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# Exploring Lifelong Learning Initiatives: A Study of ULLAS Program

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## ABSTRACT

This research article investigates the ULLAS Program, a pioneering initiative aligned with the National Education Policy 2020 in India. Operating under the New India Literacy Program from 2022 to 2027, ULLAS (Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society) aims to empower individuals aged 15 and above who have been denied educational opportunities. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study examines the program's conception, execution, and effects on lifelong learning using qualitative interviews and surveys. Implemented through volunteerism and emphasizing social responsibility, ULLAS goes beyond basic literacy, seeking to instil essential life skills and foster a culture of continuous learning. Preliminary findings indicate a positive correlation between ULLAS participation and ongoing educational pursuits, highlighting the program's effectiveness.

The research extends to assess societal impact and participant experiences, illuminating the qualitative dimensions of the ULLAS Program. As a beacon of hope for education and personal growth, ULLAS embodies a holistic approach to learning. The study aspires to contribute valuable insights into the program's effectiveness, its role in inclusive education, and its broader implications for societal development, informing educational policies and practices in the domain of lifelong learning initiatives.

**Keywords:** Lifelong Learning, ULLAS Program, Education Initiatives, Adult Learning, Program Evaluation, Societal Transformation, Inclusive Education, Etc.

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## Introduction

Government of India's revolutionary project, Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram (ULLAS), is in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the National Education Policy 2020. The five-year ULLAS (Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society) program is run under the auspices of the New India Literacy Program and runs from 2022 to 2027. Fundamentally, the initiative aims to provide those who have been denied access to education, aged 15 and up, with the means to actively participate in the advancement

of their country. ULLAS seeks to foster a culture of lifelong learning among its participants and impart essential life skills beyond the scope of a typical literacy program.

ULLAS, which is implemented through volunteer work, highlights the virtues of obligation and social responsibility (Kartavyabodh). In addition to receiving basic literacy instruction, learners are also encouraged to explore regional language content via the ULLAS mobile app and the Education for All Vertical feature on the DIKSHA Portal.

Beyond traditional educational paradigms, ULLAS illuminates the way to education and personal growth like a beacon of hope. The curriculum has been carefully designed to connect with the socio-cultural-economic background of the students, encouraging a feeling of pride and kinship. A fundamental component of ULLAS is experiential learning, which involves volunteer teachers and gives the educational process real-world application.

Acknowledging the endeavours of students and volunteer instructors, the program awards diplomas, offering concrete support and enhancing self-assurance. ULLAS is more than just a literacy campaign; it's a movement toward a more promising future and more capable citizenship. The program, which is based on the idea that literacy is a basic human right, aims to make this right available to everyone. By doing so, students will be able to read and write as well as make a significant impact on their communities, livelihoods, and personal lives. They go closer to their goals with each word read, each number computed, and each idea grasped, forming a future marked by ongoing development and enlightenment.

### **Important aspects of the plan**

1. The scheme will be implemented at the school level, serving as the primary unit for execution.
2. Schools will play a vital role in conducting surveys to identify beneficiaries and volunteers.
3. Varied strategies will be employed for different age groups, allowing States/UTs flexibility for innovative activities.
4. For individuals aged 15 and above lacking foundational literacy and numeracy, Critical Life Skills will be integrated into the program.
5. To ensure that the program is more widely covered, technology will be used to expand adult education.
6. Through the UDISE portal, the state/UT and district Performance Grading Index (PGI) will evaluate annual accomplishments, assessing both financial and physical growth.
7. CSR/philanthropy support can take the form of organizing ICT help, setting up facilitation centers, offering volunteer support, and giving economically disadvantaged students access to the internet via mobile phones and other devices.
8. The first target age group will be those between the ages of 15 and 35, with emphasis placed on marginalized groups, women, girls, SC/ST/OBC/Minorities, and PWDs. Geographically speaking, focus will be on aspirational districts, places with literacy rates below the state or national average, and places where, according to the 2011 Census, the percentage of women literate is less than 60%.

9. Collaborations with Ministries/Departments are emphasized for the effective execution of the scheme.
10. ULLAS, positioned as Janandolan under Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, aims for broad participation, involving millions of students, teachers, volunteers, and support from various entities. Media platforms, including electronic, print, folk, and social media, will be utilized for outreach.
11. Literacy assessments will occur in local schools, capturing real-life learning and skills through a scientific format. There will be on-demand exams via OTLAS and e-certificates that are jointly endorsed by NLMA and NIOS.
12. An Annual Achievement Survey of Learning Outcomes and an Outcome-Output Monitoring Framework will be implemented, sampling 500-1000 learners from each state/UT.

### **Crucial Aspects of ULLAS: Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram**

#### **1. Lifelong Learning Emphasis:**

- Advocates for perpetual learning across one's lifespan.
- Cultivates a culture of knowledge exchange and individual growth.

#### **2. Digital and Economic Literacy:**

- Empowers individuals with digital proficiency.
- Advocates financial literacy and empowerment.

#### **3. Essential Life Competencies:**

- Imparts vital life skills, including legal and digital literacy.
- Strengthens citizenship and empowerment.

#### **4. Rewards for Student Volunteers:**

- Grants academic credits in school/university to student volunteers.
- Acknowledges contributions through certificates, letters, and commendations.

### **ULLAS App at a Glance: Understanding its Features.**

The "ULLAS" mobile app is a feature-rich learning environment that can be accessed on iOS and Android smartphones. It serves as a digital gateway that links students to a variety of educational resources that are accessible via the NCERT or DIKSHA site. Through surveyor aid or self-enrollment, the application makes user registration easier.

"ULLAS" is a volunteer-run program that was created primarily for persons who were unable to attend official schooling and were at least 15 years old. It gives people the ability to actively contribute voluntarily to the development of their country. Student volunteers that participate in the program receive rewards including college or university credits in addition to recognition in the form of diplomas, thank-you notes, and awards.

With the phrase and logo "ULLAS: Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram," the initiative expresses its passion and commitment to educating the country. The "ULLAS" smartphone application, which highlights a

custom in Indian communities of exchanging information, seeks to pique people's interest and encourage a dedication to lifelong learning, ultimately improving the nation's educational system.

### **Comprehending ULLAS: The Outset of the Journey**

"Comprehending ULLAS: The Outset of the Journey" is the first in a series of innovative instructional projects. The mobile application ULLAS, available for both Android and iOS, functions as an interactive portal to an abundance of instructional materials from the DIKSHA portal. The program, which is aimed at people above the age of 15, promotes volunteering for the betterment of the country by providing rewards like recognition and credits for schools and universities. The new tagline, "ULLAS: Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram," signifies an unwavering dedication to promoting education across Indian cultures, arousing curiosity, and encouraging lifelong learning. This project aims to create a more empowered and inclusive educational environment for people all throughout the country.

### **Encouraging Adult Literacy and Education**

The main goal of the ULLAS application is to promote adult literacy and education. The application is committed to providing persons who are 15 years of age and older with basic education, financial literacy, digital literacy, and vital life skills. With the dynamic and user-friendly platform offered by ULLAS, students may learn at their own pace and convenience.

### **Volunteering: A Transformational Catalyst**

One unique feature of ULLAS is that it is carried out with volunteer participation. Volunteers with a strong desire to promote a culture of ongoing education and information exchange among Indian communities are encouraged to apply with great enthusiasm. This cooperative strategy guarantees that everyone has wide access to education and builds a robust learning environment.

### **The New India Literacy Campaign: An Empowering Framework**

The Indian government has approved the New India Literacy Initiative, which would cover the wide field of "Education For All," formerly known as Adult Education, and operate from FYs 2022 to 2027. This effort seeks to expand adult learners' access to online materials and modules encompassing a range of courses, in accordance with the National Education Policy 2020.

### **An Online Portal to Learning**

Acting as a virtual portal, the ULLAS application gives students online access to a wide range of instructional materials via the NCERT DIKSHA portal. People can easily expand their knowledge and abilities because to this easy accessibility, which goes beyond the constraints of traditional education.

### **Stressing the Need for Essential Life Skills**

ULLAS goes beyond the conventional educational setting to prioritize the development of essential life skills, with a focus on financial and legal literacy in particular. ULLAS equips students with these essential abilities, preparing them for significant participation in the social and economic domains.

## Denoting the zeal and vitality of education

❖ "ULLAS: Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram," the campaign's tagline, and the organization's logo both masterfully convey the campaign's enthusiasm and vitality. The emblem stands for the dissemination of knowledge to all corners of the nation, inspiring curiosity and a strong desire to study in everyone.

### ❖ Importance and Utilization:

At the commemoration of the third year of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Union Minister of Education, Skill Development, and Entrepreneurship Dharmendra Pradhan introduced the logo, tagline, and mobile application for ULLAS: Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram.

The ULLAS (Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society) program aims to transform education and literacy in India by creating a learning ecosystem that reaches every individual and filling in gaps in basic literacy and life skills. Its goal is to provide financial and digital literacy, life skills, and basic education to individuals who are 15 years of age or older who were not able to attend school.

According to government data, 12,53,019 students are not in school for the 2022–2023 academic year, with more boys than girls. By providing an open-source learning platform, the ULLAS mobile application has the ability to reintegrate these students into the educational process.

Stressing that this interactive and user-friendly software is available on both Android and iOS devices, Dharmendra Pradhan stressed that it will work as a digital gateway for students to interact with a variety of learning resources via the DIKSHA portal of NCERT. An important step forward when utilizing technology to enable The ULLAS app provides universal access to basic literacy." At the Akhil Bharatiya Shiksha Samagam 2023 inaugural ceremony, he spoke these things.

Through surveyors or self-registration, the ULLAS app makes it easier for volunteers and learners to register. The Minister emphasized the importance of ULLAS's focus on developing practical literacy, career skills, and vital life skills including digital, legal, and financial literacy. It encourages a culture of ongoing learning and knowledge-sharing among Indian communities and gives individuals the ability to participate in the process of constructing their country. Volunteerism is used to carry out the program.

"ULLAS: Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram,' the new logo and slogan, encapsulate the energy and vitality of the campaign," said Pradhan. It represents the dissemination of information throughout the nation, enabling people via education, and inspiring curiosity and learning in each and every person, creating Jan Jan Sakshar." Through school/university credits, diplomas, thank-you notes, felicitations, and other measures, the program encourages volunteers to contribute as Kartavya Bodh or DUTY in the service of nation-building.

## Conclusion

The study delving into the ULLAS Program, focused on lifelong learning initiatives, reveals a transformative and impactful endeavor in the landscape of education and literacy in India. ULLAS, embodying the essence of Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society, stands as a beacon for inclusive education, reaching citizens aged 15 and above who were previously excluded from formal schooling.

The comprehensive examination of ULLAS underscores its commitment to bridging gaps in basic literacy, digital literacy, financial literacy, and critical life skills. The program's strategic use of technology, exemplified by the user-friendly mobile application, serves as a digital gateway, facilitating access to a diverse range of educational resources. This innovative approach harnesses the potential of open-source learning platforms and promotes a culture of continuous learning.

The significance of ULLAS extends beyond conventional education, emphasizing functional literacy, vocational skills, and essential life competencies. The program not only addresses the pressing issue of out-of-school students but also mobilizes volunteers through a sense of duty, fostering a collaborative learning ecosystem.

As ULLAS unfolds, its potential to reignite curiosity, empower citizens, and contribute to nation-building becomes evident. The symbolic "ULLAS: Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram," is the logo and slogan." encapsulate the vigor and enthusiasm of this transformative campaign, signaling a brighter and more enlightened future for every individual touched by the light of knowledge.

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