

NON FORMAL

EDUCATION

PROCEEDINGS OF
THE WUS ASIAN REGIONAL
WORKSHOP HELD AT
UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA
COLOMBO, APRIL 19-24, 1976

WORLD UNIVERSITY SERVICE

NON FORMAL EDUCATION

CONTENTS

1. Introduction	
PART I	
2. Address at the Inaugural Session	
3. Address of Welcome - The Vice-Chancellor, University of Sri Lanka	
PART II	
4. Address on behalf of International WUS - Secretary General	
5. Workers' Continuing Education	11
6. Distance Education	16
7. Night Life Education	21
8. Summary	29
PART III	
9. Address	
10. Traditional Forms of Education - P. Udugama	33
11. Workers' Continuing Education - G. W. Jayaratne	49
12. Employment Education - Ananda Gurusamy	56
13. Night Life Education - K. Wijayawardene	62
14. Summary of Workers' Continuing Education	
15. Index	73

Organised by:
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CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	...	
PART I			
2.	Addresses at the Inaugural Session		PAGE
2.1	Address of Welcome — The Vice Chancellor, University of Sri Lanka		1
2.2	Inaugural Address — The Minister of Education. ...		5
2.3	Address on behalf of International WUS— The General Secretary. ...		9
3.	Final Group Reports		
3.1	Workers' Continuing Education ...		11
3.2	Development Education ...		16
3.3	Family Life Education ...		21
4.	Resolutions ...		29
PART II			
5.	Keynote Addresses		
5.1	Non-Traditional Forms of Education — <i>P. Udagama</i>		33
5.2	Workers' Continuing Education — <i>O. W. Jayaratne</i>		49
5.3	Development Education — <i>Susantha Goonatileke</i>		56
5.4	Family Life Education — <i>G. Wijayawardene</i>		69
6.	Papers Presented — Workers' Continuing Education		
6.1	New Impetus for Education in Hong Kong — <i>Li Wing-On</i> ...		73
6.2	On Education for Workers in Japan — <i>Motoya Tashiro</i> ...		90
6.3	Workers' Continuing Education in Thailand — <i>Chantra Shoommuangpak</i> ...		95

	PAGE
6.4 Workers' Continuing Education — <i>Asgar Ali Shaikh</i>	103
6.5 Workers' Education in the Context of Adult Education — <i>W. M. K. Wijetunga</i> ...	112
6.6 The University and Workers' Education — <i>V. K. Samaranyake</i> ...	120
6.7 Taking Workers' Education to the Field — <i>C. S. Weeraratne</i> ...	131
6.8 A Worker Student's View of Worker Education — <i>W. H. Piyadasa</i> ...	135
7. Papers Presented — Development Education	
7.1 Changing Patterns of Education — Tanzania's Policy of Education for Self-Reliance — <i>Anza Lema</i>	140
7.2 Towards Non-Traditional Forms of Education — <i>Ruth de Fernandez</i> ...	155
7.3 Towards an Understanding of Development Education <i>Robin Burns</i> ...	161
7.4 Education and Manpower Development in the Republic of Korea — <i>Wan Bae Rha</i> ...	179
7.5 Economics of Educational Innovation in the South Pacific — <i>Motootua Paul</i> ...	192
7.6 Community Service by Indonesian Higher Education — <i>Nelly Z. Oelwendeda</i> ...	203
7.7 Development Studies in the Colombo Campus Hopes and Frustrations — <i>Hiran D. Dias</i> ...	210
7.8 Development Studies at the Vidyodaya Campus: — <i>Marcus Karunanayake</i> ...	226
7.9 Work Experience for Development Studies Special Degree Students — A Review <i>Bertram Bastiampillai</i> ...	232

	PAGE
7.10 What Students Think of the Development Studies Course-A Survey carried out at the Colombo Campus — <i>Indralal de Silva</i>	244
7.11 Philosophy of Development Education — <i>Gajaba Gunawardena</i>	253
8. Papers Presented - Family Life Education	
8.1 Population Education as a Component of Family Life Education — <i>Ranjit Ruberu</i>	261
8.2 Family Life and Adjustment to Changes by Young Persons in Sri Lanka — <i>Erika Dias</i>	276
8.3 Family Life Education — <i>Jirasak Laosakkitiboran</i>	284
8.4 Family Structure and Functions in Relation to Sri Lanka — <i>Malsiri Dias</i>	289
8.5 Training of Medical Auxilliaries for Sri Lanka — <i>C. de F. W. Goonaratna</i>	293
8.6 Family Health for Assistant Medical Practitioners — <i>Patricia Weerakoon and D. S. Samarasinghe</i>	303
8.7 A Study Service Scheme in the Field of Family Welfare — <i>Tien Hetty Sukartini</i>	308
PART III	
9. Agenda	319
10. List of Participants	324
11. Steering Committee, Secretariat and WUS Executive	332
12. Acknowledgements	335

1. Introduction

Education hitherto has meant formal school and University education. Changing requirements in the Third World have necessitated the introduction of new and non-formal types of education. These may include Workers' Continuing Education, Education for Development as well as Family Life Education.

Education in these three broad areas implies not only an input of basic information in these fields but also knowledge of the mechanisms and structures of society that advance as well as prevent progress. In Third World countries which are subject to rapid change and which are breaking down the old structures of dependence and subordination, it is vital that knowledge about personal and social liberation be widely disseminated among the population.

The Sri Lanka National Committee of the World University Service held an Asian Regional Workshop from 19th—24th April, 1976, in the precincts of the University of Sri Lanka, Colombo Campus, to discuss broadly the experience of the participating countries in this vital field of Non-Traditional Education.

The fact that it was held in the University of Sri Lanka and sponsored by the World University Service has special significance in that the University itself has been experimenting recently on Non-Traditional lines. It had recently inaugurated a course on Development Studies instead of the conventional 'Arts' degree with subjects like Economics, Political Science, History and Geography. Although this particular course has had several difficulties, its experience provides valuable study material for such new courses.

The University of Sri Lanka has recently likewise inaugurated a Workers' Education Course which brings to workers a University education experience. The preliminary results of this course have been so successful (worker students in competition with regular students have taken first places in several subject areas) that a permanent education institute has been promulgated as an integral part of the University. This institute has been actively supported by the World University Service.

It was a few years ago that a Family Life Education programme was started at the University of Sri Lanka, under the auspices of the World University Service, to give basic information to the University students community on problems regarding human sexuality. A further step was taken last year when a special clinic was opened where confidential advice on psycho-sexual problems is made available to both staff and students.

The six day conference provided a forum for the exchange of a wide variety of experiences in these subject areas. Several papers were read and interesting discussions ensued, carried on often late into the night. Finally, at the end of the Workshop, many of the common view points that emerged were collated into the final group reports and several resolutions in the key areas.

Although the Workshop was on 'Non-Traditional Forms of Education in the Third World with special reference to Sri Lanka', it was the unanimous view of the participants that 'Non-Traditional' should be replaced by 'Non Formal'. Hence this publication of the Proceedings is entitled 'Non Formal Education'.

Papers read as well as the reports and resolutions that emerged at the Workshop are reproduced in this publication. It is the hope of the editors and the organisers of the Workshop that this compendium will provide necessary discussion material for the many interested in the field.