

Full Length Research Paper

Who gains from EFA – State business of education or private higher education business in developing nations? A study to understand the policy impact in Bangladesh

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Business of state is to provide a decent life to its citizens giving a wider and increased access to the needs. In order to do so, business of state always concentrates to provide a better access to five fundamentals (that is, food, cloth, shelter, education and health) maintaining an increasing curve nationally every year. A testimonial of significant success of business of state is gained when a state can maintain an increasing curve both national and international competition. In the eye of public policy, it is no matter, whether the state itself engages in business operation directly or not. A business can be owned and operated by private organization or individual. But through public policy, state has to ensure an increased decent life for its citizen which is considered success. However, either for a faulty policy or international policy influence or weak implementation of a policy, many polices have become dysfunctional or reverse-functional. The research for this paper, the first of its nature in Bangladesh, has been carried out by document review and government data analysis, questionnaires, desk study, interviews, and observation to understand the impact of Education for All-EFA (An international education policy) on state business of education in Bangladesh. Findings reveal that in order to meet the target of EFA, education policy both macro and micro levels has been changed rapidly and dramatically. Because of sudden change of policy, while state business of education gains only quantitative benefit declining qualitative achievement, private higher education enjoys a greater success in business using 'commoditization theory' in education.

Key words: Business of state, commoditization, education for all (EFA), education policy, marketing in education, privatization of higher education, sale tuition.

INTRODUCTION

Explanation is rarely needed for the acronym-EFA. The team of donor agencies working for the development of developing nations especially UNESCO should be congratulated for their hard work in contextualizing the EFA and making the term popular (Brock-Utne, 2000; Nishimuko, 2007). Many countries (that is, Nepal, Maldives,

Sri-lanka, Lesotho, South Africa) have achieved universal primary education, other countries targeted are about to achieve the target.

The term EFA itself explains its mission and vision. The main concentration of EFA is to educate the children whose life is covered by the extreme poverty (Yamada, 2007; Naseem and Arshad-Ayaz, 2007). The first phase of EFA was mainly concentrated on increasing the enrollment rate of disadvantaged children into primary education (UNESCO, 2004). Mid-phases were not only concentrated on increasing net enrolment of

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disadvantaged children but also provided an especial attention in order to increase the enrolment of girls (UNESCO, 2004). The initiatives of EFA enjoyed a greater success. Later, the team working in favour of EFA realized that only increase of enrollment does not bring good promises, unless children are provided a higher quality education. It was also noticed that in many cases that the speedy process of EFA in increasing enrollment also dented the education quality of many countries (Yamada, 2007; Naseem and Arshad-Ayaz, 2007; Nishimuko, 2007; Chowdhury et al., 2000). This was caused because of insufficient fund to accommodate the increased demand. It was also not possible to hurriedly build the proper school infrastructure and atmosphere to meet the oversize market. This circumstance motivates UNESCO and other donor agencies to work not only increasing enrollment for all but also improving education quality for all. Thus, the EFA team of UNESCO has recently determined two main targets. One is to increase the enrollment of disadvantaged into education especially in primary and secondary provisions and the other is to ensure a better quality primary education for the group targeted (UNESCO, 2004).

EFA realizes a number of constraints that are causing sluggish progression on achieving those two targets. One of the fundamental constraints is the family background of the children targeted under EFA goal (UNESCO, 2004). Therefore, initiatives were taken to educate the elderly and adolescent members of the family who are considered as disadvantaged. UNESCO provides an especial priority to an extra-budgetary programmed to support capacity building activities for EFA in selected Member States. In order to do this, they considered a project named CAP (Capacity Building). CAP has its own mission and vision, however, its goal is also to subsidize the EFA through informal provision of education (UNESCO, 2008).

As stated earlier, developing countries and their people whose lives are dominated by the extreme poverty are the main consumers of EFA (Brock-Utne, 2000). This has provided an increased primary school graduate community in an overnight, thus secondary and higher education system are being overwhelmed by the unexpected pressure. Secondary education receives second preference in investing fund by the government and donors, while higher education receives less or almost no priority (Brock-Utne, 1996, 2000; Colclough, 1995). Secondary education is thus ineffectively covering the increased demand mainly by public provision. On the other hand, higher education provision becomes a commodity (Yang, 2003). Considering education as commodity is often judged as reverse philosophy of education (Alam, 2008).

Privatization of higher education opened a door for academically inept but having sound economic graduates to access to higher education (Alam and Khalifa, 2009).

Higher education and research are interrelated which shape the primary and secondary education of a country

in order to achieve the sustainable national development. Research requires more academically able candidates (genius). Privatization of Higher Education has narrowed down the access of higher education for genius, thus it is time to think does EFA have only positive impact or is there any affect caused by rapid action of EFA and globalization of education. A deeper investigation will be able to inform us the answer of this question, however to rationalize the research project, this paper aims to answer the following research questions.

- What is the impact of EFA at primary level?
- What is the impact of EFA at secondary level?
- How does it influence the tertiary/university education system?
- Can primary system work in isolation or are both provisions (that is, primary, secondary and tertiary) interlinked?
- Why are gaps created within total education system in Bangladesh for the implementation of EFA?
- How can these gaps be addressed?

We believe that the answers of these questions will be able to provide some suggestions and guidelines for legislators to understand the way of implementing EFA and other agendas prescribed by international donors.

However, the main purpose of this paper is to illuminate the insights of problems with a view to that identifying of problems will inspire to conduct further researches in this area and the further researches might be able to provide better solution in future.

RESEARCH CONTEXT

Education provision and management towards Efa in Bangladesh

The education system mainly primary provision in Bangladesh is characterised by co-existence of three separate streams. The mainstream is a vernacular-based secular education system carried over from the country's colonial past. There also exists a separate religious system of education. Finally, based on the use of English as the medium of instruction, a third stream of education modeled following the British Education System (and using the same curriculum as in Britain) has grown mainly in the country's metropolitan cities.

However, diverse the three streams may appear, there are common elements. Scope also exists for the reintegration of graduates from one stream to another at different levels.

The mainstream education system in Bangladesh is structured as follows:

A one or two year pre-primary education in private schools/kindergartens and informal education in

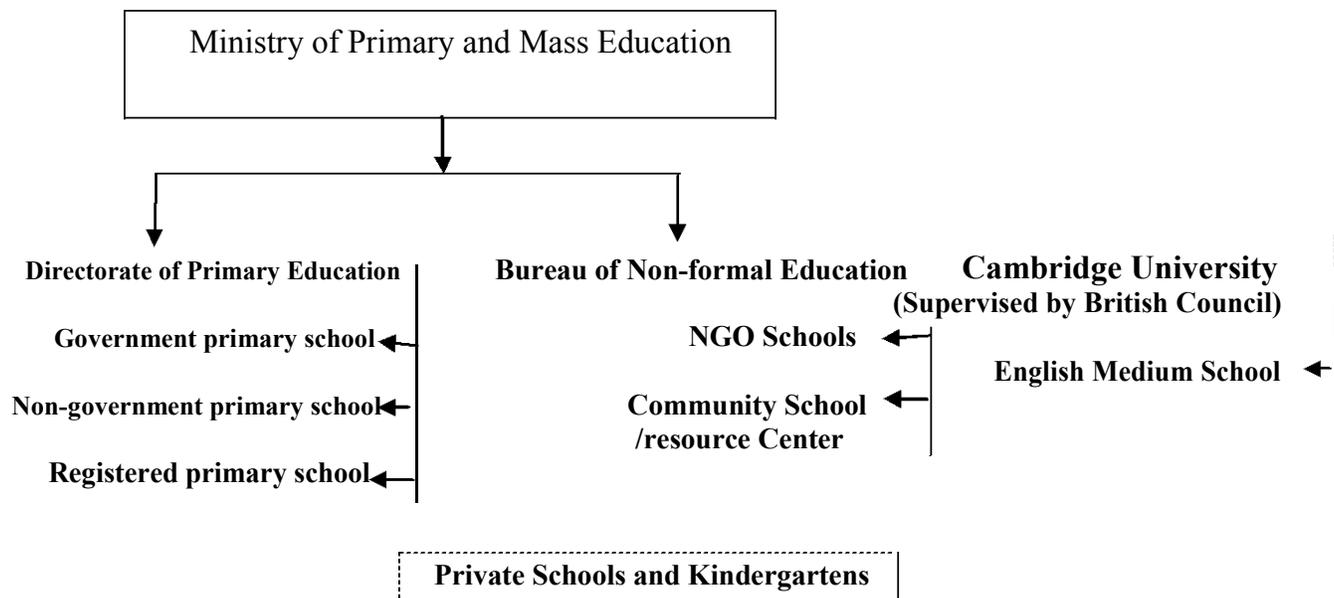


Diagram 1. Provisions of primary education in Bangladesh.

government primary schools for one year (BANBEIS, 2006). A five year compulsory primary education is an 'official agenda' for the 6 - 10 year age group, imparted mainly in government and registered non-government primary schools. In metropolitan cities, however, government and non-government primary schools cater mainly for the educational needs of the comparatively poorer sections of the population, as the better-off families usually send their children to private English medium schools and primary attached secondary. There exists, however, a substantial number of NGO-run non-formal schools catering different level of primary education mainly for opt-outs from the government and non-government primary schools (Alam et al., 2009). It is worth to note that the scale of non-formal education is quite big. Non-formal education is also considered as a strong provision to achieve EFA thus a separate division named Bureau of Non-formal Education closely works under the ministry of primary and mass education (Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, 2008).

Though many NGOs are providing primary education in Bangladesh, few of those impart the full five-year primary education cycle. Because of this, on completion of their 2 - 3 year non-formal primary education in NGO schools, students normally re-enter government/non-government primary schools at higher classes. NGO schools differ from other non-government private schools. While the private schools operate like private enterprises, often guided by commercial interests, NGO schools operate mainly in areas not served by either government or non-government schools, essentially to meet the educational needs of the vulnerable groups of society (BRAC, 2007). They usually follow a non-formal approach to suit the

special needs of children from such groups.

On completion of primary education, students (11+) enroll for secondary education. Junior secondary education, lasting over three years, is the first phase of secondary education. At the end of this phase, some students branch out to join the vocational stream offered at vocational training institutions (VTI) and technical training centres (TTC), run by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour and Employment respectively, while students in mainstream education continue in government and non-government secondary schools for a two-year secondary education in their respective areas of specialisation e.g. humanities, science, commerce, etc. At the end of their secondary education, the students sit for their first public examination named secondary school certificate (SSC) under the supervision of seven education boards known as Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) (BANBEIS, 2006). Students of religious education and English medium streams also sit for their respective public examinations, Dakhil and 'O' level, conducted by the Madrasah Education Board and London/Cambridge University respectively, facilitated by the British Council in case of the later. After completion of such education, students enroll in mainly three types of higher secondary education - higher secondary certificate (HSC), polytechnic and HSC-Business Model (HSC-BM) system. Upon completion of this HSC or equivalent qualifications, candidates try to follow higher education from the university. Three degrees are offered by the universities or affiliated university level institutions, from Bachelor to PhD level (Annex 1). Diagram 1 represents the details of the different types of primary education and their respective authorities/management.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Concept of business of state and role of public policy

While many countries fail to achieve the role of business of state, the purpose of business of state holds a global pattern. The purpose of business of state is to ensure five fundamentals (food, cloth, shelter, education and health Care) with the increasing trends for every individual that can confront the challenges of 21st century, globalization and rapid change of global economic and social competition (Alam, 2008; Bryson, 2004). In order to do so, it has been understood that establishment of business not only targeting these five fundamental sectors but also others (financial institutions, service and recreational industries and science industries) is important for a state. While financial industry works as blood cell of business of state, others sectors work as organ of cycle process (Bergeron, 2008).

These days, most of the states do not own the many businesses of state. For example, business of food, cloth and shelter is not owned by the state let alone other service sectors. Because of cultural and traditional acceptance, many states own the business of education and health although recently privatization is slowly taking the charge of these sectors too. Most of the sectors in many developing and developed states are mainly operated through private limited and multi national company (Forest, 2004). Some extends sole ownership, family business and partnership provisions work principally involving as Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) stipulation of operation. Public limited companies with a dieing trend are also in operation (Forest, 2004 and Alam, 2008).

The rate of return (RoR) calculation system of private owned enterprises is very straightforward. Deduction of total investment from total earning is the RoR (surplus, break event or shortfall). While most of the provisions are capable to ensure surplus, public limited companies are not even maintaining a break event situation. Consequently, it is easy to understand the scenario of business fully controlled and owned by the state. Therefore, the RoR of business of state is reverse in many countries. This situations force to privatize many sectors (Bryson, 2004; Fullan, 1991).

It is belief that supply of skilled and mentally and physically fit manpower for the business of state and privately owned industries is the responsibility of the state, thus, education and health care are still considered as the businesses of state. However continuous fail in ensuring a decent return, education and health care are now become a business owned by private limited company, multi national company, sole ownership, family business and partnership provisions (Alam, 2008).

In the eye of public policy, it is no matter whether a company owned by state or not. While, public policy- a way of formal process always tries to ensure the basic

purpose of business of state, governance and regulatory control tries with both formal and informal process (Bell et al., 2006). However, it is no wonder to see many faulty public polices has been practiced. Moreover, there is dearth of coordination and correlation of different macro level policy (Baba, 2008). This situation is also graver at micro level policy practiced within the organization. International influence and budgetary constraints are key enemies to make public policy functional. In this regards Alam (2008 p. 259) notes that "policy is an insecticide used to kill all insects of education, preventing development. However, if the policy is virus affected or any insect kills the policy, there is little hope for an effective education sector. While legislators want to take the advantages of the policy, rules and regulations, the design and implementation of good policy is a nightmare".

However we believe that in the 21st century, public policy provides the parameter for effective and accountable management. At the end of the day, it is important that public policy is accountable to questions and criticisms raised by the public. Ignoring public policy as the parameter for governance and regulatory control is not a solution. Considering this, this research is an analytical policy research that aims to understand the impact of implementation of an international education policy on education system in Bangladesh. We believe that findings will uncover many truths helping the country to design its own new public policy in the context of education that may able to fulfill the local need. So, 'analycentric approach' to public policy analysis for understanding the policy process and meta-policy approaches is considered as conceptual framework. This approach is considered with a hope to provide insights that may help designing a better local education policy in Bangladesh.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Guru-Shishsho provision

Before a public policy is in place, the introduction of education in South Asia was implemented by a process known as 'Guru-Shishsho'. An individual with a good analytical knowledge was considered as 'Guru' and his or her followers were known as 'Shishsho'. Exercising knowledge through Guru-Shishsho had always been a fundamental part of education in Bangladesh. With the gradual increase of demand for education in contemporary Bangladesh, there has been an increase in formal education provision as most acknowledge that education should be the fundamental concern of public policy. However, before introduction of the formal provision of education, education was a trade limited with the house of privileged group which was known as lodging master provision.

Tutor/lodging-master

Altbach (1999), and Alam (2008a) claim that this style of education is the first stage in the history of education. They assert that before the introduction of a formal school system in many British colonies and similar regions, privileged parents (for example, a landlord, the district commissioner, the district clerk) would employ private tutors (known as a lodging-master in some countries) to educate their children.

Research by Tooley (1999) hints that this type of education has remained in many developing countries even after the introduction of a formal schooling system. However, the prime purpose of this kind of private education is to help the economically elite primary and secondary students to make better progress with their school performance. This will help them complete further education where access is limited.

Formal schooling

Practice of education and knowledge through 'Guru-Shishsho' and tutor/lodging-master provision has become very popular; therefore, community realized the importance of education. This motivates the sage members of the community to establish the school through community participation. Although some researches state that community participation is a new concept in education, Alam (2008) and Narayan (1995) proves that community participation in education had a long history and heritage. According to Alam (2008), community collectively collect a various forms of subscriptions (that is, money, rice, bamboo and other materials in building infrastructure) in order to establish school. Once school was established, government shouldered the responsibility in running the schools through a public policy and administration. Government also ensures some kind of participation of community in school management via the involvement of school managing community (SMC). These days, education is considered as the weapon of development thus public and private initiatives are being involved in every level of education (that is primary, secondary and tertiary).

Expansion of education and its marketing practice

Marketing in education is not a new concept (Bartlett et al., 2008). State, partners for development, controlling agencies (that is, UGC, BISE, MO) and providers (School, College, University both public and private provision) involve in education market since long (Alam, 2008). The commitment of state and partners for development is to distribute the beam of education to every household thus to make education popular, different types of marketing of education have been taken place.

The purpose of this marketing is to make the education product popular so this kind of marketing approach towards education can be identified as product marketing.

Product marketing concept undertaken by the development partners, state and providers makes education much popular to the community thus communities having different kind of economic, social, cultural and religious background are procuring education according to their interests and needs (Alam, 2008).

Product marketing in education introduced at the early stage of education history which make education popular amongst the communities. Thereafter marketing attempts were taken to make different types of education (that is science, commerce, arts and vocational) popular (Tabb, 2001). Success of such kinds of marketing creates a huge diversified market for education. These days, a significant number of customers are ready to procure different types and level of education. This also results the expansion of education through private provision. Private provision is available at very level (that is primary, secondary and tertiary). However, the entrance of private provision is extreme at tertiary level, training courses and admission aid provisions as little public fund is allocated for these particular provisions of education. The rapid expansion of education through privatization has introduced the brand marketing provision in education. Considering these, it can be noted that within the current climate of expansion of education and its marketing, three main types of approaches are practiced, these are 'product', 'category' and 'brand' marketing (Alam, 2008).

State and donor agencies are rigorously involve in 'product marketing' of education, however in order to bring equalities in gender and others issues (that is, economic, privileged and underprivileged) in education, 'demographic segmentation concept' of marketing in education is also introduced in education marketing. While religious groups are involved in product marketing, they are also introducing the 'psychographic segmentation' of marketing in education in order to reflect their outlooks. Introduction and rapid expansion of education through private provision opens the horizon of 'geographic segmentation of marketing' in education in order to provide the service to targeted elite group (Bartlett et al., 2008).

Different segmentations of marketing in education provide services to different groups and communities that should untimely bring a number of advantages and disadvantages. However, EFA focuses on overall education 'product marketing'. Furthermore, EFA's concentration is on rural population paying an especial attention on girl therefore within the EFA approaches both demographic and geographic as well as psychographic segmentation are practiced. This research will mainly investigate the impact of EFA on education system in Bangladesh adopting following research design.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Research design

This research investigated the impact resulted from an

implementation of an international education policy. So in order to understand the input and output factors and their impact, secondary data were used through a qualitative analysis. These data were collected and preserved with a statistical analysis by two public organizations namely from Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics - BANBEIS annual statistics books, 1990

- 2006 (sponsored by UNESCO and organised by the Ministry of Education, Bangladesh) and University Grants Commission (UGC) Annual Report, (1994 - 2006). (The Annual Report contains particulars of every university in Bangladesh, whether public or private, and general information such as new development, strategy proposals, etc.). This was considered to be the most appropriate approach, given the nature of the query and the circumstances of the research. Triangulation was required to promote the objectivity of the research. As researchers with a background in educational management, we were aware of our own cultural baggage and ability to be entirely objective. We tried to be aware of the possible positional power issues that might arise within the research process, where perceived power differences might affect data collection or the way it was analysed. Considering these, while primarily collection of secondary data and empirical data from field survey was carried out throughout the project, empirical data survey (questionnaires), and qualitative interviews and observations supplement where necessary.

Data analysis

The main subjects of this paper are the data collected by BANBEIS and UGC. These two institutions are mainly responsible to collect the data and analyse them for policy formulation and discourses. While BANBEIS looks after all forms of education, UGC is a specialised body for higher education.

Other data was collected by an empirical data survey³ approach. This approach was considered the most appropriate for people who were easily accessible. Questionnaires were used at random from all provisions of education for: selected Teachers and Staffs, Students, Students facing an admission test. The private and public provisions of Education in Bangladesh were selected for the research.

Qualitative methods were also used that allowed interviewees to express their views in a free and personal way, giving as much prominence as possible to their thematic associations. Semi-structured interviews adopting qualitative approach were held with: key personnel at the Ministry of Education in Bangladesh, Key personnel at the University Grants Commission of Bangladesh, Key personnel at different BISEs, Key personnel at public and private provisions of education (at all levels), Teachers at public and private provisions of education (at all levels), Social elites with reputations as educators, The guardians of students in both public and private provisions of education (at all levels), Students of public and private universities.

The opportunity to ask relevant questions of the policymakers, legislators and stakeholders was available in an interview session. Non-participatory observation was also deemed important. For this research, a number of official and/or unpublished documents and newspaper articles were studied.⁴

Document reviews

- Different Education Commission Reports (that is Moniruzzaman, Asaduzzaman etc.)⁵.

- Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics - BANBEIS annual statistics books, 1990 - 2006 (sponsored by UNESCO and organised by the Ministry of Education, Bangladesh).
- University Grants Commission Annual Report, 1994 - 2006. (The Annual Report contains particulars of every university in Bangladesh, whether public or private, and general information such as new development, strategy proposals, etc.).
- Provisional Population Census Report 2001.
- Students' Results sheets of public and private provisions of education (at all levels).
- Newspaper articles.

Observation

Facilities for lectures were observed. The paper concentrated on the use of data collected from document review and observation. In addition, experience of working for eleven years alongside education system in Bangladesh allows for some of the arguments to reflect personal observation during that time. Before analysing the findings, it should be noted that this is the first study to be conducted on the impact of EFA in Bangladeshi context.

FINDINGS

Increase of enrollment

Donor agencies mainly UNESCO instigated the EFA. Government, other agencies and providers made a significant response in achieving the goal of EFA. The data Table 1 presents the achievement in primary level by the government of Bangladesh in connection to EFA through formal provision.

Before analysing Table 1, it is important to note that the data is presented from 'primary education' level, since both dropouts and the number of graduates with the prerequisite qualifications control the enrolments at the 'secondary' and 'tertiary' levels.

Table 1 shows that, in 1998, the total enrolment in primary education is highest (between the years from 1997 - 2005) when the *age group population* for primary education is also the highest. However, the net enrolment column shows that net enrolment in 1998 is higher than in 1997, but lower in the years that follow. The net enrolment in 2002 is higher than the previous years, where the total enrolment is lower. The net enrolment rate has increased in 2003 and 2004 but surprisingly decreased in 2005. Besides, total enrolment is in a decreasing trend from 2003 to onwards. This is simply because birth control is increasing and has an impact on total enrolment but, ultimately, has no impact on net enrolment. The data confirms that education in Bangladesh is definitely becoming an issue of increasing importance. The following Table illustrates the pattern of employment regarding educated and non-educated work force (WF) with the increase of enrollment at all the levels of education.

³ Quantitative

⁴ Since no academic research has been conducted, news paper articles and policy/official documents would be secondary source of the data collection

⁵ Prof Asaduzzaman is the chairman of the University Grants Commission, under his supervision, a team was formed to explore the current situations of HE and to discover more effective ways so that the quality of HE can be higher

Table 1. Enrollment in education and traditionalism.

Year	Enrolment (All ages)	Official age group population (6-10 years) for primary education	Enrolled official age group population (6-10 years) in primary education	Gross enrolment rate (GER)	Net enrolment rate (NER)
1997	18 031 673	18 861 583	15 113 783	95.60	80.13
1998	18 360 642	19 079 888	15 538 661	96.23	81.44
1999	17 621 731	18 307 265	15 229 814	96.23	83.19
2000	17 667 985	18 296 312	15 667 538	96.56	85.63
2001	17 659 220	18 114 198	15 680 666	97.49	86.57
2002	17 561 828	18 040 023	15 637 110	97.35	86.68
2003	18 431 320	17 592 292	16 116 934	104.77	91.61
2004	17 953 300	17 557 820	16 153 194	102.95	92.00
2005	16 225 658	17 315 296	15 098 938	93.71	87.20

Source: BANBEIS annual reports, 1997 - 2005.

Before commenting on the data presented in Table 2, we will explain the reason for personal communication in collecting data. For political reasons⁶, the government of Bangladesh does not wish to reveal the number of huge unemployment amongst educated people. As there are no official documents available, we therefore had to collect data via personal communication⁷. A few important factors are noted:

- Women involved in household jobs are shown as unemployed. However, their work has a significant contribution to development. Many women with household jobs are part of a non-educated group. If they were included in the Table 2 as an employed non-educated workforce, the percentage of employed non-educated workforce would be higher. Moreover, educated women working as housewives (these women are wives in a privileged group. They do not work, either inside or outside the house) are not contributing to development as they employ servants to do their work (servants are also not considered as an employed workforce).

- Though many students are engaged in part-time jobs, students are considered as an unemployed group. There is no data available on the total student population. If they were not included as an unemployed workforce, the total unemployed population would be lower. However, this has no impact on the non-educated employed workforce (Alam 2009a).

Table 2 shows that the unemployment rate amongst educated people⁸ is much higher and is increasing more

⁶ If any government shows that there is a large number of unemployed educated people, they may not be able to gain the public vote in a general election. There is also a threat from donor agencies. To receive funding, the government shows that the education system is working well and contributing significantly to development.

⁷ We contacted a Statistics Officer working with the Bangladesh Bureau Of Statistics. He provided us within the information in compiling the primary data collected for the census.

⁸ We also need to consider that educated people are employed in underpaid work which has a negative impact on return to investment in education. For

rapidly than that of employment amongst uneducated people. This generates the following questions: can education create jobs? Is education provided in accordance with job market demand in Bangladesh? Do we need to provide education according to job market demand? We feel that, if education was provided according to job market demand, this would bring development and create more employment for more people.

Despite the unemployment rate amongst educated people being higher (and increasing) than that of employment amongst uneducated people, education is rising in Bangladesh. People consider education to be a tradition that they should pursue (Interview of key persons of UGC); education is thought of as a 'traditional right' (Yamada, 2007; Alam, 2008). Pursuing education in order to obtain a job or to fulfill a thirst for knowledge confirms the need for balanced courses and curricula delivered through a significant academic atmosphere (Interview of persons from the Ministry of Education). In contrast, pursuing education as a 'traditional right' could be a threat to development. If the people of Bangladesh pursue education as just an heritable tradition, and not to meet a perceived need, it will impact negatively upon national development (Alam, 2008; Altbach, 1999; Baba, 2002).

Prerequisite qualifications and further study

Although a significant number of graduates are unemployed (Table 2), the ultimate goal of most students is to achieve good employment (Interview of the teachers of both private and public universities). To achieve a desirable job, candidates need to have a higher

example, if a Masters' degree holder works as a receptionist, his/her earnings is not an actual return for the investment in the education. To work as a receptionist, a candidate needs to have a basic education and some training. The production cost for a Masters' degree holder is considerably more than that of a receptionist.

Table 2. Education and employment.

Year	Total population (age 15+ to 65)	Total employed population	Total unemployed population	Educated workforce (grade IX to onwards)	Educated WF employed	Educated WF unemployed	Non-educated WF (no education to VIII)	Non-educated WF employed	Non-educated WF unemployed
1990	7 50 65 000 (100)	4 32 20 000 (57.58)	3 18 45 000 (42.42)	1 68 29 573 (100)	78 87 000 (58.75)	69 42 573 (41.25)	5 82 35 427 (100)	3 24 57 000 (55.73)	2 57 78 427 (44.27%)
1995	7 65 00 000 (100)	4 32 25 000 (56.50)	3 32 75 000 (43.50)	2 83 05 000 (100)	1 27 35 000 (44.96)	1 55 80 000 (55.04)	4 81 95 000 (100)	3 05 00 000 (63.28%)	1 76 95 000 (36.72)
2000	8 08 43 000 (100%)	4 50 00 000 (55.66)	3,58 43 000 (44.44)	3 83 43 000 (100)	1 32 45 000 (34.54)	2 50 98 000 (65.46)	4 25 00 000 (100)	2 92 00 000 (68.71%)	1 33 00 000 (31.29%)

Source: Personal communication; Values in bracket are in percentage (%).

'diploma' for competing in the employment market. Consequently, further education is an increasing feature in overcoming the obstacles of dropout rate and prerequisite qualifications. The following data demonstrates that increasing numbers of students holding prerequisite qualifications influences the expansion of the number of students gaining further studies.

SSC is the first official prerequisite qualification in Bangladesh, by which students can select from a variety of different study programmes at further level education (that is, HSC, Diploma, Teacher Education, Pre-BBA) leading to an HSC and Diploma level qualifications. There had been a trend that, once achieving an SSC, almost all students joined an HSC. Recently, however, a fair number of students have been pursuing Diploma level education and Pre-BBA, although this cannot be compared with the number of students studying at HSC level. Moreover, it is evident that academically able students are following the HSC.

The HSC is a two-year programme - students who pass the SSC can appear in the HSC examination at least two years after their SSC

graduation. However, the number of students studying for the HSC is greater than the number of students who passed the SSC (Table 3). This is simply because, every year, many students fail the HSC and re-sit within the following two years. However, figures from 1990 - 1995 show that SSC graduates are a growing feature in Bangladesh; the numbers of candidates appearing in the HSC examination have increased in the time period 1992 - 1997. In 1996, the total number of SSC graduates was extremely low; may be for two principal reasons:

- The Government took massive measures to control the birth rate during 1980 and 1981. Children in Bangladesh could attend school at the age of 5 - 6 years. After ten academic years, students can sit for the SSC examination, and in 1996 the total number of candidates in SSC was low.
- The Government imposed a new examination system in SSC to ensure a high quality education, so less-able students no longer appeared at the

SSC⁹ which may reduce the total number of SSC examinees in 1996. A major portion of SSC examinees also failed the SSC exam.

Due to the low total number of SSC graduates in 1996, the number of HSC candidates in 1998 was lower than in other years. However, the number of HSC candidates in 1998 was not very low in comparison with the SSC graduates of 1996. This is because a large number of students who failed to pass HSC in 1997 re-sat in 1998. The SSC years of 1997, 1998 and 1999 illustrate the view very clearly. The year 1997 shows that the total number of SSC graduates had once again increased, simultaneously influencing the number of HSC examinees in 1999. Conversely, in 1998, the total number of SSC graduates decreased, so the number of HSC candidates in 2000 reduced. The increase of SSC graduates in 1999 contributed significantly to the increase in HSC candidates in 2001. Finally, in 2001, the total

⁹ Every school conducts a pre-test in order to select the more able students for the SSC examination conducted by the Education Board.

Table 3. Prerequisite qualification influencing further study.

Number of students passing SSC	Year	Number of students appeared HSC	Year
1 38 317	1990	2 47 663	1992
3 08 676	1991	3 18 312	1993
3 21 675	1992	3 98 540	1994
4 04 402	1993	4 68 801	1995
4 90 099	1994	5 14 668	1996
5 60 114	1995	5 84 962	1997
197 811	1996	4 79 028	1998
3 68 803	1997	5 18 648	1999
3 46 435	1998	4 70 541	2000
4 57 252	1999	5 25 755	2001
3 81 762	2000	5 38 296	2002
2 76 903	2001	5 01 507	2003
4 08 969	2002	4 83 481	2004
3 30 762	2003	4 15 088	2005
3 63 270	2004	4 12 024	2006

Source: BANBEIS annual report 1990 - 2006.

Table 4. Enrolment and expansion of school.

Year	Total number of primary students	Total number of primary schools
1997	18 031 673	77 685
1998	18 360 642	79 803
1999	17 621 731	78 840
2000	17 667 985	76 809
2001	17 659 220	78 126
2002	17 561 828	78 363
2003	18 431 320	86 737
2004	17 953 300	82 868
2005	16 225 658	80 401

Source: BANBEIS annual reports – 2003, 2006

number of SSC graduates decreased, and the candidates of HSC in 2003 followed this trend of decrease. After 2001 and onwards, both numbers of students passing SSC and number of students enroll in HSC is decreasing. May be, the impact of birth control is now in effect (Alam, 2009a; Forest, 2004; Yang, 2003).

Rising enrolment and expansion of the school

Rising enrolments always result in the establishment of new schools, or in an increase of the enrolment capacity of schools already established. Conversely, decreasing enrolment results in the collapse of established schools (Colclough, 1995). This correlation is not usually evident from a very short observation period. However, this situation can be seen in Bangladesh in a very short

space of time. To exemplify this issue, we will again present the data from primary level, as this level is the first indicator to government and donor agencies.

Table 4 shows that 'primary education' in Bangladesh is increasing. Due to 'birth control', the primary school population is decreasing, thus the total enrolment in primary education is falling, even though the country is about to achieve 100% enrolment in primary education. This situation results in no expansion of new schools and sometimes forces the closure of schools already established (Alam, 2008).

Table 4 also shows that the total number of primary schools was highest in 1998 and decreased in the following four years as total enrolment in primary education declined. However, the impact is only slightly noticeable at primary level because of huge funds received from international donor agencies.

Table 5. Dramatic change of education policy.

Year	Number of candidates appeared in SSC	Number of successful SSC Candidates	Pass rate %	Number of HSC colleges (% increase)
1990	4 35 918	1 38 317	31.73	*
1991	4 75 261	3 08 676	64.95	*
1992	5 22 174	3 21 675	61.60	*
1993	6 61 908	4 90 099	61.09	*
1994	5 68 831	4 06 487	71.46	*
1995	7 65 135	5 60 114	73.20	*
1996	4 64 267	1 97 811	42.61	*
1997	7 16 865	3 68 803	51.45	901
1998	7 22 300	3 46 435	47.96	1 041 (14.54)
1999	8 37 220	4 57 252	54.62	1 422 (30.55)
2000	9 18 045	3 81 762	41.58	1 466 (3.09)
2001	7 86 220	2 76 903	35.22	1 485 (1.29)
2002	10 05 937	4 08 969	40.66	1 559 (4.98)
2003	9 21 024	3 30 762	35.91	1 579 (1.28)
2004	7 56 387	3 63 270	48.03	1 548 (-1.96)
2005	7 51 421	3 94 993	52.57	1 813 (17.11)
2006	7 84 815	4 66 732	59.47	

Data unavailable = *

Source: BANBEIS Reports, 1990 – 2006.

The increase and decrease of enrolment at primary level must have an impact on enrolment at secondary and tertiary levels. Birth control may enormously reduce the total enrolment at every level (primary to tertiary) in future, albeit achievement of desired net enrolment (100%) will force the country to close some established schools. This, in turn, must have a negative impact in relation to the employment market and the educational expenditure required establishing schools (Alam, 2009b; Colclough, 1995).

A question should be asked about what then happens to the person, and their family, who has settled their life according to the job in which they are employed. It is quite obvious; they must seek alternative employment in order to meet family demands. However, lack of jobs may force many to involve to crime. Thus, a long-term vision is needed to identify the needs of the populace accurately (Interview of the persons of UGC and Ministry of Education).

Following this brief illustration of the context of the expansion of education, the principal focus of the following sections will be the rationale for the development of the private higher education (HE) sector in Bangladesh.

Analysis of the Table 5 intends to claim that education policy changes in Bangladesh dramatically. Before analyzing the table, let us state the reasons for choosing the data from secondary perspective. Secondary School Certificate is the first official qualification in Bangladesh which is guided by the EFA. Legislators and politicians often use the data of secondary and primary education to

receive donation as these sectors are highly prioritized by the donors. And the increase and decrease of successful examinees at SSC¹⁰ level always have an impact on higher levels (such as higher secondary and tertiary).

Table 5 shows that the number of successful SSC examinees has increased dramatically in 1991 compared to 1990. This increase is either a result of good education provided that particular year or of a dramatic policy change. However, it is assumable that providing good quality education requires regular practice. So in order to achieve greater success through quality education needs a certain time to develop the whole system, therefore, the success should be steady. It is therefore concluded that this greater success has been facilitated by a dramatic policy change. The year 1995, 1996 and 2001 show this view more clearly. In 1995, the number of candidates appeared in SSC were 7 65 135 whereas in 1994 and 1996, the candidates were respectively, 5 68 831 and 4 64 267. It is also observed that there was not an unusual or dramatic success rate¹¹ in 1994. So this sudden increase of SSC candidates in 1995 might be a result of huge school age population in 1985 as pupil attends SSC examination after a ten year of schooling. However, censuses report of 1991 shows that there was almost no and 1986. Table 5 also shows that there was a

¹⁰ If we had had an opportunity to analyze the data of Madrasha education, it would have generated more grave concern.

¹¹ If a huge number of students failed to pass SSC in 1994, they might re-sit the SSC in 1995 which would increase the number of candidates for the SSC in 1995.

huge decline of number of candidates appeared in SSC in 1996 and the rate of pass was also very low. Since 2002 and onwards, number of SSC candidates is decreasing and this might be an impact of birth control. As it is stated earlier, if increases and decrease are a result of quality education, it should be steady rather than dramatic.

In conclusion, in twenty first century, when education is an increasing phenomenon, we must expect to have more SSC graduates in 2001¹² than that in 1991. In fact, though the number of candidates appeared SSC examination in 2001 is more than in 1991, the students passed SSC are less in 2001 than that of 1991. Above analysis and data can claim that educational policy change in Bangladesh is dramatic than steady. Following section will snappily illuminate the possible impact of dramatic policy change on quality education and development.

The impact of dramatic policy change is manifolds. Alam (2008) made following observation “Policy is an insecticide which is used to kill all insects of education preventing development. However, if the policy is virus attracted or any insect kills the policy, what is the hope to gain effective education sector”

The above section clearly illustrates the increasing feature in primary level institutions of Bangladesh which has an impact on secondary and tertiary level education. Out of the impacts, we observed that because of the increased number of primary graduates, education policies are changing frequently. The discussion that follows illuminates some impacts of dramatic policy change (Tabb, 2001).

Impact of sudden increase

The sudden increase of successful SSC examinees must deteriorate the quality of education if the number of teachers and other facilities do not increase accordingly. In addition, to accommodate these greater increases, either more colleges should be established rapidly or existing colleges would be overwhelmed which certainly degrades education quality. In addition, an overnight expansion does not result effective schooling system. However, if new colleges were not established, there would be a potential threat of high drop out and derailment of students.

This sudden increase is not a result of good education, so the products should be incompetent to do their jobs albeit having necessary qualifications. This will also result a greater unemployment rate amongst educated people¹³. However, degradation of quality education has many impacts such as underemployment or

¹²If there is no unusual decline of school age population

¹³For the greater success in SSC, students aim to study higher education rather concentrate to study VET education. This also results greater number of high educated society than skilled workforce.

Table 6. Number of qualified students for procuring HE by year.

Year	Number of students officially qualified to pursue HE (especially Bachelor-Hon) with HSC
1990	60 583
1991	65 007
1992	84 632
1993	91 786
1994	1 29 834
1995	1 78 985
1996	1 07 332
1997	1 97 835
1998	1 92 959
1999	2 48 628

Source: Analysis of BANBEIS data.

non-professional¹⁴ employment (Alam et al., 2009b). So this also provides miscalculation of ‘rate of return’ to investment in education. In addition, it results budget deficit and its miss-utilization (Alam, 2008).

Impact of sudden decrease

The sudden decrease results low enrolment. Many colleges are therefore operating without students or with a very few students. Operation of more colleges rather than the need leads to have a miscalculation of ‘rate of return’ to investment in education. However, if the colleges were not funded by government exchequer, they would close. And if they were closed, unemployed people¹⁵ would bring social decadence by involving abominable practice.

The above discussion generates four major questions. Firstly, is there any guideline for the policy change in order to achieve the goal of education? Secondly, do the legislators follow guideline or are the rules weak, allowing legislators to take advantage of them. Thirdly, is there any long term vision and mission in designing and implementing policy? And finally, is there any political commitment for policy change?

Before analyzing Table 6, it is important to clarify why data from 1990 to 1999 has been considered. Although thirteen public universities were established after 1990, they do not significantly contribute to an increase in enrolment, as the public universities established after 1990 were already operating as higher learning

¹⁴Earlier a clerical job was occupied by an HSC Graduate, but these days the job is occupied by a university graduate. Most of the researches find that secondary graduate performs the jobs better than university graduate. However, without calculating the contributions of twenty first century’s technological moderation and cultural change, some of the researchers argue that the

¹⁵Once people have job, they organize their life according to the job, so frustration of unemployment is more dangerous for this group than the group who are never employed.

Table 7. Government revenue budget on education by sub-sector, 2005 - 2006 and 2006 - 2007 (BE) (Taka in million).

Type of education	2005-2006 (RB)		2006-2007 (BE)	
	Budget	%	Budget	%
Primary education	20 714.2	34.00	22 782.5	33.71
Secondary education	11 970.5	23.26	15 437.9	23.44
College (General) education	7 259.5	13.69	9 141.6	13.82
Madrasah education	5 916.7	11.45	7 754.6	11.59
Technical education	4 45.3	0.85	700.7	0.88
University education	4 043.5	7.98	4 919.0	8.24
Teachers training	256.2	0.46	300.5	0.45
Others administrative and subsidiary services department	12 865.5	8.31	10 168.0	7.87
Total (education)	63 471.4	100	71 204.8	100

Source: BANBEIS 2008.

institutes (HLI) before 1990. For instance, the Bangladesh Institute of Engineering and Technology, Khulna (BIET, Khulna), was a HLI but has been recently renamed as Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (KUET), whilst retaining the same structure. Moreover, the preface of the National University of Bangladesh (NUB) and Bangladesh Open University (BOU) (both established in 1992) is analogous. Before the establishment of the NUB, activities now carried out by the NUB were conducted by three other public universities (Dhaka, Chittagong and Rajshahi). The BOU is also unable to significantly increase enrolment at tertiary level because of its main operation at secondary, higher secondary and language education levels through *distance mode* for school leavers. It is also noted that no special new infrastructure was established for these two universities (NUB and BOU). They were established on the abandoned campus of the Islamic University¹⁶. Moreover, literature shows that university graduate performs the job better than secondary graduate. We argue that in order to evaluate the job performance of two graduates, it is important to identify the contribution of technological, cultural and globalization moderation in doing the jobs and this contributions should not be counted in favour of university graduate as this knowledge and skills have been provided by the world of 21st century not essentially from the university.

Once people have job, they organize their life according to the job, so frustration of unemployment is more dangerous for this group than the group who are never employed. Development of the private HE sector began in the developing world from the early 1990s due to the influence of donor agencies (e.g. World Bank, International Monetary Fund - IMF). Furthermore, the

period (a 10 year segment) was considered, as literature argues that rising student enrolment is an initial indicator in the expansion of private education (Brock-Utne, 1996). Indeed, once expansion begins as a result of rising enrolment, further expansion is biased by a number of issues (that is, politics, market situations, national characteristics of the people, globalization) (Bartlett et al, 2008).

Table 6 shows that officially qualified students at HE level are an increasing feature for every year, with the exception of 1996. A small decrease is also noted in 1998. Thus, it can be advised that, by reviewing a ten-year segment initially, the growth in the number of students having the official prerequisite to study at HE level forces the country to expand the private HE sector. The following discussion aims to clarify further, interrelated reasons for private HE expansion.

Government budgetary constraint is of concern in the privatisation of HE. Being an underdeveloped country means a dependence on foreign aid or international donations. The donor agencies accept development in the area of primary education, literacy and adult education, and consequently HE lacks necessary financing (Brock-Utne, 2000; Nishimuko, 2007). As is evidenced by research, providing technical subjects in HE, demands a high budget, but data available shows that the budget for HE and Diploma level Technical Education is extremely low (Tables 7 and 8).

Tables (9 and 10) present the education revenue and development budgets for the fiscal years 2005 - 2006 and 2006 - 2007. The data showed no significant development of the budgetary allocation in favour of university and technical education provisions. Practically no public universities were established after 1991, apart from some HE institutions or enterprises that converted into universities whilst retaining their original structure.

Thus, no completely new investments have been involved. Since there are no changes to the infrastructure, apart from being newly named as a university, the size and shape of the public universities remains

¹⁶ Establishing an Islamic university was a dream of ex-President Mr Ziaur Rahman. He committed to its establishment in Kustia. After his death, his successor Hossain Mohammed Ershad established the Islamic University in Gazipur. In 1991, BNP (a political party formed by Mr. Ziaur Rahman) regained power. Mrs. Ziaur Rahman was selected as the state chief, and she shifted the Islamic University to Kustia

Table 8. Government development budget on education by sub-sector and source, 2005-2006 (RB) and 2006-2007 (BE) (Taka in million).

Sub-sector	2005-2006 (RB)		2006-2007 (BE)	
	Budget Allocation	%	Budget Allocation	%
Primary and mass education	16 947.5	61.51	19 927.8	52.65
Secondary and higher education	7 459.6	27.07	9 234.1	24.39
Technical education	1 252.3	4.55	1 882.5	4.97
University education	1 878.2	6.82	1 271.8	3.36
Own project (MOPME)	-	-	2 679.2	7.08
Own project (MOE)	13.7	0.05	2 857.6	7.55
Total	27551.3	100.00		

Source: BANBEIS 2008.

Table 9. On the issue of 'economically solvent but academically poor' students admitted to the private HE sector.

Variable	Academically poor but economically solvent students		
	True (%)	Fairly true (%)	False
PVHST	75	20	0
PUHT	89.47	7.89	0
PVHT	83.72	16.27	0

Table 10. On the issue of 'meritorious but economically poor students not capable of being admitted to a private university/institution'.

Variable	Meritorious but economically poor students not capable?		
	True (%)	Fairly true (%)	False
PVHST	75	21	0
PUHT	92.10	5.26	0
PVHT	76.74	18.60	4

unchanged. Such circumstances have resulted the expansion of private HE in order to cover the flow of students caused by succeeding the EFA target (Brock-Utne, 2000; Nishimuko, 2007).

Student of private HE sector

The following discussion is divided into two parts: the first will answer two questions concerning private HE overall. These are: What is the academic quality of students targeted? What is the family background of students targeted?

Academic quality of students targeted by private HE

The literature suggests that economically well-off students choose private HE when rejected by public

institutions (Alam, 2008). The question, "Is public Higher Education the first preference for students?" was asked to the three groups: Public HE Teachers (PUHT), Private HE Teachers (PVHT) and Private HE Support staffs (PVHST). The findings are presented below (Figures 1 - 3). The results indicate that public HE is indeed the first choice for students, according to the perception of the academics. This fact was critically examined by the questionnaires given to Public HE Student (PUHS) and Private HE Student (PVHS).

Of PUHS, 100% said that they were more interested in studying in a public university (Figure 4). Of these, 19.14% were studying their preferred subject (Figure 5), 41.30% were studying at their preferred public university (Figure 6), whereas less than 1% were studying both at their preferred university and their preferred subject. However, a reasonable number of economically well-off students had not considered private HE to study their preferred subject, even they preferred to study a less

Public HE Teachers



Figure 1. Answer of the question by PHUT “is public higher education the first preference for students?”

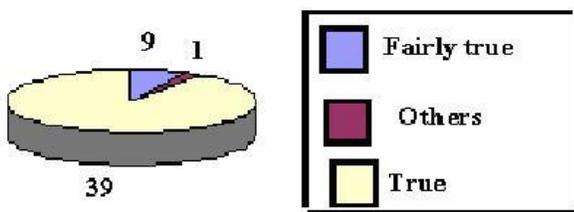


Figure 2. Answer of the question “is public higher education the first preference for students?” by PVHT.

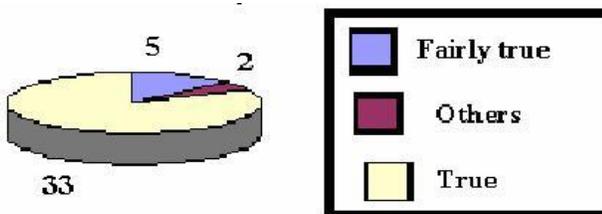


Figure 3. Answer of the question “is public higher education the first preference for students?” by PVHST.

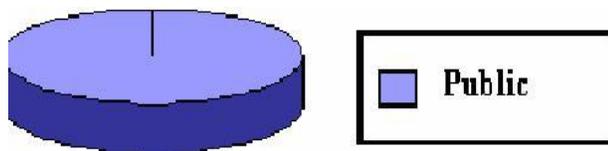


Figure 4. Interest of the PUHS to public university.

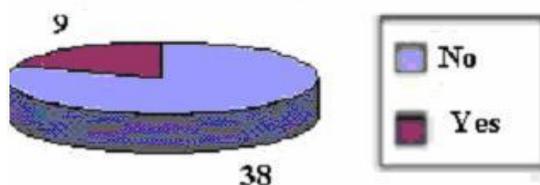


Figure 5. Interest of the PUHS to public university.

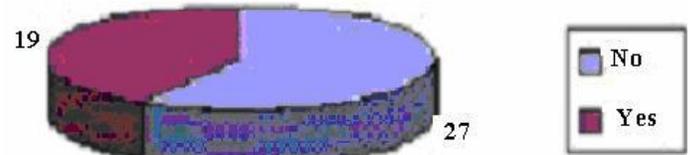


Figure 6. Percentage of the PUHS studying their preferred public university.

popular subject at a non-preferred public institution. To understand the influence of tuition when choosing a university, students were asked that, if they had been financed by an organisation, would private HE be their first preference. No-one opted for private university; rather, 84.21% expressed opinions in favour of the public institutions, while the rest expressed no preference. However, 71.79% of PUHS might consider the private sector if, after being rejected by a public university, they were financed by an organisation to study private HE. According to this analysis, it is understood that students are more inclined to study in the public university (Tooley, 1999).

To explore this issue further, we examined data gathered from PVHS, where 54.13% completed the admission test of public universities (Figure 7), but none received an offer for their preferred subject. Only 1.21% had an offer from their preferred public university, while 10.14% received an offer of a place from a public university other than their preference. The others (45.87%) were not competent (did not feel competent) to face the admission test conducted by the public universities (Figure 7). 74.75% of PVHS said that they would not consider private HE if they had an offer from public universities (Figure 8). 100% that, if they had an offer for their preferred subject at any of the public universities, they would not consider a private counterpart.

76.31% of Public HE Admission test Student (PUHAS) preferred to study any subject at a public university (Figure 9). However, the situation changes if the students are financed by donors. Results indicate that 58.33% would prefer to study in public HE; 38.88% would not mind going to any university, whilst very few (0.0277%) would wish to go to a private institution (Figure 10).

53.48% of Private HE Admission test Student (PVHAS) completed the admission test conducted by the public universities. Only 0.34% received an offer from their preferred public university and none received an offer to study their first choice of subject in any public university. Triangulated data confirms that public HE is obviously the first preference of students. Many of the less-able, under-qualified students, or those disqualified by a public university, consider private HE. Typically, students receiving an offer to study a less popular subject at a public university are studying in the private sector. However, no

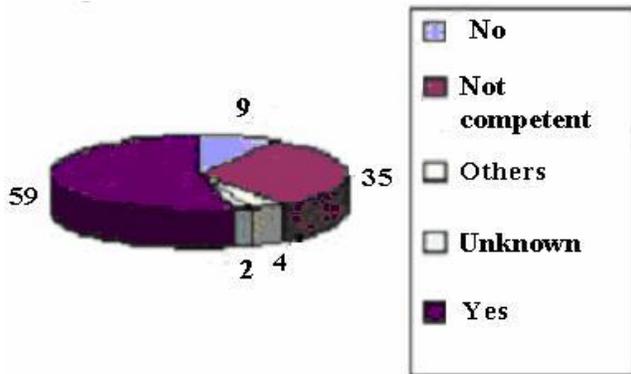


Figure 7. Competency of the PVHS regarding the admission test of public university.

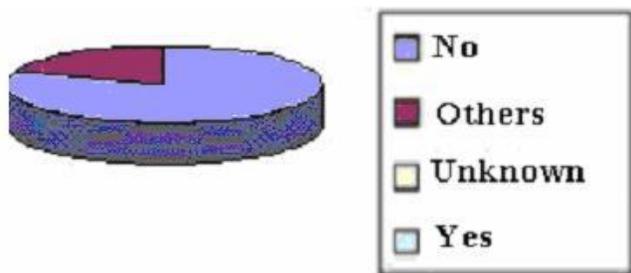


Figure 8. Percentage of the PVHE who would not consider private HE if offered from public universities.

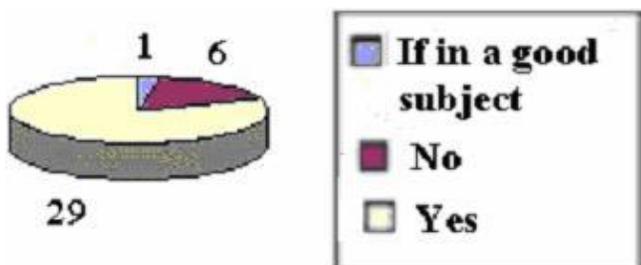


Figure 9. Percentage of PUHAS prefer to study any subject at any public university.

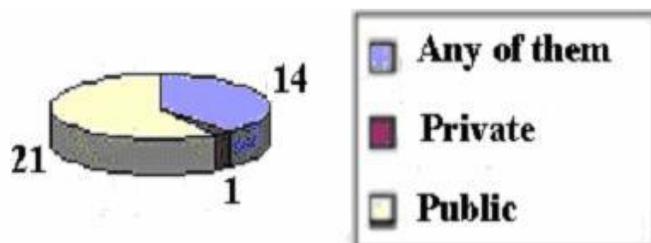


Figure 10. Preference of the PUHAS in selecting universities if financed by donors.

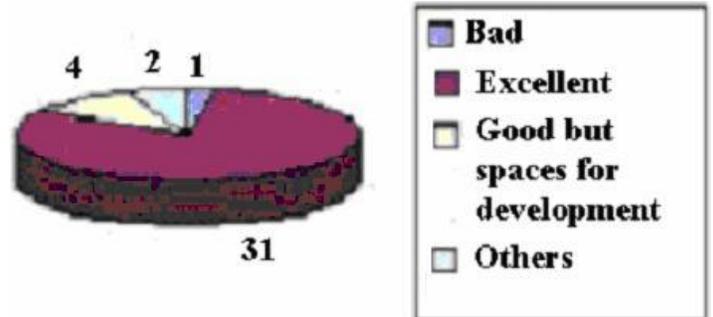


Figure 11. Comments of the PVHT regarding the academic capability of the students studying at private universities.

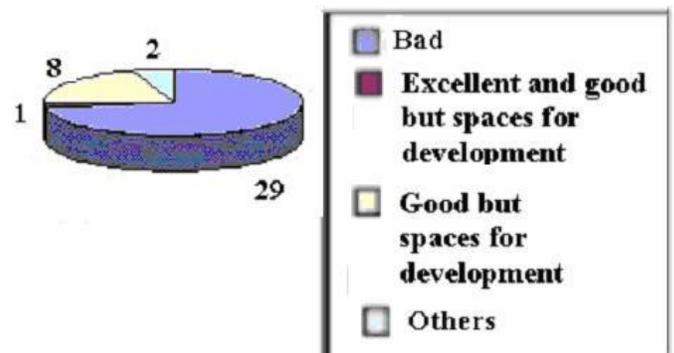


Figure 12. Comments of the PUHT regarding the academic capability of the students studying at private universities.

students were found to be studying in the private sector if they had been offered a place at a public university to study their preferred subject.

The situation described previously generates the question: "Are students studying in the private HE sector academically capable of pursuing HE?" Their lack of ability may result in poor performance of the private HE sector and generates a negative impact on HE. Considering this, respondents of each group (PVHT, PUHT and Private HE Support staff - PVHST) were requested to review the level of competence of their students (Figures 11, 12 and 13).

The previous figures illustrate that almost all PUHT consider the competence of their students to be 'excellent'. Conversely, many PVHT and PVHST consider the competence level of their students to be 'bad' ('bad' is used here to denote 'poor', as local respondents may misunderstand the meaning of the word 'poor').

Family background of the students targeted by Private HE

"If you want to run a private university, your location must

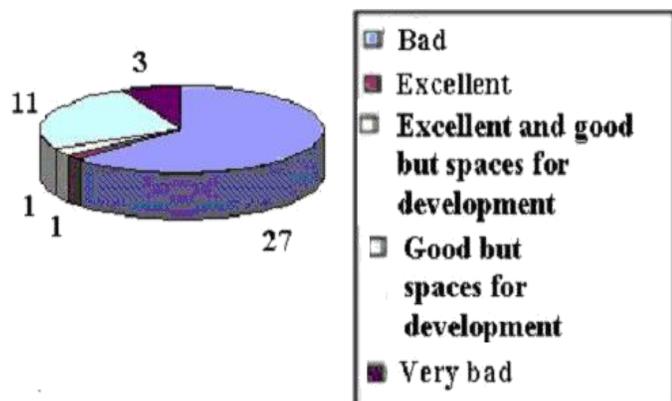


Figure 13. Comments of the PVHST regarding the academic capability of the students studying at private universities.

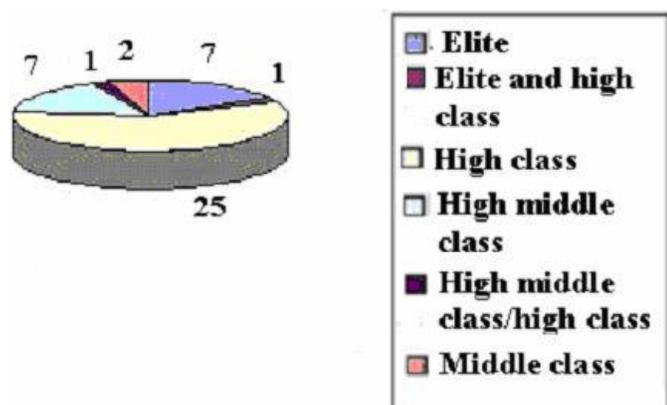


Figure 14. Opinion of the PVHT on the comment, "Only the wealthy can afford private HE for their children".

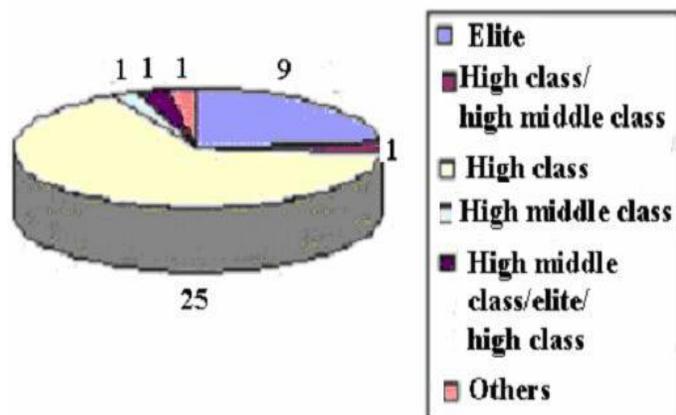


Figure 15. Opinion of the PUHT on the comment, "Only the wealthy can afford private He for their children".

be in the most urban area, especially in Dhaka, not in

Comilla."

The above statement was made by an ex-VC of Dhaka University, presently the VC of a private university in Comilla. Documents review shows that of the 54 private universities, 47 are located in Dhaka and the rest, apart from one in Comilla, are in Chittagong and Sylhet, (although the universities in Chittagong and Sylhet have Dhaka campuses). A few universities (Southeast, Northern) have recently opened very small campuses in divisional and district towns. Private universities have positioned themselves in these areas purely because these are the places where the wealthy people live. It is easy to hire a 'luxurious place' to accommodate students from a privileged background (Tooley, 1999).

PVHS shows that many students studying in private universities are children of high-ranking officials of public enterprises (bureaucrats, academics, army, police and customs officers), and business executives. Generally, public officers in Bangladesh receive low salaries but enjoy a considerable amount of illegal income (for example, bribes, corruption when spending official budgets, consultancy fees, private coaching fees). As a result, their children fail to supply full and accurate information relating to parental income. According to PVHS, PVHT and PVHST private HE students come not only from an economically privileged background, but also from families with a higher level of education.

Scholarships within the private HE sector are a difficult area, as they are offered simply as a means of attracting more students, but not necessarily more able students. It is interesting to note that the entrepreneurs of private universities and institutions do not provide scholarships from their own funds, nor from other sponsor bodies or research funds. The scholarships offered are funded from tuition fees.

Many of the private universities claim that students with GPA 5 or Grade A at HSC are welcome to study with them without paying tuition fees. However, it is important to note that, by possessing this qualification, students may study with the public counterparts where virtually no tuition fees need to be paid.

Private universities use a business technique known as 'sale tuition'. A careful investigation shows that a non-elite private university charges a minimum of BDT 80 000 per academic year for tuition fees, in addition to other necessary charges such as examination fees, library charges, and charges for accommodation and transport. In Bangladesh, only the wealthy can afford this for the education of their children. To examine this more closely, data given below represents the views of three groups: PVHT, PUHT and PVHST, concerning the family background of students studying in private universities. Figures 14, 15 and 16 show that, on the whole, students from a higher class of family background was in receipt of private HE.

In this context, it is worth noting that a considerable number of students in private universities do not have the

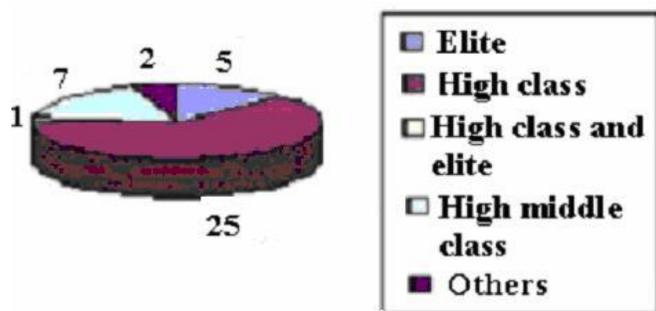


Figure 16. Opinion of the PVHST on the comment, “Only the wealthy can afford private HE for their children”.

necessary qualifications¹⁷ for the programme of study (PVHS, IPVHS, IPVHT). It is also important to note that students studying in private HE is sponsored by one or both parents (IPVHS, PVHS). There are cases where students aiming for MBAs or other professional degrees are financed from their own funds. Conversely, a considerable number of students in public HE are financed by relatives other than their parents (PUHS, IPUHS).

Table 11 confirms that the average number of the private HE sector’s academic staff is small when compared with standard universities. It also indicates that 38.00% of teachers at private universities are ‘guest speakers’. In addition, a considerable number of public university’s academics are working with the private universities (included in the Table 11) as full-time faculty members taking paid or unpaid leave. Furthermore, retired academics from the public universities work as full-time faculty members at the private universities. A large number of public university academics are involved in the private HE sector (Alam, 2008; Yang, 2003).

Many of the guest speakers invited are from two particular universities located in Dhaka, as this is where many of the private universities are located. Academics of public universities, specializing in market-driven subjects (Business, IT, Computing, Law), work as guest speakers at several private universities.

An important point is illustrated by a full-time academic at a public university:

“Before I became a guest speaker at private universities, I was experiencing hardship. I used to commute by bus - life was miserable. I had been thinking that, if I were a professor, I would have a better life, as consultancies are offered to professors. In order to publish more articles, I could gain promotion to professorship; I often had to walk to collect the data as I did not have the money to

¹⁷ Few respondents studying for a Bachelor (Hon) degree in the private HE sector, especially university provision, pass SSC and ‘O’ level but to study a Bachelor course, students have to have at least HSC or ‘A’ level.

spend on transport. These days, I have a house and cars for myself and for my family. However, I have to work hard. I need to deliver just one lecture for one hour in Dhaka University every week. For the rest of the week, I lecture in different private universities starting at 10 am and finishing at 9 pm. Now, I do not bother with the job of consultancy.”

Although this statement expresses the academic’s satisfaction, it raises a few major concerns:

1. If the employment market of the private HE sector is occupied by the public university academics, what are the prospects for unemployed new graduates?
2. If public university academics are widely engaged with the private HE sector, who is to meet the demands of students in the public HE sector?
3. Increasing the income of particular academics will bring dissatisfaction to other teaching staff at public universities (e.g. in the areas of Geography, Bangla, Education or Chemistry).

Interviews with Private HE student (IPVHS) and Interviews with Public HE student (IPUHS) demonstrate that guest speakers are very ‘erratic’ in taking classes. Interviews with Private HE Teacher (IPVHT) also show that most of the workload is given to their own faculties, who are poorly paid. They point out that public university academics are employed for the purpose of advancing the university’s prestige. We argue that there is a huge shortage of experienced, competent academics in market-driven subjects, since the offering of these subjects is a recent occurrence. We believe that this shortage of academics leads to the employment of teachers from their counterparts. However, if the academics of public universities can shoulder the workload of the private universities, why do the public universities themselves not increase their enrolment, as they have a better infrastructure? We again stress that public universities can offer various shifts (morning, afternoon, evening, weekend) as their teaching staff are lecturing in various shifts at private universities to meet the needs of different groups of students.

We argue that the job market within the private HE sector remains small when compared to the number of universities. The sector does not extensively provide jobs for new scholars - the newly-graduated - and its contribution towards addressing unemployment is slight.

Major impact of privatization of HE

In Bangladesh, education is considered as the weapon of development and it is important to ensure the equal right of every individual to have access to education. A number of advantages and disadvantages caused by the

Table 11. Teacher of private HE sector.

Total number of Universities	Total number of academics	Average number of academics	Full-time academics	Average number of full-time academics	Guest speakers	% age of guest speakers
52	4462	85.80	2762	53.11	1700	38.00

Source: UGC annual report 2003.

private HE sector can be noted but two factors are important to create a real academic atmosphere. One of them is student and academic as they create a real academic atmosphere with the help of proper infrastructure. Once targeted students and academics are not capable or interested, it is merely impossible to create a decent academic atmosphere rather both of the groups act as buyer and seller. Thus, a diploma will be a product of market rather than be a product of a decent academy.

However, with the advantage of a sound financial background, privileged individuals are not only accessing better quality education, but also gain a better quality of life through improved access to better quality fundamental goods and rights. The recent expansion of private higher education in Bangladesh has thus, not only opened the door for the privileged to access better quality education, but it has helped those within the elite that would not normally get access to higher education the means by which to enter this form of provision. This has had significant impact on the quality of HE and research in Bangladesh. Research plays the most vital role for the development of total education system (primary, secondary, VET, tertiary and others) and national development. If the research environment can be destroyed from the higher education system of Bangladesh, no international policy or target (that is, EFA, Millennium Development Goal - MDG) will bring the development of Bangladesh as the country's own scholars have to understand the development of process of their country.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Tendency of legislators of Bangladesh is to receive fund from donors at any cost. Moreover, country lacks substantial research environment depending on researches carried out by the Western academics. Being outsiders, findings and recommendations made by the Western Scholars are also biased by the researchers' own culture, or by their country's bureaucracy (Alam, 2008). These may not always be applicable in the context of the developing country due to cultural, political, educational and economical differences. EFA is not free from these problems. Thus rapid response made by government, NGOs and donors in the execution of EFA targets causes a number of negative impacts on the education system of Bangladesh. Quantitative

achievement is being made demolishing the qualitative progress. Quick quantitative achievement is always a hindrance in building solid foundation. Solid foundation should not be the product of overnight. It requires time in order to cope with all circumstances.

Speedy expansion of EFA and its fever present a low quality education. It provides a commercialization and marketing approach in education. Education is not a commodity rather it should be considered as social value and asset. Considering this, it is recommended not to progress with a high spread but to with decent steadiness. Providing education for the economic and social development of country is more important rather let it go with market approach. In order to do so following suggestions are noted:

- Bangladesh needs to accommodate the increased number of children in the schools resulted through the EFA programme by arranging necessary facilities in the schools.
- The success of EFA has been constrained to a large extent because of the high drop out rate at both primary and secondary levels. Low rate of return from primary level education might be a key reason for high drop out. Epoch-making steps should be taken to reduce drop out.
- Legislators need to calculate the number of employed individuals sector by sector. It is also important to understand the probable job fields for primary and secondary graduates. Keeping these views, skills required for jobs should be thought (Alam, 2008b).
- Need to identify how many higher educated and professional graduates are required in respective to different field. Accordingly, a portion of students will be prepared for higher education by selecting their merits and interests. No economical and social privilege in selecting the students aiming to catering for certain purpose will be given.
- Country shall not produce huge number of higher educated individuals than its need as it consumes a large proportion of budget.
- Country should explore the potential employment market within national and offshore; and manpower will be developed with the view to the projection.
- Rules should be restricted for the professional to work in their receptive field explicitly.
- It is important to make aware the employers and individuals not to suffer in diploma disease rather they

Annex 1. Flow diagram of education structure of Bangladesh.

Age	Grade											
26+												
25+	XX					PhD (Engr.)	PhD (Medical)					
24+	XIX			Ph. D	PostMBBS Dipl					PhD in Edu.		
23+	XVIII		M. Phil		M. Phil (Medical)							
22+	XVII	MA/MSc/MCom/MSS/MBA		LLM	MBBS BDS	MSc (Engr.)	MSc (Agr)	MBA	M. Ed and MA (Edn)		MA (LSc)	
21+	XVI	Bachelor (Hons)	Masters (Prel)	LLB (Hons)		BSc. Eng	BSc Eng (Tech Edn)	BBA	B. Ed and Dip. Ed	BP ED	Dip. (LSc)	Kamil
20+	XV		Bachelor			BSc. Agr						Fazil
19+	XIV		(Pass)			BSc. Text	Diploma (Engr)				Diploma in Nursing	
18+	XIII					BSc. Leath						
17+	XII	Secondary Examination		HSC				HSC Vocational	C in Edu	C in Agri	Diploma in Comm	Alim
16+	XI	Higher Secondary Education										
15+	X		Examination	SSC			TRADE	Artisan Course e.g. ceramics				Dakhil
14+	IX	Secondary education										
							Certificate/SSC Vocational					
13+	VIII	Junior Secondary Education										
12+	VII											
11+	VI											
10+	V	Primary Education										
9+	IV											
8+	III											
7+	II											
6+	I											
5+		Pre-primary Education										
4+												
3+												

Source: Ministry of Education, Structure of the Education System, website: http://www.moedu.gov.bd/edu_system__edu_structure.htm#, cited on 18/02/2008.

need to understand the concept of 'job ready' graduates.
 - Increasing budget for in-service training is required. Undertaking in-service training should be obligatory for the officials and workers. Saving budget from non-required higher education should be invested on VET

programme.

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