

THE SOCIAL FUNCTION AND MEANING OF NONFORMAL EDUCATION. A
STUDY OF OFFICIAL COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN
THE STATE OF MEXICO

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the thesis is to examine the social control and reproduction functions of what is known as nonformal education in the State of Mexico (Mexico). As such it is concerned with analysing what Bernstein calls the coding characteristics of the educational process and how this process is experienced by the participants and can reinforce their 'social positioning' in their society.

To place the study in its context there is an initial consideration of the conditions in which nonformal education emerged in Latin America, followed by a critical assessment of its functions; new perspectives for the analysis of this form of education are examined. To set the analysis in its regional context a description of the development of nonformal education at both national and regional levels is provided. Then the definition, aims, and purposes of community education programmes are analyzed. A theoretical and conceptual framework is constructed to analyze the social control and reproduction functions of education; here emphasis is placed on Bernstein's sociolinguistic theory of cultural transmission. This is followed by a sociological appraisal of community education's underlying or invisible features. In the light of the above the methodological chapter presents the concepts and techniques which allowed us to examine the educational process and participants' viewpoint.

A qualitative analysis was employed in order to account for the participants' perspective. It was supported by non-structured interviews and participant observation. Empirical work was carried out in four community education programmes in the State of Mexico. Three areas were considered during the field research: a) the educational process (curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation); b) teachers and students' motives for taking part in courses; c) the meanings assigned by participants to the courses as a result of their participation in and experience of the educational process.

Data is discussed in terms of the basic concepts of the thesis: social positioning, control and reproduction. The main conclusion refers to the social control and reproduction functions of community education programmes resulting from participants overall

exposure to educational institutions and practices. This, it is argued, is achieved through three basic processes: 1) the social positioning of participants which arises as a result of their identification with the educational coding; 2) the lowering of participants' expectations as a consequence of the marginal and marginalising characteristics of the educational process they undergo; 3) the very fact that the courses respond to the motivations and satisfy the interests of the participants.

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"The inter-actional context, its contents and its institutional expression realize in condensed and explicit forms, in visible and invisible ways, the constraints and possibilities of a given society. Alive in the context, contents and institutional embodiment of education is the distribution of power and principles of social control" (Bernstein 1977:160).

"... in matters of culture absolute dispossession excludes awareness of being dispossessed" (Bourdieu:1977).

"... in the case of schools, the medium really is the message" (Reimer).

"Pero para la masa, para los numerosos otros, subsistió el abismo igual cuando era muy profundo que cuando era más superficial" (Heller:1987).

"La educación de adultos es una forma compensatoria de la necesidad de distribución desigual del saber necesario" (Brandao 1986).

INTRODUCTION

In recent years many 'developing countries'¹ have paid special attention to promoting what has become known as *nonformal education*. They have been chiefly influenced by the widely held assumption that programmes of nonformal education can compensate for and rectify weaknesses of formal education, reach larger groups of the population located in what have been called marginal² communities, and act as more effective instruments for social and economic development than previous programmes. Mexico has been no exception to this phenomenon. From the late 1960s and early 1970s there has been a widespread development of government run nonformal education programmes covering a large range of activities from health education and literacy campaigns to the improvement of agricultural productivity in the rural sector. Amongst these activities community education stands out as a form of education to which particular importance has been given and which is now one of the most encouraged areas of nonformal education closely followed by others which focus on increasing agricultural productivity (see Chapter II: Part II, Section 7). A number of questions regarding the impact of such a vast educational enterprise, its assumptions about social and economic development, the motives for people's participation, the way they experience the educational process and what they are left with, made up the basic guidelines for our analysis.

Our own concern was generated by a previous piece of research (Pieck and Aguado 1988) aimed at giving an account of nonformal education activities performed by government institutions from 1980 to 1986 in the State of Mexico. The main conclusions indicated that despite the large number of educational activities undertaken nonformal education has not lived up to its aim of compensating for the problems of the socially and economically marginalized areas. The findings also raised questions about the

¹ What has come to be known as Third World Countries have usually been given a number of labels such as: less developed, developing, semi-industrialized, under developed, etc. We have opted to use the term *developing countries* in this thesis.

² By marginal we will be referring in this thesis to the state of poor social and economic conditions which prevail in many localities -usually those remote from urban centres- compared to other localities in the same country. That is, the non-existence or paucity of basic public services (roads, water, drainage, electricity, paving), number of schools, predominant low income population, among others, contribute to the people living in them as being regarded as marginal, and therefore labelled sometimes as socially and economically marginalized population/communities that have not been incorporated into the national social and economic mainstream.

effectiveness of such programmes given they are not coherently organized, there is a duplication of activities, and they are poorly financed (see chapter II:8).

Our object of study are official community education programmes³ in the rural areas, a particular form of nonformal education. These programmes are oriented either towards i) the acquisition of *domestic skills* (with the option of turning them into gainful employment), or ii) *skill training* courses, more typically oriented to specific economic activities, self-employment or to providing entry into the labour market. These courses, as will be explained (Chapter III:1), are generally classified as *community education* because it is and has been generally assumed that they have a positive effect or impact in terms of improving community standards of living.⁴ This is different from the broader and more ambitious concept and practice of *community education* as one which is and has been concerned with the socioeconomic development of the community by means of encouraging the direct participation of people in the community. The focus, thus, is not on the analysis of *community education* as such but on the social implications of official community education programmes.

The official community education programmes are also different from educational programmes for rural development, that is, programmes whose principal objective is to raise productivity in areas such as agriculture, aquaculture, animal husbandry, etc. Thus, agricultural extension courses (informal meetings or lectures about fertilizers, construction of water containers, improvement of cultivation techniques, etc.); courses on animal husbandry (vaccines, artificial insemination, animal nutrition, etc.); organizational courses concerned with starting small-scale rural industrial projects or at improving the economic and social development of the *ejidos*⁵ (such as those provided by the Ministry of Agriculture), are not analyzed here.

³ To refer to community education programmes carried out by state institutions we will use the term official or government-sponsored programmes.

⁴ The 'Plan for Educational Modernization' (*Plan de Modernización Educativa 1989-1994*) establishes that the aim of community education is to provide communities nonformal education services that may contribute to raise their organization and participation levels in order to improve the quality of life (SEP 1989).

⁵ A form of land tenure in rural Mexico where land was given to people but is not owned by them and where agricultural production is carried out either on a collective or an individual basis. We will discuss the term in the next chapter.

We must also stress some differences between formal and nonformal education. The differences nonformal education programmes have with formal education can be observed in the learning environment, in teachers' qualifications, in the content and in the process of education. There has been great controversy and confusion about the concept of nonformal education, defined usually purely in terms of its differences from formal education. There has been a tendency for the concept to be used in many different ways. For the purposes of this thesis we will rely on Coombs (1976:282) definition of nonformal education as a "... bewildering assortment of organized educational activities outside the formal system that are intended to serve identifiable learning needs of particular subgroups in any given population -be they children, youths, or adults; males or females; farmers, merchants or craftsmen; affluent or poor families." ⁶

One of the reasons why community education became of interest for the research was because of the faith placed upon it and the fact that it has been used and practised on large scale. Yet it has been insufficiently investigated and reevaluated in terms of what it actually accomplishes. Even after reading evaluations of field work one is struck by the lack of systematic evaluations. Indeed one is still faced with some very basic and important questions. Since the courses are concerned with the transmission of very specific skills to the rural population, to what extent are these courses successful? How useful are they for people living in marginal areas? If marginal conditions (e.g. insufficient material provision: lack of buildings and tools; low teachers' salaries) are the most typical during the implementation of programmes, would it be possible to expect courses to be successful in terms of their objectives? What motivates or stimulates people to participate in courses such as knitting, cooking, carpentry, etc.?

⁶ Simkins (1977:12-15) lists a number of features of the ideal type of nonformal education according to its purposes, timing, content, delivery system and control which make a contrast to those of the formal education system: Purposes: Short-term and specific (it meets short-time learning needs) and Non-credential based (learning is only valued in the individual's context). Timing: Short Cycle (programmes are quite short); Recurrent (it may relate to children or adults, depending on their needs); Part-time (and activities are timed to meet the needs of the learners). Content: Output-Centred and Individualised (it is task -or skills-centred); Practical (curriculum is related to the learners' environment); Entry Requirements determined by Clientele (geared to the interests of the clientele). Delivery System: Environment-based (takes place in a variety of settings); Community-related (the environment is functionally related to learning); Flexibly-structured (programmes have varying degrees and types of structure); Learner-centred (emphasis is on learning rather than teaching); Resource-saving (it economises using communities facilities). Control: Self-governing (substantially autonomy of programmes); Democratic (substantial control is vested in participants).

We thus start from the need to examine and question more rigorously the alleged social and economic benefits of official community education programmes for people living in the rural areas. We must look closely at the widely shared assumption that nonformal education is an educational alternative and see to what extent it operates as an activity that intends to compensate for problems derived from a development model that has not been able to offer marginal sectors of the population a means to improve their living standards. We must ask the question to what extent official community education programmes remain far from turning into a real support to community development?

If we look at research in this area two things emerge. Firstly, the study of government-sponsored community education programmes in terms of how students acquire the specific contents of the courses, workshops, seminars and programmes has not been prioritised by researchers. They have been more interested in courses with an immediate pay off such as courses linked to rural development, which we mentioned above, and literacy programmes. There is a tendency to view community education as unlikely to foster economic development. Yet the courses exist and flourish and as Schmelkes and Street (1991) point out they obviously have an important function. The inadequate study of this sort of programmes ends up concealing a vast government-sponsored educational activity that doesn't seem to have a counterpart in terms of the area covered and in terms of the number of programmes carried out in almost every country⁷ (*Ibidem.*).

Secondly, the social and political implications of government run programmes have seldom raised the interest of social researchers; they have chosen to study other areas, such as basic and higher education, from the perspective of their social function. When nonformal education has been studied from a macro-social focus regarding reproduction and social control functions it has dealt mainly with the pedagogic experiences of popular education (Freire 1973; Brandao 1986; Gamez 1983; Garcia Huidobro 1985). Not much attention has been paid to the social function of the nonformal education provided by the government. Recent studies (Torres 1990; Morales-Torres 1990; Bock

⁷ The activity of the government in terms of nonformal education provision is overwhelming. In the State of Mexico, only one private institution -the Mexican Foundation for Rural Development (*Fundacion Mexicana para el Desarrollo Rural - FMDR*)- had a significant presence from 1971 to 1982 in the rural sector. (Refer to Chapter II for an analysis of the numerous presence of government institutions carrying out nonformal education programmes)

1983; Paige 1983), as will be emphasized in Chapter I, are first examples of looking at this form of nonformal education from a different perspective. However, there is still surprisingly little work on how social functions such as social control, reproduction and legitimation are achieved through the nature and structure of the educational process and through the way people perceive their participation in the educational experience.

This research aims to shed some light on this area, particularly considering that in government-sponsored programmes unlike *popular education* (see chapter III:7.2) there is not a specific educational intention to develop social and political awareness, conscientization, a community vision of reality, and social change. 'Actors', that is, teachers and students, are the same in both experiences; intentions are not. Hence, what are the social implications of community education courses? What are the meanings that participants are left with even if the aim of these courses was only to bring about the acquisition of skills? The government has made an enormous investment in community education provision. What are the real/actual outcomes? Why do people participate in these courses and how do they perceive them? Of what use are they? What is the outcome of these courses, in terms of meanings and in terms of their social function? These are some of the questions that led us to choose government sponsored community education programmes as our object of study.

In the light of little research in this area we have therefore opted to reflect about the social functions of nonformal education. We will investigate the extent to which i) some characteristics of the educational process: curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation, and ii) the way they are experienced by the participants, explain what sociologists see as social control and reproduction functions underlying any act of educational acquisition. The thesis is, thus, an attempt to explore the meaning and the social function of government run community education programmes in Mexico.

This means we must look concretely at programmes in a number of settings and use a methodology that allows us to explore the questions we raised above. For that reason the thesis focuses on the educational process and uses what can be broadly defined as an ethnographic perspective (see Chapter VI). The analysis was carried out using a

theoretical framework relying on concepts and categories drawn from Bernstein's sociolinguistic theory and cultural transmission model for the analysis of the educational process and supplemented by other works concerned with the relationship between education and social control and reproduction (Chapter IV). These enabled us to get access to the underlying features of the educational process.

Official community education programmes have community groups as their targets, and usually regard community development as part of their objectives (see chapter II, III and VI). However, the *community*, within the programmes' perspective, is usually viewed as an undifferentiated group of people living in the localities sharing a same space -that is the community merely in physical terms. There is also a tendency in the literature to present the community both as homogeneous and self-sufficient. This perspective fails to deal with the important issue of social stratification and with the fact that there are social differences among the population as a result of their differences in gaining access to cultural and economic benefits (Schmelkes 1980, 1985; Brandao 1986). To what extent does this view (shared by most community education programmes) contribute to an educational practice directed at community development? This is one of the questions which underlies the thesis and which we will discuss in chapter III.

Given that community education programmes in the rural areas are usually addressed to low income population in socioeconomic marginal areas a brief initial description of the participants and the settings of community education courses in Mexico will help to provide a clearer picture of the circumstances that surround the practice of these programmes.

Bernard and Papagianis (1983:196) have pointed out that "... partly as a reaction to assumed failing of formal education, (nonformal education) programmes often attempt to present a learning environment different from that found in formal schools". We would argue that the characteristics of the learning environment of nonformal education programmes depend rather on the marginal social and economic characteristics of the context where these programmes take place. That is, the low socioeconomic level of most rural areas has been the major determinant of the contents and the characteristics

of nonformal education programmes (Jayaweera 1979).

In the State of Mexico many rural localities can be characterized as having marginal social and economic characteristics. As a result community education courses, as will be noted as part of our findings (Chapter VII), take place in equally marginal conditions with settings ranging from students' houses to borrowed classrooms. Very often these learning spaces do not have the minimum essentials (chairs, tables, blackboard, electricity; etc.) to carry out their function.

The majority of the students of nonformal education programmes in Mexico is composed of people from low income rural families who have a predominantly low social, economic and political status (Martinez 1981:84). They constitute a rather heterogeneous group (small-scale producers, agricultural cultivators, artisans, day-labourers, small-scale traders of various kinds; etc.) who are not engaged exclusively in agriculture. Nowadays men work in many types of activities, although they are generally viewed as non-qualified manual labour belonging to the secondary labour market mainly working in nearby urban centres (watchmen, porters, bricklayers, etc.). In the case of the State of Mexico there is a significant presence of two indigenous groups: *Mazahuas* and *Otomies*. Particularly in this State, as we will see in chapter II, there is a close link between the urban and the rural because of its proximity if not its partial incorporation into the enormously expanding urban conurbation of the city of Mexico, so it is quite common for people to migrate to the nearby City of Mexico in order to get temporary jobs.

It is important to stress that women make up the majority of students in community education courses. In our survey they constitute more than 90% of the total number of students. In the case of rural women low schooling levels and a predominant subordinated social and economic role are common features in rural communities. Women's everyday conditions are characterized by their primary reproductive role confined basically to time consuming domestic activities and to the contribution to family economic activities.

The everyday economic and social activities of women in many small communities makes attendance to the courses difficult. For example *mazahua* women are usually engaged in traditional activities, concerned with both domestic and farm work: tending crops (sowing, weeding, harvesting, etc.), feeding the animals, fetching wood for the fire, time consumed in making tortillas, cooking, washing, taking care of the children, etc.

These circumstances make it difficult to control one's time sufficiently to attend courses and/or workshops. In some other cases women are small-scale traders (fruits, flowers, vegetables, small shop owners). A number of communities with some urban features and with a central economic activity (either flower production and commercialization, or knitting) transform women's labour into something less traditional. As a result of the social and economic activities in the communities people's everyday life and attitudes vary and this can be noted in terms of the extent of people's openness and receptiveness.

The thesis is divided into seven chapters.

In the first chapter an examination of the relationship between education and development is presented in order to locate the emergence of nonformal education and its underlying assumptions. Some questions are introduced concerning nonformal education's contributions to social and economic development emphasizing the need to contextualize its analysis within a broader social framework. Finally, some recent attempts to look at nonformal education from alternative perspectives are analyzed emphasizing the need to take into consideration the participants' perspective when assessing the social functions of this form of education.

The purpose of the second chapter is to provide a regional context within which to discuss and analyze the development of community education. It is divided into two parts. The first gives an overview of the development antecedents of nonformal education in Mexico showing how its scope and practice have evolved. In this way a background is provided which makes it possible to understand a particular development of nonformal education in the State of Mexico where this research project took place. This first part provides a survey of the present context of nonformal education, the

institutions providing it, the areas being tackled, etc. The second part deals with the development of nonformal education in the State of Mexico. It gives an outline of the socioeconomic framework of the State of Mexico with an emphasis on the state of education, and aims to explain the development of nonformal education there since 1940.

In the third chapter we situate official community education programmes against the background of nonformal education approaches that have put emphasis on working with community groups, referred to as *community education* or *community development*. Initially an assessment of the problems which come up when trying to locate official community education programmes within the aims and assumptions of community education is provided. Next a distinction is made between popular education and community development and a description is given of their assumptions, methodologies, and limitations. Both are used as a framework for the analysis of community education as it is provided by government institutions. Finally a picture is offered of the practice of community education in the rural areas with emphasis on women's education as the most widespread programmes in this sector.

The fourth chapter provides a framework of some of the ways in which the educational problem has been tackled in order to highlight some perspectives which, in our view, allow us to explain inner and hidden processes of the educational phenomenon. The chapter aims to give an account of the search which was undertaken for theoretical concepts that could allow the analysis of nonformal education from the perspective of its social functions. In order to develop an adequate theoretical and conceptual framework theories concerned with these functions are examined. Initially, the emergence of the 'New' Sociology of Education is assessed as comprising new perspectives which departed from previous functionalist perspectives on the analysis of education in society. Then we highlight the neo-Marxist contributions to the understanding of education's role in terms of cultural and social reproduction, and its sociopolitical functions. Finally, a framework is provided derived from Bernstein's sociolinguistic theory and concept of cultural transmission.

In the fifth chapter an overview is given of the hidden curriculum of these programmes and their social and political implications when regarded from a sociological perspective. The analysis focuses on some characteristics of this form of education such as the main characteristics of its clients, and some elements of the nonformal educational process. Special emphasis is put on the rural areas as the site where community education programmes that are considered in our study are located. A hypothetical framework which refers to some of the questions and assumptions that served as a guide for the research underlies in this last section of the chapter.

The methodological chapter provides information about the methodology chosen to undertake the research, its main concerns, hypotheses, and the way in which the problem of the function and meaning of community education was examined and analyzed. It offers information to help contextualize the analysis of the data which is the purpose of the next chapter. Initially we explain why an ethnographic perspective was given priority over other forms of analysis. The following section describes the levels of analysis considered, and the main methodological concepts used for each level. Then follows a description of research techniques and instruments used during field-work. Finally, information about the sample is provided concerning: institutions, programmes, courses, and the communities. This section concludes with a general description of how the analysis of data was carried out and about the strategy followed during the field work.

A seventh chapter gives an account of the data gathered during the field research. It is divided into different sections which deal with the findings on several aspects. We start with the analysis of the educational context of community education in terms of its organizational features. We then make an analysis of the basic characteristics of the social actors: teachers and students. Next we examine the educational process at three different levels: curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation. Having provided the basic context of community education we then describe and examine students' and teachers' motives for taking part in these programmes. An analysis of the meaning the educational experience has for participants follows.

Finally, in the concluding chapter we summarise our findings and our interpretations of those findings as well as providing a final assessment of the research.

It is important to stress some assumptions and limitations of this analysis:

1) The analysis concentrates on the development of nonformal education in Latin American countries and specifically Mexico. No emphasis is put then on the way adult education has been developed and analyzed in 'developed' countries, particularly in Europe and in the United States. There it stems from different social and economic realities and has, accordingly, different purposes and methodologies. Nor do we refer to Asia and Africa.

2) Even if the term *adult education* has been commonly used to refer to activities addressed to adults, we have opted to use the term 'nonformal education' a term more frequently used to address training courses as those carried out within community education programmes.

3) Due to the paucity of ethnographic works dealing with nonformal education in developing countries, and the little research stemming from a theoretical perspective similar to the one we have adopted the thesis is intended as an exploratory work aiming to provide a complementary perspective for understanding nonformal education. As a result many ideas and interpretations that come from this work are to be taken fundamentally as hypotheses for further research.

CHAPTER I

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF
NONFORMAL EDUCATION**

"If we had only understood that much of what fashion defines as new is found already in the past the history of our educational reforms could have been very different. We would not have imposed the new just for the sake of being new, but would have understood that the past was already essentially new and required only to be translated into the languages of a different period" (Latapi).

CHAPTER I
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF
NONFORMAL EDUCATION

This chapter is intended as an introduction to the subject of the thesis: an understanding of the social function of nonformal education. Initially, an examination of the relationship between education and development is presented in order to locate the emergence of nonformal education and its underlying assumptions. Then some questions are introduced concerning nonformal education's contributions to social and economic development emphasizing the need to contextualize its analysis within a broader social framework. Finally, some recent attempts to look at nonformal education from alternative perspectives are analyzed emphasizing the need to take into consideration the participants' perspective when assessing the social functions of this form of education.

1. THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The reason for starting with the analysis of the relationship between education and development, lies in the importance given to it during the 1950's and 1960's, as the basis from which a group of theories were formulated assigning to education a significant role in development processes. On this basis education programmes were (and are still) implemented in the belief that they would have a definite impact in terms of improving socioeconomic development and living standards. Education's importance in terms of economic growth and development constituted the most common focus used by governmental agencies and came to be an important element within their discourse. As Tedesco points out, the previous emphasis on the formation of the citizen was replaced by an emphasis on the development of human resources considered as a vital resource for economic development at a social level, and for the access to higher positions at the individual level (Tedesco 1980:17; Finkel 1979).

During the 1950s and 1960s theories of development which were propounded by writers as different as W.W. Rostow and Barrington Moore (1967) attempted to explain social

and economic growth and modernity based upon a model derived from the experience of countries which were industrialised by the end of the 19th century in general and Great Britain in particular. The majority of such theories measured a Third World country's economic and social maturity in comparison to the level reached in what were thus called 'developed countries'. Moreover, these theories sought to define development in purely economic or technological terms. The failure of such a perspective to take into account individual countries specificities and the very complex nature of their processes of economic and social development led to an over-homogenised concept which was too abstract and hence theoretically unwieldy not only for analytical purposes but in terms of serving as a model (Bock 1982; Simkins 1977).

By the late 1960s social scientists began to be aware of phenomena which appeared to challenge the above theory. In Latin American countries factors like the perpetuation in the countryside and the emergence in the burgeoning urban factors of socially and economically 'marginalised' sectors, and the vast migrations from the countryside to the cities in search for work and better living conditions began to reveal some rather acute deficiencies of the developmentalist models (Cardoso and Faletto 1978). Moreover, economists began to provide empirical information which questioned the supposed link between economic growth and development. As Simkins (1977:20) points out:

"... it was becoming increasingly clear that the earlier, simplistic notion of what development entailed had involved many misconceptions and had led to a number of unexpected and increasingly unacceptable consequences."

Some countries had had constant increases in the GDP, nevertheless access for the majority of the population to minimum welfare levels did not improve. Years later foreign capital, once industrialized economies recovered their power to export, became the controller of the more dynamic fields of the economy (Cardoso and Faletto 1978). Within this panorama education was required as a mechanism to achieve development goals. It is to this aspect that we direct our attention in this first section.

What has been called the 'Human Capital' theory became the educational counterpart of developmentalist theories. It was intended to have a link with the type of policies to

be implemented by government agencies and prepared the ground for giving education a dynamic role in economic development by means of supporting technological change and the efficient use of human resources (Padua 1984). For developing countries it was intended as a means of escape from 'underdevelopment'. Almost magical powers to deal with serious disadvantages and deficits at the social economic and political levels were attributed to education. As Bock (1982:78) comments:

"... education is called upon to alleviate poverty, to serve as the vanguard in directing social and economic change, and as the means for individual self-improvement. (...) education is charged with providing the young with competencies required for productive participation in the modernizing economy; with mobilizing previously parochial populations to political consciousness; and with reforming the inequities of distribution by levelling the presently affluent while elevating the powerless".

Education was conceived of as having a major role in the development of human capital by transmitting knowledge and skills and therefore as an important instrument to achieve economic development. Schultz's conclusion was that underdeveloped countries lacking in the "... knowledge and skills required to take and use efficiently the superior techniques of production should be provided with aid designed to increase the quality of their human capital." (quoted by Karabel 1977:15)¹

The educational system became the supplier of an important factor of production: the human resource. As Simkins (1977:20) points out, "... the 'outputs' of the educational system were conceived as essentially economic -the production of skilled and educated individuals with the potential to raise productivity in key sectors of the economy". It was considered that the higher level of schooling the greater the possibility of influencing society's productive capacity given the relation established between productivity and training. The productive character of education involved also "a socially specific and historically determined relation of production that made education a direct instrument of capital value" (Finkel 1979: 295).

¹ It is then that institutions like the World Bank and the Ford Foundation gave an important support to the spreading of the 'gospel' of human capital among Third World countries by providing funds for economists of education.

Education was regarded as one of the necessary preconditions for development and as an element that might contribute to preparing a more productive and trained labour force to push forward a country's economic development. A direct relationship was established between schooling and work productivity, and this had an influence on:

"... the analysis of the conditions by which it is possible to implement educational systems aimed at preparing individuals and societies for modernization (and led) to a set of diagnoses and recommendations (...) that, if applied in the less advanced countries, would supposedly result in increased rationality in production and innovative capacity of individuals and institutions, and in the long run in a kind of society and a development similar, if not identical, to those achieved by the now more advanced societies" (Padua 1984:51-2).

If the productive capacity of a country depended not only on its natural resources, infrastructure, machinery, etc., but also on its labour force's educational level, the educational system was intended to provide human resources as important factors of the production process. Emphasis put on having trained human resources depended on the assumption that productivity was a consequence of technical training, knowledge, and technical abilities, despite differences in terms of values, personality, age, etc.

The predominance of this view led to the expansion of the educational systems between approximately 1950 and 1970 in the hope they might contribute to economic growth and a less unequal income distribution. The underlying idea was that it would become more attractive to invest in education than in physical capital, because human capital could be developed to overcome underdevelopment. At this point, low levels of education and attainment were looked at as barriers to the access to higher development stages (Gomez 1981).²

However, postulating such a simple, mechanical and direct a relation had the drawback of being a unilateral perspective on the phenomenon where economic underdevelopment

² The idea complements with the one sustained by international development agencies where 'help' is defined with a very specific direction: a United Nations' project carried out in 1948, with the aim to identify elements that could accelerate economic growth in non-industrialized countries, concluded that "money that is invested in the training of the human element comes to be probably as productive, in a strictly material sense, as the one invested in machines and buildings, and, in much cases, the first expenditure will turn into a superior circulation of goods and services than the one obtained with the later" (Dettmer and Esteinou 1983).

was explained at least partially in terms of educational underdevelopment. This 'sudden' interest in education and the expectations placed on it entailed a particular perspective on their societies and on the possible role education might play in their contexts. Bock (1982:82) comments on this that:

"... the choice of education as an intervention strategy and the high expectations which governing elites have for it reflect their world view; that is, the predominant set of assumptions they have about the nature of social change, the meaning of development (and, conversely, the causes for underdevelopment), and, ultimately, assumptions about the role education can play in these processes."

The crucial point became whether education was what brought about economic growth or if the latter was the indispensable condition -given the shortage of capital within developing and developed countries- for the expansion of the educational system, a point which became more complex given the interdependent relation between both elements. According to Finkel (1979:292) education may contribute to an increase of productivity only in certain cases, such as: 1) when learning is used by individuals who work, or who will work, effectively when the process of formal education ends; 2) amongst those who work, the ones who work in productive jobs; 3) when education's content is directly or indirectly linked to increases in productivity.

After some years the social and economic circumstances of Latin American countries challenged the potential of education as a promoter of development and as a means of achieving social equality. It became evident to commentators that education in isolation could not be a guarantor of economic progress nor of the foundation of a liberal/democratic political order (Tedesco 1980). The economic conception of education -overly a-historical and abstract- did not allow room for the possibility that similar educational systems can produce totally different outcomes depending on the realities in which they are being implemented, therefore it was not advisable to establish mechanical relations between more and less developed countries or between countries with different social structures (Segre 1980). Even if investment in education is considered important in industrialization processes, what comes to be determinant lies in circumstances and contextual conditions which are beyond the scope of an educational

system and which are rather linked with peculiar traits of contemporary capitalism and its dynamic in central and peripheral countries (Padua 1984). On this Simkins (1977:28) states that "... it must be accepted that, at present, the evidence concerning the outcomes of schooling in developing countries is quite limited, and much of the writing in this area is self-confessedly polemical".

Padua (1984:60) comments that the myths of technical progress, freedom, and equal opportunities were confounded by realities grounded in stratification and social class differences, as well as in factors concerning the organization of the economy, society and culture. Progress, as an abstract category, was then regarded as a property derived from structures linking development and underdevelopment.

On the alleged potential for fostering economic development and on the structural and specific regional constraints within the frame of the Mexican context, Fuentes Molinar (1983:18) states that:

"... it is very well known that education alone is not an economic development factor, that jobs are created according to the logic of profit and not because there exist qualified demanders, and that 'productivity' is not a worker's trait but a trait of the post assigned by the social division of labour. A massive increase in training would not prove to be the right solution if unemployment levels, stagnation, and the high levels of labour over exploitation that define Mexican capitalism prevail."

The inconsistencies of education's alleged potential in terms of socioeconomic development became evident between approximately 1960 and 1970, when the model had come to terms with meagre results produced after years of giving education a major role in social and economic processes. Some outcomes showed how the rural areas were still in a poor economic and social condition; the differences between rich and poor continued to widen; and unemployment and underemployment was growing fast in the burgeoning urban areas. Inequalities were increasing and writers argued that the mass of the people did not participate meaningfully in the development process (Simkins 1977; Bock 1982).

Despite major literacy campaigns carried out in a great number of Latin American countries in the 1940s and 1950s low schooling levels persisted among the adult population. Even if the illiteracy rate declined from 53.4% to 20.3% from 1960 to 1970 because of population growth illiteracy continued as a persistent phenomenon which by the 1970s added to a total average of 45 millions in Latin America (Castillo and Latapi 1983, quoting CEPAL). Massive groups of population with little or no schooling as a result of the insufficiency in formal education provision can be associated with the overall social and economic marginal living conditions of population groups such as peasants, indigenous groups, and women in both rural and urban areas. This led developing countries to develop, espouse and implement different forms of nonformal education (La Belle 1976; Coombs and Ahmed 1975)

Finally, economic stagnation starting in the 1970's in developed and developing countries, began to give rise to questions about the alleged relation between schooling and economic growth, and the ability of their economies to absorb a qualified labour force. The productive apparatus began to demand higher schooling levels for jobs that had not previously required such schooling levels nor particular abilities or skills. Likewise, the development of technological innovations within certain productive areas - electronics, textiles, etc.- and the development and upsurge of automation led to devalue manual labour and the abilities and knowledge previously acquired in school and training schemes (not to speak of that gained through small-scale production itself). Both are examples of different constraints and limitations to the alleged potentialities of education which stressed the complexity involved in the role to be played by education in social and economic processes. As Bock (1982:99) points out, referring to the new African nations, "... there is reluctance to acknowledge the fact that the model does not reflect the political and economic reality of the new nations or accurately describe the way education actually works in society."

Elsdon (1988:153) provides some ideas to bear in mind when reflecting upon the relation between education and development:

"Education for development should therefore not be just a process of teaching to understand, accept and execute; it is a process of listening, of joint enquiry and discovery of needs, potential, means and purposes -and then of learning to maintain and cherish no less than to change, grow, innovate, and control one's fate. Development education at its best is concerned no less with creating an understanding of an existing way of life, beliefs and traditions than with new skills, methods and ways to be inserted into existing patterns. It reinforces and reinterprets the old as part of the roots of what is new, rather than replacing it with the plastic verities of industrialised admass cultures."

Having referred to the role assigned to education within the Human Capital theory's approach, and to the limitations and supposed mistakes that came from putting in practice a mechanical relation between education and development where developing countries' own characteristics were not taken into account, the next section will deal with the emergence of nonformal education and with the functions and expectations placed on it as an alternative form of education intended to solve specific problems in developing countries.

2. THE EMERGENCE OF NON FORMAL EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA.

In this section we will discuss how as a result, in part, of the criticisms of the role of formal education as an adjunct to economic development, nonformal education emerged in developing countries as an alternative option with a chance of: i) overcoming what were seen to be the limits of the formal systems and practice of education in reaching the marginal rural population, and of ii) mitigating unresolved development problems such as illiteracy, agricultural productivity, living conditions, etc.

In order to appraise this 'new' form of education we shall consider how this activity has been defined, the social and economic context in which it emerged, its assumptions, the ways in which it has evolved, and how it has been conceptualized in Latin America.

2.1 The Concept of Nonformal education.

Trying to define the characteristics of this 'new' form of education, largely taking place in out-of-school contexts and outside the formal education system is a difficult task. Institutions and people involved in this type of programme, and the research done on this topic since the 1970s write of it using a diversity of terms which refer usually to the same activity. In addition to the concepts most commonly used since the 1940s, such as agricultural extension, diffusion, community development, etc., some new concepts have been added to the list: adult education, permanent education, popular education, liberal education, out-of-school education, fundamental education, continuing education, radical education, etc. Their use, as Simkins (1977:6) point out, "... has rarely been rigorous and has often been confusing." The definitional problem is still unsolved and the theory of adult education is undergoing a consolidation process supplemented by a multitude of complex educational experiences. These varied and numerous experiences contribute to making its analysis remarkably difficult. It is not our intention to enter into such a discussion which has been already undertaken by a number of authors (La Belle (1984; Grandstaff 1976; Simkins 1977; Lowe 1975), however we think it is important to be precise about how the term is going to be used in the thesis.

Nonformal education, as a new concept, arose from the experiences of institutions and organizations devoted to carrying out diverse educational programmes. We already gave the definition of nonformal education in the introduction; for the sake of clarity we define it again. The concept, although there is a great deal of controversy going on around it and the differences with formal education are quite weak, refers to:

"... a bewildering assortment of organized educational activities outside the formal system that are intended to serve identifiable learning needs of particular subgroups in any given population -be they children, youths, or adults; males or females; farmers, merchants or craftsmen; affluent or poor families" (Coombs 1976:282).

Both terms: *adult education* and *nonformal education* are used almost indistinguishably by a number of authors (as will be noticed in the text) since many of nonformal education activities are addressed to the adult population and thereby are labelled by

some authors as adult education.³ In Latin America the term *adult education* has become a broader term that comprises all the activities outside the formal educational system addressed to adult population (over 15 years). It has commonly been used to refer to literacy programmes, therefore illiterates are often seen to be the beneficiaries of these programmes. Perhaps the term is not the most appropriate because the majority of the students in the courses (be they agricultural extension, nutrition talks, knitting courses) are people of 15 years and over, that is, what is considered as adult population.⁴

We have chosen the concept of *nonformal education* as one which has been widely used to refer to activities carried out by community education programmes, as the main focus of this thesis. Nonformal education comprises skill-upgrading and domestic courses, agricultural extension, short courses of health and hygiene, courses in house improvement, etc. As Nieshof points out, the term is used to mean a "... method of defining developmental needs and formulating programmes of communication and education with the goal of increasing the participation of people in programmes for their welfare" (quoted by Charlton 1984:162).

A common practice is to differentiate between education oriented to literacy and basic (primary and secondary) education on one side, and, on the other side, education whose content is agriculture, health, domestic work, housing, etc., -what we call *nonformal education*.

Unlike literacy programmes and adult primary education, which can be explained as a response to the limits and problems of the formal educational system, *nonformal education* derives from a concern with social and economic development needs. It constitutes a form of education which does not have its origin in the educational system (even if it extends in that direction) but in the problems derived from the implementation

³ The term of '*nonformal adult education*' has been used by authors like Castillo and Latapi (1983) and Clark (1979). (198).

⁴ Coombs (1976:285) comments on the consequences of equating nonformal education with adult education. A main consequence, he points out, is the "almost total neglect in many situations of the essential learning needs of out-of-school youth, who comprise better than 90 percent of the 10 to 20 year old segment of many rural populations".

of a development model which failed to improve living standards in the rural areas.

It is also important to note that it is not really the educational institutions which are responsible for formulating such programmes. Institutions dealing with rural areas (Ministry of Health; Ministry of Agriculture) are the ones more concerned with the transmission of these specific contents. The nature of these institutions, devoted as they are to concerns other than education, means that little emphasis is put on the proper educational outcomes nor on the form of the educational process, and so not always pay much attention to the need for pedagogical orientations that might contribute to people's taking a degree of responsibility for their own education. The institutions tend to be unconcerned about anything beyond the acquisition of abilities and skills (Gajardo 1985:76). On this matter La Belle (1984:173) states that:

"... institutions that deal with agriculture, health and cooperatives, organize their own educational programmes so that future participants may adopt new conducts, more modern technologies and different attitudes and values. Therefore, specialized agencies are not that much interested in education, but rather in the general betterment of activities linked with agriculture, health or cooperatives. Within those activities education, research and technology accomplish indeed an important role."

Next we shall look at the context in which nonformal education developed in order to understand its assumptions and objectives.

2.2 The social, economic and educational context of the emergence of nonformal education.

It is generally argued that nonformal education began to emerge in developing countries in the 1960s as there is a consensus for the reasons behind this process.

Nonformal education represents an attempt to deal with the disparity between the needs of society and the characteristics of the educational system that became more evident daily (Borsotti 1984; Simkins 1977). The disillusionment with regard to the supposed potential of the formal schooling system was, as La Belle points out, the fundamental

reason for their interest in nonformal education in developing countries. This showed in the fact that education was not growing at the same rate as the population, nor did it provide the technical skills required by the labour market. Besides, the financial situation of developing countries exerted constant pressure for the diversion of resources previously allocated to education. In other words, low educational levels in the rural areas, the inadequacy of conventional contents for solving problems in marginal areas, and the insufficient coverage of the formal education system before the 1970s showed that the formal education system was unable to respond to the educational needs of people living in isolated and marginal communities (Coombs 1973; Coombs and Ahmed 1975; La Belle 1976).

Following a similar line of argument, Schmelkes (1982) indicates that formal education does not cover the population's basic education needs for two fundamental reasons: the ability of formal educational systems to grow at the same rate as the population, and the economic and political structure of third world countries that prevents the educational system from expanding and responding to particular needs in the rural areas. Another important aspect has been the inability of the educational system to meet training and socialization needs that come as a consequence of the developmentalist model introduced into the countryside. The limitations of the educational system are even greater when it tries to respond to specific needs in subsistence agricultural areas (Borsotti 1984; Schmelkes 1984:38; Egginton and Ruhl 1976:36; Petty *et. al.* 1979:16).

Borsotti (1984:173-175), in this respect, summarizes and situates the emergence of nonformal education arising from two basic circumstances, both concerned with limitations of the formal education system:

1) The crisis of the formal education system which shows itself in: a) *insufficient coverage*: normally it does not reach isolated groups of population; b) *low efficiency*: drop out rates are usually higher in rural areas; insufficient literacy campaigns; c) *structure and costs*: the formal education system is a centralized one conceived of mainly as a response to urban problems; infrastructure and human resources are concentrated in urban centres whereas those in the rural areas are insufficient; high

operation costs; d) *technical and curricular inadequacy for the rural environment*; e) *ideological features*: formal education transmits predominantly urban values and does not satisfy real needs from the rural sectors; f) *reinforces inequality*: unequal distribution of material and physical resources, teachers' academic attainment, and infrastructure; g) *low utility for the rural population*: providing basic schooling to peasants does not contribute to eliminating the structural marginality, neither does it help to promote their control of the productive process; it rather increases the rate of migration to urban areas by not tackling the real causes of rural problems.

2. The limits of rural formal education to take on problems derived from the implementation of the development model and that are not being tackled by the formal education system: a) population's basic needs such as: housing, nutrition, health, etc.; b) basic educational needs for a peasant located in an unfavourable and polarized agrarian structure: labour unions, unfavourable exchange, marketing, management of small projects, defense of the land, etc.; c) inability to provide education for the post-15 years age-groups that either could not attend school, or whose members have not used the knowledge they acquired and so have forgotten it.

Briefly, nonformal education came to be an alternative: 1) to the weaknesses believed inherent in the formal education system, and 2) a way to compensate for the effects of a development model implemented in the agricultural sector -it emerged thus with an alternative and compensatory character.⁵ Its objectives were: firstly to attend to the basic educational needs of the less favoured groups from the rural population, through literacy and basic education; secondly, to provide agricultural training, rural house improvement, health care, community education, etc. Nonformal education in developing countries emerged, using Bock's (1983) words, "... as a response to conflicting needs."

A number of reasons have been stated for the interest in nonformal education. For some it was seen as potentially playing an important role for solving social and economic problems of the developing countries, that could respond to specific needs of these

⁵ Even if there are many exceptions, most authors agree on the identification of nonformal education as *compensatory* (De Schutter 1986:15).

countries, and that could be a means to incorporate the poor sectors into the process of national development. As Simkins (1977:23) argued:

"... various kinds of nonformal education programmes might more appropriately facilitate the achievement of the goal of mass education, not only quantitatively, but also through provision that is qualitatively geared, through the knowledge and skills it imparts and the attitudes it instils, to the needs of the mass of the rural poor."

Nonformal education began to be seen as a possible strategy which might solve specific problems in the rural areas of developing countries; as a sufficiently flexible strategy suited for isolated sites and people's needs and -cheaper than schooling- that could reach isolated villages not covered by the formal educational system, and incorporate the marginal sectors of the population into the national mainstream. As Bock (1983:167) points out:

"... there appears to be a relatively widespread belief that nonformal education has the unique capacity to extend those benefits to neglected social subgroups, particularly the inhabitants of rural agricultural areas."

For developing countries nonformal education meant a possible alternative educational strategy for upward social and economic mobility. The concept, as Grandstaff (1976:296) points out, "... arose in response to a clear recognition that formal schooling was, in many cases, an almost totally ineffective tool for accomplishing the educational goals of development programmes".

Nonformal education was looked on as having advantages that could facilitate development goals in a cheaper and more effective way than the formal education system: it did not need formal teachers, appropriate classrooms, and 'normal' students (almost anyone over 15 years willing to learn is given the opportunity to become enrolled in any of the many courses run by several institutions). It could reach the masses and offered a non-elitist form of education. Nonformal education might be able to deal with problems the formal system ignored and perhaps even provide an antidote to those problems (Simkins 1977).

Nonformal education was taken as the 'key means' by which it would be possible to attack economic problems and to incorporate the marginal sectors into national development based on an assumption about its relation with socioeconomic development; this, as La Belle (1986) states, is the popular assumption. On this basis nonformal education has been taken to be particularly successful in attaining transmission of skills and values necessary for raising status and income levels in economically marginal groups. The assumption has led to put emphasis upon the importance of nonformal education as a means of forming the so-called 'human capital'. Nonformal education has been seized by government institutions fundamentally from the perspective of the deprivation-development thesis. According to it education has an important function in terms of changing attitudes and values in order to prepare people for a modernization stage where technology and capital come to be the central elements of the development process (La Belle 1976:329).⁶

The lack of economic equality was regarded as a problem that could be solved through the expansion of educational opportunities and through compensatory education programmes -such as nonformal education. The manifest function, the one that can be more easily related to nonformal education purposes in terms of economic development usually over emphasized the role played by education situating it in an almost mechanical relation with economic and productive development achievement. However, as Thompson (1980:23) indicates, "... the value of adult education is not solely to be measured by direct increases in earning power or productive capacity or by any other materialistic yardstick, but by the quality of life it inspires in the individual and generates in the community at large."

Finally, within the scope of State activity nonformal education programmes were regarded as a factor of integration deemed crucial to support social and economic processes within the framework of the prevalent social structures (Gajardo 1985:69). In developing countries nonformal education was thought to confer not only socioeconomic

⁶ La Belle (1988:204), commenting on these attempts to contribute to industrial growth in Latin America from the 1950s, points out that "they typically have fallen short of expectations in promoting modern skills, attitudes and behaviours among the poor."

benefits, such as occupational training and improving living standards, but also to meet the need for social cohesion and national identity (Lowe 1975:31). Diverse interests appeared in nonformal education. As Bock and Papagianis (1983b:5) point out: "Some perceive nonformal education as a potentially powerful vehicle for promoting dramatic economic growth in rural areas, while others see it as accelerating political participation and social development."

2.3 The implementation of nonformal education.

As it was felt that the developmentalist model showed inability to foster social and economic change in developing countries, nonformal education began to be encouraged in response to the State's economic and political needs. It is thus that from 1970 a group of educational programmes, outside the traditional schooling system, emerged in developing countries oriented to the margin^{a/} sectors of the population.

So that the less favoured sectors of society did not become a barrier to national economic and social development, nonformal education was given the role of incorporating them into the economy and society. The challenge was to deal with people's needs in their communities and this meant activities such as: increases in agriculture productivity, communicating knowledge of new agricultural techniques, new government programmes towards the rural sector, new forms of association and organization among peasants, how to apply for a credit, etc. For women it meant also domestic and skill training courses that could become economic alternatives and changing women's traditional role into a more active one in terms of their involvement in communities' affairs.

Governments, international organizations, public and private institutions started to develop teaching programmes with their contents channelled to heterogeneous groups of the population in the rural sector. There was an increase in the number of personnel from different institutions: extensionists, social promoters, community workers, literacy teachers, etc., as new development agents in a context where the community, rural

women and peasants' organizations, were discovered as potential students whose contribution to development was deemed important (Coombs 1976).

Many institutions launched educational programmes. Institutions concerned with agricultural development not only distributed lands and credits but also books in such areas as accountancy and promoted educational programmes on topics like fertilizers, agricultural machinery, etc. Health institutions came out from the hospitals and moved to the countryside with family planning educational programmes, courses on nutrition, and preventive medicine. Education was no more an exclusive activity of the Ministry of Education, a Ministry which itself had taken up the challenge of dealing with new educational areas such as community education and skill upgrading courses.

Nonformal education included elements of old and new forms of education. Illiteracy was addressed through literacy campaigns and basic education programmes. Nonformal education was concerned as well with the social and economic incorporation of rural population providing training (technological induction, a new productive rationale, credit management, organization, etc.) in order to enable the rural population to face new requirements of the developmentalist strategies carried out in the agricultural sector during the 1950s and 1960s (see Chapter II). It planned to improve living standards through nutrition campaigns, health programmes, housing courses, etc. Economic and social aims were merged in an activity that was created as a means to reach educationally those untouched by previous programmes, and as an instrument to help the progress of those considered as an obstacle for development plans.

Having looked at the context in which nonformal education developed, we turn now to consider the ways in which it has evolved, and how it has been conceptualized in Latin America.

2.4 The Development of Nonformal Education in Latin America.

Out-of-school education is not new. However it is important to put the accent on the recent development of this form of education in developing countries since mid-century

and the potential it has been thought to have for enabling the participation of the most unfavoured sectors of society in the social, cultural and economic benefits arising from development. What appears new in nonformal education are the attempts by educators to re-conceptualize it in order to use it as an instrument for social change and economic development. As Bock (1983:166) points out:

"... what is new is the concept of nonformal education as a new force through which educational and socioeconomic change is believed to occur at both the individual and societal level, and the vision of it as an exciting new strategy for combatting poverty, ignorance, inequality, ill-health, and oppression".⁷

Such a view was first enunciated at the UNESCO international conference on adult education in 1949. This was the moment when educational programmes of this kind began to be implemented in several countries under the auspices of the 'international aid' channelled through the international development agencies.⁸

Castillo and Latapi (1983) and La Belle (1986:79-168) distinguish several ways in which nonformal education has been conceptualized in Latin America, which has led to different educational strategies used by the State from the 1940s: agricultural extension, fundamental education, community development and functional literacy. They are related to the social, economic and political conditions of every period. As Gajardo (1983:68) points out, the different forms in which adult education has been implemented have to be explained in terms of their link with the different development trends that have characterized the Latin American region.

⁷ A different perspective is provided by Brandao (1985a). He argues that adult education emerges in developing countries with a very specific ideological character and has become an institutionalized practice. Adult education is used predominantly by the State in strict correspondence with its economic and political aims. As an opposite force to adult education, Brandao highlights popular education as a form of education addressed to the needs of the marginal population and as the one that developed as a movement of educational innovation in Latin America that rested on the negation of mainstream adult education. Adult education and popular education are seen as opposite conceptions of the role of education in society.

⁸ The creation of CREFAL (Latinamerica Regional Centre of Fundamental Education) in Mexico goes back to 1950, ten years earlier than the Conference on Education and Social and Economic Development in Latin America held on 1962, where the need to organize adult education systems was emphasized (Torres 1982; Cirigliano and Paldao 1982). CREFAL was created as a regional training organization to provide for in-service training and research in the areas of literacy training and adult basic education. It was the only organization during that time that could provide systematic training for teachers responsible for programmes on adult education, and had a significant influence on the institutionalization and conceptualization of adult education in Latin America. Its most relevant contribution was the creation and support of a network of adult educators in the Latin American region which acted as a 'critical mass' for the expansion of adult education (Buttedhal 1989:459).

The area of agricultural extension constituted one of the important nonformal education strategies carried out in Latin America during the 1940s and 1950s. In Castillo and Latapi's (1983:9) opinion first attempts were strongly linked to the peasant sector not because of its marginal condition but because activities were geared towards making the agricultural sector more productive. Under such assumptions agricultural extension was fostered by the United States during the 1940s as a consequence of the Second World War, precisely as a means of ensuring a constant supply of basic and raw materials from Latin American countries.

Besides agricultural education the 1940s and 1950s were characterized by literacy campaigns carried out in many Latin American countries, as a strategy deemed useful during that time for a massive incorporation of adults into literacy programmes and to reduce high illiteracy rates.

Later literacy campaigns were linked to community development projects in order to overcome the isolation and poor impact they had during previous years. In that light fundamental education emerged as an educational programme fostered by the UNESCO during the 1940s aiming to achieve the social and educational betterment of the communities. Within this programme it was realized that education should start from people's own reality attending to their basic everyday activities, needs and interests (Castillo and Latapi 1983). As the UNESCO (quoted by La Belle 1986:82) stated:

"... fundamental education must take its place, not as a self-sufficient programme of adult literacy teaching and informal education, but as one of a range of integrated services, contributing to the common purposes of social and economic progress."

Within this new emphasis the concept and scope of adult education began to expand: it came to be conceived as an element for social planning that might influence social change through the participation of all members of society in a wide range of educational activities (i.e. vocational, domestic skills). Adults were acknowledged as capable of learning according to their own needs, regardless of their age and schooling, allowing thus their further social and productive incorporation.

Adult education's role in social and economic change, and the need to become part of the educational system was emphasized in 1967 when UNESCO called for an international conference in Montreal on the topic of 'The World Crisis of Education'. Emphasis was put then on the educational requirements needed to achieve socioeconomic development, the new expectations of the population, and the incapacity of developing countries' educational systems to meet those expectations. The conference made evident the limitations of the formal education system to satisfy developing countries' educational needs and the need to regard nonformal education as an alternative that could reach vast sectors of the society through literacy campaigns and basic education programmes (Coombs 1973).⁹ The Conference showed, as Gajardo (1985:71) points out, "... that adult education should focus as an activity on a constant adjustment to a continuously and rapidly expanding context", and therefore should be recognized as a constitutive element of the educational system in every country.¹⁰

Buttedhal (1989) mentions that it was not until the early 1960s that the pressure to provide educational opportunities for adults was acknowledged by governments in Latin America. This coincided with the 'Alliance for Progress', an outcome of the Conference of Punta del Este (1967) when an agreement was established for the modernization and development of the region.

This was followed by massive injections of international aid to the region.¹¹ Under those circumstances nonformal education began to enter into a process of continuous growth "... providing access and educational services to a large sector of the adult

⁹ The intense concern about adult education in the 1960s had its counterpart in Latin America when the Regional Programme of Educational Development (*Programa Regional de Desarrollo Educativo* -PREDE) of the OAS was launched in 1968. The programme was intended to give priority to innovative educational activities going from traditional literacy to adult education as a substantial part of social and economic development.

¹⁰ Torres (1982) puts the emphasis on how the development and presence of adult education policy before 1970 was not very important and had only a secondary role in public policy formation, financial expenditure and enrolment. Within the framework of developmentalist policies adult education was apparently not functional and did not become an alternative for social mobility and to better income levels. Reasons for this were the lack of correspondence to demands of the model of capital accumulation, little utility in the model of political domination, and the political weakness of the clientele. Rather formal education was given an impulse during those years.

¹¹ Adding support to this idea, La Belle (1986:ix) comments that "the bilateral aid of the United States often occurred in concert with that of philanthropic foundations and multilateral agencies, all of whom had a desire to influence the direction and character of the region's development."

population previously untouched by the limited educational services available through the formal system of education" (*Ibidem*:458). A more comprehensive vision of education developed where adult education was not only to be considered as an alternative way of solving problems unsolved or untouched by the formal education system, but as an integral part of the educational system (Castillo and Latapi 1983:7-8).

Community development, represented another type of nonformal education strategy implemented in Latin America during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Programmes were based on the notion of community initiative and participation and intended to be linked to social and economic national strategies. The term community development referred to the achievement of social and economic progress through the voluntary and active participation of community members (United Nations, quoted by La Belle 1986:83). This educational strategy will be looked at in more detail in Chapter III as an area of concern of this thesis.

During the 1960s what was called functional literacy developed as a new form of linking education with social and economic development. Instead of conceiving of education as a means to better life conditions of the poor, nonformal education was oriented to technical training and became a functional element for the industrialization and the agricultural modernization processes that characterized some Latin American countries from the 1960s. "Functional literacy was the equivalent of literacy oriented to labour" (quoted by Castillo and Latapi 1983:12).

These basic conceptions -approaches- of nonformal education in Latin America have co-existed at different times and some of them are still practised by a number of institutions in every country. They are an indicator of the flexible and multiple forms in which this type of education is carried out. The emphasis put on any one of them has depended on social and economic circumstances and on the role nonformal education has been assigned during different periods.

By the 1970s most Latin American countries had adopted adult education and recognized it as an important component of education. Legislation was adopted to regulate its

activities, financial resources were allocated, many programmes were implemented by a number of institutions in every country, and there was a continuous growth in the number of people participating in this activity. Despite this fast development and 'enthusiasm' most adult education programmes carried out by government institutions continued to be remedial in nature (Buttedhal 1989). Latin American countries, as Gajardo (1985:76-77) indicates:

"... are still far from having established national systems of adult education capable of performing diversified and flexible activities that can respond to educational demands of various groups, and of combining strategies that attend to their particular needs and interests."

Few countries have adopted a policy to enable adult education programmes to become integrated into national economic and social strategies. In addition programmes are dispersed and uncoordinated. (*Ibidem*).

2.5 Summary

In this section we have looked at how nonformal education emerged in Latin American countries and how the concept and the practice have evolved. It has been argued that, as a new form of education, it emerged: 1) as a response to the lacks and limitations of the formal education system; 2) as an attempt to compensate for the effects of a development model which had not improved living standards of people living in areas classified as economically and/or socially marginal. It was seen as an alternative to solve problems of developing countries, particularly those found in the more rural areas. Nonformal education, it was argued, was both an alternative to and compensating for formal education. Having assessed its basic assumptions we turn now to consider the practice of some of these programmes.

3. THE OUTCOMES OF NONFORMAL EDUCATION.

"... given the complexity of human experience and the evidence to date, the power of nonformal education to achieve such social benefits remains an article of faith" (La Belle 1986:265).

Third World countries' expectations of nonformal education equalled those previously invested in formal education. Many programmes have been carried out (and are still being developed¹²) on the assumption of education's positive influence on socioeconomic development. Simkins (1977) asserts that the dysfunctionality of formal education gave way to the consideration of nonformal education as a functional means to tackle development problems particularly in the rural areas. Lately, though, there has also been a questioning of this functional role of nonformal education. With the support of research and contributions by a number of authors, it will be argued that nonformal education's potential in terms of improving living standards in developing countries is dubious. A number of social, economic and political factors affecting the implementation of the programmes has made evident the complexity entailed in any social process.

The capability attributed to nonformal education to attack poverty amongst the less advantaged sectors of society has proved to be less than was originally thought. Many programmes have been carried out since in many different parts of Latin America but only poor results can be drawn from them. Nonformal education assumptions in terms of development have repeatedly been questioned; as Bock (1982:79) points out:

"... during the past several years, there has been increasing evidence that leads us to question the conventional wisdom regarding the benign nature of the relationship between education and development."

¹² Even nowadays the potential of education in terms of social and economic development continues to be emphasized by a number of institutions. Cepal (1992) incorporates the link between education, knowledge and development as the axis of productive transformation with equity. In face of the unrelenting marginal social and economic conditions in most Third World countries (in this case Latin America), the novel strategy by Cepal attempts to "contribute to create, in the 1990s, certain educational conditions, on training and incorporation of technological and scientific progress, that make possible the transformation of the productive structures of the region within the framework of progressive social equity". Again the link between education and development is put into consideration and considered the central element to be taken into account within institutional policies. Rogers (1992:2-3) suggests "that at the heart of all programmes of adult education should lie the concept of Development" as it has been conceived in Third World countries. Further he puts the accent on how development barriers "lie not so much in the lack of knowledge or skills or resources, but rather in attitudes -especially a lack of confidence and unwillingness to change" (*Ibidem.*).

Coombs (1976) makes this point explicit when he talks about the false assumptions of nonformal education in terms of attending to the educational deficiencies of people who have been deprived of proper schooling. He comments that "... it is now painfully evident, 20 years later, that this attractive theory was unrealistic" and points out that "... the performance of adult education has been disappointing relative to the earlier theory and expectations". When talking about developing world statistics, he highlights the high percentages of people who do not complete primary and secondary education, about how formal schools are not answering people's basic needs, and how, even if education is being expanded day by day, its quality and responsiveness to basic learning needs is still rather poor. Nonformal education, adds Grandstaff (1976:297), "... is not a panacea for educational deficiencies in development."

Evidence so far casts doubt on the alleged benefits of nonformal education in Third World countries, even when so many programmes have been implemented under the influence of Human Capital theory (La Belle 1986: Chapter VI). A number of researchers have stressed that nonformal education programmes have almost no effect and that there is no necessary or mechanical relationship between education and productivity. According to Simkins, functionality has been defined in a rather narrow way giving more emphasis to the content than to the process, more emphasis to the transmission of skills than to the attitudes it instils. "Such an approach" he says, "is much too narrow if the possible contributions of nonformal education to development are to be considered adequately" (Simkins 1977:30).

Some authors argue that education, particularly literacy and basic education can contribute to economic development in several forms. Blaug (quoted by Torres 1990:7) suggests that among some other benefits, education can stimulate the demand for technical education, expand the diffusion of general knowledge, increase the productivity of those who work with the newly literate, and enhance occupational mobility. However there seems to be a general agreement that education is a necessary but not sufficient condition of development (Malassis 1975).

Concerning agricultural extension¹³ in Mexico in the 1950s and the 1960s, in terms of the role it was assigned during the agricultural modernization process to provide technical assistance, increase productivity levels, and foster the adoption of technological packages, Mata (1981:49) points out that "... it has only contributed to a partial adoption of new technology generated in experimental agriculture.

An evaluation of the Plan Maiz, a productive and educational programme carried out in the State of Mexico (Schmelkes 1984:186) in the 1970s revealed the limitations and conditions surrounding the relation between nonformal education and rural development. It showed that "education contributes to rural development only to the extent that the surrounding social and economic context opens opportunities and offers incentives and inputs for the agricultural transformation". There seems to be an agreement among researchers that education alone cannot be the answer to social and economic problems faced by developing countries and that it can only serve a subordinate and contingent role in terms of development. Education, it has been said, can only be a catalytic ingredient of preexisting conditions. "Perhaps the clearest and most appropriate finding of studies about education and productivity has been to verify that the historic and structural variables have an important influence on the possibility to increase agricultural productivity, much more important than education and extension activities" (*Ibidem.*:185).

The importance of the context is highlighted in many analyses and acquires day by day an increasing significance when trying to reflect upon the failures of education, or about its alleged potentiality in terms of productivity, welfare levels, economic growth, and development. Different contextual factors have been singled out by a number of authors: Muñoz Izquierdo (1982) comments on the economic effects of adult education, stating that productivity does not depend much on the level of schooling, but on the technological and social characteristics of the context in which people use their schooling with productive aims". Guzmán *et. al.* (1977), when evaluating rural

¹³ For a description of agricultural extension in Mexico, see: SAG-DGEA (1973): *La extensión agrícola en México. ¿Qué es y qué hacer?*, Mexico: Chapingo. See as well Paulo Freire (1971): *Extensioismo o comunicación*. Mexico: Siglo XXI, for a discussion on the concept.

development programmes, point out that educational effects are different according to the context, therefore under favourable contexts the aims of the programme can be more easily achieved. Hence it can be argued that educational and development aims depend sometimes on factors such as the previous fulfilment of basic needs, or on the complexity of the project which is being implemented. Bosco (1981) and Borsotti (1983) adduce evidence of how education's contributions to the rural development need to be contextualized within the social, productive, and political realities in the rural sector in order to assess its possibilities of success. Finally, as Bock (1983:307) points out:

"... programme planners may be led to assume causal linkages where none exist. Even programmes that appear to be meeting their stated objectives may be difficult to replicate if the diverse factors associated with their initial success have not been correctly identified."

It has also frequently been noted that outcomes are not really what programmes explicitly gave as their objectives. It is no novelty to state that sometimes the people who benefited from the programmes are precisely those who enjoy better living conditions, instead of the marginal sectors of society for whom the programme is implemented (Lowe 1975:57; Gajardo 1985:76; Posner 1985; Barquera 1982:25). Experience shows that the increase of educational resources in a community tends to favour above all those who already have a good schooling level.¹⁴ Referring to agricultural extension Schmelkes (1989) points out how it not only benefits those in most favourable conditions, but damages the income and productivity of those whose conditions do not match that of the agricultural model being implemented. Additionally, rural areas, and particularly very marginal and isolated places, are usually overlooked by nonformal education programmes, a fact which contributes inevitably to the reproduction of the social reality.

Moulton (1983:33), as well, when talking about the benefits of an agency dealing with 'rural animation' in Nigeria, concludes that "... the only noteworthy effect of this new institution was to create one more opportunity for some individuals to establish themselves as patrons who could cultivate a clientele ready to obey their commands in

¹⁴ This fact has been acknowledged since the III Adult Education International Conference of UNESCO held in 1972.

exchange for such favours as a portion of the limited agricultural supplies and government credit funds".

On nonformal education contributions to economic and social development, Martínez (1981:83) states that:

"... causes are multiple. Besides technical deficiencies in how rural development projects are implemented, more structural determinants are distinguished among social, economic and political spheres. Within these determinants nonformal education (like formal education) has served fundamentally as an ideological producer; instead of fostering the qualitative betterment of justice, it has increased the inherent contradictions of the actual structure of domination."

There is strong empirical evidence against the existence of any automatic connection between education and social and economic benefits. There is ample evidence to demonstrate the complexity of social reality and the existence of a multiplicity of factors affecting the results of an educational programme -especially when a programme is being carried out in a rural context. These factors include people's traditional beliefs in the communities; regrettable mistakes in the implementation of the programme; political interests that affect the policy making-process; marginal conditions in which the programme must take place; people's needs and structural constraints. These are only a small part of the whole range of nonformal education conditioners. To some of these we are going to refer in the next paragraphs.

Petty *et. al.* (1979), when assessing the prospects of rural education as a possible alternative, put the accent on three fundamental elements: a) the need to strengthen peasant economy in order to stop migration to the cities; b) the need for the rural population to believe in and accept nonformal education as something important and part of themselves; c) the need for productive educational programmes as a means to co-finance rural education. In the same sense Simkins (1977:22), commenting on rural development goals, remarks that "it is now argued that education can contribute to the achievement of such developmental goals, but not unless a considerable change in emphasis occurs."

Many educational programmes have been launched with the specific aim of providing people in marginal communities with skills and knowledge required by the technological and modernization development taking place in many developing countries. Technical packages were designed in the rural areas to increase agricultural productivity and to make people more aware of and receptive to innovations and changes. However, as Leagans and Loomis (1971:102) point out, "... it is comparatively simple to design a technical package, but far more difficult to design and implement a scheme which implants it in the minds and actions of people."¹⁵

New strategies have been worked out over the years in order to involve people in the projects. *Participatory research* (see Chapter III: 2.1.3; 2.2) has been the most common strategy used in popular education programmes.¹⁶ Participation though ends up being a very complex affair. People participate from a very wide range of motives. It has not proved an easy task to decipher from real to apparent or symbolic participation.¹⁷

As García Huidobro (1988:67) points out, when it comes to educational projects being transferred to the community, "... it must be acknowledged that it is a difficult process and that there are not many successful cases". Securing participation and real commitment on the part of people usually emerge as serious problems during the implementation of educational programmes. Participation often ends up being symbolic rather than real (Moulton 1983). Borsotti (1984:67) makes this point clear when he points out that:

"What people would expect from school has a symbolic meaning rather than instrumental: children's incorporation to a rural world different from the traditional one -even in a partial, limited and segmentary way; the proximity to urban life; the procurement of a symbol of prestige, or at least a means to avoid a likely dishonour."

¹⁵ About the ideological aspects underlying technical innovations in the countryside, see Montoya (1982).

¹⁶ On participatory research see: De Schutter (1986) and Vejarano (1983).

¹⁷ See Guy Le Boterf (1982): '*La participación de las comunidades en la administración de la educación*'; Cujo (1978) and Lewin (1984), for a treatment on participation.

As regards the usefulness of nonformal education to people, particularly when it deals with skill-upgrading courses, it has been noted that the structure of rewards is more oriented to formal schooling than to diplomas granted by the courses (La Belle and Verhine 1981). On this matter Bock and Papagianis (1983b:11) state that "... nonformal education does not provide the accepted and socially valued certification that is the 'gate pass' to primary sector jobs... Consequently, nonformal education could lock workers into the lower segments of the occupational structure". Carnoy (1982a:165) shares this point of view and remarks that:

"... apparently, employers in Third World economies consider nonformal education training less desirable (employable) than formal schooling. Since nonformal education is clearly aimed at those workers with rather low levels of schooling and hence tries to deal with the employment and productivity of workers who are largely in the low-paying, high-employment, secondary labour market, it is very likely that such training fortifies the class division of labour rather than promoting social mobility for lower-social-class groups."

As Torres (1990:51) emphasises: "... despite theories regarding the relations between adult education and the labour market, there is not adequate knowledge, based on empirical research, on the character of such relations in the experiments developed in Latin America and Mexico."

Illiteracy was regarded in the 1940s as an important deterrent to social, economic and political development. Recently, evaluations and research carried out have shown its relative usefulness to people and its poor impact if not properly linked with organization processes, productive development and political movements, as an overall process, that may include the individual and the communities (Fuentes 1983). In a very interesting study trying to determine literacy effects on agricultural productivity, Schmelkes (1979) concluded that literacy proved to be practically useless for a peasant with only a small property of land who had not had the opportunity to participate in any development programme. Besides, literacy did not necessarily help peasants to increase productivity, or to improve marketing conditions and their consumption levels. Only when peasants had been incorporated into a rural programme was literacy useful in terms of increasing their level of knowledge of technical and administrative skills, and their awareness of

their rights. Literacy had not been the answer to peasant's particular needs. Formal education, concluded Schmelkes (1980), only increases people's capability to survive in an urban world.

Nevertheless, numerous nonformal education programmes have certainly enjoyed some success in every field. People have become literate, groups of peasants have learnt new agricultural techniques, and have introduced new technology; there have been small and medium-sized projects for cattle rearing, small-scale industry, or food processing; women of many communities have learnt some domestic skills, such as sewing, knitting and cooking; youngsters have been enrolled in skill-upgrading courses including carpentry, metal working, electricity, etc.; groups of women have participated in nutrition and health campaigns. The question remains however: to what extent has nonformal education really meant a way out from the every day impoverished conditions of marginal communities in underdeveloped countries? As Smock (1981:198) points out:

"... the impact of nonformal education may be significant on specific matters such as family living conditions, agricultural practices, and craft production, but the narrow concerns of most nonformal education programmes make them ill-suited to effect major changes in social or economic equality".

Even Coombs' (1976) expressed faith in nonformal education admits words of caution concerning the always slow process of progress and change. At this point it is important to refer to Brandao's (1986:156) comment on this subject:

"The 'programme' is good, promotion and social change technicians are sincere, their services are necessary but the results are poor, incomplete, and almost always prematurely interrupted. Little is achieved beyond a limited contribution of services. Previous 'changes' are in fact so limited that only the fertile imagination of their promoters manages to measure and present them as a new solution to underdevelopment."

It has been argued that it is not enough to find farmers enjoying new agricultural technologies; happy women cooking new dishes for their families, selling clothes they make themselves; peasants reading leaflets they could not before; people who have undergone a skill-upgrading course running some workshops for their own benefit. There

is much more happening in these courses. The activity of nonformal education, like any social phenomenon, involves and entails links with people (subjectivities, culture, different codings, affections), with physical contexts (and its underlying implications), and with a wide socioeconomic structure. Therefore, as Bock and Papagianis (1983b:6) point out, "... a contextual analysis of nonformal education will enable us to understand better the current as well as the potential role of nonformal education in its relationship with social and political development."

An appraisal of the nature, meaning and function of nonformal education must be set within a very specific context which comprises complex social, economic and political relations. Nonformal education cannot be explained in isolation from a social and economic structure and from social relationships which exert an influence upon the performance and results of the programmes. The practice of nonformal education entails a kind of coding which 'contains' a complex array of social relationships in which this practice takes place. As Bock and Papagianis (*Ibidem.*:16) state:

"... nonformal education may also be viewed as a socialization subsystem shaped by the society or some aspect of it (class, subculture, political movement, etc.) in which it is embedded. (...) nonformal education, like schooling, is a social product interpenetrating and interacting with the other institutional domains of society in which it resides".

It is to this concern that the next section draws the attention.

3.1 Summary

The previous sections have considered the emergence of nonformal education in Latin America. It has been argued that although many expectations were placed on this form of education as an alternative to and compensating for formal education, empirical evidence casts doubt on its alleged functions, and reveals both the complexity entailed in social and economic processes and the need to place nonformal education within a contextual framework. Attention will be turned now to several attempts to analyze nonformal education from a social science perspective.

4. THE ANALYSIS OF NONFORMAL EDUCATION

4.1 Towards a sociological appraisal of nonformal education.

As has been noted the idea of education as a *prime force* in social and economic development has been subject to analysis and criticisms. Nonformal education, as a social phenomenon, has been recently looked at from alternative approaches and from new perspectives aiming to shed more light on its nature and social function. Research carried out lately on nonformal education has stressed the need for critical approaches of this form of education. They have stressed the need to go beyond achievement evaluations -to go a step beyond functionalist analyses¹⁸ which are incapable of giving account of social functions, such as socialization, allocation, legitimation and social control (Bock and Papagianis 1983b).

There has been an increasing concern expressed by a number of authors about the need to approach nonformal education from a sociological perspective. As Jarvis (1985:3) points out "... despite its long history, no sociology of the education of adults exists in the same manner as there are sociological studies of initial education." In the same direction Jones (1984:viii) comments that "... very little exists in the way of writings in the field of the sociology of education". There has been as well an acknowledgement of how the analysis of this form of education has been neglected when compared to other areas of education or parts of the educational system. Hughes (1991) attempts to summarize this concern discussing how nonformal education has been forced to come in from the margins and puts the accent on the need to extend theoretical perspectives. Another important attempt to bring about this discussion was put forward by Westwood (1980) when reflecting upon the social class bias of adult education, and upon the need to rely on the sociology of education in order to tackle this analysis.

¹⁸ According to the functional approach, education provides individuals with the skills and capabilities which are required by the economy and the pattern of education in any society must therefore be broadly related to the pace and pattern of change in the economy (Simkins 1977:23).

Jarvis (1985), Jones (1984) and Elsey (1986) have made some of the first important attempts to reflect upon adult education from a sociological perspective. They are pioneering and valuable attempts at the construction of a sociology of adult education. However, they were not committed to going deeply into the analysis of adult education from a particular theoretical perspective. They rather set the grounds and commented on some implications of such an approach. We share Hughes's (1991:403) opinion when she points out that "... none took a particular theoretical perspective."

Torres (1990:47), when assessing the tendency within educational research in Latin America, underlines that "... adult education has been much less studied than for example, the problems of basic education or higher education". Griffen (quoted by Hughes 1991:405) makes an important comment and seems to share this opinion:

"... adult education has not much been conceptualized or theorised in terms of its socialising functions, or its function in respect of social control or social mobility, the production of the workforce, the domestication and reproduction of labour, and so on..."

Bock and Papagianis raised the concern about the myth surrounding nonformal education as early as 1976.¹⁹ Ever since new questions have been posed geared to unravel the social functions of nonformal education. Next an account of some attempts to appraise nonformal education from different approaches will be considered.

4.2 Some alternative approaches.

Failures of nonformal education programmes referred to their potential for encouraging economic growth and development, have led to sceptical positions and warnings on putting much faith on its attributes and advantages.

Some people assume nonformal education courses have a great potential for providing vocational education for a sector of the population that would certainly not have access

¹⁹ Bock, John and George Papagianis. 1976. *The demystification of nonformal education: a critique and suggestion for a new research direction*. Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts/Centre for International Education.

to the higher levels of formal education. They see it, therefore, incorporating large sectors of the population and equipping them for upward social mobility. But for others nonformal education has proved to be "... potentially an even more effective means for limiting cross-segment mobility." They put forward questions about whether "these kinds of educational programmes contribute to rural-urban dualities, accelerate rural-urban transformation, perpetuate maldistribution of wealth and resources, and maintain the kinds of discontinuities that they were presumably designed to avoid or eradicate" (Bock and Papagianis 1983b:11-12). In the same way courses implemented with the aims of providing women with domestic skills are seldom looked at from a sociological perspective that could give an account of their social and political implications.

Educational research has become every day more concerned about the social implications of nonformal education, about the underlying features of this form of education, and about the need to "go beyond the superficial features of nonformal education and examine its social attributes: 1) its socialization and social mobility functions; 2) its selection and recruitment function; and 3) its exchange value" (*Ibidem.*:14).

New questions have been raised related to the hidden curriculum of nonformal education trying to find out what is beyond the formal and statistical achievements of the programmes. Bock and Papagianis's '(1983a): *Nonformal Education and National Development*' was certainly a big step in this direction looking for alternative perspectives on the role of nonformal education, for a more complex structural approach. As they point out, "... to measure nonformal education's effects we must draw upon or develop some middle-level theoretical framework that will enable us to focus on its underlying social features" (Bock and Papagianis 1983b:20).

Bock and Papagianis (*Ibidem.*:10) tried to reflect upon the relationship of nonformal education to the development process from a more sceptical and social science based perspective. They put the accent on the need for:

"... a broader, more complex structural approach that will allow us to view education within its social context -not as an autonomous system, but as a subsystem continually acting upon and being acted upon by the other social subsystems -political, economic, and cultural."

An increasing awareness of the complexity involved in social development processes and of the role to be played by education has produced important pieces of research that approach nonformal education from new and different perspectives trying to obtain a better understanding of this phenomenon:

Government sponsored programmes, as well as popular education, have faced numerous problems concerning community involvement in the educational projects. People involved in nonformal education, planners and teachers, are usually puzzled about why few efforts prove successful and wonder about how to draw people's attention to the project. This has led to some analyses that stress the need to investigate the knowledge of the internal processes of marginalized groups and the specific mentality of those who come to be the 'clients' of these programmes. Martínez and Sawyer (1979) constitute an attempt to search for a method that allows one to describe the way people, within their cultural context, perceive, learn and make decisions.

In a different direction, emphasis has also been put as well on the policy making process in order to determine the specificity of nonformal education policies and the particular role nonformal education has been assigned from State's perspective. Latapí (1987), looking for an answer to the determinants and nature of nonformal education policies, concentrates on political, economic and educative considerations which are taken into account in the planning of nonformal education programmes. Among these he highlights how the prevention of conflicts, consolidation of consensus, and the expression of 'common interests' are taken as *political considerations*; elements such as the qualification and socialization of force labour, the incorporation of determinate social groups into productive spheres, and the extension of the domestic market are regarded as *economic concerns*; and, finally, *educative aims* refer to social cohesion and national unity, the improvement of the population's welfare levels, and the increase in participation and organization.

Also attempting to explain the persistence and expansion of nonformal education, and the interest of the State in these programmes Bock (1983:177) points out that:

"Nonformal education appears to meet the needs of the educational producer, e.g., the state. The state is motivated to extend its authority and legitimate its elite and, at the same time to avoid the creation of politically explosive competitive forces by limiting the extension of legitimate claims for still scarce resources and participatory roles. The expansion of schooling can serve the former needs, but nonformal education may be seen as a potential solution to the latter category of needs as well."

Bock offers alternative views of educational effects and goes deep into the analysis of nonformal education social implications. Referring to Meyer and Rubinson's (1975) work: *Education and Political Development*, Bock (1983:171) analyzes the allocation and legitimation functions of nonformal education. He puts emphasis on how students are socialized "... to those values and competencies associated with the roles into which the schools (or other educative agencies) are licensed to allocate them", so that students end up learning what their chances are in terms of allocation rights. Nonformal education due to its characteristics helps to settle people in the lower rungs, and is "potentially even more inhibiting of the mobility prospects of lower status groups".

Bock goes on and emphasizes how, in his view, nonformal education not only allocates people to specific roles and statuses, but also "... legitimates new roles and new patterns of relations between them" (*Ibidem.*). Education transforms their identities and the perception of their location in society. Nonformal education, even if considered a low category education and a form of education which does not confer access to high status roles in society, has an important social meaning to people that entails a legitimation of the State through educational provision, even if it only legitimates "... limited claims on future resources and participation" (*Ibidem.*). Nonformal education programmes foster the acceptance by students of the legitimacy of limited allocation claims. They might be instilling an acceptance of their social location, an acceptance of the type of education which is addressed to them.

Another attempt to go deeper into the analysis of nonformal education was made by Torres (1983; 1990). He dealt with the adult education policy-making process in Mexico claiming that a political sociology perspective could give an account of the rationale which underlies educational policies and of their link with the specific nature of the

State. Torres (1990:120) questions if political rationality has proven to be far more important than technical rationality in the promotion of adult education. In a joint study with Morales-Gomez, they conclude that:

"Although a technical rationale operates in the formal process of educational policy formation, the underlying rationale is primarily political. Educational policy formation reflects bureaucratic dynamics and is a by product of politically contradictory projects within the State. A clear example of these trends is found in the adult education policies..." (Morales-Gomez and Torres 1990:47).

These efforts have contributed to a better understanding of the nonformal education phenomenon from alternative perspectives. They also mean approaching the problem from new theoretical frameworks that enable us to locate the problem in a perspective concerned with the social, economic and political context. We move now to another way of confronting the problem: the participants' perspective.

4.3 The participants' perspective.

Bock (1983) indicated some important societal functions of nonformal education which he called the allocation, legitimation and 'cooling-out' functions. We want to examine how these take place at the individual level, and their effect on individual's attitudes and expectations. This means 'breaking up' a social function into smaller segments so that the explanation of what happens at this level may enrich and shed more light on the understanding of this social function and on how it is achieved. As Apple and Weis (1983:27) say when commenting on the need for research at the level of practice: "... ethnographic investigations allow us to capture the creation of ideologies by enabling us to explore on a day-to-day basis the context within which practices, meanings, and social relations are lived."

We are interested in people's reactions to the educational process, in the outcome of the course in terms of meanings. We are not only interested in the meanings though, but in what these meanings entail in social terms. As Simkins (1977:25) puts it, "... the content of the formal education is likely to be much less significant than the nature of the process itself". We would argue that an identical situation exists in the case of nonformal

education. Nonformal education has to be looked at as having similar but qualitatively different functions from schooling. As Bock (1983:175) concludes:

"... nonformal education is apparently not meeting the needs of the educational 'consumer' as a collectivity (as distinct from the perceived needs of the individual)".

We would argue that in individual terms it has a significant importance that, when regarded in global terms, may turn into significant social effects. Nonformal education might end up meeting the needs of the collectivity, even if it apparently does not do so at the moment.

In light of the above we have deemed important to consider the social implications of nonformal education paying special attention to the individual level, that is, giving emphasis to the participants' perspective in terms of their expectations, feelings and meanings -looking at the point of view of the participant in order to be able to derive major social functions. Hughes (1991:412), after an overview of adult education and its relationship to sociological theory, concludes "... that a 'really useful' sociological model for adult education analysis is one which takes an ethnographic approach. This would build on and give focus to the small scale empirical research so often favoured by theoreticians on adult education". Sharing this same concern Payne (1990) comments on how "... it is especially curious that sociologists with an interest in symbolic interactionism and the use of qualitative methods have not felt attracted to fields such as adult education..." Finally, to quote Ball (1992:15) for a description of the advantages of an ethnographic approach when doing social research. Ball argues that an ethnographic approach:

"... is most suited to a research programme which seeks to start from the experience of participants to gain their trust and to use the research process as a consciousness technique. It enables research participants to identify the issues affecting daily lives, rather than the researchers imposing their own conceptual strategies. It is particularly suitable for a mode that seeks to link in with political change, as the researcher participates in the social processes being researched..."

There is not much research on nonformal education in developing countries from the participant's perspective.²⁰ Bacchus and Torres (1988), when referring to adult education policy implementation, comment that "... an analysis of values and expectations of the different actors involved in the process of policy making and programme development is usually neglected." Schmelkes and Street (1991) constitutes a recent attempt in this direction that examined the views and values of policy makers, teachers and students in order to discern how these values were reflected in policy making activities and the implementation of programmes with regard to education variables and participants' expectations.

We want to refer especially to Martinic's (1984) study on popular education, which examines participant's perception of different educational experiences in the area of popular education. The project was focused on the meaning of changes which occurred in people's lives when undergoing a course, putting emphasis on how educational spaces and pedagogical relationships were perceived. The underlying assumption was that teachers and students interpret their educational experiences with a different logic - meanings were thus supposed to be different for both groups of social actors. Martinic's interest may be fit into this direction, although he does not go further into the analysis of participant's attitudes and meanings in terms of their social implications, such as social control, ideological and social reproduction, and legitimation.

Another study involving a psycho-sociological framework with the aim of bringing out collective perceptions and unconscious meanings, was geared at uncovering literacy teachers' perspectives. De Llela and Ezcurro (1984) emphasized the existence of different trends, which they called 'centripetal' and 'centrifugal', in teachers' attitudes and behaviours; according to this teachers wish both to remain and to escape from the literacy programme. This, according to De Llela and Ezcurro, put teachers in an ambiguous position where affections, moral discourse, and the institution's own pedagogical discourse come into conflict. The study sheds light upon an aspect of adult

²⁰ Hightet (1986), in a similar direction, although within the European context, looks at ideological implications of community based women's education in a case study in the city of Glasgow, with the purpose of examining to what extent these programmes were contributing to the socialisation of women into accepting differential societal roles.

education which had not been touched so far: how literacy teachers perceive their work. Numerous studies have been chiefly concerned with the decrease in illiteracy levels and with the formal characteristics of the programme (Cuellar 1986). Some others focused on the reasons that led students to stay on or to drop out from literacy programmes (Munoz Izquierdo 1985). None paid special attention to what teachers were thinking, to how they were perceiving the programme, its problems, and how this affected their performance as teachers.

Our interest is to stress and highlight the participant's perspective and derive from it the possible social functions nonformal education courses may be achieving. It means taking the point of view of the participants as the main source to explain some societal functions. It entails a focus on how the pedagogical process is perceived and its implications in terms of meaning and changes, a step beyond traditional evaluations that emphasize effective learning over the conditions in which this learning takes place and the attitudes that arise from it. Simkins (1977:30) helps to make this point clear when he states that:

"... an analysis of the affective outcomes of education must be central to any meaningful analysis of education and development. In considering non-formal alternatives, it is necessary, therefore, as with formal education, to move beyond simple considerations of content and to concern ourselves explicitly with questions of educational process."

We want to contextualize participants' perceptions of the educational process, so that the experience of both teacher and student are not taken isolated from socioeconomic and political relationships. Perceptions are shaped by the very specific context in which they are embedded. The pedagogical context itself, what Paige (1983) calls the 'learning environment factors', exert an impact on participants which "emerges from the objective features of the setting and acts as a concrete force that shapes behaviour and learning" (*Ibidem.*:312). To focus on these factors allows us to "... extract socio-psychological meaning from the objective 'facts' of a given situation." (*Ibidem.*)

4.4 The hidden curriculum behind government-sponsored nonformal education.

As has been stressed, much has been said about nonformal education's alleged potentiality in terms of socioeconomic development, and in terms of its capacity for promoting the well-being of marginal sectors of the population. Numerous analyses have questioned, though, its 'magical' attributes. Nonformal education has been approached from different perspectives; it becomes important, though, that the emphasis on its social and political function has been rather tangential: nonformal education, provided by government organizations and institutions, has not been studied enough in terms of its social and political implications. Nor has much emphasis been put on the way these functions are achieved from the perspective of the pedagogical process.

Much writing has dealt already with the ideological function of education, as well as with its legitimation and social control functions. However, nonformal education has not been so extensively studied from this perspective as official schooling. Nonformal education social functions have often been tackled in a rather implicit way as if taking them for granted. Studies of popular education (as will be noted in Chapter III: 2.2) are the ones that have dealt mainly with these functions, as a different and contrasting framework from which alternative perspectives have been conceived (Brandao 1985a; De Schutter 1986; Gajardo 1985; Freire 1973).

Nonformal education activities provided by government institutions have often been taken as activities which do not offer a potential for encouraging social change, therefore they have been undervalued when analyzed from the perspective of their social and political implications. This has masked an activity which does not seem to have a counterpart, that is, experiences and programmes carried out by non-government organizations lie a long way behind in terms of coverage, physical and financial support, number of teachers, etc. (Schmelkes and Street 1991). Finding out how this state sponsored educational activity is perceived by the participants, what its real social outcomes are constitute major questions that guide this research. Thompson (1980:24) shares this concern when pointing out that:

"... the extent to which adult education contributes to the transmission of values and attitudes which reflect the interests of dominant groups in society is a condition of adult education which is, as yet, under-researched and largely ignored by adult educators."

Therefore, this interest led us to consider the importance of nonformal education to the State, how it fits into the State's interests, hence stressing not the view from above but that from below, that of participants in terms of what courses mean to them. These are some of the underlying questions that guide the project.

A previous study (Pieck and Aguado 1988) must be considered since it constitutes the starting point of our research. Nonformal education activities carried out by governmental institutions during the period 1980-1986 in the State of Mexico were analyzed in this research. Through recording events, topics, participants, locations and institutional programmes, it was possible to arrive at the end with a 'picture' of nonformal education in a particular region. The vast amount of information permitted some conclusions and hypotheses, some of which have been incorporated into this research. Conclusions drawn dealt mainly with the overwhelming presence of nonformal education courses in the State of Mexico; to the apparent lack of planning behind the implementation of programmes; to the unequal distribution of courses and their relation to subregion marginal conditions, and therefore to the selective feature of nonformal education. The data showed activities were duplicated and that there were low levels of articulation between programmes and topics. The degree of responsiveness of nonformal education to realities and needs from different regions turned out in the end to be one of the most important queries (See Chapter II: Section 8).

The results led finally to a questioning of nonformal education's role in terms of development, to a scepticism about nonformal education's alleged achievements and the conclusion that a different analytical perspective that could emphasize social and political angles -in order to understand the underlying rationale-, or a perspective that privileged people's perception of the pedagogical process -in order to understand the outcomes of the courses in terms of meanings-, might be more illuminating about the nature and function of nonformal education. We have opted in this research for the

second perspective. The first perspective has been tackled through the analysis of the adult education policy making process (Torres 1983; Latapí 1987).

The purpose of the research stems then from a scepticism about the social and economic benefits of community education programmes provided by government organizations for people in the rural sector. We questioned the manifest functions of these programmes and chose to consider the social and political functions nonformal education might be achieving by looking at the educational process. We assumed some characteristics of the educational process: curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation features, and how the learning environment is perceived, help to explain the social function of this form of education.

We maintain a sceptical position with regard to Simkins' faith in nonformal education as a meaningful educational alternative with a "... great potential of producing affective outcomes which may contribute substantially to desirable patterns of development" (Simkins 1977:36-7). We argue that affective outcomes of nonformal education programmes can be more easily related to or framed within nonformal education societal functions: in terms of social control, ideological and social reproduction, and legitimation.

Given the marginal social and economic conditions in which these programmes are carried out we were concerned to discover why people, students and teachers, participate in community education programmes? What do they get out of it? Given our concern with participation led us to motives and expectations, as elements strongly linked with participation. Where does one find the answer for participation: in the content of the courses, in community features, in people characteristics, in the different needs expressed by people? This points to the need of understanding and sustaining why both teachers and students participate in these programs. Giving an answer to this question means understanding one of the possible causes of success or failure of the programs. Therefore, we were interested in the meaning assigned by people to the courses before they enter a course, in how they perceive the course, with what is the meaning left after the course, in its outcome in order to be able to account for the motivations and expectations, and for the extent to which they are fulfilled. In which way is this

educational experience meaningful to people? We were interested also in possible changes in people -as an outcome of the course- and in how this change was manifested.

Taking it for granted that nonformal education may have an important function in terms of the transmission of knowledge and skills, that it may foster some favourable attitudes towards development, we are more concerned about how to emphasize how underlying features of nonformal education help to explain some of its social functions. Our intention is to explore what happens after the course, as well as its socioeconomic and political implications. It means looking at a skill-upgrading course not precisely in terms of the skill being learnt, but from what is left to students when they conclude the course, what it means to them being enrolled in these workshops, what they think of them, their perceptions and the implications of their perceptions in terms of social attitudes and behaviours, their motives and expectations, their chances of social mobility, of getting a job, and the social implications, of failure and success.

We think that the emphasis on "... what is *caught* rather than on what is *taught*" (Simkins 1977:26), that is to say enquiring into the hidden curriculum features of nonformal education, allows us to put emphasis on the educational process and highlight frequently undermined achievements of educational programmes. Being concerned with the hidden curriculum we looked for possible social latent functions of this form of education. Which are the changes experienced by people? How do they perceive them? What are the new open spaces these changes bring about and what is their importance for the participants?

Given the concern with different social relationships underlying a particular educational process, the hidden curriculum facilitated the analysis of the meaning of educational events to students and of underlying features that help to bring into existence and maintain social relations in society. The hidden curriculum, as Vallance (quoted by Giroux 1983:54) mentions:

"... allows us to acknowledge that much of schooling may be too subtle to ever fully capture" and this is precisely the idea we had: not an analysis of the outer features of a phenomenon but an inner look into the "myriad of beliefs and

values transmitted tacitly through the social relations and routines that characterize day-to-day school experience" (*Ibidem.*:45).

The intention is to approach nonformal education from a perspective that may account for what is not observed, for outcomes that are not to be found in programmes's reports, but in processes that take place during the course and which are not usually regarded as true outcomes of the pedagogical process, although they may be more indicative of programmes' results and social implications than students' achievement scales. As Thompson (1980:27) points out, "... to look beyond the commonly accepted and officially defined goals of adult education is a task which is long overdue".

For these reasons, the analysis of the social function and meaning of rural nonformal education was carried out using a sociology of education theoretical framework. It was based fundamentally on some concepts and categories of Bernstein's sociolinguistic theory and cultural transmission model. Bernstein's most important contribution to our analysis was allowing us to enter into the underlying features of the educational process through the nature of pedagogy and curriculum and, thereby, to elucidate nonformal education social function. Bernstein's concepts have been used basically for the analysis of formal education at different levels; nonformal education has hardly been touched.²¹ We thought this attempt would contribute to provide some reflections and hypotheses that could shed some more light on this form of education.

Some concepts of Bernstein's cultural transmission model may be useful to explain how educational programmes may permeate students' values, attitudes and expectations, how they may turn into State instruments for social control and legitimation. We share thus Robinson's (1981:59) opinion that "Bernstein's work may be seen as an exploration of social control". It is in this respect that we think it might be very useful and enlightening for our analysis.

²¹ To our knowledge, Bernard and Papagianis (1983): 'Educational Diversification in Less-Industrialized Countries: a Sociolinguistic Approach in the Study of Nonformal Education', and Martinic (1988) are pioneers in this sort of analysis.

To date this approach has not been used to analyze nonformal education, particularly in the Mexican context. No doubt this in itself constitutes a reason to attempt to apply the analysis. Just as Giroux (1981:91) writes: "... steeped in the logic of consensus and 'role' socialization, functionalist theory left un-examined questions concerning the relationships of schools to issues of power, class conflict and social control". That is precisely one of the main objectives of our analysis: examining the social function of nonformal education.

5. SUMMARY

In this chapter we have looked at nonformal education, the context in which it emerged, and its assumptions in terms of social and economic development. We then questioned the practice of nonformal education and stressed how it still remains far from becoming a real alternative for improving living standards in developing countries. It was argued that programmes have been tackled fundamentally from the Human Capital theory perspective without taking into account the complex social and economic reality in which programmes take place and which limit their outcomes. In face of a lack of understanding about nonformal education's social and political functions, the need for a broader framework that could give an account of these outcomes was emphasized. Accent was put on qualitative methods for looking at the participants's perspective as a means to get a different perspective on nonformal education. Briefly, the main concern of this chapter has been to provide a picture of and research on nonformal education in order to emphasize the need for an analysis of the hidden curriculum of this form of education.

CHAPTER II
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE SCOPE AND PRACTICE OF
NONFORMAL EDUCATION IN MEXICO

"Perhaps more effectively than in any other country in Latin America, education in Mexico has been used more as an instrument of legitimization than as a development tool. Since the post-revolutionary period, education has served to minimize social conflicts but not to compensate the lack of real economic and political mobility of members of the lower classes. Economically, education has not been a means to feed a process of development by preparing the human resources required to maintain a relatively successful process of economic growth. Changes in primary and nonformal education have simply expanded the pool of individuals competing to enter the labour market in low-paid occupations, while the higher education system has reinforced the ranks of the new technocratic elite in government and the private sector occupying managerial posts in society. Politically, education has served to legitimize a hegemonic power structure and a nationalistic political ideology that serve as a basis to the corporatist State controlling not only political life but also the direction and distribution of the benefits of the development process. Education has helped to maintain a facade of political stability and the image of a revolutionary tradition that provides a historical frame of reference where the corporatist state can operate" (Morales-Gomez and Torres 1990:31).

CHAPTER II
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
SCOPE AND PRACTICE OF NONFORMAL EDUCATION IN MEXICO

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a concrete context within which to discuss and analyze the development of community education.

The chapter is divided into two parts. The first gives an overview of the development and antecedents of nonformal education in Mexico showing how its scope and practice have evolved. Our purpose is thus one of providing the background to help us understand the particular case of the development of nonformal education in the State of Mexico where the empirical research project was conducted. The historical overview begins in 1921 with the ending of the active phase of the Mexican Revolution from which time official policy was to begin to use nonformal education as a tool to stimulate social and economic development as well as solidifying the emerging political structure which developed as a result of the revolution. The analysis concentrates in the rural sector for two reasons: (i) a succession of governments concentrated on this sector, and (ii) it was in this sector that experimentation with non 'open' forms of education took place. We conclude the first part of the chapter with a panorama of contemporary nonformal education, the institutions providing it, and its areas of concern and concentration.

The second part of the chapter discusses the development of nonformal education in the State of Mexico. It starts by giving an outline of the socioeconomic framework of the State of Mexico with an emphasis on its state of educational institutions and practices, and aims to explain the development of nonformal education there since 1940 when a host of new programmes were initiated.

I. THE DEVELOPMENT OF NONFORMAL EDUCATION IN MEXICO¹

It is important to note that nonformal education developed in an often *ad-hoc* and disjointed way in Mexico largely because the aim in general of education changed from 1) bringing contemporary culture to the rural and later -as they developed- urban poor to: 2) providing vocationally oriented education. Education was first seen as stimulating national unity and then as a means of bringing about a socialist society and finally as a means of training labour. For these reasons and owing to the relative power of educational agents the history even to the extent it has been researched is confusing. Institutions and policies succeed institutions and policies. Conflicting aims and methods are reflected in institutions performing contradictory activities. As we trace the beginnings of nonformal education the reader should be aware of these problems. It is not our purpose to discuss them -although this is necessary if one wishes to understand the relationship between educational institutions and practices, and the State. Our interest is only one of framing the development of nonformal institutions and its practices.

1. THE POST-REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD (1921-1940).

Before the Mexican Revolution whose military phase took place between 1910 and 1921, education was basically confined to the urban middle class and the rich. A modicum of education for the urban poor was provided in some cases by the Church, but little or no attention had been paid to the rural areas. Illiteracy, as a basic indicator exceeded 80% in 1910 (Raby 1974:11) (much higher in rural areas than in urban areas), and only 3% of children of school age were enrolled in primary school (Coplamar 1985).

Because of what many contemporary commentators saw as an alarming lack of education provision before 1910 it was not surprising that, having demanded land and political freedom for the hitherto excluded rural population largely composed of small holders and landless peasants, one of the main social planks of the Revolution was to

¹ Table 1 concentrates information about the development of the scope and practice of nonformal education in Mexico.

provide schooling for these groups. Educational programmes during this period can be seen against a background where, in 1920, whilst there was a slight improvement over pre-Revolution statistics, 7 out of 10 people over 6 years of age could still not read (that is approximately 7.1 million out of a total population of 10.5 millions (INEA 1988a). Sanchez (1971:64-65) comments that:

"... the end of the armed revolution in 1920 found Mexico in a sorry plight (...) education was in a state of stagnation and decay. Rural schools were virtually non-existent -popular education being limited to the formal instruction imparted in town or city schools to a limited number of children of the middle or upper classes."

As the Revolution had, in part, espoused the cause of the urban and rural poor, such conditions clearly dictated the direction and emphasis on education in the following years, when literacy, basic education and education for improving the living standards of the communities were placed in the agenda.

As early as 1911, after the government of Porfirio Diaz had been overthrown, there were some attempts to set up 'Rudimentary Schools' (*Escuelas Rudimentarias*). They constituted an initial innovation in the attempt to reach educationally marginalized sectors of the society and can be considered as an example of the need to foster a different type of education for these sectors of the population whose needs were seen to be different from the dominant social groups. (Castillo *et. al.* 1982). In those days the 'marginal' sectors, that is, the impoverished sectors of the society lacking power and located at the lowest level of social stratification, were estimated to compose 75% of the population (Raby 1974).

The 'Rudimentary Schools' were intended to provide two years training, teaching to indigenous and peasants in inaccessible areas reading, writing, and basic arithmetic. These schools were truly rudimentary and the programme was not very successful. They were regarded as 'schools that are little better than nothing at all' (Sanchez 1971).

It was not until after the military phase Revolution was concluded in 1921 that educational programmes in Mexico began to be taken more seriously, more attention was

given to the social and economic situation of the rural masses specifically and adult education programmes began (Raby 1974). Social ideas sustained during the revolutionary period engendered a concept of education geared towards social justice, and laid the foundation for a free, non-religious and compulsory basic education.² Sanchez (1971:65) comments that:

"... as the greatest need existed among *indios* (natives) and *campesinos* (peasants) in the rural areas -areas in which schools were unknown- it was fitting that the federal programme should begin as a pioneering educational adventure among the Indians and peasants".

Of course the fact that these groups formed large sections of the Revolutionary armies helped bring their concerns, problems and demands to the forefront.

1.1 The development of education as a cultural mission.

After the Revolution and as a result of the pressure from the coalition of social groups who benefited from it consistent attempts to improve and extend the provision of education were made. The creation in 1921 of the Ministry of Public Education (*Secretaria de Educacion Publica -SEP*), with Jose Vasconcelos as the first Secretary of State, was an important landmark in the development of education in Mexico. Then the process of providing education for the masses began (Raby 1974) and "the ideal of redemption through schooling began to materialize" (Guevara 1992:21). Its initial aims were those of combatting illiteracy and expanding basic education in the rural areas.

The 'Rural Schools' (*Escuelas Rurales*), (originally called as 'People's Centres' -*Casas del Pueblo*), and the 'Cultural Missions' (*Misiones Culturales*) were seen as important institutions to solve specific educational problems in the vast rural areas. "Both initiatives constitute the most successful historic examples of state education geared towards marginalized populations" (Schmelkes 1989:57) and were looked on as one of

² The Constitutional Congress, held in the city of Queretaro in 1917, established in its 3rd. Article that basic education had to be compulsory, non-religious, and free of cost.

the best means of tackling Mexico's educational problems at that time (Sanchez 1971). Through both institutions, attempts were made to meet the educational needs of the countryside (Castillo *et. al.* 1982). Through them the newly organized SEP endeavoured to spread knowledge and culture to the countryside hoping thereby to help them overcome rural poverty and become part of, as Vasconcelos believed, a new Mexico.

At this time, the Rural Schools were conceived of providing a service for the community, and thereby can be regarded as the beginnings of community education in Mexico. These schools were specifically charged with the task of organizing almost every aspect of social life of the community and became the linchpin of the educational system during the post-revolutionary period. In the beginning rural schools were conceived of as having an important role in providing literacy and basic education, but soon became an institution more suited to local conditions attempting to provide courses geared to the specific needs of each community (Myers 1965:37). In addition to the curriculum (which included arithmetic, local geography, reading and writing, and national history) schools had '*anexos*' (annexes) -community workshops running courses such as cooking, weaving, health and welfare, animal husbandry, etc., which in Myers's (*Ibidem.*:38) opinion were "... at the heart of the new school and concerned with anything that fall outside the formal role of elementary education." Educational programmes aimed thus to tackle different economic and social activities under a broader conception of rural and community development.

During that period the Cultural Missions developed an integrated conception of adult education, "... the most advanced thinking in Mexico and the actual application of social and educational theories *in situ*" (Sanchez 1971:95). They were thought of as an instrument of nonformal community education developing cultural, educational, and for-the-job training activities where both children and adults were involved. Educational activity was intended to be a component of all social development projects which would be to the benefit of the community.³

³ Sanchez comment is very eloquent about the achievements and the impact of this programme: "peasants who, before the coming of the Mission, thought only of labouring in the fields from sunup to sundown and who, when their work was done, turned to the pulqueria (wine-shop, or saloon) for diversion, now have other times and newer attitudes. I have seen peasants rushing to finish their day's work before sundown in order that they might have a few hours of daylight

At their outset the Cultural Missions consisted mainly of groups of people who travelled around the country establishing themselves in rural communities for short periods of time with the goal of encouraging people to become teachers and to establish the first rural schools, known as 'People's Centres' (*La Casa del Pueblo*), which were schools built by community effort. Later their role was extended to include raising the academic level of rural school's teachers,⁴ and the development of the communities which the missionaries visited. During these visits missionaries would set up three-week courses during which time they attempted to implement a project and carry out a short teacher's training programme. Those courses were known as '*institutos*' (Raby 1974). It was not until 1933-34 that there was an attempt to put the Missions on a permanent footing, that is to say, instead of travelling around the country they would concentrate their activities in some communities for a period of time and in coordination with the Regional Peasant Schools (*Escuelas Regionales Campesinas*) (Sanchez 1971).

Whilst the activities of these schools were directed basically towards improving communities' living conditions the missionaries also played an important political role. As Raby (1974:24) points out, "... their work was of enormous importance in awakening popular consciousness, and taking new values to the countryside simultaneously stimulating the most positive characteristics of the indigenous culture."

These missionaries also served during this initial period as important links between the State and the rural society and as channels for the diffusion of prevailing social ideas. Vaughan (1982:49) illustrates this point:

"... in this time (1920s) of a still weak control state and its bureaucracy, of local-state-federal power struggles, and of movements for structural change at the base, teachers became a political force helping to mobilize rural communities in favour of reforms."

for a basketball game or for the songs and dances going on at the school house."

⁴ One of the reasons why the *Escuelas Normales Rurales* (*Rural Teaching Schools*) were set up during those years was to raise teacher's schooling level since it usually did not go beyond the level of being able how to read and write (Raby 1974).

By 1924 more than 1,000 such Federal rural schools, attended by 65,000 students, had been created. In 1926, in addition to these Federal schools, there were 6,000 state-supported rural schools and about 1,800 private rural schools (Sanchez 1971:68). Nonetheless, rural schools did not seem to meet expectations because of the lack of funds to finance a six year primary school, and because of the poor response by the population where low rates of attendance were evidenced (Myers 1965). So, despite the introduction of educational institutions, there were still 7.2 million illiterate people -that is to say, 6 out of 10 people over six years of age were still illiterate in 1928 (INEA 1988a).

1.2 The need for agricultural vocationally-oriented education.

The need to improve agricultural practices and raise productivity as a means to reduce the poverty of rural people led to the establishment of Agricultural Schools (*Centrales Agrícolas*). These were opened between 1925 and 1932. They were set up in order to respond to perceived developmental needs faced by the agricultural sector and to spread the knowledge and practice of new techniques. The purpose of these schools was to provide a three year training course for students living in their catchment area. Students were supposed to return to their communities once the course had concluded so that they could put in practice what they had learnt. Both, the Department of Agricultural Education (*Departamento de Educacion Agricola*) and the Central Schools of Agriculture (*Escuelas Centrales Agrícolas*), were launched in the early 1930s, as bids to answer to people's educational needs in the rural areas. Nonetheless, in Sanchez (1971:145) opinion, these schools were a great failure because their methods and their materials were in no way suited to the needs of Mexican agriculture".

In the light of this failure Narciso Bassols, Secretary of Education during the period 1931-1934, launched a programme which created the Peasant Regional Schools (*Escuelas Regionales Campesinas*), which combined teacher's training with agricultural training. There was a new emphasis within this programme geared more to the improvement of productive methods than to the incorporation of the indigenous population into mainstream society. (Raby 1974). Within this programme students

attended a two year agricultural or technical training course, and upon completion could opt for an additional year focusing upon teaching training.

Another major problem in Mexico was the indigenous population which had been ignored since the Conquest. In terms of indigenous education, after the Revolution there was a tendency -not present earlier- to glorify and exalt everything that was indigenous. Therefore educational reforms to the advantage of indigenous population were deemed necessary and crucial. The indigenous population was isolated. There were some states like Morelos, Mexico, Tlaxcala, and Puebla where 10% of the population neither spoke nor understood Spanish, and some other states like Yucatan where the figure was as high as 80% (Myers 1965:35). By 1930 the Census revealed that 15% of the total population spoke indigenous languages, and of these only 53% spoke Spanish as well (Sanchez 1971:11).

In 1925 the 'Centre for the Indigenous Student' (*Casa del Estudiante Indigena*) was established, where indigenous people were brought in order to be provided with general and vocational education. They were closed in 1932 because of their failure to achieve their aims: one of their purposes was modernizing some indigenous young people so that they could turn into agents for change within their communities, but none of them returned to their communities (Arce 1981:187, quoting Krauze and Meyer). In 1933 they became the Centres of Indigenous Education (*Centros de Educacion Indigena*). These Centres were located in the very heart of indigenous communities and were intended to reflect the culture of the people.⁵

In addition to these centres, evening schools and educational specific projects and campaigns were initiated in an effort to integrate the indigenous population and provide them with a basic general education. This 'new' interest in these social groups led to the creation of the Department of School and Native Culture (*Departamento de Educacion y Cultura Indigena*) with the aim of locating indigenous groups and studying the

⁵ The Department of Indigenous Affairs (*Departamento de Asuntos Indigenas*) was created in 1936 in order to take care of legal problems, the organization of cooperatives, and providing help for infrastructural services.

socioeconomic characteristics of the regions where they lived.

1.3 The development of education for community development:
The Cardenas period (1934-1940).

Raby (1974:31) stresses the importance of efforts to provide an adequate education from 1921 to 1931: "... thousands of peasants had learnt how to read and write and began to hope for a better life; it was the first time that some of them had been the recipients of attention from the government on matters which were not meant to harm them." Nonetheless, education had not achieved its original purposes. A rather large chasm persisted between the real and the ideal. This situation brought about a reevaluation of educational planning in the following years starting with the presidency of Lazaro Cardenas.

During the Cardenas presidency education acquired a socialist emphasis and contents related to the social and political needs of the rural population were emphasized within the curriculum. This was related to the distribution of land undertaken during the period and the establishment of the *ejido* system (a form of land tenure in rural Mexico where land was given to people but is not owned by them and where agricultural production is carried out either on a collective or an individual basis). By 1935 there were already 18 Missions, with 4,494 rural teachers in 29 states. Up until 1938 the educational missionaries were turned into important channels through which prevailing social ideas - concerned with the agrarian reform, and organizing peasants (so that they could defend their land)- were spread to rural areas (Raby 1974; Sanchez 1971). By 1938, facing the criticisms of conservative groups for being instruments for the diffusion of State's ideology and for having played an important role within the agrarian process, they were abolished by Cardenas. They were re-launched in 1942, although now as permanent community development projects less integrated with the activities of the rural schools (Raby 1974; Myers 1965).

During this period more serious attempts were made to stimulate the rural sector since it was felt that the distribution of land would be sufficient to release peasants' energies

to allow a great rise in production. Peasant Regional Schools continued to enjoy support: "while in 1934 there were 10 schools with 900 students, in 1940 the number had risen to 33 schools with 4116 students of which more than 64% were peasants (Raby 1974:47). The growth took advantage of the previous Agricultural Schools and of the Teaching Rural Schools (*Escuelas Normales Rurales*). Whilst Cardenas' efforts to create a socialised agriculture through using schools as centres for development were abandoned his emphasis promoting of technical agricultural schools, set the ground for the further development of nonformal education in the rural areas.

As Cardenas was concerned with empowering the rural sector schools for adults and local cultural centres were established and indigenous educational programmes were carried out supported by a number of educational campaigns. Illiteracy was looked at as a problem to be overcome and some programmes were carried out with that aim: 225,000 people over 10 years were taught how to read and write, nevertheless the number of illiterates remained as high as 7.5 million (INEA 1988a).

2. THE FORMALIZING OF NONFORMAL EDUCATION (1940-1980s).

Arce (1981) argues that the Rural School received more support than other types of schooling during the immediate post-revolutionary period. Conversely, from 1940 when Manuel Avila Camacho, representing a return to more conservative values, succeeded to the presidency an important shift in the orientation given to educational programmes in the rural areas occurred. Myers (1965:46) points out that:

"... along with the declining priority assigned to the less-advanced regions there was a fundamental modification in the theory of rural elementary education. The separate identity they had maintained came to an end and the urban primary school became the national model."

Compared with previous years (1921-1940) where social equality seemed to be the prevailing idea behind educational developments the shift after 1940 was more concerned with applying the findings of human capital theory in terms of looking at

education from the perspective of its potential to develop a better trained manual labour force. At the economic level, education was justified as an investment in capacities and abilities, and as a prerequisite for development and social progress (Padua 1984).

Along with shifts in how education was being conceived of in Latin America, where educational reforms gave priority to aspects concerned with productivity and efficiency over a previous emphasis on humanist values (Finkel 1979:263 Tedesco 1980:17), emphasis in Mexico was put on its potential to contribute to the new development strategy launched during the 1940s. As Morales and Torres (1990:19) point out, "... education during the late 1940s and early 1950s began to reflect the trends of the model of economic and political development". Rural education became a secondary concern within a new development strategy because rural areas were subordinated to industrialization and urbanization priorities as having less immediate economic potential.

The purpose of this section is thus to provide an account of the development of nonformal education setting it within the initial framework of the new development strategy carried out from 1940 to the 1980s. The section is divided in two parts. The first is concerned mainly with literacy and basic education. In the second two periods are differentiated as defined by different rural policies. A description of nonformal education programmes and policies and their different emphases is provided for both periods 1940-1970 and 1970-1980s. It is here that we intend to provide a basic framework for understanding the social and economic situation in the rural sector as the context where the emergence and development of community education takes place.

2.1 The institutionalization of the system.

From 1940 there was a significant increase in educational provision, higher than population growth levels (Coplamar 1985). In 1944, a National Campaign against Illiteracy (*Campana Nacional Contra la Alfabetizacion*) was implemented. As a result more than 800,000 people learned how to read and write (INEA 1988a). This campaign was one of the most serious attempts to eradicate illiteracy and led to the National Law

on Literacy (*Ley Nacional de Alfabetizacion*) and to the decision to keep the campaign as permanent until 1952. As a result the General Department of Literacy and Out-of-School Education (*Direccion General de Alfabetizacion y Educacion Extraescolar*) was created in the next presidential period (Miguel Aleman 1946-1952) in order to coordinate and intensify educational activities within this specific area. Between 1945 and 1958 more than 4.5 million learned to read at the 'Basic Literacy Centres' that were founded in the 1940s (Myers 1965).

In 1948 the concept of *fundamental education* (see Chapter I: Section 2.4), was incorporated into educational programmes and its advantages for the use of specific methods and contents for adult population began to be stressed. So, at the end of the 1940's, stimulated by the international interest on adult education⁶ and under the auspices of UNESCO, CREFAL (Regional Centre for Fundamental Education in Latinamerica -*Centro Regional de Educacion Fundamental para America Latina*) was created in Mexico in 1951 with the purpose of training adult educators and preparing didactic materials. The emphasis was to be put not only on literacy but on "providing rural communities with the minimum amount of elements for a better adaptation to environmental and everyday contemporary requirements. Therefore the need for a trained personnel on subjects such as hygiene, agriculture, small-scale industries and craftsmanship (Torres Bodet, quoted by Torres 1985:155).

From 1953 to 1964 important programmes were launched in order to face the alarming educational statistics: even if the proportion of illiterates in the national population of six years had dropped from 58% to 38% between 1940 and 1960 due to population growth, the total number of illiterates increased by 12% (Myers 1965:57). According to Benveniste (1970:63):

"The cost of education is rising faster than revenue. The salaries of teachers are already very low, and it is difficult to recruit good teachers. The quality of the education provided in rural schools is very poor, and many children in rural areas have no schools to go to. When new schools are created in rural areas, they offer instruction for the initial grades; but teachers are not available for the higher

⁶ The world's sudden interest on adult education was based on the recent 'First International Conference on Adult Education' held in Denmark in 1949.

grades, and sooner or later children drop out. Secondary education is provided mostly in urban centres, and a very small percentage of the school-age population has access to it..."

An 'Eleven Years Plan' (*Plan de Once Años*), formulated during the presidential period of Lopez Mateos (1958-1964), was intended to improve and expand education. It was launched with the aim of providing "... all children in Mexico free and compulsory primary education" during that eleven years period (Torres Bodet, quoted by Torres 1985:82). Some of the means utilized by this new strategy were the Reading Halls (*Salas de Lectura*), Out-of-School Education Centres (*Centros de Educacion Extraescolar*) - later known as Job Training Centres (*Centros de Ensenanza Ocupacional*), Industrial and Agricultural Work Training Centres (*Centros de Capacitacion para el Trabajo Industrial y Agricola*), and the Fundamental Education Regional Centres (*Centros Regionales de Educacion Fundamental*).

During the 1960s the educational system began to expand rapidly reflecting the generally shared optimism in Latin America about what could be achieved through education. Gomez (1981:51) illustrates this:

"The gigantic expansion of educational opportunities which took place in underdeveloped countries, particularly in Latin America, from the 1950s, and had its greatest period of growth during the 1960s and until the mid 1970s, was supported by a high level of optimism about the positive contributions which were expected from education concerning economic growth, income distribution and a greater social equality. Investments needed to extent educational opportunities were considered as investments far more rewarding than those on physical capital (...) Low education levels of manual labour were considered as one of the main obstacles for development, and so expanding schooling turned into a fundamental requisite for development..."

Primary education grew from having 6.5 millions pupils in 1964 to having 9 millions in 1970, and by 1977 the number had grown by 12 millions. However it was argued that even if educational provision continued to grow it still had no answer for a vast sector of the rural population with needs not easy to meet by a conventional kind of school (Fuentes Molinar 1983:232).

In the 1960s the concept of *community development* was stressed based on the idea that illiteracy itself was not the main problem in countries like Mexico. It was argued that literacy campaigns would do little to tackle problems stemming from the structural constraints of developing countries and this led to put emphasis on programmes oriented especially to peoples' basic needs (Chapter I: 2.4 and Chapter III: 2.1.1 deal with the emergence and assumptions of community development as a nonformal education strategy).

In Mexico the emphasis on community development took up the 1920's experience of the Cultural Missions, and the proposals of community development as a nonformal education strategy fostered by the UNESCO by that time. The concept of community development put the accent on voluntary and committed participation of people from the communities in terms of their social and economic incorporation within the national mainstream and the emphasis was centred basically on education (Escalante and Minano 1984; La Belle 1976; De la Fuente 1964). As a result the activity of the Cultural Missions, as proper community development agencies, was stressed with an emphasis on programmes channelled to basic community needs such as health, recreation, nutrition, agriculture, and skill training with a similar emphasis to that of the 1920s and 1930s.

In 1968 Adult Education Centres (*Centros de Educacion de Adultos*) were created with the very specific purpose of providing functional literacy. These Centres turned in 1971 into the Basic Education Centres for Adults (*Centros de Educacion Basica para Adultos, CEBAS*). Literacy began to be regarded then as the introductory stage for basic education for people over 15 years. In this same year the Centre for Intermediate Studies and Advanced Procedures in Education (*Centro de Estudios Medios y Procedimientos Avanzados en Educacion -CEMPAE*) was created in order to identify specific adult needs, to design specifically basic education models, and to write text books. Despite the efforts, in 1970 24% of school-age Mexicans still remained outside the educational system.

2.2 Towards National Planning

In the early 1970s the educational policy began to offer a consistent and formal support to nonformal education. Out-of-school education became part of the national education system and the struggle for wider literacy was regarded as a permanent activity different from the emphasis on sporadic and spontaneously based literacy campaigns of previous years. So, in 1975, as a result of these problems the National Law of Education for Adults (*Ley Nacional de Educacion de Adultos*) was enacted. As Morales and Torres (1990:56) point out "... it was not until 1975 that the State publicly became responsible for educating adults. Castillo *et. al.* (1982:236) state that:

"... throughout all the experiences of adult education, there has not existed generally an explicit policy about what was intended on this area. Only the rural schools, the cultural missions, and the literacy campaigns had at a certain time a concrete definition of objectives and strategies. It was not until the National Law of Education that the conception of the State about this form of education was expressed more clearly."

From 1976 to 1982, during the Jose Lopez Portillo presidency, the National Plan of Education (*Plan Nacional de Educacion*) was formulated as a very ambitious programme intended to tackle educational problems in the country at every level, including adult education (Fuentes Molinar 1983). Efforts were made to spread basic education at a community level through the National Programme of Education to Marginalized Groups (*Programa de Educacion a Grupos Marginados*), which led to the Programme: 'Education for All' (*Educacion para Todos*), aimed at reducing educational inequalities. By 1980 there were 15 million children within the 6-14 age group enrolled in primary education, this meant an increase in educational cover from 44% to 87% from 1940 to 1980 (SEP 1983). In 1981 the National System of Education for Adults (*Sistema Nacional para la Educacion de Adultos*) was created with the main aim of providing literacy and basic education to the adult population leading one year later to the creation of the National Institute for the Education of Adults (*Instituto Nacional para la Educacion de los Adultos -INEA*).

Having largely solved the problem of illiteracy amongst children the government's strategy shifted to take on board new problems such as school drop out rates, totalling approximately 8 million. If we add those who did not finish primary and secondary schooling to the age of 15 to the 16% rate of illiteracy provided by the 1980 Census we have a total of some 25 million who were to be catered for by programmes drawn up by organisations like INEA.

As a result of financial stringency arising from the 1982 economic crisis there was a decrease in the number of people who could be helped. Nonetheless, from 1982 to 1988 the new government of Miguel de la Madrid intended to bring about what it called an 'Educational Revolution'. Despite these efforts this period showed a decrease in both educational figures and supports: provision of basic education went down to 97.8% and completion rates remained at 52.1% (Schmelkes 1989). Moreover, the country persisted showing severe inequalities in completion rates between the different regions: from 1976 to 1983 completion rates increased from 46% to 55% in the country, although in indigenous areas it did not reach 20% (SEP 1983).

Despite a succession of governments having launched a great number of campaigns and programmes whose aim was to provide universal basic education and despite having set up many institutions to achieve these aims, in 1980 6.5 million people were still illiterate. This figure was reduced by 1986 to 3.7 millions largely due to the National Literacy Programme (*Programa Nacional de Alfabetización -PRONALF*), a programme that was launched in 1981 with the specific objective of achieving the goals of literacy in the shortest time possible. The programme was intended to reduce illiteracy to 10% by 1982, thus making one million adult literate in a one year period based on Freire's method of '*palabra generadora*' (Morales and Torres 1990).

PRONALF's performance revealed a number of problems such as: an ineffective planning process at the centre, an inadequate training for educational agents (which led to problems at the implementation level: training strategies, literacy methods, etc.); organizational and infrastructural problems at regional levels; the inflexibility of the system facing new demands of the target population, etc. (Schmelkes 1989; Morales and

Torres 1990; De Llela and Ezcurro 1984). Nonetheless, Schmelkes (1989:70-71) suggests, the main problems were to be found outside the programme and:

"... are concerned mainly with marginal conditions, dispersion, and the extreme poverty of illiterate population. These problems, however, are the ones that define and characterize the target population of the programme, the ones that determine adult motivations and interests in becoming literate, and the ones that condition possibilities of permanence and achievement of learning objectives."

It has been argued that despite a succession of reforms many problems persisted. As a result many commentators maintained that INEA's work should be restructured because "... if certification rates remain the same -in 1988 only 52,000 primary education and 28,000 secondary education certificates were delivered-, it will take 400 years to end with illiteracy in Mexico" (CEE 1991:9).

The situation of the educational system in Mexico in 1990 is still far from meeting the population's needs. A study recently carried out (CEE 1991) provides some figures which are but a sample of the wider scene:

There are still 4.2 million illiterates, 8% of the population over 15 years. Adults that have not finished primary education total 20,536,000.⁷ Those who have not concluded secondary education add up a total of 16.3 millions (*Ibidem.*).

Similarly, concerning the problem of the quality and equality of the Mexican educational system Guevara (1992:22) points out that in 1990 20% of schools in the country did not offer the full six years of primary education, in spite of the vast efforts made during the last four decades, and only 57% of students successfully passed the final examination after those six years. Guevara considers these figures point up the inequality of school achievement given it is children from poor families who usually fail at their examinations. Moreover, he puts the accent on how there is a different kind of material provision and different academic standards between urban schools and those located in rural areas.

⁷ Guevara (1992:22) talks of 26,000,000.

2.3 Summary

So far we have attempted to provide a picture of how the practice and the scope of nonformal education has evolved since 1920. Special emphasis has been put on some significant attempts in the area of nonformal education, particularly in the rural areas. We have seen how nonformal education has tended to be connected with social and economic processes of the different periods. Educational problems -illiteracy rates, dropping out rates, educational quality, etc.- have stood out continuously as ever present challenges to which the educational system has repeatedly attempted to offer solutions. Many institutions, programmes, and campaigns have been established and launched for this purpose. Statistics reveal educational problems rather related with the quality than with the quantity of education, a problem recently raised in educational research (CEE 1991; Schmelkes 1989) and which is particularly acute in rural and marginal urban areas. Next we focus on this specific sector -the rural areas. Our purpose is to provide a broad picture of the socioeconomic development of the rural sector in Mexico, as the context where community education programmes usually take place.

2.4 Nonformal Education in the rural sector.

2.4.1 The development of the system of agricultural extension (1940-1970).

As was noted earlier, after Cardenas failure to develop a 'socialist' education, with the advent of Avila Camacho in 1940, and more importantly Miguel Aleman in 1946, Mexico adopted a new development model oriented basically towards fostering and consolidating industrialization in Mexico. The strategy meant a change of the policy in the rural sector, and therefore a strategy was chosen that could respond to the needs of new development for manpower, to the increasing deficit in food production, and that could allow this sector to accumulate a surplus to allow industrialization (Esteva 1980).

The agricultural sector was supposed to: 1) provide food and raw materials; 2) generate resources in order to finance the urban and industrial development; 3) provide cheap

manual labour for industrial development; and also 4) maintain a rapidly expanding population, which more than doubled during this period, and which would not be absorbed into the labour force during the course of the industrialization process (Esteva 1980; Hansen 1982).

In order to develop a modern agriculture that could guarantee the production of food and other raw materials the government's strategy was to foster areas mainly in the northwest of Mexico which would be encouraged to develop a considerably higher level of productivity.⁸ It was in those areas that large-scale commercial agriculture was developed through state support. Agricultural activities carried out in the lands of peasant small holders were largely excluded from this process since they were considered unable to contribute productively because of their marginal characteristics. No effort was made to provide them with capital and irrigation (Esteva 1980; Barkin 1984).

Agriculture, as Hewitt (1982:32) states, had at that time a new role "... not as the basis for rural development, but as the pillar for industrial greatness". The objectives of this new strategy "... were not geared to solve the production and social problems of the great majority of the rural population, but towards the need to produce a surplus that could feed the fast emerging cities and to supply industries." It was generally believed that the modernization of agriculture such as was undertaken in the northwest coupled with the promise of better yields stemming from agricultural innovations put into practice through the so-called *Green Revolution*, and could provide that surplus more readily than small-scale producers, i.e. peasant cultivators.⁹

This set the scene for rethinking the role of agricultural and rural education. Agricultural modernization¹⁰ began to require a response from the educational system to new needs

⁸ There was a great concentration of resources (credit, machinery, technical assistance, infrastructure) in privileged areas which led inevitably to the polarization of the agriculture in the country: "between 1936 and 1976 almost the totality of public investment in the agricultural sector was channelled to irrigation...which was concentrated in three main states: Sonora, Sinaloa and Tamaulipas" (Barkin 1984:13).

⁹ The strategy was borne in 1943 when an agreement was signed between the Mexican government and the Rockefeller Foundation. See Hewitt (1982) for an analysis of the agriculture modernization process during that period.

¹⁰ **Agricultural modernization** is understood as the process in which technology and inputs are incorporated into the productive process as a result of the expansion of capitalist production relations

beginning to arise due to changes in agricultural techniques and practices such as: use of inputs, mechanization of work, new techniques, etc., so that producers could be prepared to assimilate technological progress. Modernizing the productive structure became the determining factor of new educational requirements; therefore, providing skills and knowledge was understood as one of the main roles of the educational system (Gomez 1981). As Labarca *et. al.* (1978:31) point out: "... economic development affects the system of education when technological progress imposes activities that generate a demand for qualified manual labour."

Nevertheless, faced with the inability of existing educational institutions and practices to adapt and to respond to the new development model requirements, institutions from the agricultural sector became responsible for this task through 'agricultural extension' (Borsotti 1984; Coombs 1976) as the educational strategy used for providing face-to-face technical assistance (i.e. use of inputs) to improve the production process and yield.

The policy of developing agricultural extension became the chosen means of spreading in the rural sector the results from research conducted at the research centres. It meant as well a support for the use of these technological innovations so that productivity rates could be improved. It was regarded as one of the most important ingredients in the technological package due to its supposed capability to modify peasants' behaviour and attitudes towards the use of new technologies.¹¹

The development of *agricultural extension* as a nonformal education approach (see Chapter I: 2.4) can be set within the framework of the agricultural policy implemented from 1940s. Its conceptualization responded to the modernization process that characterizes a model aimed basically to production and productivity increases based on the incorporation of a technological package. As Torres (1982:203) points out, "... the development of adult education in Latin America was closely related to agrarian reform and agricultural development projects".

¹¹ Leagans and Loomis deal particularly with the topic of behavioral patterns modifications related to agricultural development processes. See: Leagans, J. Paul and Loomis, Charles P. 1971. *Behavioral Change in Agriculture*, USA: Cornell University Press.

It has been argued that *agricultural extension* during this period did not go beyond the productive and economic framework in which it was conceived. It was left as a service granted to an economic agent from whom increases in productivity and therefore in levels of well-being were expected (Mata 1981). It was not conceived of as an educational process to stimulate peasants knowledge and awareness about the different productive and technical possibilities, neither about the advantages and disadvantages coming from the application of different inputs. No importance was given to the fact that "... the operation of technological innovations could be a result of the conscious participation of peasants, that these modifications respond to a learning process of those techniques, and correspond to their conditions and needs" (ISEAC 1983:57).

2.4.2 Nonformal education. Its role within the new strategy (1970 onwards).

The strategy carried out from 1940 brought an unprecedented increase in agricultural production, higher than the level of the population growth; a stage known as the '*Mexican miracle*': from 1935 agricultural production raised to a 4.4% rate per year (quoted by Hansen 1982:81). Nonetheless, the strategy ran out of steam by 1965, a date agreed by many authors as the moment when the agricultural crisis showed its first signs (Barkin 1985). From being a dynamic element of the economy from 1940 to 1965, the agricultural sector turned into an obstacle to a sustained social and economic growth: from 1965 to 1976 there was a reduction of 2.2 millions hectares within seasonally cultivated areas because of the unequal support granted to the countryside during that period (Knochenhauer 1980:17). This situation was clearly a threat to the process of capital accumulation at the heart of government policy.

By 1965 the post-1940 strategy was no longer able to provide adequate food supplies for the growing population, and had not been able to absorb the increasingly urbanized labour force which had migrated from rural areas in unexpectedly large numbers; finally, it had failed to provide resources sufficient to maintain small-scale rural production at a high enough level to provide foods which only that sector can produce or to prevent the large-scale immigration to urban areas which was rapidly undermining any type of

overall progress (Esteva 1980; Barkin and Suarez 1985). That is, agricultural policy led to what was defined by many authors as a social and economic crisis in the rural sector. As Tello (1982:14) points out, "... meeting medical, sanitary, housing and educational services had a delay of several decades already."

Low levels of agricultural productivity were then not the only signs of the crisis in the rural sector. The lack of adequate services added to the relative impoverishment of the rural population and the lack of alternatives exacerbates the situation. According to analysts the point was reached where peasant families could no longer reproduce their manual labour (Barkin 1984; Rello 1981; Gomez Oliver 1978).

By 1970 the problem was felt acutely and that year marks a watershed characterized by a decisive shift in agricultural and later agriculturally related educational policies. During the Echeverria presidency (1970-1976) policy shifted back to support for the *ejidos* and emphasised the importance of maintaining and developing the rural community. In face of a loss of food self-sufficiency, a growing social instability, and an increased deterioration of living standards among rural population, one of the policies which grew out of the new strategy was to increase the production of cereal crops by small-scale producers.¹²

The new policy aimed to incorporate the countryside into the capital accumulation process.¹³ Therefore, it meant a process where the organization of agriculture had to be made more efficient.

The solution was envisaged as coming through the implementation of a new economic policy for the countryside by making available resources such as: credit, inputs

¹² The new policy coincided with the opinion expressed in 1973 by McNamara, president of the World Bank, when he proposed to orient the 'green revolution' strategy towards seasonal agriculture.

¹³ McNamara points out that "the programme of the World Bank will put emphasis primarily, not on the distribution of incomes and wealth, but on the increase of productivity of the poor" (Carty 1981:226). The emphasis by international organizations on rural development during this period points towards the modernization of rural society, and to the transformation of peasant economy into a commercial capitalist agriculture, something which locks up the small producer inside a system of agricultural businesses as a consumer of agricultural inputs (seeds, fertilizers, machinery, technology, etc.).

(fertilizers), machinery, etc.,¹⁴ with the purpose of increasing small-holders production of cereals through providing them a minimum capitalization.

Programmes implemented during the 1970s placed more emphasis on the economic and productive aspects than on the social and cultural contents. Even if the agricultural development strategy was modified in 1970, leading to a change in the functions and nature of nonformal education, the trend remained the same:

"... the trend is modified in terms of zones and rural people given priority by training activities but the developmentalist and technocratic focus is still not modified" (ISEAC 1983:67).

As was noted earlier (Chapter I: 2.2) the difficulty that the formal education system had in satisfying particular educational needs of the rural population (Schmelkes 1982), in addition that the provision of formal education was not only expensive but it was too slow, turned nonformal education into one of the alternatives for compensating for deficiencies of formal education and for solving problems which had arisen from previous policies (Schmelkes 1989). It was argued the advantage of nonformal education was that it could have a more immediate and deeper effect (Simkins 1977). Nonformal education programmes were looked at as important means to improve living standards. It was argued that nonformal education could:

1. provide general basic education for job opportunities which formal education was not able to provide.
2. provide peasants with technical training to carry out of productive activities.
3. foster among the peasants social awareness and an ideological basis.
4. combine sociopolitical reorganization with training and conscientization (Martinez 1982).

¹⁴ In terms of credit Gordillo (1979:12) comments on the extraordinary role credit had for the countryside during the 1970-1976 period. It raised to ninety thousand million pesos, more than the double than credits granted from 1936 to 1970.

The emphasis given to rural nonformal education from 1970 can be understood within this framework, therefore, as a support to the new strategy of development in the rural sector. This fact gave nonformal education a compensatory character, counteracting a number of social and economic dis-equilibriums which had come up from the model of development implemented from 1940 to 1970. Agricultural training, as a form of nonformal education, turned out to be one of the mechanisms to reinforce the processes geared towards agricultural transformation through offering rural people knowledge and skills that could allow them to improve production conditions and offering means for their socioeconomic development (Schmelkes 1984).

The emergence and development of nonformal education was meant to act as a support for the introduction of the new modernization strategy, and as a factor of consensus facing the discontent shown by the growing peasant organizations during the 1970s.¹⁵ Just as Fuentes Molinar (1983:14) points out: "... crisis or no crisis, the State can not abandon its role as public educator".

From 1970 to 1976 there was a renewed emphasis on peasant organization becoming a new subject in nonformal education courses. This emphasis was a response to the State's stated policy on productive organization as the necessary requirement to achieve rural development. Training was conceived of as the *sine qua non* element in this process:

"... not until the 1970's the organization and training of small property, community, and *ejidos* producers became again the State's main concern in order to reorganize the rural economy and therefore to overcome the causes and consequences of the crisis" (SRA 1979:42).

This major concern led to the creation in 1972 of the Master Plan of Organization and Training of Peasants (*Plan Maestro de Organizacion y Capacitacion Campesina*). The Plan stated the need of collectivization of *ejidos* with the purpose of rendering them the economic, social and political features they had during the Cardenas presidential period (1934-1940) when a collectivization campaign in the rural areas was carried out. As a

¹⁵ See Bartra, Armando. 1978. '*Notas sobre el movimiento campesino 1970-1976*', Mexico: Macehual, for an analysis of the development and context of emergence of growing state-independent peasant organizations during the 1970s.

result of it many ejidos were collectivized during those days.

However, even if the need to increase the productivity of the rural sector was emphasized from 1970 to 1976, the petroleum crisis at the beginning of the 1980's together with the critical food self-efficiency background, demanded additional urgent measures and a new emphasis on agricultural policies. Hence the SAM (Mexican Food System -*Sistema Alimentario Mexicano*) was launched in 1980 with the aim of increasing agricultural productivity levels.¹⁶ The new policy encouraged the productive organization in the rural sector stemming from the fact that peasant's agriculture had always been considered as an obstacle to rural development because of its poor resources, lack of techniques, modern tools and machinery, and an appropriate organization to generate enough production (SRA 1979). The emphasis was set within the context of the 'Alliance for Production' (*Alianza para la Produccion*) -as a strategy of the Mexican State which in the countryside was meant to be considered an answer to the agricultural crisis.

In this sense, Gomez (1981:23) highlights "... the interest of the State in promoting the organization of peasants as a means to control social movements in the rural sector, develop a domestic market, and acquire a social basis that may allow it to negotiate and channel class contradictions generally to the benefit of the class that controls the means of production."¹⁷ It has been argued that the new interest of the State in peasant organization in the late 1970s was not merely economic. It was also political. Anchored in State's clientelism, a number of organizations that were created turned into important links between the State and a vast sector of the population (Gordillo 1979).

As a result of the new policy new contents in the rural nonformal education curriculum (accounting, administration, marketing, etc.), different areas (small holding areas and

¹⁶ From being a self-sufficient maize producer, from 1970 Mexico began to import increasing amounts of this cereal. Petroleum, as the main export product of the country, began to suffer the falling prices in the late 1970s.

¹⁷ On the link between organizations and the State, Carlos Pereyra (1979:4) states that "the key to understand how the mexican political system works is to be found in corporativism as the axis of the relations between the State and the society (...) practically there is not a single segment of the civil society which has not been converted into an extension of the State apparatus."

ejidos), and new clients (small holders and peasants) developed. However, programmes still lacked the integration needed between the educational processes and a rural development programme whose main purpose was aimed at the transformation of the social, economic and political relations of the rural social units. At the end the social and organizational components of the new policy were subordinated to the productive and political aims of government plans and policies. As an example, in 1981 "out of 86 rural training programmes of different government institutions, 47 aimed exclusively at increases in productivity; 19 were oriented to social services, and only 3 aimed to strengthen peasants' organization level and their ability for political negotiation" (ISEAC 1983).

Agricultural training was regarded as an important instrument for the adoption of new technological innovations, machinery, inputs, credit, etc., as well as for the introduction of a new economic rationale that could match the emphasis on productivity put forward by the new agricultural plans and policies. Few options were left to the peasant in terms of deciding between accepting or refusing a technological package and about its advantages and disadvantages. Peasants were left out of the decision-making process about when and how to work their lands, thus they "... lost the control over the productive process, and remained subordinated to decisions taken by the official bank" (ISEAC 1983:24).¹⁸

Hence, as a result of falling living standards and a rural population severely damaged by the social and economic situation already said¹⁹ nonformal education in the 1970's was seen to be a means to reach a vast impoverished sector of the population, and to help in the areas of basic needs such as health, nutrition, housing, etc.

¹⁸ The basic traits of most productive units in the country imposes severe limits to the success of the modernization process. Schejtman (1982) shows that 83% of peasants' units do not produce enough to guarantee their reproduction needs, and even if they were provided with the best of technical options they do not have the potential of becoming food self-sustained.

¹⁹ By 1970 social indicators showed that 48.1% of the rural population lived in dwellings of one room; only 38% lived in homes with electricity; 30% did not eat meat or eggs even once a week (1970 National Census). Tello (1982:17, relying on the 1970 Census) points out that education, nutrition, housing, and social security indicators reflect clearly the prevailing unequal income distribution by 1970: 50% of families with the lowest income received 15% of the available personal income, whereas 10% of families with the highest income received 51% of the income.

At the same time, nonformal education programmes also emphasised vocational training. Courses were developed and channelled to the rural areas by 1976. They were intended to help overcome rural and urban unemployment and underemployment through developing skills and knowledge required by such work as carpentry, metal working, electricity, etc. (Schmelkes and Narro 1988).²⁰ Nonetheless, as Pinto suggests, "... they were created to make up for the lack of schooling and education" with the aim of "... increasing the productivity of a worker whose fate is to be linked to paid work" (Pinto 1982:274). Some of these programmes, together with those dealing with housing improvement and domestic work, have been labelled by a number of institutions as *community education* under the assumption that they have the potential to integrate members of the community to productive activities and constitute a mechanism to increase social participation (see above; also Chapter III: 1 and VI: 5.1).

With a different emphasis, depending on levels of social and economic support, from the 1920s community education programmes have remained present in the rural sector. It seems that although not much emphasis has been put on them compared to programmes concerned with the agricultural sector or with technical abilities for industrial work, community education courses have always been provided for the population.

Programmes such as the Cultural Missions and the activity of the Ministry of Education constitute evidence of the kind of education that the State promotes in the rural sector in face of deficiencies of the formal education system to attack specific problems from the rural areas. They are sometimes based on the assumption that domestic and training courses may be more relevant to peasants than basic education might. Following sections of this chapter concentrate on the importance given to this area of nonformal education.

²⁰ For the development of technical and vocational education in Mexico see Padua (1984).

SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRENDS AND NONFORMAL EDUCATIONAL MAJOR PRACTICES AND POLICIES (1921-1980).

Table 1

PERIODS	SOCIO-ECONOMIC TREND	EDUCATIONAL EMPHASIS	EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE	NONFORMAL EDUCATION EMPHASIS
1921-1934 Post-Revolutionary Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social and economic reorganization in light of conflicting revolutionary aims. - Strengthening State control - Emphasis on national unity and values. - Civil War. - The Calles Settlement 	<p>The process of providing education to the general population begins, supported by ideas shared by groups involved in the revolutionary process, and from the lack of educational provision in the rural areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasis on 'Socialist Education'. - Concern about the social and political needs of the population. - Development of technical education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural Missions - Rural Schools - Escuelas Regionales Campesinas - House of the Indigenous Student 	<p>There is a strong concern with community development. Through the Cultural Missions, Nonformal education accomplishes a social, economic and political role.</p>
1934-1940 The Cardenas Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Major organization of the political system with the institution of the National Revolutionary Party. - Social and economic reforms setting the ground for more equitable social and economic development. 	<p>Initial emphasis on the developmentalist characteristics of education.</p> <p>Rural education emphasis is diminished and urban education is taken as a model.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peasant Regional Schools - Centres of Indigenous Education - Cultural Missions 	<p>Integrated practice of nonformal education where social and political emphasis mixes with a developing technical orientation.</p>
1940-1970	<p>Attempt at coherent industrialization and the modernization of agriculture constitute some of the basic features of the model of development implemented during this period.</p>	<p>Particular emphasis on agricultural nonformal education and on rural organization facing low productivity levels and low living standards among population in the rural areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CREFAL - Fundamental Education Regional Centres. - Cultural Missions re-launched in 1948. - National Literacy Campaigns - National Law on Literacy (1940s) - Plan de Once Años 	<p>Education is imbued by the human capital approach. Rural areas are subordinated within the developmentalist strategy. Social emphasis decreases with a declining priority of rural education. Community education assumes a compensatory role.</p>
1970-1980	<p>Poor social and economic indicators as a result of the strategy of development implemented from 1940 to 1970 led to put emphasis on revitalizing the economy and the relation State-society.</p>	<p>Nonformal education is fostered in the rural areas in order to support productive organization and introduction of technological packages. The educational emphasis is on productivity and on vocational and community education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Law of Education for Adults. - Development of agricultural institutions and rural nonformal education. - DIF Programme initiates this decade. - Basic Education Centres for Adults (CEBAS) established in 1971. 	<p>Nonformal education economic role is stressed in order to counteract problems derived from previous policies and in order to incorporate the rural areas into the national mainstream.</p>
1980-1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The State goes through the worst contemporary state financial crisis, in addition to a reduction in oil prices, and insufficient agricultural production. - The SAM (Mexican Food System) is launched in 1980 as a major social and economic programme addressed to the rural areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Numerous institutions launch programmes on nonformal education in the rural sector. - PRONALF, later the National Institute for Adult Education (INEA). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Predominant technical and productive emphasis. - Community education continues assuming a compensatory role unable to constitute a means for social development, and with a poor link with the labour market. 	

2.4.3 The Institutional Background.

In terms of agricultural education the 1970s were characterized by the sudden emergence of technical level and higher education institutions geared to agricultural education,²¹ the proliferation of national, international, public and private organizations running training programmes; and the unprecedented development of agricultural training and extension services (Torres 1990; Castillo *et. al.* 1982; Coombs 1976; Latapi 1985). The state of rural nonformal education revealed different characteristics from those of previous years when lack of appropriate methodologies, and insufficiency of programmes typified this form of education:

The General Department of Agricultural Extension (*Direccion General de Extension Agricola*) was created in 1971 with more personnel and more financial resources than previous institutions: in 1970 there were 764 people responsible for extension activities; at the end of 1975 the number had increased to 4,500 middle and high level technicians who were incorporated in rural development programmes (Mata 1981). By 1979, the new Department of Production and Agricultural Extension (*Direccion de Produccion y Extension Agricola*) had already 6,000 people dedicated to agricultural extension activities. The renewed emphasis on small-scale production brought about the dispersion of personnel in the different regions, trying to reach places so far forgotten within rural development programmes.

Rural training ceased to be the exclusive domain of the Ministry of Agriculture and Hydrologic Resources (*Secretaria de Agricultura y Recursos Hidraulicos -SARH*). Some other institutions were created at the beginning of the decade such as the National Institute for Agricultural Training (*Instituto Nacional para la Capacitacion Agropecuaria -INCA*), and the Trust for the Training and Organization of Peasants (*Fideicomiso para la Organizacion y Capacitacion Campesina -FOCC*). These institutions were concerned with educational activities oriented to foster and support social and productive

²¹ Gómez, J. *et. al.* 1981. *Multinacionales y Educación Agropecuaria*, Revista Textual # 5-6, UACH, México, emphasizes the role of higher education in terms of agricultural development.

organizations in the rural sector.

Likewise, in 1973 the National Programme of Agricultural Development in Seasonal Areas (Programa Nacional para el Desarrollo Agrícola de las Areas de Temporal - PRONDAAT) was established in order to implement the Plan Puebla²² in different regions of the country. Institutions like the Ministry of the Agrarian Reform (Secretaria de la Reforma Agraria -SRA), National Commission for Fruitgrowing (Comision Nacional para la Fruticultura -CONAFRUT), National Centre of Productivity (Centro Nacional de la Productividad -CENAPRO), among others, began to carry out educational activities in the rural sector.

Trying to extend and bring programmes such as the SAM, the Ejidos Commercialization Support Programme (Programa de Apoyo a la Comercializacion Ejidal -PACE), the National Programme for Integrated Rural Development (Programa Nacional para el Desarrollo Rural Integral -PRONADRI), and government supports, such as credit, agriculture insurance, etc., to the attention of potential users was another important aspect stressed by training programmes since 1970. However, educational work on these aspects has been regarded mostly as mere dissemination of information with no importance given to the need of peasants to evaluate and analyze programmes' limits and benefits, nor to criticisms and opinions of those for whom the programmes are planned. Rural training, almost non-existent before 1970 became part of the daily activities of many institutions; nowadays almost 60 institutions carry out training activities within the rural sector (ISEAC 1983; Schmelkes 1982; Latapi 1982).

3. THE PRESENT SITUATION OF NONFORMAL EDUCATION.

The purpose of this section is to provide a picture of the current state of nonformal education in terms both of the areas which are dealt with and of the institutions and programmes devoted to each specific area.

²² The Plan Puebla had been implemented previously in the State of Puebla. The programme was aimed at improving productivity levels in maize production.

Nonformal education in Mexico is currently concerned with five main areas. Within each area there are a group of different institutions which carry out a number of programmes.

A. Basic Education and Literacy

This area is the one to which adult education pays more attention. Programmes are carried out by the Educational System and by the National Institute for Adult Education (*Instituto Nacional para la Educacion de los Adultos -INEA*). Adult Basic Education Centres (*Centros de Educacion Basica de Adultos -CEBAS*) are some of the sites where this activity takes place, in addition to the activity developed by INEA in the communities.

B. Agricultural Extension

There are many institutions devoted to nonformal agricultural educational programmes and which have training departments in this area. Programmes aim fundamentally at increasing production and productivity levels in the agricultural sector through increasing producers's technical skills, and through the promotion of the social and productive organization of peasants. Among them, SARH, SRA, National Commission for Popular Subsistence (*Comision Nacional de Subsistencias Populares -CONASUPO*), etc. The Ministry of Fishing offers as well training courses for fishing workers. The General Department of Technological and Agricultural Training (*Direccion General de Educacion Tecnologica Agropecuaria DGETA*) is not a primary sector institution but a department of the Ministry of Public Education which also carries courses within this area. All these institutions have a team of extensionists and technicians who carry out regular visits to particular areas in the countryside in order to provide technical and credit assistance.

C. Community Education

There are several institutions which are concerned with this area:

a) **Cultural Missions.**

As we have already noted this programme has a long history in Mexico and has survived. The operational strategy consists of a team of teachers who stay in a community for a period of two years and who offer training in areas such as domestic and skill-upgrading courses. They provide as well -through personnel from the CEBAS- basic education assistance for adults who want to finish their basic education or who want to enrol on literacy courses. The objective of the Cultural Missions is to promote the social, economic and cultural advancement of rural communities in order to encourage individual and collective development. Community development is fostered through vocational training, literacy courses, basic education, recreation and cultural activities. The missionaries become promoters of integrated community development and form links between the school, the local authorities, the work place, the institutions and the home. Sometimes they collaborate in works intended to be for the benefit of the community.

b) **INEA (Community Education Programme)²³**

The programme is addressed to localities ranging between 500 and 2,500 inhabitants, and to people over 15 years. It is intended to foster the organization and participation of adults in activities that seek the benefit of the community.

The area of community education is conceived of as a form of group education that is meant to promote the participation of the community. It aims fundamentally at

²³ INEA launched two other programs at the National Level: Cultural Promotion and For-the-Job Training. In 1985, these two programs were merged into one, now called Community Education. Since may 1988 the 'culture halls' project turned into the 'community education centres'.

implementing and creating nonformal education programmes oriented to the material and social benefit of communities where these programmes take place. It tends to provide educational contents and techniques that may provoke the participation of active groups within the community, and foster collective community actions together with the public, private and social sector.

The Community Education Programme of INEA is implemented through several ways. However, it is important to note that not all the forms comprised by the Community Education Area of INEA operate successfully, or even operate within some regions. The following constitute these ambitious strategies as they are contemplated in INEA's objectives. The reality may remain far from these ideals. The research deals particularly with this matter.

* **Community Education Centres (*Centros de Educacion Comunitaria* -CEC):** These centres are located within the rural sector. Centres are concerned with setting up an integrated educational service that may link the different activities addressed to the adult population; they are meant to become real community meeting centres where training courses, basic education and cultural activities can be provided and enjoyed. The centres are run by a community committee and by a social promoter who is paid by INEA. INEA provides as well educational material for the implementation of community workshops, and books which are intended as a source for reading and consulting facilities for the community.

* **Meeting Points:** these are designated basically for urban areas. Their intention is to provide spaces to organize activities aimed at improving the living standards of the community.

* **Education and recreation camps:** camps offer different educational options through workshops within the area of health, literacy, domestic work, for-the-job training, etc. This activity is available in temporary population concentrations of more than 100 migrant workers where the working season is three months or longer.

* **Community workshops:** Workshops are organized training courses not constrained by a formal curriculum which are intended to meet the needs of rural communities. They are equipped with the minimum technological resources for the production of goods and services intended for local or community consumption. Technological resources are provided by INEA, by institutions from the private or public sector, or by the community. There is a Community Committee responsible for getting a physical space - usually the CEC-, coordinating different activities for the workshops, and their financial administration. Workshops consist basically of an appropriate venue, a package of multiple-use tools, and simple machinery for the production of goods and services.

As will be noted in Chapter VI these workshops were selected within the sample of programmes examined during the field work.

* **Popular Theatre:** this project is meant to be carried out in the areas where INEA operates. The basic aim is to develop a theatre experience among people in the community, and through it give them an opportunity to reflect upon daily life problems.

* **Training for the creation of employment opportunities:** these are short courses designed with the aim of creating stable occupations to help solve some of the economic problems of the communities.

* **Productive Units:** Both rural and urban marginal populations are served by these units. A manufacturing project is carried out with financial support, after a preliminary viability study has been undertaken.

c) **The Mexican Institute for Social Welfare** (*Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social - IMSS*).

Its training programmes are designed for the marginal sectors of the population. There are 108 units with 336 workshops and 356 full-time instructors. Recently it has oriented its courses towards training for self-employment. It offers 27 courses on industrial and service training, four on crafts, and three on income protection. The admission

requirements are: being older than 13 years of age and being literate and competent in the four arithmetic operations. Courses last three months and there are classes for 6 hours every week.²⁴

d) **The National System for the Integral Development of the Family** (*Sistema Nacional para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia -DIF*).

The Community Development Programme (*Programa de Desarrollo de la Comunidad*) operates autonomously in each one of the States of the country. Its objective is to promote the development of the communities by training people in technical and sporting aspects, and thereby improving the social, economic, cultural and physical conditions of the individual. Courses are in domestic activities, secretarial skills and for-the-job training. Some courses are offered in auto-mechanics, carpentry and industrial sewing, but without workshops.²⁵ This programme is a leading one in the area of community education; it runs many courses and covers a large space.

The Mobile Network (*Red Movi*) is a federal programme. It is a major programme of DIF, although it is run in a different way than the Community Development Centres because it is based upon the presence of social promoters (mainly women) in communities (one per community) during a six month period in highly marginal and isolated communities. This makes a significant difference when compared with other programmes in terms of the contact that can be achieved between social promoter and the community. Communities chosen must have marginal conditions with problems that may be solved by means of the promoter's educational activity. The areas are similar to those dealt with other programmes (clothes making, knitting, cooking). DIF-Mobile Network supports its social promoters with periodical food supplies and a minimum amount of furniture (a cooker and a bed). The programme also provides training courses and tutoring to meet community special training needs concerned with the home improvement programme (painting walls, raising stoves).

²⁴ Figures were taken from (Schmelkes & Narro 1988).

²⁵ The implementation of workshops is coordinated with other institutions.

e) **Department for the Education of Adults** (*Departamento de Educacion de Adultos - DEA*).

This is a department of the Ministry of Public Education (*Secretaria de Educacion Publica -SEP*) and provides courses within the areas of domestic work, for-the-job training (secretarial skills, electricity, auto-mechanics). The DEA labels its training programme as job training. It intends to provide labour training opportunities to males and females population over 15 years. Courses are regarded as training alternatives that do not guarantee a job to the students, but provide them with elements to increase their economic resources and therefore improve their living standards as possible.

f) **Culture Centres** (*Salas de Cultura*): these centres are quite similar to the 'community education centres' of INEA. They are oriented to the improvement of community life through reading sessions and support of a group of specialists. The programme is concerned with fostering knowledge and skills demanded by the community and deemed necessary for its development. The Centre acts as a promoter of cultural, social and recreation activities, and supports basic education programmes. Centres are considered a responsibility of both the State and the community. Technical tutoring, financing, and equipment are provided by the State through the National Council for the Promotion of Education (*Consejo Nacional para el Fomento Educativo - CONAFE*); the activity of the community is supported by a social promoter, while the community contributes with a physical space and furniture.

D. Health Education

The Ministry of Health and Welfare (*Secretaria de Salubridad y Asistencia -SSA*) is the main agency responsible for courses and talks within the area of nutrition, vaccination, medical assistance, etc.

E. Training

Training in Mexico may be divided into 'for-the-job training' and 'on-the-job training'. The former kind is subdivided into formal and nonformal education.²⁶

A study conducted by INEA in 1985 aimed to determine the national supply of training courses for the informal sector of the economy. It revealed that a total of 156 different institutions offer this type of training in 26 states of the country, 90% of which are in the public sector. Only 3% belong to the private and social sectors respectively. Moreover, among the courses given, only 40% offer for-the-job training courses. The remainder were for family welfare (40%), recreation (9%), and for civic and political participation (11%) (Schmelkes and Narro 1988:254).

a) **For-the-job training:** Nonformal for-the-job training may be defined as education oriented to adults wishing to be trained in some technique about which they do not have a previous knowledge. These programmes are usually addressed to people who have had no access to the higher levels of the formal educational system. It must be noted that many programmes which provide community education courses include among their range of subjects, what they call 'for-the-job training' courses. Here, courses are usually regarded as enhancing competence in activities not precisely linked to the labour market.

* Ministry of Labour and Social Security (*Secretaria del Trabajo y Prevision Social*). This institution operates a service called 'Scholarships for the Training for Workers' (*Programa de Becas para la Capacitacion de los Trabajadores PROBECAT*). The training system is based on scholarships (the minimum salary) for a period of three months which are paid to unemployed young people who want to be trained in different

²⁶ Formal education for-the-job training is the responsibility of the National Educational System, and specifically of the National Technological Educational System. This form of education was conducted by the Ministry of Public Education through the Job Training Centres and the Skill Training Centres at a basic level. At a secondary level there are terminal options in areas such as agriculture, industry, fishing, and services. Finally, at high school level, there are schools that offer both the possibility of continuing to higher levels of education and terminal options, as well as schools that offer only terminal options (CONALEP: National Council of Popular Education. *Consejo Nacional de Educacion Popular*). Technical education at this level has grown considerably during the past few years. Registration in CONALEP has evolved from 3,900 students in 1979-80, to 19,087 in 1980-81, to 72,847 in 1982-83 (Schmelkes & Narro 1988). See Padua (1984) for a detailed analysis of this area of education in the Mexican context.

skill-upgrading courses and then be linked with labour market opportunities. Students are directed to various programmes and channelled further to different job posts.

b) **On-the-job training:** The Ministry of Labour is responsible for this sort of training. Companies are particularly concerned with this sort of training and offer special courses to their personnel, either as induction/preparation courses or on-the-job courses.

4. SUMMARY.

This last section has been concerned with the development of agricultural education from 1940 to the 1980s. We have described the emphasis on agricultural policies in this period and shown how agricultural extension, as a form of nonformal education, was encouraged in order to respond to new requirements originating from the modernization strategy. We then provided a picture of the social and economic situation in the rural sector in the 1970s, putting emphasis on the priority given to self-sufficiency in food production and on the new strategy implemented in the rural areas with the purpose of revitalizing the economic role and the social conditions of the agricultural sector. Finally, a description was provided of the emergence and development of institutions and programmes devoted to nonformal education in the rural sector after the 1970s as a sign of the new emphasis on this sort of programmes during this decade. At the end a list of the different areas where work is being done was given in order to give a picture of the current situation of nonformal education.

II. NONFORMAL EDUCATION IN THE STATE OF MEXICO

This part deals with the development of nonformal education in the State of Mexico. It starts with a socio-economic framework of the state and then goes to a general account of education in the State of Mexico. Our purpose is to account for the development of rural nonformal education in this region from 1940 and to stress its specific regional characteristics. An analysis of the main programmes being implemented during this period is given together with an assessment of the development of institutional attempts. Finally, this part concludes with an analysis of the general features of rural nonformal education in the State.

5. THE REGIONAL FRAMEWORK: THE STATE OF MEXICO.

The State of Mexico is located at the geographical centre of the Mexican Republic. It comprises the Valley of Toluca and the most important part of the Valley of Mexico. It surrounds Mexico City, except for the southern part (see Map). It is a very heterogeneous state, with many differences in climate, population, economic and social development, ethnic minorities, etc., among the different regions. The Valley of Toluca has a low density of population with some favourable agricultural conditions where maize is the main crop. The southern part of the State, where climatic conditions are better because of lower altitudes, permits more diversified productive activities such as fruit production, horticulture, and cattle raising.

The State of Mexico is the most industrialized one after the Federal District, although, paradoxically, is one of the most important maize producers in the country, even though it covers only 1% of the Mexican Republic. The peasant sector is one of the most important in the country: 95% of its 233,876 agricultural productive units may be considered to be small-scale peasant holdings (Schejtman 1982:118-119). They contributed in 1985 16% of total maize production (Appendini 1988:201) and occupied about 80% of the State's cultivated land.

THE STATE OF MEXICO



Economic and population growth in the State of Mexico have been rapid during the last years compared with other states of the country. According to the Census, by 1990 already 12.1% of the country's population lived in the State. These changes have had an impact as well in terms of the composition of the State of Mexico's working class. This came as a result of the 'stabilizer development policies' (*Políticas para el desarrollo estabilizador*) which focused on imports substitution and on the consolidation of the productive infrastructure. The policy led to migration towards the centre of the Mexican Republic, where industrialization was occurring in a rather concentrated and unbalanced form. The newly created industrial centres demanded enormous amounts of manual labour from the countryside.

Due to this process, the State of Mexico has experienced a rapid and intense transformation, more than any other state in the country because its territory adjoins the City of Mexico. As a result there has been a decrease in agricultural lands in the Valley of Mexico; currently massive population concentration are found in areas contiguous to the city of Mexico and they are now for all intents and purposes a part of Mexico City. The state, which was mainly rural just three decades ago, is now predominantly urban: by 1950 73.6% of the population lived in the rural sector, in 1970 it was as low as 37.7%. There has been a move towards industrial and service industries and even if the agricultural sector is still important, it has become less important than the industrial. The industrial sector in the State of Mexico, as a result of this concentrating process, is one of the largest in the country: in 1980 it generated 43.1% of the state's gross product (Gobierno del Estado de Mexico 1984).

Changes have come as a consequence of migrating population searching for employment and better opportunities. One of the most important modifications can be evidenced in the move of the agricultural working population to other sectors. One of the most important changes has been the move of the primary sector contribution to the State GDP, which fell from 40% in 1940 to 4% in 1980 (Rodriguez 1990).

The State of Mexico, because of its closeness to Mexico City, is greatly affected by the great amount of economic activity which is concentrated there. Its location, though, not

only has had a positive economic impact but also an impact in terms of the State's unbalanced and unequal development. Population, industry and urban services (electricity, sewage, etc.) were concentrated in a very reduced area close to the City of Mexico. In 1980, 63% of the population growth was concentrated in 17 municipalities around Mexico City, out of a total of 121 in the state.

The change from a predominantly rural State to one which was basically urban with high levels of industrialization meant an increase in the level of social service provisions. Large rural areas can still be found in the state with low densities of population, low socioeconomic levels, limited social services, and a predominant primary sector devoted to maize cultivation as part of what is basically a peasant agriculture. But there are also urban areas with high living standards and good social services. The picture is of a highly developed state with tremendous social and economic inequalities. Therefore, it is not possible to consider the region as homogeneous but rather as a region with deep and serious social and economic inequalities. Amongst the municipalities three clusters can be distinguished (Szasz 1990):

- a) First, there is a first group of municipalities with a *high level of development* which is located to the north and northeast part of Mexico City. These municipalities represented 4.9% of the State's area but contained 60% of the population in 1980.
- b) The municipalities with a *medium low level of development* comprise 40% of the municipalities in the State, but their population only amounts to 13.5% of the State's total. Within this group activities are mainly agricultural and the working population comprises 50% of the total agricultural working population in the State.
- c) Finally, 23% of the agricultural working population is concentrated in municipalities with a *relatively low level of development*. Within these municipalities more than 75% of the population is concentrated in primary sector activities. There was a decrease in agricultural working population from 1970 to 1980, a phenomenon which has led to this area being considered an 'expulsion' zone. Municipalities included within this category comprise 55% of the State's area.

According to the 1990 National Census the State of Mexico has one of the highest net migration percentages in the country (migration into the state), 34%, only surpassed by border states like Quintana Roo and Baja California.

The percentage of houses with water is 85.1%, with electricity 93.8%, and with drainage 74%. An average of 75% of houses are built with solid roofs and walls.

Its economic growth from 1970 to 1990 was 4.8%, only surpassed by Quintana Roo, (8.9%). Population density in the State is the second highest in the country, 457 people/km², only surpassed by the Federal District. In 1990, 84.4% of the population was classified as urban, and 15.6% as rural. It is the 5th. state in the country in terms of the size of the urban population.

The employment rate is 97%. Of that percentage, 68.9% are employees and workers, 5.7% day labourers, and 19% work on their own. Only 8.7% of the working population is located in the primary sector (the weight of the state's primary sector is the lowest in the country nowadays). The percentages for the industrial and service sectors are 36.8% and 50.9% respectively.

These statistics might misrepresent the social and economic reality of most regions of the State. The differences between urban and rural areas in terms of economic activities and population does not permit us to form a reliable view.

It is only in municipalities classified as *highly developed* that literacy levels and public services provision are higher than the national levels, whereas in *medium* and *low developed* municipalities (which occupy the largest area in the State), levels are certainly lower and mark the State as an area where urban development and welfare levels still remain low (Szasz 1990). These areas still demand more attention in terms of social and economic provision to fill gaps which for long time have been present among the rural population and which evidence social and economic inequality in the State.

6. AN OVERVIEW OF EDUCATION IN THE STATE OF MEXICO

The social and economic changes the State of Mexico experienced from 1940 had a pronounced effect on the educational system. Its economic growth and migration rate were such that large sectors of the population sought jobs and services. Educational growth has also been stimulated by this process, together with the demand of educational services by a growing population making greater and more specific demands such as technical and vocational education.

Between 1970 and 1983, both the primary and secondary education systems grew very fast: student numbers increased from 763,364 students in 1970 to 2,405,333 during 1982-1983. There was as well a 168.9% increase in the number of schools (2,850 to 7,665), and the number of teachers grew from 20,642 to 74,149 (Gobierno del Estado de México 1984).

Despite this significant growth the educational sector still reveals important deficiencies in terms of the provision and nature of its services, the areas where they are located, level of responsiveness to increasing new social needs, and requirements of specialized manual labour by the productive sector.

Educational provision has inevitably followed the same trend as social and economic development in terms of the unequal distribution of services. Therefore, educational services have concentrated mainly in places where demographic concentration is higher, such as the regions of Toluca, Texcoco and Zumpango. This unequal distribution matches the similar unequal distribution of income and employment in some regions of the State as it has been noted earlier.

Change in levels of literacy and schooling rates show the signs of the transformation that the State went through from 1960. Illiteracy levels fell from 40% to 10% between 1960 and 1982 (Gobierno del Estado de Mexico 1984). Pre-school education grew between 1970 and 1990 from 30,000 to 250,000 students. Despite this growth during the early 80s, only 47 out of 100 children between 4 and 5 years old were enrolled at this level

in 1990. At primary level, 92 out of 100 children between 6 and 12 years old were registered in the six primary grades (Aguado 1991).

The dynamic expansion process that the educational system went between 1950 and 1980 slowed down during the 1980s. Offering education at all levels is still a problem to which the educational system in the State of Mexico has no solution: the schooling system does not provide for 50% of the potential population within pre-school and secondary levels nowadays (*Ibidem.*). Even if primary education opportunities have been extended to reach more than 90% of the State's area, there are still many rural and marginated areas where educational services reveal serious deficiencies.

Educational deficiencies and problems in the State of Mexico include: low completion and high drop out rates, low quality and lack of relevance of curriculum, serious problems in terms of infrastructural supports (didactic materials, buildings), inequality in how economic resources are distributed among the different areas, etc. (*Ibidem.*).

This picture stresses why, compared with previous years, it is not a problem of covering or offering educational services, but a problem which is revealed basically in terms of educational inequality, referred basically to the unequal distribution of educational services among the different sectors of the population. The expansion of education did not remove inequality. It seems that the more marginalized the population the more delayed is their access to educational services. Currently educational margination is more a product of qualitative factors than a problem of educational provision (CEE 1991; Schmelkes 1989). The need to pay attention to regional differences and their possible effect in terms of schooling levels and academic performance stems from this.²⁷

Finally, by 1990 the percentage of illiterates in the population over 15 grew by 9% (approximately half a million people), while at national level it was 12.4% (approximately six millions). The percentage of the population between 6 and 14 years which attends school is 90.8%, higher than the national level which is 85.8%, and 49.4%

²⁷ Aguado (1991) comments on the educational inequality in the State of Mexico. He puts an emphasis on social and economic differences and their impact in terms of terminal efficiencies and drop out rates.

of the population over 15 years has post-primary education, the 6th. highest in the country (1990 National Census). However, there is still 18.2% of the population over 15 that has not completed primary school.

Again, the Census, due to the State's social and economic contrasts, might misrepresent the educational reality. This could suggest as well the need to emphasize aspects associated with inequality in educational provision rather than a mere quantitative analysis focused on educational coverage.

7. THE DEVELOPMENT OF NONFORMAL EDUCATION IN THE RURAL SECTOR.

This section is concerned with how the practice of nonformal education has developed in the rural sector of the State of Mexico from 1940 to 1990. Both periods -1940-1970 and 1970-1986-, as we have seen in the first part of this chapter, show significant differences as far as the social and economic strategies in the agricultural sector is concerned, as well as in terms of the development of the practice of nonformal education in the rural sector. Emphasis is put on educational initiatives linked to the agricultural/primary sector as the most significant and numerous experiences in the rural areas -what we have called agricultural nonformal education.

7.1 Agricultural modernization and educational services (1940-1970).²⁸

Agricultural modernization programmes carried out at national level were reflected at regional level in the creation of a Research Centre in the State of Mexico (Santa Elena Agricultural Experimental Station) in conjunction with the Special Studies Office.²⁹ This was planned in response to the need for a better technology that could have a

²⁸ Figures for this section are taken basically from three main sources: Gobierno del Estado de Mexico 1978 and 1957; Pieck and Aguado 1987.

²⁹ This Office was the representative in Mexico from the Rockefeller Foundation.

significant effect on agricultural productivity given the deficient existing methods. Besides, the predominance of seasonal agriculture in the State of Mexico made this region a suitable experimental field with the potential for dissemination to other similar regions in the country.³⁰

The level of agricultural development in the State of Mexico in the 1940s was rather poor: promotion of fruit-growing and phytosanitary campaigns can be taken as the only and isolated efforts performed by technicians from the Ministry of Agriculture by that time. The 'Agricultural Extension Law' (*Ley de Extension Agricola*), as one of the 'Eleven Agricultural Laws' (*Once Leyes Agropecuarias*), marked in 1956 the beginning of agricultural education carried out by government departments in the State (Gobierno del Estado de Mexico 1978).

The Agricultural Extension Service (*Servicio de Extension Agricola*) was established to respond to the need for spreading the results from research being conducted at the Research Centre. It therefore became the transmitting vehicle of modernization. It was launched with the support of eight regional agronomists (one for each region) to whom eight more extensionists were added by the federal government.³¹ Among their functions were the diffusion of proper techniques for water and land conservation; assistance in the using of seeds, fertilizers, and other inputs; providing help about the use of agricultural machinery, and about how to combat diseases.

By 1965 the Service enlarged its personnel to 25 delegates, 17 from the state and 8 from the federal government. In 1968 this small group of extensionists was supposed to be in charge of 68 different agricultural programmes and taking care of 185 communities (approximately 5% from the total in the region) (*Ibidem.*). Its success, though, in terms of fostering the adoption of modernization techniques appeared questionable. As Mata (1981:49) points out:

³⁰ The State of Mexico turned into a promoter of the 'green revolution' since the Research Centre for the Improvement of Maize and Wheat (*Centro de Investigacion para el Mejoramiento del Maiz y el Trigo -CIMMYT*) was set up within the state.

³¹ In 1962, the National Extension Service had 268 professionals. That meant an average of eight extensionists for each one of the States in the country (Gobierno del Estado de Mexico 1978).

"... through agricultural extension only a partial adoption of new technology generated at experimental agricultural fields has been achieved; that is because possibly technology takes for granted a certain amount of capital in order to use this technology on the land of peasants and farmers; this capital is though the most limited resource in the rural sector of the country".

In addition to this service technical assistance was provided by technicians from a number of programmes and institutions as another form in which rural extension was implemented. So it was with veterinary surgeons, as personnel from the Subdepartment of Cattlehip (*Subdireccion de Ganaderia*), technicians from the Rural Bank (*Banco Rural*), and personnel belonging to the Animal and Vegetables Sanitary Programme (*Programa de Sanidad Vegetal y Animal*). All of them, even if not specifically located within the Extension Service, carried out activities such as seeds disinfection, distribution of fruit trees, phytosanitary campaigns, etc., which usually included lectures and indirect assistance to peasants. These activities helped in terms of the modification of traditional techniques and behaviour.

Finally, the activity of rural teachers reinforced that of extensionists and orientators, since they were conceived as assistant personnel to extension activities and therefore trained in agricultural subjects so that they could constitute an additional support to agricultural extension activities.

The basis and conditions of agricultural nonformal education in the State of Mexico began to be established during the 1940-1970 period and were characterized by the relation between the extension service and the organization of peasants (*ejidatarios*) through the promotion of technology and the introduction of new inputs (i.e. improved seeds, fertilizers, etc.) in the agricultural sector.

Besides agricultural nonformal education, since 1940 there have been some other institutions which to a greater or lesser extent carried out educational programmes in the rural sector oriented to community education.

The Rural Home Orientators Service (*Servicio de Orientadoras del Hogar Rural -SOHR*) was created as soon as the Agricultural Extension Service was put into operation. The

programme was geared mainly towards women in the rural sector, fundamentally peasants, with courses in areas such as health, housing and nourishing. The work of the orientators was established to complement the work done by the group of agronomists so that it could turn into a social support to their work. Even if their activities were not strictly related to the agricultural modernization process, their work enabled the diffusion of new techniques on a small scale.

This Service was launched in 1957 with 39 women orientators, a number that rose to 64 by 1959, higher than the number of agronomists in charge of agricultural extension activities. The group of orientators had been trained in areas such as: rural house improvement, hygiene, nutrition, clothes making, etc.; some times they were trained as well in technical and productive matters such as farming, family vegetable-gardening, etc. The creation of this service was an indicator of the increasing importance given to courses on social welfare and of the emphasis put on community development by this time. Women and peasant communities were the main clients of this educational activity which itself can be considered as a pioneer in this area of education in the State of Mexico.

Another community education programme during that period was the 'Cultural Missions' belonging to the Ministry of Public Education. This programme operated across the country including the State of Mexico. They were the first organizations not strictly located within the agricultural sector but supported through educational programmes areas which were not properly theirs, such as agricultural techniques and diffusion of new inputs. As has been noted earlier communities were the main clients of this sort of programmes with activities particularly concerned with providing people with knowledge related to agriculture, health, culture, recreation, and self-employment workshops.

7.2 The agricultural crisis and nonformal education attempts (1970-1980).

From 1970 on agricultural policy concentrated on seasonal lands, and small property as 'new' fields of operation. The agricultural crisis demanded revitalizing peasants' previous role as producers of raw materials and cheap food.

Gordillo (1979:20) points out that the State was forced to reorient the economic function of the *ejido*, making it more important than its political function:

"... what comes to be specific about the *ejido* apparatus is that it is both at the same time a domination political apparatus and an economic unit of production. The predominance of either the political or the economic function will be determined precisely by the role assigned to the *ejido* apparatus by the accumulation model."

The State of Mexico turned into an important strategic zone for the production of basic cereals because of the large areas dedicated to maize cultivation, its rising productive trend, and its closeness to the main market.³²

In 1970 the rural population in the State of México was 70.7% of the total population, while at national level the average was 57%. From a total of 233,876 producers (ejidatarios and private), 88.1% were at a subsistence level with an average of 2.5 hectares of land with an annual income of 2,360.00 pesos, while the national average was 7090.00 pesos (Schejtman 1982).

Nevertheless, paradoxically, while 80% of the land in the State of México is seasonal land in 1970 maize yield in the State was 986 Kg./h. while at national level it was 934 Kg./h. (Coll-Hurtado 1982:181, quoting the 1970 Agricultural Census). As far as improved-maize production is concerned the state productivity was 2,269 Kg./h. while the national average was only 1,831 Kg./h. (*Ibidem.*). These high productivity levels turned the State of Mexico into a potential area to be used within the new development strategy for the agricultural sector.

³² The strategy was part of the National Programme for the Agricultural Development in Rainy Season Areas (*Programa Nacional para el Desarrollo Agrícola de Areas Temporales* -PRONDAAT) in order to extend the model of the Plan Puebla to different regions.

7.2.1 New Institutional Organizations in the Rural Sector.

In the early 1970s the public sector bodies dealing with rural development and education were significantly changed in order to be able to deal more effectively with the need to develop the rural sector. In particular the State Public Administration was restructured leading to the creation of the Institute for Agricultural Development of the State of Mexico (*Instituto para el Desarrollo Agrícola del Estado de México -DAGEM*).

Two major programmes were started during this period: the Plan for Maize (*Plan Maiz*) and Plan Calpullis; both became important in primary sector policy in both economic and political terms and constitute the axis around which nonformal education revolved.

7.2.1.1 The Plan Maiz (1971-1981).

The launching of Plan Maiz in 1971 was a response to the crisis in the production of basic cereals. Its main purpose was to increase the production of maize through the introduction of new techniques and by raising productivity levels, with the support of a strategy based on a new organizational model.³³ Concretely the programme's aim was to introduce improved-seeds, fertilizers, credit and technical assistance -the so called 'technological package'- into the communities composed of small-scale producers. The programme was intended to provide a link between peasants and the State through the 'Plan Rancheros' as the organizational strategy adopted for the implementation of Plan Maiz.

The 'Planes Rancheros' was made up of a number of organized groups of small-scale rural producers which were receiving benefits (e.g. fertilizers) and that were coordinated and promoted by a peasant leader in order to receive technical assistance and credit. They were spread throughout the State of Mexico and therefore were used as channels

³³ The Plan Maiz began to show a rapid growth in a very short time: in 1971, 24,427 hectares (approximately 4% of the maize cultivated surface) were attended through the Plan Rancheros. In 1975 there were 58 Plans -which integrated nearly 6,000 groups- covering an area of 171,158 hectares (28%), providing credit and technology to 70,000 organized peasants. In those areas, the yield per hectare increased from 841 Kg./h. in 1970 to 1,300 Kg./h. in 1973 (Gobierno del Estado de México 1978).

for providing technical assistance at local level.

Individual 'Plan Rancheros' were launched in individual communities. Each group was composed of a group of technicians and extensionists both from the State Government and from the Federal Extension Service of the Ministry of Agriculture (*Secretaria de Agricultura*). The personnel were in charge of providing technical assistance on new inputs and agricultural techniques. New ways of distribution and management of credit and inputs, as part of the new strategy developed by Plan Maiz, demanded the knowledge about how to operate and administer credits. The extensionists therefore had also to accomplish the function of assisting peasants with their own credit needs.

The leader or coordinator of a 'Plan Ranchero' was supposed someone from the community itself. This fact turned the programme into a link between the peasants and the State, something which had political and economic advantages and made it an interesting feature of the extension role under this programme. Of this sort of clientelism Aguilar Camín (1986:24) points out that:

"... due to the weakening process that the Peasant National Confederation (*Confederacion Nacional Campesina -CNC*) is going through as a corporative apparatus, new real power conditions have been built, particularly a new form of caciquism that supervises the penetration of government credit, production and consumption agencies in the regions..."

The agricultural modernization process led to several modifications to be made to the traditional activity of extensionists. Their work was not any longer concerned exclusively with the diffusion of new technologies. Two new functions were assigned to agricultural nonformal education as a result of the Plan: 1) promoting the organization of peasants and small holders (what was labelled as 'rural organization'); and 2) credit assistance; clearly two new roles framed within the new economic rationale.

Even if these new activities might have entailed a more diverse form of education and a potential new form of communication with peasants's groups, they only remained at the level of technical assistance. The clients were different though: now it is not the isolated peasant but formal institutional organizations which benefit from these

programmes. Even if the Plan Maiz could have had the potential to reinforce peasants' organizations, it did not go beyond government institutional aims. In Vielle's (1977:1531) opinion:

"... technological improvements have been introduced in the rural sector in a parallel way to the granting of credits with an association with infrastructure improvements (...) while the educational system has been less used as a modernization channel."³⁴

In the case of Plan Maiz the outcomes in terms of raising the level of technical knowledge among the participants in this experience -as an explicit educational objective of this plan- cannot be considered as an achievement of the programme, but rather a result of the implicit organizational practice in peasant's performance, because the contact with the educational programme was extremely poor (Schmelkes 1984).

The Plan Maiz formally concluded its activities in 1981 but the programmes it launched remained in operation until 1986 through work of the leaders of each individual local Plan. Between 1981 and 1986 they constituted the channels for getting access to credit facilities provided by the Commission for the Agricultural Development of the State of Mexico (*Comision para el Desarrollo Agricola y Ganadero del Estado de Mexico - CODAGEM*) to all the different groups.

7.2.1.2 Plan Calpullis

This plan was the regional version of the national *ejido* collectivization strategy carried out during the 1970s at a national level (see above). Unlike what was intended in the rest of the country the intention of the calpullis in the State of Mexico was to promote the organization of individual *ejido* members (*ejidatarios*) and not the organization of the *ejido* itself. Calpullis were thus organizations of both ejidatarios and small scale

³⁴ Even if the development and the role of agricultural extension can be explained within the new strategy, the emphasis on these programmes was not very important because the State of Mexico, due to its own traits, was not properly a privileged area for the agricultural modernization strategy.

independent producers³⁵ supported by the government for the collective purchases of inputs and for the commercialization of their products.³⁶

The role of nonformal education within this project was basically that of providing technical assistance support by DAGEM: each calpulli had the assistance of an agricultural engineer. Since calpullis needed accounting and administrative assistance some of its members were trained in the "Jya'sü" Training Centre, where peasants stayed during a number of weeks supported by special scholarships. Courses dealt basically with administrative and organizational subjects, but emphasis was put as well on social and historical aspects, a significant difference from other forms of agricultural training during that time. To supplement this type of training, technical assistance was supposed to be provided by the group of extensionists.

Both plans, the Plan Maiz and the Plan Calpullis, were vehicles of agricultural extension and training and were used as the channel through which agricultural modernization was communicated to the rural sector of the State of Mexico during the 1970s. Both programmes, plus some others like the Plan for Agricultural Commercialization, are examples of the new emphasis put on the rural sector from 1970, and of the new institutional growth which began to show during that period, a considerable contrast to the institutional stagnation of previous years.

7.2.2 New Rural Institutions, New Educational Programmes.

In 1975 the CODAGEM was created with the purpose of promoting the productive activity and the rural modernization process in the State. CODAGEM decentralized its activities through the creation of the Agricultural Units for Municipal Development (*Unidades Agrícolas de Desarrollo Municipal -UADM*) which served as the

³⁵ The difference between ejidatarios and small property owners is not very strong in the State of Mexico as it may be in some other states of the country. Their common trait is the presence of small property; moreover it is quite common to find ejidatarios that are as well small property owners.

³⁶ The Plan was launched in 1974 starting with 7 calpullis with stables and porcine farms. By 1975 there were already 33 calpullis, 23 of which were in operation and the rest was undergoing credit procedures.

implementation units for the various agricultural development programmes. These units also were the channel for the provision of technical assistance and training for the rural sector. Each UADM was composed of an agronomist, a veterinary, an agricultural organizer, rural home improvement orientators -who had kept on with their activities since 1952-, and the leaders and assistants of the 'Plan Ranchero'. By 1979, 403 employees were involved in this operational structure with activities ranging from support given to agricultural programmes to the promotion and supervision of credit operations (Gobierno del Estado de Mexico 1978).

The support for agricultural nonformal education is in contrast with previous years. For example, the Extension Service had 254 extensionists in 1974, ten times more than in 1968, which is a sign of the new emphasis on this field (*Ibidem.*). Nonformal education was conceived of as a support for the diffusion of and training in technical practices (fertilizers), new procedures (credit operation), which were regarded as the pillars of production growth and productivity in the rural sector.

During the 1970s there was a rapid growth of institutions and organizations dealing with rural training in addition to the activity already being made by SARH and CODAGEM. The following are some of the programmes and institutions which began to operate during the 1970s and that aimed to tackle different needs in the rural sector.

The INCA RURAL, founded in 1979, ascribed to the SRA, was a clear sign of the importance given to agricultural training and of the need to have an institution that could have the role of coordinating the different efforts in this field. The CENAC RURAL³⁷ was in charge during this decade of the devising of programmes and practices, and of training its personnel. It was not until the late 70s, when support was given for the implementation of the Mexican Food System (*Sistema Alimentario Mexicano SAM*), that INCA included among its activities training agricultural producers.

³⁷ The CENAC-BOA (National Training Centre of the Agricultural State Bank) was operating since 1973, and leads to the creation of the CENAC RURAL in 1978. Later it changed into the INCA-RURAL.

The FOCC was another institution created during this period. It began operating in the State of Mexico in 1977, particularly in the regions of Texcoco and Zumpango. It was concerned with providing assistance for the relocation of the dairy industry from Mexico City, and with organizing peasants that were credit worthy. The first stage was more a promotional one than a training one. FOCC was integrated later to the SARH, ascribed to the Sub-Programme of Organization of Agricultural Producers (*Subprograma de Organizacion de Productores Agricolas*). From 1981 to 1983 it supported the diffusion of the SAM in the State of Mexico. This institution was abolished after this campaign.

The National Centre for Productivity (*Centro Nacional de Productividad -CENAPRO*) and the Trust for Technical Assistance and Guarantee of the Bank of Mexico (*Fideicomiso para la Asistencia Tecnica y Garantia -FEGA*), began their operation during this decade implementing educational programmes oriented strictly to the primary sector dealing with organization and technical matters.

The SRA operated within the frame of both the Master Plan of Peasant Organization and Training (*Plan Maestro de Organizacion y Capacitacion Campesina*), and the Agrarian Reform and Rural Credit Federal Laws. Its impact in the State was rather poor because the national strategy of collectivization was carried out in the State through the creation of calpullis (see above). Within this particular plan organizational training was meant to be provided by CODAGEM through the Institute for the Development of Human Resources (*Instituto para el Desarrollo de Recursos Humanos del Estado de Mexico -IDRHEM*), which had the 'Ex-hacienda de Solís' (Jya'Su) as its training centre.

Finally, the Programme for Investments in Rural Development (*Programa de Inversiones para el Desarrollo Rural -PIDER*) comprised a vast support programme to investments on rural development projects. Training in particular fields demanded by the different projects was provided by PIDER technicians in agreement with training institutions.

It is important to point out here the activities undertaken by the Mexican Foundation for Rural Development (*Fundacion Mexicana para el Desarrollo Rural -FMDR*), a private institution with a significant presence in the State of Mexico from 1971 to 1982.

Through the Centre of Services for the Development in the State of Mexico (Central de Servicios para el Desarrollo del Estado de Mexico SEDEMEX), as its regional office, it carried out a number of educational programmes focused on the organizing and support of projects in several regions of the State. This programme constitutes the only significant occurrence of non-government rural development education programmes in the State of Mexico (almost 120 groups with various projects were dealing on assistance and training matters with this institution). Its operational methodology acquired a great importance, so much that the model was adopted by the SEP/DGETA in 1982. This had an important effect on the DGETA's new performance from 1984 and showed later in the creation of the Agricultural Education Brigades (Brigadas de Educacion Tecnica Agropecuaria -BETAS), rural development agencies quite similar to those of the FMDR.

The fact is significant because it not only meant the adoption of a new and different practice within the SEP, but meant as well the adoption by a public institution of a methodology created by a private institution with a very particular technical and productive rationale. It meant indeed the diffusion of a different rationale to different contexts and areas.

7.2.3 Community Education Institutions.

Rural nonformal education programmes carried out by institutions not belonging to the agricultural sector became increasingly important during the 1970s.

The Promotion Committee of Social Services (Comite de Promocion de Servicios Sociales -COPROSESO) was an important institution concerned with community education teaching subjects like nutrition, health and housing. It took over the work from the 'Home Improvement Orientators Programme' (see above). This programme was launched in 1980, changed its name to Community Development Service Unit (Unidad de Servicios para el Desarrollo de la Comunidad -USDEC) in 1982 and kept on working until 1986 when it changed again this time to Community Development Programme (Programa de Desarrollo de la Comunidad). From this date its activity was diminished

because of institutional constraints on the number of its personnel.³⁸ COPROSESO carried out a great number of courses during those years and provided support for the activities of the 'National Voluntary'.³⁹ Its activity was very important within the field of community education.

The National System for the Integral Development of the Family (*Sistema Nacional para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia DIF*) operated in the State of Mexico from the early 1970s. Through the 'Community Development Programme' and the 'Mobile Network Programme' (*Red Movil*), the DIF covers community education areas. It is a leading institution in terms both of the number of courses provided and in terms of the value of its credentials (see above).

The DGETA is a programme that belongs to the Federal Secretary of Public Education and covers a large area of the State of Mexico. Its area of interest is more properly located within the agricultural area but includes community education courses. The work of the DGETA is performed by the BETAS, which consist of community located centres where agricultural technical assistance and training is provided to population living in catchment areas.

Finally, the 'Cultural Missions', as a programme of the Ministry of Education, continued their work in the State during the decade with eight missions established in the State. Likewise, the Department of Out-of-School Education, which is an arm of the state Ministry of Education developed community education activities during that period.

These are some examples of how almost any institution dealing with the rural sector began to set up educational programmes. This 'sudden' growth of institutions and programmes in the 1970s can be set within the framework of the food self-sufficiency plan and the agricultural crisis; it helps to explain as well the new emphasis put by the

³⁸ The programme counted before with the support of personnel from CODAGEM. Since 1986 the programme did not have this support any longer.

³⁹ The 'National Voluntary' refers to groups of women linked and organized by government institutions in order to carry out social work in either urban or rural marginal communities.

State on training in the rural sector. The picture during the 1970s is clearly different from that of previous years and shows a larger operational structure and more expertise on methodologies used.

8. NONFORMAL EDUCATION IN THE 1980's.⁴⁰

An earlier study (Pieck and Aguado 1988) gave an account of government institutions concerned with nonformal education in the rural sector of the State of Mexico from 1980 to 1986. Contact was established with and data collected from 29 different programmes which were being carried out at that time by 16 institutions.

1. Department for the Development of Agricultural Producers (SARH-CODAGEM)
(Direccion de Desarrollo de Productores)
2. SARH: Training and Development Unit (UCADE)
(Unidad de Capacitacion y Desarrollo)
3. SARH: I Rural Development District (Toluca)
(Distrito de Desarrollo Rural)
4. SARH: Agricultural Programme *(Programa Agricola)*
5. SARH: Livestock Programme *(Programa Ganadero)*
6. SARH: Agroindustrial Programme *(Programa Agroindustrial)*
7. SARH: Forest Programme *(Programa Forestal)*
8. Forestry Development Commission (PROTINBOS)
(Protectora e Industrializadora de Bosques)
9. Vegetal Sanitary Programme (CODAGEM)
(Programa de Sanidad Vegetal)
10. National Commission for Fruitgrowing (CONAFRUT)
(Comision Nacional de Fruticultura)
11. Fishing Department *(Departamento de Pesca)*
12. Agroindustrial Cooperative for the Ejidos of the State of Mexico.
(PAGROEMEX)
(Productora Agroindustrial Ejidal del Estado de Mexico)
13. National Bank for Rural Credit (BANRURAL)
(Banco Nacional de Credito Rural)
14. Credit Agency for Agriculture (FIRA)
(Fondos Instituidos en relacion con la Agricultura)
15. National Agricultural and Livestock Insurance
(ANAGSA) *(Aseguradora Nacional Agricola y Ganadera)*

⁴⁰ Most figures for this section are taken from a field-work research carried out in 1986. See Pieck & Aguado 1987.

16. Ministry of Agrarian Reform (S.R.A.)
(Secretaria de Reforma Agraria)
17. National Institute for Indigenous Population (INI)
(Instituto Nacional Indigenista)
18. The National System for the Integral Development of the Family (Mobile Network) *(Red Movil)*
(Sistema Nal. para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia)
19. Ministry of Health and Welfare (SSA)
(Secretaria de Salubridad y Asistencia)
20. Ministry of Labour and Social Security (STyPS)
(Secretaria del Trabajo y Prevision Social)
21. Technical Commission of the Rural Employment Programme (COTEPER)
(Comision Tecnica para el Programa de Empleo Rural)
22. Institute for Urban Action and Social Integration (AURIS)
(Instituto para la Accion Urbana e Integracion Social)
23. State Handicrafts Centre (CASART) *(Casa de las Artesanias)*
24. National Institute for the Education of Adults (INEA)
(Instituto Nacional para la Educacion de los Adultos)
25. General Department of Technological and Agricultural Education (DGETA/SEP)
(Direccion General de Educacion Tecnologica y Agropecuaria)
26. Committee for the Promotion of Social Services (COPROSESO)
(Comite para la Promocion de Servicios Sociales)
27. National Institute for Agricultural Training (INCA-RURAL)
(Instituto Nacional para la Capacitacion Agropecuaria)
28. The National System for the Integral Development of the Family (DIF-Community Development Programme).
(Programa de Desarrollo de la Comunidad)
29. Department for the Education of Adults (SECyBS)
(Departamento de Educacion de Adultos)

Next we focus on three broad significant areas which came up as a result of this research. This will help to provide a picture of the state of rural nonformal education programmes carried out by government institutions nowadays in the State of Mexico.

8.1 The emphasis on Community Education.

An interesting finding arising from data was the significant emphasis on community education programmes. Five institutions: INEA, DIF-Mobile Network, DIF-Programme of Community Development, DGETA, and the Department for the Education of Adults

(Departamento de Educacion de Adultos -DEA), appeared as the most significant in terms of the number of courses carried out during that period. Together the five comprised more than 90% of the educational activity and they were all concerned with community education topics. The activity carried out by these institutions is a sign of the major emphasis put on community education within the scope of nonformal education in the rural sector, and shows how this area is the one most encouraged by governmental institutions.⁴¹

Among these institutions only the DEA is a regional one; all the others belong to the federal government. Likewise, with only the exception of INEA the activity of the other programmes dates back to the 1970s. This reveals a long institutional history and support in terms of resources, organizational structure and expertise in this field.

The fact that institutions within the educational (DEA and SEP/DGETA) and health sectors (DIF) are the ones with a longer history and more intense activity has an effect on the overall orientation of rural nonformal education. From 1970 social welfare and community education have been the subjects which have received the most attention and this has continued until the present. Therefore it is possible to note the predominance of non agricultural sector institutions in terms of number of courses and its persistent emphasis on areas related with social and community education. As has been pointed out even before 1970 -from 1920 with the Cultural Missions and later with programmes such as the 'Rural Home Orientators Service' - there has always been a predominant emphasis on community education areas (home economics and training courses).

Some other programmes like INCA, Casart, or the Department for the Development of Agricultural Producers (*Departamento de Desarrollo de Productores*) offer courses within the area of community education, but their presence is not at all significant.

⁴¹ Institutions with low presence in terms of courses are small institutions or programmes with a very specific area; such is the case of the Forestry Programme (*Programa Forestal*).

There are many institutions, though, that are dealing at present with this sort of education. In addition to the previous programmes there are some others covering these same subjects, such as The Mexican Institute for Social Welfare (*Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social -IMSS*) , The Women's Commission, the Social Promotion Department of the State Government, etc. All these institutions carry out courses of a very different kind within the area of community education but not all of them have a significant presence specifically in the rural sector.⁴²

We think this speaks of the nature of nonformal education in the rural sector and of where the current emphasis is put by these programmes. It appears that instead of strengthening economic development processes programmes have been geared towards assistance measures that try to compensate for low socioeconomic levels through the provision of skills and knowledge that hardly allow people to improve their living standards, but rather act to distract the population from their everyday occupations and to raise expectations. As Schmelkes and Narro (1988:254) point out, "community education which is of the utmost importance for the marginal population because it is preparation for economic activities, has yet to demonstrate its value or admit its shortcomings and subsequently propose alternatives".

About this sort of programmes, Coombs and Ahmed (1975:41) write:

"there are many programmes for the betterment of both the family and the community, but they are fragmentary, of a limited scale, and scarce. It is quite common to find (...) a series of reduced and isolated programmes on health, nutrition, domestic economy, family planning, cooperatives, local management, sports, recreation, etc., addressed to the same audience, but financed and organized by different public and private organizations with few coordination or that scarcely cooperate between them, if they happen to do it."

⁴² PROBECAT is a new programme carried out by the Ministry of Labour in the State of Mexico. Even if the area covered by this programme touches mainly urban centres it has some courses running in the rural areas. The programme covers most of the 121 municipalities (86 in 1990; 57 in 1991) and gets support from other institutions for the development of the different workshops. The scholarship programme is geared to unemployed people over 20 years of age. The programme offers a monthly income plus materials, and a link after the course with the labour market. Courses last three months, six hours a day, and deal with topics like clothing, computing, craftsmanship, laboratory, carpentry, machines and tools, electronics, industrial drawing, mechanics, and refrigeration. These areas comprise approximately 65 different specialities (e.g. cabinetmaker, programmer, shorthand and typewriting, metal worker, etc.). During 1990, 12,826 scholarships were offered in 65 different specialities. A total of 9,603 students came out from courses in that year. Until October 1991, 7,358 scholarships had been already authorized for a total of 271 courses.

Our preliminary work indicated this was perhaps the case due to the lack of coordination between programmes, the lack of a link with broader and large-scale regional projects, and the absence of 'community development' as an axis to be taken for the various educational activities which are carried out in a large number of communities. An analysis of the nature and function of this area of nonformal education is a major concern of this research, and chapter VII provides data that illustrates their social implications by taking a deep look inside the programmes.

8.2 Two periods and two different emphases: 1970-1980 and 1980-1987.

Our findings indicated a change in the nature of and emphasis on nonformal education between the 1970s and the 1980s. As has been noted, the early 1970s marked a fundamental change in the emphasis put on nonformal education in the rural sector and constitute a period when many programmes and institutions began to appear in the rural sector. However, institutions during this time were basically devoted to the development of their theoretical and methodological supports, personnel training, and operational strategies.

Not until 1980 did the emergence and development of rural nonformal education become clear, particularly on issues concerned with the agricultural sector. The rapid development of this area of education corresponded to the SAM's new emphasis on productivity as an attempt to overcome the effects of the food crisis in the agricultural sector (ISEAC 1983). As a result there was an increasing growth of nonformal education programmes concerned with organization, technical and productive aspects. The emphasis on agricultural education constitutes a particular sign of this period.

It can be argued that the SAM in the early 1980s gave rise to the formulation and implementation of several programmes that were introduced to satisfy various training needs in the rural sector, and in particular agriculture: the INCA had launched its training activities at producers level by that time in support of the implementation of the SAM; at the same time institutions like FOCC and the SRA joined efforts in this same

direction. By this time some other programmes from the Ministry of Agriculture, such as the Forest, Agriculture, and Cattle Rearing Programmes, began to carry out training courses in a more intense way than the activities of previous years.

Whereas community education continued in line with the trend of the last two decades, it was not until the 1980's that agricultural training began to reach producers level with more intensity and with a broader covering than in previous years.

Some other institutions launched their programmes in this period such as: INEA, created in 1981 (the Community Education Area was incorporated in 1984); the DGETA, with an intense activity since 1982 when it began operating with the support of the new methodology adopted from the FMDR (see above); State Handicraft Centre (*Casa de las Artesanias -CASART*), and the Institute for Urban Action and Social Integration (*Instituto de Accion Urbana e Integracion Social AURIS*) began training courses in 1983; PROTINBOS set up as well a training department which began operating with several courses in 1984. Finally the Fishing Department implemented a training programme during this period as well. They are all examples of the significant development of nonformal education programmes since 1980 and an indicator of the importance that starts to be given to educational efforts of this kind by institutions in the rural sector.

In the light of the above we think it would be important to analyze the different importance given to contents and the relation between education and production in relation to each period's economic and political circumstances. Then it would be possible to stress on the importance given to education at different socioeconomic periods, the relation with the type of curriculum being considered, and how this may relate to contradictions at the structural level (i.e. the emphasis on rural nonformal education from 1970 facing the agricultural crisis; the appropriation of private institutions' methodology by institutions like the SEP/DGETA, the new emphasis given to vocational courses, etc.).

8.3 The relation between content and context.

The way rural nonformal education activity was distributed in the territory of the State of Mexico, revealed a lack of planning behind the introduction of the programmes. This is shown in how courses were concentrated in some particular areas. There were some regions, municipalities, and even communities whose importance in terms of educational attention surpassed some other areas where sometimes it was difficult to find any single institution.⁴³ This situation led us to wonder about criteria used for the selection of areas and for the detection of specific educational needs, given the assumption that correspondence between the characteristics of the context and the programmes has an effect upon the success or impact of rural nonformal education.

Additionally, questions about the role played by the socioeconomic features of the different regions in terms of the selection of contents addressed to clients and areas where these programmes intended to operate were posed. Was there any relation between these educational programmes and the characteristics of the regions? To what extent was it possible to speak about nonformal education in the State of Mexico given that mainly isolated programmes were to be found within very specific and localized areas?⁴⁴

The degree of impact rural nonformal education might have depends, among other things, on the equilibrium and link between the content of the programme and the characteristics of a particular context (Guzman *et. al.* 1977; Munoz Izquierdo 1982). When data from institutions was analyzed in terms of their link with the context it raised questions about the importance of and need to conceive of nonformal education as an integrated activity where educational contents have to be complementary to each other if they are to respond to very concrete social and economic circumstances. As an

⁴³ As an example, one of the municipalities, Temascalcingo, received the same educational attention as 50 municipalities altogether that received between 1 and 50 courses. Likewise, 300 communities out of 3,500 only one course had been provided, and nearly in half of the communities no action was taken. Moreover, almost all the institutions tended to privilege the region of Atlacomulco. Most courses were concentrated in this region. Regions with a less presence in terms of courses are usually located far from the geographical centre of the State.

⁴⁴ To give answer to these questions would demand counting with information such as: rural employment level, organizational traits, institutional priorities, percentage of rural population, margination index, migration, community social an economic antecedents, infrastructure, etc.

example, it was found that a low emphasis was put on either organizational or administrative contents when productive projects were being implemented. Moreover, despite the emphasis on organizational matters since 1970, it seems peculiar that these contents are hardly given any importance in agricultural sector institutions whilst organization was emphasized by institutions concerned with social welfare and community education.

Finally, little or almost no importance was attached to contents concerned with fostering social awareness or critical and reflexive processes in people, something which shows the pragmatic focus of nonformal education. As Rogers (1992:138) points out "... more than simple training is needed", and so comments on the importance of the instrumental, communicative and emancipatory traits of learning". Moreover, the link courses have with broader community development interests is usually weak, so the benefits hardly go beyond those who are directly linked to the economic project. This, as was noted earlier (Chapter I: 3 and 4) has been acknowledged as one of the limitations which arise when implementing nonformal education programmes.

In the same way it was possible to perceive a lack of coordination between institutions which usually leads to a duplication of efforts within the same sites and on the same subjects. Moreover, nonformal education programmes did not appear to be given any priority at all in terms of the coordination with other programmes, nor the financial support necessary. These features turn nonformal education inevitably into an activity from which high levels of efficiency or any serious impact in terms of responding to population needs are hardly to be expected. This panorama is not quite different from the overall situation in the region; in this sense Buttedhal (1989:458) remarks that "some of the efforts of Latin American countries to develop adult education have been scattered as institutions, plans, programmes, and methods have multiplied, and as problems have been approached without prior experience in this field". Gajardo (1985:77) shares this appreciation and illustrates something about the state of nonformal education with the following comment:

"... dispersion prevails over the integration of programmes. In addition to dispersion there is a lack of articulation between programmes, and between them with national development strategies. Objectives, goals and priorities are

generally established without previous diagnoses about the educational situation of adults. Programmes fail when they try to link sectorial and local projects with others more relevant that may guarantee their continuity. Serious frustrations arise among the participants as a result of this situation."

8.4 A final consideration.

By and large, despite the picture of nonformal education in the State of Mexico: more than 30 institutions with different programmes, history, strategies, etc., that carry out a large number of educational activities (more than 20,000 courses run from 1980 to 1986 alone), the state of nonformal education remains precarious if it is meant to be an educational contribution to the improvement of the living standards of a vast sector of the population. Courses are unevenly spread: almost 40% of activity takes place in just 10 of the State's 121 municipalities. They are not coherently organized in terms of the relation between contents and programmes. There is also duplication because of the failure of institutions to coordinate adequately. This leads to a considerable waste of resources. Finally, the courses lack any coherent timetable and permanence. A final comment should stress as well the traditional imposition of contents and the low emphasis put on taking into account people's interests, and with fostering people's awareness of their social reality.

We think it is still not possible to talk about nonformal education as an educational alternative, but rather as an activity that tends to compensate for problems derived from a development model that has not been able to offer marginal sectors of the population a means to improve their living standards. Thus it remains far from turning into a real support to rural development processes.

Castillo *et. al.* (1982:247) summarizes some of the problems nonformal education goes through when provided by government institutions:

"... because of social demands government action is orientated substantially towards massive projects with institutionalization possibilities, in order to guarantee their continuity despite presidential changes every six years. Nevertheless, this tradition does not guarantee the quality and efficiency of public services, because even if most programmes coincide in stressing the importance

of satisfying adults' interests and needs, it becomes difficult to achieve this focus when the norms of a centralized, impersonal, and bureaucratic structure have to be respected."

9. SUMMARY

In this chapter we attempted to account for the development of the practice and scope of nonformal education in Mexico. The first section was concerned with the national level while the second part dealt with the State of Mexico, the location of the research project. We started off with a description of the initial educational attempts in the post-revolutionary period and evidence was given about how rural education was privileged among other forms of education: rural schools and Cultural Missions stood out as the most representative examples of nonformal education during this period. We then analyzed the recent development from 1940 and stressed on how it can be divided into two historical periods: 1940-1970 and 1970 onwards, according to the different economic and social processes, policies and development strategies which had an effect on the scope, nature and practice of nonformal education.

The section on the State of Mexico began with the socioeconomic framework. Here we attempted to put emphasis on the State's social and economic contrasts between its different regions arising from social processes which stemmed from the State's closeness to the City of Mexico. We then provided an overview of the state of education in the area stressing the unequal performance of the educational system in the different regions. Having offered this initial framework we analyzed the development of nonformal education in the rural sector of the State. Here we stressed its link with the social and economic policies during that period, the institutions responsible of this task, and the distinct functions which were performed by nonformal education during both periods. We concluded with a general appraisal of the state of nonformal education provision in the 1980s.

Finally, in both periods and contexts, evidence was provided about how community education has stood out as a permanent concern on the part of the various government

institutions, and how its scope and nature have changed in the different periods: from an initial concern with community development as an integrated form of education which attempted to combine social, economic and political aspects, to the compensatory function which it was given particularly after 1970 as a means to counteract problems derived from previous social and economic policies.

GLOSSARY

ANAGSA	National Agricultural and Livestock Insurance <i>(Aseguradora Nacional Agricola y Ganadera)</i>
AURIS	Institute for Urban Action and Social Integration <i>(Instituto para la Accion Urbana e Integracion Social)</i>
BANRURAL	National Bank for Rural Credit <i>(Banco Nacional de Credito Rural)</i>
BETA	Agricultural Education Brigade <i>(Brigadas de Educacion Tecnologica y Agropecuaria)</i>
CASART	State Handicrafts Centre (CASART) <i>(Casa de las Artesanias)</i>
CEC	Community Education Centre <i>(Centro de Educacion Comunitaria)</i>
CENAPRO	National Centre for Productivity <i>(Centro Nacional de la Productividad)</i>
CNC	Peasant National Confederation <i>(Confederacion Nacional Campesina)</i>
CODAGEM	National Commission for the Agricultural Development of the State of Mexico <i>(Comision para el Desarrollo Agricola y Ganadero del Estado de Mexico).</i>
CONAFE	National Commission for the Promotion of Education <i>(Comision Nacional de Fomento Educativo)</i>
CONAFRUT	National Commission for Fruitgrowing (CONAFRUT) <i>(Comision Nacional de Fruticultura)</i>
COPROSESO	Committee for the Promotion of Social Services <i>(Comite para la Promocion de Servicios Sociales)</i>
COTEPER	Technical Commission of the Rural Employment Programme <i>(Comision Tecnica para el Programa de Empleo Rural)</i>
CREFAL	Regional Centre for Fundamental Education in Latinamerica <i>(Centro Regional de Educacion Fundamental para America Latina)</i>

DAGEM	Institute for the Agricultural Development of the State of Mexico
DEA	Department for the Education of Adults <i>(Departamento de Educacion de Adultos)</i>
DGETA	General Department of Technological and Agricultural Education <i>(Direccion General de Educacion Tecnologica y Agropecuaria)</i>
DIF	The National System for the Integral Development of the Family (Mobile Network- <i>Red Movi</i>) <i>(Sistema Nacional para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia)</i>
FIRA	Credit Agency for Agriculture <i>(Fondos Instituidos en relacion con la Agricultura)</i>
FEGA	Trust for Technical Assistance and Insurance <i>(Fideicomiso para la Asistencia Tecnica y Garantia)</i>
FMDR	Mexican Foundation for Rural Development <i>(Fundacion Mexicana para el Desarrollo Rural)</i>
FOCC	Trust for the Organization and Training of Peasants <i>(Fideicomiso para la Organizacion y Capacitacion Campesina)</i>
IDRHEM	Institute for the Development of Human Resources <i>(Instituto para el Desarrollo de Recursos Humanos)</i>
IMSS	Mexican Institute for Social Welfare <i>(Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social)</i>
INCA	National Institute for Agricultural Training <i>(Instituto Nacional para la Capacitacion Agropecuaria)</i>
INEA	National Institute for the Education of Adults <i>(Instituto Nacional para la Educacion de los Adultos)</i>
INI	National Institute for Indigenous Population <i>(Instituto Nacional Indigenista)</i>
PAGROEMEX	Agroindustrial Cooperative for the Ejidos of the State of Mexico. <i>(Productora Agroindustrial Ejidal del Estado de Mexico)</i>
PIDER	Programme for the Investment in Rural Development <i>(Programa de Inversiones para el Desarrollo Rural)</i>

PROTINBOS	Forestry Development Commission <i>(Protectora e Industrializadora de Bosques)</i>
SECYBS	Ministry of Education, Culture and Social Welfare <i>(Secretaria de Educacion, Cultura y Bienestar Social)</i>
SARH	Ministry of Agriculture and Hydrologic Resources <i>(Secretaria de Agricultura y Recursos Hidraulicos)</i>
SRA	Ministry of Agrarian Reform <i>(Secretaria de Reforma Agraria)</i>
SSA	Ministry of Health and Welfare <i>(Secretaria de Salubridad y Asistencia)</i>
STPS	Ministry of Labour and Social Security <i>(Secretaria del Trabajo y Prevision Social)</i>

CHAPTER III

THE NATURE OF GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

"The development process of a community is a product of the participation of the community within it" (Prawda 1985).

CHAPTER III
THE NATURE OF GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED
COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

The purpose of this chapter is to examine government-sponsored community education programmes as one of the practices of nonformal education that have stressed the need to work with community groups and through that process encourage the development of the community. Indeed in the literature the terms *community education* and *community development* appears to be used almost interchangeably (La Belle 1986:136).¹ A number of specialists gathered by CONAFE (National Commission for the Promotion of Education -*Comision Nacional de Fomento Educativo*) defined community education as a "... process that arises from the needs, interests, and values of the community. This process is intended to enable the community to appropriate the instruments that will help it solve its problems and encourage its participation in the improvement of the well being of society as a whole."

We start by examining the problems which arise when trying to see to what extent official community education programmes conform to the aims and assumptions of community education as so defined. To what extent do they arise from the articulated rules, interests and values of the community in which courses are offered? To what extent does the learning process practised by the courses help them to identify and solve their problems?

Next we analyze how this concept emerged in Latin America as one of many nonformal education strategies implemented during the last decades. We then try to distinguish

¹ *Community education* and *community development* are terms which are closely linked, and sometimes even used with an equivalent meaning as referring to activities that put emphasis on working with groups in the community. Broadly, both terms refer basically to the same activity inasmuch as the development of a community always entails community education activities, and community education is usually aimed towards community development: "the aim of community education is community development" (Midwinter, quoted by Rogers 1992:67). It is therefore not uncommon to find authors who deal with community education programmes and give an account of community development processes. Bhola, commenting on Titmus' terminology of adult education points out that community education is a related idea to that of community development. It is described by Titmus (quoted by Bhola 1988:17) as based on the "principle that all education should originate in and be designed to meet the interests of the community and be directed to improving its quality of life." Based on these considerations we shall use both terms with an equivalent meaning and, in order to highlight the educational component of community development we shall refer to it as '*education for community development*'.

between *popular education* and *education for community development* (both of which offer educational strategies supposedly oriented to community groups) and use both as a background against which to analyze the practice of community education as it is provided by government institutions. Here we describe these approaches, their assumptions, methodologies, and limitations. Finally, we offer a picture of the practice of community education in rural areas with an emphasis on educational programmes for women as the most numerous of government-sponsored community education programmes in the rural sector. We examine the problem of participation, their objectives in terms of community development, and their links with the State and comment on their achievements.

1. COMMUNITY EDUCATION: DEFINITIONAL PROBLEMS

As has been emphasized in the previous chapter community education oriented programmes have become an area of interest and practice for many State institutions: these courses account for a high percentage of governmental nonformal education provision as was mentioned earlier (Chapter II).

Official community education programmes in the rural areas are usually addressed to low income population and deal basically with two areas: domestic activities (also labelled as: home economics, domestic science): cookery, knitting, weaving, clothes-making, flower arrangement, macrame, etc) and skill training (also labelled as self-employment oriented courses; non-vocational nonformal education; pre-vocational courses): handicrafts, carpentry, metal work, beauty, first-aids, etc. As will be emphasized later, as part of our findings, community education courses in rural communities tend to be related to women's needs and interests, both within the areas of domestic work and with skill training courses because women tend to be generally the greatest users of these programmes. Men participate in these programmes only to the extent of taking courses in carpentry, metal work, etc., and even then not in very large numbers (see Chapter VII).

Problems arise when one attempts to define community education as it is undertaken by State institutions. The aims appear to be either unclear or indeed contradictory:

- a) the programmes are usually regarded as courses for community development implying they have a potential for developing a community. For example, within the objectives of the institutions which were considered within the sample of this research (DIF, DEA, and the Cultural Missions), community development is put forward as the basic goal of their educational activities² (See Chapter II).
- b) they are sometimes defined as nonformal education programmes, that is, training courses such as carpentry, metal-work, bricklaying, etc., -as some of the subjects in these programmes- are taken as vocational courses assuming they have the status of formal vocational-technical education, and therefore a link with the labour market and job opportunities. In addition, according to such a definition home economics subjects are left out as if non-existent.
- c) they are also defined as domestic courses, therefore excluding and undermining the presence of training courses amongst the range of courses provided by the institutions.

Next some examples will be provided that can illustrate the problems that occur when trying to define community education programmes in relation to nonformal education:

Castillo and Latapi (1983:23) distinguish between five predominant forms of nonformal education: literacy, basic education, conscientization, vocational education, community development (oriented to basic needs such as health, nutrition, housing, sport and cultural activities), and popular organization (oriented to productive activities or with social and political aims). No specific mention is made here of domestic courses as they are assumed to be part of cultural activities or integrated within vocational education.

In a similar way Gajardo (1983:38) argues that there are several forms of adult education: literacy and basic education, technical and professional training, and three activities which are defined according to their contents: a) those concerned with health, hygiene and family life; b) programmes on civic and political competence; c) those referred to personal fulfilment. Again no precise reference is made to community

² For example, the DIF regards its objectives as: 'Fostering the development of the communities through the provision of technical and sporting training to the population aiming to improve thus the social, economic and cultural conditions of the individuals'. Similarly, the Cultural Missions are regarded as 'agencies for community development' with the 'mission' to promote the 'integrated development of the community by means of job training, literacy programmes, and cultural and recreational activities'.

education domestic courses as they are understood to be part of other areas.

Finally, Borsotti (1984:184) groups the most common forms of nonformal education into six areas: 1) literacy; 2) basic education; 3) functional adult education (training unemployed rural population for the labour market); 4) rural training (specifically addressed to face rural environment demands; 5) initial education; and 6) community development. This last form includes: a) housing improvements (latrines, elevation of cooking places, etc.); b) nutrition; c) community participation (cultural activities, sports); d) environmental (ecological).

As before, two problems arise when trying to locate domestic or skill upgrading courses as the subjects most encouraged in state community education programmes:

- training courses could fall within *functional education*, thereby assuming a vocational education status and a link with the labour market.
- domestic courses would not fit into any of those groups.³

We have gone through these examples to show the lack of precision when it comes to defining and locating the practice of community education. Community education seems beset by the same complex definitional problem that has characterized the concept of nonformal education. Having commented on this and having already pointed out what the practice of community education programmes is when undertaken by the State, we turn now to examine the educational approaches that have been oriented to the community groups as a framework for contrasting this State practice.

Several factors can be highlighted within the aims and assumptions of community education:

- it is intended as an educational process whose aim is to solve the social, economic and political problems of the community.

³ Borsotti points out that while non-government organizations tend to give priority to community development activities, government programmes are more concerned with literacy and basic education. We do not agree on this: As will be highlighted in Chapter II, community education accounts for a high percentage of nonformal education provided by the State.

- it should arise from the community's perceived interests and needs and so tries to encourage people to reflect upon their social reality and are able to question it.
- it aims to improve the social and economic level of the communities without destroying their culture and natural environment.
- it aims to foster the participation and organization of the community around a perceived need for change.
- communities should be regarded not as isolated structures but as part of a wider regional context.

Activities focused on the development of a community are taken to be any activities that are concerned with the improvement of such varied areas such as: health, education, local infrastructure (roads, schools), agricultural techniques, nutrition, etc. However, these activities are regarded as part of a social process which arises from the people of the community and is geared to improving the living conditions of the community through people's participation in this process (Escalante 1984:75).

In the next sections we will argue that official community education programmes are far removed from a broader idea of education for community development as we have just defined it, even if they are usually viewed as part of community education -as was mentioned above- assuming they have a role in terms of the social and economic development of the communities.⁴ In order to do this we will analyze two community-oriented approaches in order to assess what has become the current practice of community education as provided by the State.

2. EDUCATION ORIENTED TOWARDS THE COMMUNITY

Education for community development and what has been called *popular education* constitute approaches where community groups are taken as the central target of their activities (Brouwer and Martinic 1991). However, even if their methodologies share

⁴ Within a panorama of adult education and training in Mexico, Schmelkes and Narro (1988) locate these courses (home economics and skill training courses) within the area of community education.

some common features, they differ significantly in terms of their concept and practice of education, their objectives, and in terms of the extent education is seen as contributing to social change within the communities.

1) *Education for community development* usually starts from the premise of the need to integrate marginal groups into the social and economic structure. In that sense development is understood as a process fostered from the outside which encourages the community to solve its own problems to as great an extent as possible using its own resources. Associated educational programmes are basically seen as falling within the scope of State's practice. They are taken as a means to support social and economic development within the framework of the current socioeconomic structure.

2) *Popular education* can be taken to be its opposite in the sense that rather than stressing integration into an already established socioeconomic system which the communities played little role in determining, it is concerned basically with empowering the community. It sees education as a means to give power rather than integrating people into an already existing structure. Popular education programmes stress the enfranchisement of the knowledge that people use everyday to interpret their daily lives and activities in society as a means to empower them (Brouwer and Martinic 1991:6). Hence, such educational programmes are carried on outside State institutions and its adherents see it as basically oriented to the interests and the needs of the popular sectors.

Hence it is clear that whilst *education for community development* and *popular education* both emphasize community development they are very different from each other. We shall provide now a picture of both educational approaches in order to further appraise the practice of government sponsored community education programmes.

2.1 Community Development.

2.1.1 The Emergence of Community Development. Its Assumptions, its Practice.

As has been noted, what has currently come to be called *community education* is supposedly closely linked to *community development*, as both an educational approach and a target itself of community education programmes. In order to understand how community education has been undertaken by government institutions and how programmes developed we need to assess their recent historical antecedents. For this reason it is important to start off by analysing its emergence and goals within the Latin American context.

Official community education programmes grew out of what in the late 1940s was called *fundamental education* (see Chapter I). It was a strategy fostered by UNESCO aiming to orient literacy campaigns to communities and to locate learning how to read and write with community productive activities in order -it was thought- to achieve a greater impact than they had in previously isolated projects. Projects launched based on this new perspective tried thus to incorporate these campaigns into broader educational programmes designed also to involve actively people from the community (La Belle 1976). In Mexico the 'new' emphasis on the community education approach revived the experience of the Cultural Missions during the 1920s. The emphasis put during that time on this approach had an impact in terms of defining and fostering the community development programmes of the following years (*Ibidem.*:337).

Hence *fundamental education* was a strategy based on the view that "the social, economic and political growth of adults should be developed starting from their everyday activities and fundamental concerns" (Barquera, quoted by Castillo and Latapi 1983:10). The social reality of adults was regarded as the central axis of the programmes, thus new areas of immediate community concern were included such as health, work, family life, and domestic activities addressed to those with little or no formal education.

During the late 1960s there was a new development. What was called *community development* provided the basis for a new nonformal education approach. The term was used to address those social processes in which the population becomes involved in State efforts concerned with improving social, economic and cultural conditions in the communities in order to integrate these into the national mainstream (United Nations 1960). The idea of community development, as La Belle (1986:83) points out, was used with different meanings:

"... to some it was a process, to others a method, and to still others it meant a programme or even a movement. Some viewed it as a tool for government control in the face of competing international agencies while others saw it as an opportunity for local initiative and independence."

To Castillo and Latapi (1983:10) the emergence of community development programmes in Latin America during the late 1960s -as a new way of addressing the needs of adult education in developing countries- coincided with the crisis of a development model based on industrialization, rapid urbanization, and international capital investments. They refer to two basic reasons to explain the emergence of community development in Latin America during the 1970s: a) the emphasis put by UNESCO in 1957 on community development as an indicator of a movement towards a broader conception of education; b) the need for new political strategies (e.g. the Alliance for Progress) in face of the Cuban Revolution and the expanding popular movements (e.g. *guerrillas*) in urban and rural areas.

The *community development* approach is based on the assumption that people from the community would show an interest in becoming involved in activities that could respond to their 'real needs' and therefore would be motivated to bring about changes in their community. It is concerned with fostering a change in people's attitudes - a new state of mind- where the community focuses on its own problems and begins to perceive the possibility of beginning to solve them. Social and economic progress is believed to be attainable through the spontaneous participation of the communities.

Here community education was seen as a practice to bring this about. Education within this new approach -by means of changing attitudes and values- was regarded as a dynamic element in terms of fostering a continuous development of the community. Lowe (1975:97) defined it as a:

"... highly effective form of education, because it not only forces people to learn but enables them to apply what they learn to their actual conditions. It has the further advantage of making people aware that their standard of living does not solely depend upon earning power but upon the quality of the amenities made available through the resources of the local community."

Community development can be located within what La Belle calls the 'deprivation-development orientation' (La Belle 1984). Assumptions underlying this thesis suggest that progress can be achieved by the modernization of traditional schemes and structures through the application of technology and capital. Within this perspective traditional societies are regarded as lacking -as being deprived- of those characteristics regarded as necessary to development goals: attitudes, behaviours, social structures, and technology. Thus, programmes carried out which subscribe to this orientation tended to be psychologically oriented and focused on changing people's attitudes towards life and aiming to make them more receptive to innovations. They fall into what La Belle (1986:136) also defines as human capital-oriented community action.

In a similar way, Latapi (1985:285) sees education for community development as 'promotional courses' which are oriented to organize the community to be able itself to fulfil its basic needs and raise its standards of living. He defines education for community development programmes as '*support for the development of capitalism*'.

Programmes which emerged from this approach are basically seen as falling within the scope of State's practice. In the next section we turn to an assessment of the outcomes of some community development projects carried out in Latin America.

2.1.2 Evaluation of the evolution of *community development*.

The implementation of community development programmes in Latin-America during the 1950s and 1960s led to many criticisms. La Belle (1976:333) comments on the frustrations that arose out of the results of community development programmes during the 1960s and on their limitations stemming from the isolation of programmes from a wider social and economic context:

"... behavioral change is the goal of such programmes and there is little or no systematic effort to link nonformal education with the wider social system. Participants, therefore, are left with the difficult task of utilizing new, and quite probably inappropriate, behaviours in a physical and human environment which has continued to exist without alteration."

Community education programmes have also been criticized for not taking into account each community's own characteristics and its location within a social context and for therefore having become fragmentary and partial perspectives of the social reality. As Trueba (1980:36) states:

"... it is inconceivable to think about community development as if it were isolated from a national and regional context or from the great sociopolitical and economic processes that the country, and even the same continent itself goes through. A community development strategy which intends to do without history and the context would be an alienating strategy."

It has also been stressed that by failing to consider the real needs of the population programmes have become isolated efforts without any meaningful outcome to the communities.

Similarly Castillo and Latapi (1983) argue that given the need for external technical and economic support to carry out the programmes there was what they termed as a 'cultural onslaught' upon the values and traditional procedures of the communities involved. The modernization of social structures, they argue, was identified with community development and so the communities remained far from reaching the allegedly integrated conception of development which was stated as one of the objectives of these

programmes. There was a lack of consideration of structural factors, that is to say, the relation between social and economic community level projects and the characteristics of the wide social and economic structure, was neglected.

Finally, Gajardo (1983:96) comments that community development experiences showed the impossibility of generating an autonomous development based exclusively on the local forces, the disadvantages of having a sectoral-focused development, the myth of a participation when it does not go beyond the scope of community life, and the inability of local organizations to transform the local structures (i.e. the social and economic organization in the communities).

From a different perspective Barquera stresses how the evolution of adult education, as it was fostered by UNESCO, aimed to respond to the social and economic development conditions in Latin America. According to Barquera (1985:18) community development programmes constitute attempts carried out starting from what he called a functionalist perspective where the development, integration and modernization of the communities are conceived of as adequate solutions for the problems in the communities. As a consequence programmes have been implemented in a mechanical and fragmentary way, non-coordinated, and isolated from a larger social context. This strategy, he argues, has maintained or increased divisions inside the communities since only small groups - usually those with an advantageous social and economic position, have been favoured by these programmes.

More radical criticisms have contributed to providing a different appraisal of the assumptions behind community development. Emphasis has been put on how the development of adult education has consisted basically of a series of adjustments, changes of names, methods, and proposals only in order to give the appearance of being in a process of constant renovation. For some like Brandao adult education coming out of UNESCO proposals does not mean a new form of education addressed to the marginal sectors of the population but the control over challenging educational alternatives such as popular education (Brandao 1985a:57). In his view community development was intended to mean a move from the individual integration in society to

the integration of communities within national life. He points out that:

"... it is not illogical to assert that even the alleged progressive expansion of adult education represents the expansion of political control over the popular bases in order to favour alleged improvements in the living standards of the communities... With few exceptions -statistics do not lie- it will be possible to verify that there was no integration, promotion or transformation. Traditional adult education was the instrument for the institutionalization of previous educational work... It was a means to domesticate a militant sector through popular programmes" (*Ibidem.*:45).

By the 1970s approaches to community development widened the notion of community education beyond that held by UNESCO during the 1950s and 1960s: the psychological self-help based strategy evolved into a perspective which paid more attention to social structures, institutions and social units, and educational activities set within the socioeconomic context of the community. Members of the communities were supposed to confront different aspects of the social reality through multiple ways of participation. Therefore, education was no longer seen as a problem of changing behaviours and attitudes and became one of changing the social and structural constraints that affected that behaviour.⁵ As a result of this new perspective *integrated rural development* formulas were put into practice in a number of countries in Latin America. In the case of Mexico, this led to the implementation of the *Plan Puebla*, a programme which involved a systematic effort to provide credit, technology, research, markets, and crop insurance, and which was addressed to smallholders in order to speed the agricultural development (La Belle 1976:339). This programme led to the implementation of the *Plan Maiz* in the State of Mexico, which has been examined in chapter II, Section 7.2.1.1)

Later projects initiated in the 1980s were concerned with methodologies and implementation strategies and regarded changes in the life of a community as a social, economic, and political process in which the community supposedly was to take an active role. Members of the community were meant to get involved in the educational

⁵ La Belle (1986:137-168) provides an account of the trends, controversies and criticisms around community action activities. It highlights the variety of view points concerning its conceptual and implementation problematic.

programme. A new methodology for community education was thus put forward stressing participation, which was now seen by both government and non-government organizations as the *sine qua non* for achieving a community development process.

Participation has been taken as central to the success or failure of projects based on community development. A number of formulae have been designed and put in practice with the aim of fostering participation of people in the communities, that is with involving people within their own community development process, with finding paths - sometimes even short cuts- that could lead to community development. We turn now to assess some of these attempts.

2.1.3 Community Development and Participation.

Hence from the 1960s participation became the centrepiece of community education. Social and economic change were seen as possible only to the extent people participate in it: work in the community was seen as participation within social change. In the words of Juan Prawda (1985:220):

"... the greater the participation of rural communities in the design and implementation of their own education, especially nonformal education, the greater the contribution of education to the enrichment of the quality of their lives."

However, participation, as has been broadly documented by Le Boterf (1982), can assume different forms. A distinction is made by Le Boterf about how people in the communities participate in their own education depending from where the initiative for participation comes, egs.: from people themselves or from outside pressures. He distinguishes between spontaneous, compulsory and induced participation. Le Boterf emphasizes that participation can be either passive, where people do no more than receive information, or active where they have a shared role in the responsibility for the project. Participation within *community development* or *popular education* usually refers to this latter distinction where the community's involvement and commitment is regarded

as important.

However, Brandao (quoted by Castillo and Latapi 1983:15) has warned that participation is an ambiguous category which is subject to be taken either as i) the basis of educational projects -regarded as a means of production and reproduction of popular power- or ii) as the basis of manipulative pedagogic programmes, that is to say programmes where people's participation is directed to aims other than those they have or could develop independently of outside intervention. This has led to the recent emphasis on participation strategies by government sponsored nonformal education programmes (Borsotti 1984; Lewin 1984; Brandao 1985b).

Most community development formulas have tried to find educational alternatives for the integral development of rural communities. They have tried to find strategies to link participation with community based research needs and to the learning and everyday productive and reproductive activities of the community. This has led to a number of initiatives and models aimed at generating better strategies for community development, and incorporating people from the communities in their own process of development.

Prawda (1985:219), for example, points out that a way to involve communities is to draw them into participating in the shaping of their own education, especially nonformal education. He argues that communities show a great capacity to produce suitable educational alternatives when they are allowed to project their intentions, and when they are capable of selecting goals and means arising from their own social, economic and political context.

Following a similar line of argument, Marchioni (1988:56) writes about what he calls *principles of community work*. Here, he emphasises how change is not possible unless it is carried out through the participation of the people involved in the project. Development is understood as coming from people. It is produced through raising consciousness about the situation in which they live, about the need to transform it, and about their social rights and responsibilities towards society. Individuals and communities are free to choose their own development which cannot be artificially

imposed from outside. The rhythm will depend on the capacity and will of individuals to improve and develop their own community.

The possibility also that educational programmes can go beyond the micro level has been stressed. As Prawda (1985:219) points out, "... there is an enormous difficulty when going from experimentation to large-scale application. Community participation is only possible when it takes place as part of profound social, economic, cultural and political changes." Garcia (1989), for example, lists a number of structural obstacles which limit community education projects: a) the reality of the community (language and culture, etc.); b) the regional and national context; c) the capacity to improve didactic material; d) the atomization of groups and educational institutions at national level; and e) the work-team.

Some projects have been carried out also from what has been called a 'socio-ecological orientation', an approach which tends to foster community intervention based on a problem oriented strategy where people are encouraged to define and solve their own problems (Garza *et. al.* 1988). Such an approach emphasizes the importance of taking into consideration specific local conditions and therefore the need to be conscious that what is valid in one context may not be valid in another. Along similar lines the accent has been placed on the need for actions that increase the potentiality of people to control their own lives, and also on the notion of *empowerment*, a concept that expresses the idea of enabling people to exert their 'power' in order to find a solution to their problems (Rappaport 1986).

Among these various strategies *participatory research* has recently been proposed as a suitable strategy and as a key methodology for community education. Participatory research was basically conceived as a strategy that could mean support for the efforts of individuals, groups and movements that question social inequality and are committed to work for the elimination of exploitation (ICAE 1985). It refers by and large to a process:

- 1) that begins with the identification of a problem deemed important by the participants.
- 2) The group then tries to understand the problem through the analysis of its causes.
- 3) The process is intended to lead to a proposal of new alternatives which are collectively generated and which are pondered as they are carried out.

Participatory research has been defined by Latapi (1988) as an educational strategy which is intended basically to social change and to be carried out by the oppressed so that they can identify their basic problems and take further actions to overcome them.⁶

Participatory research, as Latapi (*Ibidem.*) states, emerged linked to popular education. Participation, though, as will be argued next, has a significantly different meaning within popular education.

2.2 Popular Education.

As was just noted participation in *participatory research* is considered essential and the basis of community education; the accent here is put on the kind of participation which entails people's involvement in the research process and its implementation. However, in popular education -as defined above- even if "everything seems to revolve around participation" (Castillo and Latapi 1983:15), participation not only refers to activities and responsibilities taken up by members of the community but to a participation which points towards strengthening the identification of socially and economically marginal groups in society. As Brouwer and Martinic (1991:5) point out:

"...it is Freire who introduces popular education as a non-schooling education and as a methodological conception that links education with the development of the identity and organization of popular groups in society" (our emphasis).

This constitutes its basic distinguishing feature when compared to conventional approaches carried out usually by and through the State-sponsored institutions.

⁶ Participatory research has been analyzed by a number of authors. See, among them De Schutter (1986); Zuniga (1986).

Similarly, Schmelkes (1985) argues that what is distinctive of the strategy of *popular education* is that it not only means educational activities geared towards marginal and low income sectors of the society but to activities which, either carried out by these social groups or by external agents, must be social class-based, that is activities which must strengthen marginal groups as a social class.⁷

For some like Brandao (1985:51), popular education means the rejection of a conventional practice of education addressed to popular groups as one which is carried out as a way to compensate for and legitimate the political need of the State of having popular sectors outside the formal education system.

Popular education has been considered as an educational strategy which arises from the social and economic reality of Latin-American countries. Its emergence has been regarded as a reaction to the failures of conventional approaches to adult education (Latapi 1988). It has been described as an educational strategy with the following characteristics (Latapi 1988; Garcia Huidobro 1985):

- it starts from the reality of the deprived classes.
- it is intended to lead to a transformation of the living conditions of the poor.
- it implies a social class perspective and so it aims to empower the poor.
- it works with groups, not with individuals.
- the teacher-learner relationship is based on dialogue.
- the educational process is based on people's participation.

A number of difficulties have been pointed out concerning the implementation of popular education programmes, particularly when it comes to encouraging communities' involvement and organization around the solution of their problems, that is, a concern about participation. This challenge has led a number of authors to reflect about the basis of popular education, that is to say, about its real outcomes in terms of responding to

⁷ The concepts of 'social class', 'social strata' and 'low income population' have been vaguely defined. This presents a disadvantage for our analysis because each conveys a different meaning. To avoid a conceptual discussion of 'social class' I will use them in a comparative and relative sense. The closest definition to our meaning here is that provided by Bernstein which we will use throughout this thesis and particularly in the analytical chapter.

"...class relations constitute inequalities in the distribution of power between social groups, which are realized in the creation, organization, distribution, legitimation and reproduction of material and symbolic values arising out of the social division of labour." (Bernstein 1977:viii)

people's expectations. As a result of this, there has been an acknowledgement of the need for more knowledge about the way popular education contributes to developing people's capacity for communication and critical reflection on social relations and processes, and for more knowledge about how much it contributes to the emergence of alternative forms of social organization (Brandao 1986:145).

Criticisms of *popular education* have mainly pointed to an excessive concern with the ideological and political, and to how the pedagogical features and the content of the programmes have been underestimated (Brouwer and Martinic 1991:7). Gianotten and De Witt (1988) make an important contribution to the appraisal of the current difficulties of popular education and point to the need for a new theoretical and conceptual re-evaluation that will go beyond the mere idealism and social commitment that has characterized previous attempts, particularly those of the 1980s. These authors urge for a new attitude in popular education programmes where the link between projects and the State comes under consideration. They also urge for an assessment of the link between educational programmes and the economic and productive projects, and the usefulness of these projects for local community organizations.

The need to have a project linked to participants' productive lives and potential, as a crucial reference for community education, has come as a result of problems concerned with the lack of people's participation and interest in community programmes. This has been assumed to be having an impact in terms of people's perception of tangible results in the short term and as a motivational starting point for further activities. These projects base on production are intended to be linked with other fields of community life so that they can transcend the mere economic benefits and have therefore a broader and more significant impact in terms of the organization and conscientization of people in the community (Garcia 1989). There has been a recognition also that education oriented to the community should stem from an understanding of the state of the community and not be a response which, worked out in advance, takes no account of that state.

Despite its failures and difficulties popular education's emphasis on the development of the identity and organization of popular groups in society and commitment to social

change, makes it possible to conceive of it still as a real educational alternative to that of most conventional official nonformal education programmes.

2.3 Summary

To summarize this section Brouwer and Martinic (1991:8) highlight three important aspects that should be taken into account when differentiating between *community development* practices and *popular education*: 1) Within the first perspective participation tends to be aimed towards integration and the community is taken as a key place for the identity and participation of its members whereas *popular education* promotes a liberation-aimed participation linked to a notion of social class. 2) whereas *education for community development* aims to modernize traditional knowledge, *popular education* is concerned with recovering everyday knowledge in order to have a stand point to appraise knowledge coming from the outside. 3) Even if both perspectives aim to foster community actions suitable for the solution of community problems, within the first perspective expectations are centred on the possibility that new knowledge makes possible innovative social activities within the community; *popular education*, on the contrary, is oriented to transform power structures affecting the identity and life conditions of marginal groups in society.

So far a distinction has been made between *education for community development* and *popular education* as different perspectives and practices from which community education has been implemented. A picture has been given of some of their assumptions and limitations and a number of elements have been singled out as a common basis for both educational approaches, such as: the emphasis on people's participation, the need to link projects with the social and economic context, and starting from people's needs and interests. This has provided a background against which to appraise community education programmes provided by the government in the rural areas -which has been labelled, as was pointed out in the first part of this chapter, as *community education*. Finally, it has been argued that official community education programmes are far removed from a broader idea of community education as has been defined.

3. COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN THE RURAL AREAS

The purpose of this section is to give an account of community education programmes carried out by government institutions in the rural areas. However, as was noted at the beginning of this chapter (and this will be emphasized in Chapter VII) the clients of these programmes are predominantly women. This has naturally led^{us} to analyze women's education in the rural areas.

3.1 Women's Education in the Rural Areas: Nonformal non-vocational education.

The low socio-economic level of most rural areas in developing countries has been the major determinant of the contents of nonformal education programmes. Socio-economic conditions in less-developed countries and the inadequacy of welfare service have made it imperative that non-formal programmes focus on the satisfaction of basic needs (Jayaweera 1979). Therefore, as has been noted at the beginning of the chapter, the contents of state community education programmes address basically areas such as health, home economics, and skill training with the aim of compensating⁸ for the low living standards of people in the rural areas, and providing them with basic skills and knowledge to face everyday demands more effectively.

However, continual criticism has been made of the overall orientation of community education programmes, basically regarding the predominance of courses that attempt to improve women's social reproductive activities, instead of putting emphasis on productive ones. Most of these courses reinforce women's domestic role and emphasize the updating of knowledge and skills which are regarded as useful and proper for their own gender (cooking, knitting, clothes-making courses). They limit women to their biological and family service roles -women as passive recipients of 'social welfare' - by emphasizing only family planning, health, nutrition, education, child care, and crafts for self-employment" (Gayfer 1980:4).

⁸ Street (1990) labels the State as 'Compensatory State' when commenting on State provision of this kind of courses.

Stromquist's (1987) analysis of women's education is very insightful about the trends of this form of education and about its implications. Having made an analysis of the nature of nonformal education addressed to women, she concludes that "these new skills and information are perhaps contributing to solidify the reproductive role of women and to render more elusive than before the emancipatory goals for women."

Women continue to be treated in their traditional roles as mothers or at best as handicraft workers. It is not uncommon for handicraft training such as dressmaking, needlecraft, knitting, secretarial skills, electronics and art crafts, to be the first response to the idea of vocational training for women. As Oglesby *et. al.* (1989:327) point out "there appear also to have been few efforts to train women for non-traditional occupations".

The results of having the State as the main provider of nonformal education are profound when the characteristics of this form of education are taken into consideration. For example, in the case of Mexico, Street (1990:46) defines four types of concern for the State within the perspective of adult education: training, compensating, education, and corporativism. She situates community education courses within the 'compensating' category, defined as a kind of education which is not aimed at a radical solution to social and economic problems. These courses stem from what she labels as '*Compensatory State*'.

The segmentation of the programmes, little attention to the educational component, and little sensitivity to women's concerns have been identified as the consequences of having the State as the main provider of nonformal education addressed to women (Stromquist 1987).

Stromquist's (1987:42) conclusion regarding nonformal education provided by the State and addressed to women refers to "... the lack of desire to develop projects sensitive to women's problems and needs.... The State is identified as a major obstacle to the development of women's projects because of its failure to consider women's issues seriously or to identify women's projects for funding..." Her appraisal of State activity

can be summed up in the following statement:

"The State plays a major role in the subordination of women... Many of the governments of developing countries play a conservative rather than an innovative role regarding the identification and implementation of projects for women... Governments have shown a tendency to accept almost gender-free approaches to the expansion and improvement of formal education systems and to prefer reproductive over productive and certainly over emancipatory objectives in the design of nonformal education projects for women" (Stromquist 1987:50-1).

Therefore, courses addressed to women in the rural areas have been labelled as nonformal non-vocational courses. Women, as has been documented by a number of authors (Jayaweera 1979; Stromquist 1987; Gayfer 1980) have been usually left behind as far as vocational courses are concerned, ranging from societal attitudes against women's involvement in outside-the-home activities to gender stereotyped vocational courses. When it comes to agricultural extension programmes and education oriented to the labour market men are usually given preference over women. "Not in proportion to their numbers, their needs and their abilities are women regarded as necessary participants in non-formal education, in agriculture extension, in training or in research" (Bernard and Gayfer 1981:60).⁹

Moreover, as Oglesby *et. al.* (1989:328) point out, "many of so-called vocational courses addressed to women in the rural areas are oriented to self-employment and as a matter of policy they provide no formal links to wage employment and no grade tests to increase the employability of the participants."¹⁰ Quoting the Committee on the Status of Women in India Gayfer (1980) points out:

⁹ It is interesting to note that women perform between 60% and 89% of all agricultural work and at least 50% of all food production (Gayfer 1980:2).

¹⁰ As an example, Jayaweera (1979:24) comments that the Women's Development Centres in Sri-Lanka were devoted largely to needlework courses. When the programme tried to expand to include other types of courses such as home gardening, food production and preparation, appropriate technology, crafts, nutrition and health, the achievements were poor because of the lack of financial resources. The programme at the end was largely limited to needlework instruction.

"As for vocational and occupational skills, the needs of women are perhaps even greater than those of men. While we do not deny the value of crafts, women's needs for vocational training cannot be limited to them. The skills will differ according to the industrial and market potentials of the region, and it is imperative to relate the training local needs, resources, and employment possibilities instead of adopting an artificial sex-selection process."

Following a similar idea, Charlton (1984:163) writes about how there is a debate about the appropriateness and effectiveness of nonformal education strategies, particularly when women are the main participants in these programmes. Charlton comments about how these programmes have often ignored women's productive roles, how they show an inadequate knowledge about the kind of training or information that women want and how they have usually emphasized *home economics* training. However, she comments about how difficult it becomes to propose women training programmes in non-domestic tasks (e.g., in agriculture) given that it is very likely that these programmes will not improve their status nor lighten their work (*Ibidem.*:164).

3.2 Limitations.

The impact of nonformal education programmes addressed to women in the rural areas has been questioned from different perspectives. In the face of the low standards of living in rural areas programmes usually emphasize on the need for women to be self-sufficient and to have skills that will save them money by making it unnecessary to buy certain goods and services, and to a certain extent from having to resort to the labour market. However, as Bernard and Gayfer (1981:60) point out:

"... income-generating programmes and wage-employment schemes are typically encouraged and organized on the basis of enhancing the family's economic condition and relegate women's work again to a supplementary and 'female' category."

When dealing with marketable skills the idea is that women will be able to feed their children better (cookery) and clothe their children better (clothes-making and knitting courses) (Stromquist 1987).

The potential of community education for improving the living standards of people in the rural areas, has been questioned. Arizpe (1989:73), when she comments about schemes implemented in the rural sector to integrate women into development (courses such as cookery, knitting and crafts), refers to them as "throwing sweets with a smile to a starving mass of people". Jayaweera (1979:26) provides a sombre account of the achievements of these attempts:

"Despite considerable activity, for example, integrated rural development programmes in many countries and stress on basic needs strategies, the impact on the living standards of the masses of women seems to be almost as negative as the effect of income-generating projects. Programmes have not reached the poorest and the most educationally disadvantaged women. A multiplicity of organizations have participated in the provision of these non-formal programmes but the absence of central planning or co-ordination has militated against the maximum mobilization of resources."

Criticisms have also highlighted how important it is to take into account women's social economic circumstances in the rural sector; not only taking women as householders but as having an important role in the social and economic life of their communities. In country after country, the evidence is that women are engaged in a variety of agricultural jobs, small businesses, production and marketing activities, and factory work that might be made more productive and interesting with proper training. However, programmes are rarely concerned with providing women with agricultural related knowledge since it is assumed to be a male preserve (Jayaweera 1979). As Arizpe (1989:73) has emphasized:

"The problems of women in peasant economies are the economic structure of small holdings of land, lack of employment opportunities, and the fact that their work, due to ideological reasons, has not been integrated into the economic analysis of the agricultural production unit, and it has not been given social recognition. Women's work is discharged in the vague term of domestic work, and so 1) it is not socially recognized as work; 2) therefore payment for those 'jobs' is avoided; 3) society does not care when women are forced to increase or intensify their 'jobs': if she does not accept it, she will be accused of not fulfilling her wifely duties; that is to say, her obligations in terms of work are infinite, they have no limit." It is not possible to understand the work of the peasant woman out of the production unit in which she participates, that is the domestic unit."

On this Bernard and Gayfer (1981:66) comment that:

"... the most fundamental criticism of nonformal education activities is their failure, and the failure of development programmes in general, to take women seriously into account as full participants in the total life of communities and nations. They often foster the attitude that a woman's capabilities and role opinions are few, and that her contribution to the society outside the home is basically a supplementary one."

Given women's roles in the rural areas of developing countries, Stromquist (1987) suggests three types of skills to be provided by nonformal education programmes: 1) those which would make women's reproductive tasks less time consuming and less demanding; 2) marketable ones that could enable them to enter into the market economy; and finally 3) those that could give them the opportunity to realise that they live under conditions of subordination. Briefly, these are skills for reproduction, for production and for emancipation. Following a similar line of argument Clark (1979:8) points out that:

"An important development goal, then, is to improve the social situation of women and their ability to take positive economic actions. One way to do this is to concentrate on increasing the ability and confidence of women as income producers and expanding their alternatives for generating income."

Similar to Stromquist's argument, Clark (*Ibidem.*:8-9), relying on an ILO (International Labour Office) report, comments about two recommendations for addressing economic problems of women:

"The first is that women must be enabled to contribute more effectively to the satisfaction of their families' basic needs, within the framework of their traditional responsibilities. The other... is to ease (the) work burden (of women) while furthering economic independence and their more equitable integration into the community beyond the narrow circle of the family."

Concerning the way these programmes are implemented, it has been argued that community education activities provided by the government are seldom linked to a community development, neither do they entail the participation of the community in collective activities. They are usually concerned with the provision of courses dealing with a variety of subjects and there is hardly any coordination between them nor any

integration of these courses into a wider community plan. Stromquist (1987), when commenting on nonformal education projects for women run by the State, points out that they are segmented and usually deal with only one activity. Courses in different subject areas are not integrated into any meaningful whole and are seldom concerned with gender-awareness discussion or organisational skills.

The difference between educational provision isolated or linked to larger educational strategies concerned with community development processes is illustrated by Prawda (1985:227). He comments on how courses have a different impact when they are integrated to a larger process within the community, when they are demanded by people, and when they respond to people's interest. Reporting on a project carried out in several communities in Mexico, he comments on how a group of people asked the community committee to provide domestic and skill training courses with the aim of saving money by making their own clothes, repairing their houses and making furniture by themselves. What made this initiative different is that people's interest led to an educational strategy (the courses) become integrated within a larger community project being carried out in the community.

Adding support to this idea Braslavsky (1984:66) comments on how nonformal initial education programmes had better outcomes in terms of the attitudes of the community towards women when they were combined with additional programmes on health, housing, nutrition, and community promotion.

Finally, Gajardo (1983:35) points out that vocational education has had an unequal and discontinuous development in rural areas. These programmes have not been incorporated within rural development strategies and have not been coordinated with pre-elaborated diagnoses of job opportunities. In addition, these programmes have shown serious constraints in terms of meeting needs of the most disadvantaged population given that programmes tend to favour particularly those with higher levels of schooling. Besides, as Oglesby *et. al.* (1989:327) point out:

"... entry or reentry training programmes for women in developing countries have not been promoted in any significant fashion, because the demand for unskilled labour is adequately satisfied by the available pool of inexpensive labour".

4. SUMMARY

In this chapter we have dealt with the concept of community education, about how it emerged as a form of nonformal education in Latin America, its assumptions and its limitations. We have argued that there is a difference between the way the concept is used by governmental programmes and the meaning of community education as commonly linked to a community development process. We then provided a picture of how community development projects have been carried out in the rural areas, its limitations and constraints. We have been concerned with defining community education as it is practised by government institutions. We have attempted to establish a contrast between the practice of current official community education programmes and both *education for community development* and *popular education* assumptions -as community groups-centred educational alternatives which are based fundamentally in the notion of social participation. We have made special reference to women's education -since women are the main clients of State community education programmes-, and a critical assessment of its social implications. Here, we have underscored how women's education has been regarded and practised as a nonformal non-vocational education which reinforces women's social reproductive role. Finally we have emphasized how official community education programmes have fallen short of the original conception of education for community development and how they have not been integrated within a larger community project in the community.

CHAPTER IV

**THE APPRAISAL OF THE SOCIAL FUNCTIONS OF
EDUCATION:
A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

"The sociological imagination should make visible what is rendered invisible through the society's institutional procedures, and through the daily practices of its members" (Bernstein 1987:157).

"There is no lack of evidence to support the claim that schools act as agents in the economic and cultural reproduction of an unequal society. Nor is there any lack of evidence about the power of the hidden curriculum in schools in teaching norms and values that are related to this unequal society" (Apple 1979b:102).

"not only one learns in school how to do something, but through school individuals integrate to the culture and ideology of a form of social organization" (Labarca 1980:78).

CHAPTER IV
THE APPRAISAL OF THE SOCIAL FUNCTIONS OF EDUCATION:
A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to develop an adequate theoretical and conceptual framework we must first explore theories concerned with the hidden functions of education. For that reason the purpose of this section is to present and explore theories which could lead to the development of that kind of framework. Whilst elements of such a framework were present in the works of Durkheim (1956), particularly when he explored the role transmission plays in social reproduction and also in the analysis of Willard Waller (1963), only with the expansion of sociology and the more general development of its concern with education were these elements given greater prominence in research undertaken by people like Bernstein and Bourdieu.¹

It has been generally assumed (Whitty 1985:8-9; Apple and Weis 1983) that this occurred with the emergence of the 'New' Sociology of Education giving emphasis to new perspectives when compared with previous functionalist perspectives of the analysis of education in society. It is outside the scope of the thesis to contextualize these developments but it is important to discuss them since they help to provide the framework we require.

Further in this chapter we highlight the neo-Marxist contributions giving special emphasis to education's role in terms of cultural and social reproduction, and its sociopolitical functions. Finally, we provide a framework of Bernstein's sociolinguistic theory and model of cultural transmission. In brief, the chapter aims to give an account of the search which was undertaken for theoretical concepts that would permit us to understand nonformal education from the perspective of its social functions.

¹ Examples of initial developments of these concerns can be found in Bernstein (1977) and Bourdieu (1977).

1. THE 'NEW' SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION: TOWARDS
A NEW PERSPECTIVE.

An examination and understanding of the underlying structure and function of nonformal education requires us to develop a series of hypotheses concerned with the extent to which it plays a role in terms of social control and social reproduction. We shall enter the territory of the 'hidden curriculum' to unravel the outcomes of this form of education which are normally taken for granted. Educational approaches that can give an account of this kind of functions will therefore be considered.

The development of sociology of education has gone through different stages while attempting to explain the role of education in society. Since the 1950s a number of advances have been made in the development of our understanding of schools. Bernstein (1977:160) comments that studies carried out during that time did not focus upon the knowledge properties of the school in terms of its form, content and manner of transmission: "the basic concern was the demonstration, not explanation, of institutional sources of inequality in education" (*Ibidem.*). Writing in the early 1970s he points out that "... the interest in the social basis of symbolic systems, the forms of their legitimation, the interpretative procedures to which they give rise, the manner of their transmission, is of very recent origin" (*Ibidem.*).

An alternative tradition to the structural-functionalist accounts of understanding the dynamic of a society and the role played in it by education, as the dominant theoretical paradigm in Britain during the 1950s and 1960s, is what has been called by a 'critical sociological perspective', which was embodied by the so-called '*new sociology of education*' -already a landmark in the development of the sociology of education. Whitty (1985:7) is cautious about how new the emphasis characteristic of works associated with the 'new' sociology of education really was. However, he argues that "... this period is often seen as opening up for the first time the possibility of a genuinely sociological approach to the study of the school curriculum". It offered a new way of focusing on the school-society relationship stemming from the failures of functionalism and of trying to make the social functions of education its main object of study. It focused on how

education could be seen as a potential mechanism of socioeconomic selection and control instead of following the neutral emphasis of curricula assumed by the functionalist approach.

In the light of the above we start by putting the accent on this 'new' approach as it attempts to look at education from a different perspective making the nature of school knowledge a central concern. In Young's words, it was "... an approach that sought to make problematic that which had hitherto been taken for granted in education" (quoted by Whitty 1985:7). Thus, the need to look below the surface features of education and to explore "... the range of cultural meanings and typifications of those involved in the process of educational transmission" (Sharp 1980:7) appeared as a major concern.

Young (1988:6) defined the 'new' sociology of education² as "... a brief blooming of intellectual radicalism- that pretended to face functionalist analysis of education and *input/output* school models, with perspectives that privileged the analysis of educational processes" -it turned into the anti-positivist tradition by that time with a new emphasis on the curriculum. New areas previously neglected acquired importance within this new emphasis: a) the question of educational inequalities; b) the curriculum as a topic for the sociology of education; c) the emphasis on teachers and teacher-educators as agents of progressive change (*Ibidem.*).

Bernstein (1977:163) argues that the rather different approach in the sociology of education in the 1970s stemmed from a number of influences both in the United States and England. In the United States it took up new sociological perspectives being developed: Marxist, symbolic- interactionism, phenomenological, which shared the following concerns:

- 1) A view of humans as creators of meanings
- 2) An opposition to macro functional sociology
- 3) A focus upon the assumptions underlying social order. together with the treatment of social categories as themselves problematic.

² A great number of authors have written about the emergence of the 'new' sociology of education. Among others, see Karabel (1977), Whitty (1985). For a critical analysis see Sharp (1980) or Young (1988).

- 4) A distrust of forms of quantification and the use of objective categories.
- 5) A focus upon the transmission and acquisition of interpretative procedures.

The emphasis of works associated with the 'new' sociology of education on the underlying aspects of schooling led us to the concept of hidden-curriculum a concept which permits to encapsulate what underlies the educational process, and is more concerned with the latent function of education. Jackson (quoted by Apple 1979a:84) said the hidden curriculum was composed of "... the norms and values that are implicitly, but effectively, taught in schools and that are not usually talked about in teacher's statements of end or goals". The hidden curriculum refers to the social function -the social consequences derived from an educational process. It is concerned with the actual results of education. As Giroux (1983:45) puts it:

"... concerns with the hidden curriculum provide a more productive starting point for grappling with the fundamental question of what schools actually do than either earlier mainstream modes of theorizing or many current technocratic educational perspectives".

Vallance (quoted by Giroux 1983:47) provides a definition of hidden curriculum which conveys its social implications. She refers to it as:

"...those non-academic but educationally significant consequences of schooling that occur systematically but are not made explicit at any level of the public rationales for education.... It refers broadly to the social control function of schooling".

To sum up, the concept of hidden curriculum is an important methodological concept which comprises the socioeconomic purposes that schools are serving related to a particular historical context. As Giroux (1981b:72) puts it:

"... to make sense of the hidden curriculum means that schools have to be analyzed as agents of legitimation, organized to produce and reproduce the dominant categories, values and social relationships necessary for the maintenance of the larger society."

It is within this framework that we can relate the social, economic and political functions of schooling to the concept of the hidden curriculum, as covert features that

are present in the educational process.³ It means looking at schooling beyond the achievement perspectives and giving priority to the outcomes of the educational process which were not specified in the programmes, and which cannot be captured by simple observation. It involves as Apple and King (1977:341) describe it "a tacit teaching of social and economic norms and expectations to students."

2. THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF SCHOOL KNOWLEDGE

Immersed in the hidden curriculum perspective the sociology of school knowledge became one of the main areas of concern of works linked to the 'new' sociology of education concerned with examining the nature and functions of the overt and covert knowledge found within school settings (Apple and King 1977). The social determination of the curriculum, the definition and transmission of school knowledge became the new axis around which a new analytical theoretical framework developed. "Fundamental questions were raised about the existing classifications and framing of educational knowledge as to its significance for the structuring of experience and as a

³ Giroux (1983:47-60) distinguishes three basic approaches that characterize the work dealing with the hidden curriculum: traditional, liberal and radical.

The traditional approach comprises structural-functionalist analyses and has as its main assumption the idea that education plays a key role in maintaining the existing society. The transmission and reproduction of dominant values and beliefs via the hidden curriculum is both acknowledged and accepted as a positive function of the schooling process. Nevertheless, while the content of what is actually transmitted through certain classroom practices is analyzed, the political and economic interests such beliefs and values legitimize are taken for granted." Therefore, as Sharp notes, these approaches don't "discuss the hidden curriculum in terms of its ideological and political significance in sustaining a class society" (quoted by Giroux 1983: 50).

The liberal approach, by considering knowledge as a social construction, bases its analysis on the variety of ways by which knowledge gets arbitrarily mediated and negotiated within classrooms settings. Thus, as Giroux points out, important empirical research has emerged around questions concerning: a) the actual and hidden content of schooling; b) the principles that govern the form and content of teacher-student interaction; and c) the importance of seeing educational knowledge as commonsense categories and typifications selected from the larger culture and society that teachers, students, and researchers use to give meanings to their actions.

Finally, the radical perspective has as its main question how does the process of schooling function to reproduce and sustain the relations of dominance, exploitation, and inequality between classes. In this sense 'they help to explain the political function of schooling in terms of the concepts of class and domination', and also "point to the existence of structural factors outside the immediate environment of the classroom as important forces in influencing both the day-to-day experiences and the outcomes of the schooling process".

Our concern with the hidden curriculum is in terms of how it entails a process of ideological hegemony reproduction, that is to say, how is it that education through the structuring of the educational process and the social interactions which are part of it contributes to the maintaining and reproduction of hegemony.

repeater of society's hierarchical arrangements (Bernstein 1977:163)."

Taking up these issues new approaches to the school curriculum developed quite distinct from earlier traditions in the field making a critique of the academic curriculum as a form of domination and as a major source of the unequal distribution of education. As Young (1988:11) puts it: "... its separate single subjects, hierarchies of valued knowledge and its exclusion of non-school knowledge were analyzed as instruments of social class exclusion".

Within this new emphasis the curriculum as a subject became an important concern. New questions began to be asked, questions about why certain curricula existed and on what basis they were constructed; therefore "the methods of assessment, selection and organization of knowledge and the principles underlying them" became the main focus of study (Young 1971b:25).

The new focus laid emphasis on the study of the knowledge embodied in curricula in order to unveil the hidden meanings and their relations. Knowledge was problematized and set in a social reality so that it could be scrutinized and examined to reveal its nature. Accent was put on how the content of education is socially determined and a product of the socioeconomic and political circumstances at a certain time, on how the social value of knowledge is influenced by the type of criteria prevailing in a particular social and historical context and therefore could not be defined as valuable or not valuable, but only in terms of particular interests.

Works associated with the 'new' sociology of education attempted to analyze the social nature of the curriculum putting the accent on its power and knowledge implications. As Young (1971b:32) notes:

"... those in positions of power will attempt to define what is to be taken as knowledge, how accessible to different groups any knowledge is, and what are the accepted relationships between different knowledge areas and between those who have access to them and make them available".

Sociology of education attempted to make what is considered educational knowledge problematic. It was an attempt to bring forward the content of curricula as a major subject which could allow to respond to the latent function of education.⁴

Implications of curricular knowledge for social stratification were emphasized within studies and papers by Young (1971b), Keddie (1971) and others. The fact that there is a power relation underlying the construction of knowledge that determines what is to be taken as 'valued' knowledge led further studies to consider its impact on the stratification of knowledge, and to wonder by what criteria knowledge is stratified. As Young (1971b:34) states:

"... it may be useful (...) to view curricular changes as involving changing definitions of knowledge along one or more of the dimensions towards a less or more stratified, specialized and open organization of knowledge. Further, that as we assume some patterns of social relations associated with any curriculum these changes will be resisted in so far as they are perceived to undermine the values, relative power and privileges of the dominant groups involved".

The degree of stratification of knowledge has a bearing on the differentiation between what counts as knowledge and what does not (when curricula are constructed). Curricular organization, thus, entails a hierarchy of knowledge which serves to legitimize a particular social order -a particular social structure. Keddie, relating curricular organization to educational hierarchy, states that "in so far as it is moving towards a more highly differentiated curriculum, it is becoming more and not less like the educational hierarchy in providing a stratified curriculum for a stratified society" (quoted by Jones 1984:95). Initial attempts uncovered the power underlying the construction of curriculum and its implications in terms of social stratification. The curriculum, as Sharp

⁴ To this respect Eggleston (1977: 23) argues that curriculum determination is a matter related to both the use and the allocation of power. He defines five key factors concerning the processes of curriculum determination:

1. the definition of what shall be regarded as knowledge, understanding, values and skills;
2. the evaluation of this knowledge -into areas of greater importance of status;
3. the principles on which such knowledge shall be distributed; to whom and at what time various kinds of knowledge shall be made available and from whom they shall be withheld;
4. the identity of the groups whose definitions prevail in these matters;
5. the legitimacy of these groups to act in these ways; which is at the heart of the sociological analysis for in the last resort a curriculum exists and the power distribution is real because people believe in the knowledge it contains and the justice with which it is distributed.

(1980:77) points out, "... has no essential validity: it merely reflects a particular distribution of power in society which produces the differentiation and stratification of knowledge characteristics of educational curricula". Implicit in the idea of stratification was the link between knowledge and the notion of private property due to the restriction of access by some sectors of the society to certain kinds of knowledge.

Within this framework the curriculum embodies an array of elements which comprise its latent function. It entails a power relationship which remains hidden to the 'eyes' of society "... not enabling people to become aware of ways of changing their world" and that "... presents education as a thing, hiding the social relations between human beings who collectively produce it" (Young 1977:242).

The sociology of curriculum as Whitty (1985:30) puts it "... was opened up, but never fully developed, by the 'new' sociology of education' of the 1970's". In a way it privileged the micro perspective by focusing on what was going on in the classroom and gave an emphasis to the role played by ideas and consciousness in the stability of the social structure.

Two approaches to the sociology of education should be distinguished which according to Bernstein (1977:163) shared a concern with the inter-relationships between class, selection and equality: a first approach placed emphasis on macro-structural relationships and was concerned with making explicit how social class entered into, maintained and repeated itself in the organizational structure of education. The second approach focused upon the knowledge properties of schools and was concerned to study the social basis of what is defined as educational knowledge.

Sharp raised some important considerations regarding the early formulations of the hidden curriculum by some works associated with the 'new' sociology of education. According to Sharp (1980:78) they did not give an account of who was behind the power that influences the selection and control of knowledge. There was no consideration of the effects of capitalist production relations on schooling nor any significant assessment of the role of the State in education. Concerning Young's work

she comments that given his "... concern with power relationships and their implication for the stratification of knowledge in the curriculum, it is questionable to argue that the sociology of knowledge provides a central perspective, since the latter has not produced an adequate theory either of social stratification or of power relationships" (*Ibidem.*). Finally, Sharp stresses that "Young's aim to relate, historically and comparatively, issues of power and social stratification to the organization of educational knowledge, requires a theory of ideology" (*Ibidem.*:79).⁵

There was a lack of assessment of the presence of the capitalist State in daily schooling routines, the spectrum of the analysis of the curriculum was not wide enough to encapsulate the complex array of ideas, meanings and values that are communicated by means of education, and their relation to the interest of the dominant society, specifically within the context of the capitalist State. While the 'new' sociology of education emphasized the notion of reality as socially constructed, the analysis of the macro influence in terms of how and why reality ended up within a particular type of construction had been put aside (Whitty 1985:22).

A new orientation -a neo-Marxist approach to the sociology of education- came as a result of the neglect of the broader context in which the process of education takes place. There was a shift of emphasis from the analysis of curricula to the assessment of the importance of the socioeconomic structure. Neo-Marxist accounts pointed thus to the analysis of the nature of the capitalist society and the place of schooling within it. They moved away schools from their political innocence and placed them within the social and cultural background of the capitalist system. As Apple and Weis (1983:17) put it:

"... it was recognized that school practices needed to be related, not only to problems of individual achievement, occupational choice and mobility, but to the processes of capital accumulation and legitimation and production as well."

⁵ Young's work after 1976 offered a wider approach in which the hidden curriculum not only relates to what is going on in the classroom sphere but to something that has to deal with the macro level. In his own words "the perspectives which keep society going and hide the ideological dimensions of prevailing views of knowledge from public view are not just those of the classroom but take place within a context as wide as capitalist society itself" (quoted by Sharp 1980:84).

Within this new emphasis in the sociology of the curriculum the role of the State and its link with educational provision was stressed, Schools were regarded as accomplishing a number of functions within society: first, they accomplish an economic-productive function providing knowledge and skills to different social groups. Secondly, they fulfil a cultural function by legitimating and distributing forms of knowledge and values of the dominant culture. Thirdly, schools, as state apparatus, produce and legitimate the economic and ideological imperatives underlying the political power of the State (Dale 1982; Apple 1985; Giroux 1985).

Given our interest in the social function of community education programmes we are going to turn now to the reproductive approaches in order to assess the role of education in terms of the reproduction of capitalist societies. Even if the economic function is important we are going to focus on what has been called the social and cultural reproduction function of education as the one more related to the hidden or latent function of education.

3. EDUCATION AND SOCIAL REPRODUCTION

The 'reproduction paradigm' or the 'theory of social reproduction' deals particularly with the problem of how schools function in the interest of the dominant classes in society, of how schools contribute to the reproduction of the capitalist mode of production, specifically in the area of social relations. Theories of reproduction in Giroux's (1983:76) terms focus "... on how schools utilize their material and ideological resources to reproduce the social relations and attitudes needed to sustain the social divisions of labour necessary for the existing relations of production."

Marx and Lenin did not put emphasis on the way education contributes to the maintenance of the capitalist mode of production. Instead the question of reproduction in its structural-economic aspect, which refers mainly to the material conditions of reproduction, was examined by Marx. Other aspects of the reproduction process have been examined since which are concerned with the issue of social reproduction and it

is in this sense that schooling has been given a great amount of attention as part of the superstructure and as an important aspect of the social reproduction process. Lenin, as Carnoy (1982b:85) mentions, began to appreciate education's ideological function in recognizing the relation between education and the political apparatus, although he did not put much weight on the role of schooling in maintaining capitalist relations of production; he rather gave more importance to the political meaning of education in combatting bourgeois culture and enlightening the masses.

It was Gramsci who developed Marx's concept of superstructure and placed it in a consequential position in order to understand how societies function. The State, in Gramsci's terms, was not only to be considered as the coercive apparatus of the bourgeoisie but also as a very powerful instrument in achieving the necessary consensus for the survival and legitimacy of the capitalist State. He emphasized the role of superstructure in the reproduction of social classes (although he never used the term 'reproduction' to describe the relation), and the prevention of class consciousness, assigning the State an important function in the perpetuation of class structure.

Gramsci, as Hall (1981:21) puts it, attributes "... the fundamental determination in securing the 'complex unity' of society to the relationships of the economic structure, but regards the so-called 'superstructure' as having vital, critical 'work' to do in sustaining, at the social, cultural, political and ideological levels, the conditions which enable capitalist production to proceed". Producing conformity in society was thus regarded as one of superstructure's most important roles.

Hegemony in Gramsci's analysis refers to the ideological predominance of bourgeois values and norms over the subordinate classes. The State is conceived thus as an apparatus of hegemony, but with important links to the relations of production, an aspect which has been stressed by some authors putting the emphasis on the importance of the economic in addition to the ethical-political nature of hegemony (Showstack 1980:116), and on how hegemony "... emanates from both the nature of the bourgeoisie as an ideologically all encompassing class and its particular position of economic power in capitalist society" (Carnoy 1982b:87).

In Gramsci's analysis the superstructural level was given a role in the reproduction of bourgeois domination, specifically via hegemony in the arena of consciousness. Through hegemony then the State influences people's perception of reality in a way that contributes to the formation of a consensus around the values of the dominant class in society. The consensual function, as well as the coercive one, is important in sustaining the capitalist mode of production.

Gramsci's conception of the State is quite relevant to us because he provides the first step that can allow one to locate education as part of the superstructure: education as the means by which hegemony is transmitted and a first understanding of education in supporting the capitalist State, that is, the role of education within the capitalist system.

Some functions of education more concerned with the provision of a societal context amenable to capital accumulation than with the provision of knowledge skills (as a means of furthering the capital accumulation process) were highlighted in Gramsci's analysis of education. As Carnoy (1982b:87) points out in his analysis of Gramsci, "... control of consciousness is as much or more an area of political struggle as control of the forces of production", therefore "the State, as an instrument of bourgeois domination must be involved in the struggle over consciousness".

Although Gramsci would subscribe to a different paradigm -that of hegemony- we share Hall's (1981) appreciation that the way he visualizes the relationships between education and society may fall within the framework of reproduction because as Sharp puts it, "the reproduction of capitalist relations entails a process of maintaining hegemony.... hegemony can never be presumed in the context of class struggle but has to be fought for" (Sharp 1980:117).

It was Althusser who definitively moved reproduction from the base to the superstructure emphasizing the State as the bourgeoisie's repressive and ideological apparatus. According to Althusser every social formation must reproduce the conditions of its production at the same time as it produces, and in order to be able to produce. Reproduction, though, for Althusser involves also the development of particular

production skills for particular people, so the functions of education are not only ideological but also concerned with the provision of working knowledge, the reproduction of labour-power.

Althusser's analysis of reproduction stems from the Marxist argument that "no production is possible which does not allow for the reproduction of the material conditions of production", but the latter entails as well reproduction of labour power itself -the forces of production. This second kind of reproduction is very complex because it refers not only to the material and physical, but also to the cultural and ideological reproduction. Labour then not only must be skilled in order to meet the needs of the socio-technical division of labour but also must learn the rules which govern the order established by class domination, that is to say, ideological reproduction guarantee that workers will have norms, attitudes and behaviour which are deemed necessary for the reproduction of the relations of production.

Althusser highlights an aspect of the reproduction process which refers specifically to the area of social reproduction, that is, the reproduction of the relations of production outside production, for production. As he clearly points out, reproduction is referred to two fundamental levels:

"The reproduction of labour power reveals as its *sine qua non* not only the reproduction of its 'skills' but also the reproduction of its subjection to the ruling ideology or of the 'practice' of that ideology, with the proviso that it is not enough to say 'not only but also' for it is clear that it is in the forms and under the forms of ideological subjection that provision is made for the reproduction of the skills of labour power" (Althusser 1971:128).

Both Gramsci and Althusser contributed to a better understanding of how the capitalist State achieves its reproduction and its maintenance, the important role assumed by the superstructure in this process, and its role in contributing to the solution of the main problems of the capitalist State.

4. NEO - MARXIST ACCOUNTS

Althusser's account of the role of ideology in a capitalist society could be seen as offering a way out from an economic determinist analysis assigning a more important role to schools in the reproduction of the dominant ideology. Equally Gramsci's concept of hegemony could provide the link between theories of ideology and the State.

It was argued that Gramsci's concept of hegemony could help to explain how education contributes to show how the concept of legitimacy is used by the dominant mode of production and proved useful for the analysis of the legitimating and consensual functions of the school. Althusser, as was mentioned above, brought out how the school provides for the capitalist social formation the two most important elements for the reproduction of its labour power: the reproduction of its skills and the reproduction of its submission to the rules of the established order. So, in addition to the reproduction of the labour power, the schools also contribute to the reproduction of the relations of production, a function which is carried out mainly by the ideological State apparatuses (Althusser 1971:141).

Althusser attempts to explain the role schools play in the reproduction of the existing order through the notion of ideology. Ideology, in Althusser's (1971:156) analysis has two significant features: first, it has a material existence, a strong link with real conditions of existence: "... an ideology always exists in an apparatus, and its practice, or practices"; secondly, ideology refers to a system of representations which carry meanings and ideas that structure the unconsciousness of students.

Both aspects were viewed as being enormously important for the analysis of schooling in a capitalist society with a perspective different from that of the political economy of education and privileging the analysis of how the education system contributes to hegemony. As Whitty (1985:32) points out "... concern with ideological/cultural practice in and around the school curriculum received greater emphasis... Interest therefore began to develop in the ways that the curriculum worked to produce meanings and forms of consciousness and in the political struggles that developed around these processes."

Likewise, Giroux, in its analysis of the radical approaches to the hidden curriculum, writes about this new strand in the neo-marxist positions:

"Rejecting the one sided structuralism and gloom-and-doom pessimism in the political-economy posture, neo-marxist accounts of the hidden curriculum focused more specifically on how a variety of mechanisms in the schools tacitly worked in the interest of reproducing the ethos and structure of capitalist society". (Giroux 1983:59)

This new concern was related to the processes of capital accumulation, legitimation and production as aspects that placed education within a wider social perspective. Hegemony became a key concept in these new studies aiming to determine "... how ideological hegemony was maintained" (Apple and Weis 1983:17). Ideology becomes an important concept in order to understand a function of education that is not related specifically to production but to a social atmosphere of consensus and legitimacy produced through the selective forms of social knowledge.

The focus of the hegemony approach is particularly on the role of the schooling process in terms of social control, regarding it from the aspect of "maintenance of discipline, hierarchy and control, and the 'cultivation' of appropriate forms of dominant and subordinate consciousness". It is by means of this latent 'message' that "class relationships are transmitted and maintained within the schooling process" (Hall 1981:19). The concept of hegemony thus turned out to be an important methodological concept in assessing the way education contributes to the legitimation of the capitalist State and in sustaining the capitalist mode of production.

To explain how the reproduction of hegemony takes place is to focus on the nature of the knowledge being transmitted by schools, and on the importance of cultural control as a reproductive force. The question about how hegemony acts in society points to the link between power and culture, and towards the fields of knowledge, the way they are distributed, and the interests behind a given distribution. In this sense, Apple directed our attention to the relation between education and power pointing out that "through the definition, incorporation and selection of what is considered legitimate or 'real' knowledge, through positing a false consensus on what are appropriate facts, skills,

hopes and fears, (...) the economic and cultural apparatus are dialectically linked". Here "... knowledge is power..." Apple (1979a:154) says, "... a power which is underlying and that may appear with a neutral face but which whilst being carried on through institutions ends up legitimating and reproducing a system of inequality".

The idea of the control of knowledge becomes significant because of the power lying behind the construction of knowledge and its influence in fostering the ideological domination of one class over other classes. The role of schools in passing on particular conceptions and ideas and privileging the knowledge of a particular class contributes to the reproduction of a set of values enhancing domination relations. As Bernstein points out, "... how a society selects, classifies, distributes, transmits and evaluates the educational knowledge it considers to be public, reflects both the distribution of power and the principles of social control" (Bernstein 1977:85).

The content of knowledge -the arrangement of the curricula- becomes important because it shows which ideas are given priority and which are left behind. These are the important 'sais' and 'not sais' of cultural products to which Eagleton (quoted by Apple 1985:159) refers, when he notes that "... a text bears inscribed within it the marks of certain determinate absences which twist its signification into conflict and contradiction. The *not said* of a work is as important as the *said* since 'ideology is present in the text in the form of its eloquent silences'"

Politics and the notion of conflict are some of the elements often absent from the content of knowledge. The political content of education, as Sharp (1980:125) points out, "is an absent presence" and tends to be regarded as a possible threat to the legitimacy of the system if carried out with a meaning of opposition and resistance or even as a means of 'awakening' reflection and conflict. Conflict is usually regarded as a non-desirable content, as an absence to be fostered in a curriculum construction that ends up dealing with consensual elements. Thus, Apple (1979a:87) points out:

"... a basic assumption seems to be that conflict among groups of people is inherently and fundamentally bad and we should strive to eliminate it within the established framework of institutions, rather than seeing conflict and contradiction as the basic driving forces in society".

The consequence of these absences, which turn learning into an apolitical and a-historical process, are strongly related to schools' function in terms of social control since such a curriculum tends to end up leading students to political passivity and to the acceptance of a system of knowledge contributing both to the maintenance and reproduction of dominating relations. Such an organization and selection of the curriculum hides "... the complex nexus of political and economic power" as well as the State's need for consent and control (Apple 1979:29). It acts as a hidden curriculum "... which obscures its social function and usefulness for the status-quo and posits a network of assumptions that, when internalized by students, establishes the boundaries of legitimacy" (*Ibidem.*:87).

The ideological content of knowledge embedded in the curriculum manifests itself thus via the power of those behind the construction of the curriculum and turns out as one of its outcomes -latent functions- in the legitimising of a social and economic structure. Thus, as Giroux (1981b:75) points out, "... in order to grasp the notion of what underlies school knowledge it is important to recognize that classroom knowledge is shaped by hidden structures of meaning steeped in a complex interplay of ideology and power." Eggleston (1977:35) argues that "... it is not too cynical a view to suggest that one of the features of mass curricula may be seen as the provision of experiences which emphasize the student's incapacity and thereby further his acceptance of the legitimacy of difficult curricula for 'those who can'." Schools thus not only are important to control people but they are also relevant in the way they foster the acceptance of what is considered as 'legitimate' knowledge.

Apple (1985:33) points out the need to question what underlies curricular form in terms of:

"... its organization of our meanings and actions, its temporal sequences and interpersonal implications, its integration with the process of capital accumulation and legitimating ideologies. Exactly these kind of questions need to be asked about curriculum form and social interaction in schools as well. For it is on the grounds of the dominant curricular forms (...) that the structural crisis becomes visible and questions about the hidden curriculum, State intervention, and the control of the labour process are integrated at the level of school practice."

These analyses highlight the articulations between hegemonic ideological practice and its economic and political conditions of existence. They bring forward new aspects to be taken into account for a broader conception of the hidden curriculum which suggest that schools "have to be analyzed as agents of legitimation, organized to produce and reproduce the dominant categories, values and social relationships necessary for the maintenance of the larger society" (Giroux 1981b:72). Here emphasis is put on the role played by the educational system within a capitalist society in terms of its contribution in maintaining the hegemony and in the reproduction of the capitalist mode of production.

Sharp (1980:126) points out that the relation between the hidden curriculum and hegemony is important in terms both of how "the class reproducing aspects of schooling remain hidden and the class inequalities legitimated". In a similar vein Apple (1979:6) stresses the importance in terms of the additional function of schools such as acting:

"... as agents of cultural and ideological hegemony, as agents of selective tradition and of cultural 'incorporation' which help create people (with the appropriate meanings and values) who see no other serious possibility to the economic and cultural assemblage now extant."

For our purposes the conclusions of Giroux, Sharp and Apple concerning agents of cultural and ideological hegemony are important. The idea that the school and the process of schooling can be seen as cultivating, maintaining, reinforcing and communicating elements of dominant culture through their absorption by members of the society is a useful hypothesis. The way in which the processes are linked to the necessities of social control, legitimation, and social and cultural reproduction is as important as it has proved to be a stumbling block for social scientists. For that reason it provides us with a hypothesis for looking at the extent to which curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation play a role in the achievement of these functions. At the same time our data will allow us to assess this formulation critically.

We turn now to the assessment of some features of the concept of ideological hegemony as one which enables us to understand better the social functions of education, and

which can potentially provide a useful explanation of the role of the hidden curriculum in nonformal education.

5. THE CONCEPT OF HEGEMONY.

5.1 Hegemony and ideology

Ideological hegemony can be seen to be an important concept in educational theory and practice. It can provide us with a beginning of a working hypothesis due to its capacity to illuminate the political nature of schooling where schools -as ideological State apparatus- have a fundamental role as reproducers of hegemonic ideology.

The concept goes beyond the idea of the State as an instrument of coercion to focus on the issue of how domination in society is attained by the capitalist State through more subtle means. The concept of hegemony conveys a broader image of how the State's power operates in society, invading every aspect of social life. It supposes in Williams's terms:

"... the existence of something which is truly total, which is not merely secondary or superstructural, like the weak sense of ideology, but which is lived at such a depth, which saturates the society to such an extent, and which even constitutes the limit of common sense for most people under its sway that it corresponds to the reality of social experience very much more clearly than any notions derived from the formula of base and superstructure" (Williams 1973:3-16).

Therefore, an important function of hegemony, and one which in a way is essential to the concept, is to encapsulate what a nation is: "... common sense, lived experience, are articulated to and through ideas which express and encapsulate the requirements of the dominant class" (Dale 1982:149). Hegemony, thus, projects an overall array of what society is, the nature of the State and the needs of capitalist society; it "... must reflect back to the citizens an image of themselves, their individual and collective hopes and fears, possibilities and limitations, which does not conflict with the requirements of the dominant mode of production" (*Ibidem*:151).

Ideologies become hegemonic -become dominant- when they are institutionalized by the dominant class in society. In society ideologies occur within specific relations of domination and subordination related to the distribution of power, ending up being structured and intersected by the forms and themes of dominant meanings and values. Thus there is a difference between ideology as "... a set of beliefs, values and social practices that contain oppositional assumptions about varying elements of social reality" (Giroux, 1981b:148) and hegemony as the moment when a certain ideology becomes the dominant one in society "... stripped of their oppositional power and serve to legitimize existing institutional arrangements and social practices" (*Ibidem.*). In the same sense Sharp remarks that the function of hegemony is to:

"reproduce on the ideological plain the conditions for class rule and the continuation of the social relations of production. Hegemonic beliefs and practices thus shape practical ideologies and penetrate the level of common sense, mixing and mingling with ideological practices more spontaneously generated" (Sharp 1980:102).

5.2 The material relationship

The reference to the level of practice -to the level of production- has been emphasized as an important aspect of ideological hegemony. To this aspect we now turn our attention as an aspect which entails a broader understanding of the concept. That hegemony functions, Giroux (1981b:23-4) points out, "... for example, through the significations embedded in school texts, films, and 'official' teacher discourse is clear enough. What is less obvious is that it also functions in those practical experiences that need no discourse, the message of which lingers beneath a structured silence". That is precisely what we want to highlight, how people's interactions, their daily practices in their link with school practice constitute themselves ideological practices, or in Sharp's terms 'practical ideologies'.

Sharp (1980:96) makes use of the concept of practical ideology as "... a socially defined way of thinking and acting, a set of conventions and assumptions which make meaning possible and which phenomenologists call the taken-for-granted world of every day life".

Ideology, she remarks, "... is enclosed within a system of material practices and routines and does not just consist of thought, concepts and theories..." (*Ibidem.*:113). On the other hand, Williams (1973:3-16) conceives of hegemony as:

"... a whole body of practices and expectations; our assignments of energy, our ordinary understanding of man and his world. It is a set of meanings and values which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a sense of reality for most people in the society, a sense of absolute because experienced reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of the society to move, in most areas of their lives" (my emphases).

We have underlined the words referring to action and practice to bring out the point that ideologies either dominant, as hegemonic, or not, are not only sets of beliefs, meanings and ideas but also and rather "... lived meanings, practices and social relations" (Apple 1985:15), or as Sharp puts it: "... practical ideologies, in the marxist sense, are seen as not merely cultural but having a material reality and a material force" (Sharp 1980: 96). Hegemony, adds Giroux (1981b:23), "... is rooted in both the meanings and symbols that legitimate dominant interests as well as in the practices that students daily experience". Against both the argument that the concept is nothing but lies -and then the misleading concept of false consciousness-, and the possibility of thinking of subordinated classes as passively manipulated victims, the idea of hegemony speaks of an emphasis in the material level to which ideologies are always referred.

It is thus that practical ideologies have a strong relation with relations of production, with the way people interrelate with each other in the atmosphere of work and their interrelationship with the power of the capitalist State. Sharp ((1980:96-7) conveys this idea in very accurate terms when she says that "... practical ideologies both develop within and are a necessary element of different social relations of production", as well as "... necessary elements of the material process". She completes the idea stating that "men producing have ideas and habits referring to nature and tools (...) or concepts of social relationships within the labour process, or socio-political notions and rituals regarding the context of production itself". However, these practical relations are not always carried out at the level of consciousness but involve "... a material level of social practice which is to a great extent unconscious" (*Ibidem.*:86). Althusser, when he wrote

about the effects of ideology remarked that:

"... ideology has very little to do with 'consciousness'.... It is profoundly unconscious, even when it presents itself in a reflected form. Ideology is indeed a system of representations but in the majority of cases these representations have nothing to do with 'consciousness'...." (Althusser 1971).

Finally, Giroux (1981b:74) states in a precise way the terms in which hegemony could be usefully understood:

"Cultural hegemony (...) does not refer to the various forms of false consciousness that are drummed into students' heads via the formal curriculum. Instead, cultural hegemony refers to material practices embedded in the roles and routines through which students give expression and meaning to their classroom experiences. In other words, hegemony here is produced not simply through the diffusion of ideas but in the every day routines and rituals of the classroom social encounter and its corresponding reward and punishment system" (my underlining).

Here Giroux introduces what we consider is a much broader notion of hegemony: it is not only the ideas which are communicated that are important but also what it is entailed in the educational experience, in the schooling process itself: the minor social interactions and behavioral responses, meanings, attitudes and gestures that go along with the educational practice as an important part of it where the very essence of education is rooted.

5.3 Incorporation of different interests.

An important feature of hegemony, that of incorporating elements from all the different sectors of a society including those of the subordinate classes, has been stressed by a number of authors. It does not mean that these interests are taken into account, they are rather subsumed into the economic and political strategy of the State. In Jessop's words

"... the most effective hegemonic strategy seems to be to integrate popular democratic demands and economic claims into a programme that favours State intervention in the interests of accumulation" (quoted by Apple 1985:30).

Hegemony, while invading every sphere of society, incorporates elements from the ideology of the subordinate groups. Moreover, "... the supposedly spontaneous ideology of the working class is itself penetrated by notions, practices and routines emanating from the hegemonic system. This is precisely what hegemonic dominance means" (Sharp 1980:133). The fact that the channel whereby ideologies are structured is controlled by the hegemonic class has an influence both in the tendency of dominant meanings to prevail and in the framing of possible counter-hegemonic options within the hegemonic dominant form; this means, as Williams says that "the dominant culture even seems to control and produce its own counter-culture" (quoted by Sharp 1980:104).

Hegemony therefore must be considered as a dynamic process rather than a static and permanent condition. It involves a struggle between ideas and incorporates many contradictions through which it is constituted: "... it is not an already accomplished social fact, but a process in which dominant groups and classes manage to win the active consensus of those over whom they rule" (Apple 1985:29), a process as well of ideological assimilation of the subordinate classes.

The notion of hegemony, as Giroux puts it, helps us understand "the mode of domination exercised by the capitalist State and the ensuing contradictions and tensions that exist within such a mode of control" (...) to understand "... how the seeds of domination are produced" (Giroux 1981b:95). These are elements within a dominant ideology that "... see through to the heart of the unequal benefits of a society and at one and the same time tend to reproduce the ideological relations and meanings that maintain the hegemony of dominant classes" (Apple 1985:15). Herein Apple points to the aspect of hegemonic reproduction, that is to say, to how hegemony is reproduced. This helps us to understand how education contributes to the reproduction of domination relations, of power and control, and of hegemony itself.

5.4 Hegemony, meanings and codes.

The material aspect, as has been noted, constitutes one of the main characteristics in the concept of hegemony. That is, hegemony not only refers to ideas and values but to

practices and to a specific and concrete material world. In addition to this material reference, hegemony is deeply concerned with meanings. It conveys meanings and delivers meanings. Meanings are to be found in the practices and relations that are part of everyday life. As Sharp (1980:124) points out, "... the manner in which schools, classrooms and knowledge are socially organized, the material practices and routines through which learning and teaching take place provide the socially significant context which mediates any explicit transmission of formal knowledge, concepts and theories" (our underlining).

Students when going through a course come in contact with meanings arising from the educational process (both from the content and from the pedagogic practice), and generate meanings as a result of this experience.⁶ Giroux (1981b:75) makes this points explicit when he points out that:

"... classroom knowledge is shaped by hidden structures of meaning steeped in a complex interplay of ideology and power. Put another way, each of the three message systems of the school: curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation prefigures a selection, organization and distribution of meanings based on ideological considerations."

Apple (1979a:154) supports this idea and talks about how "... hegemony operates in large part through the control of meaning, through the 'manipulation' of the very categories and modes of thinking we commonsensically employ". Further, he emphasizes that "social and economic control occurs in schools not merely in the forms of discipline schools have or in the dispositions they teach -the rules and routines to keep order, the hidden curriculum that reinforces norms of work, obedience, punctuality, and so on. Control is exercised as well through the forms of meaning the school distributes. That is, the formal corpus of school knowledge can become a form of social and economic control" (*Ibidem.*:63).

⁶ This idea has been taken as a central element of our methodological scheme. See Chapter VI: Section 2 and Table 2.

Giroux (1981a:11) has pointed out that "Bernstein's work is particularly useful in identifying how the principles of social control are coded in the structuring devices that shape the message embedded in schools and other social institutions...". Further he comments on how "Bernstein attempts to illuminate how curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation represent message systems whose underlying structural principles are based on modes of social control rooted in the wider society (...). Bernstein develops a theoretical framework in which he claims that schools embody an educational code. Such a code is important because its function is to organize how authority and power are to be mediated throughout all aspects of the school encounter and experience (*Ibidem.*:10).

In Bernstein's (1977:85-6) terms educational knowledge codes refer:

"... to the underlying principles which shape curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation (...) the form this code takes depends upon social principles which regulate the classification and framing of knowledge made public in educational institutions"

Bernstein (1987:567) defines codes in the following terms: "A code is a regulative principle, tacitly acquired, which selects and integrates relevant meanings, forms of realisations and evoking contexts." We think these meanings are closely related to what Bernstein calls educational codes.

On this basis we have turned to Bernstein's use of codes, as deliverers of meanings, since they may enable us to analyze how the underlying elements of the educational process embody functions of social control and cultural reproduction. Our interest thus in educational codes is in them being able to capture the meaning which arises from the nonformal educational process in order to derive its implications in terms of the social function it may be achieving.

It can be argued that the economic and historical grounding needed, to which Apple and Wexler (1978) refer in one of their criticisms to Bernstein, is found in the ideological content of codes. Can codes capture the notion of ideological hegemony and therefore can refer to values and practices linked to a very concrete, material level, and thus to

the notion of the State? As Apple 1985:151) points out, "... seeing the school as a State apparatus means that the forms of control in school will be encoded. Can it be argued that all this can be framed within a code and Bernstein's use of codes could help us to incorporate these practices?

I will argue that Bernstein's use of codes could help provide us with a further hypothesis to explain how social positioning is conveyed through educational institutions; how the every-day conceptualization guides to realisations and routines of people; how their perceived relation to the economic and social practices and environments has a lot to do with the perception and meaning -the positioning- that people get as an outcome of the educational process. Many institutions deal with rural people through nonformal education programmes. These institutions -by means of their facilitators- embody a meaning which is related very directly to participants' lives, to their problems, to their socioeconomic existence, so, could the concept of code capture this complexity? To what extent can educational codes reflect or contain this array of interests and meanings so strongly linked to the material base and to the State's needs? These were some of our questions and underlying assumptions; they refer back to our interest in the notion of code and its possible uses.

6. SUMMARY

We started off by reviewing some of the ways in which educational knowledge has been looked at by the sociology of education. Emphasis was put on how there has been an increasing concern about the social nature of education, its underlying features, and its relation to a wider socioeconomic and political context. We then focused on those attempts which gave priority to the analysis of the ideological function of education and that have been assessed as the 'hegemony approach' in its link with hidden curriculum perspectives. Some relevant features of the hegemony concept were highlighted as a concept which was considered able to account for and comprise a social analysis of nonformal education. At this point the concepts of hidden curriculum, ideology, social control, legitimation and consensus came to be linked with a much broader

understanding of what the concept of ideological hegemony entails. This provided a theoretical reference to locate the social role of nonformal education.

We will turn now to some of Bernstein's concepts and categories from his model of cultural transmission that we have found useful for identifying how social control, reproduction and power relations are coded in the educational process. We will therefore introduce the main concepts and categories that were used for the analysis of the educational process of community education programmes.

7. BERNSTEIN'S THEORY: A THEORY OF CULTURAL TRANSMISSION

7.1 Education as cultural transmission.

In order to locate Bernstein's contribution within the 'new' emphasis of the sociology of education during the 1970s, it is important to make a distinction between the anti-positivist sociology of knowledge on one side, and on the other side the Durkheimian structuralist analysis of Bernstein and Bourdieu. Bernstein can be located within the stream that gives priority to the analysis of processes of cultural reproduction where educational inequality is regarded as a result of cultural practices that take place inside the educational context; the emphasis, as Sharp (1980:8) indicates, rests "... on the cultural differences of students and knowledge within the same school". As Giroux (1981a:10) points out, "... at the core of Bernstein's analysis of education and the role it plays in the cultural reproduction of class relationships is a theory of cultural transmission."

Bernard and Papagianis (1983:186) argue that Bernstein constitutes a different and contrasting stream where the interest lies in the interactive internal processes of pedagogy, curriculum and evaluation. Bernstein, they argue, goes beyond the interactive analysis of the school classroom and gives more importance to the analysis of the role of education in society from a structural interpretation.

Bernstein maintains that education must be seen broadly as an instrument through which a society transmits its cultural rules. This is achieved through what he calls the pedagogic device. This makes it different from other perspectives (like Bourdieu's) where the outcome of transmission is given priority over the *how* of the transmission.⁷

Bernstein argues that through different forms and practices of the curriculum control and socioeconomic selection are achieved. That is variations in the form of curriculum can (i) be related to the hierarchy of power in the society and (ii) to social control. In Bernstein's words his aim is: "... to understand something about the rules, practices and agencies regulating the legitimate creation, distribution, reproduction and change of consciousness by principles of communication through which a given distribution of power and dominating cultural categories are legitimated and reproduced. In short, the nature of symbolic control" (Bernstein 1987:573).

Giroux (1981a:11) comments that:

"... while he points out the importance of a semiotic reading of the structural features that shape knowledge, classroom social relationships, and organizational structures in the day-to-day functioning of schools, he does so at the expense of analysing the daily experiences of the actors themselves -that is, he ignores how different classes of students, teachers and other educational workers give meaning to the code that influence their daily experiences".

We try to take up that concern. In addition to the meaning delivered by the educational code we put emphasis on the meaning assigned by the participants to the educational process. We are therefore concerned with how meaning generates from the 'contact' between students and the educational process, how the educational code is perceived, and how it is acquired. All this lead us to how students are being positioned by the educational code -by the meanings which they deliver. To sum up, by relying on the participant's perspective, we intend to take up what has been considered by some authors as one of Bernstein's flaws: the over emphasis on the transmission of educational knowledge at the expense of acquisition (Gorder 1980:339: Giroux 1981a:11).

⁷ Bernstein (1988:Chapter 1) delineates his differences respect analysis carried out by Bourdieu.

7.2 Bernstein's concept of codes.

The theory of codes constitute the central element in Bernstein's work. They were part of his initial concerns during the previous research stages. The concept though has developed from its initial sociolinguistic denotation, to definitions where the semantic content has acquired a greater importance. Bernstein's use of codes not only refers to the sociolinguistic aspect -even if paradoxically and unfortunately this is one of the reasons why he is most known when linked to cultural deficits theories- but also to something with a far larger scope:

"Language and language use are always understood in the context of a moral order: social roles and values; modes of social control and the exercise of power; the ordering of meaning and experience. 'Codes' regulate the transmission and reproduction of cosmologies and the very social structure itself" (Atkinson 1985:68).

A code is referred fundamentally to meanings and its function is basically to prepare and be a vehicle for meanings. Codes not only are different forms of language but express ways to see, to capture and to interpret contexts; however, the concept of codes does not allude to a specific cultural space but to "... fundamental sets of relationships within and between fields of cultural signification" (Atkinson 1985:82). A code, Bernstein (1981:328) points out, "... is a regulator of the relationships between contexts and through that relationship a regulator of the relationships within contexts."

The link between code and context enables us to explain the presence of underlying rules which are always present and which have a deep influence on social interactions. They are the ones that "... regulate the flow of persons, acts, communications at different times and in different contexts. These rules create criteria or standards whereby persons, acts, communications are evaluated, compared and grouped. Pupils possess criteria whereby they evaluate, compare and group the meanings they receive and create" (Bernstein 1977:176). Power and control are present -as a code- in every context, and in the school -as the context where the pedagogical process takes place- they establish the specificity of the educational context, that is to say, the particularity of social interactions within the schooling context. From this perspective, "... in its social relationships, activities and practices, the school symbolizes social control" (Bernstein

1977:177).

According to Bernstein there is an underlying code in every context that identifies it and makes it different from other contexts and which establish rules that enable one to perceive the differences. It is here that Bernstein discusses what he calls *recognition rules* and *realization rules*: "recognition rules, a function of classification create the means of distinguishing between and so recognizing the speciality that constitutes a context, and realisation rules, a function of framing, regulate the creation and production of specialised relationships internal to that context. At the level of the subject, differences in code entail differences in recognition and realisation rules" (Bernstein 1987:567).

A context has an influence over that which is possible and that which is not possible, the legitimate and illegitimate according to its own particular code, since every context will produce its own code. Through its code a context entails the notion of permissiveness: "... acts selectively upon what can be said, how it is said, and how it is made public (Bernstein 1988:43). Thereby, a code communicates what it is relevant, significant, and legitimate in a particular context. The concept of code "is inseparable from a concept of legitimate and illegitimate communications, and thus it presupposes a hierarchy in forms of communication and in their demarcation and criteria" (Bernstein 1987:568).

Having outlined the relation between code and context, we turn now to the different types of contexts at their textual level, that is to say, the level which refers to the influences exerted by the characteristics and particular experiences of receivers upon the way educational transmissions are received.

7.3 Sociolinguistic codes.

In Bernstein's view the concept of codes is linked with social structure and social positioning. Stemming from these links he identifies two types of codes: elaborated and restricted.

Elaborated codes are characterized by their universal character. Among these there is little reference or link to a specific context and meanings tend to be more general; in this sense they are context independent and emphasis lies more on the individual than on the group. The characteristics of restricted codes contrast with those of elaborated codes. A restricted code is oriented to common experiences and its meaning is local and particular bounded to a context. While elaborated codes are more oriented to personal matters, restricted codes allude more to group situations or the possession of a certain *status*.

Posner (1988) emphasizes the importance of not falling into the trap of conceiving of codes as superior or inferiors:

"... elaborated code does not mean a linguistic elaboration as the restricted code does not entail a restriction. A restricted code does not preclude elaborations and eloquence, as the elaborated code cannot preclude brief communication expressions. What comes to be fundamental is if these expressions are found in the acceptable social level, and the relative access to social promotion and power that they may confer."

In terms of their social implications, elaborated codes -in a wider sense- offer access to the comprehension and manipulation of social norms, to the construction of a hierarchy of material and symbolic values, and to their manipulation and forms of realization. As long as a person operates within what is considered as 'socially acceptable' then elaborated codes give access to promotion within the social hierarchy. Conversely, restricted codes are defined by their limited reach and reduced access to meanings and realizations related to the social hierarchy, as well as by their marginalization from these processes. This code is characterized as remote and isolated from the comprehension of social norms and rules.

This leads us -within society- to refer to elaborated codes as dominating codes, and restricted codes as dominated codes⁸. This differentiation allows us to refer more precisely to how a person locates and is located within a social hierarchy according to the level of acquisition and access to material and symbolic values. This relation is illustrated by Bernstein (1987:571-2) as follows:

⁸ This denotation of codes is used by Bernstein (1981:327) when he points out that: "... class relations generate, distribute, reproduce, and legitimate distinctive forms of communication, which transmit dominating and dominated codes, and that subjects are differentially positioned by these codes in the process of their acquisition".

"... the simpler the social division of labour and the more specific and local the relation between an agent and its material base then the more direct the relation between meanings and a specific material base and the greater the probability of a restricted code. The more complex the social division of labour, the less specific and local the relation between an agent and its material base, then the more indirect the relation between meanings and a specific material base and the greater the probability of an elaborated code."

Since social class is a factor that has an influence upon the use of and access to elaborated codes, lower social classes find themselves with less access to this kind of codes. People belonging to the lower social classes will tend thus to have less facility in the use of elaborated codes compared to people belonging to medium and high strata.

This leads to consider the way codes are distributed within a society and the factors that explain why social groups use either one or other code. On this, Bernstein (1981:332-3) makes reference to the influence that the social division of labour has upon this distribution:

"... the most primitive condition for locating of coding orientations is given by the location of agents in the social division of labour. Different locations generate different interactional practices, which realise different relations to the material base and so different coding orientations."

The position a person has within the structure of the social division of labour is determinant for the type of coding orientations and for the access to these orientations. However, that depends in last instance on the form of the distribution of power since "... the group that dominates the principle of the social division of labour determines the extent to which positions in the social division of labour give access to specialized coding orientations" (Bernstein 1981:333).

The distribution of codes in a society is thus a reflection of its social stratification and shows an unequal distribution in the access to different kind of orientations: "the distribution of codes, therefore, does not simply follow a functional diversity within the division of labour. It is not innocent. It is a reflection of the hegemony of the dominant class" (Atkinson 1985:99-100).

From Bernstein's viewpoint the comprehension of the processes that take place in the classroom must be seen from the perspective of social class and its relation with the role of the school in terms of reproduction, social control and socialization. Stemming from this, his

analysis of educational codes and their transformations within the school is based fundamentally on a notion of social class which is generated by the mode of production that operates in society and which is properly the dominant code. Therefore, social class is conceived as "... the fundamental dominant cultural category, created and maintained by the mode of production. It is the basic classification which creates the social relationships of production" (Bernstein 1977:175).

Bernstein begins with an examination of the relation between social class and the dominant mode of production where social classes are constituted by the relation they maintain with the mode of production and by their position in the social division of labour. He writes that power arises through the interrelationship between social classes according to their location in the social division of labour. This unequal distribution of power has an influence on the presence of privileged meanings and values. As Bernstein (1977:viii) points out:

"... class relations constitute inequalities in the distribution of power between social groups, which are realized in the creation, organization, distribution, legitimation and reproduction of material and symbolic values arising out of the social division of labour."

In this sense, "... a fundamental property of the division of labour is the imposition of boundaries of insulation between social categories -what Bernstein refers to as 'classification'. The creation, manipulation and legitimation of such categories are manifestations of power" (Atkinson 1985:101). "Far from being absent power informs all of Bernstein's sociology" (*Ibidem.*:98).

7.4 The Concept of Transmission.

From Bernstein's perspective, there are power relations and principles of social control underlying the educational process, so that "how a society selects, distributes, transmits, and evaluates educational knowledge it considers to be public, reflects both the distribution of power and the principles of social control" (Bernstein 1977:85).

In order to make more explicit the way in which modifications in the distribution of power and the forms of social control are realized, to reveal differences between schools or any educational activity, between different pedagogies and what distinguishes different forms of

evaluation, Bernstein uses the concepts of classification and framing. Both concepts may be referred to both micro and macro levels. These concepts were used in the analysis (see Chapter VII) as methodological concepts that helped us to decipher some underlying social implications of the coding of the nonformal educational process.

Within the educational sphere they are defined in the following terms:

Classification refers to "the degree of boundary maintenance between contents"; it does not refer to the contents themselves but to the relation between them: "where classification is strong, contents are well insulated from each other by strong boundaries. Where classification is weak, there is reduced insulation between contents, for the boundaries between contents are weak and blurred" (Bernstein 1977:88). Classification is therefore a concept that refers to the structure. Within a strong classification there is a strong insulation between subjects or areas of knowledge, such as between biology and sociology, whereas in a weak insulation contents exist in an open relationship (social movements and psychology), or there is a core idea that integrates knowledge.

Framing refers to the pedagogical relationship that exists between teacher and pupil and specifically refers to the context of the transmission of knowledge. "Frame refers to the degree of control teacher and pupil possess over the selection, organization, pacing and timing of the knowledge transmitted and received in the pedagogical relationship" (Bernstein 1977:89). A weak framing will reflect conditions where the limits between what may and what may not be transmitted are slight; in a strong framing the limits are rather firm: "framing regulates who controls the principle of communication" (Bernstein 1988:32). In a weak framing situation the pupil can influence the way in which learning is realized while in a strong framing the control by the teacher is total.

Classification and framing (internal and external values)

According to Bernstein, classification and framing can be used as well to refer to relations between objects and to relations between persons. Hence, in order to understand key features of the educational process in nonformal education we used these as working hypotheses. We relied thus on external and internal values of classification and framing for the assessment of some features of the educational process.

The internal value of classification within the pedagogic context refers to how the space is organized in terms of how objects are set up, which objects, the relation between them, etc. It refers to the arrangements of the space and the objects in it. So in a classroom with strong classification, there is a specialization of spaces, etc. (Bernstein 1992:36).

Classification may refer as well to the structural relationships between teachers and between acquirers. Therefore it may refer to different groupings of students (i.e. sex, ability, curricula) and also to different groupings of teachers according to the level of specialization of their subjects (Bernstein 1977:177-8).

The **external value of framing** refers to "... the controls over communication outside of the pedagogic context entering pedagogic communication within that context". "Where the external framing is strong, this often means that the images, voices and practices the school reflects, make it difficult for people in the marginal classes to recognize themselves in the school" (Bernstein 1992:36).

Finally, Bernstein distinguishes between two systems of rules regulated by framing which can vary independently: rules of social order (**regulative discourse**) and rules of discursive order (**instructional discourse**) (Bernstein 1992:35).

The rules of social order (regulative discourse) "... refer to the forms that hierarchical relations take in the pedagogic relation and to expectations about conduct, character and manner" (*Ibidem.*). They refer to the transmission rules which position the acquirer in these aspects.

The instructional discourse is concerned with selection, criteria, sequence, pacing, and so refer to the transmission rules which position the acquirer in relation to legitimate competencies and the relations between competencies. Where there is weak framing over the instructional discourse there must be weak framing over the regulative discourse. According to Bernstein instructional discourse is always embedded in regulative discourse which is the dominant one (*Ibidem.*).

In general where framing is strong, we shall have a visible pedagogic practice. Here the rules of instructional and regulative discourse are explicit. Where framing is weak, we are likely to have an invisible pedagogic practice. Here the rules of regulative and instructional discourse

are implicit, and largely unknown to the acquirer (*Ibidem.*:36).

7.5 Pedagogies, visible and invisible.

Bernstein makes a distinction between different school pedagogies in terms of variations of visible and invisible pedagogies.⁹ Both are characterized by different levels of classification and framing. An invisible pedagogy is defined as that which is realized through apparently weak classification and weak framing; a visible pedagogy, on the contrary, is realized through strong classification and strong frames.

Bernstein (1977:117) points out three fundamental rules whose interrelationship defines the logic of any kind of pedagogical relationship: hierarchy rules, sequencing rules, and criteria rules. Each one of them may be explicit, specific or diffuse. Thus, visible pedagogies will be characterized by an underlying structure visible for the pupil where the transmitter clearly and explicitly defines the different rules; on the other hand, invisible pedagogies are those that don't reveal their underlying structure and where rules have a rather diffuse and implicit character (Bernstein 1988:155).

Therefore, the rules of hierarchy establish who is the acquirer and who the transmitter through the acquisition of rules of social order, character and manners; sequencing rules indicate the rhythm for the acquisition of knowledge; and criteria rules will indicate to the acquirer the type of communication and relationships that are considered legitimate or illegitimate. (Bernstein 1988:64).

There are two important links for our analysis of the community education pedagogical process: the link between pedagogy and social class and the link between pedagogy and social control:

Bernstein (1988:80) argues that even if both pedagogies are absolutely different, both bear social class assumptions.¹⁰ The different assumptions considered constitute fundamentally

⁹ An ample treatment on this topic may be found in Bernstein (1977): 'Class and pedagogies: visible and invisible' and Bernstein (1988).

¹⁰ An ample treatment on class assumptions of invisible and visible pedagogies can be found in Bernstein (1988:72-86).

"cultural and economic requirements needed for the effective acquisition and comprehension" and they are analyzed in terms of concepts of space, time and control.

A space characterized by a weak framing where objects are in close relation to each other, will have a symbolic impact given that rules underlying its construction "contain implicit cognitive and social messages" (*Ibidem.*). These social messages are expressed in people's perception of this particular environment. Different settings will have different meanings to people and will influence attitudes, the learning process, and the proper expected outcomes from a course.

As for the time, some pedagogies are based on a more relaxed concept of time with no set times for the achievement of a specific development stage. Both pedagogies "... build different concepts of development (...) in time" (Bernstein 1988:82) and just as the space will have an effect on pupil's appreciation of their educational experience.

Concerning social control implications of invisible pedagogies, the typical characteristics of this sort of pedagogy -diffuse evaluation criteria, and a weak framing where the pupil may influence the educational process- generate a greater expression and projection of the individual. As Bernstein (1988:83) asserts, it is a "... way of communication that operates around intentionality and motivation areas" where "... more of the feelings, fantasies, fears, expectations (...) are expected to be made public". Invisible pedagogies will result in a reduced isolation between teacher and pupil favouring a personal interrelationship. They offer thus the possibility for students of manifesting and, therefore, the chance for teachers to observe this manifestation. Control -states Bernstein- "inheres in elaborated interpersonal communication in a context where maximum surveillance is possible (...) control is vested in the process of interpersonal communication" (Bernstein 1977:135).

7.6 Relation between education and production.

Bernstein's attempt to develop a theory which can translate the micro into the macro and the macro into the micro using the same concepts, offers the possibility of analysing the relations between education and production with the concepts of classification and framing. As Bernstein (1977:188) states:

"...the crucial relation between education and production is the strength of the classification between these two categories. Where this classification is strong, then the principles, contexts and possibilities of education are not integrated with the contexts, processes and possibilities of production. Where the classification is weak, the principles, contexts and possibilities of production are integrated with the principles, contexts and possibilities of education."

From Bernstein's perspective there is a level of correspondence between both spheres and the intensity will vary according to how weak or strong classification is. So, opposed to a rigid and mechanic correspondence principle where education fulfils the role of providing students with the proper characteristics demanded by the sphere of production, Bernstein (1977:187) maintains that "... only a small fraction of the output of education bears a direct relation to the mode of production in terms of the appropriateness of skill and dispositions".

Even if Bernstein refuses to establish a mechanic correspondence, he accepts that production has an influence upon educational practice: "... education (...) is not directly in rapport with a material base, although it is affected by such a base" (Bernstein 1977:189-190). The relation that exists between both levels will not always be the same, so education will correspond to a lesser or greater extent to the needs of production, depending on the specific economic and political context and on the correlation of forces of the class structure. Therefore, "variations in the codes of education and production are different historical realizations of the dominant cultural category" (Bernstein 1977:175).

There are occasions where education is relatively independent with characteristics that do not necessarily correspond to the needs of the mode of production, because "education is dependent upon production but also possesses a specific independence or relative autonomy in the constituting of its codes" (Bernstein 1977:191). These occasions are characterized by a strong classification between both spheres, so that this situation of relative autonomy of education may be defined "in terms of the strength of the classification between the category education and the category production". (*Ibidem.*:188).

It is thus that the relation between both spheres may be considered as an indicator of the desired function of education in the social sphere. This relative autonomy of education may be fostered in situations when legitimation is needed to face the State's eventual loss of legitimacy. On the other hand, situations that put pressure upon the need to accelerate the capital accumulation process will surely require a stronger link between both spheres, so that

education may accomplish specific tasks for the process of accumulation.

As part of its economic -accumulation- function education is supposed to play a very strong role in the production and reproduction of manual labour with characteristics relevant to the different spheres of production (Apple and Weis 1983:5; Camoy 1982b). On this particular function, Bernstein (1977:185-6) states that education "is a class-allocatory device, socially creating, maintaining and reproducing non-specialized and specialized dispositions which have an approximate relevance to the mode of production". Within the frame of this correspondence there are a series of contradictions with reference to the relationship between both levels:

"a) the relations between the distribution of the categories it creates and the distribution of the required categories of the mode of production.

b) the relationships between the categories it creates and the relationships between the categories required by the mode of production.

c) the realization of its categories (skills and dispositions) and the expected realizations of the categories of the mode of production" (Bernstein 1977:185).

This type of relations are the 'systemic relationships between education and production'. They refer to the role of education in its approximate reproduction of the work force; they constitute "both the class and the material basis of education" (Bernstein 1977:186).

So, even if a clear correspondence is established between both levels, the concept of classification at this level helped us to analyze the real or apparent link between nonformal education and the labour market, and its possible social implications.

7.7 The Educational Code.

According to Bernstein framing is linked to pedagogy and therefore to the principle of control; whilst classification is linked to curriculum and hence to the distribution of power. He argues that both concepts, classification and framing give an account of the educational code which is the one that regulates the relations and structures of power in the school. In his view it regulates as well what counts as valid knowledge, as a valid transmission of knowledge, and as a valid evaluation.

Bernstein uses variations in classification and framing to describe the different systems of educational organization; changes in classification and framing values help Bernstein as well to analyze the ways in which material and symbolic values are consolidated and the social structure they represent. Any change in these principles implies a change in the code itself that is being transmitted:

"... the educational code is determined by the values of classification and framing (...) As a code changes so do what count as relevant meanings, what count as appropriate realizations and what count as evoking contexts. As classification and framing change, so do relevant meanings, realizations and contexts. Inherent in the classification is the distribution of power; inherent in the framing is the principle of control" (Bernstein 1977:180-1).

According to Bernstein, every school environment is regulated thus by principles of classification and framing -that is by principles of power and social control- that, as codes, are internalized by students. Pupils during the educational process are in contact with a series of underlying codes through which they internalize principles of power and control. Codes, according to Cox (1984:210):

"... can be seen as looking backwards to power and control relations which position categories of agents and regulate their practices, social, material, symbolic, through the principles of classification and framing they establish (...) The specification of educational codes is simultaneously a reading on power relations and on consciousness."

The context generated by the code marks and limits the form of social interactions, the sphere of the possible and the legitimate; "... such boundaries mark what is thinkable" points out Atkinson (1985:135), and they lead to the notion of what may be considered as valid educational knowledge, what may be taken as a form of communication. This positions the individual and influences the formation of ways of thinking and acting; that is, the shaping of ideologies. According to Bernstein the ideological positioning and oppositioning is realised in, transmitted and legitimated by classification and framing rules (Bernstein 1987:567).

Bernstein states that codes "... will locate those who use them in an ideology. To the extent a code is acquired, at the same time it is acquired and used, the person falls in the process of being inserted into the ideology" (1988:41). Lodged within the code are power relations and principles of social control with which the pupil is in contact during the educational process.

According to Bernstein the tacit incorporation by the individual of the educational code is what constitutes the heart of cultural reproduction. Through this process the individual incorporates principles of social order which arise from classification and framing relations -structural boundaries and the ways in which they are experienced. This process of acquisition is described by Bernstein (1977:177) in the following terms:

"As the acquirer tacitly acquires these principles, he/she acquires the underlying code. In this way, classification and framing regulate meanings, and, more importantly, the principle which creates and maintains what count as legitimate meanings. From this point of view, power and control are made substantive in the classification and framing procedures which, in turn, create particular contexts and forms of educational practice which constitute the particular acts of social relationships of the school. We can say that from this point of view, in its social relationships, activities and practices, the schools symbolizes power and control."

Finally, Cox (1984:34) makes explicit what this process entails in the educational context:

"What is incorporated in the case of schools are the classificatory schemes that the person acquires imperceptibly in the every day process of experiencing the order of transmissions (hierarchy of fields); the order of social relations (hierarchy of social categories); the order of the rules that regulate the space, the time and the practices (regulation over objects and their distribution, sequence, and rhythm of the discursive transmission, etc.). The educational process is about the incorporation of the social, the transformation of the objective limits of a social order in incorporated limits and classificatory schemes; the transformation of social and material categories in mental categories."

Bernstein's use of codes was used because they enable us to enter into the particular code of the nonformal education process and look into its underlying social functions. The concept of code allows to enter into fields such as social control, the curriculum, socialization, ideology, meanings, school, the family. The possibility of looking at Bernstein's work in the direction of a "construction of a model which specifies relations between the realities of class, power and ideology, and their relation to principles of interpretation" (Atkinson 1985:100, quoting Grimshaw) was crucial when selecting this analytical perspective.

8. SUMMARY

In this chapter we have attempted to provide a theoretical and conceptual framework that could enable us to account for the social control and reproduction functions of nonformal education. Given our concern with the latent functions of education we started off by putting emphases on attempts to look into the hidden nature of schooling and the social determination of school knowledge carried out by what has been called the 'new sociology of education'. The emphasis put on underlying aspects of schooling led us to the concept of hidden curriculum as a concept which enables us to enter into the analysis of the latent function of education. In the following sections we centred our attention on the social nature of school knowledge, particularly regarding power and control implications, and its impact on the stratification of knowledge. We then turned to the analysis of the role of education in terms of the reproduction of capitalist societies, here emphasis was put on the social and cultural reproduction function of education as a reaction to economic determinism analysis. We focused on the role of schools in terms of the reproduction of a dominant ideology. This led us to give priority to the hegemony approach as one that could give account of the role of the schooling process in terms of social control, legitimation and social reproduction. At this point we linked the concept of hegemony with that of hidden curriculum and argued about the potential of hegemony in terms of what the term conveys.

Finally, we established a link between hegemony, meaning, and codes, and stressed how meanings are inherent parts of the educational codes. On this consideration we turned to Bernstein's use of codes as a means of entering into the particular code of the nonformal education process and looking into its underlying social functions: how educational codes embody social control and cultural reproduction functions; how they contribute to explain how the characteristics of nonformal education process deliver meanings -as a primary attribute of codes- that entail ideological values. At this point it was argued that the interest in the code is that it can capture a broad notion of meaning -a meaning joined to ideological hegemony and to everything this term entails.

We argued that Bernstein's use of codes might help to explain how the every-day routines of peoples, their relation to the economic and social practices and environments has a relation with the perception and meaning -the positioning- that people get as an outcome of the educational process. Questions were posed about to what extent a code can capture this

complexity. To what extent can educational codes reflect or contain this array of interests and meanings so strongly linked to the material base and to State's needs?

Finally, we described some of Bernstein's concepts and categories taken from his model of cultural transmission. These are the basic concepts used for the analysis of the educational process during the empirical work.

CHAPTER V

**NONFORMAL EDUCATION:
A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**

"a contextual analysis of nonformal education will enable us to understand better the current as well as the potential role of nonformal education in its relationship with social and political development."

"nonformal education is not a unique phenomenon that requires for its evaluation or investigation totally new methodologies and theories. Rather, it is another aspect of the spectrum of purposive education phenomena and as such lends itself to research models and social science knowledge that has already been accumulated, developed, and tested."

(Bock and Paganianis 1983b:6)

CHAPTER V
NONFORMAL EDUCATION:
A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

In this short chapter our purpose is to look at nonformal education from a sociological perspective. We shall focus our analysis on some characteristics of this form of education such as the main characteristics of its clients, and some elements of the nonformal educational process. The analysis is concerned not only with community education programmes but with what has been broadly termed as nonformal education. Special emphasis is put on the rural areas as the site where community education programmes that are considered in our study are located. A hypothetical framework addressing some of the questions and assumptions that served as a guide for the research underlies the chapter. Should it be necessary please refer to Chapter IV for an explanation of some of Bernstein's concepts which are used in the following section.

1. THE CLIENTELE OF NONFORMAL EDUCATION: CODES AND IMPLICATIONS

As we have mentioned in previous chapters (I, II, and III), nonformal education covers a great variety of programmes concerned with numerous topics from literacy and basic education to vocational education and agricultural extension. The dissimilarity among the objectives of such programmes can be seen in terms of the diversity of educational processes, ranging from discussion groups to field practices and short courses. As Bernard and Papagianis (1983:198) remark:

"... in out of school education, what is considered academic knowledge, how it is transmitted, the rules governing those transmissions, and the authority relationships between transmitter and receiver are distinctly different from those found in formal schools".

Even if programmes are so heterogeneous, they share a common trait, the lack of formality. This can be seen in some features such as the learning environment,

evaluation, type of credentials, teacher's training, etc. These features are certainly more evident in the rural areas. The particular feature of rural nonformal education stems from the fact that these programmes are addressed to a very specific clientele, people who live in the rural areas. Additionally, some of its objectives keep a link with the characteristics of the rural environment (organization courses, agricultural extension, rural housing betterment, agro-industrial projects, etc.).

The bulk of the clients of nonformal education programmes is composed of people from rural low income families.¹ Their coding orientation,² -people's tendency to have access to different types of codes, and then to meanings- is more likely to be a restricted one, that is to say, the relations between them and the material base are more specific and local and with a location in a simple division of labour. Their marginal position within the overall social structure is one of their common traits. Coding orientation thus tends to be more restricted -local and particularistic- with a limited access to different levels of understanding and positioning during the process of acquisition.

However, besides social class, some other factors contribute to the shaping of a sociolinguistic code. A simplistic analysis of restricted and elaborated codes might be dangerous because as Bernard and Papagianis (1983:195) point out:

"Since sociolinguistic codes refer to ways in which the environment is experienced and interpreted, interactions between contexts, authority structures, beliefs, and values held by people in diverse communities may contribute in similar ways to the development of restricted and elaborated codes".

Therefore, it may happen that someone who grows export products (strawberries, flowers), a day-labourer, or a migrant worker -given the spaces they interact with- may

¹ The rural people is not engaged exclusively in agriculture. They constitute a rather heterogeneous group (traders, housewives, small-land owners, day labourers, etc.) Nowadays they work in many types of activities, although they are generally viewed as non-qualified manual labour belonging to the secondary labour market level mainly within the urban centres (warehouse cellars, bricklayers, stow workers, etc.) We are referring thus to this multi-active people that live in the rural sector with a predominantly low social, economic and political status (Martinez 1981:84). The different relations that may be established force us to distinguish between the different social actors: a young peasant who migrates eventually to the city will have different demands than the peasant who is committed all day to agricultural works; their coding orientation will clearly be different as well.

² Coding orientation can be "restricted/elaborated in terms of the different orders of meaning and the forms of their realisations" (Bernstein 1987:565).

have a more elaborate coding orientation than an industrial worker in the city. In the light of the above, we will be looking at restricted codes as dominated codes, and elaborated codes as dominating codes, and rather in terms of coding orientations, in order to assess how people locate themselves, and are located, within a social hierarchy according to their level of acquisition and access to the material and symbolic values of that social entity.

Under the assumption of a predominant interest with context related concerns -that is to say, with concrete, material, everyday social relations- among rural population, particularly among women, given their general socially subordinated role in rural societies, to what extent can nonformal education programmes be successful if their message is not sufficiently grounded in people's common material needs and systems of belief found in their communities? It could be that programmes have to respond basically to immediate needs and expectations and have to be based on people's common interests in the rural context in order to attract people's interest. If restricted coding is more positional or status-orientated, more attached to the local context, possibly an educational message which takes into account these characteristics could be more successful. However, giving priority to these considerations might lead to a reinforcement of a marginal education, an '*ad-hoc*' education for rural people which could limit their access to a more elaborate coding orientation in terms of the acquisition of dominant values. We are forced to ask thus what is the most convenient coding within the practice of nonformal education and what are the possible social implications?³

Following this argument, it may be that some governmental programmes may be more successful in engaging people's interest due to the fact they appear to answer to their basic needs and make sense in their context. Programmes for the use of fertilizers to increase agriculture productivity, animal husbandry techniques, skill training and

³ This would lead to reflect upon popular education's effectiveness due to a more elaborate coding entailed in this form of education, and because of the reflexive basis in which this alternative education is sustained. See Posner (1985) for a criticism of popular education under this basis. On this Bernard and Papagianis (1983:203) comment that "if Bernstein's analysis is correct, we might find that learners with more restricted coding do better in a more strongly classified or framed educational environment such as traditional formal schools, i.e. those with a more visible pedagogy." So, they argue, if restricted coding is the most typical among peasants, it "may be desirable to try to maintain structures and processes for the exchange of knowledge that learners understand and expect" (Bernard and Papagianis 1983:197).

domestic courses, etc., may represent to rural people concrete ways to raise their incomes.

Regarding this idea Oglesby *et. al.* (1989:328) point out that:

"Despite the great diversity of economic, political and cultural systems, the factor affecting motivation to attend courses which is common for women in the developing countries of Asia and Africa is the overriding need for education which is designed to generate more income."

The link between elaborated and restricted coding orientations and systems of rural social stratification could reveal which sectors of the rural population have more access to elaborated coding and the relation to their social positioning in the social division of labour and in the distribution of power in a very specific context. That would account for "... the differential positioning of persons (subjects) within the social division of labour" (Atkinson 1985:101) and provide some analytical elements to enter into potential cooptation processes as likely outcomes of nonformal education programmes.

Rural people come in contact with an 'atmosphere' of codes, while going through the educational process and are "... differentially positioned by these codes in the process of their acquisition" (Bernstein 1981:327). "Ideology", asserts Bernstein "is constituted through and in such positioning" (*Ibidem.*). Cooptation -as one of nonformal education's latent functions- might be explained in terms of the advantageous coding a group of individuals have -as a result of their positioning in the social division of labour- and its relation with their level of understanding and acquisition (and identification of dominating codes).

The closer to power, that is, to the place where material and symbolic values are constituted and housed, the greater the probability of being positioned. Therefore those who are already in the position of thinking and acting closely enough to the logic of power of a particular community, and with the ability to penetrate into the form and content of discourse, will be the only groups to benefit. As Bernstein (1988:37) points out:

"... the educational process produces at least two categories of students, those who acquire the code (framing and classification) with different levels of realization, and those who are not socialized by the code but only within their position in the relations of power (classification)."

Only that social stratum with an advantageous position in the structure of local power and able to use elaborate coding will acquire elaborate coding orientations. Such is the case of people who have certain positions of power (i.e. municipality delegates); people who are located at the highest levels as a result of their economic activities and because of their position in the local social division of labour; and the situation of people who migrate abroad or to the major cities for a determinate period of time, due to the permanent contact with an urban world which provides them with a broader perspective and with a less restricted coding orientation.

This is achieved either weakly or strongly depending on the type of courses. Courses whose contents are strongly linked to the regional structures of power -the local level authorities- will have a stronger effect. Such is the case of courses dealing with agrarian matters, such as those dealing with the organization of the *ejido*, where conflicts over responsibilities and authorities are analyzed and discussed and where those who have an advantaging handling of dominating codes will tend to accede to positions in the local power structure. This leads to wonder to what extent and in which way nonformal education is fostering the availability of these sort of codes to its clients.

Arguing along the same lines a number of authors have pointed out how nonformal education is sometimes used as a means to gain access to material and symbolic values (Martinic 1988); how sometimes it tends to reproduce hierarchy roles within the local context (Moulton 1983); how usually those with an advantageous position in terms of schooling, economic status, are the ones who benefit the most from nonformal education programmes (Lowe 1975); finally, how, particularly in the agricultural sector, those with more resources and schooling take the most advantage of skills and knowledge provided through agricultural extension programmes (Schmelkes 1979; ISEAC 1983).

2. THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

2.1 The Curriculum.

Adult education programmes have often been questioned for not allowing people to participate in the making and implementation of the programme. For example Gayfer (1980:6) referring to women's interests being taken into account, comments that "more women than men take part in adult and nonformal education activities; and yet women are not true participants and actors in this process; they are usually described in terms that perpetuate the myths of passivity, inferiority and helplessness - 'target groups', 'beneficiaries', 'untapped resources'." It is normally in the institutions, not amongst people, that decisions about the curriculum come to be made. "There is not yet any single governmental institution that abdicates its power over the classificatory systems of knowledge" (Posner 1985:56).

It can be argued that if the content of the curriculum comes to be a selection from the dominant culture (Young 1971b), the student will only be in contact with knowledge and values which are favoured by the elite. As La Belle (1986:91) points out:

"... most educational programmes are dominated by the state and typically by a nation's more powerful socioeconomic and political interests. Such an orientation ensures that the dominant's group point of view will determine the existent curricula through text book choice, teacher selection, and so on, while it also ensures that the implicit educational process will reflect the wider social order."

It would be important therefore to know how a hierarchical society's power and control are being channelled through the curriculum and pedagogy of nonformal education programmes. What is the relation between the type of classification and the social, economic and political characteristics of the regional context? How is it responsive to people's needs and to the economic and political needs of the State in that particular context? How does a determinate classification work out with people? What is the outcome in terms of the codes and meanings people are getting out of it? Moreover, how do systems of classification help to legitimate the social structure?

These questions point to the need to look closely at structural relations and interests which are not evident at first glance and emphasize the need to go beyond simplistic curriculum analysis into a wider perspective that reveals how, through the classification of nonformal education, the State, as the agent which controls educational institutions, transmits values that support its economic and political needs. As Apple (1985:33) states:

"... curriculum content is important in terms of its organization of our meanings and actions, its temporal sequences and interpersonal implications, its integration with the process of capital accumulation and legitimating ideologies because it is on this very same field that the structural crisis becomes visible and questions about the hidden curriculum, state intervention and the control of the labour process are integrated at the level of school practice."

This leads us to seeing to what extent Bernstein's concepts in his theory of cultural transmission help to explain how power is embedded in the curriculum and how it operates, how to 'read' in a curriculum the State's socioeconomic and political interests, and to what extent it can mirror aims and contradictions located inside nonformal educational policies.

How useful is the concept of classification for analysing the extent to which the idea of liberation is supported within the curriculum -the possibility of the *yet to be voiced*; in analysing how dominated meanings are taken into account (as a particular way in which hegemony incorporates subordinated meanings)? Can Bernstein's use of codes enable to understand the inherent complexity in State's hegemony and thus the complexity, contradiction, and mixed interests involved in the coding of a nonformal education practice?

To what extent then does the incorporation of subordinated interests, 'games' of power that permeate society and generate an atmosphere of domination, legitimation and consensus, turn nonformal education in a matter of concession and compromise, if only to guarantee State's legitimacy within people's opinion? The 'possibility of the other' incorporated in hegemonic values might help to explain why the State incorporates forms of resistance into the game, within the framework of a "... continuous process of

formation and superseding of unstable equilibria between the interests of the fundamental groups and those of the subordinated groups" (Showstack 1980:119).

These considerations raise questions regarding the way in which subordinated interests are incorporated in the educational process. Is the answer to be found in the curriculum's classificatory traits or in the form of the pedagogical process? Can codes express such diverse interests? Could it be that the pedagogy and curriculum contain this duality and leave space for the expression of dominated interests: in the curriculum, through the nature of some subjects (sociopolitical), and underlying elements (the image and meaning of some courses that appears to 'vindicate' people's interests and rights); in pedagogy, through the possibility offered by some programmes' open characteristics to project situations of conflict and the level of participation allowed to students in the regulation of the transmission process?

It is therefore important to contextualize nonformal education within a socioeconomic and political framework, and take into account the particular characteristics of a regime in order to understand the values and interests being privileged and legitimated (Dale *et al.* 1981; Apple 1985). It is equally important to analyze what could be the implications of a determinate classification in terms of social control, level of consciousness raising, and programmes' effectiveness both in terms of people's and State's interests.

Brandao (1985b:23) points out that services channelled towards people, such as community education programmes, provide "... a political service for the interests of dominant groups, making control over the activities and ideas of popular groups more effective and far reaching. Singer (quoted by Brandao *Ibidem.*) calls them '*services for control*' aimed at avoiding social and economic contradictions interfering with the production and consumption of both material and non-material goods within the established order.

If mass curricula, as Eggleston (1977:35) has noted, may be seen as "... the provision of experiences which emphasize the student's incapacity and thereby his acceptance of the legitimacy of difficult curricula *for those who can*", could it be that as one of the

underlying features of nonformal education it performs an important role in terms of social control and in the positioning of people within their specific social division of labour? How does the curricula contribute to make mental and manual divisions clearer -as an aspect of the social division of labour with important implications in terms of the reproduction of class relations-, and how does it reinforce the idea of a stratified knowledge for a stratified society (different forms of education to different kinds of students): the distribution of codes as a reflection of the hegemony of the dominant class?

To what extent do the nature and marginality of nonformal education provide a means for the State to insert agents "... into their respective position within the social formation" (Sharp 1980:105). As Jarvis (1985:81) points out, "... the knowledge that relates to the upper stratum of society will be accorded high status while that which is specifically relevant to the lower echelons of society is given low status". Thus, in this way the contents of nonformal education curricula maybe reinforce the role of rural people in a capitalist society and attach them to their function in the social division of labour, taking into account the multiplicity of roles rural people play nowadays (which goes from being a farmer to their multiple insertions within urban informal work). As Courtney (1992:135) points out:

"Schooling takes on a symbolic function of signalling social class identity. Rather than serving the instrumental function of providing necessary job skills, it serves an equally important -some would argue more important- function of placing people in social categories with respect to each other."

The curriculum of some nonformal education courses (such as carpentry, metal-working, electronics, etc.) seems to respond also to the need of filling the lower rungs of the labour market and contribute thus to social stratification. The fact that nonformal education clients are mainly recruited from the lowest economic sectors, and the restricted possibilities of upward social mobility provided by its curriculum and its credentials, contribute to nonformal education's important role in terms of the

stratification of knowledge and of society. According to some writers these programmes are exacerbating the gap between the rich and the poor and perpetuating a two-tier educational system where the bottom one is for the masses (La Belle 1988:89; Schmelkes 1989; Jarvis 1985). Nonformal education's contribution to education's global function in terms of the reproduction of production relationships -through the revaluation of the labour force's commercial character- may be highly significant.

On this Devlin (quoted by Courtney 1992:139), in the case of developed countries, comments that:

"Adult education plays an important role in relation to the occupational structure beyond that popularly recognized. While the manifest function of individual participation in adult education may be the enhancement of occupational mobility, the latent function of such participation in the aggregate is to contribute to the allocation of talent on the basis of ability. This function thus supports the rational organization of economic life."

2.2 The Relation between Nonformal Education and the Labour Market.

According to Bernstein, there is a level of correspondence between education and production which varies depending on the level of classification between both spheres. Nonformal education presents an interesting picture when this relation is taken into account. When regarding nonformal education programmes in Latin America it is possible to observe a significant level of the expected correspondence between both fields (La Belle 1986). The general assumption is that nonformal education programmes' manifest function lies within the economic realm, particularly within situations when the economy faces difficulties and the educational system is pressed in order to achieve a

greater level of correspondence.

As was noted in Chapter I one of the main assumptions behind nonformal education has been its role in social and economic development. There is not much evidence for this alleged potentiality nor for the existence of an integration or correspondence with the labour market (La Belle and Verhine 1981). This leads to the consideration of some important latent implications of nonformal education: can the appearance of *openness* of some nonformal education courses act as an important means of social control and legitimation projecting a favourable image which legitimates this form of education with respect to its intentions? On the other side, do courses raise expectations for those who regard these programmes as an opportunity to get access to the labour market? On the other hand, how frustrating can the experience be when students realize that they do not have the credentials required by the labour market? (La Belle 1986:89).

This leads us also to reflect about the relation that courses, such as carpentry and weaving, have with the workplace or with the labour market. Is there such a strong classification between education and production so that is inevitable that nonformal education programmes will fail to match labour market needs? What does an apparent weak classification between education and work mean in ideological terms? Can these courses be explained in terms of social control by means of using up spare time, and providing people with temporary palliatives? What is then the ideological and political role of courses which are not directly linked to the labour market, such as leisure, recreation, home economics? Moreover, it lead us to question the real function of these courses, particularly should the State be facing an eventual loss of legitimacy.

Nonformal education may give the impression of greater equality of opportunity, especially the technical/vocational courses, hence the need to find out their role within the educational system and their real link in productive terms. Vocationalism, according to Bernstein (1988:88-9), writing about the United Kingdom, "... seems to offer the working class a legitimization of their own pedagogical interests in a curriculum based on the manual, and while doing this it seems to include them as significant pedagogical subjects, but at the same time it closes their personal and occupational possibilities".

In terms of Latin America, for some others these courses have not been relevant or useful within people's environments and thus have only "... generated the conditions to reproduce, within the countryside, (...) reserves of manual labour sufficiently trained for the performance of works that the capitalist economy will eventually need" (Schmelkes 1984:191).

Finally, nonformal education's lack of credentials -its low status as an educational alternative- has also been acknowledged as an influential factor when the link with the labour market has been considered. As was noted earlier (Chapter III) nonformal education in the rural areas has not been concerned with offering proper vocational education, therefore people's possibilities of being employed are restricted (La Belle and Verhine 1981; La Belle 1989:89). On this, Keddie (quoted by Jones 1984:95) has commented that "... as far as adult education is concerned , it is not its non-vocational nature only which makes it vulnerable... but that no value is set upon it in the academic market place".

2.3 The Pedagogical Process.

There are some important questions we must consider when reflecting upon the relations between pedagogy and nonformal education. Some of our queries refer to pedagogy as a key factor to explain nonformal education's social control and legitimation functions. Can the pedagogy of nonformal education programmes mask the implicit rules of subordination contained within the pedagogical process? What are the implications of a determinate pedagogy over students' social behaviour? To what extent does the nonformal educational experience mean to students an alternative link with society? How do participants experience the educational context?

Chateau and Martinic (1988) have put the accent on how popular education programmes are sometimes taken by participants as specialized contexts where a different form of communication takes place, and where it is possible to talk about situations of conflict, and about everyday life. Their findings were related to three fundamental aspects:

- the educational spaces which are organized by the institutions are perceived by the participants as places where both symbolic (prestige, relationships, social contacts) and material (seeds, credits) resources are distributed.
- teachers are regarded as external agents with a specialized knowledge who despite the attempts to bring about a participative atmosphere are the ones who control the dynamic of the educational process.
- participants value the experience as the possibility to talk about their problems and to have access to a different way of thinking and acting in their reality, and not as a *change of consciousness*.

Also, on the assumption that the relaxed and informal atmosphere of nonformal education offers the opportunity for people to express themselves, how can the

experience be meaningful to people? How does an open educational context act upon people? What does it mean in terms of the social functions of education? In what ways do the rules that regulate social expression and outcomes *-realization rules-* offering a different collective space contrast with those that regulate participants' daily life? How do the characteristics of nonformal education that shape the educational context become a means for surveillance and social control? (Bernstein 1977). Can the group dynamics carried out in some of the programmes turn into cathartic and mediation processes where situations of conflict can be exposed and students let off steam -even if the programme was not conceived as having that function?

It has also been argued that the pedagogic practices used by popular education (group dynamics, the discussion of topics) have not had the expected outcomes. Even when trying to provide a different learning environment to that of formal education, so that the educational process does not turn into a hostile experience, some times these pedagogical strategies, where rules are rather implicit, ironically "increase learning problems of those for whom this new learning situation was created, supposedly based in their experiences... Not only must a particular content be learnt, but the rules of the games as well" (Posner 1985:58).

Concerning the role of the teacher attention has been focused on the dependency implications of the underlying image of nonformal education teachers, given they are also representatives of authority and also about how this translates into a potent instrument of social control (Posner 1988:58). With a similar perspective Brandao (1986:157) points out how difficult it is for teachers to realize that their problems to conform to and make a real link with the people address power relations which are disguised as *services* among unequal social classes.

This leads us to reflect upon how the whole educational experience is perceived, upon what underlies it, and what meaning is assigned to nonformal education programmes. Brandao (*Ibidem.*:157) makes an interesting assessment of how popular classes -given their 'colonization' experience- have learnt to profit from social programmes (education, health, housing) without getting involved opposing thus to the political control which is entailed in government education provision.

3. NONFORMAL EDUCATION STATUS: SOME SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Many authors have dealt with the low status given to the field and practice of nonformal education. La Belle (1981:309) relates it to nonformal education's lack of credentials: "... one major reason for the failure of nonformal education to increase job attainment may be that employers do not value such credentials when compared with those offered by the formal schools." Likewise, Clark (quoted by Jones 1984:2) underscores "... the socially marginal position of adult education as a result of its basic un-acceptability to the broader, more established institutions and forces of society and because it is concerned with ...precarious values... Adult education is socially marginal and outside the mainstream of educational processes in society." This leads us to wonder to what extent the informal nature in which courses are carried out reinforce the 'social service' or 'social welfare' features of these programmes and highlight the marginal status of nonformal education. What effects does it have in terms of people's positioning -in terms of the acceptance of a marginal education? What are the motivational effects of nonformal education given its marginal circumstances? What is the importance of its marginal image in terms of social stratification?

The relation between nonformal education and its effects in terms of motivational attitudes has been acknowledged by authors like Bock and Papagianis (1976). They analyze this effect on the basis of what they call *cooling-out* thesis. According to it, out-of-school education programmes tend to reduce aspirations so that they match lowered expectations. From this perspective some characteristics of the invisible pedagogies adopted by some nonformal education programmes such as the sequencing, evaluation criteria, and pacing, can frustrate motivation and lower expectations. Similarly, Gomez Tovar (1980) comments on how the probability of succeeding in educational programmes, in and out of school, is much less among the poor who feel frustrated and blame themselves for their failure.

Is it possible thus to make a link between the type of pedagogy and its possible effects in terms of lowering participants' aspirations to match labour market possibilities? How does it translate in terms of the division between mental and manual labour?

The marginal conditions in which these programmes operate has been acknowledged as an important constraint and a crucial indicator of the importance given to this form of education. Jayaweera (1979:27) has pointed out how resource limitations have an adverse effect on the organization and quality of the courses as well as on how people perceive the courses:

"At policy level there is the implicit assumption that a modest outlay of funds will suffice for home economics programmes and there is little concern about evaluating the behavioral outcomes of such programmes. At the same time apathy leads to resignation and acceptance of poor environmental conditions and living standards on the part of women."

To conclude we think it is important to analyze how it is that nonformal education programmes fail to achieve precisely what it was they were intended to achieve. Conversely, how some meanings become present even when they are not specified either in the functions or in the contents. Finally, how the economic message -as the manifest objective of the courses- works its way through and how it accomplishes social and political functions rather than economic or developmental ones.

4. SUMMARY

In this chapter we have examined some aspects of nonformal educational practice from a sociological perspective. We argued about how some features of the curriculum and the pedagogy, as parts of the nonformal educational process, may help to explain social and political functions of this form of education; about how people's interests and coding orientations have an influence on the possible outcomes of the programme. Broadly, this chapter has attempted to provide a look into the hidden curriculum -the latent functions of nonformal education.

CHAPTER VI

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

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METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to provide information about the methodology chosen to undertake the research, hypotheses, and the way in which the problems we have raised about the meaning and function of community education were examined and analyzed. It offers information to help us contextualize the analysis of the data which is the purpose of the next chapter. Initially a brief statement is given of the basic interests behind the decision to make community education the object of study, and an exploration of why an ethnographic perspective was given priority over other forms of analysis. The following section describes the levels of analysis considered -the social actors¹ (teachers and students) and the educational process-, and the main methodological concepts used for each level. Then follows a description of research techniques and instruments used during field-work. Finally, information about the sample is provided concerning: institutions, programmes, courses, and the communities. This section concludes with a general description of how the analysis of data was carried out and about the strategy followed during the field work.

1. THE PROJECT'S CONCERN, AND THE ETHNOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE.

Our immediate problem and therefore our starting point is that observing and analyzing nonformal education presents us with a number of difficulties arising from its differences with formal education, as has been pointed out in the introduction: i.e. programmes flexibly-structured, non-credential based, part-time, practical contents, etc. When one enters the learning space one is struck by the fact that unlike the formal classroom workshops are carried out in a wide range of settings (from borrowed rooms to students' houses). These are some of the typical features in nonformal education courses.

¹ In the absence of a better term that could give account of both teachers and students we have relied on the term of *social actors*.

In this light and paying attention to the characteristics of the participants -especially of women- in community education programmes in the rural areas of Mexico: predominant low schooling levels, peoples' shyness, presence of indigenous groups, women's traditionally subordinated roles, etc., we needed to develop an adequate technique to approach people taking the courses. Moreover, as will be emphasized below, we piloted a first set of interviews using pre-formulated questions and that led us to adopt open-ended questions in order to enable people to be more confident and open, and in order to allow a more fluent form of communication between researcher and interviewee.

The purpose of the research was to analyze the social function that underlies the process of community education provided by the government agencies in the rural sector, through identifying the meaning this experience has for the participants. We attempted to account for the meaning generated by these types of programmes and their social control and reproduction functions.

We tried to reconstruct the point of view of the participants themselves. We wanted to know what they get out of the course, their impressions, their feelings, motives and expectations. Unlike other kinds of evaluation where the main concern is with the characteristics of the programmes or achievement scales, we wanted to deal with the participants and account for what we can call the subjective dimension of the nonformal education process. This required a type of qualitative analysis whose purpose was to provide an additional insight that could shed more light on the understanding of the social implications of this form of education. It was the result of a "... dissatisfaction with the information that is produced by quantitative evaluation and the recognition of the uniqueness and importance of the data that can be gathered by the naturalistic-qualitative methods of participant observation" (Centre for New Schools 1976:3).

In a previous research (Pieck and Aguado 1987) we gave an account of the range of nonformal education activities performed by government institutions from 1980 to 1986 in the State of Mexico (see Chapter II: 8), however the analysis used quantitative data and was not concerned with understanding the social implications of this activity; rather a catalogue of this activity during a specific period was generated as a first step in the

research process. Here our aim is to give priority to qualitative aspects of the educational process in order to see inside and have a deeper understanding of this form of education in the rural sector. Along similar lines Garza *et. al.* (1988:641) comments that "... although several programmes have been implemented in recent years, the lack of comprehensive planning and evaluation has made it almost impossible to determine the social and psychological impact of adult education programmes in Mexico."

The need to analyze the social function of the courses led us to incorporate the participant's point of view of the process as a key means of explanation, and to make use of ethnographic techniques given our purpose to deal with meanings. As Fetterman (1991:12) points out "... the ethnographer is interested in understanding and describing a social and cultural scene from the emic, or insider's perspective". Therefore, we chose the ethnographic methodology since it can possibly allow one to describe situations, facts, and cultural processes with a special emphasis on a participant's point of view. Besides, as was mentioned above, taking into consideration that women are the main clients of community education programmes and the common shyness of rural women in small communities a qualitative approach was deemed more useful in order to have a more reliable data, and gain a more relaxed and open contact with the interviewees. Payne (1990:84) shares this idea and comments that "... qualitative methods are more likely to present a clear picture of the social reality of women in adult education (...) They allow a more complete picture of the social world than would otherwise be obtained."

Trying to understand participants' perception led us to use research techniques that could account for these human factors. As Wilson (1977:259) states, "the assumption about human behaviour -that these meanings exist and that understanding them requires involvement in the participant's perspective- calls for such techniques as empathy and nonstandardized observation".

We started off with the assumption that the educational experience (curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation; and learning environmental factors) comprises and gives shape

to a particular atmosphere full of elements -a *coding*²-, an educational code (as defined in Chapter IV:7.7), with which participants come inevitably in contact when taking part in a course. Meanings, as a result of individuals' perception, represent an important outcome of this contact (see table 2). Therefore, it was important to identify how these elements were perceived by the students: understand the meanings produced by the educational process in the students, something which may help to explain social control and the legitimation processes.

We wanted to understand the meanings the experience assumes for students looking at three different stages (before the course; during the course; after the course). According to this concern we focused our attention on: 1) the orientations -following Weber (1978)- behind students' decision to participate in the courses; that is to say, the motives that lead them to enrol in a course. Here we looked at the intentionality (the motives) that lie behind individuals' participation so as to understand which meanings are entailed in the action of participation in a course, and the meaning assigned by them to the courses. 2) how the educational process is perceived; that is, looking at the meaning and impact that comes from the students' 'exposure' to this process; and 3) how students perceive the different changes that come as a result of their taking the course, what is the meaning of these changes for them, the possible impact on their lives within the framework of the social, economic and political constraints of the local context. What does the experience of attending the courses leave students with? To what extent are the courses significant and how is significance experienced and expressed? (See Table 2).

Individuals' perceptions were not conceived of isolated from a social context. This means privileging in the analysis participants' meanings on the basis that they are not individual expressions but rather inserted in a social code, imbued with permanent social influences. Jacob (1987:34) makes this point clear when he states that:

"Human behaviours are not caused by internal forces (instincts, drives) nor by external forces (cultural norms, social structure). Behaviour is the result of

² We are not saying that nonformal education has a specific code. We are merely arguing that there are some elements in the educational process that contribute to give it general coding features.

individual's reflective interpretations of socially derived meanings. Human behaviour is based on the meanings things have to them. Meanings are learned through social interaction, groups develop shared meanings."

Briefly, the main concern was looking at the societal functions of nonformal education from the transmission process with emphasis on the participant's perspective. In order to achieve this purpose the research was focused on two main areas of interest -what we have called levels:

a) the elements of the nonformal educational process: the educational code.

b) looking at the meaning attached to the educational experience by the social actors -teachers and students- through examining:

- the motives of the participants when they decide to participate in a course.
- the meanings produced as a result of students' perception of the educational process.³
- the notion of personal change as an outcome of the course.

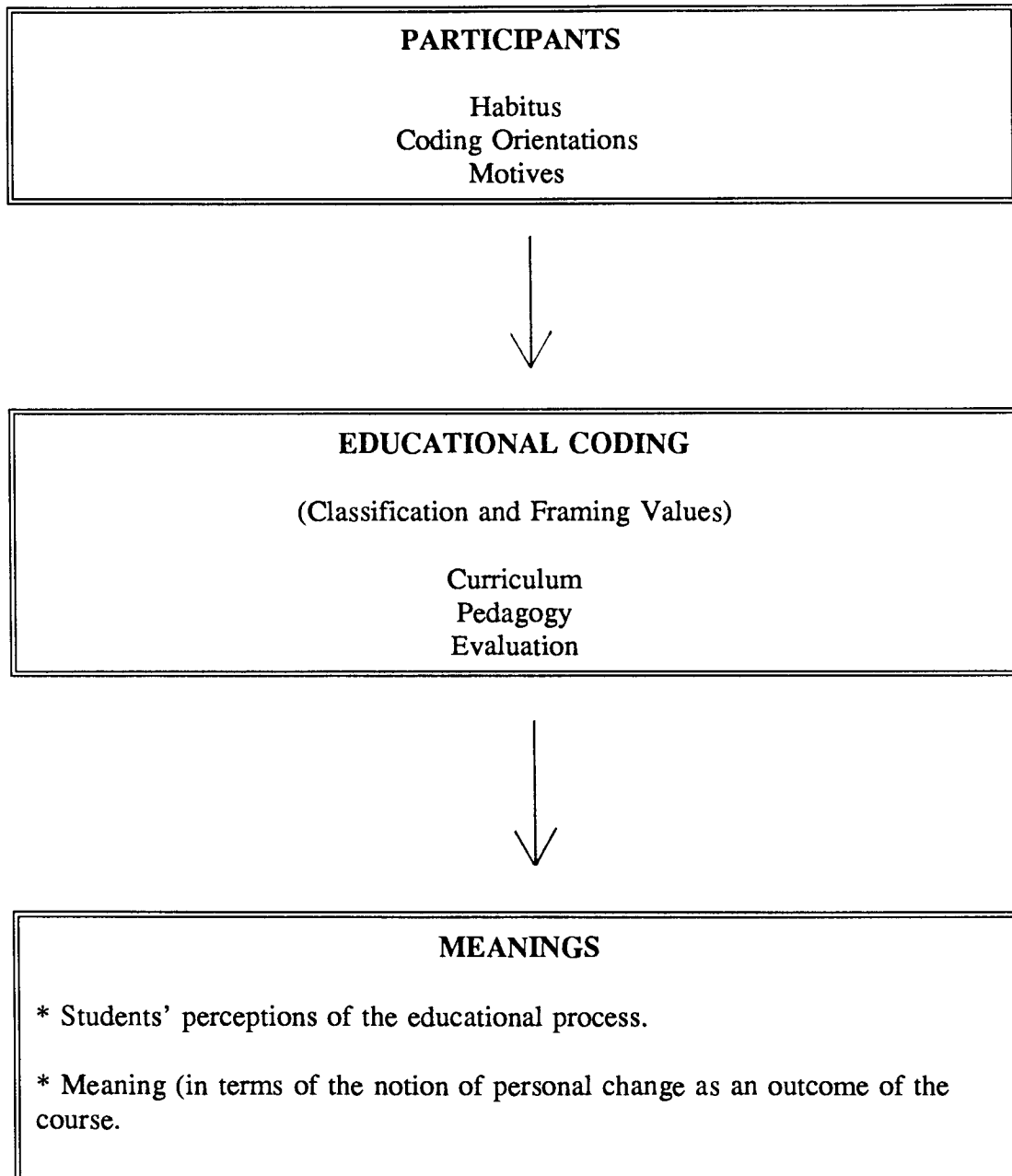
Our definition of participants includes not only those students who are engaged in the educational experience but any student who takes part in the experience. Thus anyone who has attended the course, no matter how briefly or how low the level of his or her engagement with it, is considered a participant. Given our concern with students' motives for attending these programmes, the merely fact of just being present at the course turns someone into a participant for the purpose of this research.

It must be noted that teachers were also included in the analysis as actors and crucial elements of the programmes and thereby were a most valuable supplementary source of information for understanding community education. Stemming from the nature of community education programmes -particularly concerning people's participation in community development programmes (see chapter III)- teachers' participation was regarded as important, even if it refers obviously to a very different way of participation than that of students. Therefore, we have deemed important to identify their motives for getting involved in these programmes and the meanings produced as a result of taking part.

³ Only students were considered here.

THE CONTACT BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS AND THE
EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

Table 2



THE FOCUS ON MEANINGS

(The Different Stages)

Table 3

EDUCATIONAL PROCESS		
<i>Before</i>	<i>During</i>	<i>After</i>
<p>Motives: Meanings assigned by students to the courses and that influence their decision to participate in the programmes.</p>	<p>Perception of the educational coding:</p> <p>1) Educational Process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Curriculum * Pedagogy * Evaluation <p>2) Learning Environment Factors.</p>	<p>The meaning of the experience in terms of what participants are left with and in terms of how people perceive a change in their lives.</p>

2. THE SCOPE OF THE ANALYSIS

What we sought in the analysis was to characterize the nonformal educational process so that we could derive a number of working hypotheses and interpretations. From our basic concerns we considered two fundamental levels of analysis: the social actors (teachers and students) and the educational process (See table 4). In the end both levels of analysis would converge and reveal the outcome of this contact in terms of meanings (see table 2); that is to say, we take into account specific subjectivities (students' *habitus*, coding orientations and motives) going through a particular social experience (the nonformal education process). Next we will focus our attention on the elements that were considered for the analysis within each level.

2.1 The Social Actors

For the analysis of the social actors (students and teachers) we focused on three different features:

a) *Habitus*: When considering the social actors we were interested in them not as individuals but as a functioning part of a social context, of everyday life constituted by practices, feelings, common situations, culture, and history. Therefore, in addition to basic personal data such as age, gender, marital status, schooling, considered as background references, aspects such as social environment, group socioeconomic status, and motives were taken as variables that may help to account for the variety of people's practices and from which an experience is assigned a particular meaning. As Bourdieu (1990:56) points out "the *habitus* -embodied history, internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history- is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product." We relied thus on Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, as the perspective (in close relation to people's daily life) from which the participant gives meaning to experiences (Bourdieu 1990).

When we focused our attention on human behaviour, on participants' perspectives, we were dealing with interpretations that arise from individuals' daily life context. We worked with the interpretations people put upon their experiences. In this sense Bourdieu (1990:55) points out that "being the product of a particular class of objective regularities, the *habitus* tends to generate all the 'reasonable', 'common sense', behaviours (and only these) which are possible within the limits of these regularities, and which are likely to be positively sanctioned because they are objectively adjusted to the logic characteristic of a particular field, whose objective future they anticipate".

b) *Motives*: We were interested here in students' motives for attending a course, where motives are taken as a "complex of subjective meanings which seems to the actor himself as to the observer an adequate ground for the conduct in question" (Weber 1978:7). The area of motivation has tended in the literature to be linked more with psychology than with sociology and anthropology. For that reason it must be stressed that a socio-anthropological perspective was adopted for the analysis of motives. Following Weber (1978:11) we are more "concerned with the interpretive understanding of social action and thereby with a causal explanation of its cause and consequences." We were concerned with understanding the orientation of participants' action, that is to say, giving an account of their orientation, setting it within its context. Using Weber's terms, the concern is with the 'meaningful orientation' of the action; that is, for us, the meaningful orientation of students' participation in a course and of teachers' decision to get involved in the programmes. Hence, what motives determine and lead students to participate in a course? As Blumer (quoted by Taylor and Bogdan 1984) points out, people act towards things, including other people, on the basis of the meanings these things have for them. It is the meaning that determines action, and thus people do not simply respond to *stimulii* or act out cultural scripts. Cropley (1989:145) points out what a concern about participation in community education courses should be addressing:

"The question of participation in adult education (..) becomes a matter not of ascertaining what it is that people want to learn or what teaching and learning strategies are most suitable in view of the special characteristics of adult learners, but rather of establishing which factors dispose some people to regard adult education as a good thing, others to see it as irrelevant to their lives, or boring, or snobbish" (our emphasis).

We wanted to identify meanings assigned by students to the courses, in order to analyze to what extent they have a correspondence to the aims of the course. It is important to understand why people sign up for these programmes, and to discover what kinds of needs the programmes are intended to satisfy -what their level of responsiveness to people's needs and interests is (as the meaning individuals assign to their participation in the courses) and therefore to what extent a social function is being fulfilled through meeting students' orientations.

Motives were not taken in isolation from a specific context: of a personal or social kind. Therefore students' and teachers' habitus and their daily life context were used as elements that could allow us to understand their expectations. Motives that students bring to the classroom affect their learning, their interest in the courses, their level of motivation⁴, their not dropping out, and therefore the meaning that comes from taking part in the course. It is not thus only a matter of taking motivation as an accepted "concept that explains why people behave as they do" (Weiner, quoted by Wlodkowski 1986), but rather as that which is behind people's behaviour.

It is argued that utilitarian perspectives that students place on courses commonly underlie their motives, that is to say motives depend as a last resort on the courses' perceived usefulness, on how much they can respond to the very personal purposes or intentions of each participant (Wlodkowski 1986; Courtney 1992). However, the 'usefulness orientation' students assign to a particular course varies as much as personal motives vary. What comes to be important is that anyone who enrolls on a course does it because it is going to be useful in some way, and because it will meet some particular need or solve whatever problem is deemed important by the participant, be it personal or merely practical. As De Llela and Ezcurro (1984) point out "... immediate usefulness is not the unique crucial criteria. Some contents are valued because they entail a 'knowledge' in itself, because of their future usefulness potential, or because students like to learn."

⁴ For our purposes the fact of being motivated means having a motive behind that impels people towards a certain direction. Our interest is not whether if people are motivated or not but rather concerned with the motives that make them feel motivated.

Motives behind the decision to enrol on a course, depend thus on the usefulness participants see in the courses, a decision which arises from the social and economic context of the participants: "the motivation and emotional participation that are linked to learning activities are not explained adequately as elements of the process that can be produced parallel to the learning content itself. They are not purely cognitive factors that can be manipulated, but they turn up as a result of the social participation of a social subject" (Paradise 1985:92).

Stemming from these considerations we were interested in identifying teachers' and students' motives for taking part in community educational programmes. Looking into the range of possible perceived usefulness placed by students in the courses and by teachers in teaching in these programmes.

c) *Meanings* in terms of students' perception of the educational process and as outcomes of the course; that is, in terms of participants' notion of personal change.

In the light of the existing research an underlying assumption was that the learning environment influences students' perception. We assumed environmental factors are perceived in different ways and assigned different meanings and so have a definite influence on students' perception of the educational process. Just as Paige (1983:312) points out: "the contribution of learning environment theory is that it allows us to extract socio-psychological meaning from the objective facts of a given situation".

We assumed that to a great extent the social function of nonformal education might be explained by how students perceive the educational process (educational code and the learning environment factors); that is, social function is explained through the way students feel and what they think of the factors that surround their educational experience. In other words we are interested, following Blumer (quoted by Taylor and Bogdan 1984:9) in "how social actors (students and teachers) attach meanings to situations, others, things, and themselves through a process of interpretation."

As with their motives, participants' perceptions were viewed within a context, a personal and social context from which they assign meaning to a particular experience. As Bernard and Papagianis 1983:191) point out: "... a student encounters and interprets the school experience through his or her own familiar pattern of communication, a pattern determined by previous family, peer, and community experiences". Therefore, both the concepts of *habitus* and *coding orientations* became crucial to socially contextualize the meanings involved in people's participation in community education programmes.

2.2 The Educational Process

Emphasis was put here on the analysis of three central elements: curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation as 'the message systems' by which educational knowledge is realized and that define what may be considered as valid knowledge, a valid transmission of knowledge, and a valid realization of knowledge (Bernstein 1977:85).

Methodology was based:

- 1) upon the use of some concepts and categories of Bernstein's cultural transmission model for the analysis of curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation as central elements that shape the educational process. We emphasize thus the use of classification and framing, as concepts that allow entry into the underlying structure of the educational process. These concepts have been described in Chapter IV: Section 7.
- 2) upon the analysis of *learning environment factors* as the contextual setting where learning takes place.

Learning environment factors are defined by Paige (1983:314) as "... those environmental press characteristics that emerge out of the objective realities of the learning setting, in a socio-psychological sense, with forces that encourage predictable behavioral, affective and cognitive responses."

Paige (*Ibidem.*) considers a group of factors to be taken into consideration as merely *objective factors* that can be observed, without going further to infer their meaning for the participants:⁵

- *physical resources* (availability of learning materials, number of chairs and desks in a classroom)
- *organizational variables* (teacher-student ratio, class size, teacher autonomy)
- *social-contextual factors* (job mobility outcomes of the programme, observed social status).
- *instructional variables* (ability grouping patterns; teaching methods, pupil support, encouragement of pupil enquiry behaviour)
- *socio-psychological climate* (teacher and pupil interaction patterns, teacher control behaviours, pupil participation behaviours).
- *local social context* (community social framework). This is a factor additional to the ones considered by Paige which we think has an important influence on possible outcomes and that is a vital element without which interpretation might be incomplete. Besides, just as Wilson (1977:249) asserts, we "... cannot understand human behaviour without understanding the framework within which the subjects interpret their thoughts, feelings and actions". Behaviours, attitudes, feelings, take place within a specific social and political context that acts upon them, that are "consciously and unconsciously shaped by the social situation" (*Ibidem*:254).

During the analysis of some of these learning environment factors we used Bernstein's concepts of visible and invisible pedagogies as concepts that proved to be useful in understanding nonformal education's social implications, particularly for the analysis of organizational and instructional features. In the same way, we took external and internal values of classification and framing for a more complete assessment of some learning environment factors. These concepts have been described in chapter IV: Section 7.

⁵ Paige includes in this group the 'participants antecedents' and 'teacher characteristics'. Instead of including both factors here, we have located them at the research's second sphere of analysis: the participants.

METHODOLOGICAL SCHEME

Table 4

LEVELS	SPECIAL FEATURES	OBJECTIVE WITHIN EACH LEVEL	FOCUS	TECHNIQUES
1) Social Actors	1) Habitus 2) Motives 3) Meanings	Look at the meaning attached to the educational experience by the participants.	a) Motives for participation. b) Perception of the educational process.* c) The notion of personal change.	Non-Structured Interviews.
2) Educational Process	1) Educational Process: - Curriculum - Pedagogy - Evaluation 2) Learning Environment Factors	Examine how the elements of the educational process contribute to reinforce social control and social reproduction functions.	<u>Educational Coding:</u> Classification and Framing values.	Observation of the educational process using an ' <i>Observation Guide</i> '.

* Teachers were not considered here.

3. RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

Because of the two different levels of analysis considered in the empirical research different techniques were developed for each one of them.

3.1 Interviews (The Social Actors)

Both social actors, teachers and students were interviewed using non-structured interviews. The interviews were based on the methodological precepts we have just presented and were held in both formal and informal settings as I will describe below.

Goetz and LeCompte (1984:119) refer to the nonstandardized interview "... as an interview guide, in which general questions to be addressed and specific information desired by the researcher are anticipated, but may be addressed during the interview informally in whatever order or context they happen to arise". This type of interview was used with both teachers and students with some variations in each case. The purpose was to have a sort of guided conversation supported by previously formulated topics that offer the possibility of changing and incorporating new questions and going more deeply into some areas of interest as and should they emerge. The '*observation guide*' (see below) was relevant at this point providing additional elements to be considered in the interview and thereby allowing the identification of the participants' perspective on a number of particular aspects of the experience. All interviews were recorded in order to have a complete text that could allow for a further and deeper analysis.

Hypothetical guidelines (as referred to in Chapter V) set a range of possible topics to be considered in the interview; therefore, interviews were divided into sections in order to elicit data referred to the areas of concern:

1. Personal data. This includes features such as age, gender, marital status, schooling, family size, and everyday activities. Besides, questions were added to find out about students' and teachers' knowledge and concern with basic

problems in Mexico and in their communities. These questions (as indicators) aimed at getting an idea of how localistic⁶ their appreciations could be and how much interest was shown on these matters.

2. Motives: this section aimed basically at eliciting data in order to have a picture of what moves students and teachers to participate in the courses, and about the meaning of the courses.

3. Perception of the educational process: questions in this section were focused on finding out how participants perceive some elements of the educational process.

4. Stemming from the fact that educational provision is usually carried out by government institutions we were interested in getting information about how both teachers and students link community education courses with the government and what was their opinion about government activities. We deemed this useful if one of our interest was to find out something about the legitimation function that these programmes might be having.

The teacher interviews covered basically the same grounds. However the purpose of the sections of the interviews is slightly different:

The part concerned with motives dealt basically with the teachers' reasons for working in community education programmes and sought information about how they regard the courses and their usefulness. A basic aim was having an additional perspective to that of students and a help as well for the triangulation of the information. Likewise we were interested in having their point of view about the programmes and the way they are carried out. Finally, given some teachers' long experience in community education, data about how they perceived students was deemed most valuable. At the end it was also

⁶ Localistic is used here in relation to the concept of restricted (or dominated) orientation to meanings as defined in Chapter IV:7.3 and Chapter V:1. Bernstein (1987:564) points out that restricted codes refer to particularistic, local, context dependent meanings; elaborated codes refer to universalistic, less local, more context independent meanings.

important to have data about teachers' support for government activities and about their concern with problems other than the local ones.

Almost all questions belonged to the open-ended type as the study was intended to be of a generative and exploratory kind. As was mentioned above due to the nature of the rural context (i.e. people's shyness) this type of question allowed to have a conversation with people rather than what might appear to be subjecting them a formal type of interviewing. Questions alluded rather to guide-concerns since we tried as much as possible to use common and popular expressions. We chose not to use specific pre-formulated questions as they did not seem useful to our purposes. This decision was reached early on the basis of experience gained from first interviews carried out during the interviews testing-stage. The conversation, supported in guide-topics, tried to dig into respondent's values, perceptions and meanings, through elicitation of opinions about several elements of the educational experience. Goetz and LeCompte (1984:126) speak of "... ideal questions that elicit respondent's values" and "reportorial questions, that elicit a respondent's knowledge of factors in a social situation, usually preceded by interrogatives, such as who, what, when, where, and how".

We must stress the fact that our concern was not to evaluate how much learning had taken place. We were rather concerned with capturing the meaning of this experience for the participants and the extent to which the experience had an impact upon their lives, not only in terms of raising their living standards but mostly in terms of a personal change in the individuals' lives.

3.2 'Observation Guide' (The Educational Process).⁷

At this level of analysis the technique used was basically observation. It meant being present at the different courses and taking notes on the basis of what we called an

⁷ As part of the field work we considered as well informal talks with people in charge of the planning and implementing process in order to elicit information concerned with antecedents and organizational and implementation characteristics of the programmes. This allowed to have a more complete image and understanding of the courses.

'*Observation Guide*' which aimed at gathering information related to some learning environment factors as described above.

LeCompte and Goetz (1984:41) point out that in the mode of participant observation "the investigator lives as much as possible with and in the same manner as the subjects being investigated. Researchers take part in the daily activities of people, reconstructing their interactions and activities in field notes taken as soon as possible after their occurrence". This was certainly not the case because it was not possible for observers to participate in the courses because of their nature.

It was not a non-participant strategy because sometimes it involved talking, interviewing, chatting and socializing with people; there were indeed many exchanges with the participants and teachers under study. Non-participant observation strictly involves "...merely watching what is going on and recording events on the spot...nonparticipant observation exists only where interaction is viewed from hidden cameras and recorders or through one way mirrors. With these exceptions interaction is impossible to avoid in social situations" (Goetz and LeCompte 1984:142). We opted rather for an 'in-between position, that is to say a point between observation and involvement.

As Burgess (quoted by Payne 1990:81) points out, it is difficult to deploy typologies of participation and observer: "sometimes 'roles' are not 'played' or 'taken' but are products of the situations in which researchers find themselves".

Therefore ours was a mixture of both strategies. As Jacob (1987:15) points out "...sometimes an ethnographer might be primarily a participant, and at other times primarily an observer". In a way the strategy used was that of being an observer being noticed by participants and conscious that "... regardless of their reticence of immersion in a research site, whenever researchers are observing on the scene, they acquire some role and status": participant observation with some restrictions is perhaps a reasonable description (Goetz and LeCompte 1984:142-3). The difference between the two strategies are, as many authors recognize, confused and unclear.

4. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

4.1 Interviews

STUDENT

Personal data

AGE

SEX

MARITAL STATUS

SCHOOLING

FAMILY SIZE

EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES

MAIN PROBLEMS IN THE COMMUNITY

MAIN PROBLEMS OF MEXICO

Motives and usefulness

- REASONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE
- MAIN ATTRACTION IN COMING TO THE COURSE
- SATISFACTION WITH WHAT PEOPLE ARE LEARNING
- ABOUT COURSES' USEFULNESS
- COURSES' USEFULNESS FOR PEOPLE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE
- IS IT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?
- IS IT HELPING YOU RAISE YOUR INCOME?
- HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN TAKING THE COURSE?
- HAVE YOU TAKEN OTHER PREVIOUS COURSES?

Opinion about the courses.

- WHAT DO YOU LIKE AND DISLIKE THE MOST?
- HOW CAN COURSES BE IMPROVED?

- OTHER COURSES OF INTEREST
- ABOUT TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING
- ABOUT THE PLACE WHERE COURSES TAKE PLACE
- ABOUT THE WAY COURSES ARE GIVEN
- THINGS MOST LIKED IN A TEACHER
- PROBLEMS IN ATTENDING THE COURSES
- ABOUT WHY SOME PEOPLE PARTICIPATE AND SOME DON'T
- CHANGES IN LIFE AFTER THE COURSE.

Perception of government activity

- OPINION ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT
- OPINION ABOUT COMMUNITY DELEGATES?
- WHO DO YOU VOTE FOR?

TEACHER

Personal data

AGE

SEX

MARITAL STATUS

SCHOOLING

FAMILY SIZE

EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES

MAIN PROBLEMS IN MEXICO

Motives and usefulness

- REASONS FOR BEING INVOLVED IN ADULT EDUCATION
- WHAT DO YOU EXPECT FROM THE COURSES?
- ABOUT COURSES' USEFULNESS
- IS IT WHAT YOU EXPECTED?
- ABOUT TEACHER'S ROLE
- COURSES' MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOMES

Opinion about the courses

- MAIN PROBLEMS
- ABOUT EVALUATION PROCEDURES
- ABOUT THE PROGRAMME
- ABOUT TEACHING METHODS USED
- WAYS OF IMPROVING THE COURSES

About students

- WHAT STUDENTS VALUE MOST IN TEACHERS
- ABOUT INTERACTION WITH STUDENTS
- WHY DO PEOPLE ATTEND THE COURSES?
- REASONS WHY PEOPLE DROP OUT
- REASONS FOR MORE OR LESS PARTICIPATION
- OBSERVABLE CHANGES IN STUDENTS AS A RESULT OF THE COURSE.

Perception of government activity

- ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT
- ABOUT VOTING

4.2 'Observation Guide'

The 'Observation Guide' was expected to act as a broad outline intended to collect data of some significant features of the nonformal educational process. The guide was divided according to the three basic elements of the educational process: curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation. A record of these would give a picture of the nonformal education process -what we call its global code.

CURRICULUM

a) on the basis of the level of **classification between contents** of the curriculum of the different programmes: How weak are the limits between the traditional contents and proper technical contents? To what extent is importance being given to either content? To what extent are knowledge and local interests being incorporated? What is the link between the courses and the contextual productive and social activities? What counts as a valid transmission?

b) **compass or boundary of influence**: organizational, technical or social. Reflection upon whether the curriculum is likely to bring about the aim of the programme.

c) **relations between education and production**: This aspect has already been described in Chapter IV.

PEDAGOGY

a) **Instructional variables**:

- Teaching methods, student support, encouragement of pupil enquiry behaviour.
- Pedagogic styles: vertical, horizontal, interactive. Reflection upon their influence in terms of how knowledge is being transmitted, in terms of different levels of participation and in terms of how evaluations are conducted.
- Possible effects in terms of cathartic processes, group expression, resolution of problems, etc.

b) **Physical resources** (availability of learning materials, number of chairs and desks in a classroom). Way in which the **space** is organized. How different is it to everyday people's spaces? To what extent does the use of space signal to people that the context is specialized. How weak or strong are limits with reality and what are the possible implications? How frustrating or encouraging can the pedagogical physical environment be?

c) Pedagogic relationship (Socio-psychological climate):

- relation between students and teachers (whether there is a hierarchical atmosphere or a friendly egalitarian one).
- Emphasis on the importance of the pedagogical relationship in terms of the relationship established between teacher and students, and the meaning of this relationship for the student.
- Possible implications of some invisible features of nonformal education and of the lack of 'status' of the educational process.
- relation between the participants. Type of interaction between them.

d) characteristics of participants's interventions.

- to what extent are external elements brought inside the educational process?
- students' interventions and their relation with characteristics such as schooling, work experience, everyday context, motives, etc.

e) sequencing rules and criteria.

- getting to know how rules are specified. Are they implicit or explicit? How clear are they to participants in terms of the contents of the course and its development?
- how much, and in which way, are objectives, methodologies and contents made explicit to participants?

f) organizational variables (teacher-student ratio, class size, teacher autonomy).

g) social-contextual factors (job mobility outcomes of the programme, observed social status).

EVALUATION

- a) how does evaluation take place?
- b) how rigorous it is?
- c) teachers' and students' attitudes and perception of evaluation?
- d) what is considered as a valid realization?
- e) what are the evaluation parameters?

5. ABOUT THE SAMPLE.⁸

5.1 Selection of the programmes.

The universe of analysis is constituted by a number of carefully selected government-sponsored rural nonformal education programmes located within the community education field. The programmes chosen are some of the most influential and cover a larger area of the State of Mexico than any other programmes (see Chapter IV).

The sample comprises four nonformal education programmes:

1. Cultural Missions (*Misiones Culturales*) (Federal Ministry of Public Education).
2. National Institute for Adult Education (*Instituto Nacional para la Educacion de los Adultos -INEA*). (Community Education Centres).⁹

⁸ Refer to Chapter II for a detailed analysis of these institutions, their characteristics, their ascription, antecedents, etc.

⁹ Community education centres (CEC) are part of INEA's community education programme (see Chapter II:Part I, Section 3). They are intended to operate in localities with between 500 and 2500 inhabitants in rooms provided by members of the community. There is a community education committee constituted by people from the community who are responsible of the programmes carried out in the centre. Their presence is basically concerned with reading halls (in fact CECs are a derivation from these halls), so they are provided with a minimum amount of books so that the community can consult them whenever they wish. The CEC is meant to be a space where literacy and basic education students can attend in order to receive tutorship help. Supposedly, as long as these programmes exist the centre can remain in the community, since it is in this space where courses and tutorships are provided. For-the-job training is practically non-existent on the side of INEA.

3. The National System for the Integral Development of the Family. (*Sistema Nacional para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia -DIF*) (Community Development Programme).

4. State Ministry of Education, Culture and Social Welfare. (*Secretaria de Educacion, Cultura y Bienestar Social -SECyBS*). Department for the Education of Adults (*Departamento de Educacion de Adultos -DEA*).

Programmes were chosen in the light of these criteria:

1) their structural and organizational characteristics in terms of institutional support. This was deemed necessary for the analysis of the impact of differences in programmes' organization and support in terms of the outcomes of the courses. Programmes like the DIF, the DEA and the Cultural Missions were chosen on the strength of this consideration.

2) it was important to look at courses employing a variety of methodologies in order to be able to study particular reactions to them. This aspect was important when selecting the Cultural Missions. Both the DIF and the DEA operate with a similar structure and methodology, something which was considered important as well for comparative purposes.

3) In the case of programmes with a wider coverage there would be a greater probability of assessing precisely their impact on the population. Likewise, federal programmes would allow to us to extrapolate to other regions of the country. Two of the programmes were selected on the strength of this consideration, the DIF and the DEA, which have a wide coverage in the State of Mexico. The DIF also operates at national level.

4) their antecedents and political importance. Programmes deemed important for government social and political purposes would permit the analysis of links between the characteristics of the programmes and the way they are implemented. INEA was chosen for this reason, however all programmes have a political relevance depending on each institution interests. For example, DEA is linked to the education sector; the DIF is

linked to national voluntary social activities for which the wife of the president and the governors in every state are responsible. Finally, we assumed prior experience in the area would make better results more likely.

In accordance with these guidelines, the selection of the sample assessed the following specific considerations in every programme:

1. Cultural Missions were considered important because of 1) their history (as we have seen they were originally set up in 1926 by the then Secretary of Education Vasconcelos and have thus amassed an enormous amount of experience particularly within the community education area). 2) Concretely, the way Missions operate makes them apt for a comparative analysis between institutions: it involves a team of teachers ('missionaries') each with a specialization: a formal education teacher, a carpenter, a blacksmith, an agriculturalist, a veterinary, a recreation teacher and a knitting-clothes making, toy-making teacher. They all stay in a community for a period of two years. Actually, this programme operates at national level including eight Missions operating in different communities of the State of Mexico.¹⁰

2. Community courses carried out by INEA stood out because they constitute part of the operational strategy of an institution considered as the leader within the field of adult education (literacy and basic education) in Mexico, although its relevance in terms of community education is rather slight.¹¹

3. The DIF's Community Development Programme is a leading one in terms of the great number of courses carried out by this institution, the wide area covered,¹² its regional presence and importance within this area, and because of its operational features: the Municipal President's wife in each of the municipalities is directly responsible for the

¹⁰ In 1980 there were 215 Cultural Missions in 645 rural communities throughout the country, employing 1,700 teachers and serving an estimated population of 202,800 persons (Morales and Torres 1990).

¹¹ Despite its low presence INEA's sub-programmes are highlighted within the section on community education in the prospectus of the 'Plan para la Modernización Educativa 1989-1994' (SEP 1989:81-95).

¹² The DIF programme attended 22,701 pupils in 1991 in 438 centres located in different municipalities of the State of Mexico. 1,094 teachers were involved in this task covering 1,478 groups.

programme (and the president also of the DIF at this level).

4. The DEA Programme was chosen because it is the most important one run by the government of the State of Mexico. It equals the DIF in terms of number of courses, people's attendance at the courses, infrastructure, and coverage.¹³ Additionally field work revealed its importance because of its antecedents in the State, the demand by people in the communities, and the relative quality of its credentials and diplomas.¹⁴ Finally, the mere fact of having a programme run by the local government within the sample was thought relevant.

5.2 Selection of the Courses

The prime consideration for the selection of courses was their popularity. The choice was for community education courses which were the most commonly present in the rural sector in order to have a more complete and reliable picture of this activity and of their impact among the population. Hence the courses selected were: carpentry, metal-work, clothes making, knitting, beauty, and first-aid.

The range of courses in each institution is often very wide and varies a lot from one programme to the other. The DIF programme has a battery of forty courses ranging from karate and dance, to cooking, knitting and yoga. Nonetheless, according to the DIF own statistics there are no more than ten courses which are popular in terms of attendance. Only in areas and municipalities with a considerable level of urban development like Coacalco, Nezahualc6yotl, Ecatepec and Tlalnepantla, the demand and supply refer to almost the whole range of subjects. Even in those cases the most popular and demanded courses are the ones chosen for the analysis.

¹³ The DEA programme attended a total of 24,111 pupils during the schooling period 1990-1991. 1,038 teachers were in charge in 393 training centres located in 110 municipalities of the State of Mexico.

¹⁴ The diploma granted by this institution is the one that counts with the highest social recognition among the other institutions. During fieldwork it was interesting to discover how many of the teachers had done previous courses within this programme. In the same way, for example, in the first-aids course the diploma is accepted by health institutions for a nursing assistant job. Diplomas granted by institutions like DIF and SECyBS are normally validated in some other places, therefore courses are being legitimated. Diplomas are, among other things, a possible key to be accepted within particular segments of the labour market.

The same situation occurs in the DEA Programme: it is always on subjects like carpentry, metal-work, clothes making, knitting, beauty, first-aid, toy-making, cooking, etc., that are most in demand amongst people in the communities. It is the same within INEA's Community Education Programme and in the Cultural Missions' workshops.¹⁵ Therefore courses that are most in demand are among the ones mentioned above.

Since the length of courses varies, in virtually all nonformal education programmes (short ones: from two to four hours; long ones: several days; permanent: which last as long as the programme lasts), we were obliged to consider all type of programmes in order to make a global evaluation of them, their differences and possible implications. An effort was made to maintain the same subjects (carpentry, metal-work, knitting, first aids, and clothes making) within the different programmes in order to have them as a constant when undertaking the analysis. Only agronomy and veterinary were specific to the Cultural Missions due to the nature of this programme. We focused our attention on how institutional supports, teachers' academic achievement, instructional variables, etc., vary as programmes' comparative features to be considered in the analysis. However, the basic interest was in getting an overall picture of community education programmes and on discovering how they are perceived.

5.3 Selection of the rural areas

Rural areas were looked at basically for their marginal socioeconomic characteristics and because programmes are usually carried out with lower level of efficiency than in urban communities. Marginal operating conditions worsen in rural areas in terms of physical resources, teacher's training, financial support, etc. All these facts made us question, following our main interest, what could be the possible outcomes in such circumstances. Why do people decide to take a course in such deprived conditions? To what extent would marginal conditions affect participants in terms of being able to put learning in

¹⁵ It must be said that carpentry and metal-work do not fall among courses most demanded. However, they were selected because there was an interest in finding for-the-job training courses for men. As it is explained in chapter VII, one of the findings of the research is precisely the absence of this type of courses in the rural sector.

practice? We assumed that the intended learning outcomes of courses could be achieved only with difficulty in those contexts, so what would actually be accomplished?

Finally, we assumed a great number of programmes carried out in social and economic marginal circumstances would facilitate the achievement of a social and political function given people's low schooling average in the rural areas and the amount of social needs that still remain to be satisfied.

5.4 Selection of the communities

After holding a meeting with every one of the institutions two to three communities were chosen where courses were taking place. The choice depended basically on three factors:

- 1) Communities should have courses on the range of subjects sampled: carpentry, metal-work, beauty, first-aid, clothes making and knitting.
- 2) All communities chosen were located in the rural areas, with low population, lack of most public services (water, drainage, etc.), although not at a far distance from small urban centres. We assumed this closeness would mean potential outcomes in terms of links with the labour market for those enrolled in job training courses.
- 3) Communities should not be too isolated because nonformal characteristics of courses (the lack of formality) becomes extreme where courses rarely occur and where the analysis of some variables would have become unsuccessful: people's rather introverted behaviour towards strangers in the rural areas would have made field work quite limited. A different strategy would have been terribly expensive and enormously time consuming.¹⁶ Maybe this could have only been possible in the Cultural Missions

¹⁶ Due to the informal nature of the courses I chose locations within reach. It would not have been unusual to have a three hour drive and arrive to the course and find out it had been cancelled for a wide variety of reasons such as the teacher not turning up. Additionally, financial constraints of the research project made any other options quite difficult.

Programme, where teachers live five days a week in the community for a period of two years.

5.5 Courses considered in the sample per programme and community.
(See table 5)

A. Cultural Missions (Federal Ministry of Public Education).

Zepayautla, Municipality of Tenango.

Courses: clothes making
metal work
carpentry
veterinary
first-aid

B. (INEA) National Institute for Adult Education (Community Education Centres).

1. San Agustín Mextepec, Municipality of San Felipe del Progreso.

Courses: clothes making

2. Totolmajac, Municipality of Ixtapan de la Sal.

Courses: knitting
clothes making

3. San Lucas, Municipality of Villa Guerrero

Courses: first-aid

C. (DIF) The National System for the Integral Development of the Family.
(Community Development Centres).

1. Tepexoxuca, Municipality of Tenango.

Courses: knitting
beauty workshop

2. Sto. Domingo de Guzmán, Municipality of Ixtlahuaca

Courses: knitting
 clothes making

3. Jalatlaco, Municipality of Jalatlaco

Courses: first-aid

D. (SECyBS) State Ministry of Education, Culture and Social Welfare (Out-of-school Education Centres).

1. Santiago Coauxtenco, Municipality of Tenango

Courses: first-aid
 beauty workshop

2. Asuncion Tepexoyuca, Municipality of Ocoyoacac.

Courses: carpentry
 knitting
 clothes making

DISTRIBUTION OF COURSES BY INSTITUTION

Table 5

	DIF	CULT. MISS.	INEA	DEA
CARPENTRY		*		*
METAL WORK		*		
CLOTHES MAKING	*	*	*	*
KNITTING	*		*	*
FIRST-AID	*	*	*	*
BEAUTY	*	*		*
VETERINARY		*		

6. ON DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 The initial stages.

It is important to note that the analysis process started from the very beginning of the research project. It began to take place from the initial stages of mapping visits to the final analysis scheme. It started with the search for the main characteristics of the institutions considered in the sample, with the formulation of interview guides, and with the pilot-field work. Analysis thus started from the first moments of data collection and influenced the decision of what paths should be taken and what types of data could be neglected. Analysis, says Fetterman (1991:103):

"... has no single form or stage in ethnography. Multiple analysis and forms of analysis are essential. Analysis takes place throughout any ethnographic endeavour, from the selection of the problem to the final stages of writing. Analysis is iterative and often cyclical in ethnography. The researcher builds a firm knowledge base in bits and pieces, asking questions, listening, probing, comparing and contrasting, synthesizing and evaluating information."

Theory was always a guide line for the research process aimed at identifying the main features of the nonformal educational process and students' perception of it. As Fetterman asserts: "no study, ethnographic or otherwise, can be conducted without an underlying theory or model (...) the researcher's theoretical approach helps define the problem and how to tackle it". This can be noted in the considerations made, particularly in chapter I where the object of study was defined, and then in chapters II, III and IV.

The process of analysis began with a form of analytic induction: at first, initial surveys brought about ideas of the variables which might be relevant and that could help to assess the different phenomena and relationships: we faced the situation of 'not knowing the relevant variables before entering a setting' (Centre for New Schools 1976:7). Initial working hypotheses emerged and evolved at this stage while undergoing a constant contrast between our initial theoretical formulations and the reality. An array of initial and hypothetical questions shaped a guideline from the outset. The formulation of hypotheses about students' motives and perceptions and their testing against the reality of how programmes were being implemented took place from the beginning in an attempt to arrive at explanations about the nature of these programmes and the reasons for students' enrolment.

Initial variables and categories began to be defined during this stage and the process continued during the field research work itself. Iterative analysis therefore typified the initial stages of the research in a constant testing of theory against reality where working hypotheses had to be reformulated several times. Goetz and LeCompte (1984:173) stress this point when they emphasize that the "ethnographer generates and tests successive explanations, both mundane and theoretical, for the behaviour exhibited and attitudes held by the people under study".

The hypothetical framework (see Chapter V) helped as the starting guideline from which the research looked for new interpretations and hypotheses which could shed more light about the nature and social implications of nonformal education practices, and about the meanings and motivations involved.

We did not want to prove or disprove any hypotheses. They were just merely starting points for us which helped us make the first steps during the research and which were constantly tested and re-elaborated. At the end a more solid basis for hypotheses that attempted to account for i) the participant's dimension within community education courses; ii) the coding of the nonformal educational process, and iii) the possible social implications that could be derived from both, began to come up.

6.2 Analysis and interpretation of data.

The final stage of the analysis, once field work was completed, involved the interpretation and analysis of data. Data was analyzed in a way similar to that in which observation was carried out. As Goetz and LeCompte (*Ibidem.*:167) point out, it involved a continuous process of "perceiving, comparing, contrasting, aggregating and ordering, establishing linkages and relationships and speculating" engaged in throughout the research and stressed at the final stage of analysis. Information was analyzed in order to establish units of analysis that could offer a coherent explanation for our initial questions about the function and meaning of community education.

Information was grouped according to the previously defined units of analysis:

1) Students' and teachers' personal data:

- * (age, gender, marital status, schooling).
- * assessment of government activities

2) Motives.

- * expectations
- * usefulness

3) Students' perception of the educational process.

- * Settings (material provision, learning spaces; etc.)
- * Teacher-Student relationship
- * Teachers' training level.
- * Range of courses

* Learning environment factors (instructional and organizational variables).

4) The notion of personal change

Information was then submitted to a process of analysis and interpretation which included three main steps: classification, comparing and inference (Van Dijk 1980).

Through classification we intended to distinguish among different units of meaning. Classification of the information means the application of categories that have the capacity to gather up in a general statement a series of more specific statements. According to Van Dijk (1980:45) "... if we want to specify the global sense of a discourse, that sense must be derived from the senses of its own sentences." So, what he calls 'semantic projection rules'¹⁷: suppression, generalization and construction, consist of relating a group of specific propositions with a more general one that synthesises and classifies them in a more ample assertion or meaning. During the analysis the richest content -what appeared as essential and common characteristics in most answers- began to be revealed allowing the emergence of patterns and clusters of both motives and meanings.

In the case of motives this necessitated the construction of a group of categories which could allow us to classify the information: a "constructive phase of analysis, in which conceptual categories embedded in the social phenomena are discovered" (Goetz and LeCompte 1984:169). These categories reflected different patterns in which students' and teachers' reasons were aggregated as initial units of analysis. As Goetz and LeCompte (1984:170) assert:

"... central to categorization is the generation of the properties and attributes that the data units of a category share. Data are massed and scanned through systematic content analysis. Properties of a category are discovered by listing how all units are alike and how they differ systematically from units outside the category. Core properties are then used to develop an abstract definition of the category".

¹⁷ Martinic (1984) uses the 'semantic projection rules' for the analysis of data from a research focused on popular education.

Subsequently a further step was undertaken in which specific data of the categories was reanalysed so that a more general definition of the category could be established. This was achieved through a process in which, as Miles and Huberman (1984:223) point out:

"... the analyst shuttles back and forth between first-level data and more general categories, which evolve and develop through successive iterations until the category is saturated (new data do not add to the meaning of the general category)."

Categories emerged from an interaction between theory and data (see below). At this point theoretical hypotheses which I discussed in chapters IV and V proved to be useful in order to tie the findings of our study to what Miles and Huberman (1984:228) call "across-more-than-one-study propositions that can account for the 'how' and 'why' of the phenomena under study". Findings and categories were thus compared and relationships between them were established in order to infer different explanations of the social function and meaning of nonformal education. The analytical process allowed the construction of interpretations and inferences starting from the classification, reordering and comparison of the data.

Corroboration of the data was carried out over the different stages aiming to triangulate the information, that is, trying to "support a finding by showing that independent measures of it agree with it or, at least, don't contradict it" (*Ibidem.*:234). This was carried out through a comparative method where students' responses were constantly compared with both teachers' observations (as was mentioned above teachers' perspective of the programmes was deemed most useful), and with information gathered through institutional enquiries made to people involved in the planning and implementation process at the initial and final stages of the research.

Finally, it must be noted that the analysis of the data involved, inevitably, an act of interpretation on the part of the researcher which, according to Gadamer (quoted by Hekman 1986), is constituted by a fusion of horizons: the one of the interpreter and the text itself. Objectivity is not conferred on any of them. Even if the text represents a particular horizon of meaning, it does not have an objective meaning because it may be

interpreted in several historical periods. The understanding of an action as a text, according to Hekman, is neither the appropriation of the actor's concepts, nor the imposition of the researcher's categories, but the fusion of both in a distinct identity: the interpretation.

6.3 Categories generated in the analysis.

As a final step we describe the categories that were generated when intending to account for people's motives for enrolling or participating in nonformal education programmes. Different categories were developed for both teachers and students. However, it must be pointed out that categories tend to account for people's motives within a very specific context, that is to say, basically rural people living in marginal communities in developing countries, the so-called 'Third World'. This is important because categories used in previous researches allude rather to participation in adult education in developing countries. The context, we think, imposes different connotations on categories, and so what 'betterment' might mean in a certain context does not necessarily mean the same in a different context. This is important because one of the aims of the research was to give an account of meanings, and meanings are necessarily contextually bound. As Bernstein (1987:567) points out relationships between contexts "create boundary markers whereby specific contexts are distinguished by their specialised meanings and realisations". In developing societies' motives for learning usually involve reference to basic needs. This is not the case in developed societies. If Maslow's table is to be considered, motivations do not go beyond the lower levels. People in these countries do not have the opportunity to search for different kinds of education or to meet needs that come after basic needs have been met (Jayaweera 1979).

While for some, like Jarret (1960), the main reason for adult education is that it offers an escape from boredom, it could be said that in developing countries the reasons are strictly linked to social and economic conditions of the participants, and derived from a very specific aim: the need to survive. It is interesting that even in popular education programmes in Latin-America, where the aim is chiefly to do with social awareness,

participants show a pragmatic and concrete orientation (Martinic 1988).

Houle's (1961) typology has become an obligatory reference when dealing with motivational orientations. He considers three different orientations for participants in adult education: 1) towards goal; 2) towards activity; and, 3) towards learning. Learning: when learning is the end and not the means, that is, learning for its own sake. Activity: for those more interested in the activity than in the proper aim of the course. Goal: for those who have a specific and concrete objective when they enrol in the course. These surely can cover most of participants' motives when signing up for a course. We argue though that even when learning 'for its own sake' is expressed as the inner motive, it certainly has a different meaning depending on the individuals, the context and the circumstances. The same response means and involves totally different things in different contexts. The pure reason for learning entails different things when expressed by a middle-class woman from an industrialized country than when expressed by an indigenous woman of a 'Third World' country.

Likewise, Boshier's 'education participation scale' is composed of a six factor model for explaining participants's need to enrol in adult education: 1) social contact: need for socializing 2) social stimulation: adult education as an escape; 3) professional advancement: job oriented; 4) community service: community service orientation; 5) external expectations: recommendations; and 6) cognitive interests: (knowledge for its own sake) (Boshier 1989). We think that even if some of these factors might comprise some of individuals' motives for participating in community education courses in Mexico, they cannot fully account for the specific orientation behind the action of participation. Boshier's factor of social stimulation, even if it assesses people's common attitude of taking courses as an escape from everyday reality, does not report on what escape amount to in rural marginal areas, especially for women. Escape means a totally different thing depending on the society. Also, *leisure* and the *need for social contact* are motives which must be properly contextualized in order to grasp the meaning underlying people's participation. Likewise, interestingly, the model does not include the economic factor which in 'Third World countries' comes to be one of the main reasons for participating because of people's socioeconomic conditions, as will be emphasized

as part of our findings. Again, the connotations of some terms do not apply as well to developing countries' realities.

In face of this array, a group of categories was generated during the course of the analysis where different motives were grouped on the basis of their common elements. It is through these categories that we intend to account for participants motives in the context where the research was carried out. Even if sometimes the names of categories are similar classifications generated by other authors (such as 'learning'), motives expressed in individuals' responses account for the specificity of every category. Categories thus aim to apprehend a very specific contextually located meaning: that of rural people in developing countries. In the case of women, as the most numerous in these programmes, categories are drawn from their everyday reality within these contexts, therefore emerge from their oppressed condition and basically reproductive role.

Categories are understood as ideal types, therefore tend to overlap and mix in teachers' and students' reasons for participation, even if in some occasions motives seem very specific and concrete. They have been grouped under a number of categories which have as their main aim giving account of the array of meanings underlying students' and teachers' motives for participation.

Several motives always merge guiding and orientating people's decision to participate. Stemming from this consideration we did not deem relevant to refer to frequencies of individuals expressing a particular motive, nor with assigning a particular weight to any of the categories. Again, we were more concerned with giving a view of the array of interests expressed by students and teachers. Specification is only made referring to schooling levels, age groups and gender.

The following categories were generated to account for students' motives:

1. **Social Valuation/Personal advantage:** when motives allude to the need of a personal betterment which is strictly referred to people's specific social context, particularly that of women's everyday conditions in the rural areas of developing countries: predominant reproductive role; low schooling levels; time consuming domestic activities; subordinated social role; contribution to family economic activities (sowing, harvesting, etc.). Within this wide motivational field, intentions are varied and relate to different aspects such as personal value, sublimation, realization, and feeling of security.

2. **Rupture:** when motives were linked to the intention of achieving through the courses a means of socialization, distraction and escape. Basically it refers to the need of a 'break', of a 'recess' of their everyday lives. Rupture here particularly refers to and has to be understood within women's everyday activities. When people attend the courses they come out of their everyday activities where space for reflection and sharing different things is quite restricted.

3. **Economic:**

- domestic: when courses may enable students to economize on domestic expenses.

- subsistence: when the motive for participation is directly linked to the necessity of satisfying immediate, concrete and specific needs, quite typical of those environments.

- link with the labour market: when motives refer to the possibility that courses may link them with productive activities or with the labour market.

4. **Learning:** when motives do not usually go beyond the very concrete objectives of the course.

For teachers' motives the following categories were generated:

1. **Sublimation:** when motives allude to personal difficulties to which teaching in these programmes is intended to be an answer.
2. **Service-ethic:** when motives have an orientation towards helping people, stemming from the fact of the teachers' participation in programmes basically addressed to economically and socially marginal sectors of the society.
3. **Social-class solidarity:** when motives show a more critical conception of social change, and a global vision of poverty that does not stay at the level of the mere satisfaction of helping marginal people but in addition looks forward to their social class condition and seeks to orient them towards social change.
4. **Economic:** when the motive is basically to earn a living.

CATEGORIES FOR STUDENTS' AND TEACHERS' MOTIVES

Table 6

INDIVIDUALS	CATEGORIES
STUDENTS	1) SOCIAL VALUATION/PERSONAL ADVANTAGE 2) RUPTURE 3) ECONOMIC: - Domestic - Subsistence - Link with the labour market 4) LEARNING
TEACHERS	1) SUBLIMATION 2) SERVICE ETHIC 3) SOCIAL CLASS SOLIDARITY 4) ECONOMIC

7. FIELD WORK STRATEGY

Next, an account is provided of how field work was organized from the initial stages. This will make clear how data was gathered and the conditions in which this took place.

Field work was carried out in several stages:

a) Initially, an institutional contact was made in order to get some general information about the programmes, the range of courses, methodologies, map the locations of the courses, etc. This had a considerable importance given the concern with framing the analysis within the context of every institution's specific features, and to assess the relevance of these features within community education activities in the rural sector. Getting an institutional agreement that could provide the facilities for establishing contact with regional supervisors in charge of the communities where selected courses were taking place became necessary in most programmes and took a very long time. Only with the exception of the Cultural Missions all the other institutions considered in the sample delayed the access to their different programmes. In the case of the DEA, due to bureaucratic and administrative procedures almost two months elapsed before being introduced to teachers in the different communities. Likewise being offered the opportunity to work in the DIF programme took almost three months of constant interviews due to the suspicious attitude showed by the institution. A similar period of time took gaining access to INEA.

b) Having secured an institutional agreement a process of discussion about and analysis of the courses and the places where they were taking place, a selection was made of two to three communities according to our guide lines (see above). Importance was placed as well on how far advanced the course was in order to gather information about what participants normally expect at the beginning of the course and what they think they got or what they have perceived at the end of it. Approximately two weeks were spent with each institution when dealing with choosing the communities.

c) Next, a suggested timetable was discussed with the people responsible of every programme in order to establish contact with the teachers.

d) Two weeks were spent making first contacts with each of the teachers in charge of the courses which had been selected in every community. A second suggested timetable was agreed with them in order to carry out classroom observation and interviews. At this time the aims of the research project were explained to teachers and reassurance was given about the confidentiality of interviews and data coming out of field work. Finally, emphasis was put on the fact that interviews were intended to be rather conversations (chatting with people) and that their intention was not to be longer than half an hour.¹⁸ At this time the title as 'teacher concerned with getting to know what these programmes are about' seemed to be the most convenient label for the researcher's role in the setting given the nature of the programmes and people's ease with the role of the teacher.

e) A couple of weeks were devoted to testing the instruments (interviews and observation guides).

f) Having agreed on a timetable, field work consisted basically of paying several visits during courses hours in order to carry over the '*observation guide*' (see above) and to arrange interviews with both teachers and students. Because features such as: the nature of the courses (the rather informal way in which they take place), the spaces used for teaching, the widespread shyness of people in the rural places, the irregular number of students in the courses, and particularly the noise-background, interviews were carried out without following any specific tactic or procedures. Talks were carried out in many different circumstances depending on participants' dispositions trying to get the friendliest contact possible. Some interviews were carried out in a very informal way (while students were waiting for the teacher; having lunch; etc.); some others were carried out in small rooms provided for this purpose; and some others out in the street, etc.

¹⁸ During field work sometimes people became impatient when interviews lasted more than they had expected.

g) At this stage it was important for the researcher to be visible so that students could be more confident about talking to someone whom they did not know. Time was often used to get a rapport with the students and therefore detailed notes had to be postponed. So it was not until after a number of visits that interviews could be arranged. Since attendance at the courses is very irregular and it is very rare to find more than ten students taking a course (even if more students have been registered for that course), we chose to interview between 30% and 50% of students participating in the course at the time when the course was taking place. Therefore, observing and taking notes about the development of the educational process at the different courses was a substantial part of this stage. Hanging about often seemed to be useful for gathering additional information from people in the community, and for getting an initial rapport with participants in the course. This contact became even more important given the researcher was male and most of the participants female.

Field work was intended to be a two-three months continuous work in each of the programmes, in order to enable an iterative process. At the end, work included at times mixing (working in parallel with two programmes) in order to enrich the analysis, be able to make comparisons and generate hypothetical formulations referred to possible implications of programme differences.

h) After the field work was finished and analysis of the data began to reveal uncertainties and gaps in the information obtained, some additional visits were made in order to complement the picture. Fieldwork ended when data began to converge and a global picture started to emerge. Empirical work took approximately nine months, from February to November 1990.

8. SUMMARY

In this chapter we have attempted to describe the methodological considerations that support this research. We laid out our basic concern and stated the reasons that led us to choose an ethnographic type perspective. Next, an account of both levels of analysis:

the social actors -students and teachers- and the educational process was given with the corresponding research techniques. Emphasis was put here on the theoretical and methodological concepts used for the analysis of each level followed by a description of interviews and the observation guide as basic research instruments used during the empirical work. Finally, criteria used for the selection of programmes and communities were described, as well as the way data was analyzed and the basic strategy followed during field work. Basic concepts, reasons behind choosing different levels, research techniques, and the way data was analyzed, as it was described in this chapter, constitute the necessary basis for understanding and contextualize the analysis of data which follows in chapter VII.

CHAPTER VII
ANALYSIS OF THE DATA: THE SOCIAL FUNCTION AND
MEANING OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION

The evaluation of nonformal education is made more complicated by the fact that such programmes, over time, can be associated with a wide variety of both intended and unintended consequences at the individual and aggregate levels. Participation in a programme might produce cognitive, effective, and behavioural learning at the individual learning, causing alterations in career plans and mobility, an altered conception of self, association with and the identification of new 'significant others', and new status and recognition within the community. At higher social levels, nonformal education might either break down traditional barriers to socioeconomic mobility or perpetuate existing patterns of stratification. Such programmes could promote social stability by meeting the needs of the previously disenfranchised or lead to social instability by raising the expectations that cannot, in truth, be met. Such strikingly different outcomes are at the heart of the debate of nonformal education. (Paige 1983:307).

CHAPTER VII
ANALYSIS OF THE DATA: THE SOCIAL FUNCTION AND MEANING OF
COMMUNITY EDUCATION

"... what is selected is not necessarily transmitted, what is transmitted is not necessarily acquired and what is acquired may, for some acquirers, bear little or no relation, or indeed an oppositional relation, to the intentions of selectors and transmitters." (Bernstein)

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the data gathered during the field research. The chapter is divided as follows: 1) We start with the analysis of the educational context of community education in terms of its organizational features. 2) We then analyze the basic characteristics of the social actors: teachers and students. 3) Next, we examine the educational process at its three basic levels: curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation. 4) Having examined the context of community education we go on to describe and examine the reasons presented by teachers and students for being involved in the course. The chapter concludes with an attempt to analyze the meanings that the educational experience has for both sets of social actors. This chapter is heavily footnoted because of the large quantity of ethnographic data that complements and supports the analysis.

1. THE INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT.

The purpose of this section is to examine some organizational elements of the programmes which make up the sample in order to provide a context in which to locate the analysis of some features of the nonformal educational process.

1.1 Organizational characteristics (see Table 7).

There are some important differences among the programmes which have a definite influence on teaching quality and on the value of the credentials, such as teachers'

training, contents, length of courses, programmes, supervisions, salaries,¹ evaluation, etc. Programmes show as well different levels of formality and strictness depending on how the programme is set up in the different workshops; likewise they have a different status within the field of community education. We have already described some basic institutional features in the methodological chapter. Next we will look in more detail at some of these features and emphasize some similarities between the programmes. Stemming from some common features shared by the institutions we have made a distinction between two groups of institutions: INEA and the Cultural Missions on one side, and on the other side the DIF and the DEA programmes.

1) The Cultural Missions and INEA.

These are clearly the institutions with less prestige in terms of the value assigned to diplomas. The reasons for this lie in factors such as: the relaxed way in which courses and workshops are taught; flexible teacher's hiring requirements; programmes which are rarely revised and have become dated; little rigour in how courses are evaluated; minimal supervision; and an almost complete absence of normative procedures concerning schedules, periodic and final evaluations.

In both institutions programmes are extremely flexible and, intentionally, pitched at a very low level. In the Cultural Missions non-systematic work and a high level of freedom in implementing the courses is the overall institutional watchword. This makes up a crucial part of the educational strategy of this programme. Flexibility is very high within all the different levels and aspects (students attend when they can and learn what meet very personal needs). Even if a programme for each course exists, no obligation is felt to adhere to it and it is not taken seriously. Basically, the course is organized to

¹ Payment varies from one institution to the other. In the case of INEA, teachers and instructors do not belong to the formal institutional structure and so they are considered as volunteers -within the framework of the social solidarity discourse-, who are paid \$3,000.00 pesos per hour, when eventually they are paid, for most of the personnel complained about not having received any payment for an approximate period of six months. Payment problems come to be a rather serious and common problem in INEA. This fact provokes discouragement among teachers who eventually drop out from the programme. On the other side, cultural missionaries are trade unionist personnel from the Ministry of Education and receive a monthly payment of \$1,200,000.00, quite similar to the amount paid to personnel working in the DEA Programme. Teachers from the DIF receive \$4,000 per hour and this payment is administered through the municipalities. In these last three programmes payment is made punctually; that offers a very different working dynamic than the one of INEA.

meet specific learning needs. Students are always welcome in the Cultural Missions courses. The teacher is always willing to teach someone to meet a particular need even if that person does not want to become a regular student in the course. This aspect has unquestionable advantages as far as an educational strategy is concerned and is possible because the Cultural Missions stay in every community for a period of two consecutive years and so teachers have the opportunity to mingle with the people in the community.

A similar situation occurs in INEA with regard to the flexibility with which the programme is carried out and how courses are taught. However, in this programme the effect of this flexibility on the way things are organized is offset by the rather bureaucratic characteristics of the institution. Not much emphasis is put by INEA on the implementation of community education courses, as they are only taken as a complement to the institution's educational programme (See Chapter II:3). As a result of this lack of institutional encouragement the organization of the courses reveals acute weaknesses: low number of courses, low teachers' training levels, lack of curricular programmes (manuals), etc. Even if INEA is the official -alleged- leading institution concerned with the education of adults, its programmes within the area of community education reveal significant deficiencies when compared with other institutions.

Supervisions in these two programmes -INEA and the Cultural Missions- are carried out without much rigour. There exists a certain level of collusion between the supervisors and the teachers stemming from their recognition that a strict compliance with institutional regulations and procedures is difficult given the circumstances in which many programmes often take place.

The range of courses in the Cultural Missions depends on a team of specialists from different areas (carpentry, first aid, agronomy, metal work, brick layer, etc.). Teachers in this programme, unlike those from the other programmes, are integrated since their subjects are in some way subordinated to a general idea of community work. So, the community acts as a link that integrates, or at least is supposed to integrate, teachers' practice. Courses take place during the afternoons and last approximately four hours.

In INEA courses last only 40 hours and sessions are organized on a 6 hour per week basis, although again this is very flexible and depends on teacher's time restrictions. Courses deal with subjects such as clothes making, first aid, knitting and carpentry. Basically, the range of subjects depends on the availability of instructors in the community.

In terms of teachers' level of training, technical knowledge of the area is the level required by teachers on the Cultural Missions Programme. However, it is not possible to talk about a teachers' training policy, not even of a meaningful recruitment process.² A similar situation occurs in INEA, where levels are even lower than on the other programmes, with a selection process which is not at all strict: what counts is a basic knowledge of the trade sufficient for giving courses which last 40 hours (and which are flexibly scheduled).³ Teacher's training in both INEA and the Cultural Missions has become an underestimated need during the implementation process -though itself a need which is emphasized by the programmes.⁴

An apparently inconsistent recommendation, when INEA's objectives are considered, appears in INEA's teachers' recruitment regulations. While in the DIF, the DEA, and Cultural Missions, teachers are hired and go to the different communities to take responsibility for their courses, without the need to be part of the community, INEA requires that instructors be recruited from the people of the community itself. However, it is very difficult to find trained instructors: carpenters, nurses, etc., even knitting teachers, etc., in marginal communities. Nonformal education programmes have underestimated the importance of care in the selection of teachers and instructors and

² During the 1930s there were some training programmes for the teachers (*Institutos*, see Chapter II) with mobile training units which carried through courses that lasted for several days and where personnel from different CM were trained. The lack of teacher's training was not regarded by teachers as a problem and it was only raised by a single teacher from the DEA programme.

³ A common complaint by the students refers to the short length of courses and the consequence that the students cannot learn as much as they would like. Occasionally courses have to be repeated so that everybody can have an opportunity, and to teach people a little bit more. Paradoxically, INEA states that the same people cannot be recruited for the same course a second time.

⁴ At an INEA regional meeting, training for the members of the Community Education Centre (CEC) committees was demanded. The regional delegate in charge and some technical coordinators argued that the technical coordinators, or even the social promoters, could take on the responsibility of training the committees.

the implications this has in terms of the outcome of the courses.

By and large, at least in the communities we observed, teachers recruited from the communities have little knowledge of these trades. This situation sometimes leads to non-conformist and rejectionist attitudes by people given their expectation of having teachers with a minimum level of training.⁵ Likewise, sometimes conformist behaviours prevail in face of an overwhelming reality: either they accept the courses in such conditions or they do not have any courses at all.

2) The DIF and the DEA.

Programmes like the DIF and the DEA show different characteristics. As was noted in the previous chapter, both have a more organized structure and set of procedures. Even if any nonformal education programme has informal features (sometimes as a strategy which tends to favour the development of the courses), the normative ambience within these institutions is rather rigid and control over the attendance tends to be rather strict.

The size of groups varies between the two programmes. While the minimum number of students is 25 in the DIF, the DEA establishes a minimum of 30. This does not mean that this is always achieved and the institution is not very strict if the number goes down because of people dropping out from the courses. There is always a degree of flexibility in this; however, control over attendance is clearly more rigorous in these two programmes than it is in INEA or the Cultural Missions.

As we have pointed out the DIF has the widest range of courses ranging from karate to cooking, and from knitting to typing. In the case of the DEA courses deal with domestic and vocational education. In both institutions the length of courses varies from one to two years depending on the nature of the subject. Both institutions have specific curricular programmes for each of the courses and they are carried out conscientiously.

⁵ In the community of San Agustín Mexztepec, people used to complain about a teacher who was going to be hired for the carpentry course, since he was only an apprentice and did not have enough experience and knowledge. This factor has a definite weight when trying to explain dropping out figures or the failure of some programmes.

SOME BASIC ORGANIZATIONAL FEATURES OF THE PROGRAMMES

Table 7

	RANGE OF COURSES	LENGTH OF COURSES	PROGRAMME	EVALUATIONS	REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS	TEACHERS REQUIREMENTS
CULTURAL MISSIONS	Specialities: clothes making carpentry recreation agronomy first-aid metal work	2 years 4 hours daily.	There is a programme but the course focuses on specific learning needs of students.	Very informal. Students usually present their work at the end of the year. Diplomas are granted according to teacher's appreciation of students' work.	Being over 15 years. Students are welcome anytime.	Technical level studies.
INEA	Small range including: clothes making, first-aid, knitting, and carpentry.	40 hours Distributed depending on circumstances.	The development of the programme depends on the teacher.	No proper evaluations.	Being over 15 years. Students are welcome anytime.	Knowledge of the subject is required.
DIF	There is a range of 37 courses such as clothes making, carpentry, karate, etc.	1 year. Some courses last 2 years. 6 hours per week.	There is a specific programme to be carried out and observed.	Students are evaluated during the course. There is also a final examination by external examiners.	Being over 15 years. There is a registration period to be admitted.	Primary education plus a certificate in the subject.
DEA	Range of courses: domestic and skill training.*	1 year. Some courses last 2 years. 3 hours daily	There is a specific programme to be carried out and observed.	Students are evaluated along the course. There is also a final evaluation with external appointees.	Being over 15 years. There is a registration period to be admitted.	Primary education plus a certificate in the subject.

* Subjects like: first-aids, accounting assistant, typing, short-hand, carpentry, electricity, electronics, welding, mechanics, clothing. Domestic ones include: cooking, beauty, clothes making, flower arrangement, and toy-making.

Notes:

1. Size of groups varies. The DIF and the DEA established a minimum number of 25 and 30 students respectively for starting a course, even if people drop out during the course. There is always flexibility on this. The number of students at Cultural Missions and INEA depends on how many people want to enrol in the courses, there is not a minimum.
2. Teacher's training only takes place in the DIF where teachers can attend monthly tutorials for improving their teaching.
3. The DIF is the only programme that has its own buildings in some communities. Other programmes have to borrow places from the authorities in the community (schools, public buildings).

In fact there are periodical supervisions in each programme with the purpose of inspecting the development of the courses (rate of attendance, extent to which teachers stick to the programme, etc.). It must be noted that these supervisions have institutional support and therefore are taken rather seriously by both teachers and supervisors. However, as will be emphasized below, even if the more formal organization within these institutions makes courses better organized and strict, nonformal features are dominant and always create a rather relaxed atmosphere.

There are indeed procedures for teacher's training in both institutions. This is especially so in the DIF programme where teachers can attend monthly tutorials for improving their teaching. In the case of the DEA there is no a stated policy towards teachers' training. Selection processes in both programmes are also more rigorous: teachers to be eligible to teach a particular course must have a primary education certificate plus a certificate in their subject. Many teachers in these programmes have more than five years of experience in their own field.

In the case of programmes like the DIF and the DEA there is virtually no significant contact between teachers who have, therefore, little knowledge of each other's work. They are all concerned basically with their own subjects and possess a high degree of autonomy with regard to their classes. The result is that teachers are hired to teach specific workshops and have sometimes a very low level of contact both with the programme and with other teachers, and subjects.

We may conclude that there are different organizational and institutional characteristics which have an influence on the way programmes are carried out and on how courses are taught. These differences between the institutions give different programmes a different status and therefore some diplomas have a greater social value than others.

1.2 Provision of spaces and materials.⁶

A constant comment when asking about the different problems of courses observed by students and teachers was that there was a lack of materials: '*we do not have the necessary tools*'. This situation includes the absence or lack of sewing machines for a clothes making course, the almost complete lack of tools for a carpentry or metal-working workshop, and the absence of basic medical instruments for a first-aid course. Usually the communities where programmes are implemented lack the necessary facilities, but the courses are still taught.

Teachers and students often have to provide the equipment needed (tools, syringes, machines, etc.) themselves.⁷ Sometimes even civil organizations have to support financially the implementation of some courses.⁸

Nonformal education, which is meant to attend to basic educational needs of the marginal sectors of the population, has to be supported by its own participants who are frequently forced to subsidize the development of the courses. As Camara (1985) points out:

"... need is so strong, resources are so limited, and so unique the decision to support only the few they can reach, that action is idealized and mystified where this action is so marginal that it gives way to idealization and exemplarism."

It is rare that workshops are properly equipped. In fact in the majority of cases the minimum requirements for the adequate delivery of the courses are not met. In terms of buildings, in some communities, only the DIF and the DEA have their own teaching

⁶ We will use the term 'space' as a synonymous of 'area' and 'place' -as a context. We will refer to it in two ways: 1) merely in physical terms (e.g. as a room); 2) as an area where social relationships occur. In both cases they will be taken as a social space, as a context which, using Bernstein's terms, have a particular coding, that is to say, "can be defined by its classification and framing values" (Bernstein 1987:570).

⁷ The motor for the carpentry course in the Cultural Missions project belonged to the teacher; syringes had to be provided many times by the teachers at the different first-aid workshops; the welding system was the blacksmith's own; etc.

⁸ There is a civil organization (OICAT: Organization to Foster the Culture of Asunción Tepexoxuca), in the community of Asunción Tepexoxuca, which has managed to finance some courses carried out by the DEA Programme. This organization is trying to buy a piece of land in order to build a special place where courses can take place; at the moment courses are implemented in a state storage building.

areas.⁹ Usually teaching areas must be 'borrowed', which means they amount to no more than a room in a private house lent by a student¹⁰ or rooms in a municipality building or a part of a lobby. Consequently the teaching area may suddenly cease to be available. At least this is not a problem when courses are held, as they sometimes are, under the shade of a tree.

Teaching facilities and equipment are indeed a central concern and the most common problem raised by teachers. They emphasize that if adequate teaching space and equipment were allocated to courses the quality of their work would improve and the motivation of students would increase.¹¹ The amount and quality of teaching tends to be limited by the tools. A teacher commented that: *'the tools are the problem. To teach people something else, material is needed'*. In addition, the lack of proper classrooms, just mentioned, obviously makes teaching more difficult.

In the case of INEA the lack of equipment and teaching areas is compounded by the very serious delays teachers and promoters face in the payment of their salaries.¹²

Due to the marginal characteristics of nonformal education it is not easy for teachers to obtain the social and economic support they need. They are the ones who often have to recruit their own students -knocking on doors so that they can have the minimum number of students required for a course to run.¹³ Teachers comment on how tiring it

⁹ In the case of DIF, from 434 community development centres, only 158 have a proper infrastructure, that is, only 36%. The remaining 64% of DIF courses have to be taught in borrowed places.

¹⁰ Teachers comment on the fact that having a space of their own helps people to be more confident about attending the courses, instead of being forced to go to the house of someone whom they do not know well.

¹¹ A carpenter teacher (his first teaching experience), from the community of Tepexoxuca, commented on how much interest there would be, and how useful the course would be if there was adequate classrooms, materials and tools. People's motivation would increase when they saw the quality of the furniture that could be produced given these improvements, and the status of the courses would rise.

¹² Both the promoter of the CEC who had been in this job for two years, and the promoter of San Felipe del Progreso (and some instructors as well) had been without payment for nine months. This problem makes recruitment of instructors and teachers complicated because people refuse the job, since they already know about the irresponsible payment procedures in INEA.

¹³ Given the marginal conditions of nonformal education it is natural to wonder about what is sustaining these programmes. We believe teachers are indeed one of the greatest supports of community education courses, without them everything would fall down.

is to recruit students and emphasize how frustrating it is not to have students in their classrooms and to witness high dropout rates. Students dropout, or the fact of not having enough students enrolled in their courses, seems to be one of the main frustrations of teachers. This was raised often during the interviews. Motivation and participation among students tends to be so uncertain, a teacher said, that '*if you relax your grip, they just go*'. As a counterpart, one of the most motivating factors for teachers is the satisfaction of having students attending their courses, with group success and with the gratitude of the people (see below: Section 4).

In addition, the context has a decisive influence on how programmes are performed and on the likely outcomes. Even in courses such as the ones carried out by the DIF or the DEA -which have an organizational structure that covers almost the whole State-, the prevailing situation in highly marginal communities is quite different from those rural places close to urban development centres. This has an effect that extends from the frequency of field-supervisions to the teachers' training level. It also affects the outcomes of the programmes and the expected participation of the community.

The more marginal a community the less possibilities there are for favourable conditions to implement nonformal education courses. This fact contributes to the reproduction of the situation which it is intended should be attacked. The marginal conditions in which these programmes operate, the subjects of the courses, and the marginal population to which they are addressed accentuate the social reproduction function of nonformal education. Much has been said about the need to professionalise this form of education and about the need to have enough support to turn it into a real and valued educational alternative with meaningful qualifications linked to the labour market (Jarvis 1985; Schmelkes 1991; La Belle and Verhine 1975).

From our observations of how institutions function in the State of Mexico it is possible to conclude, as a number of authors do (Newman 1979; Cropley 1989; Schmelkes 1989; Jayaweera 1979), that nonformal education, particularly in the rural sector, is a marginal education, which is carried out in marginal situations with equally marginal conditions. Its marginality shows as a coherent totality which goes from the contexts to teachers'

recruitment; from the curriculum to the population to which it is addressed. Almost everything is marginal in nonformal education.

Finally, it can be stated that places where community education courses take place are not specialized contexts to people, they are part of their everyday life, and the objects within it (which due to marginal conditions are rarely more than a table and some chairs) are not special either but can be found everywhere in the background context. The way in which objects and people are distributed within the space is predominantly informal. The teacher does not have a specific place and is not isolated from students: indeed teachers mingle with the students. The space where community education courses take place entail a total lack of formality, it is just another common space within their lives, where objects, and even the teacher, reflect their own world. The spaces are weakly classified from the context: objects are easily drawn from the background context. They are, in fact, part of the context.

1.3 The Institutional features. Some implications.

1.3.1 Institutionality in community education.

Having given a brief account of some of the programmes' organizational features we would like to raise here some considerations regarding the link between some of these programmes' internal features and their outcomes, both in terms of the orientation of the programmes and in terms of the image being projected by the institution. We will start by providing an additional overview of some of these programmes' institutional characteristics.

Programmes, particularly, the DIF, the DEA and the Cultural Missions, have specific institutional characteristics which impinge upon their own dynamic, atmosphere and way of doing things. These institutional features make it possible that a teacher, as Remedi *et. al.* (1989:54) point out:

"... in his acting, forms an image, a representation of his own function, in a complex game of acknowledgement, disregard, resistance and opposition that turn him/her into a carrier of values, interests, expectations and intentionalities that define as well his/her practice as a teacher."

The DIF, as a federal programme linked to municipality power levels and antecedents that date back more than a decade, has an organizational structure and institutional support as a well known institution devoted to social and health concerns. Further, the specific group in charge of this institution (politicians wives ranging from the president's wife down to the wife of the mayor of a tiny village) has a definite impact on the performance and outcomes of this programme; therefore minimum levels of quality are demanded by those in charge. These are some of the factors which confer on it an institutional image which has a clear effect on its performance.

The DEA Programme's most significant characteristic stems from its being a programme belonging to the Ministry of Education. This gives rise to a "teachers' atmosphere", where teachers belong to their own trade-union,¹⁴ and to an institutional support from the Ministry. Both programmes, the DIF and the DEA, have structural and organizational support, even if their operating conditions do not differ much from those of the other programmes. Credentials from these programmes are indeed the most valued within this restricted field.

The Cultural Missions fall between them. Their historic antecedents (see chapter II), as the first and most important official community development strategies implemented in the rural sector, have an undoubted effect upon the way teachers perceive the programme and upon the image of the institution. An institutional mystique remains, although at a very low level. Institutional support, though, is substantially lower than in previous years, something which makes a contrast with the DEA and the DIF programmes. Finally, their coverage, budget, and the number of personnel working in the programme is quite limited when compared with the other programmes.

¹⁴ In the case of the Cultural Missions and the DEA Programmes, teachers belong to a trade-union, and have several years of experience. Experience on the side of teachers from DIF, DEA, and Cultural Missions is extensive and it is not rare to find teachers with more than ten years of experience in the field. Many of them were previously students from the programmes, or from similar programmes where they teach now, and it is there where they began their initial training.

A number of responses revealed a sort of institutional jealousy among most teachers when talking about their length of service in these programmes, their benefits as labour union teachers, and the advantages of each programme. There is jealousy and a pride in participating in the DIF, the DEA or Cultural Missions Programmes, or from having been a student on those programmes before being a teacher. These attitudes were usually referred to the status and prestige of courses: the value of diplomas, the organization of the courses, the institutional image, teachers' training schemes, advantages offered by some programmes (such as providing material for the courses: wood, tissue; scholarships, etc.). These factors give rise to a competitive atmosphere within an educational space where it is not difficult to compete.

Elitism has a great importance when trying to explain teachers' satisfaction from participating in nonformal education programmes, and it may be conceived of as well as a factor in retention. Likewise, there is a feeling of belonging to an idealized family that is committed to a noble aim, as in the case of the Cultural Missions. A quotation from Remedi (1989:54) helps to bring out and emphasize this sort of identity between the teacher and the institution:

"... the teacher appropriates, in the practice of his role, some meanings that turn him/her into a carrier of the institutional presence -what it allows, fosters, or expects to realize. This way, it makes possible his/her enrolment as teacher, acting thus as instituted through the acceptance of programmes, timetables, evaluation systems and norms of behaviour, and keeping an identifying discourse with institutional goals and practices".

This feeling of *belonging to a group* could not be found among teachers in INEA, which is an indicator of the lack of social cohesion between their teachers, and an indicator also of the different teachers' recruitment procedures in this programme, as it was mentioned above.

Having commented on these institutional characteristics, we want to emphasize that the educational activity of institutions like the DIF, the DEA and the Cultural Missions entails a particular institutional rationale. Even if their educational activity could be framed within a political rationale (Torres 1990), we argue that it is supplemented by

other values which confer on it a greater complexity. We think there is a certain mystique and 'own rationale' -by which we mean an *orientation*- within each of the institutions, which comes from above and permeates until it reaches students and teachers, and impinges on the way courses are delivered.

Therefore, even if the coding of courses is important in terms of explaining and clarifying the function and the way these courses operate, we think the institutional code has an important influence in terms of how the institution functions and in terms of the impact of the courses. By institutional code we mean an institutional meaning -a coding- which permeates the practices of an institution, what Bernstein (1987:568) calls as discursive, transmission, and organizational practices. Therefore the institutional coding refers back to the very specific and defining features of an institution: its history, organization, structure, hierarchies -its classification and framing values: its coding. The institutional code comes from above and has an influence on the way courses are implemented -classification and framing institutional values exert their coding along the ladder.

It can be argued that the political rationale underlying the nonformal education policy making process (Torres 1982; 1990) does not explain fully the function of these programmes or the reasons why they are carried out. It can be argued that this assessment might rather be related to courses where framing -even over the regulative discourse- is extremely weak, or even non-existent, in the case of INEA, where courses fit rather into the logic of politics. It is on these aspects that we shall centre our discussion now.

1.3.2 Simulation in community education.

It is not easy to obtain reliable information about INEA's activity within this area. Apparently there are a certain number of CECs (Community Education Centres) in every zone; nonetheless, the level at which they exist is quite variable. During field work it was possible to appreciate how CECs are not fully developed within INEA's strategy. When trying to establish contact the number of CECs became just figures for statistical

purposes, and a means to justify the budget assigned to the programme. Community education courses are sometimes intended as introductory subjects with the aim to motivate people to further enrol in literacy and basic education programmes; however, the number of students enrolled in community education workshops and who are incorporated in other programmes is quite limited and sometimes non-existent. Because of their infra-structural conditions and lack of support, these centres usually have a short life. This turns into a contradiction in terms of their assumptions because they never get enough time to foster an interest in people, and so there is little opportunity for the CEC to be appropriated by the community.

People cannot implement a pedagogic practice if there are neither organizational support, nor resources. There are indeed manuals, prospectus, etc., but there is a very restricted practice, and sometimes no pedagogic practice at all. Programmes often are not implemented precisely because there is an impossibility entailed by marginal circumstances to carry out the work. There is a mission, and some coordinators might tend to believe in what they do and appropriate themselves the pedagogic discourse, but there is also a consciousness that the mission cannot be accomplished in the conditions in which the work has to be carried out.¹⁵

Coordinators know the difficulties that material circumstances raise in trying to set up and run a course, so sometimes they just pretend that they take place. Since they are under pressure from the top for results so funding continues, they falsify results (attendance figures, the effectiveness of courses, etc.) regardless of what is actually being achieved.¹⁶ Supervision thus cannot be at all strict because supervisors know themselves that marginal conditions do not allow for a more effective work. Besides, the institutional coding (imbued in a bureaucratic organization), does not stimulate the

¹⁵ Tools provision for a carpentry course at INEA's CECs include only a pair of saws, a plane and a manual drill under the assumption that the operation of the workshop is the responsibility of the people in the community. A teacher who was about to be recruited in a CEC at San Felipe del Progreso was astonished by this and puzzled about how to start a workshop with so few tools. Given these conditions sometimes workshops take place in a privately owned carpentry workshop where carpenters are willing to teach students while giving them the opportunity of giving him a hand during the afternoons.

¹⁶ This situation was very common and was observed during visits to different CECs and during talks with regional coordinators.

practice of a more organized and systematic work. Courses carried out in these conditions are indicators of the way courses are implemented, and even if they do not constitute proper courses they are useful in terms of giving an account of what the institution is doing, even if only in terms of statistical figures. The conditions in which courses take place are not stressed in the reports as if part of an implicit institutional behavioural code. These circumstances give rise to what has been called by Schmelkes and Street (1991) as the *simulation* phenomenon that occurs in nonformal education.

The questions would then be: what is being communicated in these circumstances and how? What is being acquired? Apparently that which is being communicated is communicated by the form rather than the content, and so it is mainly the form that carries the message when there is not a significant educational process. The 'commitment' or responsibility of government institutions to care for the rural poor -as part of the institutional coding- might prevail and maybe that is what is being transmitted to people, even if it does not get put into practice. That may be what is experienced by the participants and may explain how legitimation is achieved.

In the light of the above it may be possible to conclude that the community education programme of INEA shows some important features which point towards the nature and function of community education in terms of a *simulation role* which defines the way the programme operates. It also points towards the bureaucratic and non-rational educational policy making process that characterizes developing countries (McGinn and Street 1982). Therefore we think that in addition to the educational coding of the courses, it is important to take into account INEA's rather bureaucratic organizational structure and the poor institutional support given to this programme, if we are to fully explain the probable outcomes of INEA's community education programme.

It has not been our intention to enter into the analysis of how the internal features of the institutions influence a pedagogic practice. However, we have felt necessary to make these considerations as we think they might contribute to explain some of the outcomes of these courses. This special concern becomes indeed a new direction for further analysis.

1.4 Summary

In this section we have laid out a basic framework of the community educational context in terms of its organizational and infra-structural characteristics. We have made distinctions between the four programmes considered in the sample and put an emphasis on how institutional features have an influence on the orientation of the programmes. Even if the aim of the research does not focus on the analysis of the institutions we have deemed this important in order to give a background for the analysis of some implications these internal features may have both for the implementation of the programmes and for the coding of the community education process. Next we shall examine the characteristics of the social actors in community education, both teachers and students, to get a better understanding of their participation in, and perception of, these courses.

2. THE SOCIAL ACTORS

2.1 STUDENTS

2.1.1 Basic characteristics: age, gender, marital status (See Table 8).

One of the outstanding features of community education is that women make up the overwhelming majority of those attending the courses. More than 90% of students attending these programmes are women. For instance, women made up 97% of the participants at the DEA programme, and a similar situation exists in the other programmes. The reasons behind this are a function of the type of courses offered within these programmes since most subjects are thought of as women's activities.¹⁷ Consequently community education is fundamentally an education geared towards the female population.

¹⁷ It was difficult to find courses addressed to men during the field work. That was one of our basic concerns given our interest in evaluating the link between courses and the labour market possibilities. Courses dealing with subjects like carpentry, metal work, electricity, etc. are rare in the rural sector due to the resources needed for their implementation.

2.1.1.1 Women

The age of participants varies and can be grouped in three main clusters: 15-25, 25-40, and 40 plus.

The first group (15-25) comprises mainly single people, and a minority of people who have not been married long. This group accounts for a large number of students attending the courses: 19 people out of 39 in our sample fell within this age group. Students within this age group normally look for courses which have a closer relation to the labour market or to self employment opportunities, such as first-aid and beauty workshops. In these courses students under 25 years account for nearly 80% of the participants,¹⁸ 17 out of 25 students in our sample. When participants from the next age group (25-40) take part in these particular courses their interests are in getting complementary knowledge and skills that may raise their family income, or they study for the pleasure of learning. We will be dealing with people's motives in the next sections of this chapter.

The 26-40 years old group is composed of participants who are mostly married and with an average of 4 children. This group is comparatively numerous: 18 out of 39 women interviewed belonged to this group. This group is the most numerous in typically domestic courses (knitting, cooking, clothes making) and accounts usually for more than two thirds of students.¹⁹

Finally, the group aged 40 years and older is the smallest (only 2 women in the sample). It includes people who are spinsters and widows and whose children are normally adult. They tend to regard courses as a means of using their spare time, as it will be noted in the next sections.

¹⁸ Some comments in this section are not taken only from the sample but from talks, interviews, observations and data from institutions regarding the average age, marital status, and levels of schooling among the participants.

¹⁹ Besides information taken from the sample, looking at enrolment records and talking with teachers gave an overall appraisal of which kind of students (age group, marital status) are the most representative.

COMPOSITION OF THE SAMPLE
- Students -

Table 8

PROGRAMMES	COMMUNITY	COURSES	No	SEX	AGE	MAR. STATUS	SCHOOLING
CULTURAL MISSIONS	ZEPAYAUTLA	CLOTHES MAKING	8	F	2(A),6(B)	7(M) 1(S)	6(1),1(2),1(3)
		METAL WORK	3	M	1(A),2(B)	2(M) 1(S)	2(2),1(3)
		CARPENTRY	2	M	1(A),1(B)	1(M) 1(S)	2(2)
		VETERINARY	2	M	2(A)	2(S)	2(2)
NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS -INEA	TOTOLMAJAC SN. LUCAS	KNITTING	4	F	1(A),1(B),2(C)	2(M),2(S)	1(0),2(1),1(2)
		FIRST-AID	4	F	3(A),1(B)	1(M),3(S)	3(1),1(2)
DIF - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME	TEPEXOXUCA	KNITTING	4	F	2(A),2(B)	4(M)	1(1),3(2)
		BEAUTY	4	F	4(A)	1(M),3(S)	1(1),3(2)
	STO. DOMINGO JALATLACO	CLOTHES MAKING	6	F	1(A),5(B)	5(M),1(S)	3(0),2(1),1(3)
		FIRST-AID	2	F	2(A)	2(S)	1(2),1(3)
DEPARTMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION (DEA)	COAUXTENCO	FIRST-AID	3	F	2(A),1(B)	1(M),2(S)	1(1),2(2)
		BEAUTY	4	F	2(A),2(B)	2(M),2(S)	2(1),2(2)
	ASUNCION	3	M	2(A),1(B)	1(M),2(S)	1(1),2(2)	

Notes:

1. Age: A(15-25); B(26-40); C(40). 25 in A; 22 in B; 2 in C.
2. Sex: M (Male); F (Female). 10 Males; 39 Females.
3. Marital Status: M (Married); S (Single). 27 Married; 22 Single.
4. Schooling: 0 (only first grades, or being illiterate); 1(Primary); 2(Secondary); 3(Technical Studies, High School, Teaching School)
5. In total 49 interviews were carried out.
6. Interviews were carried out to approximately between 30 and 50% of students in a course. When small numbers are indicated, it means students attending the course were very few.

Finally, there is a group which does not properly fit into the adult education population target (15 years and older) but that has acquired lately an increasing importance and constitutes an indicator of problems within the formal education system. It is a group the age of which ranges from 10 to 15 years which either has not completed secondary education or not even finished primary schooling. At some workshops (usually those with a possible link with self employment or to the labour market) it was common to find students within this age range: girls that used to attend sewing and knitting courses, boys who were moved by curiosity and sometimes wishing to learn something about trades took their time to give a hand to the carpenter while he was in the workshop. This group constitutes a potential universe to be incorporated within nonformal education programmes. For example, the CEC in Totolmajac provided a knitting course for 16 people: 10 of them were girls under 15 years (many between 9 and 12 years old).

2.1.1.2 Men

The small number of men taking courses (only a small number of courses were addressed to them) makes for a less reliable analysis.

The men, 10 students, who attend the courses, (carpentry, welding, etc.) are usually young, that is, between 15 and 30. Few men over 30 attend. In the sample 6 out of 10 students belonged to the 15-25 age group; the remaining 4 belonged to the 26-40 group.

Ages vary depending on the subject of the course. In the Cultural Missions veterinary course all the students were under 25 years old, basically young men who had finished secondary education who did not wish to pursue further education and who opted for learning some skills and knowledge related to their family and the local context economic activities, such as cattle rearing.

Students whose ages fall within the 26-40 age group (4 students) can also be found in a metal work or carpentry course. Their interests refer basically to meeting specific family and housing needs given their married status.

With respect to their marital status the majority of students between 15 and 25 are single; students over 25 years are usually married. As we have just mentioned their demands and interests in specific courses are related to the fact that married people are more concerned with courses that can help them meet immediate demands which come precisely from their married status (make a window, a table, house repairs). They also seek skills that will give them the chance of a better paid job. Students who are single usually use their spare time to learn some skills in order to get a job, or simply for the pleasure of learning.

2.1.2 Schooling

Schooling levels among participants can be grouped according to three basic levels: primary, secondary, other further or professional studies (technical studies, high-school). It must be noted that participants' level of schooling in the case of primary and secondary levels, sometimes did not go further than the first grades.²⁰

In the sample it was found that 4 participants out of 49 (men and women) who were part of the sample were illiterate and they were all women. 19 did not go beyond the primary level; their age was on average over 30 years and they were people whose access to secondary education had been hampered by family economic problems and by the economic support needed by the family unit (taking care of brothers, contribute to the family income, helping in housework, etc.).

A total of 22 participants had got to, but not beyond, secondary education, a level few (only 3 students) went beyond. Participants with secondary education are usually young (15-25 years).²¹ The fact that young participants (15-25) usually have achieved this level while participants over 30 years rarely go beyond primary education reflects the

²⁰ Participants' parents' schooling very rarely went beyond primary education. Normally their level of schooling was located within the 2nd and 3rd year of basic education. At times there was no previous education at all.

²¹ There was some questioning among a group of participants within this age group (6 out of 19) about the usefulness of secondary education, as well as an agreement upon the need for a technical type of education (courses linked either with office work: secretary, accounting assistant, or with factory work), or courses like the ones offered by CE programmes.

expansion of educational opportunities in recent years, something which was pointed out in chapter II: Section 2.1.

Finally, schooling levels beyond secondary education (such as technical or professional studies) are rarely found among participants; only 4 people had achieved this level. They are 'exceptions to the rule'.²²

It was more common to find secondary schooling levels among male participants: out of 10 men in the sample 8 had secondary education, 1 had taken technical education, and 1 had primary education (he fell within the 25-40 age group). Male participants are usually young people who finished secondary education and who opted either to work in a factory or stay in the countryside (usually attached to their family economic activity: cattle rearing, small shops, etc.).

2.1.3 Differences between students

Community education courses are open to everyone. Programmes' rules of exclusion and recruitment procedures are basically weak: almost anyone over the age of 15 can attend the courses. There are no important differences among students, be it in terms of socioeconomic level, expectations or schooling levels. In the same way, abilities are also not important for enrolment in the courses. Since programmes are basically addressed to meet the learning needs of students over 15 years no prior skills or knowledge are required. Any level is accepted and teachers help students accordingly.

Weak classification between students helps students feel that they are amongst with their own people, in terms of culture, socioeconomic status, behaviours, expectations: they share the same coding with their peers. Strong classification refers only to gender groupings. This fact arises out of the nature of the subjects and not from any rule excluding men from taking some courses.

²² In some cases it was found that it was people who lived in urban areas (or moved to), who had the opportunity to undertake technical or professional studies, and then moved back to the rural areas.

2.1.4 Students' Habitus and Coding Orientations.

An aim of the thesis is to look at people's everyday contexts in order to have some data that could enable us to understand the perspective from which participants assign meaning to their experiences, what Bourdieu (1990) calls, as we have seen, *habitus*. Responses from participants allowed to have a basic framework of their everyday contexts, activities, overall coding orientations, and perception of different problems.

Rural people's economic activities are extremely varied: housewives, peasants, small-land owners, traders of all sorts (flower, fruit, vegetable and growers, husbandry, small shop owners) migrants, bricklayers, etc. These activities have an influence on people's economic level and on their coding orientation when activities foster their relation with different contexts (e.g. migrants, traders).

As has been noted the population attending community education courses in the Mexican rural sector is basically composed of people who have a predominantly low social, economic and political status (Martinez 1981). Rural people live in localities which do not differ much from each other though closeness to urban centres or to the capital of the State always has a positive impact in terms of availability of public services. Conversely, communities which are farther from urban centres or main means of communication, usually experience problems due to lack of services such as water, drainage, electricity, transport, schools, etc.

As we have said in chapter II (Part II: Section 5) there is a significant presence of two indigenous groups in the State of Mexico: *Mazahuas* and *Otomis*. These are located to the northwest and northeast part of the State respectively. 3.6% of the State of Mexico's population over 5 years speak an indigenous language. San Felipe del Progreso, Toluca, Ixtlahuaca, Temoaya and Naucalpan are the municipalities which contain 41.5% of the indigenous population, of which *Mazahuas* are the predominant group (National Census 1992).

It is common among the rural population in the State of Mexico to go and work in the main cities (or in the United States) for different periods of time. Given men's tendency to leave the rural areas in order to find better job opportunities, women are usually oriented towards the community. They become the centre around which many social and economic programmes are generated. As it has already been noted women account for more than 90% of participants in community education courses.

Women's everyday conditions in the rural areas are characterized by their predominant reproductive role confined basically to time consuming domestic activities (cooking, contribution to family economic activities like sowing, harvesting, etc.); low schooling levels; subordinated social and political role.

There were 23 women out of 39 in our sample whose activities were basically concerned with taking care of the house and their children. None of them were engaged in full or part time jobs. Fourteen women were single and their education did not go beyond secondary level. They mainly helped with domestic tasks in their houses.

In the case of men 7 out of 10 in our sample had full time jobs as blue-collar workers in manufacturing companies. The remaining 3 neither attended school nor had a job.

Schooling levels rarely go beyond primary education especially among middle-age people (40 plus). When participants were asked about their parents' schooling the most typical response refers to either illiteracy or having completed only the first years of primary school. As a reference, in the State of Mexico only 49.4% of the population over 15 years has post-primary education (*Ibidem.*). In rural isolated communities it is very common to find schooling levels which do not go beyond the first two or three grades of primary school.

Students' schooling in our sample generally was correlated with being more critical, and assuming resistance positions towards the courses in the programmes. Both schooling and work experience exerted an influence upon language elaboration, on the capacity to link concrete personal experiences to a larger context, in more expansive verbal

participation, and in terms of the agility of their responses. It was usually people who had had some previous jobs (i.e.: secretarial work), or who had schooling levels beyond primary education, who showed a wider and more critical perspective towards their own everyday world. It was indeed among this group of people that consciousness about the meaning of these courses beyond their concrete needs could be appreciated. Among participants in a clothes making course a woman with technical education level (commerce) was the one who had the highest expectations, gave the fastest and more critical responses, was most uninhibited, and participated most; on the courses she commented on their '*lack of class*'. Another woman, also, with technical level education (accounting), talked about how she fought against her family opinion that '*women should stay at home (.....) 'I needed to prove to them that I could do it'*'.

These students were always more critical of the government, more aware of how government policies could affect their social and economic conditions. Students who were more critical about politics, who did not think the government was doing something on behalf of the communities, and who did not vote or who did it for a different party than the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional -PRI* (Institutional Revolutionary Party), usually have higher levels of schooling (secretary, teacher-student) and fall within the age group 25-40. Supporting this finding, Bock (1982:85) writes that:

"there is empirical evidence showing a strong positive relationship between years of schooling and political participation. Those with advanced levels of schooling are found to be more politically efficacious, more economically productive, and more participative than those who are unschooled or who have few years of schooling".

Therefore a critical attitude was shown among participants with previous schooling (secondary education or other studies), rather than by young people without schooling who showed less awareness and concern with social and political problems and a rather restricted coding orientation -that is, a limited reach and reduced access to meanings and realizations related to the social hierarchy, as well as by their marginalization of these processes. These orientations, as was noted (Chapter IV:7.3) are characterized as remote and isolated from the comprehension of social norms and rules. However, even if within certain cases the schooling level had a correspondence with critical positions towards the

government, it is not possible to establish a causal and direct link.

When it comes to the perception of community problems students' responses usually refer to typical problems of marginal communities: lack of water, drainage, electricity, transport, roads, migration and alcoholism. There was a predominant local and concrete perspective which rarely went beyond the community level: silence was a common response when asking about the main problems in Mexico. When silence is broken topics such as corruption, pollution, and the national debt emerge as indicators of mass-media influence during the past years.

By and large responses from people participating in the courses revealed a rather local perspective, very concrete objectives, and quite limited and restricted interests. These features become more acute when accompanied by characteristics such as low schooling levels, isolation of communities, and cultural characteristics (indigenous population).

Women, within the age groups 25-40 and 40 plus, who had no primary education gave responses which were very short, local, with very concrete interests, and expectations which normally did not go beyond their everyday world concerns. Women sometimes felt ashamed of taking part in the programmes and some did not feel sufficiently secure to join the courses. As Burgman and Ooijens (1989:50) point out, "women with little formal education lack confidence in themselves because they do not feel able to participate".

Having given a picture of the clients of community education programmes we turn now to describe teachers' basic characteristics.

2.2 TEACHERS

2.2.1 Basic characteristics: age, gender, marital status (See Table 9).

Age among teachers varies between 35 and 45 years. Out of 18 teachers in our sample, only 1 falls within the 15-25 age group,²³ 4 in the 25-40 age group, and 13 in the 40 plus age-group. Most of them are women due to the areas in which the courses are held, and the great majority are married: 14 out of 18 in our sample. Younger teachers are usually in charge of 'new' courses dealing with subjects such as 'beauty' and 'first-aid', whereas courses which refer to home economics are taught by women who are usually married, with some children, and with some experience in the field. Men can only be found in courses such as carpentry, welding, agriculture, where the students are mainly young. There is a sexual division where men teach men and women teach women.

2.2.2 Schooling

Even if the average level of schooling does not go beyond the secondary level, it varies depending on the programmes:

Teachers from the Cultural Missions have the highest level of schooling (nursing studies, teacher's training studies, technical and pedagogical high-school), even if it does not normally go further than secondary education or technical studies. Technical education is the minimum schooling level required to become a teacher in the Cultural Missions. Experience in the field is high as well and it is common to find personnel from the Cultural Missions who have between 5 and 10 years of experience as adult education teachers.

Likewise, personnel from the DEA and the DIF show experience in their subjects of an average of 10 years. Many teachers have been in the programme for a long time; some

²³ This single case belongs to an INEA's cloth making course. The fact of the teacher was so young can be linked to INEA's flexible requirements for recruiting teachers. As was noted above not much emphasis is put on teachers' training level on the part of INEA.

COMPOSITION OF THE SAMPLE
- Teachers -

Table 9

PROGRAMME	COMMUNITY	COURSES	SEX	AGE	MAR. STATUS	SCHOOLING	EXPERIENCE
CULTURAL MISSIONS	ZEPAYAUTLA	CLOTHES MAKING	F	40	SINGLE	SECONDARY	YES
		METAL WORK	M	43	MARRIED	PREPARATORY	YES
		CARPENTRY	M	54	MARRIED	PROFESSIONAL	NO
		VETERINARY	M	34	MARRIED	TECHNICAL	YES
		FIRST-AID	F	35	MARRIED	PROFESSIONAL	YES
		RECREATION	F	48	MARRIED	TEACHING SCH.	YES
INEA	AG. MEXTEPEC TOTOLMAJAC SN. LUCAS	CLOTHES MAKING	F	22	SINGLE	PRIMARY	NO
		KNITTING	F	53	MARRIED	PRIMARY	NO
		FIRST-AID	F	48	MARRIED	TECHNICAL	NO
DIF	TEPEXOXUCA STO. DOMINGO JALATLACO	KNITTING	F	46	MARRIED	ADULT EDUC.	YES
		BEAUTY	F	53	MARRIED	ADULT. EDUC.	YES
		CLOTHES MAKING	F	44	MARRIED	ADULT. EDUC.	YES
		FIRST-AID	F	28	SINGLE	TECHNICAL.	NO
DEA	COAUXTENCO ASUNCION	FIRST-AID	F	46	MARRIED	SECONDARY	YES
		BEAUTY	F	28	SINGLE	SECONDARY	SOME
		CARPENTRY	M	43	MARRIED	PRIMARY	NO
		KNITTING	F	47	MARRIED	SECONDARY	YES
		CLOTHES MAKING	F	52	MARRIED	SECONDARY	YES

Notes:

1. Having experience means sometimes being in adult education for more than 10 years, like in the case of some teachers from the Cultural Missions, DIF, and DAE.
2. Teachers interviews do not necessarily match those of students. Interviews were carried out whenever the opportunity came up.
3. Adult education schooling means generally having primary education plus having taken a number of adult education courses.
4. Technical schooling means vocational education referred to subjects like nursing, agriculture, etc.
5. Sex: M (Male); F (Female).

of them were previously students and then became teachers. In the case of teachers from the DIF and the DEA it is quite common for them to have previously attended out-of-school courses and show levels of education which mostly do not go beyond the secondary level. Only in the case of nursing teachers has education gone at least to technical high-school level. Teachers' schooling levels are quite similar in both programmes and so they share the same teachers' profile. In both programmes there seems to be a link between age and schooling level among teachers: they are usually people in the age range 40 plus (13 out of our sample of 18) who did not have the opportunity of going onto higher levels of education during their youth and so regarded these programmes as an alternative form of education.²⁴

Teachers' schooling levels in INEA show a different picture which stems mainly from the institutional recruitment requirements: some knowledge about the trade or activity is the only requirement for becoming a teacher in INEA. Therefore, schooling levels among teachers rarely go beyond primary or secondary education.

3. THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS.

The purpose of this section is to enter into the analysis of the educational process of community education. The analysis is based on data gathered in field work using the *observation guide* (see Chapter V). We relied on Bernstein's concepts of 'classification' and 'framing' and on the 'learning environment factors' as key concepts that allow us to understand the curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation elements of the educational process. We intend to link the analysis of these characteristics with their social implications. Please refer to chapter IV, section 7 for an explanation of the categories used.

²⁴ It is interesting to find, though, that many of these teachers have children enrolled in professional education.

3.1 The Curriculum

3.1.1 Curriculum Contents and their Relation with the Context.

Some social implications.

When considering the type of knowledge that is transmitted in the courses a very specific insulation of this content from others can be observed. The curriculum of nonformal education is concerned mainly with the material world, with very concrete needs, with the world of the labour market. Magendzo (1987:107) makes this point clearly when he comments that:

"... the contents and subjects are kept isolated, framed and separate from each other and thus reproduce in a narrow way the existing social structure in the academic world and in the labour world. Same as in social life and in the labour world, there are included and excluded, integrated and marginal, professions with a higher status and works with a lower status; within the curriculum there are disciplines, contents and knowledge which are valued and given high priority, and others that deserve less value and low priority. The first will be included in the curriculum, the others will be disregarded. The first will be those that are related to the intellectual world and the second those related to the world of physical and manual work. Those with high priority and relevance are linked with the universal culture and those with less priority are linked with the everyday culture. The curriculum will reproduce in a coherent way the meanings and values that are generated within society."

Precisely this insulation is what constitutes the speciality of this discourse, which makes it different from other forms of education, which establishes the dominion and importance of this type of knowledge, and "... also creates a strong sense of membership in a particular class and so a specific identity" (Bernstein 1977:90).

It is very easy for people to recognize themselves in the nonformal educational experience, it is their world. Everything the educational experience reflects is linked to and is part of their everyday context. Hardly anything different from participants' context comes into the inside of the nonformal education process. External framing, "... as the controls on communications outside of the pedagogic practice entering the pedagogic practice" (Bernstein 1992:36), is very weak in nonformal education because students can

easily bring into the educational practice their own experiences. The strength of framing between educational knowledge and everyday community knowledge is weak.

Almost everything inside deals with people's context and everyday life, so they are used to it -the context of the classroom itself, the features of the teacher, as well as the contents (see below). People can easily recognize themselves in the pedagogical practice; they identify themselves with the educational code because it is their everyday code.

People in the courses possess a tacit recognition rule which orients them to the speciality of the context. They feel among equals. They know these are courses available to them, that they can cope with. Courses which are carried out in the programmes do not differ much from their everyday activities. People are familiar with activities such as knitting, cooking, embroidery, etc., as part of the transmission of knowledge which is carried out within the family -usually according to traditions. It is through the courses that they learn more about, and become skilful in, those very common activities. There is not a significant difference between the local knowledge and the knowledge which is transmitted in the courses. This makes it a non-specialized context, a context common to people, and which people are used to.

The educational experience clearly matches people's orientations and expectations as will be highlighted above (4.1.4). People wait expectantly for the courses even when the courses are in areas of which students have previous knowledge and so do not offer a new knowledge to be learnt. Areas are basically related to common and everyday activities, to knowledge areas shared in a way by the community, to levels and types of knowledge which match peoples' contexts. As Bernstein says (1992:37) "... the classificatory principle provides the key to the distinguishing feature of the context, and so orients the speaker to what is expected, what is legitimate in that context."

This has a psychological impact as well because for people these courses are *their* courses, *their* curricula, something which impinges on people's expectations and people's positioning within their specific social division of labour. This can be observed in nonformal education courses which are regarded by people as something natural, as

normal curricula that fit their reality, that respond to their needs. People are positioned by the educational code and rarely question the educational programme. The insulation translates into personal behaviours that support and agree on the status of the courses. Individually, people fit in the courses and the courses fit into their lives, responding to their motivations and expectations (see below).

On this Bernstein (1992:31) points out that:

"... the arbitrary nature of these power relations are disguised, hidden by the principle of the classification, for the principle of the classification comes to have the force of the natural order and the identities that it constructs are taken as real, as authentic, as integral, as the source of integrity."

Most subjects in community education courses are concerned with women's everyday activities and with their context, and therefore strictly linked to a material base. As for men, courses are about the learning of working skills to be used for meeting very specific material needs. There is hardly a space for people in courses to think or to wonder about matters which are not linked to their everyday life. Courses do not usually offer the possibility of entering into dynamics different from those considered as 'theirs'. Meaning in community education courses is predominantly linked to the immediate context. As Bernstein (1992:45) points out:

"If meanings have a direct relation to a material base, these meanings are wholly consumed by the context; these meanings are so imbedded in the context that they have no reference outside of that context. These meanings are not simply context dependent, they are necessarily context bound; and meanings which are context bound cannot unite anything other than themselves; they do not have the power of relation outside of a context because they are totally consumed by that context."

We may conclude thus that the nonformal education curriculum illustrates how knowledge is distributed in society. Knowledge here is basically about mundane matters and the sphere of the unthinkable is restricted by the strength of classification, defined as "... the degree of boundary maintenance between contents" (Bernstein 1977:88). In nonformal education there is a weak classification between the inside and the outside, where the principle of classification clearly establishes specific identities and voices;

consequently, people recognize their space within these programmes. We may say that there is a weak classification but it gives rise to a strongly classified discourse. The curriculum of nonformal education appears as strongly classified with respect to other spheres of knowledge, even if it is weakly classified. We argue that the weak classification of nonformal education curriculum stems from the fact that nonformal education deals with a common knowledge, the most widely spread simple and practical knowledge, although a knowledge which has a deep marginal, social class connotation; it is from this last fact that it derives its strong classified appearance.

Nonformal education illustrates how knowledge is stratified, how knowledge is distributed to different sectors of society, and how this form of education is rarely concerned with the 'unthinkable'. In Bernstein's terms nonformal education would refer to a *narrowly defined procedural knowledge in a strongly classified relation with elaborated discourse*. Distributive rules, as points out Bernstein (1992:44), "... specialize forms of knowledge, forms of consciousness, and forms of practice to social groups. Distributive rules in fact distribute forms of consciousness through distributing different forms of knowledge."

Finally, another important feature of nonformal education related to the above, is how the educational process produces people who acquire a set of skills for doing different things and who therefore will have the same competencies as others. It is not a matter of differentiating people but rather of providing people with more or less the same level of competencies, competencies which, besides, are quite common to the context. In this case, as Bernstein (1992:52) points out, "... the pedagogic discourse creates a pedagogic practice in which all share equally the competencies of that practice".

Community education is not a practice that is geared towards the differentiation of people but rather to the creation of common capacities and shared competencies. Relations between people tend to be *similar to* instead of *different from*. They offer the possibility for people to recognize each other, to reflect themselves on the others, to be able to 'read' each other. As Bernstein (1992:54) points out:

"... the output of shared competencies in the end constructs a simple division of labour, a much less specialized division of labour (...) behind that, lie quite different modes of solidarity, identity, ideology."

In the light of the above it can be argued that the outcomes of the educational process of community education programmes tend to reinforce people's identity by contributing to their social positioning within the social division of labour.

3.1.2 The relation between education and production.

Some implications between expectations and social positioning.

A study of participants' motives (see below), shows there are two main expectations behind the decision to enrol into a community education course:

a) when the participant wants to learn some basic skills for everyday use: (having some knowledge about nursing in order to use in case of an emergency), or with the specific purpose of meeting immediate needs (learning about welding in order to make a window for the house; learning about carpentry to make pieces of furniture needed at home).²⁵

b) when the participant regards the courses as a source of training in a specific trade in order to apply for a job (learning some welding in order to get a job in a factory), or set up his own workshop (a blacksmith's workshop; a beauty parlour; doing some sewing and clothes making jobs) in order to either start being economically independent or to get additional income.

In this last case courses act in terms of sowing hopes and are regarded by people as a potential means of mastering a productive and potentially lucrative trade. Courses are regarded here strictly as job training.²⁶ Often this expectation is disappointed and frustration is felt in the face of the marginal and unrelenting reality of the labour market, and the low value placed on the qualifications the programmes bestow.

²⁵ This situation is very common among students at the Cultural Missions courses, where they are mainly interested in meeting a very personal need. This strategy has come to be considered as part of the programme's educational strategy because later the student becomes more interested in the course and is willing to enrol in the workshop and learn the trade.

²⁶ The DEA Programme defines its courses as 'for-the-job training' courses, a fact which from the institutional perspective entails a possible correspondence between courses and the labour market.

At the beginning of courses the initial motivation is concerned with the fulfilment of some priority needs but as the time goes by, immersed in the learning process, students begin to find within this type of course the chance of making a change, and the possibility of gaining an additional income to improve their living standards. The problem arises when what the course offers does not match the students' expectations.²⁷

It is amongst young participants -men and women within the 15-25 age group- that unrealistic expectations about what the courses will do for them in the labour market are generated. It is here that the problem lies. Young people, precisely because of their age, show expectations and motivations that usually go beyond the objectives and the potential of the course. Their expectations are significantly different from those of middle aged or married people.

It is quite common to find participants who want courses to open up new job opportunities: there were a number of women who had in mind setting up a beauty parlour, or applying for a job as nursing assistants in a clinic; young men who saw the possibility of setting up a workshop or finding work in the industrial sector. It is within this group of people that frustration becomes a real possibility. It is not difficult to find here that expectations go beyond what is possible; as a consequence resistance processes may be generated, or an unavoidable adjustment and inevitable reinforcement of social positioning.

As an example, in the community of San Lucas a group of young girls (15-23 years old), who only had primary schooling level, were motivated to join a 40 hours-first-aid course from INEA, with the expectation of getting a diploma which could allow them to get a job as nursing assistants in a hospital. Frustration was very strong when they realized that the diploma which they might get after the course would not provide the recognition that they had expected in order to get the sought-after job.²⁸

²⁷ Schmelkes and Street (1991) found out that in job training courses students tend to be more clear in their expectations, terminal efficiency is higher, and fulfilment levels are greater. The impact of programmes though is less than pupils and teachers expect.

²⁸ This fact brings up a comment about why teachers do not talk to participants about the objectives and limitations of the courses in order not to foster false expectations.

Hence one possible conclusion is that community education courses seem to have an important role in terms of limiting participants' expectations and fixing a particular sector of the population within its own social stratum with corresponding motivations from this level. Participants tend to regard these courses as an important educational alternative that matches their possibilities and expectations: '*since we are people of few resources, we cannot go further*'. Courses, in some cases, represent to people the possibility of social mobility and a means for climbing into higher social classes, even if they do not go beyond the lower ranks of the labour market (e.g. becoming a nursing assistant, setting up a workshop).

From the educational perspective, the way the courses limit the expectations of the students at this level, acts as an automatic mechanism of social reproduction inasmuch as most people located within these economic strata want to study trades and technical studies that only offer access to the secondary segments of the labour-market. Schooling and work expectations from people very rarely went beyond this level. Becoming a blue-collar worker constitutes a 'reasonable' and common ambition among students of carpentry or metal-work courses. For many of them these courses entail the chance to gain access to such jobs.

In this way, the features of the nonformal education curriculum, its apparent link with the labour market, and context specific characteristics (as part of the educational coding which typifies this kind of education), might be contributing to lower expectations matching them constantly with real possibilities offered by the context.²⁹

3.2 The Pedagogy

3.2.1 Regulative and instructional discourse.

As was noted in chapter IV Bernstein distinguishes between two systems of rules regulated by framing which can vary independently: rules of social order (**regulative**

²⁹ This hypothesis is developed by John Bock and George Papagianis (1983b).

discourse) and rules of discursive order (**instructional discourse**) (Bernstein 1992:35).

The rules of social order (regulative discourse) refer to the forms that hierarchical relations take in the pedagogic relation and to expectations about conduct, character and manner. They refer to the transmission rules which position the acquirer in these aspects. The instructional discourse is concerned with selection, criteria, sequence, pacing, and so refer to the transmission rules which position the acquirer in legitimate competencies and the relations between competencies. Where there is weak framing over the instructional discourse there must be weak framing over the regulative discourse. According to Bernstein instructional discourse is always embedded in regulative discourse which is the dominant one.

In general where framing is strong, we shall have a visible pedagogic practice. Here the rules of instructional and regulative discourse are explicit. Where framing is weak, we are likely to have an invisible pedagogic practice. Here the rules of regulative and instructional discourse are implicit, and largely unknown to the acquirer. (Bernstein 1992:36).

When taking into consideration the strength of framing in the nonformal educational process different framing values among the programmes -both over the regulative discourse and the instructional discourse- can be observed. Framing over both discourses at first glance seems very weak -both at the level of the institutional structure and at the local implementation level- due to the relaxed way in which courses are carried out and because of the rather informal and nonformal nature which is appropriate to these courses. Nonetheless it is interesting to note that even if framing over both discourses - instructional and regulative- might seem weak, it is not possible to talk about an invisible pedagogy in nonformal education. In fact the pedagogy is visible.³⁰

³⁰ We disagree thus with Bernard and Papagianis (1983) for whom nonformal education is taken as having rather an invisible pedagogy.

Framing of the instructional discourse is strong. There is a sequence³¹ to be followed during the courses and this is made clear to students. There are always certain things in every course that have to be done first according to a curricular programme which exists at different levels of formality and explicitness among the institutional programmes. In programmes like the DIF and the DEA there is a specific work rhythm which develops according to what the programme requires. There is a specific programme within each course which establishes times and particular objectives for each period of the course. This programme, in the case of knitting courses, culminates in an album that contains small versions of all the different kinds of clothing that students have learned to make. Each section of the course is devoted to making a particular garment. Likewise, job training courses specify different techniques that have to be mastered during the course.

In the case of the Cultural Missions the teacher follows an order although this order does not necessarily have to be written nor do the students have to be made aware of it. Likewise, in INEA the organization of the course is left to the teacher's discretion in most cases; only a guide is supposed to be provided by the institution.

As with sequencing there is a pacing to be followed, there is a compulsory programme that has to be carried out, and students know it from the beginning. They know what new knowledge or skills they can get out of the course and what they are supposed to learn and do during the classes. In the Cultural Missions, particularly in INEA, framing over sequencing tends to be rather weak. Students can just pick up the course at the stage they want. If they leave they are allowed to come back anytime and pick up whatever stage of the course they deem valuable or of any interest to them. There is not any strict control over the attendance as within the DIF and the DEA. Sequencing rules tend to be slightly explicit for some regular students, but framing varies according to the extent of informality that characterizes the implementation of a course. The fact is that courses are very flexible within these two programmes so, even if by and large it is possible to talk about a weak framing, sometimes framing might strengthen depending on the different situations. A continuum going from weak to strong framing runs from

³¹ Sequencing rules indicate the rhythm for the acquisition of knowledge (Bernstein 1988:64).

INEA to the DEA, via Cultural Missions and the DIF (See Table 10).

Criteria in most programmes tends to be explicit and detailed about what is expected. Within the learning process there is a continuous reinforcement by teachers of how things must be done, of what is considered acceptable and what is not. The role of the teacher emphasizes the transmission of knowledge, therefore his regulative role is rather reduced. Even if framing over the regulative discourse is rather weak in INEA there are certain rules or criteria which must be understood and followed by the participants.

FRAMING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROGRAMMES

Table 10

	INEA	CULTURAL MISSIONS	DEA	DIF
SEQUENCING	-F	-F	+F	+F
PACING	-F	-F	+F	+F
CRITERIA	+F	+F	+F	+F
REGULATIVE DISCORSE	-F	+F	+F	+F
OVERALL FRAMING	-F	+F	+F	+F

By and large, in all programmes, with the exception of INEA, the hierarchical nature of the relations is explicit (the authority and role of the teacher is made evident to students), and the ambience in which courses take place reveals an order to be followed in terms of schedules, development of the courses, behaviours, and attitudes of students while the courses are taking place. As was already noted in the first section of this chapter, there is a clear social order within these three programmes which comes from above, from the institutional characteristics.

It is only in INEA that framing over the regulative discourse is rather weak. It is precisely the weak framing over the regulative discourse which gives these courses their sense of flexibility, informality and the relaxed way in which they are implemented.

Such differences in framing values entail also major changes in terms of organizational and transmission practices, and in the way the knowledge and the actors (both students and teachers) are conceptualized.

In the case of courses like the ones given in the Cultural Missions and in INEA, it is important to analyze the links between a very weak framing and the irrational - disorganized- way in which courses are sometimes implemented. Framing, we think, may be linked to some features of the bureaucratic way in which these courses are carried out. The fact that in certain cases framing over certain rules tends to be rather weak, suggests the need to look for another perspective which could contribute to explain this apparent weak framing. It is very likely that we would have to resort to the analysis of the rationale underlying the educational policy making process in Mexico in order to fully understand the apparently irrational ways in which courses are usually carried out.³²

Having commented on some features of the programmes, we may conclude that the community education pedagogical process points to a visible pedagogy where both the rules of regulative and instructional discourse are rather explicit. According to the definition of the concept:

"... in general where the framing is strong, we shall have a visible pedagogic practice. Here the rules of instructional and regulative discourse are explicit. Where framing is weak, we are likely to have an invisible pedagogic practice. Here the rules of regulative and instructional discourse are implicit, and largely unknown to the acquirer" (Bernstein 1992:36).

³² See McGinn and Street (1982) and McGinn and Galetar (1984) for an insight on these particular features of Mexican policies' rationale.

3.2.2 Pedagogic style.

Community education is basically concerned with the transmission and acquisition of procedural knowledge and skills,³³ be it knitting or welding skills: people attend the courses basically because they want to learn new skills. Teachers and planners are quite conscious of this situation and therefore design the courses accordingly. The emphasis is put on the transmission of very specific procedures and techniques even if the process of acquisition is deemed relevant within all programmes. Emphasis though on the grading of knowledge is rare, and only happens in programmes like the DIF and the DEA where more formal institutional features confer on these programmes a different status (See above). Training is carried out fundamentally through practice. This modality of instruction contributes to the assimilation of *knowledge* and *know how*, turning courses into a more successful and motivating training.

Courses are quite concrete, basically concerned with doing things, with learning abilities and skills. If people are not quickly doing things they might drop out; *'they become desperate'*, as some teachers say, when time goes by and they do not learn as much or as quickly as they hoped. Basically, practical purposes are behind students' motives for attending the courses. A teacher commented that the students *'do not like taking notes, which is the theory we give them at the beginning of the course... some even quit for this reason'*.

In the light of the above the visible pedagogic style is geared basically to generate the transmission of knowledge in terms of acquisition of skills, although the informal way in which courses are carried out -the setting, the distribution of objects, the way people dress, the cultural identification between teacher and student- gives rather an impression of a horizontal and more interactive pedagogic style -the structural context affects the methodology and the outcome (Bhola 1988:114). For instance, courses is perhaps the wrong term to describe what sometimes is provided by the Cultural Missions: it is

³³ Government sponsored nonformal education programmes are not concerned with objectives such as: fostering new reflective processes and making people conscious of their reality, which are predominant issues among popular education experiences (see chapter III: 2.2).

personal contacts and informal relations that are central.

Therefore, even if the authority image of the teacher is always present and very important for the students in terms of the status conferred on someone -for the fact of being a teacher-, the informal relationship that marks the pedagogic style prevails and favours the way knowledge is transmitted and acquired. Teachers usually answered students' questions promptly and were willing to respond to the individual needs of all students. A high level of support and encouragement for students was found when observation was carried out. The teacher was a kind of guide always ready to help with any individual's learning problems and thus sometimes the courses ended up in a personalised, learner-centred-type of education.³⁴

Even if for the student the relationship might be a relaxed and informal one, there is a clear vertical style where control resides basically in the teacher. There is a strong framing within the coding of community education programmes and this framing may help to reproduce in rural societies aspects such as: the passive role of students, the status of the authority, the predominance of the instrumental, the verticality of relations in society, notions of power, and the lack of a voice in society. As Bernstein (1992:50) points out:

"The selection of the theory of instruction is not entirely instrumental, it also belongs to regulative discourse, because the theory of instruction contains within itself a model of the learner, and that model of the learner is never wholly utilitarian. That model of the learner contains ideological elements."

So, even if the atmosphere of community education programmes seems very informal, there is a clear vertical relationship that typifies this pedagogical process, where the teacher is taken as the one who knows and the one who definitely controls the communication. Both teacher and student have therefore their very specific roles within the community education pedagogic relationship.

³⁴ Due to the small number of students in the courses (very rarely more than 15 students, even if 25 is the minimum required), and to the nature of the courses -dealing particularly with procedures (special types of soldering, different wood cuts, knitting techniques), teaching methods tend to be learner-centred. During field work it was possible to observe how practically in all workshops teachers perform 'tutorials' in every session when every student's particular needs concerned with the application of new techniques or procedures are met. A student at a Cultural Missions' clothes making course said that *'here, the teacher stays with us until late in the evening if we have an urgent need for a dress or a uniform'*.

3.2.3 Teacher - student relationships.

The informal and friendly atmosphere contribute to people finding a place to open themselves up, to talk about their problems, their way of doing things, etc. This encourages and develops a particular relationship between teachers and students. For example, the basic education and the clothes making teacher in the Cultural Missions Programme talked about the extent to which students trust them and share with them some of their problems. Similar situations occurred with the carpenter and the blacksmith who many times joined their students in parties and meetings. Therefore, the teacher is usually a person with whom they can socialize and even have a friendship.

Nonetheless teachers keep their place as teachers and their authority certainly underlies this relationship: *'it is like a friend that we have to respect'* expressed a woman at a knitting course. Within the atmosphere of the course there is a feeling always of respect for the teacher, a wide acknowledgment of his/her authority by students. A comment from a student at the blacksmiths' workshop is quite eloquent about this sort of relationship: *'I have a friendly relationship with him, of friendship, of trust, but I give him his place.., because he is the teacher.'*

The fact, as was mentioned earlier, that male teachers teach men students and female teachers teach women reinforces the identification between teacher and student in terms of the activities, interests, topics, gossip and relationships that spontaneously take place between them. In the case of men it fosters shared activities such as 'going to parties' or 'having a drink together'. As for women social activities such as 'getting together to celebrate a birthday' are quite common.

The relation between student and teacher is very important in terms of how students value their teachers. Most students -both men and women- think positively about teachers. There seems to be approval for their methods of teaching and standards of training: *'very good'*, was the common response when students -both men and women- were asked about their teachers. Most students think teachers have enough training for the courses they teach: *'she knows a lot'* many students said, or *'teachers are very well*

trained'. There were even some cases where teachers' level of training was considered more than enough for them: '*what do we want a well trained teacher for if we are not going to catch up with him/her*'.³⁵

Responses to questions about the teachers' attitudes the women students valued most referred to patience, good humour, effective teaching ('*that they teach well*'), and a reluctance to criticize and scold ('*that they don't tell us off all the time*'). By and large the teachers in all the programmes were valued highly. Teachers are highly esteemed and respected and usually end up becoming students' friends. For example, in the community of Santo Domingo, all the students attending a knitting course contributed to pay the teacher's transport.

Particularly in the case of the Cultural Missions time devoted by teachers to people in the community is very much appreciated by the participants. Since the Mission stays in the communities for a period of two years, it is not rare for teachers to devote more time to their teaching. This personal contact with students is a very important factor that has to be considered which fosters stronger links, identification and closeness to people. So the work of the missionaries is not confined to courses given but usually diffuses and permeates the everyday life of the community. We think this programme could well have a different impact than the other programmes due to the way it operates. In fact, every Mission is supposed to be committed to carrying out a community development activity wherever the team is operating.³⁶

Teachers themselves talk about qualities such as: '*humility*', '*being a trustworthy person*', '*knowing how to motivate people*', as important virtues and attitudes that teachers must have within this form of education. For them the teacher-student relationship must be friendly and trusting, and this relation is commonly found in these programmes.

³⁵ Only in some programmes of INEA there were some resistance behaviours on the side of participants, when people from the community were not very enthusiast about the carpenter who was meant to be recruited to take on a carpentry course; people knew he did not have experience at all and they wanted to have a better trained teacher.

³⁶ Polluted water was taken up as a community problem to deal with in Zepayautla, the community considered in the sample.

Teachers' social positions are not very different from those of students. Coding orientations, and even expectations, for both groups of social actors are very much similar. A comment from a social promoter from DIF-Mobile Network, when talking about the community she was working in encapsulates this idea: '*the people I teach is very similar to my own family*'. This fact helps to explain students' attitudes and behaviour towards their teachers and explains as well the reinforcement of social positioning among the students.

It could be that schooling and teachers' social position may contribute to explaining why their level of expectations is not very high, and why their level of criticism and coding orientation is rather restricted. Teachers' social position being similar to that of students gives rise to a stronger integration, identification, and level of communication between both, because there is a corresponding link, whether in terms of their social position within the social division of labour, or in terms of their orientation to meanings of a more restricted type.

Teacher and student both naturally use a common language full of local expressions, and there is a strong bond between them. There is no great gap between teachers and students in terms of level of schooling, social background, and sophistication in the use of language. It was very common to find courses where teachers and students were having a good time by joking, chatting, gossiping, organizing social events, etc. Topics raised and activities carried out are familiar to both.

This facilitates and gives way to an atmosphere where "... language enables things to mean and is the mediator of ideological signs" (Sharp 1980:97). The teacher matches the student in these terms. Apparently there are no cultural barriers that could block a real identification between them. Students talk a lot about how much they trust their teachers, about the close relationships between them. The fact that teacher and student share similar *habitus* and coding orientations led us to wonder if it was not this very fact which explains the failure of students to advance beyond their social and educational levels. In which case the similar *habitus* and coding orientations would be reinforcing their social positioning.

Finally, it must be noted that students see their teachers as people like them, but who know more than them. At the unconsciousness level, teachers constitute for students a model to be followed. Remedi *et. al.* (1989:62) is quite eloquent about the meaning underlying the image of the teacher:

"... if the teacher can occupy a place in the imaginary of his students it is because with his effective presence, with his being there, he occupies a real space in the classroom and embodies and makes present the ideal, the model they should aspire to. Then, the teacher actualizes what the curriculum offers them as a future, as a promise; he offers students a space for identification and for their subjective realization." (our emphases)

Therefore, in addition to social positioning implications coming out from students' and teachers' similar -sometimes the same- backgrounds, the fact that the teacher sometimes is a model for the participants reinforces this process.

3.3 Evaluation

Given the emphasis put upon the acquisition of skills criteria becomes a constant element in community education workshops. From the beginning students are taught skills in order to make, be it a table or a dress. There is a specific criterion for doing things. Courses deal mainly with instrumentalities, therefore practice is always present within the theory of instruction. Stemming from this fact, students are constantly evaluated in the way they perform and put into practice their everyday learning. Nonetheless, there are significant differences in the way evaluations are performed depending on the characteristics of every institution.

In INEA and the Cultural Missions periodical evaluations are not the rule, even if they are stated to be such in the programme of the courses. In both cases a diploma is given at the end of the course which certifies attendance rather than the knowledge or skills acquired. At the Cultural Missions final assessment usually takes the form of a presentation before students' families and local authorities and does not attempt to quantify what has been learnt during the course. Diplomas are only given to outstanding students who have followed the courses on a more permanent basis. There is a

significant difference between the value of diplomas at both programmes. Given that INEA's courses only last 40 hours and the disorganized way in which the programme is carried out and courses are taught, diplomas have less value than in the other programmes.

In the DEA and the DIF, evaluation is taken more seriously. As was noted above, courses such as knitting and clothes making entail the elaboration of an album from the beginning of the course which shows the content of the programme and the different units that will be evaluated. Consequently, there are periodical examinations which take place after every unit where students are tested. In addition, regional exhibitions are held during the courses where students display the items they have made. These exhibitions stimulate students and foster a degree of competition between teachers. At the end of the course there is usually an assessment. In both the DIF and DEA programmes final examinations are conducted by external appointees. Students have to work on a randomly chosen task and the award of the diploma is conditional upon a good performance.

Students' attitudes towards evaluation usually express a concern; this attitude was found especially among women. A most common response found among students when asked about things they liked the least was: *'I don't like evaluations'*. People worry too much. This attitudes were found particularly in the DIF and the DEA programmes, and also in the Cultural Missions although to a smaller extent. As was noted above courses' characteristics in the DIF and the DEA (the more visible pedagogy) and the institutional features, contribute to make these courses better organized than courses taught by the Cultural Missions and INEA. Therefore, people know from the beginning that they are going to be evaluated at the end of the course. Some people do not like it from the beginning, some do not even enrol in courses for this reason. Teachers commented about how sometimes students begin to drop out when periodical or the final evaluations were approaching. So, some students just learn as much as they can or wish, and then drop out just before examinations take place.

On the other hand, for those who stay, evaluation acquires a very special meaning. This was perceived in all the programmes with the exception of INEA where courses, as was noted earlier, are quite short and final evaluations are not the rule. From our observations final evaluations, particularly, are regarded by students as very special occasions, especially by women. On this day students bring along their families and invite their friends in order to share with them a moment which is special and meaningful to them. This is a moment of which they are very proud. It means to them, above all, having achieved a socially valued grade, an educational grade. Again *having been able to learn, a means of self realization*. It all points to the reasons why they decided to take part and to the very special meaning assigned to these courses (see below: section 4).

Evaluation in nonformal education exhibits the same features found in the rest of the educational process. The evaluation process is strictly constituted by the pedagogic practice and therefore exerts and reflects the same coding as the entire educational experience. As Bernstein (1992:39) points out, evaluation "... condenses into itself the pedagogic code and its classification and framing procedures, and the relationships of power and control that lie behind it." Therefore, again, the informal way in which programmes are carried out -the apparent weak overall framing- makes evaluation rules less strong than they are supposed to be. Programmes like the DIF and the DEA, where criteria and framing are stronger than in INEA and the Cultural Missions, clearly have a more strict control over what comes to be considered as a *legitimate form of realization*. As a result of this and considering the institutional characteristics (see above: section 1) diplomas have a different value depending on the programmes. Clearly diplomas from the DIF and the DEA are the most highly regarded within the restricted competitive atmosphere of community education. Diplomas granted by these institutions can provide easier access to sectors of the job market related to the content of some of the courses, such as metal work and first aid. A diploma from the DIF or the DEA can provide access to jobs such as working as a nursing assistant or apprentice at a clinic or getting a blacksmith job at a manufacturing company. Likewise, diplomas can be useful in case participants wish to become teachers in any of these programmes. Diplomas granted by the Cultural Missions cannot be as socially valued as diplomas

coming from the DIF and the DEA.

3.4 Summary

In the last section we have examined curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation in the nonformal educational process, in order to assess the different coding characteristics of each one of these elements, and to look further at how they were perceived by the participants. We have stressed how the curriculum of nonformal education is apparently strongly classified from other types of knowledge because of its marginal characteristics but is really a common and widespread knowledge shared by the majority of the population; this, it was argued, has important implications in terms of how people recognize themselves within the learning space. In addition social positioning implications were examined regarding the apparent link between nonformal education and the labour market. The analysis of the pedagogy put the accent on the visible characteristics of this process and the emphasis on instructional discourse. Social positioning implications were discussed also in terms of teacher-student relationships and in terms of the evaluation of the process. Here stress was put on how students tend to develop, arising from the characteristics of the educational process, similar and shared competencies which reinforce participants' location within the social division of labour. Finally we commented about how evaluation in community education courses reflects the same coding as the rest of the educational process, and how its rules are less strong than they are supposed to be.

4. THE MOTIVES OF THE SOCIAL ACTORS

"No other subject is more widely pondered and discussed by people interested in the education of adults than the motives which lead men and women to introduce systematic learning into the patterns of their lives" (Houle 1974).

In a previous section we have described and analyzed some basic features of both students and teachers. We will now concentrate in giving an account of the motives expressed by them for taking part in these courses.

4.1 Students

4.1.1 The Categories

A number of categories (social valuation/personal advantage; rupture; economic; learning) emerged from the analysis where different motives were grouped on the basis of their common elements; these have been described already in chapter VI. We now give an account of the different responses expressed by the participants. It must be noted that these categories can be understood as ideal types, therefore they tend to overlap when students express their reasons for participation, even if in some occasions reasons seem very specific and concrete. They have been grouped under a number of categories which have as their main aim giving an account of the array of meanings underlying people's motives for participation.

Therefore, several orientations always merge in students' decision to enrol in a particular course. This fact led us to think it unnecessary to make reference to the frequency with which people expressed a particular motive, and unnecessary to assign a particular importance to any of the categories. Again, we were more concerned with giving a picture of the range of interests expressed by the social actors -teachers and students. Comments are only made regarding programmes, levels of schooling, age groups and gender among participants.

1. **Social Valuation/Personal advantage.** Motives within this category reflect above all a concern about personal betterment that needs to be understood with respect to a very specific social context, that of women's everyday conditions in the rural areas of developing countries: predominant reproductive role; low schooling levels; time-consuming domestic activities; subordinated social role; contribution to family economic activities (sowing, harvesting, etc.) (Arizpe 1989; Jayaweera 1979; Stromquist 1988; Charlton 1984). Within this wide motivational field, intentions are varied and relate to different aspects such as personal value, sublimation, realization, and feeling of security. As Courtney (1992:139) points out "... adult education is *par excellence* the means by which earlier deficiencies can be made up and where talent not previously used now finds a new basis of opportunity."

Responses falling within this category usually come from women within the 25-40 age group. Men's responses did not fall into this category. As it was pointed out previously schooling levels among this group rarely go beyond secondary education and in some cases do not go beyond primary education. We think this helps to explain students' need for an education which they could not afford for both social and economic reasons in previous years. Some responses referred to reasons concerned with personal improvement and can be as abstract or simple as: '*to learn*'. Some very common responses among students expressed ideas such as: '*I have always dreamed about learning. I like to better myself*'. These responses always emphasize the importance of *learning*, but a *learning* to which underlies the idea of doing better through learning. This specific distinction is what separates this idea of learning from the one considered in the 'learning' category (see below).

A frequent response expressed by people reflected the need to be socially valued: '*knowing how to do something*', responded a woman enrolled in a first-aid course in Tepexoxuca when asked about her reasons for participating., even if this 'something' refers only to basic knowledge or skills like the ones taught in these courses. In the same sense, in face of their economic situation some participants expressed the need to learn so that this knowledge can turn into a means to face future economic problems: '*so that I don't have to appeal to someone*'.

Traditional activities such as domestic ones (doing housework, cooking, etc.) are not regarded by women as 'really knowing something'. Some responses like *'to feel useful.., to have something of my own'*; *'to do things by myself'* or *'I told him to let me - as a woman- do something'*, express a need strongly linked to an underestimation of oneself and of the everyday world of the rural woman. Therefore there is a need to improve themselves by doing other activities which are assigned a definite value because they mean learning, getting to know something, even if this something is very related to their everyday activities. As De Llela and Ezcurro (1984) point out, there is a quite wide-spread system of "... collective meanings of knowledge that condition the performance of their learning roles. Precisely, through such a system is generated an idealized valuation of 'knowledge' from an assumed role of 'ignorance'."

Conversely, there were responses which legitimated and valued the world of women and the domestic scene. Such responses denoted a need to better oneself at this very concrete and specific level: *'to learn things that are important for women: how to make-up a daughter'*; *'courses are good for us women, to do better'*.

Finally, motives often referred to the need to have a personal income additional to the one provided by the husband as a means to revalue themselves within the framework of a traditional woman's subordinated role in the rural areas. Responses falling within this category usually come from married women without distinction of age group. Some responses refer to this potential of courses to provide them with an additional income: *'someone doesn't depend only on the husband...to contribute something to the family economy as well'*.

2. Rupture: This category contained responses where motivations were linked to the intention of achieving through courses a means of socialization, distraction, and escape. Only women's responses fall in this category, and then only those who are aged 25 plus, and who are usually married. As with the previous category the crucial idea, that of rupture in this case, derives its specific meaning from the context of women's everyday activities. When people attend the courses they leave their everyday activities where space for reflection and sharing different things is quite restricted. As Heller (1987:57-

58) states:

"... the attitude of everyday life is absolutely pragmatic... The ideas of the necessities of everyday life never rise to the level of theory, and everyday activity does not constitute the practice. The practical activity of the individual does not rise to the level of practice except when it is conscious specific activity."

Such motives involve the need to make a break with the everyday world and to escape routine: *'it is a relief from being shut up, coming here and seeing other things'*, was a comment which it was quite common to find among the responses.

Socialization is revealed through the desire for being together with other people, through the need for company different from their everyday company. For instance, some CECs of INEA, like the one in Totolmajac, became important community meeting points, as a sign of the lack of such facilities in the community itself. Likewise, the blacksmith's workshop at the Cultural Missions became a real social reunion space for many youngsters in the community.

These places constitute opportunities for people from the communities where a breaking-off from the everyday world takes place in terms of activities, expression, and being together. The space, which means attending the courses during the afternoons, constitutes to a great extent a break with the everyday atmosphere, a space different from the domestic world, a different meeting point, a space where talk other than house-type gossip take place. In the case of the DIF programme teachers are previously trained in some special areas (such as initial education) which are supposed to be taught during the course. People value highly these talks and usually feel quite pleased about to be taught some extra things during their course. As a woman at a DIF knitting course commented *'one comes here with the enthusiasm of knowing a bit more... sometimes the teacher tells us about children's education.'*

Here, women have the opportunity to talk about things they do not normally talk about at home, and to be with people they normally cannot meet because of their everyday activities. Communication is different from that which people are normally used to and this marks a sort of 'break' with their everyday context. As Gayfer (1980:6) points out:

"... when women unaccustomed to speaking for themselves, do begin to speak, a new social and experiential reality becomes visible with recharged awareness and action."

Communication during the courses establishes a social atmosphere in which participants feel at home and share the same problems, worries and doubts; it contributes also to the reinforcement of community social links and the positioning of people.

Even if government-sponsored community education does not foster reflection or consciousness raising processes the way it is encouraged by popular education³⁷, this does not mean that sometimes the group atmosphere generates a form of communication and reflection different from the one people are used to. Everyday activities are analyzed from differing perspectives as a result of people being together and sharing the same everyday problems.

A comment from a middle-aged spinster, illiterate, and shy, expresses clearly the potential of these courses and the reasons which underlie people's decision for participating:

'One is alone at home, and does not have anybody to talk to but the children, but once we are here we are all chatting. Well., I like it., isn't it?, chatting with the women because being there at home I sort of talk with the children but... it is not the same: listening to the woman telling a joke and something else, and some other women that laugh., and me as well, so... when I don't come, I sort of miss them'.

Just as Burgman and Ooijens (1989:16) found out in their study of the Cultural Missions, "for women in Mexico's rural environment, whose freedom of movement is limited, participation in a course (...) has a meaning not only in terms of their everyday activities, but as well in terms of the possibility of having social contacts."

³⁷ Martinic's study of popular education programmes in Chile highlighted the importance of programmes in terms of how the space was perceived by people. Because of the different orientation of the educational process the courses were looked by people as a specialized context with significant influence on changing attitudes among participants.

What must be stressed here is that people really find a different space when they attend the courses, even if the space is not fundamentally different from their own. These experiences "allow them to live a feeling of integration that counteracts the everyday experience of social exclusion" (Martinic 1988:3). The space comes to be a specialized one to people because there are small but meaningful differences from the world in which they normally live in. We must emphasize then that despite the space not having areas strongly bound to people's contexts, it becomes special to people. The educational encounter may be weakly classified but it is highly valued.

3. **Economic:** The economic factor constitutes the most important of the reasons that push people to enrol in a course. As Stromquist (1987:46) points out, "although certain types of knowledge and skills are beneficial to women, one should not lose sight of the fact that poor women, before anything else, need financial resources". Similarly, Charlton (1984:126) points out that "rural women are often caught in the downward economic spiral (...) a spiral that is fuelled by a need for cash that outstrips the ability to earn it". There were, though, different intentions behind this category which point to the specific orientations given by people for their participation in these courses. It is not only an abstract economic motive or need which impels people to enrol in a course, but this action was assigned several concrete meanings by the participants. These were grouped as follows:

a) **Domestic:** what comes to be important here is that learning can produce savings in household expenses. This seems to be the overall orientation in responses like the ones from students at a carpentry course: *'because this way, one can make one's own pieces of furniture'*; or from women attending clothes making courses: *'to make one's own clothes and not having to spend money'*.

For women within the age group 25-40, who also were married, courses meant sometimes an additional income, a way of helping the domestic economy, an income of their own and sometimes even a way to survive. Due to the economic situation in rural communities some women expressed the hope that these courses could help them get an additional income by cutting hair or making clothes.

A teenage student at the Cultural Missions Programme is a good example of how courses are regarded with a very pragmatic orientation and as having an immediate potential in terms of solving concrete needs: in carpentry he made some loud speaker boxes for his musical group; learnt to weld and made the pig sty doors; and from the veterinary course he learnt how to take care of the animals that belonged to his family (give vaccines, vitamins, etc.).

b) Subsistence: This economic motive refers to the need to satisfy immediate economic needs, very concrete and specific, and very typical of these environments. Courses here were regarded basically as a means of meeting everyday urgent needs. It was mainly married women who expressed these views as a result of the economic needs within their families. People participate in courses for different reasons than the ones properly specified within the course, as a woman said: *'courses help not to eat only beans, with what we get from sewing I buy meat'*; another woman, like many, said that she participated in courses *'to make children uniforms'*³⁸. As Meister (quoted by Moulton 1983:35) emphasizes, people often are not interested in aspects such as development or economic growth, but rather "they are most concerned in getting food, shelter and security from year to year and with the continuity of their social group".

c) Link with the labour-market: here economic motives are oriented towards the possibility that these courses give people a link with the labour market or with specific self-employment production activities (a small business of their own): *'so that later I can set up a small beauty parlour'*.

For younger participants (15-25 years) the link with the labour market amounts to the possibility of having a trade, a profession, a job that they can rely on: *'so that I can apply for a job at the factory'*, or as some others expressed it: *'maybe later I can sort it out and set up a little workshop'*. Their age makes their expectations realistic -having a chance of achieving their goals. These courses give them their only chance of

³⁸ Even if state education in Mexico is free, it is quite common for women to worry about their children's uniforms every year because of the amount of money involved. For this group of women saving on uniforms means a significant saving in their finances.

education in their foreseeable future. This was the case of young women students without secondary education attending an INEA's first-aid course in San Lucas, whose expectation was to become nurses.

4) **Learning:** Motives here are very concrete and specific. People's responses were usually referred to the manifest objectives of the courses and so their reasons for participating were in terms of the interest to acquire a new knowledge: the pleasure of cooking, wanting to learn crochet, the pleasure of knitting, learning how to inject, etc. This motive sometimes refers to what Boshier calls as *cognitive interests*, that is to say, knowledge for its own sake. Likewise, Houle's (1961) labels it as *learning* when the orientation points towards learning for its own sake. Normally it is women within the age group 25-40, and 40 plus who look for a way to use their spare time learning with a very specific aim: *'I wanted to learn how to make little carpets'* or *'I wanted to learn to cook new dishes'*.

This particular motive was also found among men, usually within the 15-25 age group. For young people who do not want or are not able to go on to further education learning becomes a way of using spare time. The possibility that it may prove useful in future employment or in meeting specific personal needs is recognized but is not seen as being of great importance.

4.1.2 Alternative courses' expectations. Some implications.

The analysis of the motives behind the decision to take part in a community education course was enhanced when expectations regarding alternative courses were considered.

When students were asked about any other courses which might interest them, some responses reflected the desire to have a different form of education, even if not for themselves, for their children or for younger people: *'secondary school courses would be good for young girls'*, or in terms of their link with the labour market: *'learn some typing so that girls can get a job in the factories'*.

Usually, behind the opinion about alternative courses lay an estimate of their potential usefulness and therefore referred to the need to solve immediate basic needs such as *'knowing something about first-aids just in case of an emergency'*, or the need to know something about clothes making so that *'we can make up children's school uniforms instead of having to buy them'*.

Responses were quite eloquent in their agreement about subjects offered by the programmes, especially within the 25-40 and 40 plus women's age group. People normally showed great satisfaction about the type of courses included in the programmes and seemed happy with what they learned: *'when I am sewing I have a lot of enthusiasm for doing things'*, expressed a woman at a Cultural Missions clothes making course.

People did not seem to worry about studying other different areas and were conformist with regard to the actual curriculum. Expectations about other alternative courses mostly reflected either a conformist attitude towards the range of courses included normally within the curriculum, or a preference for domestic type courses or some others similar to those being offered. Courses chosen belonged to the same common domestic areas of the community education curriculum: knitting, cooking: *'so that I don't have to repeat the same dishes'*, or projected a conformist position: *'the same courses'*. Some other responses revealed impoverished expectations and a real belief that other sorts of education were beyond their possibilities. These courses were regarded as matching their own level. A woman at a DEA beauty course commented that *'what do we want a better teacher for if we are never to catch up with her'*.

There was a very low level of questioning and criticism, of expressing alternative interests, of choosing subjects which go beyond the domestic scope -a very low level of resistance to the content of the programmes (see next chapter: section 2.5). The need to have a more technical and labour market orientated education (typing, accounting assistant) was not generally felt by participants, only 7 students out of 49 in our sample expressed such views and then were usually people with higher schooling levels. Non-conformism was only revealed in attitudes like that of a woman with technical level of education at a clothes making course in the Cultural Missions who did not seem to have

much respect for the range and quality of courses when asked about her interest in taking some other courses: *'well..., courses of a higher class'*.

We think this is an indicator which reflects the level of expectations that exist within this sort of environment, and also an indicator of how through programmes that privilege women's traditional role, social positioning is being reinforced complementing the reinforcement of women's subordinated role within rural areas. Moreover, by and large people did not complain about the courses nor about the conditions in which they are taught. Responses normally expressed conformism and acceptance of their reality: *'for us, the poor, it is alright'*, commented a woman from the community of Santo Domingo de Guzmán. This situation reinforces the *cooling-out* thesis which states that nonformal education, because of its marginal characteristics, lower people's expectations and makes them match their possibilities and limitations (Bock and Papagianis 1983).

Within training courses, expectations usually do not surpass the first levels of a secondary labour market. Expectations from people about what they can get from the courses usually refer to *'know some welding and then apply for a job at the factory'*, or young girls interested in becoming hair-dressers, learning some secretarial skills and looking for a job in an office. It can be concluded that expectations are being fulfilled within a context where expectations usually are low. Courses are highly valued and usually linked to the usefulness that people have placed on them. The picture gives evidence of low expectations and low demands which end up fulfilled by these programmes.

When workshops do not have either the necessary materials, tools, or the necessary space; when diplomas granted can have value only in the lowest and most marginal spheres of the labour market, when students' economic level sometimes does not allow them to have the basic materials needed at the workshops, it is not strange that expectations and motivations coincide to a great extent with the broad features of courses and with the inherent possibilities of the place occupied within the social division of labour. To this extent we think community education is fulfilling an important role in terms of social class reproduction and contributes only moderately to

training a labour force for a secondary labour-market which does not demand high qualifications.

4.1.3 Students basic characteristics. Some links to motives.

Characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, and schooling had a significant influence on the functions, motives and meanings of nonformal education. We have already commented about some of these links when describing the participants. Here we want to emphasize some of these aspects.

Among women, the first group (15-25) is the one where it was more common to find work expectations (through courses like beauty or first-aid). It is usually young women who have finished primary or secondary school, who help out with housework in their homes and who look for a short educational course that may allow them a future economic activity. Because of the lack of educational opportunities beyond secondary education within their communities women within this group do not usually continue on to further education.

The next group (25-40) comprises participants who are interested in courses normally linked to their everyday domestic activities (knitting, clothes making, cooking, etc.). Even if the expectations of this group are not linked to labour market possibilities there are some cases where expectations pointed towards the possibility of having an additional income through setting up a beauty parlour, or doing some small jobs within the neighbourhood.

Most participants are married, a fact which explains to some extent which subjects are privileged within the curriculum of community education (cooking, knitting, beauty, etc.). Married women are also usually the ones preferred by teachers because *'they are calmer'* and *'they know what they want'*. Besides, they show a higher emotional stability according to the teachers than young women and know for certain what they can expect from the courses. According to some teachers, married people show concrete needs linked to the domestic field (the need to improve their cooking; the need to learn how

to knit and therefore save some money), which are seldom found among younger participants.

For the group aged over 40 years courses mean above all an opportunity for some distraction and socialization, and they fulfil a truly compensatory and remedial function by simply acting as a palliative of the population's basic needs. For them courses usually meet also very concrete and specific objectives (*'I wanted to learn embroidery'*), and provide them with an activity to 'kill the time' (*'I get very bored just being at home'*). It is mainly women whose children are adult and who have some spare time during the afternoons. These courses provide this group of people with an interesting way to spend some of their free time, which makes them feel useful and gives them some social contacts beyond those offered by their normal domestic routine. For such people courses accomplish a clear and specific purpose and totally fulfil their expectations. They are grateful for the provision of courses and workshops within their communities.

In the case of men, within the 25-40 years range the youngsters are mostly married and the need to link learning with productive activities or with the labour market is stronger. People enrol in the courses in order to meet some personal concrete needs which have arisen from their assumption of marital responsibilities, or from their socioeconomic level. Usefulness appears as the basic meaning attached to these courses. *'I came because I needed some windows for the house'*, appears as a common motive among men within the different age ranges, even if in the lowest range it is quite normal to find participants who attend the courses out of mere curiosity.

People with a better economic and social position usually do not experience any difficulties in attending the course, even if among these are some who reject the courses because they clearly do not fit their expectations. Consequently, possibilities for starting up an independent economic activity from what is learnt from the courses, are more real among students who have got the time and the resources to set up a small beauty parlour, to buy a sewing machine, or a motor.

In terms of the link between schooling and people's attitudes and motives, the field work provided some interesting information. By and large, higher levels of education and a link with productive activities had an influence on people's responses and orientations. Normally participants with levels beyond primary education show higher expectations in terms of being able to pursue higher schooling levels in areas and activities oriented to the labour market (i.e. computing, secretarial skills). The need to have a more technical and labour market orientated education does not prove to be a general concern among participants; when it happens it is usually among people with higher schooling levels.

The characteristics of the population and the level of economic development impinge on the function and usefulness of nonformal education. Participation levels, motivations and meanings vary from an isolated indigenous community to a non-indigenous rural community close to urban centres. Codes vary substantially from one area to the other and have an impact on the way programmes are implemented.

From this perspective, nonformal education seems to operate in many different ways and has different values for different groups. Therefore it is possible to think about different functions depending on the context characteristics, such as socioeconomic level, schooling, gender, age and context, conditions which are seldom taken into account during the nonformal education policy making process.

4.1.4 Courses' relevance to students.

Having examined different categories of students' motives a general comment can be put forward: the main motive expressed by the participants is the satisfaction of very specific needs. As Leagans and Loomis (1971:104) point out: "... behavioral patterns are largely determined by what people believe is true and useful to them, not merely by their knowledge alone. What people believe to be true is true and real to them as they see it." This has an influence on participants because they want to see fast results. On this teachers usually comment that sometimes people drop out because they become desperate about the time learning is taking them.

Some students expressed a particular rejection of theoretical aspects of the courses (taking notes on clothing measures, first aid techniques, etc.). What people enjoy and value is being engaged in a practice. What is more simple, more immediately useful, seems to be the most motivating aspect for students: people take courses basically to satisfy very personal and concrete interests. Even if this is quite common and understandable the fact alludes to a higher identification with practical aspects rather than with 'thinking' aspects. This is a reflection of the general coding orientation among adults in the rural sector. Most adults come to learn for specific reasons which are based on what they think they need. "If the content or the process of instruction does not in some way meet these needs, the learning will have very little meaning for adults" (Wlodkowski 1986:23). It is worth noting a case in the community of San Lucas where students at a first-aid course of INEA began to drop out as a result of the 'elaborated' way of teaching used by a doctor, who collaborated during several weeks, and whom students could not understand.

Finally, when people were asked about the usefulness of courses responses were overwhelmingly concerned with how useful they were and with the extent to which they addressed problems in their communities. There was a general agreement on this supported by practically all the responses. Regarding this idea, Love (quoted by Courtney 1992:55) has pointed out how people go through a process when they decide to enrol in adult education courses. He emphasizes two preconditions which were the base of this 'sequence of enrolment': first, a student must be aware that education has a positive value for the solution of problems; secondly, education should be equated with happiness or success.

People expressed the view that courses had benefited the communities and concrete results could be observed: women who attended courses were now doing knitting and sewing jobs for other people; some other students set up a small beauty parlour or a blacksmiths' workshop; young people managed to make their own furniture or managed to finish building their own houses making windows and doors; and married people, especially women (since most are basically concerned with domestic affairs), used their spare time to put into practice what they have learnt. The opinion is that courses are

really meeting people's needs and benefit the communities. A comment expressed by a woman refers to the reasons that impelled her to participate in the courses which are reasons that cannot go beyond the most basic level: *'since we are poor we cannot go further; ... for us., the poor, courses are very good'*.

It is possible to conclude that the overall response about courses is very positive. People are satisfied with the courses and some courses have even exceeded people's expectations: they have learnt more than they thought possible; they liked the social atmosphere, they approve of the way they are taught, and they feel happy with what they have learnt. It was not rare to find people pointing out that *'the course has been better than I thought'*, or responses like the one of a woman at a DEA knitting course saying that *'I did not know that they were going to teach us so many things'*.

Participants are grateful for having this sort of courses in their communities: *'if the government is bringing them home and we despise them..., that would be too much!'*, said a woman from a Cultural Missions clothes making course. Peoples' reservations are usually over how short the courses are. People would prefer longer courses and, in the case of the Cultural Missions Programme, would prefer the team to stay longer.³⁹ We think this constitutes an indicator of the importance attached by people to the courses. We think that when dealing with motives which are behind community participation in the courses, it is important to take into account that the conditions in which they are asked to participate, both teachers and students, are not very different from their own everyday living conditions. People in the communities are used to a lack of resources, poor conditions, and having to make great efforts. When people do not have anything, a little is better than nothing. This situation may contribute to people's getting used to very little and to their regarding this situation as normal. As Latapi (1982:103) highlights, "... the peasant gets used to receive crumbs from everything, even from education itself". This contributes to depress even more the status of adult education and favours people's positioning within their own socioeconomic level.

³⁹ In the community of Zepayautla, where the study of the Cultural Missions was carried out, people were trying to get the Missions stay for a longer period. People attending various courses in this programme were concerned about the Mission leaving the community since there was no other institution to provide them with this sort of education.

4.2 Teachers

"Every master needs a slave (one at least) that knows his power. Every teacher needs a pupil (one at least) that recognizes his knowledge" (Jean Clavreul).

Teachers like their students show different reasons and motives that explain their remaining as teachers in community education programmes and provide evidence about why, under marginal working conditions, teachers continue giving their courses and workshops. Motives behind teachers' decision to teach in these programmes acquire certainly a special dimension. They do not necessarily refer to the material benefits but make reference to affective aspects. Motives usually refer to a personal history, to their antecedents, their social and economic conditions, their expectations, and the struggle which they have undergone '*to be a teacher*'. Responses were categorized as follows:

a) **Sublimation:** The category was drawn from teachers' social circumstances (low schooling, low socioeconomic level), consequently it refers back to them. It was created to account for motives that allude to personal problems for which teaching in these programmes is meant to be an answer. As a middle-age teacher, single mother with one son, from a DEA clothes making course with 15 years of experience commented:

'I have found here the family that I don't have at home. I enjoy being here getting along with the students..., help them with what I know, so that they don't suffer what I suffered when I was a girl...'

For many teachers teaching constitutes an opportunity to compensate for the lack of status and self-fulfilment: '*for me being a teacher is a great pride because my family never could provide us with university studies*'.

Given their socioeconomic condition some teachers regard these courses as a means of gaining ascendancy (which they cannot have within their own traditional spaces) over other people (their students) who belong to their own social class. Just as a young DEA beauty course teacher with only two years of experience commented: '*I come to teach here, I tell them: you do this, you do that*'. As Remedi *et. al.* (1989:43) underline, the moment when someone becomes a teacher has great importance:

"... from the symbolic point of view. It is thought as a central one for the constitution of the identity of the teacher, since the teacher configures there his access to a new place within the schooling institution, inasmuch as he gains access to status, power, function and relations. This new place faces the teacher with new meanings, allowing different identity poles to emerge".

Teaching turns into a means of achieving a status recognized by the community and a social position which is not very easy to get in those environments. It seems quite significant for people to be elected and to be in charge of affairs. It is a position to be proud of and there is a lot of status reward entailed in being a teacher within those environments.⁴⁰ *'It is very nice to be a teacher'*, appears as a frequent response from teachers, as is: *'one feels good when people are grateful'*.

For some teachers these courses mean almost everything in life. To lose the opportunity of being a teacher in these programmes, besides being an important loss in their finances, would be a great loss in their everyday lives. They constitute for many of them their only route they have of self-fulfilment. As a clothes making teacher expressed: *'the day they took my job away..... is as if they took off my arm'*.

For teachers these courses mean a source of status, a way of feeling useful helping other people to learn what they know and feeling proud about it. Teaching offers them a way to feel important, even if it is only within this specific social environment and only with their students. Being a teacher, as Remedi *et. al.* (1989:47) note "entails the acknowledgement of some attributes such as power, status, knowledge, abilities, ethic, etc., which make a difference between a teacher and a pupil". There is a pride in being a teacher, reaching this social level, even if the status value of the courses is very low. For instance, some responses also alluded to the act of transmission of a knowledge which is deemed important or useful (the fact of being able to teach their knowledge): *'teaching what I know..., that people can learn from what I know'*. Repeatedly responses from teachers spoke about this new satisfaction of being able to teach, which we think

⁴⁰ People feel very proud of being nominated for a charge, such as being the group president, being the promoter, or the president of a committee. A peasant at a community centre in San Felipe del Progreso, recently elected for a charge (President of Promotion Committee of that Centre) was very proud of having gotten a seal for the Centre of his community.

refers to the pleasure entailed in the action of teaching, particularly to people for whom achieving status positions within their communities is not an easy goal because of their socioeconomic conditions.

All age groups were represented in this category, therefore no special connection can be suggested between age and sublimation needs. However, we think a link can be established between peoples' marginal living conditions and the need to sublimate personal and social deficits through teaching.

b) **Service ethic:** this category is composed of motives expressed by teachers which have an orientation towards helping people, stemming from the fact of their participation in programmes basically addressed to economically and socially marginal sectors of the society. As a carpenter teacher in the Cultural Missions programme expressed it: *'one feels satisfaction from serving humanity'*. In the same direction, a metal work teacher argued that *'I feel pleased that at least I am leaving something behind. Wherever I pass I leave one or two workshops'*. Satisfaction appears as one of the most common reasons when teachers want to explain their staying in the programmes. So, when asked about why they are teachers in these programmes some talk in terms of *'the satisfaction, helping people who need it..., students benefit from the practice..., it is a satisfaction that students can learn and do it by themselves'*. The Community Education Centre promoter in the community of Totolmajac (a 17 years old girl who lives with her family) did not seem to be worried about not getting her pay for many months already: *'I do the job for pleasure'* she responded when asked about working conditions and reasons for working in adult education.

Responses falling within this category refer to the constant feeling among teachers of talking about their work in terms of others, always in terms of those 'to whom they are devoted', 'to those to whom they are committed': *'teach the little bit that someone knows, so that it turns into an economic help for people'*. We think this feeling, a common one among the teaching profession and part of teacher's identity, is a feature which typifies teachers' work in these programmes. "Nowhere appears more clearly" writes Lacan (quoted by Remedi *et. al.* 1989) "... that the desire of man finds its

meaning within the desire of the other, not so much because man detects the wish of the desired object, but because its first object is being recognized by the other."

This motive appeared as a common response amongst teachers. This, we think, refers to the social mystique involved in these programmes, and to the fact that teachers identify themselves with their students since they belong to the same socioeconomic level, as has already been noted in a previous section.

Community education institutions take advantage of moral and commitment motives, which are not difficult to find among teachers within these programmes. The institution appeals to this 'mystique' assuming the underlying apostleship of this form of education on the basis that "(they) would fulfil a sort of apostleship sealed by 'personal generosity' and the 'absence of selfishness': it is the discourse of 'help', 'service', 'usefulness' and 'sacrifice' (De Llela and Ezcurro 1984).⁴¹ This kind of institutional discourse is illustrated with the following example:

In a regional meeting, facing the frequent problems of a payment that never arrives, the zone coordinator argues that INEA '*does not offer jobs*', *we seek for your social participation, people who are interested in the community, people who trust and cherish their ethnic group*'. When a promoter answered: '*you go and make people understand that*', the coordinator -using a scolding tone- appealed to values, not to look for excuses and obstacles, to participate because it is a programme from the government. It seems that things have to be done no matter what way. A social promoter commented that '*we do not have any other alternative but keep on.*'

Similarly, even if the institutional mystique which existed a long time ago in the Cultural Missions Programme and the organization and support behind this programme nowadays has evaporated⁴², nonetheless, in many cases there still can be found a

⁴¹ Among problems raised by teachers in the Cultural Missions Programme, were the fact that they have to move to a different community every two years which gives rise to an accommodation problem, and problems about schools for their children, lack of stability and the sacrificing of their families.

⁴² Nowadays missionaries are not so much interested in remaining in very marginal communities. Almost all of the Missions in the State of Mexico have searched for rather urbanized communities with water, drainage and electricity services, where finding accommodation is less complicated and can be more comfortable. Family needs push them to reject communities which do not have basic public services or good means of communication. Marginal conditions therefore influence missionaries' decision not to work or not to choose very isolated communities, as it is meant to be according to the Cultural Missions programme objectives.

certain personal mystique which shows in terms of the 'pleasure of teaching', 'the pleasure of helping people', 'the pleasure of teaching what I know'. These motives compensate teachers for bad wages and poor working conditions. As De Llela and Ezcurro (*Ibidem.*) point out "... the primacy of the emotional and the ideology of 'helping' are two decisive factors in retention".⁴³

c) **Social-class solidarity:** This category, similar to the previous one, refers to motives which show a more critical conception of social change, and a global vision of poverty that does not remain at the level of the mere satisfaction of helping marginal people but that foresees the possibility of helping them to change their social class condition.

Teachers who expressed this sort of motive understand their work in terms of 'popular education' (Chapter III: 2.2 deals with this educational approach), and therefore their motives allude to social commitment rather than to social help. A few teachers (only 3 out of 18 in our sample), expressed their reasons for participating in adult education programmes, in terms of: '*help a little those of my class*', or responses like: '*fight with the peasant, even if slow, against ignorance and poverty*'.

These teachers were usually young people who had experience of higher levels of study, such as teacher training. They were critical of the objectives of community education programmes and of the activities of the government. This group of teachers usually regard these programmes as an opportunity for carrying out consciousness raising with the groups they work with.

d) **Economic:** the economic need appears as a constant amongst teachers, particularly for those who normally do not have more education than secondary schooling and for whom opting for a better job is a difficult task. Many teachers, from the Cultural Missions and from other programmes work in these programmes because they have been

⁴³ There are factors that incline teachers towards dropping out and apathy, while on the other side there are emotional and affective elements that contribute to their continuing presence in the programme. These are what De Llela and Ezcurro (1984) describe as the *centripetal* and *centrifugal* trends of literacy teachers behaviour, an ambiguous and conflictual process which most teachers go through during their stay within these programmes.

there for many years already, because their age, their training and schooling antecedents, and their marital status (most of them are married with small and medium size families), do not allow them easily to opt for another job. In many instances it is not the pleasure of the job but not having any other alternative that explains why teachers remain in these programmes. As an example, a social promoter from the DIF-Mobile Network Programme, coming from a low economic level background, pointed out that working conditions were indeed hard (she could only see her husband and children once a week) but her family's economic needs were great and so she did not have many options.

Some teachers participate in these programmes as a means to get an extra income during their spare time. These motives are usually found among middle-aged (40 plus) teachers, with some years of experience already, who are used to work during the afternoons, and who have children who no longer need constant care. Teaching provides them with a moment of their own and a route towards economic independence (within the framework of the family), and additional income to contribute to the family economy. A number of women, whose orientations fitted within the economic category, expressed the importance of having some money of their own, so as not to be in the position of continuously asking for money from their husbands: *'it is always good to have a little money, for one's own expenses.'*

5. THE MEANING OF THE EXPERIENCE

The meaning that comes out of being temporarily inserted into a nonformal educational process was analyzed in terms of how this process was perceived by the students. If motive orientations refer to expectations underlying people's participation, the meaning of the experience is determined by how and the extent to which expectations have been fulfilled and how this has meant a change in peoples' lives. Therefore, when considering 'changes' it is possible to evaluate to what extent what was expected, what was underlying people's reasons, was fulfilled. That is, to what extent courses were useful for meeting people's expectations.

People characterize the changes in terms of their '*usefulness*' -as a common underlying meaning when students were asked about to what extent courses had meant a change in their lives. This 'usefulness' was referred to a different number of aspects. It is to some of these aspects that we turn now our attention.

5.1 The meaning of the courses for rural women.

The analysis has shown so far that a proper understanding of the meaning of these courses to rural women requires us to know about women's routine in their environment, their social conditions, and the nature of domestic work. As says Sharp (1980:113-114), meaning "... is always built up in a context containing other signs and in a non-verbal situation which is itself infused with meaning."

As has been noted, to women in the rural sector these courses represent an authentic means of self-fulfilment, realization and escape from their everyday reality, having their own spaces and time to themselves, in face of the traditional role they normally have within these environments.

In addition to the new knowledge they are getting out of the courses, there is an affective side to the experience. Women, particularly within the context of their social condition within their communities, usually evince a strong feeling towards the courses. Following Martinic (1984:9):

"... there is as well a symbolic communication which goes beyond the rational. In these experiences, affection and the reencounter with a deep shared subjectivity lead the subject to recognize in the other and to think life not as something fated by their nature but as a social situation which is built and changeable."

Data has been eloquent about the importance of these spaces within contexts bounded by tradition, routine, and the subordinate role of women. Courses entail, as Martinic (1988:28) found out as well, "a transgression of everyday limits; they transcend the everyday world and they feel different, 'saved', close to the utopia of a new life." In

this way a woman expressed that *'you come here and you forget about little problems that someone has sometimes at home..., it is a pastime that we have to take advantage of..., that is not forever.'*

In the light of the above many of the changes expressed by people reflected satisfaction at being able, now, to do things; from doing better in life; from being useful: *'now I know I can learn'*; or *'yes, because I feel I'm doing better, improving myself'*. Some of these responses reflected a feeling among rural women of not being useful, an underestimation of their traditional roles in rural societies and so their participation in the courses is oriented often by the need for proving to themselves that they can achieve certain goals, that they are able to do some other things. What people said about the changes was framed within the broad notion of personal betterment and social valuation fulfilled through their participation in community education courses.

In some other cases there was a clear reference to the past which established a division between before and after the course:

'Now I know how to do things that before I did not know';

'Yes, courses have changed us because before we had to ask a favour to someone to make up a skirt, now one do it oneself.'

Some women expressed a positive evaluation which stemmed from their having enabled to help the family: *'yes, because now I can help my husband'*. Changes were also valued because of personal considerations where for instance there was a personal sense of security or a change in attitudes:

'I feel more secure, so that when things turn economically difficult..., well I know how to do some works';

'Before... I was shy, now I am more mature and I have learnt more'.

Again there is a sense of fulfilment, of personal realization, that can only be understood and explained within the very specific context where these courses take place and the social position of women in rural societies.

There were some responses in which courses seemed not to transcend in terms of a significant change in their lives. In this case changes expressed by people are felt in terms of merely having acquired a knowledge which they did not have before:

'Yes, I have learnt things which I did not know before;

'Yes, I have acquired new knowledge'.

5.2 The meaning of learning.

Besides taking these courses as a way of filling their spare time, women also take them as a means of achieving self-fulfilment and competence in areas additional to and different from their normal domestic activities which are still important for their everyday life. All these factors contribute indeed to people's motivations for enrolling in the courses. "When there exists that social value considered as an integrated part of the activity or knowledge, the understanding of this cultural and social fact produces a strong attraction towards the activity or knowledge" (Paradise 1985:90) -even if the importance of feeling useful is strictly referred to the contextual social value of that usefulness.

Thus, we think it is important to highlight what people understand by '*doing better*', by '*feeling useful*', because when people mention that these courses are useful for *doing better in life*, they denote a definition of *doing better* which is strictly bounded by their social class possibilities. Courses indeed mean for them a real '*doing better in life*', within frameworks where the absence of educational alternatives and marginal economic and social conditions shape their everyday context.

At this stage, the fact that people really are learning must be stressed, and that is one of the reasons that underlie people's satisfaction about the courses. Courses deal basically with the acquisition of skills, people learn while doing things -through practice- and they really end up with a new learning, with the true feeling of having learnt. Learning comes as a result of being part of a process that is meaningful to people.

Learning, as Illich (1973:44) points out, "... is the human activity which least needs manipulation by others. Most learning is not the result of instruction. It is rather the result of unhampered participation in a meaningful setting."

Changes sometimes did not go beyond the very concrete objectives of the course and involved no more than the meeting of a very specific need. When asked about how courses had changed them women said they were happy because they knew how to cook a different dish, they learnt crochet as a knitting technique, they knew now how to weld or do some different joints, etc. Or, as a woman pointed out: *'I have already done some small jobs, that gives me a great satisfaction'*. Changes are felt in very concrete terms and strictly related to the objectives of the course.

Finally, from the teachers' perspective courses definitely help to foster a change in students. Changes are looked at from different points of view: some teachers think people change because now they know how to do things they did not in the past and so feel useful. Some teachers at the Cultural Missions think of change as community change and so new pavements, volley-ball courts, names for the streets, etc., are considered as a change which was fostered by the missionaries' team. Some other changes are regarded in relation to the new socialization space opened to them through the courses, as a result of which they had adopted new attitudes and engaged in new activities, so, people becoming less shy, and more communicative, are viewed as positive improvements in people's lives. Courses, as a teacher pointed out:

'... have helped to change people. Before the programme, people used to be dedicated only to domestic activities, now they have the motivation to carry on doing new and different things. Housewives as well, because only being at home..., I think it's boring, isn't it?...and so, with a bit of distraction, being together with other people here from the community, now it is different, and besides those queries they talk about, well they get there with their family, there is this and that.... Before, if they were not friends, here they make friendship.'

Martinic's (1988:30) work is very insightful when he comments that this sort of experiences:

"... may reinforce cultural lines and action orientations and, on the other side, they allow people to think and organize new spaces of communication, work and participation.... There are two conclusions then. First, changes proposed are recontextualized by the participants so that they do not provoke great ruptures with deeper structures, it rather comes from the common sense of which one participates from. Secondly, most of the proposed changes are perceived as a widening of possibilities and the opening of new alternatives that are connected with participants' own habitus and so widening the existing symbolic resources and possibilities for action."

Martinic deals mainly with popular education programmes but we believe some of his conclusions can be applied as well to our analysis. Courses are extremely meaningful to students in terms of a sort of *change in life*, as if a new stage in their lives has just begun: '*before.., I knew nothing. Now I can.....*'. Changes are very linked to their everyday lives, to their *habitus*. They are changes which are felt at the deepest level.

The compensating characteristics of these programmes are more than evident. Courses are far from having an impact in terms of a significant betterment of their personal income or life conditions, or in terms of the community as a whole. Courses transcend in terms of the meanings that are left, and that remain in students after they attend the course: feeling useful, the fact of having had a moment of distraction and having met some people; having an additional knowledge; be able to manage on one's own; be able to contribute economically, even if it is with a minimum contribution, to the family income; having obtained a space of their own; having escaped, even if to small extent, from domestic routine.⁴⁴

Courses constitute the opportunity for education; they give the opportunity to learn things, to feel useful, having -for some once again, for some others for the first time- the opportunity of '*being at school*', of '*feeling students*'.

⁴⁴ For instance, it was common to find answers that talked about the problems faced by women when trying to attend the courses. Besides time spent doing housework, women need to count on their husband's permission. There were some cases where women were beaten several times before they obtained permission to attend during the afternoons.

5.3 The Perception of Marginal Conditions.

When participants were asked about the infra-structural conditions of the course, responses expressed both acceptance and rejectionist attitudes. However, it was most common to find responses like: *'it is alright, the place is what matters little'* amongst the responses.

Non-conformist behaviour usually had a direct link with motives that have led people to drop out⁴⁵ or to reject the programme: there are students who expected more from courses, to learn more, to do better. Some people showed disagreement about the way in which courses are carried out and towards the settings where they take place. Responses of this type focused on problems like not having water, classrooms, coldness because of the classroom's lack of proper walls, the lack of materials to work with, etc. The lack of equipment for the courses, particularly in the carpentry and blacksmiths' workshops is crucial and constitutes a serious problem for the proper development of the courses; it has an impact also on the drop out index.

Teachers comment that material conditions (the classroom, the inadequate material) push people to abandon the courses: *'there are some people who leave the courses because they think the classrooms are ugly'* expressed a teacher at a DEA beauty course. Likewise, non-participation is also explained by people's rejection of courses because of the marginal characteristics: *'if they charge so little, they can't be good'*. As a teacher comments, *'there are some people who have money who do not regard us as proper teachers'*, or *'Sometimes, since the fee is very low, people think courses are no good'*.

⁴⁵ According to teachers students drop out for many reasons: some get married and then the husbands do not allow them to continue attending the courses; some others because of the housework or because they cannot obtain their husband's permission; in some other courses people do not have economic resources because some courses tend to be rather expensive in terms of the materials demanded for their development (cloth for a clothing course; cosmetics used for a beauty course; tools for a carpentry course, etc. Courses like cooking, beauty, carpentry are expensive because of the materials that are needed. In many cases, particularly for men, attendance on the courses is conditioned by the time available after being at work during the mornings. For some people it is very tiring to spend the morning working in an industry and then spend the afternoons at the workshop.

However, even if there are some indications of non-conformist attitudes the norm tends to be conformism, non-critical attitudes and resignation about the way the courses are carried out. The characteristics of the workshops are not strongly criticized. We think this is because people are used to such conditions in their own lives. They easily identify themselves with these environments and so do not feel pressed to ask for more -they end up accepting them. As a woman at a DEA knitting course taking place in the lobby of a municipal office expressed: *'it is the only place where it is possible so we don't have a choice'*. Some others expressed a feeling of forced acceptance of their reality *'let's say the place is not in a good shape..., but we have to stand it'*. Some participants are happy enough that they can finally attend courses they had always longed for: *'as long as I learn everything I want to learn, it is alright'*.⁴⁶

Resistance usually did not go beyond the fact of being uncomfortable during the course.⁴⁷ People have to accept the courses the way they are. Particularly in very isolated or indigenous communities, where poor conditions are greatest, the way courses are carried out 'match' living conditions, so for people it is 'normal' to be taking a course in inadequate spaces. As a woman taking a knitting course in the open air said *'not well, because you see we don't have a place where to sit..., you get tired; we are not comfortable, but we are content'*. People's marginal living conditions again help to explain people's participation in the courses. The more marginal the conditions the more people are reinforced into their social positioning through the acceptance of a marginal education which was intended for people like them: *'for us the poor...it is alright'*.

5.4 Community Education Spaces: Meanings and Social Implications.

Next we are going to highlight some social functions these courses might serve in terms of how the educational space is perceived by the participants.

⁴⁶ Women attending a Cultural Mission clothes making course talked about how eager they were when they knew that the Cultural Mission were coming to stay in their community.

⁴⁷ Teacher's training level was only criticized in INEA's courses.

Workshops which are promoted by the programmes are intended to fill a void, an empty space in the communities. In isolated places that do not have blacksmiths' workshops, carpenters, etc., the advantage of having someone to teach them -even domestic skills- inspires people to show an interest in learning and joining workshops and courses. People's participation in these programmes can be explained to a great extent by courses' response to the daily social and economic needs faced by the communities: (the pleasure of learning things that they are interested in: cooking, knitting, beauty, etc.; for men: workshops, which are seldom found in marginal communities). When need is very strong these programmes represent a real alternative in many ways, be it in educational terms or in terms of distraction. The fact is that these programmes come to respond to real needs and interests in the communities and fill a social vacuum. That can explain why people participate and why courses are relatively successful.

A number of students (41 out of 49 in our sample) said that courses are a way used by the government to help people from the most marginal communities, something which contributes to reinforce State's image, presence and legitimation within these environments. As when Apple (1985:54) refers to technical/administrative knowledge, knowledge in community education courses "... enables the school to do two things: it increases its own legitimacy in the eyes of this crucial class segment and, just as importantly, it enables this class segment to use the educational apparatus to reproduce itself."

Courses contribute to providing people with a time for distraction, and make them regard the courses as spaces provided by the State, which in their marginal circumstances come to be a blessing: *'the government gives courses to give help to the communities'*. People regard these courses as valuable educational opportunities given the limits of what is possible for them. Courses are regarded as something useful that the government provides for the most needy sectors of the population and that it is important to take advantage of.

The way people perceive the activities of the government leads to a general consensus: 41 students out of 49 thought the government was really doing something. Among these

there were responses that spontaneously linked courses with the activity of the government in terms of help and assistance granted to marginal communities:

'These courses coming from the government..., I say it is putting a great deal on its side as well' ;

'These teachers, we don't pay them, that is a great help. Those who don't want to come, if they don't better themselves is because they don't want to' .

These courses constitute for the most part spaces where people feel revalued, where people take a time out of their everyday routine to think about themselves. Courses turn into a central element within their lives, into important social meeting centres. The comment of a teacher (herself a student as well) from Ocoyoacac, with fifteen years of experience is extremely eloquent about the meaning of these courses and about the government's activity:

'Here I am very much grateful to the government of the State of Mexico.... How much it worries about people! If someone comes to analyze, the government does too much in every aspect... Because..., look, these courses are magnificent, because they help women to manage in their houses, to know how to cook... because there are courses on so many things! Be a better mother, be a better wife, be a woman in every way. They help you too much. Clothes making courses are fabulous! In my house, because I have learnt all the courses, they are very, very useful. They help very much, both at home, as well as oneself; because one can sew, make flower arrangements..., because in cooking they teach you about everything...'

Some other responses expressed the view that the government was doing something *'but I don't know how it is doing things because I don't see anything'*, or claim that recently they had seen changes which they had not seen before.⁴⁸

Sometimes participants hold themselves responsible for the problems and blame the community for not having enough commitment. It is these people who are convinced by government activity and who locate the problem at community level -it is the community which should be blamed for: *'the government does help the communities, it is just that we are slovenly'*.

⁴⁸ These responses may have a clear link with the recent social policy referred to as the 'Solidarity Programme' carried out during this presidential period.

As has already been noted students who did not think the government was doing something on behalf of the communities have higher levels of schooling (secretary, teacher-student) and are usually more critical about politics.

Linked to how participants perceive government activity are attitudes towards voting. When participants were asked about voting the common answer was that they vote for the dominant party, the PRI. Reasons given mentioned:

- fear (*'If not, formalities, steps and requirements can be blocked'*);
- force of habit (*'I have always voted for them'*);
- convenience (*'Better the devil you know than the one you don't know'; 'for the PRI..., we know nothing about another party'*);
- mass- media influence⁴⁹ (*'Because now we are free, ain't we? now you can work, you can do things. Whereas for other party, as far as it looks, it seems we won't do any longer what we are doing now, working..., we want to be free'*).

Teacher's opinion about what the government is doing for the communities was not very different from that of students. By and large there seems to be a general agreement about the performance of the government: *'the government does things'*. Besides, in many responses, there appears a link between government activity and the educational programme:

'I tell to my students, take advantage of this opportunity that the government is giving you';

'The courses that the government is giving us is what is helping us so that all people can learn something';

'The government gives these courses to help rural communities, that is why the government has fostered them, to help people with low economic resources'.

As with the students some teachers hold the community responsible for the problems: *'the government is doing something, but it is the people who are not doing much'*.

⁴⁹ The Government's recent political campaigns emphasized the fact of Mexico's being a free country (*porque somos libres*) and therefore called people to vote for the PRI.

Critical comments, positions hostile to the government, and voting for a different party come to be very isolated behaviours and are expressed in responses such as: *'why vote if we already know who is going to win'*, or stronger positions: *'no, the government does not help, on the contrary; 'it gives these courses to pretend that it is doing things'*.

Political behaviour is a function of this lack of criticism and resistance, therefore voting among teachers usually favours the PRI. Normally, teachers express their support for the official party, because *'one can see facts and... with the other parties, no'*; or *'I always vote for the PRI because it is the only one that has given us a hand: because the PRI builds highways, roads, etc.'*⁵⁰

5.5 An assessment of the meaning of the educational space.

On the basis of the data that has just been examined and reflecting upon a perspective that gives priority to the meanings of codes used in the pedagogical transmission, the detection and the joint use of the spaces that the State opens through an enormous range of community projects, may be referring to different possibilities:

- firstly, the enjoyment of a space marked by the underlying image of the State that has promoted this space. The space is generated (its creation is fostered) by the State and this is present in the coding of the space. This refers to the illusion that provokes the appropriation of this space which, from State's perspective, makes up for the absence of spaces of expression and serves as a means to channel social uneasiness. The State provides thus spaces that help them to channel anxiety and social discomfort, and that help to guide social participation (Lewin 1984).
- An intermediate possibility is brought up by Bernstein when he points out that "the family/community/peer relationships can exert their influence upon the recontextualizing field of the school and in this way affect its practice (Bernstein 1986:218).
- on the other side, and rather from the resistance perspective, it may be possible to talk about a real appropriation of this space by the community where institutional codes and community codes are overlapped, ending up in the domination of people's codes.

⁵⁰ It must be noted that this data was taken from a visit to another Cultural Mission from the one considered in the sample.

INEA's programme of community education has some significant features which make it different from other programmes. The CECs (Community Education Centres) entail the possibility for the community of having a physical and cultural space which at some time could be open to appropriation by the community and turning thus into the axis of the community's future activities. The slogan is that the CECs belong to the community and they are the ones who have to manage to put them into operation. Within the framework of a criticism of the paternal role of the government the operation of these centres is considered strictly a community affair; it is the community which is responsible for initiating the CECs and solving their social and economic problems.⁵¹ As Lewin (1984:81) points out, the State's educational proposals for low income classes, "... are strongly oriented to community participation, trying to assign those segments of the population the responsibility of building a more equal and fair society."

The community education centres of INEA can be understood as attempts to foster community development and therefore make people feel these spaces as their own, foster their appropriation, so that the State's idea of a community centre belonging to the communities may come true. We wonder to what extent the limits imposed by the State really leave those spaces for the community to control. Or, does the way the State retains the formal right to control these spaces give it the opportunity to make its presence felt and increase its legitimation in the communities? Does the characteristics of the space -its coding- contribute to the process of social control, and how does it do it?

Through simulating a space that may have the potential of promoting a community development and which may respond to real needs on the part of the community, the State opens the possibility, makes the first step for people to set up a community centre where it will be possible to take courses that will provide them with skills they think are useful and that may allow them to better their income and welfare levels. As Bernstein

⁵¹ As an example, when a CEC in the Mazahua region was being provided with carpentry tools, people began to wonder if there was going to be additional support in terms of more equipment, paint and windows for the building, etc. The answer of the social promoter -from INEA's discourse- was definitive: it was they who were responsible for getting the supports. Since their community centre was 'their's' so was their responsibility to solve its material problems. This situation takes place within the framework of an institution that promotes the creation of community centres offering less than the minimum resources required and with a rather poor promotional support.

would say, "... the school may include as part of its practice re-contextualized discourses from the family/community/peer relations of the acquirer for purposes of social control in order to make more effective its own regulative discourse" (Bernstein 1986:218).

The canalization of expectations and frustrations through people's insertion in community education programmes suggests the degree of social control and legitimation of the State, stemming from the educational transmission process which takes place in nonformal education programmes in the rural sector. It is then that the social function of these courses can be highlighted and that, looked from a macro-social perspective, refers to a practice of social control as an important output of these courses.

6. SUMMARY

In this last chapter we have attempted to give an account of the data gathered during empirical work. The findings enabled us to give an overview of the community educational process, its overall coding features, and enter into the analysis of the social function and meaning of these programmes. Initially we looked at the educational context and examined the organizational and infra-structural characteristics. Here the marginal conditions in which courses take place were highlighted, the differences between each of the programmes taken in the sample, and the importance of the institutional coding in terms of the outcomes of the courses. Next we described the characteristics of the social actors in community education programmes -students and teachers. Having provided a framework of the setting and the social actors we analyzed the educational process looking at the curriculum, the pedagogy and the evaluation of community education. Here special attention was given to the coding values of each of these elements and its implications. It was argued that the overall coding in community education courses was concerned with people's everyday activities and therefore allowed people to identify themselves with the experience.

The link between context and content, its marginal operating conditions, the informal (apparently weakly framed) pedagogical process, the weak classification between

students were all seen as having implications in terms of participants' social positioning. Next, the motives of both teachers and students were analyzed in terms of a group of categories which were strongly linked to people's everyday context. Students' concern with practical and problem-solving learning was highlighted as a common motive amongst students. Likewise, some other motives were pointed out concerning students' interest in self and social valuation, and in making a rupture with everyday life. Teachers' motives were examined referring to a group of categories dealing with sublimation needs, social ethics and social-class solidarity concerns.

Finally, an overview was provided of the meaning of the educational experience in terms of how the educational space was perceived. Emphasis was put here on how courses are highly valued by students even if the learning spaces are not different from their everyday contexts. Also we directed the reader's attention to how an understanding of the meaning of these courses to rural women demands the knowledge of their social and economic conditions -of their everyday life. On this basis we examined the affective side of the experience and the meaning learning has for people in the rural sector, especially for women. To conclude we explored the meaning of the courses when they are viewed as educational spaces provided by the State. Here we reflected upon the social and political implications in terms of how they contribute to social control and legitimation functions.

**CONCLUSIONS:
AN OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE RESEARCH**

CONCLUSIONS: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this chapter is to summarise the conclusions we presented in the previous chapter and assess the research. Initially we stress some aspects of community education programmes which in our view have special importance. Then we order our findings according to the two levels of analysis that have been taken as the focus of our research: the social actors (students and teachers) and the educational process. We link these to the social function of community education in terms of social control, cultural and social reproduction as the basic concern of the thesis.

1. COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

In this section we shall set out some considerations about the programmes, which are important as part of the findings of the thesis:

1.1 Rural Community Education: women's education, non vocational education.

A first conclusion points towards the fact that community education in the rural areas is basically addressed to women, and occurs in the form of non-vocational education. Women account for more than 90% of participants and are the main target of these programmes. In this way our interest in official community education programmes meant that the thesis would become, largely, a study of women's nonformal education in the rural sectors. Two reasons lay behind this situation: 1) courses provided by the institutions deal basically with women's activities: home economics-domestic courses, therefore the potential clients are basically women; 2) courses addressed to men are rare in the rural areas (carpentry, welding, electricity workshops) because the materials and the facilities to set up a workshop areas are difficult to get due to financial constraints.

Workshops are normally located in the Cultural Missions because the methodology of these programmes is based on a team of specialists who stay in the community for a

period of two years; their programmes have thus a minimum infrastructure for the operation of these workshops, even if they are not nearly so well resourced as they need to be. These 'advantages' do not exist in any of the other programmes even if they have teaching rooms in some cases.

The main reasons behind the low number of vocational training workshops are the high cost of materials needed, costs that institutions can rarely afford. Courses of this kind also become expensive for people in the rural areas because they necessitate buying materials which they cannot afford. In addition, the marginal characteristics of the settings do not allow the proper installation of workshops. Vocational education workshops are thus only to be found in the urban areas where demand by the population is higher and infra-structural conditions are better. Courses with a potential link with the labour market are seldom to be found in the rural areas.

Stemming from these considerations community education programmes are basically concerned with women's traditional activities and interests -with providing courses whose contents are deemed by the Institutions, and often by people, as socially useful. Amongst the courses encouraged most by these programmes are those dealing with women's reproductive activities -that is with improving their domestic skills. Courses tend thus to reinforce women's traditional role in their communities as home makers. However, as a result of the social and economical marginal isolation of rural areas in the State of Mexico educational programmes tend to provide skills for women to help their families be more economically independent and self-sufficient -to carry out activities that may turn into an economic saving without having to resort to the labour market. In the light of the above courses are not entirely non-vocational because, as we have seen, they do provide certain skills. However, we can probably conclude that they are unintentionally vocational, that is the women, not the courses, stress the possibility of commercializing these skills and the official recognition of what they learn is more often than not simply not give.

1.2 Lack of Diagnoses and Evaluations.

There has been a common concern (ISEAC 1983; Jawaweera 1979; Martinez 1981; Schmelkes 1989) about the extent to which courses take into account people's opinions and demands and about how community education reflects the interests of those to whom it is addressed. How often is the curriculum of different programmes revised and to what extent are modifications responses to criticisms and are adequate to the context? How often are surveys carried out in order to adjust the curriculum to people's interests and needs, and to discover problems which occur during the implementation of the courses? By and large the data revealed little effort to revise curricula and bring them up to date. People are not really consulted about their interests and expectations.

The need to have programme evaluations has totally been underestimated. Even if most institutions emphasize this principle (such as the Cultural Missions), none do it properly and systematically. Field research showed an absolute lack of real and systematic evaluations, and therefore the low value which they have been assigned as crucial elements for educational planning. Nor was there any significant attempt by any of the institutions to carry out proper diagnoses and surveys prior to the implementation of the programmes. A continuous and traditional institutional practice prevails offering the same range of courses as those offered for the last few decades.

There was no serious effort by any of the institutions to take on areas which could respond to current educational needs in some of the communities, such as vocational education. The difficulties that could be involved in providing technical courses (typing, computing), which might be demanded by young participants in the rural areas who were not able to complete their secondary education, or even primary education, provides a good excuse for the *inertia* of the institutions and constitutes a sign of the marginality of this kind of education and of these communities.

1.3 Community Education *versus* Community Development.

As has been noted the objectives of the programmes are not really to do with community development, even if the formal objectives make reference to it. We argued that isolated workshops on carpentry, metal work, or knitting do not amount to *community education*, indeed hardly amount to more than isolated courses which are being provided to assist the marginal strata of the population by providing skill training courses and some compensatory education.

Community development cannot easily be achieved through the strategy that is being used by the institutions (where the absence of evaluations and participation strategies constitute some of the basic characteristics of the programmes). Programmes do not promote participation, as the essential condition and basis of community education projects and programmes where people's participation -community participation- is considered as a *sine qua non*, as was mentioned in chapter III. Where there is not any commitment to community development on the part of an institution courses inevitably become isolated efforts with benefits which whilst in many cases usually do not extend beyond the individual or the family.

The commitment and support that comes from the promoting institutions for the development of the workshops so that they can become real productive community projects, is practically non-existent. The objective pursued by the workshop does not reach beyond the workshop itself. There is no real further process of building on the achievements of the workshops, either short or long term. The sphere of what comes to be possible does not transcend the micro-social level.¹

Probably the case of the Cultural Missions deserves separate consideration. Their work is closer to a community development practice, even if their activity still remains far from achieving this aim. People's comments were very illuminating about the changes

¹ Students attending a toy-making workshop had already made a great amount of puppets and therefore showed a great interest in being able to sell. Nevertheless the DIF does not offer additional supports such as marketing, it is basically concerned with the provision of courses, so courses very rarely go beyond their specific objectives.

undergone by the community during the two years residence of the Cultural Missions: people gathering together to participate in sporting activities (they did not do that before); people getting together more often and getting to know each other through their attendance at the courses; some works being carried out for the community such as pavements, street labels, and sometimes -although very rarely- the Mission becoming involved in the solution of local problems. Places where Missions have passed show evident signs of the work carried out by the team. By and large, results can be observed in terms of setting up carpentry or metal working workshops once the Mission has left the community; sport teams are left, people who learnt how to make clothes and who are working on their own; people who learnt basic first-aid skills and to whom people now look in an emergency.

Nonetheless, programmes do not attempt to go beyond these gradual achievements having thus a rather compensatory function. From our observations and discussions with personnel of the Cultural Missions it is not possible to identify a real commitment of the Missions to the broad concerns and problems of the communities. Missions are only supposed to be committed to collaborate with the community in the solution of one community problem. However, occasionally there is participation in minor communities' affairs such as naming streets or building pavements. None of the programmes were really concerned with fostering social awareness or making people reflect on their everyday life. Burgman and Ooijens (1989:65), in their study of the Cultural Missions, arrived to the same conclusion:

" ...courses are not geared towards productive activities of women, they stem rather from their traditional abilities such as cooking, sewing, etc..... The teachers do not take advantage of the opportunity in terms of beginning and developing a process of conscientization and emancipation ... most courses reinforce woman's traditional role and do not seek to offer them any other alternatives. Neither do they motivate women to participate in courses out of their domain."

1.4 The impact of Institutional Coding.

We have emphasised how some of the programmes' internal features have an influence upon their outcomes, the orientation of the programme, and the image being communicated by the institution -the coding of the community educational process.

Community education programmes have specific institutional characteristics which impinge on their own dynamic, atmosphere and way of doing things. There are institutional factors which give programmes an institutional image, an institutional coding which has a clear effect on the institution's own performance. As Jones (1984:98) points out:

"... there is (...) a hidden curriculum which exists alongside the formal one in most educational institutions and which contains a process of reinforcement of the value system and ethical system of the institution, and which mirrors and sustains the social order" (the emphasis is ours).

Every institution acts with a very specific rationale which guides the orientation of their activities. Even if their educational activity could be framed within a political rationale (Torres 1982; 1990), we argue that it is supplemented with some other values which confer a greater complexity on it. We think there is a certain mystique and institutional rationale within each of the institutions, which comes from above and permeates until it reaches students and teachers, and acts on the way courses are being performed.

By and large, in all programmes hierarchical relations are quite explicit (the authority and role of the teacher reflects a very particular status on students), and the atmosphere in which courses take place reveals an order to be respected and followed in terms of schedules, development of the courses, behaviours and attitudes of students while the courses are taking place. There is a clear social order within these programmes which comes from above, from the institutional code.

It is only in INEA that framing over the regulative discourse is rather weak. It is precisely the weak framing over the regulative discourse which gives these courses their

sense of flexibility, informality and accounts for the relaxing way in which they are implemented. Such differences in framing values entail also major changes in terms of organizational and transmission practices, and in the way the knowledge and the actors (both students and teachers) are conceptualized. We have argued that the characteristics of programmes such as INEA -the apparent weak framing- where the bureaucratic chaos often prevails during the implementation of the courses, addresses the nature of the policy making process in developing countries. It is very likely that we would have to resort to the analysis of the policy making process in Mexico in order to fully understand the apparently irrational ways in which some courses are usually carried out. As McGinn and Street (1982:179) have pointed out on the particular features of Mexican policies' rationale: "... the process of decision making in education is inherently political and conflictual, and technically nonrational".

We argued that even if the coding of courses is important in terms of explaining the function of the courses and the way they operate the institutional code has an important influence in terms of how the institution functions and in terms of the impact of the courses. The code comes from above and has a strong influence on the way courses are implemented -classification and framing institutional values exert their coding upon the experience.

2. THE SOCIAL FUNCTION OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION

In this section we are going to look at the social control, legitimation, and social reproduction functions -the hegemonic function- of community education by looking at some aspects which we think have particular significance and which, in our view, can contribute to explain how these social functions are being accomplished.

2.1 Meeting People's Needs. Some implications.

Having examined the data it is possible to conclude that courses are useful to people in the rural areas. Responses overwhelmingly indicated how useful they were and how

much they provided an answer to problems in their communities. Individuals' participation in these programmes can be explained to a great extent by courses's response to the social and economic needs that communities face everyday. This fact, we have argued, has significant implications in terms of how social control is achieved. Courses are definitely filling a gap through meeting people's perceived needs and expectations in contexts where the absence of educational opportunities is a common feature within the rural areas. When people do not have anything, a little is better than nothing. This situation may contribute to people's getting used to very little and to their regarding this situation as normal. The educational experience matches people's orientations and expectations. People wait expectantly for the courses even when the courses are in areas of which students have previous knowledge and so do not offer any new knowledge.

The complexity lying behind the usefulness of these programmes which we discussed in the previous chapters is also found in as different a setting as the experience of a Women's Development Centre in Libya (quoted by Charlton 1984:165). Research on this programme revealed how "... women believed that the project was the major way they could obtain the skills and knowledge they needed to increase their status and power within the family." Women showed an interest "... in learning skills such as knitting and sewing, or anything that would help them earn money. The chief reason for earning money was that the women were convinced that doing so would give them more status".

Workshops which are fostered by the programmes fill a void, an empty space which is most commonly found in the communities. It can be concluded that expectations are being fulfilled within a context where expectations are usually low. Courses are highly valued usually because of the usefulness that they are thought to have. By and large the picture is one of low expectations and demands which these programmes do, in fact, meet. We think this is an indicator which reflects the level of expectations that exist within this sort of environment, and also an indicator of how through programmes that privilege women's traditional role, social positioning is being strengthened complementing the reinforcement of women's subordinated role within rural societies.

Even if there were some indications of resistance the norm tends to be conformism, non-critical attitudes and even resignation about the way the courses are carried out and about the marginal characteristics of the settings. We think this speaks about how people are used to these conditions and to the locations where courses take place since they are not different from the characteristics of the places where they live. People feel identified with these places. The environment itself does not press people to ask for more -they accept the places as they are.

The courses become spaces where people feel revalued, where they take time out of their everyday routine and devote time to themselves. Courses turn into a central element within their lives, into important social meeting centres.

Through simulating a space, in the case of INEA, that may have the potential for promoting a community development and which may be the collector of real needs on the part of the community, the State opens possibilities, makes the first step for people to set up a community centre where it could be possible to take courses that will provide them with valuable and useful skills that may allow them to better their income and welfare levels.

This very successful canalization of expectations and frustrations through the insertion of people in an educational process suggests the level of social control and the ways of legitimation of the State, stemming from the educational transmission process which takes place in nonformal educational processes in the rural sector. Hence, looked at from a macro social perspective they show that the exercise of social control is an important output of these courses.

Participants' marginal socioeconomic and political status within a context where many basic needs are still to be met, provide the State with conditions for its legitimation and a fertile ground for the reproduction of hegemony. As was noted in chapter II, an important feature of hegemony is that of incorporating elements from all the different sectors of a society including those of the subordinate classes, that is subsuming them into the economic and political strategy of the State. As Jessop points out:

"... the most effective hegemonic strategy seems to be to integrate popular democratic demands and economic claims into a programme that favours State intervention in the interests of accumulation" (quoted by Apple 1985:30).

On this, responses revealed how people tend to link the courses to the activity of the government, how they tend to regard them as a help coming from it: '*the government gives courses to give help to the communities.*' Community education contributes to the interest of reproducing the conditions for power relations, survival and reproduction of hegemony itself. In a way, hegemony reflects back to the participants an image of themselves, "... their individual and collective hopes and fears, possibilities and limitations (...); it posits specific ideas and social relationships as natural, permanent, rational and universal" (Giroux 1983:148).

Teachers, overtly and unintentionally, play an important role here. Sometimes they constitute a key that facilitates access to welfare programmes (community shops, health clinics, urban facilities, etc.), as well as to productive programmes (production inputs, mechanization, credits, etc.) (Martinic 1988). As has been examined and as data from field work revealed, students sometimes attend the courses with the only expectation of receiving material supports (e.g. grants, tools) which some programmes provide. The State's capacity in terms of resources (economic and political resources people know they can get from the government) (Brandao 1986), within the framework of an unfavourable economic context, acts as an important force that draws people's attention. As Sharp (1980:104) points out "... hegemony is not only ideological domination but also the maintenance of spontaneous consent through the granting of economic concessions and through political organization".

The image of the teachers is particularly strong because of the image that underlies a teacher's presence and performance. The teacher embodies a State institution -whether or not he/she belongs to one. Behind his/her words and actions lies an institutional code which reflects back to the image of the State, to meanings that have a link with what the State means to people. The teacher often constitutes the link with 'outer' society, the access to a dominant coding (as symbolic resources), and a channel to obtain material resources. There exists an ample range of cultural meanings in those involved in the

process of educational transmission that has a profound effect on what is being transmitted.

We argue that there is an institutional structure behind the teacher which entails the omnipresence of State institutions in rural society. The teacher constitutes the link to and conduit for the State, as the presence of the State among the rural population. Teachers become a potential means of social control, and a channel for the transmission of hegemonic values which are sometimes expressed in ideas, sometimes in practices.

We think the events and personal contacts around the educational process allow us to explain social control functions and how they become a means of ideological reinforcement. Talks and encounters related to the handling and solution of conflicts; credit application requirements, inputs; diffusion of development programmes, etc., contain ample opportunities to stress ideological values and to increase people's dependence on the State. As Giroux (1981b:74) points out, hegemony is not only constituted and reproduced by ideas but "... in the every day routines and rituals of the classroom social encounter and its corresponding reward and punishment system".

The idea of a State as a force -as an ever present power- can explain how hegemony is transmitted through daily interactions and educational practices which are commonly linked to a very specific material base. People's social and economic relationships, the social and economic structure of their context, and the link with the State, permeate their appreciation of reality and the way knowledge is acquired. This is why Apple (quoted by Whitty 1985:23) points out that "... individual interaction and conception is constrained by material reality" and, in the case of community education programmes in Mexico, a reality that is strongly linked to the specific notion of the Mexican state. Probably the idea of a State concerned with people's interests gives the impression of an ever-present and natural situation after so many years of being rooted in State's image and within people's consciousness. It is thus that Bernstein (1981:340) establishes that:

"... there are classificatory principles within each culture generated by the specific form of the social division of labour, produced and reproduced by the

distribution of power, regulating the relations between its categories (agents), which establish its distinctive classificatory principles". This modality within culture -an ideological representation- has its source "in a specific distribution of power that creates, maintains, reproduces, and legitimates a specific syntax of generation of meaning" (our emphases).

What we have seen is how the underlying elements of the educational process reinforce this complementary need of both reproducing values and the social conditions that make this process feasible. We have also stressed how the very essence of education is rooted in the minor social interactions and behavioral responses, meanings, attitudes and gestures that go along with the educational practice. As Apple (1979a:63) points out, social control refers to the "... forms of meaning the school distributes."

2.2 Courses' distinct value. Some implications. (See Table 11)

Hence, nonformal education seems to operate in many different ways and has a distinct usefulness according to the group to which it is being addressed. Therefore it is possible to think about different functions depending on the context characteristics, socioeconomic level, age, gender and schooling, conditions which are seldom taken into account during the nonformal education policy making process.

For some women (15-25 age-group) courses mean a possibility of social mobility -a link with the labour market. However, it is here that expectations are higher due to people's age: frustration becomes a likely outcome amongst participants when courses cannot meet their expectations, and so courses' usefulness is restricted and constrained. If married, courses help them improve their domestic skills and become a help to their everyday reproductive activities.

For other women (25-40 age-group) courses act basically as distractions from their everyday occupations. It is for this age group that community education seems to be particularly able to meet needs and expectations. For this group of women, mainly married, courses accomplish an important social reproduction function. Courses provide them with skills that enable them to perform in a more efficient way their everyday

VALUE, MEANINGS, AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE COURSES DEPENDING ON PARTICIPANTS' FEATURES

Table 11

GROUP	VALUE	MEANING	IMPLICATIONS	MOTIVE CATEGORIES
Women (15-25)	Students normally look for courses which have a relation to the labour market or to self employment opportunities.	Courses become the available opportunity to get involved in education. They become a potentially useful knowledge.	Courses give rise to expectations. Social positioning is reinforced by realizing courses' weak link to the labour market or self-employment opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Economic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - link with the labour market * Personal advantage/Social Valuation
Women (25-40)	Interests in getting complementary knowledge and skills that may improve their family income, or just for the pleasure of learning.	Courses as valued as 'specialized' contexts that offer them the opportunity to make a rupture with routine and everyday domestic occupations.	Courses contribute to social positioning by reinforcing women's traditional roles in rural societies. In addition, courses reinforce social control and legitimation by providing courses on subjects expected by the participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Personal advantage/Social Valuation * Economic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - domestic - subsistence * Rupture
Women (40 plus)	Courses act as social distracters; enable women to use their spare time.	Courses are valued as 'specialized' contexts that offer them the opportunity to make a rupture with routine, boredom, and everyday domestic occupations.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Learning * Rupture
Men (15-25)	Students opt for learning some skills and knowledge related to their family and context economic activities. They also look for courses which have a relation to the labour market or to self employment opportunities.	Usefulness appears as the basic meaning attached to these courses.	Courses give rise to expectations. Social positioning is reinforced by realizing: a) courses' weak link to the labour market or self-employment opportunities. b) access only to secondary labour-market jobs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Economic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - link with the labour market. - domestic. * Learning
Men (25-40)	Students look to meet specific family and housing needs given their frequent married condition.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Economic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - link with the labour market. - domestic.

domestic activities. Finally, for middle age women (40 plus age-group) courses provide fundamentally a space for recreation and fulfil their expectations.

Courses' usefulness for men (15-25 age-group) is in terms of providing them with a set of skills that allow them both to perform activities to solve personal domestic problems, and offer them the opportunity to become more skilled so as to increase their chances of (new) employment. Here, as with women, courses meet people's expectations due to restricted opportunities in the rural areas for access to this kind of workshops. Again, often expectations are disappointed and there are feelings of frustration when facing the marginal and unrelenting reality of the labour market, and the low value of credentials granted by these programmes. It is possible that within this age-group, be it women or men, courses contribute to social reproduction by reinforcing people's social positioning. Courses tend to produce low expectations and thereby make them match students' social and economic possibilities (Bock and Papagianis 1983).

Such a huge activity carried out by State institutions in community education becomes extremely important when the broad social functions of this kind of education are considered, particularly regarding the role of women in developing countries' societies, given that, as has been noted, community education programmes are predominantly female-oriented. Our conclusions, therefore, take into account women's traditional roles and assess their implications in terms of women's future social role.

2.3 Nonformal Education Coding. Social Positioning Implications.

(See Table 12).

"Ideology is a way of making it is not a content but a way relationships are made and realized....Ideology is in the model already which shows the process whereby a specific ideology is incorporated into a specific consciousness" (Bernstein 1992:37).

We argued that the nonformal education experience has a particular coding, it entails an educational code. Both the classification and framing features of the nonformal

educational experience entail a coding with which the student is in constant contact and which have an influence on how people perceive and acquire the underlying code. This coding has a very specific meaning to students, a meaning which refers to people's lives, context, and especially to their position within the social division of labour. "As the acquirer tacitly acquires these principles", points out Bernstein (1977:177), "he/she acquires the underlying code. In this way, classification and framing regulate meanings, and, more importantly, the principle which creates and maintains what counts as legitimate meanings".

As was stated in chapter VII, there are a number of features of the educational process which give shape to an educational experience significant for students in terms of how knowledge and space are perceived, and in terms of how relationships are lived. There is a relation, as Bernstein (1992:37) suggests, "... between codes of transmission and the shaping of the pedagogic consciousness of the acquirer". We would argue that this pedagogic consciousness that is shaped in students attending nonformal education courses entails the process of acquisition in which students are positioned and reinforced within a specific social division of labour. As Bernstein (1977:180) emphasizes:

"... in acquiring the classification and framing of these relationships, the pupil is also acquiring the macro representation of the code, the positional structure and the transmission field: the relations between the structure of power and the structure of control".

Regarding this idea Cox (1984:209) states that "... the crux of the cultural reproduction of a social order lies not in the internalization of specific roles or contents but in the tacit acquisition of classification and framing principles which derive from a given patterning of power and control relations in society. Thus acquisition "... accrues from the whole of the processes of day-to-day experiencing of the boundaries and practices of a socially constituted order" (*Ibidem*). As Giroux (1981a:10-11) points out, commenting on Bernstein's perspective, "... power and control are embedded in the structuring devices that shape the experiences and consciousness of human beings as they pass through such social sites as the family, the school and the workplace".

Attending to these considerations we argued that the following features -classification and framing values- of the nonformal education process shape an educational coding that participants at community education courses are in contact with and which has significant implications in terms of social and cultural reproduction by reinforcing participants' social positioning:

1) **The educational context is a context common to people**, a non-specialized context which people are used to, even if it is valued highly. It is a context weakly classified from the 'outside', that is, from people's contexts. It becomes just another part of their world. It becomes important to note, though, that the context is highly valued precisely because of the potential it entails in terms of meeting people's needs, be it social, personal, or simply a space that, in the case of women, enables them to make a rupture with their everyday lives, even if the educational settings are not different from their own everyday contexts. The educational encounter may be weakly classified but it is highly valued by people because there are small but meaningful differences from the world in which they normally live in; besides, the educational experience clearly matches people's orientations and expectations.

As has been noted even if government-sponsored community education does not foster reflection or consciousness raising processes the way it is encouraged by popular education, this does not mean that sometimes the group atmosphere generates a form of communication and reflection different from the one people are used to. Everyday activities are analyzed from differing perspectives as a result of people being together and sharing the same everyday problems. We must emphasize then that despite the space not having areas strongly bound to people's contexts, it becomes special to people. The educational encounter may be weakly classified but it is highly valued.

2) There is a **weak classification in the educational setting** where objects relate to each other and have a clear reference to people's daily context. The objects in the 'classroom' are not special objects but objects that can be found in and drawn from the background context -they are in fact part of the context. The educational setting (the 'classroom') comes to be just another common space within their lives, where objects, and even the

teacher, reflect their own world. There is a predominant informal way in which objects and people are distributed within the space. Therefore, spaces in which community education takes place, and the way objects are distributed, have a relation -are not unfamiliar- to people's contexts.

3) The relation between education and production: The appearance of openness (both the labour market possibilities and the apparently invisible pedagogy) acts as an element in the legitimation of the *status-quo*. Nonformal education entails the possibility of an upward social mobility (welding, first-aid) and is regarded by the participants as an opportunity for solving their basic social and economic needs. We think this apparent link is important because it may reflect the idea of a State that is concerned with helping rural people. Likewise, it gives people the feeling of being able to improve their living standards: *'the government gives courses to help poor people.... It is a help that the government gives to the communities'*.

From the educational perspective, the limitation set on expectations at this level, acts as an automatic mechanism of social reproduction inasmuch as most people located within these economic strata desire to study trades and technical studies that only offer access to the secondary segments of the labour-market. Schooling and work expectations from people very rarely went beyond this level. Becoming a blue-collar worker constitutes a 'reasonable' and common ambition among students from carpentry or metal-work courses. For many of them these courses mean the chance to gain access to such jobs.

We may conclude that the apparent link with the labour market, and context specific characteristics (as part of the educational coding which typifies this kind of education), might be contributing to lower expectations matching them constantly with real possibilities offered by the context.

4) Teacher-student relationship. Teachers' social positions are not very different from those of students. Coding orientations, and even expectations, for both groups of participants are very similar. Teachers' social position being similar to that of students gives rise to a stronger integration, identification, and level of communication between

both, because there is a corresponding link in terms of their orientation to meanings of a more restricted type. Common codes contribute to reinforcing students' social positioning and explain their failure to advance beyond their social and educational levels.

Communication between both is based on similar aspects and deals with the same topics. Both use a common language full of local expressions which creates a strong bond between them. There is no great gap between teachers and students in terms of schooling, social class, and sophistication in the use of language. Nonetheless, teachers constitute for students a model to be followed. Therefore, in addition to social positioning implications coming out from students' and teachers' backgrounds the fact that the teacher sometimes is a model for the participants reinforces this process.

5) The educational process produces people who acquire a set of skills for doing different things and who therefore will share and have the same competencies as others. It is not a matter of differentiating people but rather of providing people with more or less the same level of competencies, competencies which, besides, come to be quite common to the context. It is not a practice that is geared towards the differentiation of people but rather to **the creation of common capacities and shared competencies**. Relations between people tend to be *similar to* instead of *different from*. They offer the chance for people to recognize each other, to reflect themselves on the others, to be able to 'read' each other. Community education's pedagogic practice tends to reinforce thus the sense of community among people and to strengthen their identity. It ends up, as well, contributing to the social positioning of people within the social division of labour.

6) **Students are weakly classified among them.** Weak classification between students helps to explain how students feel about themselves *vis a vis* their own people, culture, behaviours: they share the same coding as their peers. Strong classification includes only gender groupings. This fact arises out of the nature of the subjects and not because there is a rule excluding men from taking some courses.

Differences between men and women participants are basically in terms of age, schooling and kind of expectations. As was mentioned earlier it was more common to find secondary schooling levels among male participants. Men participants are also usually younger than women and this can be explained due to the predominant nature of the courses addressed to the male population (i.e. carpentry, metal work). Besides, given it is rare for students to go beyond secondary education and that they are not attached to domestic activities -as in the case of women- they tend to regard these courses as both a pastime and an opportunity to learn a trade. Expectations among men and women are similar within the 15-25 age-group and usually opt for 'vocationally oriented' courses (e.g. first-aid or beauty in the case of women; metal work or carpentry in the case of men) linked to the labour market or to self-employment opportunities.

7) Strong overall framing: The teacher does not have a specific place and is not isolated or distant from students: teachers mingle with the students within a relaxed atmosphere. The nonformal educational process entails a very low degree of formality. However, even if for the student the relationship with the teacher might be a relaxed and informal one, there is a clear vertical style where control resides basically in the teacher. There is a strong framing within the coding of community education programmes and this framing helps to reproduce in rural societies aspects such as: the passive role of students, the status of the authority, the predominance of the instrumental, a society with vertical relationships, notions of power, and the lack of a voice in society. So, even if the atmosphere of community education programmes seems very informal, there is a clear vertical relationship that typifies this pedagogical process, where the teacher is taken as the one who knows and the one who definitely controls the communication. Both teacher and student have therefore their very specific roles within the community education pedagogic relationship.

Similarly, the informal way in which programmes are carried out -the apparent weak overall framing- makes evaluation rules less strong than they are supposed to be. The evaluation process reflects the same coding as the entire educational experience.

8) The curriculum is context bound, practical and not reflective. The visible pedagogic style is geared basically to foster the transmission and acquisition of skills. **The curriculum of nonformal education is concerned mainly with the material world, with very concrete needs, and does not differ much from people's everyday activities.** Participants recognize themselves easily. It is their world. The content of the courses is not different and new from what they are familiar with. The content of the courses reinforces people's role (particularly women's) in the social structure. Courses reinforce predominantly the transmission of restricted codes and are not concerned with the transmission of elaborated coding. The content of the courses (chats and gossip included) are basically related to their local world, to the communities' everyday activities and concerns. People possess a tacit recognition rule which orients them to the speciality of the courses' context.

Areas are basically related to common and everyday activities, to knowledge areas shared in a way by the community, to levels and types of knowledge which are expected and that correspond to peoples' contexts. As Bernstein (1992:37) points out "... the classificatory principle provides the key to the distinguishing feature of the context, and so orients the speaker to what is expected, what is legitimate in that context."

This has a psychological impact as well because people perceive these courses as 'their' courses, 'their' curricula, something which influences people's expectations and reinforces their positioning within their specific social division of labour. This can be observed in nonformal education courses which are regarded by people as curricula that fits their reality, that responds to their needs.

There is not a significant difference between the local everyday knowledge and the knowledge which is transmitted in the courses. This makes it a non-specialized context, a context common to people, and which people are used to. The context generated by the code marks and limits the form of social interactions, the sphere of the possible and the legitimate; "... such boundaries mark what is thinkable" points out Atkinson (1985:135), "... and they lead to the notion of what may be considered as valid educational knowledge, what may be taken as a form of communication. This positions

the individual and influences the formation of ways of thinking and acting; that is, the shaping of ideologies."

People are positioned by the educational code and rarely question the educational programme. The insulation translates into personal behaviours that support and agree on the status of the courses. Individually, people fit in the courses and the courses fit into their lives, responding to their motivations and expectations. As Sharp (1980:126) comments:

"... the practical routines of the classroom make people acquire an attitude to the stratification system and to their own place within it through their ideological incorporation into the surface of these operations. They imbibe an explanation of social hierarchies as functional, necessary and inevitable, and of their own and other's location within it as being due to differential competencies, motivation and aptitudes upon which the school sets its seal of approval or disapproval."

In this sense hegemony fosters via the nonformal education process the cultivation and maintenance of appropriate forms of dominant and subordinate consciousness as a means of achieving functions of social control, legitimation and consensus: the reproduction of capitalist relations entails a process of maintaining hegemony and its conditions of reproduction. As Bernstein (1992:44) points out:

"Distributive rules specialize forms of knowledge, forms of consciousness, and forms of practice to social groups. Distributive rules in fact distribute forms of consciousness through distributing different forms of knowledge."

We may conclude that nonformal education illustrates how knowledge is stratified, how knowledge is distributed in society, and how this form of education is rarely concerned with the 'unthinkable'. Knowledge here is basically related to mundane matters and the sphere of the unthinkable is restricted by the strength of classification. In nonformal education there is a weak classification between the inside and the outside, where the principle of classification clearly establishes specific identities and voices; consequently, people recognize their space within these programmes. We may say that there is a weak classification but it gives rise to a strongly classified discourse. The curriculum of nonformal education appears as strongly classified with respect to other spheres of knowledge, even if it is weakly classified. We argue that the weak classification of

NONFORMAL EDUCATION CODING FEATURES

Table 12

LEVEL	FEATURES	SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS
Educational Process	<p>The content of the courses is not different and new. It is basically concerned with material and domestic aspects, with activities not at all unfamiliar to students. (Weak external classification between contents '+Ce').</p> <p>- Strong overall framing '+F' (sequence, rhythm, criteria), even if the atmosphere seems very informal.</p>	<p>- The content's marginal connotation (common and practical knowledge) gives rise to an apparent strong classification. The content of the courses reinforces the transmission of restricted codes and is not concerned with the transmission of elaborated codes. It reinforces people's role (particularly women's) in the social structure.</p> <p>- Reproduces aspects such as: the passive role of students, the status of the authority, the predominance of the instrumental, the vertical relations in society, notions of power and the lack of a voice in society.</p>
Relations with the external context	<p><u>THE CONTENT:</u></p> <p>Apparent link between the content of the courses and labour market opportunities. (Weak classification between education and production '+C').</p> <p><u>EDUCATIONAL SETTING:</u></p> <p>- The educational context and the local context are similar and share the same features. Objects in the educational context have a clear reference to people's daily context. (Weak framing between context and the educational setting '+Fe').</p>	<p>- The appearance of openness acts as an instrument of legitimization: courses act in terms of sowing hopes and are regarded by people as a potential means of mastering a productive which will allow them to improve their life conditions, as educational alternatives that match their expectations.</p> <p>- Often expectations are disappointed in face of the weak link of courses to the labour market. Resistance processes may be generated or an unavoidable adjustment and social positioning.</p> <p>- There are no strong boundaries that limit students to identify with what goes on in the classroom.</p> <p>- The educational setting is not different from their own contexts and everyday places but it is a context highly valued by the participants. So, despite the space not having strongly bound areas with people's contexts, it ends up becoming a special one to people</p> <p>- Contents, spaces, teachers' training level, credentials, give courses a marginal status and seem to have a role in terms of limiting participants' expectations and reinforcing social positioning.</p>
Teacher-student relationship	<p>- Teacher and student share the same social status, schooling level, living context. Their expectations are similar. Communication between them is based on similar aspects and deal with the same topics. (Weak classification between students and teachers).</p> <p>Students are weakly classified among them.</p>	<p>- There are social positioning implications coming out from students' and teachers' similar backgrounds, and from the fact that the teachers sometimes constitute a model for the participants.</p>
Students	<p>Emphasis is put on the transmission of specific and practical skills even if the process of acquisition is deemed relevant.</p>	<p>- Students identify with each other. They share the same socioeconomic level, schooling, contexts, activities, etc. This reinforces their identity and social positioning.</p> <p>Learning entails in most cases an improvement in skills which are not unknown to students. It does not differentiate students but creates common capacities and shared competencies, which besides, are quite common to the context. This tends to reinforce peoples' identity and their social positioning.</p>

nonformal education curriculum stems from the fact that nonformal education deals with a common knowledge, the most widespread simple and practical knowledge, a knowledge which has a deep marginal, social class connotation; it is from this last fact that it derives its appearance of strong classification.

2.4 Community education: its particular social reproduction role.

Nonformal education accomplishes a particularly significant role in terms of social reproduction. In addition to the classification and framing values -the nonformal education coding- described in the previous section, a number of elements contribute to reinforcing this particular social role of nonformal education:

- **The educational settings' marginal features tend to foster low expectations.** Courses tend to lower peoples' aspirations and match them with the possibilities of their contexts. The overall marginal features of non-formal education courses: weakly classified contents, spaces, low teachers' training level, low value of credentials that restrict access to the labour market, etc., seem to have an important role in terms of limiting participants' expectations and fixing a particular sector of the population within their own social strata and with motivations characteristic of this level. Participants tend to regard these courses as an important educational alternative that matches their possibilities and expectations.
- **its clients:** social, economic and politically marginalised population in the rural areas.
- **rural women -the poorest of the poor** (Charlton 1984:126)- as the main clients of these programmes. As has been remarked women in rural societies have a predominantly traditional, reproductive and subordinated role. They face the problem of lacking power and being politically dependant at local, national and international levels (*Ibidem.*:23-4). A number of social, economic and political factors, such as culture, the availability of public services (education) contribute to the overall low individual status women have in rural societies.

- **the curriculum** that is given priority in these programmes. As was noted earlier the contents of the courses which are provided by official community education programmes deal basically with common and practical knowledge, a knowledge which is not given high status in society.

In nonformal education it is not possible to talk about students' positioning by any particular privileging text because nonformal education is not concerned with what Bernstein (1987:568) calls *privileging meanings*, that is meanings which confer "... differential power upon speakers" and which are a "... function of power relations between contexts". Rather, people is reinforced into their social positioning by being in contact with a *non-privileging* text which is familiar to them. It is a marginal curriculum -marginal meanings- which is addressed to a marginal population. Nonformal education accomplishes thus a very important role in terms of the reproduction of these meanings.

When participants attend a community education course they come in contact with a diverse assortment of meanings originating from the setting, from the arrangements of objects in the classroom, from their relation with their teachers, and with their peers, from the way the course is performed, from the content they are learning. Participants go through an educational process in which they are being imbued by an 'atmosphere' of meanings which are 'read' -experienced- from the very particular context-bound participants' perspective, as the pivot around which the educational experience is lived. Women's everyday life, especially in the case of community education programmes, acts like the axis around which the whole educational experience is being referred. As Giroux (1981b:74-5) points out:

"The nature of a student's socializing experience is determined largely by their socioeconomic background. In other words, the socializing experience of the hidden curriculum itself is class-based. The substance of hegemonic ideology remains the same, but the form varies depending upon the types of students and the specific socio-historical conditions of a given period" (our emphasis).

Therefore, we think the whole educational experience that entails a course speaks of perceptions and relationships which are constantly lived by people in a strict link with

their *habitus*, as "... those subjective dispositions which reflect a class-based social grammar of taste, knowledge, and behaviour inscribed permanently in the 'body schema and the schemes of thought' of each developing person" (Bourdieu 1977:9).

Participants come in contact with codes -an educational coding-, with meanings drawn from the educational context and from everything that surrounds it. Participants are immersed in a code which refers to the "... selection and integration of relevant meanings, forms of realization and evoking contexts" (Bernstein 1987:567). Participants in community education courses, as has been emphasized, possess recognition rules which enable them to recognize the speciality that constitutes a context -in this case the context provided by the programmes.

Bernstein (1977:176) describes this situation in the following terms:

"... when we look more closely, we find rules which underlie the diverse sets of specialized meanings which regulate the interactions and practices. These rules regulate the flow of persons, acts, communications at different times and in different contexts. These rules create criteria, standards whereby persons, acts, communications are evaluated, compared and grouped. Pupils possess criteria whereby they evaluate, compare and group the meanings they receive and create."

We would argue that in the particular circumstances of nonformal education these meanings have much to do with an overall marginal meaning coming out from the marginal features of this form of education: people, contexts, contents, etc. It is the same idea pointed out by Apple (1979:5) when he refers to hegemony as "... an organized assemblage of meanings and practices, the central, effective and dominant system of meanings, values and actions which are lived." As Apple and Weis (1983:23) point out, "... real people with real and complex histories interact with that content. The ideological outcome is always the result of that interaction, not an act of imposition."

In light of the above we think these factors contribute to giving nonformal education a significant role in terms of social positioning, and thus in terms of social and cultural reproduction. By this means nonformal education contributes to reinforce the division

between mental and manual labour, reproducing thus the essential seal of a class society: the separation between those who work and those who think, a division between those 'allowed' to organize and those who have been 'given the chance' to learn to produce (Sharp 1980). In order to emphasize what is incorporated during the educational process we rely on Cox (1984:34) when he points out that:

"What is incorporated in the case of schools are the classificatory schemes that the person acquires imperceptibly in the every day process of experiencing the order of transmissions (hierarchy of fields); the order of social relations (hierarchy of social categories); the order of the rules that regulate the space, the time and the practices (regulation over objects and their distribution, sequence, and rhythm of the discursive transmission, etc.). The educational process is about the incorporation of the social, the transformation of the objective limits of a social order in incorporated limits and classificatory schemes; the transformation of social and material categories in mental categories."

Having commented on community education coding characteristics we may conclude that community education programmes have a significant influence in terms of social and cultural reproduction. Initially we were concerned with how courses accomplished different outcomes from those stated in the objectives of the programmes. We think we have arrived now at a more complete understanding of what these programmes achieve. The internal features of the educational process have helped us to explain some important social functions of these courses and how they relate to the wider social structure. Besides, as has been emphasized, the marginal conditions in which these programmes operate, the subjects of the courses, and the marginal population to which they are addressed accentuate the social reproduction of nonformal education. We are forced to conclude that community education programmes have a predominantly reproductive role in society.

2.5 Resistance, a vacuum in community education.

"... it would be overly deterministic to see education as simply reproducing existing social relations but, having said this, we must avoid a naive and romantic view of the capacity of the oppressed groups to resist the existing system" (Ball 1992:2).

The impression might have been given that community education acts in a merely reproductive way in society, as a mere instrument of the dominant classes for the maintenance of the capitalist system through ideological hegemony. The picture given of students resembles that of passive people fully accepting values and norms that are given to them without much criticism, questioning or acting against what they are getting from the courses, or the conditions in which they are learning. Such a picture would suggest a very successful role for nonformal education in terms of social and cultural reproduction.

We think that the apparent lack of resistance in nonformal education may be explained by the highly informal nature of this type of education. As has been already remarked, the nature of the courses always allows a great degree of flexibility despite the apparently strict normative procedures in these programmes. This situation makes resistance an unlikely attitude amongst participants -it is not necessary. Again, the flexible nature of the courses allows a variety of informal situations: arriving late at the courses, a certain rate of non-attendance, bringing children along, learning depending on personal needs and on some occasions on one's own rhythms, chatting and gossiping, etc. Students always find ways to avoid complying fully with some courses' regulations, such as those in the DIF and the DEA programmes. Briefly, the nature of community education programmes does not foster the need for resistance behaviours and attitudes.

In addition, resistance behaviours are not to be expected given students' overall consent and satisfaction about the courses. As was stated earlier, answers were very explicit about how courses are meeting people's needs, about the strong meaning they assign to them and the impact they have in their lives. As Charlton ((184:167) points out, this kind of training is "... desired by the rural women, it is culturally compatible, and it

could be the first step toward providing women with real income-earning opportunities". In face of such a picture not much opposition can be expected.

Finally, it can be argued that women's traditionally subordinated roles in rural societies and their common 'housewives status' contribute to explaining non resistance attitudes. This makes difficult being optimistic about their chances for expressing their voice in rural societies. As an example, the treasurer of a CEC asked to be removed from her position within the CEC's Committee, because she did not feel right being the only woman among men. It could be argued that a position which could allow women to have a voice in the community -to make it public- is being abandoned.

We may conclude that it is not possible to talk about resistance in community education. If by resistance it is meant "... ways pupils make sense of and respond to the ideologies and culture of the school" (Giroux 1983:47) stemming from the effects of class culture, attitudes by students in community education courses rather tend to non-conformism, uneasiness, and rejection but not resistance. As Giroux 1985:59) points out "... not all oppositional behaviour has a radical significance, nor is all oppositional behaviour a clear-cut response to domination". Non-conformist attitudes are there, as has been already noted, although they are not very significant. Rejection of the overt curriculum by students is often a result of characteristics such as schooling, socio-economic level and work experience.

Even if our findings lead us to conclude that there is little resistance amongst the participants, we think it is not possible to disregard the fact that "there are complex and creative fields of resistance through which class, race and gender mediated practices often refuse, reject and dismiss the central messages of the schools" (*Ibidem.*:38). The case of a woman attending a knitting course whose has a diploma in accounting and with work experience as a secretary, reveals how she fought against her family opinion that '*women should stay at home*': *I needed to prove to them that I could do it*'. We think this case shows how sometimes women participate as a result of indignation produced by the social context. As Rockwell (1986:3) points out, "... the search for resistance based on *indignation* maybe will uncover real resistance to failure and to

social reproduction". This constitutes the sole but significant experience of what we think is an indicator of resistance which arises from the role of women in rural societies and which sheds light upon possible paths to be explored by other women.

Resistance remains then one of the aspects that we would have liked to stress more. It provides material for further research on a subject which has been neglected so far in adult education research. The very fact that women are the main actors in these programmes makes the analysis of resistance more important. As Giroux (1985:60) points out:

"... women (...) in different degrees, experience dual forms of domination in both the home and the workplace. How the dynamics of these forms are interconnected, reproduced, and mediated in schools represents an important area of continuing research."

We would add that in the case of community education this turns more acute given the strength to which subordination is lived in the rural areas and given the very special reinforcing characteristics courses have in terms of people's social positioning and women's reproductive role, as was earlier emphasized.

3. COMMENTS ON THE METHODOLOGY

Having commented on how findings have been concerned with the meanings that participants attach to community education courses, with how responsive courses are to people's needs, and with orientations underlying students' decisions to participate in these programmes, we must conclude by considering the usefulness of the ethnographic perspective we have taken -the importance of the participant's point of view. There is not much research on nonformal education in developing countries from the participant's perspective. As has been noted in Chapter I this kind of focus has been neglected within the analysis of adult education in developing countries. Our concern with the analysis of the social function of community education courses led us to give priority to the participants' point of view of the educational process; we consider that without knowing what participants think about education it is difficult to know to what extent courses are

really successful and what they accomplish. We must conclude therefore with a consideration of the usefulness of incorporating participants' perspective -giving priority to meanings- into the analysis if the social function of these courses is to be fully assessed.

Ethnographic methodology allowed us to describe situations, facts, and cultural processes with a special emphasis on a participant's point of view. It enabled us to have a different perspective on these programmes, getting into what people think, into how they perceive. It meant having a more complete picture of what is happening in adult education. We have echoed Hughes' (1991:412) claim that "... a *really useful* sociological model for adult education analysis is one which takes an ethnographic approach. This would build on and give focus to the small scale empirical research so often favoured by theoreticians on adult education".

Finally, we have found some advantages which in our view are well expressed by Ball (1992:15):

"... an ethnographic approach is most suited to a research programme which seeks to start from the experience of participants to gain their trust and to use the research process as a consciousness technique. It enables research participants to identify the issues affecting daily lives, rather than the researcher imposing his own conceptual strategies."

Like participants' perspective the focus on the social implications of the community educational process enabled us to enter into the analysis of processes which are often taken for granted in social research analysis on adult education. Even if the analysis of the social reproduction functions of this form of education have been envisaged not much attention has been paid to how these processes take place at the micro level. It is here that Bernstein's concepts of classification and framing helped us to examine the internal characteristics of the educational process, how they relate to principles of power and control and, most importantly, how community education practice is linked to the wide social structure.

4. A FINAL ASSESSMENT OF GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED COMMUNITY EDUCATION

In the light of the findings it is possible to reach conclusions about the marginal features of government-sponsored educational provision addressed to the marginal rural population. The picture showed a lack of teacher training programmes, insufficiency of resources, poor planning behind the implementation of the programmes, a lack of articulation and coordination between programmes,² and an underestimation of people's values, interests and expectations. The State has explicitly opted not to give support to the professionalization of adult education (Schmelkes 1989; Lowe 1975; Bhola 1988) and has been reluctant to assign community education a relevant role within national social and economic strategies. There has been a predominantly political rationale (Latapi 1987; Torres 1983) behind the decision to implement these programmes and therefore they have been constrained to be a kind of compensatory education. Against this picture data, paradoxically, has been eloquent about courses' success and usefulness to people living in the rural areas. We think programmes merely serve to provide a set of interesting subjects in places where the absence of these opportunities is more than evident and therefore help in terms of the success of the programmes. The way courses can meet people's real needs explains participation (in part at least): people welcome and accept material and educational support as long as they meet needs and expectations which have not yet been fulfilled. Community education seems to be responding to people's interests and expectations which are normally present within contexts marked by tradition and lack of these educational opportunities. Again:

'for us., the poor, these courses are alright'

However, courses' usefulness does not go beyond meeting immediate personal and contingent needs through isolated courses with differential possibilities that rarely have an impact on families' economies and on community development. Community education programmes do not go beyond a kind of education which appears merely to

² The lack of coordination between institutions devoted to this area was observed during field work. In some occasions programmes were taught the same course at the same time in the same community.

compensate for social and economic inequalities which have come as a result of development strategies that have not been successful at improving living standards in the rural areas. Courses, though, as has been emphasized throughout the thesis, transcend in terms of the meanings that are left, and that remain in students after they attend the course: feeling useful, the fact of having had a moment of distraction and having met some people; having an additional knowledge; be able to manage on one's own; be able to contribute economically, even if is with a minimum contribution, to the family income; having obtained a space of their own; having escaped, even if to small extent, from domestic routine.

It is possible to assert that official community education accomplishes rather important social functions: it reinforces the presence and legitimation of the State in the communities, and contributes to the process of social reproduction by positioning people within the social division of labour.

With a predominantly small scale peasant economy, with high migration rates, and schooling levels which normally do not go beyond secondary education, the State of Mexico could be seen to be an appropriate region where attempts could be made to strengthen vocational education. However, changes in the curriculum of community education that may respond to people's expectations -which, even though latent, exist- have not been encouraged. Instead of strengthening vocational education, courses have reinforced women's traditional and reproductive role in the communities. Programmes have tended to offer no more than an alleged opportunity for self-employment for people in the community.

It is not difficult to propose alternatives to programmes which seem to fail on so many fronts. Many times emphasis has been put on the potential of this kind of programmes, on the need to link them with productive opportunities for people in the communities and to provide people with skills deemed valuable by the labour market. Likewise the need for research that shows people's needs, student's socioeconomic characteristics, link of courses to productive activities, coverage, follow up, etc., has been stressed. Such research would make better planning possible and increase the likelihood of intended

outcomes being achieved.

We agree with Stromquist (1987:38) that courses for women should be concerned with allowing an emancipatory process through emphasis on the provision of productive, reproductive and emancipatory skills. Rural women's traditional everyday world should be regarded as a problem to reflect about and to be analyzed within a political perspective. That is to say, action should stem from the very concrete level and start from the everyday specific routines that shape women's world (Colegio de Postgraduados 1990). The significance of such a change in programmes' orientation can easily be appraised, in the same way as the consequences which would come up should such numerous programmes remain in the inertia that has typified governmental community education during several decades.

Many authors, over a considerable period of time, have been concerned with many of these issues. This thesis does no more than provide additional evidence for the existence of a situation that has repeatedly been revealed, even though institutions have been reluctant to act on such findings. It, therefore, constitutes another attempt to raise awareness about a reality we have become used to.

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