to answer this question, Draper (1993) writing in *The Craft of Teaching Adults,* points out that "A discussion of our values or philosophy of practice is more than an academic exercise. We may not be conscious of it but each day we live our philosophy". Philosophy encompasses the principles, values and attitudes that structure our beliefs and guide our behaviour in our work as well as in our daily life.

To what extent do we articulate and understand these values, assumptions, beliefs and attitudes which guide us? Our individual or collective philosophies are the basis upon which we defend and practice what we do. The way in which we perceive and deal with issues is determined by our philosophy.

It is a human tendency to feel that what we do is rational, and that we are right in what we think and do. We do not usually articulate these feelings, but take them for granted. Our philosophy of life, is an integral part of our identity that we seldom question. But can it limit our perceptions? Are there other views to listen to and benefit from? Are the assumptions we make about the educational needs of others really a projection of our own values? How do we know? All these are philosophical questions. Being able to answer these and many other questions helps us to understand and implement the programmes in which we are involved, including the identification of training needs, curriculum planning, delivery, evaluation and the selection of teaching materials. Philosophy affects them all.

The *Random House Dictionary* (1987) defines philosophy as "a system of principles for guidance in practical affairs; the rational investigation of the truths and principles of being, knowledge, or conduct". Articulating our personal philosophy helps us to understand why we behave and think the way we do. Furthermore, it helps us to understand the consequences of our behaviour and the influence our philosophy

has upon others. It helps us to be consistent but also challenges us to question our inconsistency. It can help us in communicating with others, providing we take care to openly express our values and assumptions. It may help us defend our action, for instance, as a volunteer. "I use this teaching approach because it expresses the philosophy I believe in."

Being able to articulate our preferred philosophy also helps us to understand our role as volunteers and as adult educators. That is, it helps us to describe our behaviour through a thoughtful and rational point of view. The generalist practitioner-volunteer is often only able to describe what is done, not why. Articulating our beliefs and values also helps us to bridge theory and practice, and see with greater clarity, the relationship between education and society and the various social, economic, political and cultural forces which influence education.

Our philosophy influences our practice, and practice illuminates our philosophy. Rooted in our individual History and the history of our society, our philosophy is always personal yet it identifies us as members of a group. Focusing on our explicit beliefs helps us to both utilise and create knowledge, especially when we are open to the beliefs of others.

The Need for a Dialogue on Philosophy

A number of question further help the volunteer to focus on the need for a dialogue on values and philosophy. For example, how do we account for differing perspectives and perhaps differing philosophies in an organisation? Where is the place of the volunteer-educator as learner in the educational programme? Are educational programmes to focus only on learning immediate skills or does it include goals which help people become more socially responsible and more critically reflective? Does our educational philosophy help people to reflect on possibilities and make choices?

Education is not a neutral enterprise but involves both political and philosophical decisions and influences all aspects of an educational programme from its original inception to its teaching and evaluation. Particular philosophies, based on particular assumptions about human nature can help democratise an educational programme and society. There needs to be a compatibility of management and infrastructure with the philosophy that is expounded.

Philosophy like culture and values, is studied and acquired. Philosophy may encourage one to seek partnerships with student learners, with the community and with other organisations, or it may encourage one to remain closed. The values the volunteer holds may come in conflict with the agency for whom he/she works. For example, what will a volunteer do if he/she is asked to perform tasks or use methodologies with which the volunteer is in disagreement? What is the role of one's conscience in being a volunteer? How does one philosophically handle these and other contradictions?

Philosophy is an expression of an ideology. By understanding values one maximises the rationality and ethics of behaviour. Philosophy is the foundation upon which the volunteer acts; it is the rudder which steers the volunteer through daily life. A philosophy is not a theoretical thing that other people possess. It is the profound understanding which provides meaning for each individual.

Part II
Linking Adult Education and Volunteerism

Regardless of the tasks or functions which volunteers perform, there is always a component of learning which occurs, both for the volunteers and for those who guide them and with whom they work. Even though the first part of this section focuses on the close links between the long traditions of adult education and non-government organisations (NGOs), it must be acknowledged that NGOs are not the only agencies which use the services of volunteers. Such services are also used by governments, business and industry and the corporate sectors of Indian society.

Non-Government Organisations

"The work of voluntary organisations (NGOs) has always been closely linked to adult education, social work, community development, social action, and the training of both lay volunteers and professionals" (Draper, 1984). Traditionally, volunteer organisations identified closely with geographical communities as they attempted to deal with the social, health and educational programmes of community members. Today, such organisations are characterised by their work with functional communities and with a community of ideas, interests and concerns that are not confined by geographical boundaries, for example, working with the elderly, or dealing with environmental issues or literacy education.

Traditionally many agencies often took a treatment approach to human and community development. Their primary concern was to deal with immediate crises such as poverty, ill-health, unemployment, and discrimination. Now, organisations are devising programmes aimed at preventing a condition from occurring, such as ill-health or discrimination. Such programmes are built around the assumption that people are willing and able to change, if they can see relevance to themselves. Such programmes are primarily educational, attempting to bring about change from within and making the individual or a given community more self-sufficient, self-reliant and more independent. All these are worthy human goals. Often, both treatment and preventive approaches are required in programmes which use the services of volunteers.

It is well accepted that NGOs and non-profit organisations support the social, economic and cultural development of communities and individuals. In every community there are unmet economic and social needs and many of these can best be handled by non-government agencies as compared with government or private business interventions. It is also true that such NGOs utilise human and material resources that otherwise remain untapped, such as the extensive use of volunteers.

The proximity and rapport that most NGOs have with their communities also enhances the speed and responsiveness of these organisations in dealing with the concerns of community members. The government cannot be responsible and accountable for solving all the problems in society. In fact, within a democracy, one can argue that the government should not be all-encompassing in its social policies and programmes, but supportive and appreciative of the work of the NGOs.

Social Action and Individual Learning

Previously the point was made that most community and social action is really an act of individual learning, of changing attitudes, of acquiring skills including those of communication, and of gaining information and knowledge. Self-help and self-reliance seldom takes place without a voluntary act of learning. The constraints to innovative learning are often the same elements that constrain participation. The book *No Limits to Learning: Bridging Human Gap* (1979) makes the point that all societies must enhance learning in order to close the gap between the world's growing complexity and *our* capacity to cope with it at the *macro* level. Focus is placed on learning and what is stated at the international level is applicable as well to the local and national scene. The authors state that "the challenge of complexity, the poorly established linkages between individual and societal learning, the widening of contexts, and the need both to enrich and compare contexts through dialogue and interaction are several factors underlying the need for and requirements of innovative learning". The authors describe two concepts which they believe constitute the main features of innovative learning, that is, "anticipation" and "participation", both of which are important concepts for volunteers and adult educators to understand.

> Anticipation is the capacity to face new, possibly unprecedented situations. Anticipation is the ability to deal with the future, to foresee coming events as well as to evaluate the medium-term and long-term consequences of *current* decisions and actions. It requires not only learning from experience, but also "experiencing", vicarious or envisioned situations... Anticipation is not limited to foreseeing or choosing among the desirable trends and averting catastrophic ones; it is also the creating of new alternatives.

Anticipation implies "taking responsibility for our ability to influence, and in some cases, determine the future". The parallel turn, 'participation' is also defined:

> Whereas anticipation encourages solidarity in time, participation creates solidarity in space. Anticipation is temporal while participation is geographic or spatial. Where anticipation is mental activity, participation is a social one. There are many reasons why anticipation must be complemented by an additional feature, and why participation should be the complementary feature. On the one hand, it is no longer feasible to hand down decisions or ready-made solutions from above. On the other hand, there is a need for the social interaction inherent in participation, both to reconcile differing anticipation as well as to develop the harmony or consensus essential to implementing a chosen course of action. There is a near-universal demand for increased participation at all levels.

Involvement in voluntary, non-government organisations holds the potential for both "anticipation" and "participation" as the bases for innovative learning. Hayden Roberts (1979) reinforces the idea of viewing the process of community development as a learning experience and the importance of understanding and applying learning theory to community action.

In its Report *on* Education (1980), the World Bank emphasised that education needs to be recognised as a central element in development. Following the Second World

War, education was perceived as a means of raising political and social conscious-ness. However, by the 1960s, it became apparent that the definition of "devel-opment" had to be broadened beyond a narrow economic focus. The broader definition saw the relationship between such issues as education, health, nutrition, housing, and social welfare and the terms "comprehensive" and "integrative" approaches to development became more evident. The World Bank emphasises that this comprehensive approach to development underlines the significance of education in three interrelated ways.

- As a basic human need. People need education to acquire a broad base of knowledge, attitudes, values and skills on which they can build in later life, even if they do not receive further formal instruction. Such education provides people with the potential to learn, to respond to new opportunity, to adjust to social and cultural changes, and to participate in political, cultural and social activities.
- As a means of meeting other basic needs. Education influences and is in turn influenced by access to other basic needs, such as adequate nutrition, safe drinking water, health services and shelter.
- The third way is as an activity that sustains and accelerates overall development which includes, prepares and trains skilled workers at all levels, facilitating the advancement of knowledge, concern for the management of the environment, and transforming the relationship between the individual and society.

The educational component of voluntary actions is vital to the success of such programmes which is sometimes overlooked or underestimated. Those involved in community programmes through non-government, non-profit agencies are both teachers as well as leaners.

Although the term "voluntary organisations" is still in use, the actual use of volunteers varies among specific organisations. Even the kinds of tasks that volunteers perform and the background of volunteers, many of whom are profes-sionals, has changed greatly over the years. Caution is still raised about the potential exploitive character of volunteerism, but organisations and volunteers themselves seem to be aware of this. One can observe that the relationship of the volunteer and the organisation takes on the characteristics of a "learning contract" between the two parties. Volunteerism is still rationalised, in part, by its contribution to citizenship and leadership development.

Stereotypes of the volunteer as being passive and uninformed have also changed, recognising the volunteer as an important, sometimes an essential component of the organisation, for example, as members of the board of directors. Volunteers want a serious commitment in their participation. The new volunteer has much to offer the field in developing innovative approaches to serving clients. Today's volunteers are to be viewed as colleagues. "This new volunteer prefers to be seen as an associate rather than an implementer of a programme." (Ironside, 1979-80)

MacNeil (1980) reinforces the point that it is the element of member commitment which promises to make voluntary organisations important vehicles for adult learn-ing. According to her, although the educational concerns of many voluntary organ-isations are not always identifiable or even articulated, most organisations have some educational purpose: for example, to inform the public about an issue, to

develop leaders who will function in certain roles, or to present new technical information to its members. Appropriate methodologies are important to both teaching and learning situations.

In conclusion, it is argued that those volunteers who see themselves as practicing adult educators are likely to be more effect in their work simply because they will perceive themselves and those they work with as lifelong learners.

<div align="center">

Part III
The Implications of Volunteers as Adult Educators

</div>

Just as the essence of adult education is learning, a major function of the volunteer is learning and education.

Applying the Knowledge of Adult Education

Since all volunteer work involves varying degrees of human interaction, it is important to perceive this interaction within the context of learning and education, and being aware of the differences between the two. It is important to recognise that unintentional learning and intentional learning (education) interact with each other wherever human interaction occurs.

Frequently, learning is often thought of as being confined to the learning of subject-matter. It is easy to be misled that only one domain occurs at a given time. For instance, the volunteer might be involved in planning an educational programme for rural women, but what is learnt is more than the subject-matter of planning. The volunteer, and those with whom he/she works are using and improving communication skills; reflecting on whether or not they like what they are doing; altering their values and attitudes about rural women or the people in the agency with whom they are working.

It is easier for volunteers to identify with the field of adult education when that term is used broadly and not, by definition, limited to a particular programme, content area, or to particular methods of teaching and learning. Adult education refers to any process in which adults are engaged in learning. The agency with which a volunteer works, the programme in which he/she is involved, the client group, and the methods used in carrying out this work, all fall within the broader meaning of adult education.

The breadth of adult education as a field of study (as a discipline) in turn can be seen within the breadth of the social sciences. In the eyes volunteers, this legitimises adult education and the theories and literature which it expounds, much of which is based on research and systematised study. Many volunteers themselves have backgrounds in one or more of the social sciences.

Even without having formally studied one of the social sciences, the average person has had some experience with these sciences, for instance, education, political science, economics, psychology or sociology. It is important to make this assumption about the children, the men and the women with whom volunteers work. The volunteers want their experiences and knowledge to be taken seriously. In turn, the volunteers accept the experiences of those with whom they work seriously. The volunteers treat others as they would want to be treated.

It is generally accepted that volunteers are no longer to be perceived as inexperienced amateurs. In fact, many volunteers are professionals and can lend credibility to the agency or the programme with which they are associated.

Adult educators acknowledge the interchanging roles between "teachers" and "students". All persons involved in the process of a programme are (should be) teaching and learning from each other. Each person has a self worth in the process.

Viewing themselves as adult educators, volunteers are encouraged to be clear about the assumptions they make, about themselves and of others, as learners. If the volunteers do not have faith in the ability of people to learn, in their wanting to learn, and to take responsibility for their own learning, then how can they (volunteers), in good faith, work with others to assist them to grow, change, adapt, and develop? The volunteers would not wish for less, when viewed by the agency with whom they work as volunteers. The statement by the University Grants Commission, that education is a lifelong human right has wide application.

Personal reflection is an important component of the work of the volunteer and all others as well. People are involved in volunteer work not only for the purpose of assisting others, but also because they expect to learn something from the experience. For example, a group of college students in Bombay met for a day to share their volunteer work with each other. The typical approach would be to focus on the programmes in which they were involved, the outcomes of these programmes and the people they had assisted. To the credit of those organising the day of reflection, the students were asked to reflect on themselves as learners, What had they learned from the experience? Many of them commented on their change in attitude towards people living in slums, for example, or the confidence they had acquired and the skills they had learned as a result of undertaking survey research; or the knowledge which they had gained as a result of the content of their volunteer work such as learning more about nutrition and health. Such reflections can often be enhanced if the volunteer maintains a learning journal. One can also think of the agreement between an agency or a programme and the volunteer as a learning contract. That is, where the agency agrees not just to use the services of the volunteer, but to enhance the personal learning of the volunteer. The term "voluntary" implies the outcome of self-determination and having the power to make a free choice.

The basic principles expounded by adult educators are applicable to other age groups as well. Familiarity with these principles is essential to achieving effective outcome of volunteer work. One of these principles is to treat people with dignity and respect and to assist people in improving the concept they have of themselves as learners. A few years ago, I met a number of engineering students in South India. They were explaining that, as volunteers, they were going to organise adult literacy classes in a local village and over a period of weeks, each student would take a turn in instructing the class. I asked how they would feel if, in their college engineering programme, they had a different professor at each session. My question seemed to make a point. The students responded by saying that they would not like having a series of different professors; they wanted the professor to know them as persons and for this to happen, continuity was important. This illustrates one of the basic principles and emphasises that the teaching of adults is not restricted to only one

domain of learning. This illustrates one of the basic principles of adult education — that continuity helps to create a supportive climate for learning.

Preparing Volunteers to Perform Unknown Tasks

Volunteers are to be encouraged to make their own judgement and develop their critical thinking. What is learnt as a result of this process is transferable to other life situations, including the development of communication skills within the family and the community, the development of good citizenship and a variety of attitudes, skills and content which comes from being a volunteer.

Volunteers can assist an agency in its extension function, for example, extension in time (teaching programmes which are convenient to the people the agency is attempting to serve) and in space (extending these programmes geographically to make it convenient for people).

Collection of qualitative and quantitative data can also be an important learning experience for the volunteers and others, since the outcome of research is to learn. A basic assumption is that all people are capable of being involved in the entire research process.

In adult education, an important philosophical distinction is made between the "process" and the "product" of learning. To focus only on the product or intended outcome of a programme or a project, may deter the participants from valuing the process, or the learning journey which allows time for people to explore their curiosity, interest and intuition, as one works towards the end goals of a programme. In reality, there is no end, since learning is lifelong.

Volunteering should be an act of liberation and not an extension of one's oppression. Volunteering is to be seen as part of one's transition and personal growth. The rich and extensive field of adult education can help in perceiving and practicing the act of volunteering as an act of learning.

REFERENCES

Barer-Stein, T.
1992

"Learning about Learning", J. Draper and M.C. Taylor (Eds.) *Voices from the Literacy Field,* Toronto: Culture Concepts.

Bordia, A., J.R. Kidd and
J.A. Draper
1973

Adult Education in India, Bombay: Nachiketa Publications.

Botkin, J.W., M. Elmandjra and
M. Malitz
1979

No Limits to Learning: Bridging the Human Gap (A Report to the Club of Rome), Toronto: Pergamon Press.

Draper, J.A.
1984

"Voluntarism in Canadian Human Services", M.D. Nair, Robert C. Hain and J.A. Draper (Eds.), *Issues in Canadian Human Services,* Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

1988

"Transforming Society: The Role of the Social Sciences in Adult Education in India", *The Indian Journal of Social Work,* Vol. 1, No. 2.

1989

Adult Education: A Focus for the Social Sciences in India, New Delhi: Indian Adult Education Association.

1991	: "The Changing Face of Adult Education: Personal Reflections on India", *Indian Journal of Adult Education,* Vol. 52, Nos. 1 and 2.
1992	: "The Dynamic Mandala of Adult Education", *Indian Journal of Adult Education,* Vol. 53, 'No. 2.
1993	: "Valuing What We Do As Practitioners", Barer-Stein and J.A. Draper (Eds.), *The Craft of Teaching Adults,* Toronto: Culture Concepts.
Faure, E., et al. 1973	: *Learning to Be* (The World of Education Today and Tomorrow), Paris: UNESCO.
Ironside, A. 1979-80	: "The New Volunteer — An Important Resource in the Learning Society", *Learning,* Vol. 3, No. 1, Fall/Winter.
Kundu, C.L. 1992	: *Adult Education Programme in the University System* (National Level Consolidated Report 1978-91, Sponsored by the University Grants Commission), Kurukshetra: Kurukshetra University.
MacNeil, T., 1980	: "Adult Education and Voluntary Organizations", *Learning,* Vol. 3, No. 2, Fall.
Roberts, Hayden 1979	: *Community Development: Learning and Action,* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
Taylor, M.C. 1992	: "Understanding Principles Guiding our Practice", J. Draper and M.C. Taylor (Eds.), *Voices from the Literacy Field,* Toronto: Culture Concepts.
University Grants Commission 1983	: "Report of the UGC Working Group on Point No. 16 of the New 20-Point Programme of The Government of India", New Delhi: UGC.
World Bank 1980	: Education (Sector Policy Paper), Washington, DC: World Bank, April.