

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of adult education globally and in Bangladesh. The chapter discusses the concept of adult education, relation between adult education and illiteracy, role of adult education in the society and how it can change the life style of women. This chapter also conceptualizes women and adult education, women development and adult education and how creativity of women is developed through adult education. It also presents the concept of gender and adult education. In addition, this chapter presents the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives and research questions, significance of the study and finally conceptual framework of the study.

1.1 Background

Adult education today has assumed a new meaning and a new significance. The old connotation of adult education that is belated instruction in 3 R's is not usually quoted - as Relevance, Relatedness and Responsibility. The new meanings of 3 R's are Reading, Writing and Arithmetic for the illiterate and uneducated adults. This has been adopted as the new concept of life- long education for all people without exception. Adult education in its broad sense can be said to include experiences such as talking with others, listening to the radio, watching television, reading, attending formal classes and lectures, travelling and even getting bawled out by the boss. In fact, all of these experiences leave their marks on us and change us in one way or another. Thus they can be called 'educational' because they modify, change, or reinforce our behaviour in some way.

The challenges of the twenty-first century require the creativity and competence of citizens of all ages, but without education, they could not be achieved. As a Least Economically Developed Country (LEDC) where people are mostly illiterate, adult education plays an essential and distinct role in equipping women and men to respond productively to the constantly changing world and as it provides learning which acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of the adults in the community. It

has grown in depth and scale, and has become an imperative at the workplace, in the home and the community, as men and women struggle to create new realities at every stage of life. In addition, adult education can help in alleviating poverty, consolidating democratic processes, strengthening and protecting human rights, promoting a culture of peace, encouraging active citizenship, strengthening the role of civil society, ensuring gender equality and equity, enhancing the empowerment of women, recognizing cultural diversity and a new partnership between state and civil society.

In Bangladesh adult education or literacy relates to two inter-related factors. The first factor is about social status- what it meant to be called 'Literate or Illiterate'? The term 'Literate' does not have a simple translation in Bengali language- and in many respects the concept does not exist in the same way as it does in the west. Many people including women and the rural people have low social status, and although they are able to use literacy- that is, to read and write, they do not consider themselves to be literate. In fact they deny being 'literate'. The term '*shakkhar*' which is used by development agencies implying literacy, means 'to sign'(i.e to sign one's name, in contrast to someone who signs with their thumb (*'tip shoie'*)). But many people, particularly women, do not have relatively high social status (or rights) to count themselves as ones who sign. However, if you ask people if, and what they can read and write (*'lekha pora'*) they will say they can.

The second sense that we can look at in terms of the meanings of literacy is through its everyday use, that is, literacy and numeracy practices. Many, particularly women, under report their literacy abilities and practices, since they are prevented from using literacy by their families, or because they do not want to tell others about how they use literacy. This fact relates to the pervasive vulnerability of the rural poor. If you ask people what they read and write, they are likely to give a wide range of answers including *Koranic* reading in Bengali and Arabic - many of which are literacy practices that would not be recognized by a census enumeration.

Promotion of adult literacy is an essential step towards adult education. Considering this, adult learning encompasses both- formal and continuing education, non-formal learning and the spectrum of informal and incidental learning. Thus for the purpose

of census enumeration in Bangladesh, ability to write a simple letter or message and to read the same is considered to be a person's qualification for being counted as literate or adult educated.

1.2 The Concept of Adult Education

Historically adult education has been recognized as a force for individual and societal growth; it has also been concerned with worldview construction, albeit these precise words have not been used by adult education theorists explicitly. In addition, adult education can be a major factor in helping adults construct the networks of ideas, values, feelings, beliefs, opinions, institutions, judgements, choices and action that constitute a worldview.

Paul Bergevin (1967: 37), is a philosopher of Adult Education who stated that "adult education contributes to the civilizing process both individually and socially. That is the civilizing process for an individual which involves movements towards being a responsible member of the social order. For a society, the process is corporate where social movement involves the whole of society, as it moves from barbarism toward refinement in behaviour, tastes, and thought."

According to Lindeman (1961:5) "Education was not a preparation for life but was coextensive with life. Adult education revolves around non-vocational ideals. Adult education more accurately defined begins where vocational education leaves off. Its purpose is to put meaning into the whole of life." Adult education was not to be identified with the systematic study of subjects but rather with the analysis of situations. The best resource for adult education was the experience of the learner.

Lindeman (1961:33) observes that "adult education is via the route of *situations*, not subjects and it always runs by situations approach where our academic system has grown in reverse order: subjects and teachers constitute the starting – point while students are secondary". In conventional education, the student is required to adjust him/herself to an established curriculum; in adult education curriculum is built around the student's needs and interests. Every adult person finds him/herself in specific situations with respect to his/her work, his/her recreation, his/her family-life, his/her community- life, etcetera – situations which call for adjustments. Adult education begins at this point. The situation-approach to education means that the learning process is at the outset given a setting of reality. Intelligence performs its function in relation to actualities, not abstractions.

UNESCO (1978) defines adult education as, “adult education to help men and women to live fuller and richer lives in adjustments in their culture, and to achieve the social and economic progress which will enable them to take their rightful place in the modern world and to live together in peace.”

At CONFINTEA-V, 1997, the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (Hamburg), the following definition was provided: “The objectives of youth and adult education...are to develop the autonomy and the sense of responsibility of people and communities, to reinforce the capacity to deal with the transformations taking place in the economy, in culture and in society...in short to enable people and communities to take control of their destiny and society...”

The beneficiaries of adult education, are the “disadvantaged” out-of-school youths and adults- those who have had limited or no opportunities to access or benefit from sustained learning in formal school settings. This target group may or may not be wage earners or effective participants in their economic or community activities, but their basic or functional literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills, as well as “life skills” are likely to be lower than desired by national policy makers and/ or what is needed to assure economic survival.

Witty (1958:57) defines those who are disadvantaged as “those who have completed fewer than five years of schooling are counted as functionally illiterate. This is a crude but practical index.”

In the education message of February 6, 1962, President Kennedy also stated that the disadvantaged or adult illiterate are, “the twin tragedies of illiteracy and dependency who are often passed on from generation to generation. There is no need for this. Many nations - including our own - have shown that this problem can be attacked and virtually wiped out.”

Based on the above, it can be seen, that literacy and adult education are terms that, together, are meant to refer to “second chance basic education” carried out among youth and adults. By “second chance”, we are referring to educational activities that are meant for those individuals who never attended school (i.e. , who missed schooling the “first time” when they were younger), or who left school before completing the acquisition of skills such as literacy and numeracy. Thus, adult education is not meant to include the myriad programs of lifelong learning for adults

(as important as they are), but rather a focus on the most disadvantaged women and men who do not possess basic skills and are thus in need of basic education in non-formal (as different from formal) settings (EFA 2000, Literacy and Adult Education: 5/1/00: 11).

1.2.1 Literacy and Illiteracy

‘Literacy’ is a word that is usually associated with the more positive aspects of human civilization, and is strongly associated with some of the most positive aspects of social and economic development. Indeed, the level of “illiterate” has been used and is today often used to characterise the poverty and lack of education still experienced in many parts of the world. Yet literacy also encompasses a wide variety of attitude, beliefs and power relations between individuals and groups of individuals. Thus, literacy itself is at the heart of the changes that have taken place across literate human history. Whether in the domain of religious tradition, the invention of the printing press, or the internet, literacy has been central to many of our most profound human and historical developments (EFA 2000, Literacy and Adult Education: 5/1/00: 11).

In the dictionary sense, literacy means acquaintance with the alphabet and ability to read and write. A person is considered literate if he/she can read handwritten, type-written or printed matter, and also put it down in writing. For statistical purposes, especially in connection with census operations, ability to read and to write a simple letter used to be previously regarded as the minimum standard of literacy. At the Atlanta Convention of the National Education Association in 1929, it was agreed and a resolution adopted to the effect that forth- year schooling was a sound basis for determining literacy.

The 1990 World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) in Jomtien, influenced the definitional aspect of the literacy goal by broadening the discussion to that of Basic Learning Needs or Competencies (BLCs), which are seen not only in terms of mastery of the 3 Rs, but also in terms of other knowledge, problem- solving and life skills. Together, BLCs, are thought to promote empowerment and access to the rapidly changing world. They should support independent functioning and coping

with practical problems or choices as a parent or worker or citizen, and are seen as critical gatekeepers to job entry and social advancement in all countries. Thus, when defining BLCs, there is need to refer both to formal school- based skills (such as ability to read prose text or to understand mathematical notations) and also the ability to manage functional tasks and demands, regardless of whether such competencies were developed through formal or non-formal education, or through personal experiences in diverse informal learning situations. The challenge of changing definitions is not a trivial one, and will influence not only how policy makers view literacy goals, but also how programme developers will seek to promote literacy and adult education in the 21st century.

Most definitions of literacy have traditionally included calculation skills as part of broad definition of literacy, but often these have been limited primarily to the four arithmetic operations. It is now widely thought that numeracy assessment should encompass a broad range of skills, thought processes and background knowledge. Numeracy enables interpreting, acting upon and communicating about mathematical information in a wide range of everyday life contexts, and is needed as well for effective functioning in a world of amounts, prices, weights, distances, and so forth. Thus, literacy and numeracy will be considered together to define adult education or assess the performance of literacy in this study.

1.2.2 The Concept of Adult Education in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, Adult Education refers to literacy, cultivation of awareness and development of professional skills. The 2000 National Education Policy, initiated after Humburg Conference and adopted by Parliament in 2000, stated that “ the aims of adult education are to offer people the skills of literacy: reading, writing, numeracy, and to inspire them with human virtues and to raise awareness in them about health and environment.” The Fifth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) of Bangladesh stated that:

“the purpose of Non Formal Education (NFE) besides empowering the learners with skills in literacy, numeracy and communications as well as internalise socio-cultural traits, should extend to ... emotional

and physical well-being, self-actualisation, creative and aesthetic expression, basic technological skill and orientation, entrepreneurial traits and leadership skills” (Fifth Five Year Plan, GOB, 1997; National Literacy Policies Bangladesh).

The National Education Policy 2000 also states that “Mass education will branch out in two directions in accordance with the age of the learners and subjects of learning; adult education and non-formal education.” Non-Formal Education (NFE) is complementary to formal education. Through this the children outside schools and the dropouts will have access to basic education. They will also receive some practical skills, which they can apply in real life situations as and when necessary. NFE graduate can be enrolled in appropriate classes of the formal schools. This opportunity will be created for all illiterate men and women of the country giving preference to those between 15-45 years of age.

Adult education may take three distinct forms: formal, non-formal or informal. Formal education is usually learning that leads to certification. It can be part-time or full-time but is always institutionally based. Non-formal education refers to the range of targeted learning opportunities that are offered outside educational institutions but are nevertheless organized to achieve particular learning outcomes. Non-formal education can include work-based skills training, community education workshops or any specific learning programme. Informal education is often connected to projects in which education is not the priority but which result in increased knowledge, skills and understanding. Such programmes may also provide opportunities for non-formal education but more often they involve self-directed learning or engagement with others on an informal basis.

Considering the above, it can be said that, the 2000 National Education Policy of Bangladesh is committed to achieving 100% literacy by 2015. For achieving that target the policy of adult education included literacy, cultivation of awareness and development of professional skills. Opportunities had been created for all illiterate men and women of the country giving preference to those between 15 and 45 years of age.

1.2.3 The Aim of Adult Education

The aim of adult education should be to target the educated powerful elites in society as much as those who are the so called marginalized and illiterates, since the macro-policies such as globalization and structure adjustment which have affected the human condition so severely, are created by the educated, the rich and powerful. The new vision of adult education calls for the creation of inclusive learning societies building on all the potential and resources of all the people and the environment. In addition, there can be some other aims of adult education.

Adult education aims to help the human being learn to think for him/herself, to develop his/her highest human powers. Mutchins (1976) an American Philosopher, stated that it has never been denied that this education is the best for the best. It must still be the best for the best unless modern times, industry, science and democracy have made it irrelevant. In a modern, industrial and scientific democracy every man has the responsibility of a ruler and every man has the leisure to make the most of himself. The modern, industrial and scientific democracy requires wisdom and the aim of adult education to make wisdom, because every man has the duty and every man must have the chance to become as wise as he can.

Bergiven (1967:31-40) maintained that adult education functions to achieve purposes transcendent to whatever topic adults happen to be studying. The teacher who helps adult learner how to make chairs, for example, must also in some way help them to better themselves as human beings. He also stated that adult education has several general goals among which are:

- “helping adults achieve a degree of happiness and meaning in life,
- helping adults understand themselves, their talents, their limitations, and their relationship with others,
- helping adults understand the need for lifelong learning,
- providing opportunities to help adults grow spiritually, culturally, physically, politically, and vocationally, and
- providing education for survival, i.e., literacy education, health education, and vocational skill training.”

1.3 The Role of Adult Education in the Society

Adult education influences environment, health, population, nutrition and food security which are intricately linked to one another in sustaining development. Each is a complex issue. Caring for the environment by controlling pollution, preventing soil erosion and prudently managing natural resources has a direct impact on the population's health, nutrition and well-being which, in turn, have implications for population growth and the availability of food. These issues are part of the wider quest for sustainable development, which cannot be attained without a strong emphasis in education on family issues, the reproductive life cycle and population issues such as ageing, migration, urbanization and intergenerational and family relations.

Some states in the Third World have represented the interests of the popular classes and have pursued development strategies intended to restructure the socio economic order, reduce external dependency, and extend democracy. In this context, state-sponsored literacy programmes are aimed at expanding the capability of workers and peasants to be involved in the economic and political decisions affecting their lives. Such programmes are exemplified by the literacy campaigns in Mozambique in the late 1970s and the National Literacy Crusade in Nicaragua in 1980. But these examples are rare, and on the whole, state support for literacy serves to reinforce patterns of domination and subordination in society.

Adult learning has become a significant component of education policies and programmes in developing countries. For example, Namibia's National Policy on Adult Learning (Government of Namibia, 2003) states the provision of adult learning is a multi-sectoral responsibility, connected to agriculture, extension education, basic education, national heritage and culture programmes, as well as the defence forces, environmental affairs, forest management, media, health, community skill development, rehabilitation training, vocational and business training, voter education and gender sensitivity.

Adult education is a consciously elaborated programme aiding and reinforcing the civilizing process. The over-all aim of the professional or lay adult educator, then,

will be to bring each of us into some kind of constructive relationship with the civilizing process, always remembering that this process should represent those positive elements in environment and society that help us develop mature rationality in our lives and institutions.

1.3.1 Adult Education as a Life-long Process

Adult Education is an integral part of a lifelong and life-wide learning process such as promoting family and *community* learning as well as dialogue between cultures, respecting differences and diversity and thereby contributing to a culture of peace. Adult education has always been confronted with the world of work, which is today rapidly changing. We need to redefine the concept of work, which has to go beyond the idea of paid work and pay tribute to every area in which productive and reproductive responsibilities are taken; this notably concerns women's activities. The new paradigm of work should inform adult and continuing education policies and inspire lifelong learning programmes in the work place (Fifth International Conference on Adult Education: Final Report, Hamburg, Germany, 1979;14-18 July).

Sherman M. Stanage (1989) described the view of adult education as it is a lifelong process which should develop the autonomy and the sense of responsibility of people and communities, to reinforce the capacity to deal with the transformations taking place in the economy, in culture and society as a whole. It is essential that approaches to adult learning be based on people's own heritage, cultural values and prior experiences and that the diverse ways in which these approaches are implemented enable and encourage every citizen to be actively involved and to have a voice.

1.4 Women and Adult Education

In this study an important and valuable key term is 'women'. Let us think for a moment about who that woman is. Fisher (1973) had this to say about a woman:

“he is a person of deep emotions. She is a woman of heart. Her motivation is for her family. She is a woman, let us say, of 22 years of

age. She performs the same functions in the same old backbreaking way that her mother, her grand- mother, her mother-in-law and all her aunts have done in generations before her, following the same unending pattern of life. What does she really want today? I believe her emotional desires come first. She is a true woman. She craves the best for her family. How will she know the best, if she cannot read and write and decide for herself? Evidently, she must accept what others tell her is best, or follow the dictates of her heart. Her heart is beating out her anxious fears for her family in its need. In this democracy she must be free to do more than that, but at the moment she is afraid to experiment because she does not know enough of what it may mean.

The Indian great leader Gandhiji followed basic education for improving women. According to Gandhiji, basic education was spinning and weaving – to create self-reliance. He believed that education could be gained from spinning which, if done to perfection, would provide a wide economic base for villages and villagers. He used to address: “you can teach the 3R’s through spinning cotton. Put down the words ‘good cotton’, ‘bad cotton’, etc. Put down the differences – ‘good land’, ‘poor growth on poor land’” Again his conception for improving adult education was that society could pay for a teacher to train the young people in the village to read and write from the money earned from selling the strong, firm thread.

In this study literacy is basic and social education whose aim is to develop human beings who will themselves change society for their betterment. Women can change society more humanly, more effectively and more helpfully for the future generations. It is for us, the womanhood of the world, to take our place as creators of the new world society for us, Vinibaji said, “Education is character building.” A Woman thus will develop the capacity for faith in herself, because faith in her own particular and vital capacity will change her outlook and in time will change society. Education is more important for improving any type of development like human being, social value, health, agriculture, etc. It was once said rather beautifully by Edwin Markham (1886);

We are all blind until we see

That in the human plan
Nothing is worth the making
That doesn't make the man.
Why build these cities glorious?
If man unbuilt goes.
In vain we build the work,
Unless the builder also grows.

Thus based on the above developments, we can say easily that Adult Education for women is essential for the development of every society. Equal opportunity in all aspects of education is essential to enable women of all ages to make their full contribution to society and to the resolution of the multiple problems confronting humanity. When women are caught in a situation of social isolation and lack of access to knowledge of information, they are alienated from decision-making process within the family, community and society in general, and have little control over their bodies and lives. For poor women, the sheer business of survival becomes an obstacle to education. Educational processes should therefore address the constraints that prevent women's access to intellectual resources and empower women to become fully active as parents in social information. The message of equality and equal access must not be limited to programmes intended for women. Education should ensure that women become aware of the need to organize as women in order to change the situation and to build their capacities so that they can gain access to formal power structures and decision making process in both private and public sphere.

1.5 Gender and Adult Education

Unfortunately, the gender gap in illiteracy rates has only declined only moderately in recent decades, though some regions (Eastern Asia and Oceania) seem to have made major gains. In some countries, improvements due to increased primary school access for girls have been noted, while in other countries differential completion of primary schooling favours boys, hence maintaining or increasing the gender gap in literacy for adolescent girls. If educational access trends do not change dramatically

in the coming decades, it is estimated that male and female literacy gap will not be reached for over a century.

Of the almost one billion illiterates currently in the world, the large majority are women. Although there are large variations by region, illiteracy rates invariably are higher for women than for men in developing countries. A summary of gender gaps for 87 countries published by UNESCO (1990) found that:

(1) in 36 countries, all of them in Africa or Asia, the difference between male and female literacy rates was over 20%.

(2) in 26 countries, nearly all of them in Asia and Africa, the male-female difference was between 10% and 20% and

(3) in 25 countries, most of which are in Latin America and the Caribbean, disparity was less than 10%.

Gender disparity is particularly pronounced in South Asia including Bangladesh. South Asia is one of the few areas in the world where gender discrimination is so severe that aggregate population statistics reveal skewed gender ratios suggesting differential life expectancies between women and men resulting from socio economic and cultural factors. In rural Bangladesh, although there have been rapid changes in recent years, girls unlike boys, have often been seen as a liability rather than an asset, with lower level of education, low participation in productive economic activities, early marriage and high fertility. For example, the literacy rate in Bangladesh was about 35% among women; it was only 22%, as of early 1990s (World Bank 1992). At the secondary education level, 33% of the total enrolled were female and only 5% of them completed up to grade ten (GOB, 1996).

1.6 Statement of the Problem

The Government of Bangladesh (GOB) is committed to the principles of equitable access to education at all levels from her independence. Along with nationalisation of primary education in 1972, the GOB continued several initiatives to eradicate illiteracy in the country. The achievements of those initiatives were always

questionable. In 1992, the GOB created an individual division under the Prime Minister which has been transformed into a full ministry, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education in 2003. The ministry emphasised compulsory primary education and achievement of 100% literacy goal by 2000 through formal and non-formal education. However, “Equitable access to education at all levels really remains a mere dream for countries in the developing world” (Kelly, 2000). The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) affirms that it will take positive action to ensure that the education system caters satisfactorily for the poor and vulnerable. It further states that priority in educational provision and the distribution of educational resources will be in favour of whatever is more likely to benefit the poor and vulnerable. The MOPME has prioritised the girl’s and women’s education in its policies and practices and positive initiatives taken to increase their enrolment.

Although the Government and the NGOs have been trying to eradicate illiteracy among the adult population of the country, a high number of people especially women are still illiterate. The Government policies or the literacy movements have already failed several times to achieve the targeted goal. Considering the situation, it is necessary to explore the nature of the problems and scope for further interventions which would effectively address the problem of illiteracy among women in Bangladesh. This study therefore was designed to provide answers to some of these concerns.

1.7 Purpose of the Study

The study aimed to examine the historical and sociological perspective of adult education for women in Bangladesh. Its focus was on the relationship between educational policies and broader national development. Thus, the purpose of the study was to find out the factors that hinder achievement of adult literacy among women with a view to mapping out the prospects for the future.

1.8 Research Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To identify existing Government policies for eradication of adult illiteracy in the country.
2. To analyse and document the Government and NGOs initiatives for eradication of adult illiteracy, especially among women since independence (1972).
3. To find out the factors in the government and NGOs sectors which hinder the success of adult education for women in Bangladesh.
4. To identify the socio-economic and cultural factors which may hinder the eradication of illiteracy, especially among women.
5. To identify the future prospects of adult literacy for women in Bangladesh.

1.9 Research Questions

Based on the above objectives the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the existing policies of the Government to eradicate adult illiteracy in the country?
2. What are the initiatives taken by the Government and NGOs since 1972 to eradicate adult illiteracy, especially among women?
3. What are the factors in the Government and NGO sectors that hinder success of adult education for women in Bangladesh?
4. What are the socio-economic and cultural factors which may hinder the eradication of illiteracy, especially among women?
5. What are future prospects of adult literacy for women in Bangladesh?

1.10 Significance of the Study

Although the study was conducted for the academic purpose, it is hoped that its findings will provide valuable information to the policy makers as well as the implementing agencies. Knowledge of factors that achievement of the adult literacy among women will help the implementing agencies in implementing adult literacy programme in future effectively. All concerned authorities in Bangladesh who have been trying their best to eradicate illiteracy from the country, may benefit from the findings of the study.

1.11 Conceptual Framework

This study was grounded on “Feminist Pedagogy Theory”. The perspective of feminist education – the feminist classroom – should be a place where there is sense of struggle, where there is visible acknowledgement of the union of theory and practice, where we work together as teachers and students to overcome the estrangement and alienation that have become so much the norm in the contemporary university. Most importantly, feminist pedagogy should engage students in the learning process that makes the world “more rather than less real.”

According to Hayes (1989) and Maher (1987) feminist pedagogy has been influenced by different educational models that share a concern with such issues like:

- (1) How to teach women more effectively so that they gain a sense of their ability to change their lives,
- (2) An emphasis on connection and relationship (rather than separation) with both the knowledge learned and the facilitations to other learners, and
- (3) Women’s emerging sense of personal power.

It is also important to highlight that not all of the feminist pedagogy literature deals with the nature of structure and power relationships or with women’s collective experience as an oppressed group. The strand of the feminist pedagogy literature that stops short of dealing with structured power relations deals only with women’s personal empowerment from a developmental-psychological perspective. Maher (1987) suggested that the wide body of literature coming to be labelled feminist pedagogy can be divided into two major subgroups that have been influenced by two major educational models like Liberatory Model and Gender Model.

1.11.1 The Liberatory Model

The liberatory or emancipatory model of feminist pedagogy deals with the nature of structure power relations and interlocking systems on oppression based on gender, race, class, age, and so on. In particular, versions of the liberatory model attempt to account for and deal with why it is that women (and minorities) are often silenced or absent or that their contributions are overlooked or discounted in the public arenas of our society, including government, industry, education and in the classroom at all educational levels.

A liberator feminist movement aims to transform society by eradicating patriarchy, by ending sexism and sexist oppression, by challenging the politics the domination on all fronts. Feminist pedagogy can only be liberatory if it is truly evolutionary because the mechanisms of appropriation within white-supremacist, capitalist patriarchy is able to co-opt with tremendous ease that which merely appears radical or subversive.

1.11.2 The Gender Model

Gender model deals directly with women socialization as nurturers. The gender model is emancipatory in the personal psychological sense, rather in terms of dealing with the power relations of the larger social structure.

1.11.3 Feminist Pedagogy and Adult Learning

Based on the above discussion, what insight does the feminist emancipatory education or feminist literature offer for learning in adulthood? A synthesis of both the liberatory and the gender models initially offers three primary and interrelated insights for adult learning. First, it is clear that the feminist emancipatory education literature suggests that women may have different learning needs from men. Nearly all education systems may have been initially designed for the education of men, with a knowledge base predominantly based on a rationality that was socially constructed by white males. Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule's (1986) suggest that women seem to do best in learning environments where affective forms of knowledge or knowledge that comes from life experience are valued. In short,

they do best in learning environments where there is an effort to relate theoretical concepts to real-life experience.

Clearly, the idea of capitalizing on students' life experiences and relating theoretical concepts to those experiences is not new in the adult education literature. Nevertheless, the feminist pedagogy literature centres on the importance of women in particular reclaiming and validating the learning that comes from the life experience as women. Because women have a different relationship to the structures of power from that of men, there has been a tendency to dismiss or discount their learning that comes from experience in the private realm.

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule's (1986) connected teaching methods and learning environments seem to help women begin to see themselves as creators of knowledge. The creation of connected learning environments helped at least some women in their study begin to integrate subjective knowledge, where truth is perceived as personal, private, and internally derived, with procedural knowledge, where objective procedures are used for deriving or obtaining knowledge. Women who were able to integrate subjective and procedural forms of knowledge came to see themselves as more independent thinker, and Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule's report that these women were more concerned with moral and spiritual values and began to translate ideas into action. When attempting to solve moral dilemmas and to translate ideas into action, they tended to ask questions related to context. Thus, connected learning, environments may help women see themselves as independent thinkers and constructors of knowledge, which is more likely to lead to social action.

Second, implicit in the discussion of the feminist emancipatory education literature is attention to the socio-cultural context where power relations based on the interlocking systems of oppression abound. These power relations are always present and clearly affect learning. Power disparities between women or racial minorities and the white male majority are present in both hidden and overt ways in adult education curricula. As Hugo (1989), Collard and Stalker (1991), and Colin and Preciphs (1991) have pointed out, literature that deals with power issues related to women and minorities is often absent in adult education curricula, and the literature that does

deal with women and minorities often portrays them only in non authoritative roles, which contributes to the reproduction of unequal power relations in society. The feminist emancipatory education calls attention to these issues and underscores the importance of directly dealing with these issues in the socio-culture context- through the choice of what to include in the overt curriculum and in attending to what gets taught through the hidden curriculum by the way in which the class or education programme is conducted.

Third the feminist emancipatory education literature contributes to the adult learning literature in the direct discussion of how to deal with power issues in the learning environment that affect the learning process. There is considerable discussion in the feminist pedagogy literature about the power disparity between the teacher and the student, and how professors, as authorities of their own knowledge, should deal with power issues that come up in their classes. Much of the literature deals with concrete examples based on experience. Since this power disparity is a central theme in much of the feminist emancipatory education literature and of interest to adult educators who want to attempt to deal with power issues and later the nature of structured power relations in the classroom, some brief examples are in order here.

Gardner, Dean, and McKaig (1989) discuss the reality of trying to deal with power issues in a women's studies class. Gardner, the professor of the class, discusses her effort to make a "truly feminist" classroom. She relinquished most of her authority and took on a passive role in the first part of the class because she did not want to exercise power and domination in her classroom. She found, however, that as a result of relinquishing her own authority as teacher, the feminist majority, those who considered themselves "the enlightened" dominated the class, and those students who either had less of a background in feminism or were less sure of their political position felt silenced. "The students used differences in knowledge to create a distinct hierarchy in the classroom with knowledge being a source of power over others"(Gardner, Dean, and McKaig 1989, p.65). A similar dynamic emerged when discussing topics of class, where women from working-class backgrounds felt silenced.

These dynamics caused Gardner to rethink her own position on the issue of teacher authority. She reclaimed her own authority as teacher and encouraged the class member to critique the power dynamics that emerged in the class. This helped the students grapple with the nature of power relations in a concrete situation. Gardner then concluded that, as an instructor, she can use the power of her role as teacher to facilitate the emancipation of women students.

1.11.4 Implications for Practice

The feminist pedagogy and feminist theory literature is just beginning to have an impact on the field of adult education. While there is a body of literature that examines the nature of power relations in the adult education field, there is at present a limited literature base that specifically examines power relations based on gender and race. Colin and Preciphs (1991) have discussed the fact that the curricula in most adult education settings still present the white worldview. Collard and Stalker (1991) and Hugo (1989) have also pointed out that there has generally been a lack of attention to feminist theory, which uses gender as a unit of analysis in theory development in adult education and adult learning. Hugo (1989) has suggested that feminist theory should be used to critique existing theories in adult education and to offer new insights to the field of adult education. The recent critique by both Hart (1990) and Clark and Wilson (1991) of Mezirow's theory of perspective transformation (Mezirow and Associates, 1990) have been informed by a feminist analysis. Hart (1992) analysis work and education from a feminist perspective and makes an outstanding contribution to the workplace learning literature. Thus, there is evidence that the feminist theory and feminist pedagogy literature are in fact beginning to have an impact on the field of adult education and on adult learning theory.

But the feminist pedagogy literature is also beginning to have an impact in the practical realm of adult education. As we come to better understand the ways in which women in minorities know and learn, practitioners who want to raise consciousness or challenge power relations in the adult learning environment are beginning to adopt teaching strategies intended to directly challenge structured power relations. What are some of these teaching strategies and what are the

practical implications of the feminist pedagogy literature for adult educators who want to engage in emancipatory education practices?

First, adult educators who want to adopt feminist and emancipatory education practices should carefully consider how their curriculum materials for their class or learning activities serve to challenge the nature of structured power relations based on gender, race and class. As Wood (1988) has suggested, decisions about what to include in the curriculum are political considerations. When choosing curriculum materials to address issues related to women and racial minorities, one might consider if such materials examine these issues from the perspective of unequal power relations or from the standpoint of gender or racial differences only. Since books related to content areas often do not include chapters dealing with women and minority issues, it may be necessary to include additional books or articles that specifically address gender, race, and class issues related to the course content or learning opportunity.

Second, adult education instructors who want to challenge structured power relation based on gender, race and class need to adopt teaching strategies that contribute to the achievement of this goal. Instructor must develop and experiment with teaching strategies that prove over time to be emancipatory. As Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule (1986) found, teaching strategies that unite theory and practice, that value affective forms of knowledge, and that require reflection on how the course content relates to students' life experiences seem to contribute to the ability of women to find voice. Such an approach may also work for minority students. However, the adoption of such an approach does not mean that critical reflection and discussion of highly theoretical material are unnecessary or impossible in a feminist or emancipatory education classroom, or that students in such classroom are not challenged (Hooks, 1989). Rather, discussion of highly theoretical concepts must be integrated with a consideration how they relate to the lives of real people, including the students in the class. Such an approach is not only intellectually stimulating, it also makes the educational experience more meaningful and may be more likely to lead to social action.

Third, while the choice of emancipatory teaching strategies is an individual decision, it is worthwhile for all university departments to develop new courses specifically designed to deal directly with power relations based on gender, race and class. Development of new learning opportunities dealing with these issues is important, but integration of these issues into the existing curriculum and learning activities is also important for all content areas. Adult educators outside academia might also consider the development of programmes that deal with power issues related to other content areas, such as how these issues might be addressed in the workplace.

Finally, adult educators who are interested in challenging unequal power relations based on gender, race and class may attempt to address the ways in which their own unconscious behaviour in the learning either challenges or reproduces society's inequitable distribution of power. We have all unconsciously internalized to some degree the values of the dominant culture. In attempting to increase our unconsciousness about power relations in the classroom, we may want to consider such issues as the gender, race and class of the majority of characters in our illustrative stories and examples, who are affirmed (by both facilitators and students) as leaders of the class and how, with whom we have more eye contact, and one whom we rely to carry the discussion (Tisdell, 1992). We may want to watch ourselves on videotape or consider inviting a trusted colleague or friend to observe the way in which we conduct a learning session, paying attention to these issues. One cannot change what one is not conscious of, and the reproduction of power relations happen largely through unconscious mechanisms.

In conclusion, the feminist pedagogy literature is in fact beginning to have an impact on the field of adult education. In the coming years, as theorists continue to use feminist theory to critique present theories of adult learning, those theories are likely to be revised. Further research on the adult learning patterns of women and member of minority groups may also lead to the development of new adult learning theories. And as practitioners continue to adopt some of the principles of feminist pedagogy in their own teaching, there may be an increased sensitivity to gender and minority issues among students and practitioners, leading to even greater insights into the nature of feminist pedagogy and the education of women and minorities. Thus, we look to the future with a growing awareness of gender and minority concerns.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CONTEXT OF ADULT EDUCATION AND STRATEGIES IN BANGLADESH

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the overall scenario of adult education of Bangladesh. It includes the background of Bangladesh which covers religion and socio-economy condition. In addition, this chapter presents the existing policies of government as well as NGOs in this sector since independence (1972). It further highlights an educational overview and strategy plan for adult education as well as NGOs initiatives.

2.1 Country Background

Bangladesh is a country in South Asia which became independent on 16th December of 1971. The official name of the country is “The People’s Republic of Bangladesh”. It is situated by the Bay of Bengal on the southern side, and borders with India and Myanmar. About 85 percent of the land, except in some hilly regions in the eastern side, is low-laying, criss-crossed by a number of large rivers and their tributaries. During the torrential monsoon rains, most areas become flooded. There are six geographical divisions in the country: Dhaka, *Chittagong*, *Khulna*, *Rajsahi*, *Barisal* and *Sylhet*. Dhaka is the capital city of Bangladesh and Chittagong is the business capital. There are 64 districts under the divisions and 482 *Upazila* (sub-districts) under the districts. There are about 68 thousand villages all over the country.

The Political Map of Bangladesh



Source: GRAPHOSMAN (2009), 55/1, Purana Paltan, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated nations in the world. Almost 150 million people, half of them women, live within an area of 147,570 square kilometres. Most of the people (almost 80 percent) live in rural areas. The population is ethnically and religiously homogeneous, and almost all citizens speak a common language, Bengali. Most of the people are Muslim. According to population census 2001, 88.3 percent people are Muslim, 10.5 percent Hindu, 0.6 percent Buddhist, 0.3 percent Christian. The animists and their beliefs in ethnic faiths are 0.3 percent.

The economy of Bangladesh is vastly dependent on agriculture. Besides this, the industrial sector is also playing an important role in improving the economy especially in the production of jute, tea, textiles, garments, paper, fertiliser, lather and lather goods, sugar, cement, fish processing, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, light engineering, ceramics, information technology, etc.

Millions of people struggle to cope with the most basic of human needs and 40.9 per cent of the population live below the poverty line while the Gross Domestic Product increased at a rate of 6 per cent and per capita income is US \$ 450.

The government is run by parliamentary system where the administrative head is the Prime Minister and the President is the constitutional head of state.

Bangladesh has a highly patriarchal society. The population is young, children below the age of 15 representing about 45 per cent of the total population, with roughly equal proportions of males and females (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific [ESCAP]). The households through local and legal decision-making bodies, men exercise control over women's labour, men choose their marriage partner, their access to labour and other markets, and their income and assets. However the Prime Minister and the opposition leader both have been women for the last 18 years.

2.2 Educational Context

The present literacy rate of the country is 47.5.0% compared with 25.9% in 1974. Although this can be seen as a great achievement, it is not satisfactory if we look at these figures in terms of gender. The adult literacy of the country was 25.9% in 1974 which increased up to 47.5% in 2001. This rate was only 13.2% among women in 1974 which increased up to 40.80% in 2001. Still the drop-out rate among women in adult literacy programmes and among the girls in primary education is higher than their male counter parts for several reasons. The table below 2.1 presents the adult education status of 15+ populations from 1974 to 2001.

Table 2.1: Adult Literacy Status of 15+ Population from 1974-2001

Year	Male	Female
1974	37.2%	13.2%
1981	39.7%	18.0%
1991	44.0%	22.9%
2001	53.9%	40.80%

Source: Population Census 2001: BBS and Analytical Report of the Poverty Monitoring Survey (PMS) 2004. Bangladesh 2005.

During the decade of 1990, 17.6 million primary school- age children never attended school because of poverty, lack of facilities and other factors. Of the 13.7 million who did enrol, 8.2 million or 60 percent dropped out before completing the five year cycle of primary school, mostly during the first three grades. As a result, Bangladesh's adult illiteracy rate of 65.4 percent (1991) is one of the highest in the world. In addition the women illiteracy rate was as high as 77 percent and the situation continues to be gloomy.

2.3 Strategies for Adult Education

When Bangladesh became an independent country in 1971, the Government prioritised illiteracy as one of the main problems of the country and nationalised primary education. It also took initiative to provide education among the adult people

without whom the development of the country could not take place. Following that initiative, the Government as well as Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) have been running education programmes for primary as well as adult population using their own strategies.

During that time the country was facing enormous challenges of alleviating poverty and combating the curse of illiteracy and becoming a learning society, in order to develop human resources for improving economic growth and make the economy self-reliant. Against this backdrop of economic backwardness, literacy is considered as an indispensable tool for transforming illiterate population into human development.

2.3.1 The Constitutional Obligation

The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh provides an authoritative basis for national educational development. The Provisions in Article 15 of the Constitution attaches the same importance to education as to other basic rights like food, shelter, clothing and health care. Furthermore, the Constitution enshrines the provision for universal primary education for children to combat illiteracy. Article 17 stipulates that, "The State shall adopt effective measures for the purpose of: establishing a uniform mass - oriented and universal system of education and extending free and compulsory education to all children of such stage as may be determined by law; relating education to the needs of society and producing properly trained and motivated citizens to serve those needs; and removing illiteracy within such time as may be determined by law." The constitution further enjoins on the State to ensure gender equity and equality in all aspects, in line with Education for All (EFA).

2.3.2 Global Commitment

Besides the constitutional obligation, The Government further committed itself to attaining total literacy by the year 2006. As part of commitment to education for all, Bangladesh is also a signatory to the World Conference on Education for All (EFA) held in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, World Conference on Children's Rights held in

New York in 1990 and EFA Summit Conference of Nine High Population Countries held in New Delhi in 1993. In view of her commitment to EFA the Government of Bangladesh fixed, inter alia, a target for attaining 62% literacy rate by the year 2000 and introduced Non Formal Education (NFE) as a complementary approach to formal education.

Finally, Bangladesh developed its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in 2005 and was committed to achieving Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of Education for All by 2015. Clauses 19 and 20 of the MDG are of special interest in the context of adult learning. Although the major thrust of PRSP is on reducing poverty by half by 2015, the target for adult literacy is to raise it to 88% by 2015. However, considering that a huge number of people, especially women are illiterate this will be a challenge for the country to achieve.

2.3.3 Primary Schools Taking Over Act

After independence, as a part of eradication of illiteracy, the Government nationalized and took over 36,165 primary schools in 1973 and regularized it under the Primary Education ‘Taking Over’ Act of 1974, and declared 157,724 primary school teachers as government employees.

2.3.4 Compulsory Primary Education Act

To reduce illiteracy, the Parliament of Bangladesh passed an Act for compulsory primary education on February 13, 1990. The Act stipulated that primary education should be made compulsory for children aged 6-10 from any date and for any areas of the country through government notification. The Act also provides for creation of compulsory primary education committees with defined responsibilities.

2.3.5 Movement of Adult Education

Adult literacy movement regained its momentum in early 1990s and was further strengthened with global concern and support. A movement to ensure Education for All gained momentum at the regional and international level. To this effect,

Bangladesh activity practice included participation in the the ‘World Conference on Education for All by the year 2000’ held in Jomtien, Thailand and EFA Summit Conference of Nine High Population Countries held in New Delhi, India in 1993, and as signatory to the declaration thereof. Successive interventions on Education for All were influenced by Bangladesh’s commitment made to the international community. Accordingly, four targets were set to be achieved by the year 2000. These were as follows:

- raise enrolment rate at the primary level up to 95 percent;
- raise female Gross Enrolment Rate at the primary level to 94 percent;
- reduce dropout rate at primary level to 30 percent.
- increase adult literacy rate up to 62 percent.

Further, the government of Bangladesh (GOB) after the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, 1990) committed the itself to the overall objectives of achieving the goal of ‘Education for All’ (EFA).

During that time government had set some targets aimed at increasing literacy rate of adults (15 years and above) to 80 percent by the year 2002; achieving 100 per cent literacy by the year 2006; ensuring the optimal use of educational facilities at all levels; empowering learners with technological skills, entrepreneurial traits and leadership skills; empowering learners with skills related to literacy, numeracy, and communication; reducing gender gap in literacy rate in both rural and urban areas; developing a continuing education programme for neo-literates; reducing disparity in literacy rate between different areas; enhancing the participation of women in every sphere of education as well as to reduce the gap between facilities provided for male and female education; and improving management of educational institutions through involvement of local bodies.

To meet these commitments, the Government of Bangladesh made, as its major focus, the eradication of illiteracy through the development of basic education which is delivered through two parallel systems, the formal and non-formal.

2.3.6 GOB Initiatives to Increase Adult Education

Presented below are the steps the government of Bangladesh has implemented to increase adult education.

a) To achieve the targets, Compulsory Primary Education Act was promulgated and made effective in 68 Thanas (sub-districts) in 1992 and countrywide in 1993. With the successful implementation of these activities the literacy rate has reached 65 per cent from 1993 to present.

b) With special consideration to female literacy, the Government adopted a policy to recruit more female teachers in primary schools in 1991 to ensure 60 percent quota for female candidates to be appointed as primary school teachers. Further, the process was initiated to introduce education free of tuition fee and stipend for female students up to class eight.

c) In line with the global commitment on Education for All Campaign, the Government adopted the National plan of Action in 1991. For its implementation, the Integrated Non-Formal Education Programme (INFEP) was undertaken in 1991. During mid nineties a total of four projects titled “ Non-Formal Education Project-1,2,3 & 4” were launched to achieve the national target of literacy in 1990s. Success of such undertakings brought wide international acclamation, which found expression when the prestigious “UNESCO Literacy Award 1998” was accorded to Bangladesh. For expanding primary and mass education programmes in a well organized manner, the Government constituted the Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED) in 1992 and the same was transformed into a full-fledged ministry titled “Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME)” in 2003.

(d) Bangladesh has taken a comprehensive approach to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Government of Bangladesh has prepared a policy document entitled “Unlocking the potential: National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction” which is termed as PRSP. The document has outlined a number of policy measures for achieving MDGs.

2.3.7 Village Literacy Centres

Under the National Plan of Action, GOB created Village Literacy Centres for reducing adult illiteracy. Accomplishing these objectives will require mobilizing commitment and resources to eradicate illiteracy in the shortest possible time. One way of developing this consensus and to ensure support of the community at large is to create adult education communities at district, *Upzila/thana* (sub-district), union and ward levels with a cross section of people from those areas. The objective would be to establish at least one literacy centre in each village by 1995 and small libraries in selected villages suitable for the new literates. These would be operated by local communities and NGOs, where necessary, with the assistance of the government. Other means are also being explored, such as encouraging newspapers to reserve space for reading materials suitable for new literates in danger of relapsing into illiteracy. Literacy classes for women would be organized in their homes, and local organizations such as business and trade unions would be encouraged to undertake literacy programmes for their respective constituencies. There would be a mechanism for special recognition of innovations and successful projects. Attempts would be made to incorporate the adult literacy programme in various projects of relevant Ministries or departments so that they can play their due role and can contribute to the successful implementation of the programme.

2.3.8 Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED)

To achieve the above mentioned target, the GOB has created new division for primary and mass education. The Ministry of Education (MOE) in the past was responsible for looking after all sub sectors of education- primary and mass (adult), secondary, technical, *madrasha* and higher education. Education for All and Adult Education were a vast programme and government was committed to achieving those goals by 2005. However it was felt that the Ministry of Education could not possibly cope with the new demands of Education for All. Therefore, to ensure that the new demands of the Education for All and Adult Education programme receive the appropriate priority, a separate “Primary and Mass Education Division” was created in 1992 under the direct charge of the Prime Minister. After opening that division, it has continued existing with the overall responsibility for setting policies and

undertaking programmes in the field of primary and adult education. It oversees administration of subordinate offices and organizations and coordinates activities with other government and non-government agencies and liaison with international bodies and organizations.

2.3.9 The Creating Process of Non-Formal Education Programme

Non-Formal Education Programme was started in 1991 and completed in 1997 all over the country and it covered each district for each *Upzila/thana* (sub-district). However that programme covered the only whole area of two districts, which are *Lalmonirhat* and *Chuadanga*. At the end of the project period, these districts were declared 'literacy free' and a recorded number of 2.47 million peoples were provided with literacy services against 1.64 million as targeted in the programme. The programme succeeded in drawing interest among development partners regarding NFE vis- a-vis the huge number of people from different walks of life. In pursuance to the unprecedented success of the project the Government on September 3, 1995 established the 'Directorate of Non-Formal Education (DNFE)' as a permanent structure of non-formal education.

2.3.10 The Directorate of Non-Formal Education (DNFE)

The DNFE is headed by a Director General with its headquarter in *Mohakhali*, Dhaka. As many as 46 officers, including four directors, 12 deputy directors, 1 system analyst, 18 assistant directors, work under the DG in the HQ. A total of 76 staff are also there to assist these officials. There are 64 districts in Bangladesh and each district has an official setup of DNFE. There is one officer designated as "District coordinator (DCO)" and other staff to assist DCO. The main responsibility of this office is implementation of DNFE programmes in each area. To achieve literacy goal by 2000, the DNFE undertook four projects during mid nineties. These are given below:

i) Non Formal Education Project 1 (NFEP-1)

NFE-1 was undertaken with a view to building a permanent NFE structure in the country and to provide literacy services to 2.96 million people aged 15-24 years. The project was implemented covering 32 districts of Bangladesh. It began in January 1996 and completed in June 2001.

ii) Non Formal Education Project 2 (NFE-2)

This project was aiming at providing literacy services to 8.18 million illiterate people aged between 11 and 45 years. It also intended to formulate a Post-Literacy and Continuing Education Model for NFE. The project covered 190 *Upzilas* (Sub-districts) from 31 districts. Its duration was July 1995 to June 2002.

iii) Non Formal Education Project 3 (NFE-3)

This project was undertaken to provide literacy services to 0.35 million working children aged between 8 and 14 in six Divisional cities of the country. The duration of the Project was January 1996 to June 2004.

iv) Non Formal Education Project 4 (NFE-4)

The main objectives of the projects were to provide literacy to 22.89 million people and to create employment opportunity temporarily for educated and unemployed youth (both male and female). The project areas were 448 Upazilas (Sub-districts) from 62 Districts. The project started in 1998 and ended in June 2003.

2.3.11 Community Participation in NFE

Non-formal Education is fundamentally outreach programmes where community people reflect their own attitudes and believes. NFE planning is more careful for effective and meaningful participation of the community. In this respect DNFE has provided some principles as follows: provide a conducive learning environment; mobilize social resources needed for the programme; access and meet the felt needs

and expectations of the community; establish accountability of persons involved through a participatory monitoring system; and develop a sense of community ownership of the programme

To ensure and enhance community participation, DNFE prepared some code of conduct which included: deployment of local educated youth and school teachers in conducting the baseline survey at the community level; participation of the community in the selection of location of learning centre or get the community to donate the venue; recruitment of teachers and supervisors from the community; and establishing a Centre Management Committee (CMT) with persons representing local elites, guardians of learners and NGO workers.

2.3.12 Measures Taken to Increase Participation

In the public sector DNFE (as did the DPE for formal primary education) mounted a multi-Faceted social/community mobilization campaign to inform and attract illiterate persons to join the programme and others to come forward and support the basic literacy programme for adults. The widely used approaches included: general approach: Use of loud speakers, posters, banners, etc; special approach: Bi-cycle and Torch processions; direct contact Approach: Door to door contact, group discussions, seminars etc; cultural Approach: Wayside drama, folk song soirees, *jatra* (local opera/melodrama); participatory approach: Periodic meetings between learners, teachers, and opinion leaders of the community; and print and electronic media approach: Publicity campaign by using newspapers, leaflets and broadcasting/telecasting (Radio, TV) and narrow casting (audio and video cassettes).

Besides, DNFE assisted NGO and local administration in organizing literacy fairs and competitions in observance of International Literacy Day, Adult Education Week, and other national days are directed towards creating awareness. DNFE also facilitates, as stated earlier, participation of the community in baseline survey, selection of learning centre sites and determination of class timing, recruiting teachers/facilitators from the local community, forming Centre Management Committee (CMC) with local community representatives and involving the

community in the management of PLCE centres. These measures seem to have energized the communities and enhanced participation.

2.3.13 Approach of Adult Literacy Programme

DNFE uses three different approaches to imparting literacy skills to illiterate adults in the age range of 15-45 years. These are described below:

i) Centre-Based Approach (CBA)

The CBA programme runs for 10 months where illiterates come for 6 months for basic literacy and 4 months for consolidation or post literacy. The government selected the areas and number of learning centres; then allocated a certain number of centres to given NGOs selected through a competitive process and submit to meeting certain conditions. NGOs receive a pro-rata fund allocation per learner to cover the cost of accessories, training of teacher and others. DNFE also runs a UNICEF-supported project (NFE-3) for the hard-to-reach urban working children of 8-14 years covering 351,000 children in six Divisional cities. It uses the CBA approach.

ii) Primer Distribution Approach (PDA)

PMED provided teaching and learning materials for non-formal education under Primer Distribution Approach (PDA). Main objective of this approach was to promote networking for literacy. Thus all selected NGOs collected those materials and followed guide lines provided for the adult literacy course.

iii) Total Literacy Movement (TLM)

TLM is a campaign-mode programme of promoting literacy. It works through the district administration, which mounts district wide campaigns in two phases in favour of literacy. Implementation of the programme begins when it is adjudged that the community is ready to receive and undertake the programme. It is implemented through community-based organizations (CBOs), school and college teachers who work as volunteers and others, who receive a token compensation equivalent to

US\$8.77 a month. TLM runs for 10 months (6 months for basic literacy and 4 months for post literacy). TLM was intended to contribute heavily to removing illiteracy in 10 years or by 2006.

2.3.14 Delivery and Content

The DNFE adult literacy held in community learning centres is organized separately for men and women at different times of the day. Each literacy centre takes 30 learners in each group of men and women, making 60 learners per centre for nine months. Its literacy classes run for 9 months (for TLM)/ 10 months (for CBA programme). This programme uses three primers, named *Chetona* (consciousness or awakening) I, II and III.

The first two cover initial and mid- level proficiency and the third one is intended for self learning level. The third one is considered as being too difficult for the mid-level completers. These primers have been in use for more than a decade and there is a consensus that they need to be updated and improved. It is also contented by critics that the same primers may not be suitable for children of 11-14 who are lumped together with the older people since the programme age range for adult literacy covers persons of 11-45 years.

The NGO literacy programmes take 33 learners (increased from the original 30) in each batch. The centre is hired or donated by the community, with a floor space of 33.44m² (more or less then same size in the DNFE centres); learners sit in U-shape formation, one teacher conducts/facilitates the class from the open end and continues with the same batch to the next higher class until the course is completed. NGOs use a variety of curriculum and teaching learning materials. As they go more for innovation, somewhat compelled by government restrictions on taking up adult literacy programmes, 45 different types of NGOs, learning/teaching materials for NFE and adult literacy have been identified; 20 of them were published as a compendium by CAMPE in 2000, with support from UNESCO.

2.3.15 Adult Educators/ Facilitators

Basically, there are three categories of adult educators and facilitators: the trainers, supervisor and teachers/ facilitators. As indicated above there is no given or fixed number of any of these categories of personnel associated with adult literacy/ learning. It depends on the size of the project and number of centres in operation at any given point of time. The supervisor-teacher ratio is 1:15 and their salary per month respectively is \$21.05 and \$08.77.

2.3.16 Recruitment Process

The teachers or facilitators of non-formal education and adult literacy, continuing education programme in the public sector are recruited under different development projects, with defined life span, generally for five years or less unless extended for special reasons. All posts, teachers, supervisors or managers created under the post become extinct as soon as the project comes to its end or completed. The incumbents no longer remain on the payroll of the employing agency. Facilitators and teachers are, as a matter of rule/practice, recruited from the local community and not treated as full-time employees since they work only for three to four hours a day. They are paid only a small lump sum (about \$8.77 a month) as compensation. Thus their posts do not carry a defined status or guaranteed longer term appointment. The arrangement is the same for the NGOs sector, which pays the same amount of compensation, and in fact has more firing-power.

2.3.17 Training of Adult Educators/Facilitators

DNFE provides some training for educators/facilitators to improve their capacity building. The major training includes-

- Foundation training for 10-12 days at selected places.
- Refresher training for 1 day every month at agency level.
- Subject based training for 3-5 days, once a year (orientation to the learning materials for the next level) at selected places.

This training is conducted under the Community Based Approach (CBA) programme. It follows a cascading system of training where the Core trainers train the master trainers, who in turn train the supervisors, who again train the teachers. In the urban areas the supervisors and teachers are trained together by the master trainers. In addition, training is also conducted under the TLM programme organized by the district administrations.

2.3.18 Post Literacy and Continuing Education (PLCE)

DNFE has initiated further PLCE programme because previous experience shows that due to lack of proper literacy practice, the new literate who have been made literate under different projects do forget and soon become illiterate again. Post Literacy and Continuing Education is therefore necessary to check the relapse back into illiteracy. There was a built in mechanism three to four months post literacy course with every literacy course. There is 735 *Gram Shiksha Million Kendra* (Continuing Education Centre) in the country as part of continuing education under INFEP. This project also could not achieve desired goals to uplift living standard of the learners. Considering these realities, the DNFE has undertaken three projects under the title “Post Literacy and Continuing Education for Human Development (PLCEHD)”.

The PLCEHD project focuses on;

- (a) promoting an efficient system of continuing education,
- (b) enhancing the planning, delivery and supervisory capacity of agencies involved in CE, and
- (c) implementing sustainable community-based and employment-oriented CE programmes.

The PLCE courses are for 3 months for post literacy and six months for continuing education. Three month’s Post Literacy (PL) studies covering 8 (eight) general Issues and twelve Income Generating Issues and Six month’s Continuing Education (CE) covering professional training on anyone of the 11 skills development trade courses.

The Eight General Issues are awareness on Health & Nutrition (AIDS, Drugs); arsenic contamination, safe water; safe motherhood, child care & family planning;

gender equity, Rights of the child, Women retards; natural calamities & disaster management; tree plantation & environment protection; legal awareness; and self-Employment and Self-Reliant while the Twelve Income Generating Issues are goat rearing and cow fattening, milk cow rearing, duck and poultry raising, tailoring, food processing, pisciculture, bee keeping, nursery, flower and fruit cultivation, candle and soap making, repairing cycle, rickshaw, van and lock and key, cottage industry based on bamboo, cane, mat and *pati*, and *buttic* and *block print*.

2.4 Adult Literacy Programmes Conducted under NGOs

There are more than 25,000 NGOs in the country registered under the Ministry of Social Welfare and Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (women's NGOs only). Some 1,400 of them are registered with the NGOAB, 114 of foreign origin and the rest, national, which receive foreign funds or donations for various developmental programmes, including non-formal education. Over the last twenty years such NGOs have received just about US\$ 2.5 billion (NGOAB, 2002). The foreign donation receiving NGOs claim to be developmental or Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs). The last known figure of NGOs with education programmes was 518 (DNFE MIS, 2002) and some 400 had adult literacy programmes, integrated into NFE. As the majority of the NGOs involved in education activities are grouped under CAMPE, there are also other activity-based umbrella bodies or NGOs in the areas of health, water and sanitation, urban poor, etc. Some of the NGOs, with broad range of activities, have common membership in more than one forum. Some of them which own adult literacy programme are described below.

2.4.1 Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM)

Mr *Ahsan Ullah*, was a member of the Indian Education Service who retired in 1929 and founded *Dhaka Ahsania* Mission in 1935 for improving adult literacy. This organization is a leading NGO in Bangladesh working at the grassroots level as well as national and international levels with the aim to develop social and spiritual life of the human community. It works to render all possible help to the suffering humanity at large with basic thrust on poverty alleviation and socio economic empowerment of the poor, especially women. DAM is the first to provide innovative services in

different fields of education bringing sustainable impact for improvement of quality of life of the target beneficiaries.

Its operational objectives for education are-

- Promotion of human resource development through both formal and non-formal basic and higher education,
- Undertaking programmes for eradication of illiteracy and alleviation of poverty,
- Undertaking programmes for uplifting the dignity of women through spiritual, social and economic development,
- Developing a structured adult literacy curriculum and educational materials;
- Developing and introducing separate curriculum and primers for education of the adolescents;
- Developing graded follow-up materials for completers of basic literacy courses;
- Developing highest number of continuing education materials in the country so far;
- Launching the 'Each One Teach One' Programme for those who cannot attend centre based literacy classes.

To achieve the above targets, DAM initiated some of the following activities:

i) DAM Non-formal Education

Non-formal basic education programmes launched by DAM aim at providing basic learning skills to those who remain out of formal education due to non-enrolment or drop-out. Age specific separate programmes have been designed to suit the psychosocial needs of the participants. This programme follows some principles as below:

- Learner-centred teaching-learning process,
- Need-based curriculum content monitoring,
- Professional development of NFE personnel,
- Equivalency of learning between non-formal and formal education.

NFE programme covers these areas:

- a) Early childhood care and education,
- b) Primary education for out-of- school children,
- c) Non-formal secondary education for urban working children,
- d) Adolescents education and development,
- e) Adult literacy programme.

ii) Continuing Education Programme

Continuing Education is one of the major components of DAM's NFE programmes. It is a common experience that a time-bound literacy programme does not yield the desired results, unless such activity is followed by a programme of continuing education, providing scope for reinforcing the acquired literacy skills of the participants.

DAM therefore, developed a model of continuing education and has been implementing it since the early years of the last decade with time-to time review and modification. This model has been designed to offer a centre-based open-ended continuing education programme. Under this programme community learning centres locally known as *Ganokendra* are organized and managed by DAM with community support and involvement, with the ultimate goal of transferring their ownership and management responsibility to the community itself. It also created an opportunity for secondary school graduates to go for technical and vocational education through the Institute of Technical Vocational Education and Training.

iii) Institute of Literacy and Adult Education (ILAE)

The aim of the ILAE is to promote the professional standards and efficiency of the literacy and adult education personnel involved in various development programmes and projects which are being implemented by NGOs as well as the concerned public sector agencies.

The ILAE has the following objectives:

- Development of non-formal education workers;
- Development of non-formal basic and continuing education materials for children, adolescents and adults,

- Development and improvement of technical skills of various occupational groups; and
- Advisory/consultancy services to various agencies and organizations on planning, designing, implementation, management, research, evaluation and monitoring of non-formal education programmes.

In addition, its plan is to organize campaigns by holding workshops, seminars and symposia on the one hand and through mass media like radio, TV, newspapers, on the other, with a view to raising social awareness and mobilization of public opinion so that the people themselves can assert their rights to literacy and education.

2.4.2 PROSHIKA

Proshika is one of the biggest NGOs which also works individually to eradicate illiteracy through applying its own strategy. It introduced a comprehensive education programme named Universal Education Programme (UEP) for its group members and their children. The UEP tries to cover five major activities which are:

- Adult literacy for non-literate group members;
- Post literacy centres for the new literates to reinforce, regenerate, and sustain literacy;
- Non-formal Primary Education (NFPE) for the drop-outs and unenrolled children of 8-11 age groups;
- Enrolment of children of the poor households in formal schools to enhance further growth of literacy; and
- Primary education for the non-poor.

So far 53,743 adult literacy centres were set up and 1,012,645 persons graduated with functional literacy skills from these centres. The adult literacy centres conduct two courses of six-month duration with 20-25 adult learners each year. The learners are selected by the Village Federations (VFs), and the facilitators are chosen from the group members who have 8-10 years of schooling. Adult group members are provided with functional literacy skills to make them aware of their condition, of their rights, values and the reasons for their poverty. The skills help them mobilise

and uplift themselves through economic and social development. Their curriculum is prepared with much emphasis on gender, environment, democracy, communal harmony, poverty alleviation and human rights issues.

The course duration for post literacy programme is four months. The post literacy reading materials are prepared by own centres with a focus on health and nutrition, homestead gardening, various income generating activities, environment, ecology, participatory forestry, etc. *Proshika* has also published several Bengali literacy classics in simplified versions for this programme to open a new world for knowledge and information to its recipients.

2.4.3 Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC)

BRAC is one of the largest national NGOs in Bangladesh working in many development sectors including education and adult education. BRAC's education programme was launched in 1985 with only primary education. BRAC is working in Post-Primary Basic Education, livelihood development for adolescents, and Continuing Education programme for rural youths and adults. However, all of these education activities started in 1990. The descriptions of BRAC programme related to education are presented below.

i) Adolescent Development Programme

This programme was first launched in 1993 and initially known as 'reading centres' and later renamed as *Kishori Club (KC)*. The early objective of the club was to create space for the BRAC graduate girls to retrain their literacy, numeracy and life skills. This club provides reading materials, safe place where the girls could socialize, play indoor games, sing, dance and exchange views and experience- all activities that were frowned upon in their homes. After one year the club saw the need to include some other programme to empower adolescents socially and economically. These programmes are: Adolescents Peer Organized Network course (APON), APON boys programme, community participation, cultural and sports competition, Interactive popular Theatre, livelihood and basic economic life skills training are all developed to create a supportive environment for the adolescents to achieve the goal of ADP.

ii) *Kishori* Club (KC)

Kishori Club (KC) plays a distinctive role for ADP adolescent empowerment and leadership development. This type of school/ centre is situated under the community site; made by BRAC. Usually this school/centre is based on one room facilities where 25-40 members together. Adolescent girls come twice a week in the afternoon and participate in different activities such as reading books/magazines, playing indoor and outdoor games, performing cultural activities and so on. This club is organized by one adolescent girl who is equipped with more knowledge (APON Life skills Based Education, Economic Life skill course, and Livelihood training on different trade) through core training from BRAC adult literacy course.

iii) Continuing Education

BRAC set up CE programme under its adult education programme which “aims to stimulate interest in acquiring information and encountering new ideas in order to create an environment that is conducive to a ‘learning society’”. Under this programme, BRAC runs a Reading Centre School completes its cycle (of three years), primary for developing reading habits among adolescents girls and women, provides books and other reading materials to read and borrow, and facilities for indoor games. BRAC also establishes Union Libraries, known as *GonoKendra Pathagar* (People’s Centre Library). These libraries, established with community support and contribution, also operate as Community Centres, serving as a focal place where people can come to read and borrow books, get involved in socio-cultural activities or take advantage of the textbook lending scheme for high school students from poor families.

2.4.4 Action Aid Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, Action Aid piloted the first phase of its Regenerated Freirean Literacy Through Empowering Community (REFLECT) and formed more than one thousand REFLECT circles (groups) comprising of around fifty thousand people in twenty six districts. Action Aid uses the REFLECT ‘approach to basic literacy instruction (which uses action research to identify literacy needs of learners in order

to build learning activities) and individual trainers use other PRA (community literacy) approaches to help learners improve literacy practices’.

i) Learning Process and Time Through REFLECT

This programme is implemented by community managed organization called ‘*Lokokendra*’. There are adult literacy courses for two years with three month pre-circle preparatory period, a nine month basic circle and twelve month post circle in REFLECT. This learning process is participatory and the learners under this programme, termed as participants, gather together at a mutually convenient date and time, usually four to six times a week. The participants generate their own learning materials through a dialogical process and discussions. The participants primarily identify and discuss a wide range of problems that concern their day- to- day life. From the range of problems discussed, the participants unanimously select and prioritise some long and short term problems to work on. Since most of the participants are illiterate, they express and analyse their problems with the help of drawings known as graphics. Sometimes the graphics are first drawn on the ground then re-created on papers. The REFLECT facilitators ensure everyone’s active participation in graphics preparation and simultaneous discussion on the respective graphics.

In order to address the issues, the participants then decide on possible initiatives and activities termed as ‘Action Points’. After deciding the Action Points, the participants pick up certain words that they think have really influenced and dominated their discussion. The word is then spilt into individual alphabets and signs. After that the sounds and pronunciations, already known to the participants, are introduced. Thus the participants begin to learn the alphabet with their corresponding phonetics. As the participants start rapidly picking up the alphabet and songs (*Amar sonar bangla ami tomay bhalabasi*), they combine these with different variations to reproduce words from their own contextual vocabulary. From words they gradually learn to develop meaningful sentences and subsequently paragraphs.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a historical account of adult education in some countries from earlier stage to current stage, and then Bangladesh. Adult education was built up in the Greek period; however, all citizens of the country could not access adult education equally at that time. Since then, it continued from that period to date with its different dimension in different societies. Considering above, this chapter will be divided into two sections. Section one presents the revolution process of adult education in Greece, Medieval age, Europe, England, Turkey and finally Asia and Africa. Section two presents the revolution process of adult education in Bangladesh from colonial period to date. This chapter presents the historical and cultural background of adult education in Bangladesh from 1918 to date. In addition, this section analyses influential characters who personally tried to eradicate illiteracy in the country. Finally, it analyses Government and NGOs policies of post independent Bangladesh and try to find out those reasons which was the main obstruct to eradicate of illiteracy among women.

3.1 The History of Adult Education in other Countries (outside of Bangladesh)

3.1.1 Adult Education in Early Stage

In the ancient Greek city-states, adult education was very much part of daily life. The Greeks, however, committed as they were to the ideal of moral excellence achieved through life-long learning, limited the opportunities for education to the free citizen and not the common person, the slave, the foreigner.

The Romans, on the other hand, needed a far greater proportion of literacy among the common men. Although literacy was never quite universal in Roman times, one can safely assume that it was wide-spread and common among the artisans and farmers.

Indeed, illiterates were considered barbarians. With the expansion of Rome, its culture and literacy followed into the outlying provinces. However, Rome failed to carry its culture deep enough into a growing population swelled by the influx of the 'barbarians'.

The early Roman Catholic church is an excellent example of Adult Basic Education (ABE) through religious instruction of the adult convert- the catechumen. This reached its peak at the turn of the fourth century. With the increase in child baptism and the decline in the number of adult converts, the institution declined and with it declined adult literacy. The use of an "X" for signature (meaning " I cannot read and write, but I am a Christian") became widespread by the fifth century. As literacy among the laypersons and the lower clergy declined, so did the emphasis the Church placed on instruction. Indeed, worship as symbolic ritual, became important.

3.1.2 Adult Education in the Middle Ages

With the simplification of society in early mediaeval times, literacy lost its importance in daily life. There was no economic disadvantage attached to literacy; the common person felt no pressing need to be literate. Artisan skills were passed on through the apprenticeships which blossomed to full glory in the mediaeval cities. Literacy became a monopoly of the clergy.

3.1.3 Adult Education in the Late Mediaeval Ages

During the late mediaeval period, literacy began to spread again. This was due mainly to the supreme importance attached to it by the reformers to the reading of the Bible and the invention of movable type and mass printing technique in fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries that spurred on renewed literacy efforts. The revolution brought about the new printing techniques that rivalled only by the revolution mass media in the second half of the twentieth century. Literacy again became indispensable to success in life; those who remained illiterate became disadvantaged. This favourable climate for widespread literacy did not last long however. A growing middle class removed the peasants and those at the lower ranks of the social ladder further and further from access to education.

3.1.4 England

The religious and social reformers and revolutionaries, who grew out of the excesses of the Industrial Revolution, engaged in renewed efforts for the literacy of the working person. John Wesley and the Methodists took a vigorous, though narrow, interest in teaching reading, writing and arithmetic in night schools, Sunday schools and reading circles they organized. Once literate, the people had to be led to read what the Methodists wanted them to read. To accomplish this, Wesley undertook a vast publication programme and every preacher-indeed, every member of the society- became a bookseller.

The Mechanics' Institutes which sprang up in the British Isles in the early nineteenth century and spread as far as Australia, Canada , the United States and India, were another important vehicle for Adult Basic Education (ABE). The pioneer of these institutes was Dr. George Birkbeck who first started to lecture to mechanics in 1800 in Glasgow. Convinced by his success in Glasgow, Birkbeck promoted the idea in London. He became one of the founders of the London Mechanics Institute, established in 1823. Eight hundred of the original twelve hundred members of the London Institute were men living on weekly wages- the clientele the founders wanted to serve. The Institute tried to teach the workers the scientific principles behind the vocations they had learned in apprenticeship. In the long run, however, the Mechanics Institutes did not hold on to their blue- collar worker clientele. There was a gulf between the teachers and the taught. By the end of the century, Most of the Mechanics Institute were transformed into vocational and technical schools, libraries, or simply had vanished from the scene.

The Adult School movement, designed to spread among the poor, flourished in England between 1847 and the early 1860s. This movement was supported mainly by the Quakers. Its principal theoretician, Dr. Thomas Pole, believed if adults could be taught successfully, they in turn would teach their children, and in time there would be no need for Adult Basic Education (ABE). The aim of teaching adults to read, write and do arithmetic was not only to enable them to read the Bible, but also to make them more productive members of society. The schools were established in numerous industrial cities; by 1909 there were 1662 adults' schools with some

110,000 students. With the spread of state education, which replaced much of the activity, literacy classes organized by the adult schools were dropped by the end of the First World War (Jindra Kulich: 1972; 4).

3.1.5 Europe

Turning briefly to continental Europe, the story of the Danish folk schools and their role in helping to transform a largely backward peasantry within two generations into one of the most progressive agricultural societies is well known. Let us remind ourselves that the expressed purpose of the folk schools, according to their spiritual Father, Bishop Grundtvig, was education for life, not for living. The second story is the little known renaissance of the Czech language and culture. Czech culture became almost extinct when Bohemia and Moravia came under the Germanizing rule of the Hapsburgs in 1920, and the Czech language became a language used only by peasants and servants. During the national cultural awakening in the nineteenth century, Czech became again a literacy language and the intelligentsia, especially village teachers, raised the educational and cultural level of the adult population through a number of voluntary educational and semi-educational associations.

Compulsory elementary education- introduced in Denmark in 1814, in England 1870 and in other European countries during the same period- took much of the pressure off ABE in Western Europe. In England, residential colleges such as Ruskin, the workers educational Association and university extension took over most of the workers' education at the turn of the nineteenth century, and elevated it. In continental Europe, workers education was carried on mainly by the trade unions and the socialist political parties, with a special political aim.

The one notable exception is the literacy and Adult Basic Education (ABE) campaign waged by the Soviet Union from 1920 through the Second World War, a campaign which thus far has not been exhibited elsewhere. At the last census before the revolution (1897) approximately seventy-eight percent of the female population were illiterate. The 1920 census revealed that, in the European part of the Soviet Union, sixty eight per cent of men and seventy eight percent of women were illiterate. In the remaining areas of U.S.S.R., eighty percent of the population was

illiterate. Faced with the enormous task of rebuilding a vast country ravaged by the First World War and by the civil war that followed- the task of modernizing a largely backward peasant society- the Soviet government realized the crucial need for literacy and ABE on an unprecedented scale. The campaign- and a campaign it truly was, with literacy workers formed into cultural shock-troopers who with fanatic devotion spread all over the countryside – was set up by two governmental decrees passed in minded devotion, upon this total engagement. However one has to realize the odds of this overwhelming undertaking, with little or no teacher know-how, sparse funds, lack of food, meeting rooms and primers, and frequently a hostile opposition among the conservative village elders.

M.Zinovyev and A. Pleshakova (1962) observed that after the first stage, a mass volunteer organization, ‘The Down with Illiteracy Society, was established in 1923 and it became a matter of a citizen’s honor to volunteer. In 1924-25, the Society maintained more than 1200 courses throughout the country (in Soviet Union). By October 1925 the society had 28,000 local branches, 1,600,000 members had published 5,000,000 primers. Approximately 3000,000 adults attended literacy courses in 1925-26; ninety per cent of the courses were held in the rural areas. Due to the magnitude of the campaign, the annual increase in the literacy averaged 2.6 per cent during 1918-1928. The Second World War slowed down the progress, but the 1959 census showed that illiteracy was finally brought down to 1.5 per cent. The Soviet campaign against illiteracy was a tough campaign, but it was a campaign that deserves to be noted and analyzed.

3.1.6 Turkey

Another campaign to lead a backward country out of the ruins of the First World War took place in Turkey at almost the same time. Turkey was defeated in the war and lost all of its empire. In 1923 *Mustafa Kemal* (later renamed *Attaturk*) overthrew the Turkish monarchy and established a republic. Only ten per cent of the population was literate at that time. In a series of sweeping reforms, *Attaturk* started to change the face of the country. In 1928, the Arabic alphabet in use in Turkey was abolished and the Roman alphabet was adopted. The government issued a decree that everyone between the age of sixteen and forty had to become literate in the new alphabet. New

textbooks were printed, and free primary education was compulsory. *Attaturk* himself, and thousands of volunteers, were attended by two and half million men and women. By 1935, adult illiteracy increased by 20 per cent, by 1950 it increased by 35 per cent, and by 1960, it had increased to fifty seven per cent for the men and twenty-five per cent for the women (Jeffries (1967)).

3.1.7 Asia and Africa

With the growing independence movements in Asia and Africa during and after the Second World War, the necessity for more literacy training became of crucial importance. The United Nations, with increasing numbers of Asian and African members, took notice of the problem. United National Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) formed its foundation deeply involved in fundamental education planning, but it lacked funds to carry out a number of its pilot projects. Because of the structure of the United Nations, both the Economic Council and UNESCO lacked the authority to request for necessary action on behalf of the national governments. The 1963, Declaration of the World Campaign for Universal Literacy, which was hoped to break the back of the problem within ten years, unfortunately did not get far beyond mere declaration. The widely- heralded 1965 Teheran World Congress of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy did not seem to achieve much more. An effective literacy campaign on a world scale remains still to this day both a dream and a dire need.

3.2 The History of Adult Education in Bangladesh

It is important to be clear that, now Bangladesh is an independent country however it has a long history for her creating process. At the first stage, in 1757 to 1947, it was ruled by British and Bangladesh was in the part of undivided India. During that time, it was introduced by the name of East Bengal. (There was also another Bengal; the name West Bengal still is one province of India). In 1947, India and Pakistan got independent from the British, indeed, Bangladesh got also independent but it was part of Pakistan. In 1947 to 1971, during this period it was called by East Pakistan. After then, from 1972 Bangladesh is individual and independent country. But, adult education it was grown in 1918, when it was united and under the British rule.

The people of the country followed the education systems which were created by the rulers (British: 1757 to 1947 and West Pakistan: 1748 to 1971) for their own interest. The education of the country was always neglected by those Governments. Besides, the religious beliefs of illiterate people of the country are against the education of females which leads to low literacy rate among women. As such, the emergence of literacy programme can be looked at in terms of three historical periods.

- First, there was a period of gradual development from the night schools in colonial Bengal from end of British rule. This period was from 1918 to 1947.
- Second, from the changes brought about by the Bengali language movement to the war of liberation in Bangladesh. This period was from 1948 to 1971.
- Finally, from the time of independent till date (1972 to 2009). This period saw a great deal of innovation, a gradual institutionalisation of adult literacy provision within government and the NGOs sector, and later, the mechanisms of standardisation, delivery and monitoring.

3.2.1 Adult Education in Colonial Period (1918-1947)

A highly developed education system was established in the Indian sub-continent from the time of the Aryans; and educated people were highly esteemed in their society. But access to education was an exclusive privilege of the elite and aristocratic classes and that period western education enlightened the youths of the country and created an interest in the education of the masses. Similar situation continued during the Muslim period.

In 1901, the literacy rate in British India was 5.6%. Growth in literacy rate was very slow and in 1941, it was 13.9% in India and 16.1% in the province of united Bengal (Bangladesh and West Bangles was a part of undivided Bengal. Now Bangladesh is separate country and West Bangle is one of the province of India). The first ever adult literacy school was launched in 1918 by establishing night school in undivided India in West Bengal. In 1926, some 150 night schools were formed in 12 selected Thanas (Sub-districts). The literacy movement in Bengal gained some popularity with the adoption of the slogan 'each one teach one' and night schools for adults started in Bengal. An adult education was placed under the provincial government newly formed Department of Rural Reconstruction. The curriculum of the

department of adult education programme included courses on agriculture, animal husbandry, and sanitation. Officials were appointed to monitor the programme. Gradually, the programme gained wider popularity because towards the end of British rule the society was felt 'without adult education their nation could not prosper'. They emphasized adult literacy movement in the period of 1939-40 based on the learning.

3.2.2 Adult Literacy Movement in the Pakistan Period (1948-1971)

After the British period, people of East Pakistan went under the West Pakistan government. West Pakistan was completely different from East Pakistan both geographically and ethnically and even was parted by about 1.5 thousands kilometre. Only the religion Islam was the contributory factor behind their being one country. Apart from the religion there were differences in language, culture, dress, food, attitude, behaviour etc. East Pakistan realised that West Pakistan government was reluctant to eradicate illiteracy from the East Pakistan (recent Bangladesh). Not only that they also tried to change native language and Alphabet (i.e. Bengali) and forced to implement Urdu language as national language , which was a new language for Bangladesh.

The Bengali Language Movement of 1950s shaped the language policy in education and due to that, language and script were adopted. That had not previously been the case. During the period between 1947 and the late 1950s state building process in West Pakistan had promoted the use of Urdu in East and West Pakistan, and had considered the adoption of Persian or Arabic script for writing even Bengali. This contributed towards a political turmoil and people raised their voices against the West Pakistani rulers. Due to such activities by the Bengali mass brought back Bengali language for East Pakistan in 1952, and Pakistan government changed her decision and promoted Bengali language for East Pakistan.

Two censuses were conducted in Pakistan in 1951 and in 1961. In the first census people were classified as literate if they could only read clear prints in any language. According to this definition, literates in East Pakistan (the current Bangladesh) constituted 24.7% of the population of age 5 years and above and 21.1% of the total

population. In the census of 1961, literacy was defined as the ability to read a short statement on everyday life in any language. The census estimated that the literacy rate was 21.5% of the population of 5 years and above and 17.6% of the total population. However literacy rate was not good in East Pakistan even then the education policy of the Pakistan government gave marginal attention to adult illiterates and almost no attention to universal primary education. In East Bengal (the current Bangladesh) some inspired individuals undertook initial ventures on adult education.

i) Village Agricultural and Industrial Development (V-AID) Programme

The first serious national venture to fight against illiteracy in East Pakistan (East Bengal) was launched under the Village Agricultural and Industrial Development (V-AID) Programme. Several adult education centres were set up in rural areas under the programme. However, it was short-lived. The work of V-AID was later taken up by the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) established in Comilla in 1959. In 1962, BARD also conducted a seminar on the role of adult education in rural development. In the following year a powerful Ministry of Education was established in Comilla to enhance adult education. This division developed primers, chart and post- literacy materials to run adult literacy centres. This adult education initiative, which became popularly known as the Comilla Approach, continued for fifteen years, during which time it achieved significant results in the Comilla region' (Rahman and Rashid 2004:164). Kazi Rafiqul Alam of Dhaka Ahsania Mission also mentioned that the academy for rural development established the 'Comilla Method' and they had produced more than 60 adult literacy materials, although there is limited information about the success of the programme (K.R.A. 5.11.97).

ii) Adult Education Section under the Directorate of Education

In 1963, the government of East Pakistan created a separate Adult Education Section in the Directorate of Education and through it launched a model pilot project on adult education in 1964. The project initially covered four Thanas¹(Sub-districts) of four

¹ Administrative unit under the District

Districts. Subsequently, four more Thanas (sub-districts) were included in this programme. These eight Thanas (Sub-districts) continued to function as project areas till the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971.

iii) Literacy Program during 1965-70 in Comilla

East Pakistan government initiated a pilot project on adult education for eradication illiteracy which was situated in Comilla with headquarters under the Directorate of Public Instruction. The project covered eight thanas (sub districts) and it published some supplementary readers' books for the new-literates. After ending the project period, in the absence of follow-up, the result of the project vanished altogether.

3.2.3 Role of Influential Characters in Eradication of Illiteracy

It is important to know some influential characters who have tried to increase literacy among the people in country. Famous Nobelist Rabindranath Tagore, HGS Biver, Akter Hamid Khan, Assan Ullah and Begum Rokeya all of them are well known figures for their activities of adult education. Their works on adult education are described below.

i) *Rabindra Nath Tagore*

Rabindra Nath Tagore was the first pioneer of the adult education in undivided Bengal. He founded Sreeniketan Rural Reconstruction Institute in 1922 as an adjunct to his famous Viswa-Bharati University. His conception of rural reconstruction was both constructive and comprehensive. All round improvement of the villager's life mainly through self-help and cooperation was the key-note of his plan. The success of the plan as he conceived it, hinged upon proper education of the people. Tagore's Rural Reconstruction Scheme was all educational. The Rural Institute at Sreeniketan not only organizes and conducts adult education classes, but also brings out a series of popular literature for the neo-literates and sub-literates. This series entitled "Lok Siksha Granthamala" is a pioneering venture in this particular field. The Rural Institute also offers tuition through correspondence courses to out- of- school people. The Calcutta University Students' Council for Eradication of Illiteracy carries out a

programme of organizing literacy classes for the illiterate village adults. They organize village camps for this purpose during the longer vacations. Apart from the shortcomings usually inherent in youthful ebullience, the programme itself has made considerable headway in certain selected areas. Still more this approach has been functioning activity in many areas of India and Bangladesh.

ii) *HGS Biver*

HGS Biver was a colonial administrator who 'stayed on' after 1947. Biver set up a centre for adult literacy provision (the East Pakistan Adult Education Co-operative Association) and died in 1962. He did notable work in this area in the 1950s. Biver was an officer of the Indian Civil Service. After retirement, he dedicated himself to the task of removal of illiteracy from East Bengal (East Pakistan). Biver himself, had previously met Frank Laubach (another significant pioneer in the literacy field), and had been influenced by him, and adopted the Laubach 'method'. The method was based on approach that link the sound of letters to the shape of objects in people's life (e.g. the shape of a tree, a knife for cutting fish, a vine etc.), and promoted the 'each one teach one' idea that each new person who is, or becomes literate should teach another person. *Biver's* organization had apparently published some 24 books in adult education and taught literacy to 10,000 people before his death in 1962.

iii) *Akter Hamid Khan*

Akter Hamid Khan who set up the **Academy for Rural Development** at Comilla and founded the Comilla Method in 1959. (See Comilla Method in V-Aid programme). When he was an administrator of East Pakistan government, he invented 'Comilla Method' for improving adult literacy through Academy for Rural Development at Comilla. He had been a government administrator, and retired from government to dedicate himself to social work. Fredoz Khan (1960); the following stated about his works " He had a very broad programme, aiming at improving a lot of poor people, and he also include the mass education programme, especially the adult literacy programme. In some villages, he encouraged people to establish co-operatives and embark on programmes to improve their lot...On his model the government established two or three more academies in rural areas.. at his insistence. It was part

of the education directorate, but located in his office.”(F.K interview 13.11.97 with Dr Bryan Maddox)

iv) *Assan Ullah*

Assan Ullah, was a member of the Indian Education Service who retired in 1929 and founded Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) in 1935. DAM is now one of the largest NGOs in Bangladesh dedicated to education and development which has been discussed in earlier section.

v) *Fredoz Khan*

Fredoz Khan, was a director of Public Instruction, in the period of 1971. He has written many of the early adult literacy materials. After post-independent period he was one of the most influential characters who provided mass literacy campaign under General Ziaur Rahaman government.

vi) *Begum Rokeya*

Begum Rokeya Shakhawat Hossen was the first Muslim woman who fought for the equal rights of men and women in Bengal. She observed that Muslim women were neglected in their own society. They did not go to school and had no power towards making decision of her family. In addition, she was the first Muslim woman who spoke about the Islamic religion in favour of Muslim women towards religious, residual, customs etc. She was born in 1880 in a village called Pairaband in the district of Rangpur. Begum Rokeya herself got married when she was only 10 years old and started study very secretly by her husband at night. When suddenly her husband expired, society did not allow her social activities hence, left for Kolkata with some girls and founded the Sakhawat Memorial Girls School in there which still thrives. In her books titled ‘Sultana,s Dream’ she stated that “the time will come when the men will be veiled (purdha) and do at indoor works that is invisible vis-a-vis the women would be at outside works that is visible. In her another book ‘Padmarag’ she dreamt for a female-founded and female-administered community

set in contemporary Bengal, where women from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds would come out from patriarchal oppression for their betterment.

She always criticized oppressive social customs, forced upon women in the name of religion. However, she herself could not reject veiling, altogether, but she advocated liberalization for veiling which must not hinder education for women. Her primary concern was formal education for every woman that they make would be self-sufficient and she argued that women become better “home-manager,” when they are educated. However, her ultimate goal was that women, and particularly Muslim women in her country, should reach their fullest potentials as human beings.

3.2.4 Post- Independent Period (1972-2009)

Bangladesh became an independent country in 1971 when literacy rate was only 16.8%. Then the Government prioritised illiteracy as one of the main problems of the country and nationalised primary education in 1973. Because at the time of colonial period, Bangladesh had limited people with the necessary qualifications to undertake the big economic and social development work which was essential. It was appropriate there were motivated desire to in calculate the values of the colonial society and to train individuals for the service of a colonial period. It also took initiative to provide education among the adult people without whom the development of the country could not take place. Following that initiative, the Government as well as Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) have been running programmes for eradication illiteracy and development of education sector using their own strategies.

i) In the Period of 1972-1975

During this period, the literacy rate was low. The country did not have necessary qualified staff to run the Government administration. As a result, it was challenging for the new Government to undertake larger economic and social development which was essential. Alongside these features, certain forces in the country were preventing the emergence of new values, even threatening to destroy some of the fundamental values cherished for ages by the society. The growth of indiscipline, fanaticism,

intolerance, corruption, selfishness, inefficiency and disregard of duty of national life are examples of these adverse trends.

After the liberation of Bangladesh, the first President Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman felt that education had a special and positive role to play in rescuing this generation from the situation described above and promotion and strengthening deeper human values. He also felt that the adult education for social responsibility including its political and economic aspects is probably the most important task for the development of society. For achieving adult education his first step was to nationalize the primary education and he stated about education that, “Education would be our first and foremost tool for national development.”

In this respect his government recognized the need for establishing a uniform, mass-oriented and universal system of education and extending free and compulsory education to all children. This noble goal was enshrined in the constitution of Bangladesh. During his tenure of office the primary education system was brought under government funding despite severe resource constraints. During his period (1972-1975) the government established 11 thousand new primary schools, appointed about 50 thousand teachers and made free primary education. Besides, over 150 thousand primary school teachers were given the status of government employees. Some incentives like arrangements for meals for primary students, free education for female students up to class VIII, and the free supply of books, pencils and papers were undertaken to encourage children to attend school.

ii) Dr. Qudart-e-Khuda Education Commission

After liberation first census was held in 1974 which defined literacy as the ability to read and write in any language and according to this definition literacy rate was 26.8 per cent. During this time, an Education Commission was formed with an eminent educationist Dr. Qudart-e-Khuda as its chairman to give the traditional colonial system of education a modern, scientific, professional and technical nature. This commission recommended the establishment of one adult education centre in each village and the use of social institutions as education centre. The commission’s aspiration was eradication of illiteracy in the shortest possible time through a social

movement ensuring participation of people of all walks of life. But suddenly this program broke up when Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was assassinated on the 15th August, 1975 by a group of traitors and conspirators. With this brutal killing the whole process of development in the country was shattered and disrupted and the people were deprived of their rights of franchise. This was followed by a period marked by coups, killings, exploitation and oppression. The people were neglected and their life became unbearable under poverty, illiteracy, terrorism and tyranny.

iii) Movement of Adult Literacy

In the years immediately after independence there was a significant growth in interest in adult literacy programmes. However at first the programme was mainly taken up by youth and men from the middle classes, and the method and materials used were unsophisticated. A more important significant move occurred after the famine in 1974 when many NGOs began working in the literacy field. This can be seen as a part of new economy of aid. As part of 'relief' efforts, the focus shifted from individuals to a 'community' approach, and provision then focused on women as a target group. Participation of adult literacy programmes sometimes became a condition for further 'relief,- a practice that continued within the NGOs community who often link literacy provision to group membership. Nevertheless, these new activities led to rapid expansion in adult literacy provision, particularly for women, and some significant innovation and institutional development followed.

One of the factors that should be recognized is the fact that mass literacy programmes, particularly women's literacy programs had become an established activity within the country, with a mass support, experience and feeling of legitimacy at the grass-roots. This idea of women's literacy (as an activity and a right) had been established, as had the 'institution' of adult literacy, and the 'literacy group'. At the same time, this increased regulation and standardization brought with it a number of challenges.

iv) Literacy Ratio by Male and Female

Adult literacy rate for population of 15 and above is defined as the ratio between the literate populations of the age 15 years over to the total population of the same age

expressed in percentage. This rate for both sexes was 25.9% in the 1974 census and 47.5% in the 2001 census. In all census periods, male adult literacy rate was higher than that of the females. Educated adults come to the urban areas for better employment and education. As a result, the adult literacy level of urban population is much higher than that of their rural counterparts in all census years. However, the gap between urban-rural literacy rates narrowed in 1991, as did the gap between the male and female population. This is due to rural people's increasing participation in education in recent times.

v) Revolution of Adult Education under the different type of Development Plan

Education is fundamentally regarded as the basic element of human resources development leading to human development. Five-Year development plans, Two-Year development plans, National Plan of Action and PRSP undertaken in the 39-year life of the country have emphasized the co-relation between education, poverty alleviation and development. All of the schemes were highlighted and given priority, but limited allocations failed to make the desired impact on poverty or literacy or development of human resources. In addition, NGOs have seen the values of combining literacy, micro-finance and skills training as the right approach and made it an integral part of their rural and family development programmes. The clientele could see the value of literacy which is required for reading, writing and maintaining accounts of their small enterprises.

a) First Five-Year Plan (1973-78)

According to the Report of Bangladesh Education Commission of 1974, the number of adult men and women illiterates in the country at the time of independence was 35 million. The Report recommended adoption of non-formal and mass education programs for them. According to the report, the GOB launched a massive functional literacy programme through Non-Formal Education.

b) The Second Five-Year Plan (1980-85)

This plan attached high priority to eradication of mass illiteracy. Side by side the Universal Primary Education Project, a Mass Education Programme (MEP) was implemented in 1980 for people of the 11- 45 years age group. As such, the programme was abandoned in 1982, when its achievement in terms of the number of people made literate was an estimated 700,000 against a target of 10 million.

c) Literacy Program during 1980-82

A nationwide programme of mass literacy-cum adult education was launched in February 1980 for making 40 million illiterates of the 11-45 age groups literate by 1985. This programme was initiated without adequate preparation, organizational support and improvident project plan. An evaluation of the programme by a 12 member committee revealed that an estimated 2.54 million learners were enrolled in the literacy centres and that 670,000 learners were made literate through this programme. This programme continued up to March 1982, when, with a change of government, it was suddenly abandoned.

d) Third Five-Year Plan (1985-90)

The programme was with a modest target of making 2.4 million adults literate by June 1990. Information from the office of the Integrated Non-Formal Education (INFE) project (former MEP Office) shows that only 27 Thanas (Sub-districts) were covered in this project out of a target of 71 Thanas (Sub-districts). A total of 291,600 adults were made literate in five years.

e) Mass Education Project (1987-91)

Following discontinuation of the above programme, there was hardly any movement in the non-formal education subsector for five years. In 1987, a three year Mass Education Project (MEP) was initiated. The objective of this programme was to raise the literacy rate of the 11-45 age group from 30% in 1987 to 60% by the year 2000. This programme covered 202 thanas (sub-district) which had been implemented by

direct MEP and the remaining 175 thanas (sub-district) implemented by NGOs under the supervision of MEP. The project claimed that they made 550,000 illiterate people to literate.

f) The Fourth Five-Year Plan (1990-95)

During the Plan period MEP was continued as a spillover illiteracy programme and targeted 367,660 adult illiterates of 11-45 years age. In addition, another new project, expansion of INFE programme, was initiated to institutionalise a comprehensive non-formal education system in the country. The programme was implemented in 68 thanas (Sub-district) of the country. Moreover, under the aegis of the district administration a programme named Total Literacy Movement (TLM) was started in 1995 and extended to all the Districts.

g) Integrated Non-Formal Programme (1991-97)

Integrated Non-Formal Education Programme (INFEP) as provided under the country framework National Plan of Action (NPA-I) took off after the World Declaration on EFA Jometin, Thailand, in 1990. This programme was launched in 1991, while primary education was made compulsory.

The objective of this project was eradication of literacy through a non-formal education system that would be parallel to the formal system. This project objects are below:

- A one- year pre-primary programme for the age group that would facilitate entry into formal grade 1;
- A two year basic education programme for the 6-10 age group remaining outside the purview of formal primary education;
- A two year non-formal education programme for adolescents of the age group 11-14 remaining outside the formal school system;
- A ten month adult literacy programme for the 15-45 age group; and
- Post-literacy and continuing education for the new-literates graduating from the above programme.

h) The Fifth Five-Year Plan (1997-2002)

The Fifth Five-Year Plan (1997-2002) adopted an ambitious objective to achieve the goal of Education for All (EFA) by the end of Plan period 2002. The major objectives were to increase gross enrolment in primary schools to 110 percent (net 95%) with particular emphasis on enrolment of girls and on increasing completion rate of primary education to at least 75 percent by the year 2002. The Fifth Plan had also set up some important objectives of mass education consistent with the overall objectives of achieving the goal of EFA and fulfilling the educational needs of 30 million adult illiterates. These objectives were to increase literacy rate of adults (15 years and above) to 80% by the year 2002, to empower learners with technical skills, entrepreneurial traits and leadership skills, to empower skills related to literacy, numeracy and communication, to reduce gender gap in literacy rates in both rural and urban areas, and to develop continuing education programme for new literates. However, the Fifth Five Year Plan failed to achieve its objectives on education.

i) The Role of CONFINTEA-V

Bangladesh played a great role in CONFINTEA-V, led by then Prime Minister *Sheakh Hasina*. It was the Keynote Presenter at the Conference and the Education Minister also elected its first Vice President. The Prime Minister stated in her keynote address “We consider education at all levels as one of the major factors of poverty alleviation. We are committed to eradicate illiteracy from our country within the next 10 years” (UNESCO, 1997). After this statement, the Government took Fifth Five Year Plan, 1997-2002 (Published in March 1998), which addressed adult literacy, post literacy and continuing education projects drafted and launched after 1997 and illiteracy would be removed in 10 years or by 2006 (continuing from 1997). Consequently, DNFE launched four projects all over the country.

j) National Plan of Action

Since 2002, all government adult education programmes are progressing under the Fifth-Five year Plan and National Plan of Action I. Now, it is working under the National Plan of Action II and it incorporates with the Adult Learning Agenda for

the future. There was a proposal to cover comprehensive adult learning programme in place of the traditional adult literacy / basic literacy programme. The targeted plan of this programme was 16.0 million people to make literate out of 34.5 million illiterate people, which age from 15 to 45 year. The young adults from 25 to 45 follow mainly functional literacy courses while a selected number (up to 25%, belonging to 25-35 age group) follow skills training or a occupational skills up grading courses. The programme runs for 15 months for the group (from 15 to 24) and one year for the group (from 25 to 45). The first quarter provide basic literacy, the second and third quarters run on an integrated based on approach, holding literacy classes for two days and vocational skills courses for four days every week. This approach enables to turn literacy programme to need and module of skill training and vice versa and, thereby, sustaining the interest of learners in both courses. The fourth quarter geared to promoting self learning skills and this period also is used for linkage activities enabling the learners to have access to wage jobs or micro- finance for self employment. The fifth three months period initiate the learners into advanced continuing education and skill training programmes; and those attending only literacy course attend CECs for nine months (3+6) and then transfer to CE programme.

Their target plan was to improve adult literacy by 80% by 2015 under the National Educational Plan II. Table 3.1 below shows the number of adult illiterates targeted for comprehensive adult literacy/learning programme by 2005, 2010 and 2015. The last row of the table also shows that the people from 25 to 35 age group adults, proposed for vocational skills training:

Table: 3.1 Adult Literacy Target (2005, 2010, 2015)

Target groups (residue illiterate adults)	Benchmark 2000	Distribution of target groups by phases (in 2000s)		
		2005	2010	2015
Young adults: 15-24 years old (50% of the illiterate group)	5197	1559	2339	1299
Adults: 25-45 years old (50% of the illiterate group)	10803	3241	4862	2701
Total	16000	4800	7200	4000
25% of 25-45 age group target	2700	810	1215	675

Table: 3.2 Adult Learning by Age Group and Gender (2005, 2010, 2015)

Item	Gender	Benchmark 2000	Achievement Goals by NPA II Phases (In percent)		
			2005	2010	2015
Adult Literacy Rate (15years old+)	M	68	76	81	90
	F	56	64	75	90
	Total	62	70	78	90
Adult Education (15-24 years old)	M	73	79	87	95
	F	58	66	79	95
	Total	66	73	82	95

k) Post - Literacy Continuing Education (PLCE)

Since the two PLCE projects started in 2003 and that covered only 3.6 million new literates by 2008, the new PLCE projects will be needed to cover the remaining 11.62 million from July made three projects. These projects have been working along with adult literacy which is attached with livelihood programme such as handicrafts, poultry, pisciculture, candle making, goat rearing and cow fattening, tailoring, veterinary, vegetable cultivation, nursery, apiculture, preparation of improvised oven,

sweetmeat preparation, preparation of bags and envelopes, wood work, soap making, making of rings and slabs, repair of cycle and rickshaw van, repair of shallow machine and power tiller, establishment of bio gas plant, laundry, masonry, driving, repair of television and radios, repair of locks and keys, welding, electric house wiring, preparation of *chanachur* and *mudali*, repair of clocks and watches, making and repair of shoes, *sericulture*, preparation of *semai (vermicelli)*; *chat pati*, *butic and block print*, handloom work, screen print, bamboo and cane work, cottage industry, knitting and fishing nets, chalk making, hair dresser, food processing: preparation of banana chips, potatoes chips, jelly from pineapple, guava, *bundia*, preparation of *chatny (sauce) from tamarined*, green mango , olive, *amra* etc.

1) Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)

Bangladesh has taken a comprehensive approach to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Government of Bangladesh has prepared a policy document entitled “Unlocking the potential: National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction” which is termed as PRSP (2005). The document has outlined a number of policy measures for achieving MDGs. A MDG monitoring report by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics stated that adult literacy rate was 29.2% in 1981 and it increased to 47.5% in 2001, indicating 18.3% percentage points increase over the last two decades. For the males, it increased from 19.7% to 53.9%, the increase being 14.2% percentage point. The increase for the females over the last two decades had more than doubled. It increased from 18.0% in 1980 to 40.8% in 2001.

The Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies in cooperation with the World Bank (World Bank and BCAS 1999) undertook an exercise of projecting the course of development up to the year 2020. Based on the overall development perspective, a vision for educational development by 2020 was presented in the World Banks’ Education Sector Review for Bangladesh. The review emphasized that “Bangladesh by 2020 should have achieved a strong system of non-formal basic education for those previously by-passed by the formal system. The emphasis for non-formal education will shift to continuing education, equivalence programmes, life skills and skills for income generation.”

m) Donor Funding

As a Less Economically Developed Country (LEDC), the government mostly depends on foreign aid for implementing their development plan and there is no exception about INFEP or adult literacy programme. In 1991 INFEP started with 28% government money and 72% foreign aid. UNICEF, UNDP, NORAD and SIDA were major donor organization for INFEP.

3.2.5 The Revolution of NGO's Programmes for Adult Learning

Following the war of independence there was a changed social and political climate in which the 'spirit' of the independent nation meant that there was a desire to do something for the people, and increase recognition of people's right and opportunities in education. As a part of development, many national and international voluntary organizations engaged in relief and rehabilitation programmes. Some of these organizations introduced literacy programmes for their beneficiaries. Dhaka Ahsania Mission, PROSHIKA, BRAC, FIVDB, CCDB, RDRS, SNSP, CODEC are some of the other organizations which have developed their own adult literacy materials and working within own group member. One of the largest NGO (Proshika) has 10,000 centres running with 250,000 learners. It also helps more than 400 smaller and medium NGOs with technical support, training facilities and materials. Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM), Friends in Village Development in Bangladesh (FIVAD), Sawmirvar Bangladesh (SB), Action Aid Bangladesh (AAB) are among the major NGOs offering adult literacy programmes. Clientele of most NGOs adult literacy programmes are in the age range of 15-35 years and the total number of participants adds up to about 837,000, an increase of 103,000 over 1996 figure or about 29 percent of NGO NFE clientele (CAMPE,1996 and ADB, 2001). Already we have discussed some big NGOs adult literacy programmes in the Chapter two.

NGOs have been quite active, particularly after *Jomtien*, in non-formal education and are also becoming engaged in formal primary education. More than 450 NGOs are involved in adult literacy programmes (World Bank 2001, *Proshika Database*,2003) participating in DNFE programme and also running their own. Following the

WCEFA and the meeting of the International Council on Adult Education held in Bangkok in 1990 some leading NGOs got together and established a coalition/forum of NGOs engaged in education activities under the name of Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) in 1990.

It has a membership of 425 NGOs. Though the major part of NGO education activities are focused on the un-enrolled and dropout primary school and post-primary school age children. Nearly 450 NGOs also are running basic literacy programmes, some of them manage post literacy and continuing education programmes as well as for adolescents and adults. Actually these small scale NGOs are working in adult literacy in collaboration with government.

GO-NGO partnership has been grown since 1990 following the WCEFA and the meeting of the International Council on Adult Education held in Bangkok. According to the international commitments and Constitutional obligations government has created new division and Directorate of Non-formal Education respectively between 1992 and 1995 for achieving the literacy goal by 2002. During that time, literacy on rate of the country was 29% where male was 33% and female was 25%. Most probably 35million adult people were illiterate. It was a great challenge for the government to promote literacy all illiterate people within short period. During that time, there was no official tire from secretariat to grass-root level for implementing adult education programme. Considering above situation the government comprehensively decided that NGO could help for implementing adult education programme effectively.

In 1991, leading NGOs came together and established a coalition/forum of NGOs and engaged themselves in education activities under the name of Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE). This forum has a membership of 425 NGOs. These NGOs are running their own adult education programme in both rural and urban area using their own capacity. However, most of the smaller NGOs around 425 in number are working for removing illiteracy under the DNFE or MoPME.

At the planning stage of National Plan of Action I (NAP-I) after the World Conference on Education for All in 1990 the government recognized the role that

NGOs could play in providing Basic education to the out of school children and illiterate adults. The GO-NGO partnership became more evident when the government from Sida and DGIS grants invited the NGOs to operate the primary education programmes and in 1992 the INFEP project invited the selected NGOs to run literacy programmes under a CBA approach. This partnership grew further when the DNFE was established and a large –scale nationwide literacy campaign was launched with NGO participation. This is true that, DNFE is the largest financier for implicating of small scale NGOs NFE programmes.

Still the government and NGO relationship has been strained. New NGOs that were formed to take DNFE work were awarded contracts that did not go to more experienced NGOs, and this created some amount of tension in the relationship. The DNFE contracts also have given room for politicization, as well as unethical and unacceptable corrupt practices.

There are signs of better cooperation between the government and the NGOs. NGOs have agreed to participate in the new DNFE Post-Literacy and Continuing Education Project, assisted by the IDA, ADB, SDC and DFID. With an ADB initiative, the government also has formed a Consultative Committee to develop a more acceptable framework for government-NGO cooperation. CAMPE has been active in all government discussions representing all NGOs to keep government-NGO partnership alive. NGOs and the government work together running thousands of centres under contract agreement, and although they complain about each other, they carry out the work together. The underlying situation is that the two parties are learning to work together. If they could iron out their differences in the long run, government-NGO cooperation will further improve.

i) The Selection Process of NGO

The Director General of DNFE does the initial selection of NGOs but the selections have to be finally approved and cleared by the Secretary of PMED. Often NGOs have had to satisfy officials to get contracts. The new NGOs often agreed to these practices, while many of the larger and more established NGOs either have withdrawn from the programs or have taken up a few centres simply to avoid the blame of non-participation in the government’s literacy campaign. Government-

NGO relationships were also hampered by DNFE's decision to use government officers as trainers, leaving out the more experienced trainers of the NGOs. Some of the education NGOs leaders have taken an active role in national politics, and that has also strained the Government-NGO relationship to some extent. Other than these small NGOs there were some big type NGOs who are self financed and have own management. Although some NGO activities have already been discussed in the previous chapter, this chapter also describes some NGOs activities.

ii) Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC)

BRAC, one of the largest NGOs in the country began a literacy programme in the 1970's using the Comilla method. In 1974, BRAC developed a set of functional literacy materials based on Paulo Freire's conscientization approach. This approach reduced the drop-out rate, and the level of awareness of the learners increased significantly. The term functional literacy was used to describe literacy and illiteracy in this form was transformed into political empowerment of the rural poor. Many organizations used BRAC's functional literacy materials over a period of a decade. But the limitation of BRAC's method was the lack of a balanced linkage between literacy and conscientization, which sometime generated frustrated exception rather than empowerment.

The ironically named CRASH programmes, a much literacy program (in the campaign model led by government) did not have the benefit of later methodological innovations that BRAC had developed, nor the understanding about integrated rural development that was being developed within the NGO sector, and consequently the programme was not successful as those that followed. The CRASH programme is widely considered to have been relatively unsuccessful. Their experience is documented by Chen (1983), and is also discussed by Nussbaum (1993) and Jennings (1990). They found that the methods were not suited to the women in their programmes and revised them. These methodological difficulties haunted adult literacy programmes in the 1970's and they faced poor result. In 1980 these problems were still evident. The materials being used were often unsuited to adults and were still influenced by Laubach's earlier approach.

iii) Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB)

Beginning from the 1980 Friends in Village Development Bangladesh, developed a new set of functional literacy materials consisting of three graded primers in which carefully controlled vocabulary was used. In this approach discussion is generated through pictures which lead the learners to structured responses. To teach reading and writing in the FIVDB functional literacy materials an electric method was introduced, which consisted of a combination of phonetic, sight word, key word and sentence methods. FIVDB's method and approach have been widely used in Bangladesh for the last sixteen years. FIVDB developed a primer influenced by a Frierean methodology following a pilot study by James and ANS Habibur Rahaman (see Jennings 1990). The primer is similar to those that were developed elsewhere in South Asia (particularly those used in Nepal).

iv) PROSHIKA

Initial stage PROSHIKA has started adult literacy programme using FIVDB's materials. But after sometime PROSHIKA found the FIVDB's materials effective in terms of teaching reading and writing though the electric method should be extended to other components of the approach. Keeping this in consideration, PROSHIKA made the discussion component a combination of group interaction, simulation exercises, individual expression, observation of surroundings and the analysis of the learners' real life situation. It is expected that this whole electric approach will prepare the learners to respond to the complexity of reality.

PROSHIKA started its adult literacy programme in 1990 after the need for literacy was expressed by the members of PROSHIK's organized people's organizations (POs). From the inception of the programme it was the largest adult literacy programme in the country. So far 3,00,000 men and women have graduated through this programme. The PO members reviewed the curriculum and contents of the materials of different organizations and decided to introduce FIVDB materials in the programme, but after eight years, they found out that many other important issues

would need to be included. Then this organization changed their teaching materials and added gender, environment, democracy, communal harmony, poverty alleviation and human rights in the adult literacy curriculum.

The reviewed literature has shown that adult education programmes have had some difficulties even in the pre-independence era. It has also shown that literacy levels were very low especially among the female folk. Efforts were however made to make adult education programmes reach the intended women but due factors such as culture and traditions that hindered women from fully participating in education, women lagged and are still lagging behind in education in Bangladesh as compared to their male counterparts.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methods which were employed in this study. It constitutes the following: research design, target population, sampling procedure, sample size, research instruments for data collection and how they were administered, data collection techniques and analysis.

4.1 Research Design

The research was exploratory in nature. It deployed a descriptive survey design, which involved collection of data using quantitative and qualitative techniques. A descriptive survey design was chosen because it was able to provide a detailed description of the prevailing adult literacy initiatives and their implications vis-a-vis policies and the socio-economic factors. The study employed both the quantitative and qualitative methods.

4.2 Study Population

The population for the study was all the illiterate women who had not yet been considered by any adult literacy initiatives and the new literate women who had completed the adult literacy course run by the Government and NGOs. The total number of the population was approximately 30 million. It comprised all the 6 Divisions and 64 Districts of Bangladesh and both the rural and urban populations.

4.3 Sample Size

The total sample size for the study was 468. Based on the sampling plan, 384 women respondents (192 new literate and 192 illiterate women) were targeted. However, the study covered 418 samples (206 new literate and 212 illiterate) which was more than

the target. In addition to sample survey, the study organised 2 FGD in each division; one with the new literate women and other one with the illiterate women. A total of 12 FGD covered 110 women (54 new literate and 56 illiterate) from both the categories. The participants for FGDs were selected from the respondents of questionnaire survey. The study also interviewed 50 key informants from different stakeholders including policy makers, Government Official, NGOs involved with adult literacy and the implementing agencies. The sampling framework for sample survey is described below.

Given the size of study population, it was decided to conduct a sample survey. The theoretical rationale behind determining the size of the sample for this study is elaborated below.

To select a statistically significant sample size which represents the entire target population (within the confines as specified) was determined by using the following equation:

$$n = \frac{z^2 pq}{d^2} \dots \text{eqn } ^2$$

where

n = the desired sample size when target population is greater than 10,000

z = the standard normal deviate

p = the proportion in the target population estimated to have a particular characteristic

q = 1.0 – p

d = degree of accuracy desired

² Taken from 'Andrew A. Fisher, John E. Laing, John E. Stoekel and John W. Townsend. *Handbook for Family Planning Operations Research Design* (2nd edition). New York : The Population Council, 1991.

There follows a brief explanation of what each of the parameters shown above entail;

- 1) n – in instances where our target population exceeds 10,000, ‘ n ’ represents the sample size which can represent the entire target population
- 2) z – this relates to how confident we wish to be that the results obtained from the sample estimate are accurate. ‘ z ’ has been set at 1.96 which equates to a confidence level of 95% (this can be considered to be a customary figure).
- 3) p – this is the estimate of the percentage of the target population which has completed adult education. Hence, to ensure that we maximise the expected variance and therefore select a sample size which is sure to be large enough, an estimate of 50% has been taken.
- 4) d – this relates to the level of accuracy of the data retrieved from the sample population. This has been set at 5% which means that the results obtained are within an accuracy of 5%.

Hence, using the figures above for the parameters defined in equation for determining sample size, we see the following;

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{(1.96)^2(0.5)(0.5)}{(0.05)^2} \\ &= 384 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, in instances where a particular target group is greater than 10,000, a sample size of 384 adult women (new literate and illiterate) has been randomly selected from this group to represent the entire group.

4.4 Sampling procedures

The respondents for sample survey were selected using a multi stage random sampling procedure. In stage one, the sampling procedure considered all the six Divisions of the country for the study. In stage two, one District was chosen from each division. In stage three, one Upazila (sub district) was chosen from each district. In stage four, one Ward (broader than the village) was chosen from the Upazila and

in final stage, the adult women respondents were chosen based on their literacy status (new literate and illiterate). To maintain harmony of sample size from each location (Ward), the study considered to cover at least 32 new literate and 32 illiterate women. However, some extra sample was covered which made the total number slightly more than the expected. It is worthwhile to mention that rural and urban combination was considered to select the Wards. However, the samples of different stakeholders for Key Informants Interview (KII) were chosen purposively based on their involvement in adult literacy programmes.

4.5 Instruments for Data Collection

The data for this study was collected through different tools. All the secondary data was collected through literature review. However, the primary data for the study was collected through questionnaire and checklist. Two questionnaires were developed and pre-tested and finalised earlier to conduct questionnaire survey among new literate and illiterate women (*Appendix XX*). Similarly, a separate questionnaire was developed and finalised to conduct KII (*Appendix XX*). In addition, Focus Group Discussions (FGD) was conducted using a predesigned check list.

4.6 Data collection procedures

Primary data for this study was collected by the researcher herself with assistance from two female Research Assistants. The selected villagers were informed in advance about the purpose of the study and importance of their involvement. The research team visited the home of the respondents to conduct interview. As mentioned earlier, primary data from the women (new literate and illiterate) was collected through interview using the questionnaire. In addition, Focus Group Discussions (FGD) was conducted to collect some of the qualitative information using a check list. FGDs were organised in the court yard of one of the respondents. Separate FGDs were conducted for the new literate and illiterate women. The KII with different stakeholders (e.g. Policy makers, senior staff from the implementing agencies, teachers for adult education programmes, supervisors, NGOs etc.) was conducted only by the researcher using a questionnaire. The researcher took appointment in advance to do the KII.

4.7 Data analysis

The data from the survey using questionnaire interview was entered through a computer package called *Access* and then analysed using the statistical Package for Social Sciences (*SPSS*). Frequencies and percentages were used in defining distributions of the single and summated variables. Cross tabulations, correlations and factor analysis were used in presenting relationship between the variables. After analysis, the data was presented either in tabular form or in graphical presentation based on the needs. Although the data was analysed based on the study locations, it was not always presented location wise due to low variation. The qualitative information from KII and FGDs were analysed based on emerging themes.

4.8 Limitations of the study

The study was more focused on the policies, practices and factors hindering the success and failure of adult literacy initiatives. It did not capture the impact of adult literacy initiatives among adult women as well as among men which was also necessary to explore. So far, limited numbers of studies were conducted in this field and availability of books in this topic was limited. As a result, the study faced difficulties to get available secondary resources related to the study. The study could explore more qualitative issues which was not possible due to time constraints.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

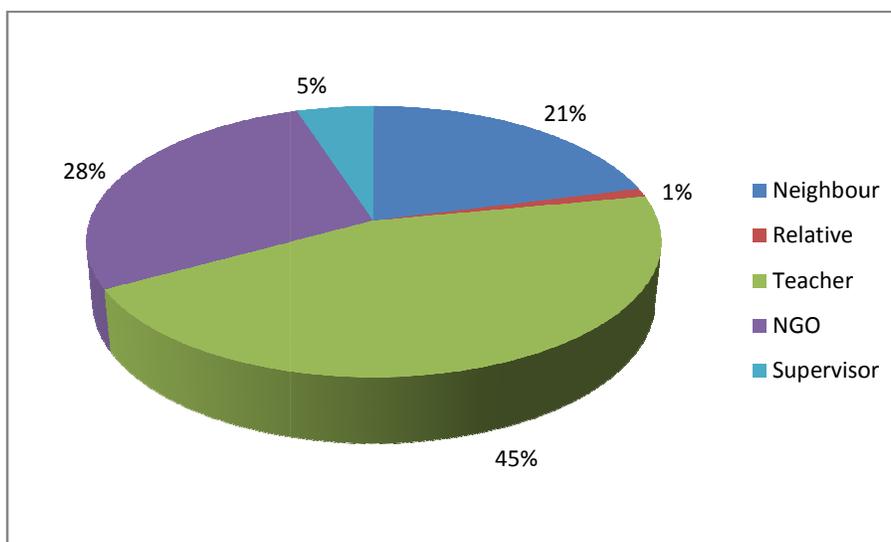
This chapter presents the findings of the study which sought to find out the problems and prospects of adult education for women in Bangladesh. The objectives of the study were: to identify Government policies for adult literacy programmes; to study the Government and NGOs approaches in this sector since independence (1972); to find out the factors that hinders the success of adult education for women in Bangladesh; to identify the socio-economic and cultural factors which obstruct to eradicate illiteracy, especially among women; and to identify the future prospects of adult literacy for women in Bangladesh. The presentation of the study is in the following manner: government policies for adult literacy, self-expectation, self-realization and self-development information; government and NGOs approaches in adult literacy since independence in 1972; factors that hinders the success of adult education for women in Bangladesh; socio-economic factors which obstruct to eradicate illiteracy, especially among women; and finally future prospects of adult literacy for women in Bangladesh

5.1 Government Policies for Adult Literacy, Self-expectation, Self-realization and Self-development Information

5.1.1 Motivated Process of the Learner

The new literate women were asked to indicate who motivated them to go to the literacy centre. Most of them 92 (44.7%) said they came to know about adult education programme through teachers while 59 (28.6%) of them said that they came to learn about adult education programme through the NGOs in their area. 44 (20.9%) said through neighbours; nine (4.8%) of them said through course supervisor; and two (1.0%) said through relatives. As can be seen in Figure 5.1, the above finding indicates that teachers play a vital role in reducing illiteracy levels.

Figure 5.1: Motivation sources of the learners



5.1.2 Self-exception and Achievement of the Respondents

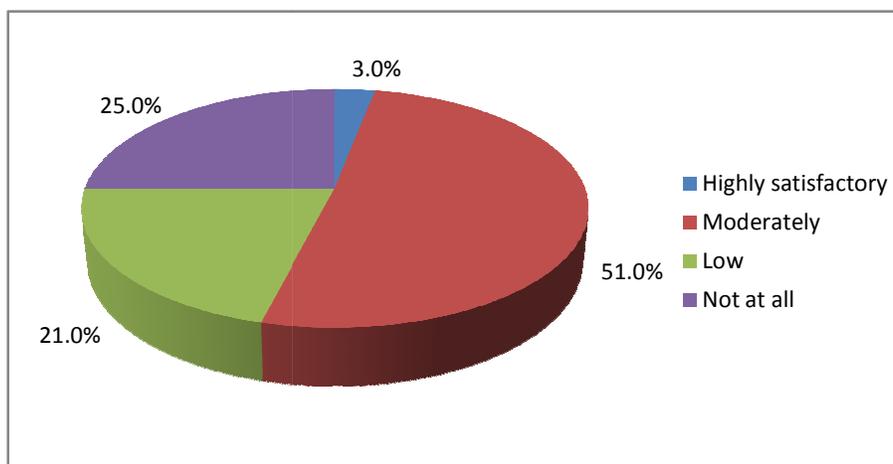
The new literate women were asked to indicate why they attended the adult education centres. Most of them 98 (47.6%) said that they wanted to further their education while 63 (30.6%) said that they wanted to use their education for job opportunities in future. Of the remaining respondents, 63 (30.6%) said they wanted to use it to get credit support from microfinance institutions while 17 (8.3%) said they wanted to use it for learning calculations; 16 (7.8%) said “to learn how to write a letter”; four (1.9%) said “helping children in their education”; three (1.5%) said “to learn how to read a news paper” yet another three (1.5%) gave other reasons.

In terms of achievement of expectation, 121 (58.7%) felt that their expectation had been achieved partially while 29 (14.1%) felt that most of their expectation had been achieved. However, 13 (26.7%) felt that their expectation had not been achieved at all. Only one respondent (0.5%) said that her expectation had been fully achieved. This finding indicates dissatisfaction in terms of achieving self-expectation as well as literacy goal.

5.1.3 Change of Social Status and Life style

Respondents were asked to indicate whether after completing the course their social status and life styles had changed. Government of Bangladesh (GOB) had introduced adult literacy for creating social awareness, changes value of life, improving health and economy of the nations. Most of them 104 (50.5%) felt that their social dignity had increased partially; 44 (21.4%) of them said it had increased at a very low level and 52 (25.2%) said it had not increased at all. Only six (2.9%) of the new literate women felt that their social dignity had increased satisfactorily as a result of completion of adult education. Figure 5.2 below shows their responses. This is in line with the Bangladesh government which had introduced adult literacy for creating social awareness, change value of life, improving health and economy of the nation.

Figure 5.2: Change in social dignity and life style

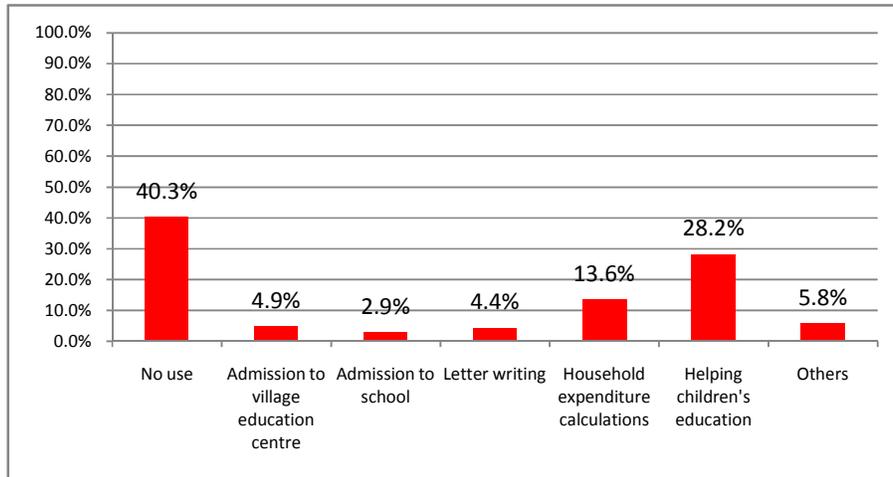


The study also tried to assess the changes in the livelihoods of new literate women. In terms of changes in livelihood status, only six (2.9%) felt that their livelihood status had changed significantly due to completion of adult education. 22 (10.7%) felt that their livelihood status had been changed partially and 125 (60.7%) felt that their livelihood had been changed slightly. However, 53 (25.7%) felt that there was no change in their livelihood status as a result of completion of adult education programme.

5.1.4 Sustainability of Learning

The new literate women were asked to indicate how they were using their learning which they had acquired through adult literacy programme. Figure 5.3 below shows their responses.

Figure 5.3: Use of new learning



The majority of the new literate women have been using their education skills for various purposes. Of the new literate women, 58 (28.2%) of them were using their skills for helping their children's education followed by 28 (13.6%) who said that they were using the acquired skills for calculation of income and expenditure. Others indicated the following: continuing education at the village education centre, 10 (4.9%); writing letters, nine (4.4%); continuing education in formal schools, five (2.9%); and others, 11 (5.8%). However, 83 (40.3%) reported that they had not been using their learning for any purposes. These respondents in the process forgot what they had learnt resulting in an increase in the number of the illiterates.

5.1.5 Self- satisfaction and Realization

Among the new literate women, 175 (85.0%) realized that adult education taught them how to be a good citizen. However, 25 (12.6%) thought that they had not learned anything about good citizenship while four (2.4%) had mixed response on this issue. In terms of developing into more responsible citizen, 173 (84.0%) new literate women felt that adult education had helped them to be more responsible to the family, community and society. However, 10 (4.9%) felt that they had not learned anything about responsibility while 23 (11.2%) had mixed feelings on this issue. Despite the latter sentiment, it is evident that adult education has had positive contribution towards social development of the respondents.

5.1.6 Age for Adult Literacy

According to the policy, the GOB targeted the women of 15-45 years for adult literacy. The findings of the study also revealed that the ages of respondents ranged from 15 to 45 years old. The mean age of the new literate was 30.76 while that of the illiterate was 29.98. In all the divisions, the average age of the respondents was below 30 years except for Khulna and Barisal. The standard deviation of the age of illiterate women under this study indicates that a high number of them are below 20 years old and are eligible to enrol for second chance basic education. Table: 5.1 below shows the details of age information of the respondents.

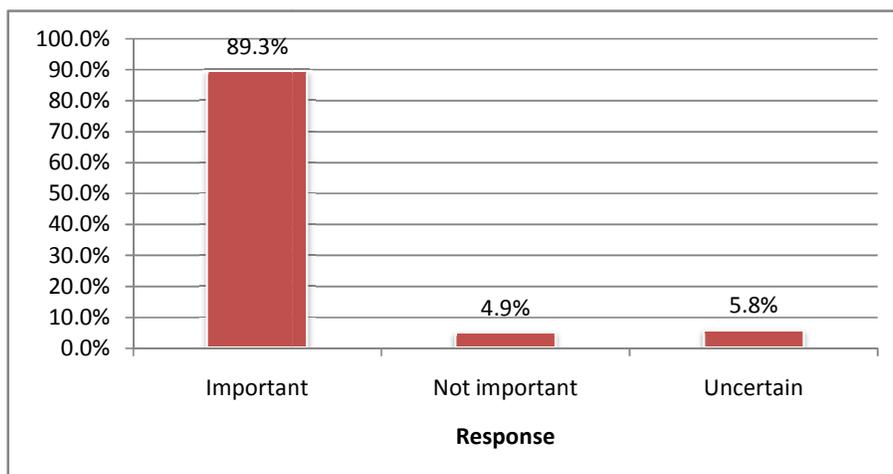
Table 5.1: Mean age of the respondents

Name of the division	New literate women		Illiterate women	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Dhaka	26.67	7.684	33.31	6.948
Chittagong	29.12	14.990	26.14	7.853
Rajshahi	23.88	2.071	24.44	2.557
Khulna	34.60	11.464	31.11	7.447
Barisal	41.14	6.413	36.86	16.587
Sylhet	28.69	12.012	28.26	7.126

5.1.7 New literate women's Views on Adult Education

The new literate women were asked to indicate their views as regard to adult education (see Figure 5.4). The figure shows that majority of them 184 (89.3%) felt that adult education was important for self development while 10 (4.9%) of them felt that adult education was not important for own development. Further, 12 (5.8%) of them said that their future was not certain to them after completion of the adult education course.

Figure 5.4: Percentage distribution of new literate women by their views as regard to adult education

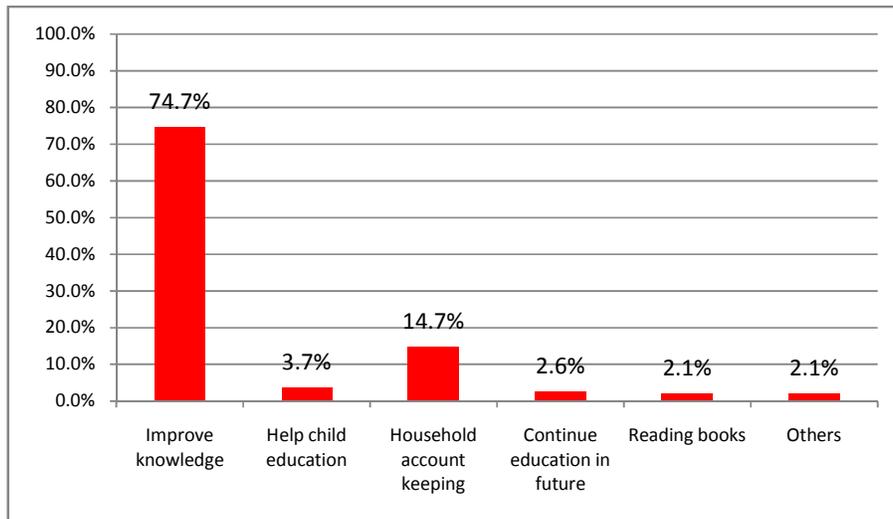


When the new literate were asked to say whether the other illiterate women should join the adult literacy classes, nearly all of them 203 (98.5%) felt that all other illiterate women should join adult literacy classes for their self development. Only three (1.5%) of the new literate were of the view that adult education was not important for the illiterate as it may not help them for their future development.

Furthermore, when the illiterate women were asked to say whether it was important for them to join the adult literate courses, majority of them 190 (89.6%) felt that it was important that they joined these classes while 22 (10.4%), however, were of the opinion that it was not so important that all illiterate women should join the adult literacy courses.

As regards reasons why all the illiterate women should join literacy courses, the majority 159 (75.0%) of the respondents indicated that it was important for their knowledge improvement while 25 (12.0%) were of the view that it was important for household account keeping. Other reasons were: “helping children in their education”; “continue education in future”; and “be able to read books and newspapers” as shown in Figure 5.5 below.

Figure 5.5: Reasons why illiterate women should join adult literacy

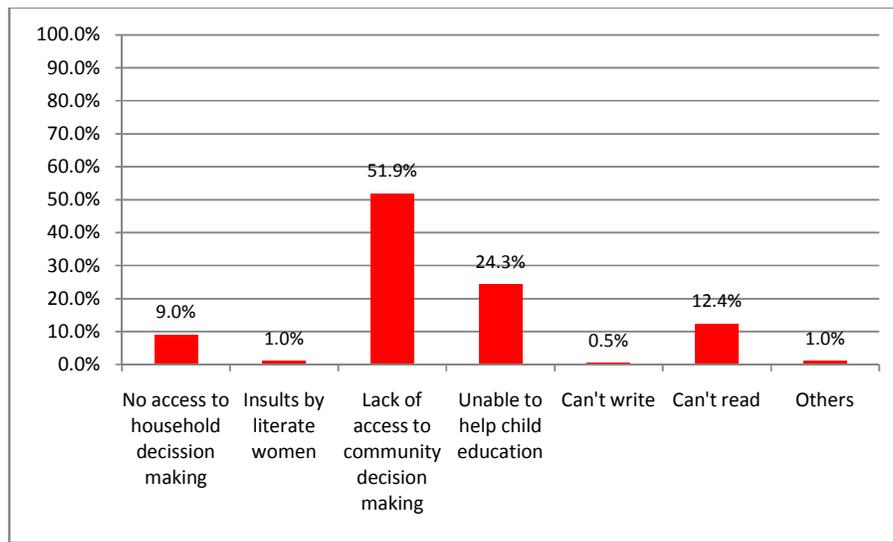


The study also revealed among the illiterate women, most of them 186 (87.7%) were still interested to join adult literacy courses. This is a good sign to achieve literacy goal for the future. Only 25 (12%) illiterate women were not interested to join adult literacy for the following reasons: old age 8 (4.8%); lack of time 121 (57.1%); distance to the centres 61 (28.6%); and other reasons 20 (9.5%)

5.1.8 Being Illiterate as a Problem

Almost all the illiterate women 210 (99.1%) indicated that they faced many social problems in their own families, community and society because of being illiterate. Figure 5.6 below shows the social problems faced by the illiterate women.

Figure 5.6: Nature of the social problems faced by illiterate women



The figure above shows that 110 (51.9%) of the illiterate women cited lack of participation in the community decision making as the main social problem which they faced while 51 (24.3%) of them felt that they were unable to help their children in education. Importantly, 19 (9.0%) women felt that they had access to household decision making due to their illiteracy. Other problems faced by the illiterate women were: lack of household decision making 19 (9.0%); being unable to read any documents 26 (12.4%); insults from the literate women two (1.0%); they could not express their views through writing one (0.5%); and other reasons two (1.0%).

5.2 Government and NGOs Approaches in Adult Literacy since Independence in 1972

5.2.1 Government Approaches in Adult Literacy since Independence in 1972

Since independence, the GOB had taken many initiatives to eradicate illiteracy from the country through its development plans. Details of those have been discussed in the literature review chapter.

During the first Five Year Development Plan (1973 to 1978) the GOB tried to find out the illiterate population as well as taking vast functional literacy programme for those illiterate people through non-formal education.

As part of Second Five Year Development Plan (1980-1985), GOB launched a Mass Education Programme and its target was to make literate seven million people out of ten million illiterate.

The GOB introduced an Integrated Non-formal Education (INFE) during the third Five Year Development Plan (1985-90). The target for this plan was to make literate three million adult illiterate people.

Adult literacy programme was introduced all over the country during the fourth Five Year Plan (1990 -1995). The GOB created an individual ministry, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education in 1992 for reducing illiteracy. To reinforce Non-formal education, the ministry established Directorate of Non-formal Education (DNFE) in 1995. The DNFE under the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education implemented different projects with vast target plan to eradicate illiteracy from the country by 2006.

- To achieve the target, DNFE introduced Non-Formal Education Project 1 (NFE-1) in 1996. This project aims to build permanent NFE structures in the country and to provide literacy services to 2.96 million people aged 15-24 years. Under this project, 32 out of 64 districts of the country were covered. The project continued up to June 2001.
- The second project named Non- Formal Education Project 2 (NFE-2) aimed at providing literacy services to 8.18 million illiterate people aged between 11

and 45 years. It also intended to formulate a Post-Literacy and Continuing Education Model for NFE. The project covered 190 *Upzilas* (Sub-districts) from 31 districts. The duration of the project was from July 1995 to June 2002.

- The third project was called Non- Formal Education Project 3 (NFE-3). This project plan was undertaken to provide literacy services to 0.35 million working children aged between 8 and 14 in six Divisional cities of the country. The duration of the Project was from January 1996 to June 2004.
- The fourth project, Non-Formal Education Project 4 (NFE-4) was introduced in 1998. The main objectives of the projects were to provide literacy to 22.89 million people and to create employment opportunity temporarily for educated and unemployed youth (both male and female). The project areas were 448 Upazilas (Sub-districts) from 62 Districts. The project ended in June 2003.

The Fifth Five Years Development Plan was implemented from 1997-2002. This plan had also set up some important objectives of mass education consistent with the overall objectives of achieving the goal of EFA and fulfilling the educational needs of 30 million adult illiterates. The objectives were to increase literacy rate of adults (15 years and above) to 80% by the year 2002, to empower learners with technical skills, entrepreneurial traits and leadership skills, to empower skills related to literacy, numeracy and communication, to reduce gender gap in literacy rates in both rural and urban areas, and to develop continuing education programme for new literates. However, the Fifth Five Year Plan failed to achieve its objectives on education.

Since 2002, all government adult education programmes were progressing under the National Plan of Action I and II. The plan targeted all the adult illiterate of the country of 15 to 45 years of age and would like to improve adult literacy by 80% by 2015 under the National Educational Plan II.

The DNFE introduced Post-Literacy and Continuing Education (PLCE) since 2003. The PLCE targeted 3.6 million new literate people for continuing education by 2008.

The PLCE also considered livelihood aspects of the new literate along with their education.

DNFE have been in lead role to eradicate illiteracy of the country since its inception, DNFE did not implement any adult literacy centre directly but DNFE provided funding support and learning materials to the selected NGOs who mainly ran the adult literacy centres.

Although GOB initiated several approaches to eradicate illiteracy, no any initiative was fully successful to achieve the objectives. As a result, adult illiteracy still remained a problem in the country.

5.2.2 NGOs Approaches in Adult Literacy since Independence in 1972

NGOs have been working to eradicate illiteracy from the country since independence in 1972. PROSHIKA, BRAC, DHAKA AHSANIA MISSION, FIVDB, ACTION AID BANGLADESH along with other NGOs are using their own resources and approaches to implement literacy programmes. The details of their activities and approaches on adult education have already been discussed in literature review (chapter three and chapter two).

In addition to the NGOs who have their own adult literacy programme, there are more than 450 NGOs involved in DNFE implemented adult literacy programmes (World Bank 2001, Proshika Database, 2003). Following the WCEFA and the meeting of the International Council on Adult Education (Bangkok, 1990) some leading NGOs established a coalition/forum of NGOs engaged in education activities under the name of Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) in 1990. Since then these NGOs have been implementing all of DNFE programme. It has been already discussed in the previous chapters that DNFE did not implement adult education centres directly; they provide resources to the NGO's to implement adult education related activities. However, some of the NGOs had their own adult literacy programme targeting their programme beneficiaries. The study data among the new literate women also presents similar findings, 97.1% of them went to the adult education centres running by the NGOs. Table: 5.2 presents status of implementing organizations among the new literate women.

Table 5.2: Implementing Organizations of the Adult Literacy Centres in the field level

Division	Name of the implementing organisations		
	Government	NGO	Others
Dhaka	-	97%	3%
Chittagong	-	91.2%	8.8%
Rajshahi	-	100%	-
Khulna	-	97.1%	2.9%
Barisal	-	100%	-
Sylhet	2.9%	97.1%	-

5.3 Factors that Hinder the Success of Adult Education for Women in Bangladesh

5.3.1 Place of the Learning Centre

Figure 5.4 shows that there is no permanent place for adult education centres which needed to achieve the targeted plan. The implementing authority use a suitable place in the village of the learner's to run the adult literacy centres. Either DNFE or NGO's have any established centre which can be continued for long time. This finding revealed that in terms of place of the adult literacy centres (Figure 5.7) , 88 (42.7%) new literate women mentioned that their adult literacy centre was in some one's house within the village, followed by school place, 87 (42.2%) and court yard, 31 (15.0%) of one of the participants. Thus it can be said that the place of the learning centre was one of the factors in achieving literacy goal.