

Factors Affecting Higher Education Quality in Bangladesh: An Attempt to Improve Higher Education Quality in Bangladesh through HEQEP.

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ABSTRACT

To meet the globalization challenges raising higher education quality to the world standard is essential. Because Economic Factors, An Era of Competition, Demographic Realities, lack of infrastructural development, Governmental Political and Legal Challenges, Religious Factors, internal conflicts among educational institutions, corruption etc affect quality of higher education in Bangladesh. Bangladesh Govt. has taken initiatives to develop the quality of tertiary education. Govt. plans to prepare university graduates in such way that they can successfully compete in the context of international knowledge society. The Government prepared a Higher Education Strategic Plan 2006-26, which was fully homegrown with participation of front-line academics from both public and private universities and representatives from think-tanks and the private sector. Accordingly, the Ministry of Education, with the assistance of the World Bank, has undertaken a Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project (HEQEP). The project aims at improving the quality of teaching-learning and research capabilities of the tertiary education institutions through encouraging both innovation and accountability and by enhancing the technical and institutional capacity of the higher education sector. The Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project (HEQEP) will comprise of the following 4 (four) components: (i) promotion of academic innovation in teaching-learning and research through an Academic Innovation Fund (AIF) allocating funds on a competitive basis to public and private universities; (ii) institutional capacity building at the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the universities; (iii) connectivity capacity building for universities and research centers through the development of the Bangladesh Research and Education Network (BdREN); and (iv) support to the operation of the project implementation unit. The University Grants Commission of Bangladesh is the implementing agency of the project. A HEQEP Unit has been established in UGC for implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation of the activities.

Key words: Factors, Higher Education, Quality, HEQEP, Project.

INTRODUCTION

The development of a modern society depends to a large extent on the nature and standard of higher education. Thus the role of higher education is to prepare competent, knowledgeable and far-sighted people for assuming various higher responsibilities. The growing importance of knowledge in the modern world can hardly be overemphasized, especially in the era of globalization and in a global environment which is fiercely competitive. Particularly, higher education has enormous potential to promote prosperity in the developing nations (UGC: 2006).

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In Bangladesh there was a time when higher education used to be considered a luxury in a society of mass illiteracy. However, towards the turn of the last century the need for highly skilled manpower started to be acutely felt every sphere of the society for self-sustained development and poverty alleviation. Highly trained manpower not only contributes towards human resource development of a society through supplying teachers, instructors, researchers and scholars in the feeder institutions like schools, colleges, technical institutes and universities. They are also instrumental in bringing about technological revolution in the field of agriculture, industry, business and commerce, medicine, engineering, transport and communication etc (UGC: 2005) But quality of higher education is not so good in our country and world- wide is not highly acceptable because Economic Factors, An Era of Competition, Demographic Realities, lack of infrastectural development ,Governmental Political and Legal Challenges, Religious Factors, internal conflicts among educational institutions, corruption etc affect quality of higher education in Bangladesh. Govt.has taken an attempt to improve quality of higher education in our country through higher education quality enhancement project (HEQEP) funded by World Bank.

Objectives of the Study

This reposting study is aimed at focusing on the factors affecting the higher education quality in Bangladesh. In addition to this an improvement attempt would be taken. The objectives are:

- i) To identify present scenario and policies to ensure Quality in higher education.
- ii) To know about Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project for enhancing higher education quality in Bangladesh.
- iii) To improve the institutional academic infrastructure by generating better access to Knowledge and information, by integrating **ICT** and laboratory technologies into learning, and by modernizing student learning spaces and support facilities through Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project (HEQEP).

METHODOLOGY

Correct and smooth completion of research work requires adherence to some rules and methodologies. Rules were followed to ease the data collection procedure. Accuracy of study depends on the information and data analysis. The subject matter of this report is based on primary and secondary sources of data and information. The study is performed based on the information extracted from different sources collected by using a specific methodology. The methods of completing the report have included some steps which were followed by one by one. First of all I selected the topic of the report then I had to collect information relating to the topic by primary and secondary sources and through personal interview. As an Internee of project it was easy for me to collect data. After gathering the information I had to determine the procedure of research and sampling plans. After gathering all the information I required, I have come up with an expected result of the report.

2.1 Population:

All projects of HEQEP located in everywhere in Bangladesh has been taken into consideration as population.

2.2 Sample:

HEQEP CP 2245 HSTU Dinajpur was selected for gaining as a better communicational advantage.

2.3 Data collection:

For carrying out this report I had to study the actual project operations of HEQEP .In order to carry out this study, two sources of data have been used.

a) *Primary data* b) *Secondary data*

Primary Sources:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct interview & conversation with respective personnel of HEQEP. ▪ Conversation with my supervisor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Official records. ▪ Observing projects activities for 3 months.

Secondary Sources	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Books of HEQEP ▪ Manuals of different project. ▪ Newspapers. ▪ Internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Journals ▪ Research papers, training materials

2.4 Size of the Population:

The population is the aggregate of all the elements sharing common set of characteristics that comprise the universe for the purpose of research study. In case of my study the population includes manpower of the project:

<i>Name of the post</i>	<i>NOS.</i>
Sub project <i>Manager(SPM)</i>	01
Alternate Sub project <i>Manager(ASPM)</i>	01
Associate Sub project <i>Manager(ASPM)</i>	03
<i>officers</i>	02
<i>Total officer</i>	07
<i>Class-III</i>	2
<i>Class-IV</i>	2
<i>Total</i>	4
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>11</i>

**** NOS=Number of Sample**

2.5 Sample Size:

Sample is a subgroup of the elements of the population selected for participating of the study. To accumulate the required data I have contacted with HEQEP CP 2245. The sample I have taken for the study consists of 9 personnel of HEQEP CP 2245 Dinajpur.

2.6 Sampling Technique:

Here I have used **non-probability judgmental sampling** that attempts to obtain a sample of convenient element based on the judgment of the researcher.

2.7 Location of Study:

The area of my study has been encompassed the operation area of HSTU Dinajpur.

Factors affecting Higher Education Quality in Bangladesh

3.1 Quality and quality in education

Whenever quality in education is mentioned, it may be vital to establish what is understood by the term “quality,” because different professionals such as educators, researchers and politicians perceive this term differently. The term “quality” is derived from the Latin word “qualitates,” which means the degree of excellence of a thing (Oxford Dictionary, 2003). Coombs (1985: 105) defines the word quality as:

“Qualitative dimensions mean more than the quality of education as customarily defined and judged by student learning achievements, in terms of traditional curriculum and standards. Quality... also pertains to the relevance of what is taught and learned—to how well it fits the Quality Education Management present and future needs of the particular learners in question, given their particular circumstances and prospects. It also refers to significant changes in the educational system itself, in the nature of its inputs; its objectives, curricula and educational technologies; and its socioeconomic, cultural and political environment.”

In terms of quality in education, the World Bank (1995: 46) puts forth the following concept: Quality in education is difficult to define and measure. An adequate definition must include student outcomes. Most educators would also include in the definition the nature of the educational experiences that help to produce thus outcomes—the learning environment.

Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994: 45–46) offer two different definitions of quality. One is related to quality assurance, and the other is from consumers’ points of view, which are as follows:

Quality assurance refers to the determination of standards, appropriate methods and quality requirements by an expert body, accompanied by a process of inspection or evaluation that examines the extent to which practice meets these standards; and consumer-driven quality refers to a notion of quality in which those who are to receive a product or service make explicit their expectations for this product or service and quality is defined in terms of meeting or exceeding the expectations of customers.

Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994) argue that the concept of quality includes a customer-driven perspective that is a derivative of economic theories. In fact, service quality has now become an important dimension for education providers, as with any other business organizations. Hence, customer evaluations of the quality of education should be an integral part of overall quality management in any of the organizations (Haque, 2004). The following figure shows what variables affect quality education:

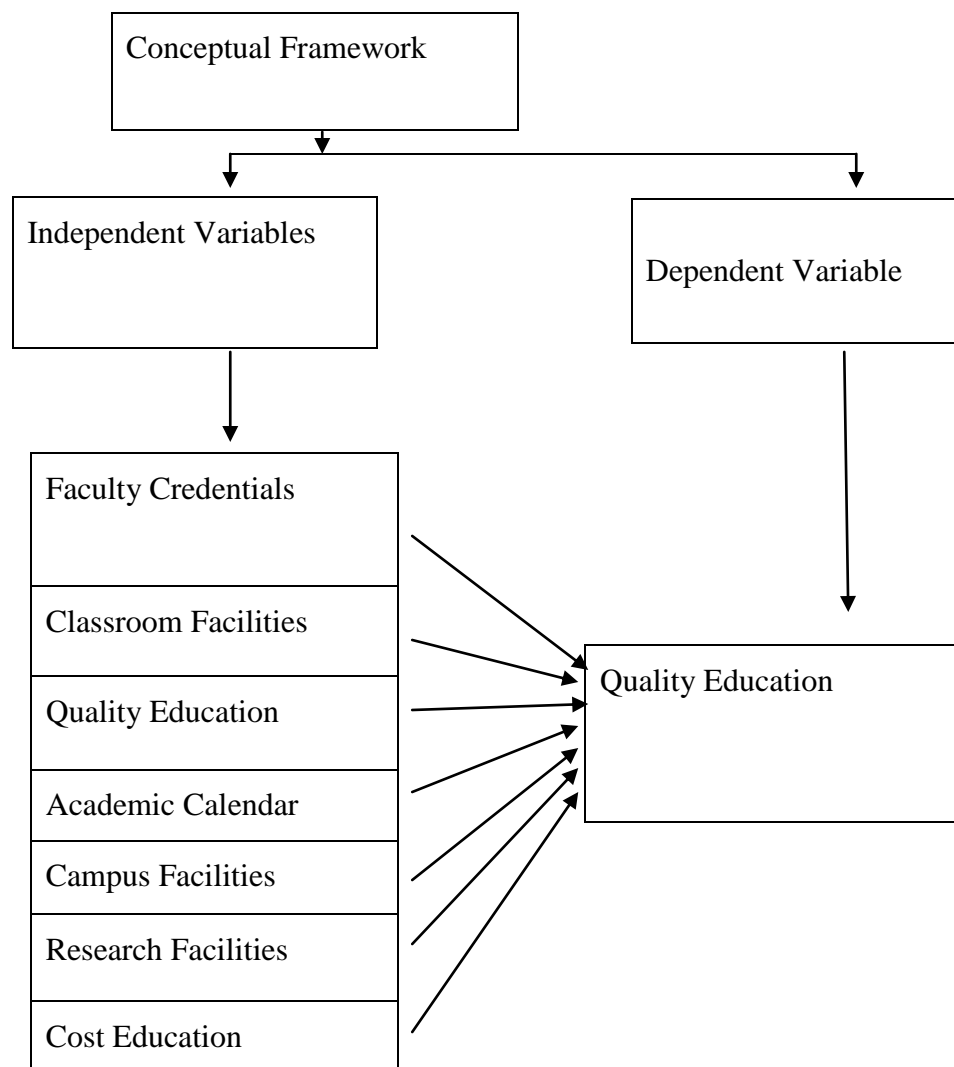


Figure 1. Conceptual framework for quality education at universities in Bangladesh
3.2 Factors affecting Higher Education Quality in Bangladesh

Internal Factors

a. Student Intake

University education is likely to be adversely affected by its poor base line i.e. Intake. Quality of education at primary and secondary level is not satisfactory in most cases. Thus the outputs they provide as inputs of universities are found to have adversely affected quality of graduates in line with ‘low level trap’ (UGC: 2005).

b. Faculty Recruitment

There are four grades of university teachers such as Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor and Lecturer. There is set rule of recruitment for which UGC has provided a guideline. But universities are found to have modified the rules through their respective syndicate in a lenient way. But the crux of the problem is that the best talent to jobs in education sector cannot be always ensured due to real pay and facilities compared to civil services and private sector opportunities.

c. Staff Development

Quality of faculty is not up to the desired level. Selection procedure though theoretically more or less ideal yet in some cases proved faulty resulting from various factors. The situation as to appointment in the positions of Assistant Professor and above through up gradation/restructuring has proved to be counterproductive. Staff development, both as idea and practice, suffers from a lamentable lack of infrastructure facilities too. Teachers’ commitment to search for knowledge, adequate teaching norms of academic behavior is not above question. Teaching has become another job for some, where consultancy has become more important. The process has been further complicated by absence of faculty

evaluation in the Universities. Improving the quality of faculty is made more difficult by the ill-conceived incentive structures. Faculty pay is generally very low in relation to that offered by alternative professional occupations.

d. Teaching Method

The present method of teaching the basic subjects, particularly teaching science at all levels, have been made ineffective by outmoded method and lack of broader aspects of disciplines. The growth of quality education at all levels is based on teaching method to a greater extent which needs to be supported with required infrastructure and facilities. Such a situation is very much lacking which needs up gradation.

e. Library and Laboratory

Library and laboratory conditions are not conducive for quality education. There is no denying the fact that the use of library facilities by students and teachers have declined over the years. The teachers in most cases seem to rely on particular texts and the students seems to possess increasingly poorer language ability to comprehend and explore the vast expanse of scholarship that the libraries hold. The libraries are poor as they lack adequate resources to buy recent publications and order for the basic journals. Likewise, the laboratories suffer from inadequacy of equipments.

External Factors

a. Politicization

Of the external forces, the prevailing political culture of the country has been identified as being mainly responsible for the fact that the administration, the teachers and students body have all been thoroughly politicized. The net result is factionalism: chaos and session-jam. In fact, the system of linking political parties with their student wing resulting in the open political patronage to student politics has meant many things at once; a student leader can take out a noisy procession on the corridors of an academic building in complete disregard of the classes in progress and this without any permission from any authority he has free access to the highest political leaders either arising from national issue or local/university issue leading to disturbance, closure, strike at the university causing unscheduled suspension of classes.

b. Unplanned Expansion

In absolute terms there has been an impressive quantitative expansion in the general university education even though the rate of increase in science and technology sector is not significant. There is no objection to such increase in line with population increase and increase in primary and secondary level output. But the crux of the problems that such increase always does not correspond to the needs, required infrastructure, faculty and financial facilities (UGC: 2006).

c. Financial Constraints

University administration faces a host of pressing problem to ensure required facilities for academic development and quality assurance under condition of severe resource constraints. For years it is observed that the governmental budgetary allocation to university education has declined considerably vis-à-vis other levels of education. Another significant feature has been that recurring expenditure increased rapidly at the expense of development grants (Taherul Islam: 2005).

d. Corruption

One fourth of Bangladeshi citizens perceive the education sector as a corrupt institution and one third involved in the sector. Report having paid a bribe to the education the Bangladeshi administration. According to a 2010 Transparency corruption which manifests International Bangladesh survey, incidence of bribery at itself mainly in the form of negligence of duty, asset- the service delivery level in the Bangladeshi primary stripping, abuse of power and bribery (Transparency education has showed a decline from 39.2% to 15.3% International, 2008). A report by the Bangladeshi Anti- in 2010. However, corruption in education still manifests Corruption Commission estimates the cost of itself in a variety of ways, including negligence of duty, bribery, misuse of resources etc. (NORAD, 2011).

Present Scenario and policies for developing higher education quality in Bangladesh

4. 1 Higher Education in Bangladesh: The Present Scenario

i. General Information

Higher education in the public sector is a legacy of the British colonial education system. At present there are 90 universities in Bangladesh of which 34 are public and 56 are private universities. Of the public Universities twelve are general universities seven are engineering, three agricultural, seven science and technological and one is university of arts and culture, one affiliating and one offering education only on distance mode. The number of students in the public universities is around 92,000 excluding those in the affiliating National University and Open University offering distance mode education. Thus at the moment above 1.3 million of population receives higher education in Bangladesh of which 74 percent were male and 26 were female students in the year 2009. The percentage of female students enrolling at the universities is on the rise (UGC: 2009). Higher education facilities of the public universities are spread over the entire country, so that students of different regions can receive higher education without going very far from their familiar environment at home. Thus there is at least one public university in all the administrative divisions of the country.

ii. Structure of Higher Education in Bangladesh

There are 5 types of higher education available in the country. These are: i. General Education ii. Science and Technology and Engineering Education iii. Medical Education iv. Agricultural Education v. Distance Education. In addition, the higher education sector also provides Vocational and Madrasha education.

In Bangladesh higher education consists of a 3 year pass-course or a 4 year honors course for the bachelor's degree, followed by a two year Master's course for pass graduates and a one-year Master's course for honors graduates.

iii. Organizational structure of the universities

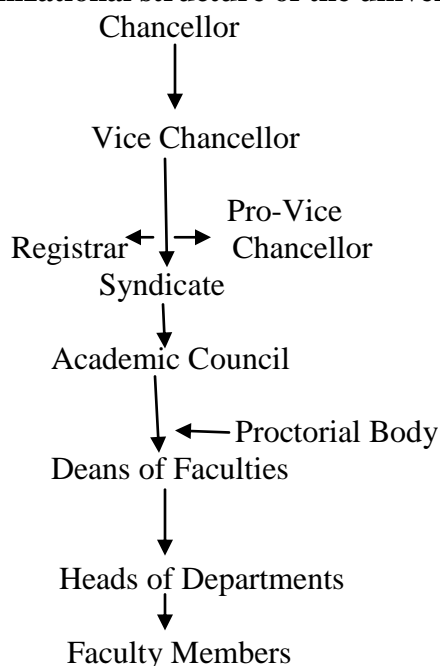


Figure 2. Organizational structure of the universities.

iv. Number of Students and Teachers in Higher Education

There are just over 1 million students studying at higher education level in the country. The total number of students in the public universities is 112,430 while the affiliating National University (NU) and the Bangladesh Open University (BOU) have total of 777,492 and 437,500 students respectively. However, in the BOU only 84,271 are pursuing higher education studies. The number of teachers in public universities other than NU and BOU is 6,280 of whom about 17 percent are absent for different reasons. Leaving aside the absentees, the average student/teacher ratio in the public universities is about 1:18 (UGC: 2009).

The number of National University Affiliated colleges in 2001 was 1,297. There were 32,278 teachers and 773,492 students in these colleges, which meant a 1:24 teacher student ratio. At present, among the graduate and post-graduate students, 83% were studying in national University affiliated colleges and the rest in the public universities (UGC: 2009).

4.2 Public Universities in Bangladesh

The area comprising the present Bangladesh was to have no university for a long time during the British rule. A teaching cum residential university was set up first in Dhaka in 1921. The second university was set up in Rajshahi in 1953. In total there had been 6 public universities in the country before 1971. After the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971, during the last 35 years, higher education scenario has greatly been transformed. The number of public universities has increased significantly. Some key features of public universities are-

- Enrolment rate has increased over periods
- There has been commensurate expansion of faculty in the universities. The teacher-student ratio, on average, has not varied much. On paper, teachers in the universities have better academic qualification now than before. There appears to be more publications made by academics now than before.
- The expansion is mostly quantitative. Quality of education has not improved.
- In general higher education is highly subsidized. In absolute term the extent of subsidy has been increasing over time.
- In the last decade the share of university allocation to total education reveals a saw-saw trend with, however, a decreasing trend for last three years.
- The employee-student ratio reveals interesting trend. Against teacher student ratio of 1:17 on average, this ratio is 1:5 on the average.

Public universities are the foremost choice of the majority students seeking higher education. This is for various reasons. First, these universities offer wide range of subjects in Science, Commerce, Liberal Arts, Humanities, Engineering and Technology, Law, Education and Medicine disciplines. Second, public universities attract the best brains and researchers as teachers although monetary compensation for them is anything facilities are much better there than anywhere else in the country. Fourth, seminars, symposiums, workshops, debates, exhibitions and visiting teachers lecture series are often held in these institutions with a wide scope for national and international exposures for promising young knowledge seekers. Fifth, residential and boarding facilities at low cost/subsidized rates are available in these public universities.

4.3 Financing Public Universities

Most of the public universities are dependent on government for funding. However, Out of the 34 public universities the National University is financially independent of the government and very solvent. It derives its entire fund from students' registration and examination entry fees. The Open University of Bangladesh can cover about 30% of its revenue expenses from the fees collected from its enrollees and the rest is financed by the Government through the University Grants Commission of Bangladesh (Mahfuzul Huq:2003). The other public universities meet their needs in the following ways:

i. Students Tuition Fees and Other Fees:

Public universities cater the educational needs of the thousands of meritorious students at a nominal cost of TK. 12 (about 20 US cents) per month which has remained static for about the last 75 years. Thus, it goes without saying that sum does not even cover the cost of collection and maintenance records. Other incidental fees such as registration fees, sports, students union fees and examination fees have, however, increased to a large extent over the years so as to cover cost and even generate some income for their universities. But the tuition fees cannot be enhanced due to strong pressure from students union and opposition political parties. Neither the university administration nor the government is keen on taking serious steps to increase the tuition fees simply because of the fear of students' unrest and opening up a new front for political opposition.

ii. Government Funding

In the face of the above vis-à-vis a huge rise in costs of university administration the government has to spend a large amount of money for the public universities from the public exchequer every year. About 95 percent of the fund for higher education is provided by the government while a maximum of 5 percent on average are generated by the universities from their own resources. In 2011-2012 govt. Budget is tk. 112953 lac and own resource is tk. 188.43 lac.

Thus, average expenditure for medical students and agricultural scientists has been the highest (Tk.154,430 and Tk. 87,761 respectively) particularly because of fewer number of students vis-à-vis high fixed costs while for general universities the average expenditure is rather low. Against the per head tuition fees of less than 150 (about 2.5 US dollars) per year released from the students this sum of public expenditure appears to be colossal in the backdrop of a poor country like Bangladesh. Yet, tertiary education receives inadequate importance in the public budget. This is true for both revenue and development allocations. While education is of all types of has received the highest priority in the budget allocation (about 10-11 percent of total revenue budget), funding for university/higher education has never reached even 1% of total revenue budget allocation during the last 10 years.

Budget (in Crore Tk.)

Financial Year	National Budget	Allocation for Education	Allocation for Universities	Share of Percentage of University in Education Budget	Share of Universities in National Budget
2002-2003	34597.00	3587.46	288.67	8.05%	0.83%
2003-2004	35479.29	3738.97	293.57	7.85%	0.75%
2004-2005	39945.45	3960.39	323.53	8.17%	0.81%
2005-2006	46263.62	4474.80	389.85	8.71%	0.84%
2006-2007	50069.36	4608.85	409.11	8.88%	0.82%

Source: Bangladesh University Grants Commission, 2008

One striking feature of the revenue expenditure on education is that about 71% of the fund allocated for education was spent on teachers' salaries, pension and fringe benefits, 16% on general contingency and the rest 13% only was available for education contingency in 2006-2007.

Yet, more surprising is the fact that only a tiny percentage of fund is allocated for research. Thus in the year 2005-2006 only 29 million taka out of 3,773 million taka was earmarked for research and this is certainly a low percentage compared to the developed countries (Mahfuzul Huq :2007).

iii. Trust Funds

The older and also some relatively newer universities receive trust fund from benevolent elite members of the public. Usually these funds are donated for particular purposes e.g. for awarding scholarship/research grants or medals for distinct performance in academic fields etc. in the name of some near or dear ones and hence cannot be utilized by the recipient universities for other purposes such as infrastructural development or defraying particular expenses that may be urgently required.

iv. Other Incomes

Some bigger universities have a few additional sources of income rental income from immobile properties (as residential houses, shops and related lands), income from forestry, fisheries, orchards and dairy. However, these incomes are often negligible and hence are not shown in the budget (UGC: 2008).

4.4 Quality Assurance

In the context of Bangladesh various Education Commissions that were set up so far theoretically emphasized on unlocking potential at all levels of society and creating a pool of highly trained individuals to contribute to the national development. For example, National Education Commission-2000 under the title Higher Education inter alia states that the goal of higher education will be acceleration and inventing new knowledge and creating skilled persons (MOE :2000). But these objectives cannot be achieved if quality of education cannot be ensured. Quality assurance in this context denotes "All the policies, systems and processes directed to ensuring the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of educational provision within an institution. A quality assurance system is the means by which an institution confirms to itself and to others that conditions are in place for students to achieve the standards that the institution has set"(Donald Ekong: 2003). It is important to note that quality is not static; with changing environment and advancement of technology it needs to be dynamic and always endeavor for excellence.

As to the public universities, quality assurance deserves more attention because these universities are established by the government and financed through state exchequer. Compared to private universities, the cost of education in these institutions is less as it is highly subsidized. In such a context and wider scope of entrance, vast majority of students enroll themselves in these institutions. On the whole, in Bangladesh the quality of graduates of public universities seems to have deteriorated as seen from the reports of the Public Service Commission and the analysis of opinions of employers both in the public and private sector jobs. This, however, does not mean absence of a small percentage of very high quality of students.

Quality assurance must be understood with clear idea about what to be assured. The relevant aspect in this regard assumed to be admission access policies, equal opportunities, credit accumulation, programme design course review, resource allocation for courses, research student's supervision, assessment and degree, academic staff appointment and development, academic staff appraisal, teaching and innovation.

4.5 Public Universities: Accountability Mechanism

To run universities freely as a centre for academic freedom some facilities like conducive environment for teaching and research, autonomy coupled with accountability etc. are necessary. In some public universities such as Dhaka University, Rajshahi University, Chittagong University and Jahangirnagar University, 1973 University Acts introduced the concept of autonomy, introduced the Senate and established the principle of collective leadership of the vice-chancellor in the Syndicate. But the gain proved short lived for various reasons with the result that during the period 1975-90, the changed tone of politics gave a new set of Acts for the newer universities. Autonomy, however, in the absence of universities' own adequate resources, and because of its sole dependence on the government has always been fragile, in actual terms (Zillur Rahman Siddiqui :1997). Further, it is seen that 1973 Act, provided some autonomy theoretically but the concept of accountability of administrative personnel and teachers was very much lacking. Further, neither the chairman nor the Dean who in terms of assigned responsibility, should be authorities to take note of a teacher's failure, whatever may be the nature of failure, is not in a position to play the expected role.

4.6 Faculty Evaluation at Public Universities

Teaching is a special skill and effective teaching skill is necessary to maintain the quality of the university. Therefore, it is desirable that some mechanism be instituted to determine the teaching ability and or commitment of the teachers. Two such mechanisms are (a) student evaluation and (b) peers' evaluation. Evaluations of teachers help both self development of the teachers and improvement in teaching and quality education. In different countries this evaluation is done through self-evaluation scheme, peer rating, student evaluation and management evaluation. But in Bangladesh the system faculty evaluation is yet to be introduced due to fear of political victimization, although some quarters strongly feel the necessity for introduction of some form of evaluation.

4.7 Formation of Accreditation Council

The UGC is convinced about the inevitability of having an Accreditation Council to ensure maintenance of a minimum standard and guaranteeing of a quality assurance in tertiary education imparted by the universities in Bangladesh. Since the main purpose of any exercise by Accreditation Council is to inform the stakeholders and the guardians of the students as to the quality of education in an institution and/or of the value of its degree, there is a need to determine yardstick/standards that should be followed by a university in its academic and all related activities (UGC: 2005). The UGC is at present evaluating the private universities according to a few yardsticks. It has already set a high powered committee to work out the details of the Accreditation Council. The committee is preparing a comprehensive set of criteria to be used to evaluate both the public and private universities. The committee suggested that the proposed Accreditation Council would have the responsibilities to ascertain if

- (a) Instructions are being imparted according to a modern, scientific and relevant curriculum
- (b) By well qualified full time faculty members
- (c) Management is transparent

(d) Examination system is objective and impartial

(e) Accountability is established in respect of academic, administrative and management matters and

(f) Compliance of all rules and regulations is ensured. The committee suggested that the proposed Accreditation Council would be entrusted with the responsibility of assessing and grading an institution in an overall sense as well as certifying all the components so that the weighted average of the grades can form the overall grade score of the institution. In this process, those who need the assessment of specific programme would get to know them along with an overall grading of the institution. The proposed Accreditation Council will be autonomous and free from Government control. The government, through the Ministry of Education, will play the role of a facilitator, and provide necessary funding for smooth running of the Council (UGC: 2006).

4.8 Policy for enhancing higher education:

To meet the globalization challenges raising higher education quality to the world standard is essential. Bangladesh Govt. has taken initiatives to develop the quality of tertiary education. Govt. plans to prepare university graduates in such way that they can successfully compete in the context of international knowledge society. Accordingly, the Ministry of Education, with the assistance of the World Bank, has undertaken a Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project (HEQEP). The project aims at improving the quality of teaching-learning and research capabilities of the tertiary education institutions through encouraging both innovation and accountability and by enhancing the technical and institutional capacity of the higher education sector. The University Grants Commission of Bangladesh is the implementing agency of the project. A HEQEP Unit has been established in UGC for implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation of the activities.

Recommendations:

Enhance opportunities for research will be created by establishing centers of excellence in some of the institutes of higher learning. There will be a considerable number of public and private universities and research institutes in the country. The performance of the universities will be evaluation and monitored by establishing an Accreditation Council. Attempts will be made to improve the quality of teaching, library facilities, and research. The goals for all universities are to meet international standards. Current public expenditure on education is 2.24 per cent of GNP, which should be at least 6.0 percent by 2021.

UGC should adopt these following recommendations in order to improve higher education quality in Bangladesh:

- Upgrading the curricula and improving teaching-learning methods for quality outcomes to meet 21st century challenges;

- Integrating ICT in the curriculum irrespective of the stream and encourage computer aided learning at secondary level by establishing a coherent and comprehensive policy framework articulating national priorities in the education and reducing urban-rural gaps;

- Linking TVET curriculum to local industries and business needs and higher studies;

- Establishing of a Trust fund for Supporting Higher Education;

- Reducing session jam and elimination of politicization in higher educational institutions;

- Introducing a fair, non-political system of recruitment and promotion of teaching staff;

- Introducing a special salary scale for teachers to ensure commitments and accountability;

- Increasing revenue of the public universities to cover 50% of their budget;

- Implementing Private University Act to enhance quality education and a standardized system;

- Digitalization of libraries and references with emphasizing on the preparation of informatics databases.

- Enough attention to the English language as the international language.
- Use from informatics technologies for production of information and the scientific stagnations.
 - Standardization of the educational programs to product the knowledge. in this case, developing countries should pay attention to research, instead of education, development of specialized periods, correction of educational content, compilation of content based on some tools regarding to network change of educational regulations, emphasizing on permanent education and improvement of manpower.
 - Study of global markets of higher education for establishing conditions and university suitable environment for accepting foreign students, execution of common projects and exchange of experiences and educational, scientific innovations.
 - Reconstruction of higher education for using the new technologies cheaply and fast.
 - Use from tools and educational models, especially education from distance for progress of higher education, shortening of educational periods, applying of taught, qualifying of education and using from usable software's in learning based on the network.
 - Setting up an Accreditation Council for ranking the quality of higher education in all the universities.

Conclusion

Higher education system is diversified in the country in different streams such as general, technical, professional, madrasa, engineering, agriculture, business, and medical streams. There is a need to further improve in quality of education both at public, and non-government and private institutions. Inadequate professional preparation of teachers in subject matters and teaching methods, lack of academic supervision, limited encouragement and resources for research, lack of teacher and institutional accountability, and lack of sufficient textbooks, reference materials, and a habit of completing the degrees in a longer time than originally stipulated in the context of negligible tuition fee are some of the reasons affecting the quality of higher education. A number of higher education quality enhancement projects (HEQEP) funded by UGC- Bangladesh includes improvements of teaching-learning processes at different universities in Bangladesh. To provide effective training for sustainable improvement of quality requires international experts in pedagogy. There are a number of expatriate Bangladeshi experts who are interested and willing to contribute to quality improvement initiatives in Bangladesh. The current chairman of the university grant commission of Bangladesh expressed his interest in providing support to these experts. Other universities in Bangladesh must also take initiatives to arrange workshops and training by these experts on the teaching and learning process. Defining a common understanding of quality of higher education and establishing an improved knowledge and understanding of pedagogy can play a critical role in the higher education quality improvement initiatives of Bangladesh

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