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ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY, ISLAMABAD

Course: Adult Education in Comparative Perspectives (847) • Level: MA/MEd

Semester: Autumn 2026

Assignment No. 2 (Units 5–9)

Total Marks: 100 • Pass Marks: 40

SOLVED ASSIGNMENT GUIDE

(For Study & Reference)

Note: This guide is prepared for study and reference purposes. Students are advised to read the relevant units of the course book, understand the concepts, and then write the assignment in their own words. Copying this guide word for word is discouraged.

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Question 1: Instructional Strategies in Adult Education and Their Steps (20 Marks)

How are instructional strategies used in adult education? Discuss different steps.

Introduction

An instructional strategy is the overall plan a teacher uses to bring about learning: the choice and arrangement of methods, materials, activities and assessment through which learners move from what they already know to the objectives of a lesson or programme. In adult education, strategy matters even more than in school teaching, because adult learners are voluntary, experienced, pressed for time and quick to leave a class that wastes their hours or

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wounds their dignity. A strategy that works with children — long lectures, memorization and examination pressure — commonly fails with adults. Adult instructional strategies are therefore built on the principles of andragogy: respect for self-direction, use of learners' experience, problem-centred content, participation and immediate application. This answer explains how instructional strategies are used in adult education and then discusses, in order, the different steps through which a sound strategy is planned and carried out.

How Instructional Strategies Are Used in Adult Education

In practice, the adult educator uses a blend of strategies rather than a single method. Discussion and experience-sharing strategies draw out what learners know and let them teach one another. Demonstration and practice strategies dominate skills teaching, where the teacher shows, the learners imitate under supervision, and errors are corrected on the spot. Problem-solving and project strategies set the group a real task — preparing a household budget, planning a village cleanliness drive, costing a small business — through which reading, writing and numeracy are learned as tools. Individualized and self-paced strategies, including programmed material, workbooks and mobile-phone practice, allow learners of different speeds, and women who cannot attend regularly, to progress without shame. Audio-visual and media strategies — pictures, charts, radio, video and simple experiments — make abstract ideas concrete for learners with little schooling. The skilled teacher selects and combines these according to the objective: discussion cannot teach stitching, and demonstration cannot by itself change attitudes; strategy is precisely this matching of method to purpose, learners and resources.

Step 1: Identifying the Needs of the Learners

The first step is a needs assessment. Before teaching anything, the educator finds out who the learners are and what they need and want to learn. This is done through informal interviews, community meetings, observation and discussion with local leaders and with the learners themselves. Needs may be felt needs, which learners can state — "read my child's school letters", "keep my shop accounts" — and real but unfelt needs, such as health practices or legal rights, which the educator must gently bring to awareness. Skipping this step is the commonest cause of failure: a beautifully prepared course on a topic the learners do not need will be attended for a week and then abandoned. Needs assessment also reveals practical facts that shape the whole strategy — learners' ages, languages, work hours, previous schooling and the barriers, especially for women, that the plan must work around.

Step 2: Setting Objectives

The second step is to convert the identified needs into clear objectives: statements of what learners will be able to do at the end of a lesson, unit or course. Good objectives in adult education are practical and observable — the learner will read a medicine label correctly, write a simple application, calculate profit on a day's sales — rather than vague promises to "create awareness". Objectives are set, as far as possible, with the learners, because adults commit themselves to goals they have helped to choose. They are also arranged in a sensible sequence from simple to complex and from the immediately useful to the more general, so that early success builds the confidence on which later learning depends. Clear objectives guide every later step: they decide content, methods, materials and how success will be judged.

Step 3: Selecting Content and Preparing Materials

The third step is selecting and organizing content and preparing suitable materials. Content is drawn from the learners' lives — their work, families, health, rights and community problems — and organized around problems rather than around the academic structure of a subject. Materials must be adult in appearance and language: primers and charts that address grown-up readers respectfully, real documents (forms, labels, bills, price lists) for practice, locally made charts and pictures, and, where available, radio, video or mobile content. Imported or childish material is a known cause of drop-out among adults. The educator also arranges the physical setting at this stage — place, seating in a circle or small groups, light, timing and any tools the practical work requires.

Step 4: Choosing Methods and Organizing Learning Activities

Table 1: Steps in using an instructional strategy in adult education

Step	What the educator does	Key principle
1. Needs assessment	Finds out learners' needs, background, hours and barriers	Start from the learner, not the syllabus
2. Setting objectives	States, with learners, what they will be able to do	Goals must be practical and shared
3. Content and materials	Selects life-related content; prepares adult, local materials	Relevance and respect
4. Methods and activities	Chooses discussion, demonstration, practice, projects, media	Match method to objective; participation
5. Implementation	Teaches in a safe climate, links new learning to experience	Facilitation, encouragement, feedback
6. Evaluation and follow-up	Checks learning practically; revises strategy; arranges post-	Test ability, not memory; prevent relapse

	literacy support	

The fourth step is to choose the teaching methods and design the activities through which the content will be learned. The guiding rule is maximum participation: adults learn by doing and discussing, not by listening passively. A typical well-planned session therefore moves through a rhythm — recall and discussion of experience, presentation or demonstration of the new point, guided practice, independent or group practice on real material, and summary by the learners themselves. Group work is used deliberately, pairing stronger with weaker learners and drawing quiet members in. The educator plans questions in advance, prepares for the differences in pace within the group, and keeps a reserve activity for fast finishers. Method is also chosen with the senses in mind; illiterate and semi-literate adults learn best when seeing, hearing and doing are combined.

Step 5: Implementation — Teaching and Facilitating Learning

The fifth step is implementation, where the strategy meets real people. The teacher's role here is that of facilitator rather than lecturer: creating a friendly and safe climate, encouraging the shy, managing the talkative, giving feedback that corrects without humiliating, and continually connecting the new learning to the learners' experience and to the use they will make of it the same day. Classroom decisions are adjusted in the light of response — an explanation repeated in the local language, an example replaced by a better one from a learner's own work, the pace slowed where the group struggles. Punctuality, regularity and respect for learners' time belong to implementation: adults who sacrifice working or family hours will forgive a modest room, but not a teacher who arrives late or unprepared.

Step 6: Evaluation, Feedback and Follow-Up

The final step is evaluation, which in adult education is practical and continuous rather than a single frightening examination. The educator checks, during and after teaching, whether the objectives have been achieved: can the learner actually read the label, fill the form, perform the stitch, keep the account? Self-evaluation and peer checking are preferred, and results are used first to improve the teaching — reteaching what was missed, changing a method that did not work — and only secondarily to report to a sponsoring agency. Evaluation closes the loop back to needs assessment, because a course ending reveals the next set of needs. Follow-up is part of this step: arranging post-literacy reading material, refresher meetings or the next course, so that skills are used and retained instead of fading within months.

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Conclusion

To conclude, instructional strategies in adult education are used as flexible blends of discussion, demonstration, practice, problem-solving, individualized and media-based learning, all chosen to fit adult learners and practical objectives. Their use follows a clear sequence of steps: assess the learners' needs, set shared and practical objectives, select life-related content and adult materials, choose participatory methods and activities, implement them through facilitation in a safe and encouraging climate, and evaluate practically, feeding the results back into improvement and follow-up. When these steps are followed, teaching respects the adult as a self-directing, experienced person and learning becomes useful from the first week; when they are skipped — above all the first step of asking adults what they need — even well-funded programmes end in empty chairs.

Question 2: Importance of Adult Education in the E-9 Countries (20 Marks)

Write a note on the importance of adult education in E-9 countries.

Introduction

The E-9 is the group of nine high-population countries — Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan — which together contain more than half of the world's population and, historically, the great majority of the world's illiterate adults. The group was formed in the early 1990s in the follow-up to the 1990 World Conference on Education for All at Jomtien, when the leaders of these nine countries met at the EFA Summit in New Delhi in 1993 and pledged to work together, and with UNESCO's support, to achieve education for all. Because so much of humanity lives in these countries, the world cannot reach its education goals unless the E-9 reach theirs; and within each of these countries, adult education holds a special importance, because the number of illiterate and unskilled adults is so large that no expansion of schools alone can transform the society in time. This note explains why adult education is especially important in the E-9 countries, what forms it takes there, and what their experience teaches.

The Shared Situation of the E-9 Countries

Table 1: The E-9 countries

Country	Region	A notable adult-education feature

Bangladesh	Asia	Large NGO-led non-formal education for adults and out-of-school children
Brazil	Latin America	Literacy and youth-and-adult education linked with social programmes
China	Asia	Mass literacy campaigns and continuing education that nearly eliminated illiteracy
Egypt	Africa / Middle East	National literacy authority and university-linked literacy work
India	Asia	National Literacy Mission and Total Literacy Campaigns led district by district
Indonesia	Asia	Community learning centres and equivalency programmes
Mexico	Latin America	National institute for adult education with community plazas and study points
Nigeria	Africa	Mass literacy and nomadic education programmes in a highly diverse federation
Pakistan	Asia	Literacy and non-formal education departments, NCHD and open-university provision

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Despite their differences, the E-9 countries share a recognizable situation: very large populations, widespread poverty, big rural and informal-sector workforces, sharp inequalities between men and women and between regions, and a heavy backlog of adults — in several of them counted in tens or even hundreds of millions — who never completed schooling. Several also have fast-growing economies whose industries and services need literate, trainable

workers now, not in twenty years. Adult education is therefore important in these countries not as a small welfare activity but as a strategic necessity on a giant scale.

Demographic and Social Importance

First, the sheer numbers make adult education decisive for social goals. In the E-9 countries, the adults of today are the parents who decide whether the children of today go to school; the health behaviour of families, the nutrition of children, the acceptance of immunization and family planning, and attitudes to the education of daughters are all settled by adults. Programmes that educate mothers have repeatedly been shown, in E-9 experience, to reduce child mortality and raise school enrolment more surely than programmes aimed at children alone. Adult education also carries the main burden of social messages these countries need at scale — sanitation, safe water, disaster preparedness, environmental protection and peaceful coexistence in diverse societies. Where hundreds of millions must be reached, adult education through community classes, media and distance learning is the only channel that exists.

Economic Importance

Second, adult education is an economic necessity in the E-9 economies. Their development strategies — industrialization in China and Indonesia, services and technology in India, agriculture and garments in Bangladesh, construction and overseas employment from Pakistan and Egypt — all require workers who can read instructions, handle numbers, observe safety rules and be retrained as technology changes. China's achievement is the standing example: its mass literacy and continuing-education efforts converted a largely illiterate population into the trainable workforce on which rapid industrial growth was built. India's National Literacy Mission

similarly treated literacy as part of its development effort, and its district Total Literacy Campaigns showed that volunteers, led by district administration, could make whole districts literate at low cost. For the informal sector, which employs most workers in countries like Nigeria, Bangladesh and Pakistan, adult and non-formal education is practically the only form of training that reaches the workers at all.

Importance for Democracy, Rights and Women

Third, several E-9 countries are large democracies or states working to extend citizenship and rights, and adult education is the instrument that makes formal rights real for the poor. A citizen who cannot read cannot use a health card, a land record, a bank account, a court notice or a ballot with understanding. Women deserve special emphasis: in most E-9 countries women form the majority of illiterate adults, and their education is the single intervention with the widest social returns — on children's schooling, family health and household income. Women's literacy and skills programmes in Bangladesh, run largely by NGOs, and women-centred campaigns in India are credited with changes in confidence and status that go well beyond reading itself. Adult education in the E-9 is therefore also an instrument of gender justice and of the empowerment of marginalized groups, including ethnic minorities, migrants and nomadic communities, for whom special programmes such as Nigeria's nomadic education were created.

What the E-9 Experience Has Produced: Models and Lessons

The importance of adult education in the E-9 is also shown by the influential models these countries have created and shared with the world through their cooperation: Mexico's national adult-education institute and community learning plazas; Indonesia's community learning

centres offering literacy, equivalency and livelihood courses under one roof; Egypt's dedicated national authority for literacy and adult education; Brazil's linking of youth-and-adult education with broader social policy; and Bangladesh's demonstration that NGOs, supported by government, can deliver non-formal education at national scale. The shared lessons are consistent: political commitment at the highest level, mass volunteer mobilization, functional content tied to livelihood and health, special priority to women, and follow-up through continuing education. The honest lessons also include failures — relapse where post-literacy provision was missing, and exaggerated official claims where evaluation was weak — which the E-9 exchanges have helped all members recognize.

Importance for Pakistan Within the E-9

For Pakistan, membership of the E-9 is both a warning and an opportunity. The warning is comparative: several fellow members that once had literacy levels similar to Pakistan's have moved far ahead, showing that the obstacle is not poverty alone but priority and continuity. The opportunity is practical: Pakistan can borrow tested designs — India's district campaign method, Indonesia's community learning centres, Mexico's study-point network, Bangladesh's NGO partnership — instead of inventing everything afresh, and E-9 and UNESCO cooperation provides technical support for doing so. In a country where illiterate adults are counted in tens of millions, adult education is, exactly as in the other E-9 states, the fastest route to a literate, healthier and more productive population.

Conclusion

In conclusion, adult education is of exceptional importance in the E-9 countries because they hold most of the world's people and most of its illiterate adults, because their social goals in health, schooling and women's advancement are decided by the education of present adults, because their economies need literate and retrainable workers immediately, and because rights and democracy remain paper promises for citizens who cannot read. Their collective experience — from China's mass campaigns to India's district movements and Bangladesh's NGO partnerships — proves that large-scale adult education is achievable in poor, populous countries when there is political will, community mobilization and follow-up. For the E-9, and for global Education for All, adult education is not the remainder after schooling is funded; it is one of the main roads by which these societies develop.

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Question 3: Role of Women's Associations in Eradicating Illiteracy Through Adult Education (20 Marks)

What role does the women's association play in eradicating illiteracy from society through adult education?

Introduction

Women form the majority of the illiterate adults of the world and of Pakistan, and their illiteracy is the most damaging kind, because it passes to the next generation: children of illiterate mothers are less likely to be enrolled in school, less likely to be immunized and well nourished, and more likely to leave school early. Yet women are also the hardest group for a

government department to reach, because of domestic workload, restricted mobility, purdah and custom in many areas, shortage of female teachers and the low priority families give to a woman's learning. This is exactly the gap that women's associations fill. By a women's association is meant any organized body of women — national and local women's organizations, welfare associations, mothers' clubs, women's wings of community and religious bodies, self-help and savings groups, and the local committees through which women run literacy and skills centres. This answer examines the role such associations play in eradicating illiteracy through adult education.

Reaching Women Where Official Programmes Cannot

The first role of women's associations is access and trust. A male official or an unfamiliar agency knocking at the door is often turned away where purdah and custom are observed, but women of the same locality — members of a local association, a welfare committee or a respected mothers' group — are received inside the home. They can persuade husbands and elders, answer the objection that a grown woman has no need of letters, and explain education in terms the family values: reading the Holy Quran, helping children with school work, managing household money, caring for health. Because association members are themselves local women, many of them educated through the same route, they serve as living proof that a woman can learn without dishonour. This trusted, woman-to-woman access is something no budget can buy, and it is the foundation on which all their other work stands.

Running Literacy Centres Suited to Women's Lives

Second, women's associations organize and often themselves run literacy and adult-education centres designed around women's lives. They choose venues that women are allowed and able to attend — a member's courtyard, a welfare centre, a room attached to a mosque or school — and hours fitted to domestic work, commonly mid-morning or afternoon. They recruit and support local female teachers, sometimes training literate members for the purpose, solving at one stroke the two scarcest resources of female adult education: acceptable places and acceptable teachers. Associations also look after the practical details that decide attendance: tolerating babies in class, arranging watch over children, keeping the group small and friendly, and visiting the home of any learner who stops coming. Official programmes repeatedly fail on these small human points; associations, being made of the learners' own neighbours, handle them naturally.

Combining Literacy with Skills, Health and Income

Third, women's associations understand that most women and their families will not sustain literacy for its own sake, so they combine it with what women urgently want: income skills, health knowledge and help with children. A typical association centre teaches reading, writing and numeracy alongside sewing, embroidery, knitting or food preservation; runs health and nutrition sessions, often inviting a lady health worker; and links members with savings groups and microcredit. This combination performs three services at once. It gives the family a visible economic reason to let the woman attend. It makes literacy functional, because the learner immediately uses reading and figures in her skill, her accounts and her children's health cards.

And it multiplies the social benefit, since an earning, health-aware literate mother transforms the prospects of her whole household. In this integrated form, association-led education is one of the most effective anti-poverty instruments available.

Mobilization, Awareness and Changing Attitudes

Fourth, associations work on attitudes — their own members' and the community's. Through meetings, talks, religious gatherings, celebration of Literacy Day and public honouring of successful learners, they make women's learning respectable and even a matter of pride. They counter the deep prejudice that education spoils a woman or is wasted on someone who will marry and leave, by presenting educated local women whose families visibly benefit. Within the group, association membership itself is educational: women who have never spoken outside the home learn to discuss, decide, keep minutes and accounts and manage a small fund, gaining the confidence and organizational skill that formal lessons alone cannot give. Many graduates of association literacy classes become volunteer teachers of the next class, so the association continuously manufactures its own teaching force and spreads literacy from woman to woman and village to village.

Partnership with Government and NGOs, and Advocacy

Fifth, women's associations connect grassroots women with the larger system. They bring government and NGO programmes into localities that would otherwise refuse them, provide the local committee and monitoring that such programmes require, identify the poorest and most neglected women whom official surveys miss, and feed back honest information about whether classes are actually running. At the national level, established women's organizations

— in Pakistan, bodies with long histories of women's welfare and education work, alongside newer women's foundations and networks — advocate for girls' and women's education in policy forums, raise funds, train teachers and publish material. This two-way role, local delivery plus national advocacy, makes associations a bridge between the state and the secluded woman whom the state cannot directly reach.

Limitations and the Need for Support

A balanced answer must note the limitations. Many local associations are voluntary and poor, dependent on a few devoted workers, their teachers may be willing but untrained; their records and evaluation are often weak; and in conservative areas even a women's association works under the watch of male elders and can be stopped by local opposition. There is also a risk that association activity remains welfare-oriented — distributing charity and holding ceremonies — rather than systematically teaching to a tested standard. These weaknesses do not diminish the associations' unique value; they define the support that government and NGOs should give them: training for their teachers, free primers and reading material, small grants for venues and equipment, recognition and certification of their learners, and inclusion in district literacy planning. Support without takeover is the right formula, because the associations' strength lies precisely in their voluntary, trusted character.

Conclusion

In conclusion, women's associations play a role in eradicating illiteracy that no other agency can fully perform. They reach women whom custom and seclusion hide from official programmes; they run centres fitted to women's hours, venues and teachers; they join literacy to income,

health and children's welfare so that families support rather than resist it; they change the attitudes that keep women unlettered and turn learners into teachers; and they link the grassroots to government and donors while pressing women's education in public policy. Since female illiteracy is the root from which illiteracy renews itself in each generation, the associations that break it are striking at the source of the problem. A national literacy strategy that treats women's associations as full partners — trained, supplied and respected — will eradicate illiteracy faster than any strategy that tries to reach women without them.

Question 4: Community Mobilization Techniques in Adult Education: A Critical Examination (20 Marks)

Critically examine community mobilization techniques in adult education.

Introduction

Community mobilization means the process of bringing a community — its leaders, organizations, families and ordinary members — to recognize a shared problem, decide to act on it together and contribute its own resources to the solution. In adult education, mobilization is the work done before and around the classroom: persuading adults that literacy is worth their scarce time, securing a venue and a teacher, overcoming the objections of elders and employers, and keeping learners attending until they finish. Experienced practitioners say that in adult education the teaching is the easy half; mobilization decides whether there will be anyone to teach. Several techniques of mobilization are in common use. This answer examines the main ones — awareness campaigns, use of local leadership and institutions, group

formation, incentives and demonstration — and assesses each critically, noting both its power and its limits.

Technique 1: Awareness Campaigns and Media

The most familiar technique is the awareness campaign: posters, wall chalking, banners, announcements, radio and television spots, literacy walks and public meetings that tell a community that illiteracy is a problem and that a class is opening. Campaigns work at the level of climate; they make literacy a public topic, remove some of its shame and prepare the ground for enrolment drives. India's Total Literacy Campaigns made brilliant use of this technique, with folk songs, street theatre and processions turning literacy into a district festival in which the whole society participated. Critically, however, awareness is the weakest link in the chain when it stands alone: it is easy to create a week of excitement and very hard to convert it into six months of regular attendance. Campaigns run from above, in language and imagery designed in a distant office, often preach at the community rather than listening to it, and their effect fades quickly once the banners come down. Awareness is a necessary door-opener, but programmes that mistake it for mobilization itself end with full opening ceremonies and empty classes.

Technique 2: Working Through Local Leaders and Institutions

A second technique is to mobilize through the community's own structures: village elders, elected councillors, religious leaders and the imam of the mosque, school teachers, landlords and respected women. Their endorsement legitimizes the programme, their buildings provide venues, and their personal persuasion reaches households that no outsider can enter. Religious endorsement is particularly powerful in Pakistan, where learning carries religious merit and a

word from the mosque carries weight. The critical examination must, however, face the other side. Local leadership is not neutral: elites may capture the programme, choosing venues and teachers that suit them, or quietly block the education of labourers, kiln workers or women whose literacy might disturb existing arrangements. Dependence on a single influential patron also makes the programme fragile — it flourishes while he favours it and dies when he withdraws. Skilled mobilizers therefore work with leaders respectfully but build, in parallel, an independent base among the learners themselves.

Technique 3: Group Formation and Community Organizations

A third technique is forming groups: literacy committees, mothers' groups, village education committees, self-help and savings groups, through which the community organizes its own learning. This technique mobilizes more deeply than a campaign because it gives the community ownership: the group identifies learners, selects the teacher, fixes hours, monitors attendance and solves problems as they arise. Where adult classes are attached to an existing valued group — a savings circle, a farmers' group, a women's association — attendance and continuity improve markedly, because the class inherits the group's discipline and trust. The limitations are time and exclusion: genuine group formation is slow, cannot be completed in a project's first quarter, and groups can exclude the poorest and lowest-status members who need education most, or be dominated by a few voices. Facilitators have to watch deliberately for who is missing from the group and why.

Technique 4: Incentives, Linkages and Services

Table 1: Community mobilization techniques — strengths and limits

Technique	Strength	Main limitation
Awareness campaigns and media	Creates a favourable climate quickly and at scale	Effect is shallow and short-lived if not followed by organization
Local leaders and institutions	Legitimacy, venues, access to households	Risk of elite capture and quiet blocking of the weakest groups
Group formation / community organizations	Ownership, discipline, continuity of attendance	Slow to build; may exclude the poorest
Incentives and linked services	Answers the learner's immediate needs; strong initial pull	Dependency; attendance may end when the benefit ends
Demonstration and role models	Converts scepticism by visible proof	Local and slow; needs real success to show

A fourth technique mobilizes by offering linked benefits: combining literacy with microcredit, health services, skills training, agricultural inputs, children's schooling support or, in some programmes, direct incentives. This answers the poor adult's reasonable question — "what will I gain?" — and can draw in learners whom appeals alone never move, especially women drawn by savings groups and skills courses. Critically, incentives are a double-edged tool. They cost money that literacy budgets rarely have; they can distort motivation, so that attendance continues only while the benefit flows and the habit of learning is never formed; and they may attract participants interested in the benefit rather than the learning, who leave the class itself neglected. The sound use of this technique is to link literacy with genuinely complementary services — health, skills, credit — that make learning more useful, rather than to pay people, in effect, to sit in a class.

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Technique 5: Demonstration, Role Models and Peer Persuasion

The fifth technique is demonstration: letting results speak. A neo-literate woman reading her child's report card before the neighbours, a farmer whose yields rose after extension classes, a graduate earning from a new skill — these persuade sceptics more effectively than any poster, because they answer the community's real doubt, which is not whether learning is good in theory but whether people like us actually benefit. Successful programmes systematize this: honouring completers publicly, inviting past learners to speak at enrolment meetings, using each finishing class to recruit the next, and applying the "each one teach one" principle, under which every new literate undertakes to teach another. The critical points are that demonstration is slow and local, depends on the programme having real successes to show — exaggerated claims, once exposed, destroy trust for years — and can embarrass learners if publicity exposes their earlier illiteracy insensitively. Used honestly, however, it is the most durable mobilizer, because it converts beneficiaries into the programme's own workers.

Cross-Cutting Criticisms

Across all techniques, certain general criticisms recur in the literature and in Pakistani experience. First, mobilization is too often treated as a preliminary to be finished before the "real" work, whereas adult programmes need continuous mobilization: recruiting, retaining, following up absentees and recruiting the next batch are permanent tasks. Second, mobilization targets are set from above in numbers — so many enrolled by such a date — which tempts field workers to inflate enrolment and neglect the slow persuasion of the genuinely reluctant, who are usually the poorest. Third, mobilization frequently addresses "the community" as if it were

one body, ignoring its internal divisions of class, caste, gender and occupation; techniques that mobilize the dominant may simultaneously demobilize the weak. Fourth, mobilizers themselves — teachers and field staff — are commonly the least trained and worst paid people in the programme, although their skill decides everything. Finally, mobilization without a good class behind it is a fraud on the community: people persuaded at real cost in time and courage who then meet a careless teacher or useless content will not be persuaded a second time, and their experience will poison future efforts.

Conclusion

In conclusion, community mobilization techniques — awareness campaigns, work through leaders and institutions, group formation, linked incentives and services, and demonstration by role models — are each genuinely useful, and the strongest programmes combine several of them in sequence: campaign to open minds, leaders to legitimize, groups to organize, linked services to sustain interest and demonstration to renew the cycle. Critically examined, none is sufficient alone, and each carries a characteristic danger: campaigns are shallow, leaders may capture, groups may exclude, incentives may corrupt motivation and demonstration depends on honest success. The standard by which mobilization should be judged is not enrolment on the first day but regular attendance, completion and tested learning among the poorest members of the community, women above all. Mobilization done to that standard is not propaganda for a programme; it is the community taking its own education in hand, which is the only basis on which adult education endures.

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Question 5: Problems of Adult Learners in Teaching–Learning and Their Solutions (20 Marks)

What are the different types of learners' problems that adults face in teaching-learning problems? What are solutions to these problems?

Introduction

Adults do not enter a classroom as blank pages, and they do not learn under the protected conditions of childhood. They come with jobs, families, debts, memories of earlier failure and bodies and minds shaped by years of physical work. Consequently, the problems adult learners face in the teaching–learning process are numerous and of several distinct types — psychological, social and economic, physical and health-related, and educational and instructional. A teacher who treats an adult's irregular attendance, silence or slow progress as laziness will lose the class; a teacher who understands the problems behind them can almost always find a remedy. This answer describes the main types of problems adult learners face and, alongside each, the practical solutions available to the teacher, the programme and the community.

Psychological Problems and Their Solutions

The first type is psychological. Many adults carry anxiety and low self-confidence from earlier encounters with schooling: they fear ridicule from neighbours, from younger literate relatives and even from their own children; they believe, wrongly, that the age for learning has passed and that an old mind cannot retain; and they are ashamed to be seen beginning with the

alphabet. Fatigue of motivation is related: initial enthusiasm fades when progress feels slow. The solutions begin with climate. The teacher must create complete emotional safety — no mockery, no public correction that humiliates, no comparison between learners — and must engineer early, visible success by breaking learning into small steps in which every learner succeeds in the first week. Adults should be told, truthfully and with examples, that mature learners learn more slowly in rote memory but faster in understanding because of their experience. Group solidarity helps: when learners struggle together and celebrate one another's progress, shame gives way to mutual encouragement. Certificates, public honouring of completers and the testimony of earlier graduates strengthen motivation at the points where it usually fails.

Social and Economic Problems and Their Solutions

The second type is social and economic, and in poor communities it is often the decisive one. Adults work long and irregular hours; seasonal labour, migration for work, domestic duties and care of children and elders compete directly with class time, producing irregular attendance and drop-out that have nothing to do with ability. Women face additional social barriers: mobility restrictions, the need for a family's permission, disapproval of mixed company and the sheer weight of household work. Poverty adds the costs of travel, materials and lost working time. The solutions are organizational: classes at hours and seasons fitted to work — evenings for labourers, slack agricultural seasons for farmers, mid-day for housewives; venues within walking distance, and for women, venues and female teachers acceptable to families; short, modular courses whose completion does not require an unbroken year; tolerance of children in

women's classes; and linkage of learning with income, through skills and savings groups, so that attendance visibly pays. Community and family persuasion, discussed under mobilization, must accompany these arrangements, especially for women learners.

Physical and Health-Related Problems and Their Solutions

The third type is physical. Many adult learners, especially older ones and those who have done years of close or outdoor work, have weak eyesight and cannot read small print in poor light; hearing may be impaired; chronic illness, malnutrition and sheer physical tiredness after a day's labour shorten concentration; and older learners genuinely memorize new material more slowly than the young. These problems are frequently misread as stupidity or indifference. The solutions are practical and cheap: large-print materials and bold writing on the board; good lighting and seating near the teacher for those with weak sight or hearing; referral, where programmes can manage it, for simple spectacles, which transform a learner's progress for a very small cost; shorter sessions with breaks instead of long lectures after a working day; generous repetition and practice rather than speed; and teaching methods that use several senses at once — seeing, hearing, speaking and doing — so that a weakness in one channel is compensated by the others.

Educational and Instructional Problems and Their Solutions

Table 1: Adult learners' problems and practical solutions

Type of problem	Typical examples	Practical solutions
Psychological	Fear of ridicule, shame, low confidence, belief that age for learning is past	Safe climate, small successful steps, praise, peer support, public honouring of completers

Social and economic	Work hours, seasonal labour, migration, women's mobility limits, cost of attendance	Flexible hours and seasons, near-home venues, female teachers, short modules, link with income and skills
Physical / health	Weak eyesight, hearing loss, illness, fatigue, slower memorization with age	Large print, good light, front seating, spectacles, short sessions, repetition, multi-sensory methods
Educational	No prior schooling, mixed levels, childish materials, irrelevant content, unsuitable teacher behaviour	Diagnostic grouping, adult materials, functional content, trained facilitators, practical evaluation

The fourth type is educational and instructional. Adult classes commonly contain complete beginners beside semi-literates who attended school for a few years, and teaching pitched to one group bores or bewilders the other. Many learners have no study habits, no experience of holding a pencil and no idea how to practise. Materials are often at fault — primers written for children, content unrelated to adult life — and so are teachers, when those trained for children scold, rush or examine adults as if they were pupils, or when untrained volunteers teach inaccurately. Language can itself be a problem where the learner's mother tongue differs from the language of the primer. The solutions follow directly: assess each learner's starting level and group or pace work accordingly, using peer help from stronger learners; use adult, functional materials built on real documents and tasks; teach study and practice skills explicitly, with plenty of guided practice in class, since home practice conditions are poor; train teachers specifically in adult methods and in the respectful handling of adults; where possible, begin literacy in the mother tongue and bridge to the national language; and evaluate by practical demonstration, which informs the learner of progress without the terror of examinations.

Problems of Retention and Relapse, and Their Solutions

A further problem, sometimes counted separately, appears after the course: relapse into illiteracy. Adults who pass a basic course but then find nothing to read and no occasion to write forget within a year or two much of what they learned, a pattern documented in evaluations of literacy campaigns in Pakistan and elsewhere. Related to it is drop-out during the course, whose causes are usually the social and economic problems already described, breaking in before the learner has become firmly literate. The solutions are a post-literacy stage planned from the beginning, not improvised at the end: simple books and newspapers written for new readers, village reading rooms and wall newspapers, refresher and continuing classes, and deliberate creation of occasions to use literacy — keeping the accounts of a savings group, reading official notices for the neighbourhood, corresponding with migrant family members. Retention is also protected by reaching a genuinely functional standard in the first course rather than a ceremonial one, because skills used daily are skills kept.

Conclusion

In conclusion, adult learners' problems in teaching and learning fall into recognizable types: psychological problems of fear, shame and low confidence; social and economic problems of work, poverty, family duty and restriction, especially for women; physical problems of eyesight, hearing, health, fatigue and slower memorization; educational problems of mixed levels, poor materials and unsuitable teaching; and the post-course problem of relapse. None of these is a defect of the learner, and almost all have known, practical solutions: a safe and encouraging climate with early success; flexible hours, seasons and venues with provision fitted to women's

lives; large print, light, rest and repetition; level-wise grouping, adult functional materials and teachers trained as facilitators; and a planned post-literacy follow-up. The teacher or programme that diagnoses problems in this way, instead of blaming learners for them, will find that adult learners — motivated, experienced and purposeful — overcome difficulties that would defeat a less determined class.

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