DECLARATION

I hereby solemnly declare that this thesis represents my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for a degree at this or any other University.

_____

Durga Rani Sarker

(Candidate)

DEDICATION

To my late mother *Anjana Sarker* who rescued me from early marriage and encouraged me to continue with education.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This thesis, of Durga Rani Sarker, is approved in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology of Education by the University of Zambia.

Signed:_____ Date:_____

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to sincerely thank all the people and institutions, who in one way or another made this study possible. However, the following deserve special appreciation:

Dr. Sophie Kasonde Ng'andu, my supervisor, for her academic guidance and support who read my numerous revisions and helped some sense of the confusion. This work would not have reached the present form without her encouragement and supervision.

Dr. Oswell Chakulimba, the co-supervisor, who offered guidance and support. In addition, as head of the department, he helped me in getting admission and always encouraged me for writing this thesis.

Dr. Kamini Krishna, a lecturer of History department at the University of Zambia (UNZA), who always provided me mental and academic support to complete my thesis.

Thanks also go to Mr. Jonathan Chibaula who tireless edited and revised several tables and graphs in the report.

My husband Subrata Chakrabarty and son Aritra Chakrabarty who always encouraged me to complete this. Thanks to my husband too who provided financial support for the study.

My friends who endured this long process with me, always offering support and inspiration to complete this research.

Last but not least, the University Grants Commission of Bangladesh who approved my study leave to continue and complete the study.

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ACRONYMS

ACNEA	Atlanta Conventional of the National Education Centre
BLCs	Basic Learning Needs or Competencies
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CBA	Centre Based Approach
CBO	Community Based Organization
DAM	Dhaka Ahsania Mission
DCO	District Coordinator Officer
DG	Director General
DNFE	Directorate of Non-Formal Education Programme
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
E9	Nine Highly Populated Developing Country
EFA	Education for All
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FFYP	Fifth Five Year Plan
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
GRMK	Gram Shiskha Millan Kendra
HQ	Head Quarters
ILEA	Institute of Literacy and Adult Education
INFEP	Integrated Non-Formal Education Programme
KC	Kishori Club
KII	Key Informants Interview
LEDC	Least Economically Development Country
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MoE	Ministry of Education
MOPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
NEP	National Education Policy
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PDA	Primer Distribution Approach
PLCE	Post Literacy and Continuing Education
PLCEHD	Post Literacy and Continuing Education Human Development
PM	Prime Minister
PMED	Primary and Mass Education Division
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
REFELECT	Regenerated Freirean Literacy Through Empowering Community
Three R's	Relevance, Relatedness and Responsibility
TLM	Total Literacy Movement
UNESCO	United National Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPE	Universal Primary Education
VFs	Village Federations
WCEFA	World Conference on Education for All

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the problems of adult education for women in Bangladesh and its prospects for them.

A descriptive survey design was used in conducting this research. Primary data was collected through questionnaires, checklists, and Focus Group Discussions to a sample of people selected to accurately represent the population under study, while secondary data was collected through reviewing the relevant literature.

This study was grounded on "Feminist Pedagogy Theory" which states that 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 people 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

The study used mainly qualitative methods in the collection of data. The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods. The target population comprised all illiterate and literate women in Bangladesh

The research was conducted among the sample of 212 illiterate and 206 new literate women and the government and non-governmental organizations which were involved in adult literacy and education sector.

The analysis of study findings revealed that there was lack of traditions of mass literacy programmes in Bengal in the early period and the period from 1948 to 1971. Shortly after independence in 1972, there was a national literacy campaign, However, initially the programmes were mainly taken up by the youth and men from the middle classes, and the methods and materials used were unsophisticated. A more significant change occurred after the famine in 1974, when many NGOs began working in the literacy campaign. As a part of 'relief' efforts, this focus shifted from individuals to a 'community' approach to benefit women as a target group.

There were some problems to increase literacy among women, despite the effort of government and NGOs, as there were very few experienced staff, reliance on local improvisation for the school teaching materials, discontinuation of literacy programme, un-accountability and lack of a transparency implementing authority, extreme poverty, cultural and religious conservativeness. As such, the result was less successful than the programmes had expected to achieve. The primary data of the study showed some positive changes in terms of social and economic development among new literate women compared to the illiterate women. The contribution of adult literacy in increasing social awareness is very effective. However, a high number of illiterate women still existed in Bangladesh who needed adult literacy for their better prospects.

The study concluded that unless the new-literate women have opportunities of using their newly acquired knowledge, it would be almost impossible for them to retain the

literacy level attained. Consequently, there was an urgent need for an effective post-literacy programme where new literate women should get skills development training which would help them in income generation.

Based on the findings, the study recommended that an adult literacy programme should extend over a period of at least six months. The classes should meet five or six days a week for, at least two hours a day. One Gram Shikkha Milan Kendra (GSMK) should be established in each village which should be attached to Primary Schools. Gradually it should be upgraded to *Loke Kendra* (Community Centre) or Public Library.

The teaching force of adult literacy should include unemployed persons who at least completed grade 12 or the retired primary and high school teachers. In addition there was need for some livelihood-related skilled trainers who could help in increasing income generating opportunities of the new literate women. In recruiting the teachers for adult literacy programme, females should get preference. All newly recruited teachers should receive foundation training for 15 days and later on refresher training for 10 days.

Motivation is a very important part in increasing enrolment of adult education. Therefore, the mass media can play a more effective role in motivating the illiterate women. Radio and Television should devote at least half an hour a day to NFE and Adult Literacy Programmes.

DNFE should run adult literacy programmes through their own management and assist other government organizations to implement their programmes. Similarly, NGOs should run adult literacy programme through their own management following the same curriculum.