

## PRESENT SITUATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH

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### ABSTRACT

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**Keywords:**

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Higher education are flourishing, there are some major obstacles to achieve the goal of higher education as well. The scenario is not different in a third world country like Bangladesh, rather in reality; there are more obstacles than opportunities. After starting its journey centuries ago the education system with a commercial value which spread all over the world, has moved forward and became more technology dependent. This system is not only protecting the commercial value of education, but also helping the world to be prepared for the future. However, the situation is relatively different in a developing country like Bangladesh. Apart from the traditional academic education, the lack of opportunities in vocational training, less technological support and fewer prospects of befitting research are vitiating factors here. After dividing the intermediate education system in science, arts and commerce groups, it was thought that the number of science students will increase rapidly and the country will move forward technologically. However, the efforts were in vain due to lack of employment in the relevant fields and especially for brain drain. Considering all the facts, it can be argued that the present perspective is not so bright in Bangladesh. Hence, the main purpose of this research is to identify the

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opportunities and obstacles of higher education and to find out logical propositions to make it impetuous.

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## INTRODUCTION

There is a huge contradiction between fundamental rights and basic needs. Most of the people of Bangladesh couldn't distinguish it. When we started our school life most of the teachers and seniors said that we have five fundamental rights these are- food, cloth, shelter, education and treatment. But this is completely a wrong idea. These five are not fundamental rights; these are the basic needs of us. We have 18 fundamental rights which are described our constitution. Article 27 to 44 stated that. If we can't enjoy our fundamental rights we can go to the higher court of Bangladesh. The high court will do everything in this matter. But if we can't get the basic needs, it will be impossible to go to the higher court. There is no opportunity to go to the high court to establish fundamental principles. Education is the fundamental principles of the constitution of Bangladesh. From the very beginning of my writings I want to establish that it should be included in the fundamental rights of our constitution. Without proper education it is quite impossible to improve as a man and as a nation. Bangladesh is not in the up mark position financially. Most of the people believe that overpopulation is the key reason behind that. But I steel believe that education is the key problem behind that. Lack of knowledge is the main reason behind over population. So if we produce more literate people we can handle the situation more smartly! From the starting point of this paragraph I only discuss about Bangladesh perspective about education. Since Bangladesh is a third world country if we discuss about Bangladesh it will cover a lot about third world countries of all over the world. Now we will discuss about higher education. Higher education doesn't only discuss about the higher level of education, but also every sector of education which can improve the style of learning system. There are four stages of the education system in Bangladesh- Primary level, secondary level, higher secondary level and university level. To ensure the highest education, we have to ensure the all levels of education properly. Some of us think that if we can improve the status of university level, we can change the whole situation of higher education system. It is nothing but a rubbish idea. Without making the root level perfect it will be impossible to climb in the upper portion. Though the university level makes sure the higher education properly, we have to fulfill the demand of every sector of education. So in this article we will discuss about the educational system of Bangladesh. The higher education system will be

discussed seriously. We will discuss it not only under the perspective of Bangladesh but also the every perspective of the whole world.

### **LIMITATIONS ON PREPARING THIS ARTICLE**

From the very beginning of my journey to make this I article I think it will not be that much difficult. But the reality doesn't help me. Before starting my field work I decided I need some help from some officials like UGC officials, university officials, private university owner, and faculty members, students and guardians. Unfortunately UGC officials didn't help me as I needed. When I met with them about this particular topic, interestingly most of the officials didn't cooperate with me. Collect essential data from private university is a very difficult matter. Most of the university didn't show any interest to do that. Most probably they are concern about their limitations. They have no interest to disclose it. Because of the future of the university they didn't co operate us. But I didn't lose my energy. Students were really helpless. Books are not available about this topic. Though a lot of obstacles were there I was trying my level best to make the article more fruitful and realistic.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature review will be based on both secondary and primary sources which data will collect through existing laws, acts and ordinance's will use as primary sources: books ,journal and other published works have been adopted as secondary sources. The basic data has been collected from the administrative sources, legislative laws and historical events. By focusing efforts on critical issues of authority concern is the important sources or data collection.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The methodology study is given below: This report is written primarily by taking help of the secondary source such as news, feature, reports published is different national and local daily newspapers, and we also used data compiled by the yearly report of the UGC.. However, these data in tabular are redrawn by present authors. Additionally, available published research reports and articles are taken in to consideration while developing arguments and analysis of different dimension of higher education .Authors own an observation are also incorporated while analyzing the nature and causes the problems . Then the recommendation will be make at the end of report.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What are the challenges of higher education?
2. What are the opportunities of higher education?
3. What should be done to ensure higher education?

### **Education**

Education is not only a word but also an institution. That is why a lot of philosophers and educationalist define it differently. They describe its importance differently. Ancient philosophers like Socrates, Aristotle and Plato gave their definition long time ago. From their time to till date a lot of educationalist defines it. The holy Quran said that, every messenger of Allah came to the world to spread education. It is not only for the religion knowledge but also everything. Business dictionary said that- *“The wealth of knowledge acquired by an individual after studying particular subject matters or experiencing life lessons that provide an understanding of something. Education requires instruction of some sort from an individual or composed literature. The most common forms of education result from years of schooling that incorporates studies of a variety of subjects.”*

### **Higher education**

Business dictionary says that- *Higher education, post-secondary education, tertiary education or third level education is a final stage of formal learning that occurs after secondary education. Often delivered at universities, academies, colleges, seminaries and institutes of technology, higher education is also available through certain college-level institutions, including vocational schools, and other career colleges that award academic degrees or professional certifications. Tertiary education at non-degree level is sometimes referred to as further education or continuing education as distinct from higher education.*

### **Importance of higher education**

From abstract to last paragraph, we already discussed about the importance of education. Education is the only way to change a society and a nation. We already talked about the financial situation of third world country like Bangladesh. There is a great debate between the reasons behind the poor economic condition of those countries. But no one has any debate that literate of people of these countries are not really numerically up to the mark. Without getting the proper knowledge it is almost impossible to improve in any sector. A day is not enough to describe about the reason behind the tremendous position of a first world country like to united states of America, Canada, Australia, Finland, Germany, Russia, Japan, France etc. If we discuss about only two reasons it will be an education and technical knowledge. Interestingly, second one is too much related with the first one. So without education it is almost impossible to improve the technical knowledge. Without technical knowledge financial condition can't improve radically. If we want to change our economy or

create a peaceful country we have to change our educational System. It is interesting to hear that to make peaceful country education is important. We know the environment of all over the world has been changed radically. Terrorism and other cyber crimes are spread out rapidly. Controlling that type of problem technical knowledge is important. On the other hand to cope with the dynamic change of the world or adjust the situation with other countries proper higher education is really important. Research based education is really important. My honorable teacher named Mr. Joachim Ali chudhry, the assistant professor of the department of law, university of Chittagong, said that – the main duty of a university teacher is not to teach the students but to do research. By this particular sentence he wants to clear that research based knowledge can make students mind more universal. Without this standard knowledge improvement is almost impossible. So in a sentence we can easily say that for the improvement of a man and a nation's proper higher education is really important.

#### **Present situation of higher education in Bangladesh**

Before starting the description of the higher education system of Bangladesh we should give big hands for the all government of Bangladesh because education in public sector in Bangladesh is a very important initiative. Most of the people of this country are poor. It could be really impossible for them to read in private universities. Though Bangladesh has 79 private universities it is a most important matter that there are 34 public universities in this country. Those who are the students of public universities they has to spend a minimum amount of money. On an average, they can complete their honors and masters level just paying around 300 to 400 dollars in five years most probably the cheapest educational system in all over the world. But in private university student has to pay much more money. On an average they have to pay around 3000 to 4000 dollars. Some of the universities are more expensive than statistics. North south university, east, west university, Brac university is the example of that group. Though they are taking more money than public universities unfortunately there is no opportunity to research in there. Without inventing new things higher are education can't get the real meaning of this. The scenario of public universities is better than this. But the situation of public universities is not really up to mark also. There are five types of higher education available in Bangladesh. These are- (a) General education, (b) Science and technology and engineering education, (c) Medical education, (d) Distance education and (e) Vocational and madrasa education.

#### **Challenges of higher education in Bangladesh**

There are a lot of reasons behind that, we will discuss it in below:

**Lack of knowledge in English:** everyone knows that English is an international language. Except some of the subjects most of the subjects of

the university level are conducted in English. There is not a sufficient kit in Bangla. Medical and engineering students are bound to read English because each and every book are written by foreign writers. The same scenario is applicable for the public university students. Law, English, economics, BBA, statistics, physics, chemistry, genetic engineering, applied physics, etc. Is fully written and conducted in English. We are all known that most of the students of our country are very weak in English. It is too harsh to hear that most of the teachers of the school and college level of our country are not quite good in English. That is why students are not up to the mark in English. Without knowing perfect English student can pass in their respective examination, but it is almost impossible to know the real taste of the subject. Because of the lack of knowledge in English our higher education is really hampered.

**Student's politics:** it is very interesting to know that student politics is one of the biggest obstacles for higher studies in Bangladesh. Though student politics had a great history in Bangladesh, it is now creating more damages. Most of the public university and national university affiliated colleges are surrounded by student politics. Student movement should continue for the welfare of the student. But this time it has been continued for the welfare of the political parties. They are creating unrest situation, most of the time. That is why most of the Time College and universities can't do their own work. Without continuing study activities how can it possible to ensure higher education?

**Teacher politics:** it is really unexpected that most of the public universities and national university affiliated colleges are surrounded by teacher politics. A teacher is a mirror of a society. But most of them are the product of the political parties. That was not the common scenario of our country in early 70's or 80's. The total scenario has been changed from the military period. They are trying to involve teachers in their political activities. On the other hand, most of the teachers of public universities got their job by the influence of the then ruling party. That is why they can't do anything against political agenda. If a teacher involves himself too much in politics, it will certainly hamper his main duty. Bangladesh is facing this problem. They are also motivating their students to join with them in political activities. Our higher education system is under pressure because of the nasty activities of this type of teachers.

**Brain drain:** Brain drain is one of the biggest reasons for not spreading perfect higher education in Bangladesh. A student from Bangladesh completed his study life with the help of a lot of people of Bangladesh. A rickshaw polar to an industrialist give his taxes to the government to run

this country. By this tax, government allocate subsidy in some of the sectors like education. The IMF said that got spent around 1 lakh 20 thousand taka against a single student in every year in every public university. After completing their studies in those countries, some of the guys went to foreign countries for taking more degrees. After completing this degree most of the students don't come to the lovely country. They want to spend more secure life in foreign countries than Bangladesh. If they came, we could learn a lot. Bangladesh can increase their standard of higher education by their support. So because of the brain drain we lost some brilliant guys and their important suggestion and initiatives for ensuring higher education.

**Political unrest:** we, the hopeful Bangladeshi people, thought that if democracy ensures, we will get a lovely and peaceful country. Unfortunately, it seems wrong after a couple of era of getting democracy. Both parties and their alliances are not mango people oriented. They are always busy with their political matter. Because of the magical chair named power, they can do anything. They are calling strikes and blockade for indefinite time. That is why it is impossible to run schools, college or university. But, most interestingly, they claim that they are declaring this for the welfare of the people. There is a great debate between the thinking of them and the thinking of other people. We discussed it on the other day. Because of this program normal educational system can't run. Higher education can't run into this situation. Most of the days of our university shut down for that type of political decision. It is one of the important challenges for not ensuring higher education in Bangladesh.

**Lack of research opportunities:** I think this is the main reason behind that. We know there are 34 public universities in our country. These 34 public universities are providing some opportunities for research to students and honor teachers. Statistics show that these are not really sufficient. Only little number of students and teachers are getting the opportunity to do it. Money is the key problem. Budget is insufficient. I was the student of university of Chittagong. Only a couple of guys in my department are getting the opportunity to be the student of M. Phil in 2013-14 sessions. A lot of students are trying. But because of r=many reasons university couldn't provide the opportunity for most of them. I am one of the luckiest one to get this fantastic opportunity. Without proper research anything new can't be invented and without discovering anything nation will not run in a dynamic way! In 2010-11 session university of Chittagong provides only 8 latch taken for research. Chittagong university has not less than 21000 students. Is it sufficient to provide only 8 lack take in a year?

Another picture is more pathetic! We have 79 private universities. They can't provide research facilities. Most of the private university runs for earning money. So, trustee board thinks that research is not the right path

to earn more money. The government is also not that much interested to give them such opportunity. Only north, south university provides M. Phil and P, had a degree. Ugc decided that any m. Phil and PhD degree from a private university will not get any recognition from them. Without ensuring research facilities higher education will not be ensured.

**Lack of quality education:** It is very interesting to say that lack of quality education is one of the very important reasons behind the lacings of quality education. At first we have to understand that what are the objectives of education? We are all known about that, neither job, nor pass is the only objective of higher education. But most of us don't follow it. We need certificate by which we will get a job or we have to be the first boy of our department. We know if we can be the first one, we will get a better job or we can be the teacher of a public university. Because of earning these we were making notes, memorize it and by writing these in the exam script we stood first, second or third. My question is it the right way to learn. Definitely not. Because of the system most of the student's of this pattern got the job of the public university. It is not always true that a first boy can be the best teacher. He might be better one, but it is impossible to say he can be the best teacher. This style and statement is written by protmoth Choudhury. If a teacher doesn't understand the inner meaning of the lesson, he will not capable to give his 100% to his student. One of a legendary teacher named Mr. Liakot Ali Khan of Bangladesh always said that, "a third class teacher cannot produce e second class student!" we are in this type of problem. We have a lot of good graded students, but we can't ensure the better higher education.

**Challenges of higher education in global perspective:** From the very beginning of my writings I described the challenges of higher education under Bangladesh perspective. But if we discuss it under the perspective of international level, we will identify some other problem. Most of us believe that ensuring higher education is really difficult for the poor countries. It is almost true. But the fact, ensuring higher education in international level is also not that much easy. More than 200 countries are in the world. We, the poor countryman, always believe that foreign country means England, America, Australia, and Canada etc. These countries are financially capable. That is why we always talked about these type of countries. Except these 8 to 10 countries, there are a lot of countries in all over the world. To ensure higher education in all over the world is impossible without ensuring proper higher education in other countries. The main problem in poor countries is a money problem. Higher education is really expensive in global perspective. I was a student of university of Chittagong. I spend no more than 400 dollars in my honors and masters level. But most of the countries had not that amount of public universities. I already wrote that if anyone want to complete his graduation in a private university in Bangladesh he has to spend around 4000 to 5000 us dollars. Some of the universities of Bangladesh named north, south



university; break university and east West University are more than expensive. If anyone wants to complete his degree from this type of university, he needs more than 12000 us dollars. This is not a matter of joke!

Bangladesh has a lot of public universities. England, America, Canada, Australia has not that many. That is why most of the students of this country couldn't continue their education after A level. Education is too much expensive in this level. Only some of the students continue it. Research facilities are available in the rich countries. Though it is available only small number of students can avail it!

For using higher education for the development of the world science education should be spread out rapidly. Interestingly, as like as Bangladesh most of the students lost their intention to read the science. They think that the style of living has been changed. Now 5th world is run by business. So for earning more money, man should study in business. They can't think that everything is run by science. To be a very good businessman anyone should learn the basic science of this. Science can ensure technological knowledge.

No barrier should be applied about education and literature. But the relation between a lot of countries are not healthier. As example – relation between Cuba and usa, china and usa, south korea and north korea, izrael and palestain, Pakistan and india, Syria and usa etc are not harmonious. So a student of this countries cant to go the other countries because of their diplomatic relation. On that cases higher education system can be hampered. A lot of reasons are playing vital role for not establishing higher education.

**Opportunities of higher education in Bangladesh and global perspective:** Every coin has two parts. Head, and tell. Every matter has to be discussed by two ways- Positive and negative. Though higher education is not really very easy to achieve I still believe that there are a lot of opportunities in Bangladesh and all over the world in the 21st century. Point wise, I will discuss it-

**Digital facilities:** The scenario of Bangladesh has been changed radically. The present government of Bangladesh wrote in their manifesto in 2008 that the country will be a digital country. The government kept their word. Bangladesh is going to be digital country. Everyone can make contact within a single moment. It is really important for ensuring higher education. In my early ages I was a debater. It was really hard for me to collect up to date data without newspapers. Now internet is really available. Anyone can know anything by internet. The internet is honestly cheap enough for a country like Bangladesh. Most of the classes of our private universities, public universities even school and colleges are

conducted by digital ways. Teacher and student both can make themselves digital. It is the great opportunity for ensuring higher education.

**PPP project:** PPP means public private partnership. When a developmental work has been done by the joint initiative of public and private this is called PPP. Every developed country makes their own path by this way. Bangladesh was far behind from this. This government took this initiative. They think that if we want to change our total system or if we want to improve our financial or technical side we have to do in a joint way. Public work can Co in a simple way. There is no bureaucratic obstacle. Only Privatization can make research and education costs, but because of their joint venture education and research can get more budget and it can run without facing obstacle as an example- Chittagong university in Fabian sponsored by the AK khan foundation. They are contributing more than 20 crore taka. Its a great initiative in ensuring higher education.

**More research facilities:** the scenario of the third world like like Bangladesh has been changed radically. It was almost impossible to get research facilities in our country. Most of the famous teachers of our country completed their doctored and post doctored degree from foreign universities. They didn't get such opportunity in this country. Now the scenario has been changed. I am one of the he students of M. Phil in university of Chittagong. I am doing these prestigious degrees by spending a little amount of money. After completing this degree I can complete my PhD in there. It's a great opportunity for a middle class family boy like me. It is one of the stories of a student. Most of the public university provides this opportunity to the students. I strongly believe that it can do something special for ensuring higher education in Bangladesh.

**Scholarship facilities:** A lot of rich countries like England, America, Australia, Canada, and China are giving scholarship facilities to the students of all over the world. The study is not bound in a territory right now. If anyone has the capability does gain more knowledge from international level and if he completes the requirement, he will get the opportunity from famous foreign university. It's a very positive sign for higher education. One country can better in any single areas. If she shares it with other countries, she can be developed and the other countries can achieve something. We know the world is now a global village. It is applicable in today's world and famous countries are doing this for ensuring higher education. Not only rich countries but also some developing countries are also taking this initiative, India, Portugal, Malaysia is the greatest example for this

**Collaboration with foreign universities:** For ensuring higher education, it's a new initiative. A lot university of third world country makes collaboration with foreign universities. With that collaboration a student

can go to the other University for learning. Faculty members also can enjoy the same facilities. The most important thing is some joint program is arranged by both universities. This initiative by students and faculty members can make themselves smarter than the previous time. I am the lecturer of Britannia university, Comilla. My university has collaborated with help university and Anglia- Ruskin university. This article will be presented in fine university. That means a lot of universities in a same path for acquiring same goal. The goal is no other than ensuring perfect higher education. I strongly believe that it is already playing and hopefully will more vital role for higher education.

**Recommendations:** Not only in Bangladesh but also most of the countries of all over the world now realize that without higher education it is quite impossible to achieve the goal of development. Every country wants, but most of the countries don't know what is the real way to achieve it. When I do this research I identify what are the obstacles for not ensuring higher education. By this experience I am giving some suggestions

1. Research facilities should be increased. Every public and private university should provide research facilities and fixed research budget in every year for the students and faculty members.
2. Technological support should be ensured. Most of the universities of our country are beyond some technological facilities like WI fi, internet facilities etc. It should be introduced within a very short time. Without ensuring it it will be really impossible to achieve the goal.
3. Collaboration with famous foreign universities should be introduced in the University of developing countries. It can increase the standard of faculty members and students. A qualified teacher only can ensure quality education.
4. Every government of a developing country should encourage private sectors to invest education sectors. A literate nation can be more essential for the development of their business. It is a general and simple idea. This idea should be implemented by the private sector. Government should give them every facility to invest.
5. Political influence in educational institutions should be banned as early as possible. Only for the influence of student and teacher politics most of the college and university can't continue their work properly. We lost not only some days, but also some students. Without ensuring regular class higher education is impossible to answer.
6. Because of the budget problem of public university only a minimum amount of students can get the opportunity to read M. Phil and PhD level. So if the government can invest more in research sector it will be the asset

for the upcoming day. By the research new enterprise can come and join to the industrial world, what can be really effective for the betterment of the country.

7. Political situation should be developed for ensuring higher education. It is not irrelevant. Because only for the political unrest university can't run properly, legendary philosophers don't come to the country regularly, they feel afraid for their life and foreign investment are greatly hampered. That is why the environment should be changed within a very quick time.

## CONCLUSION

Though the research was conducted for global perspectives I was giving more concentration on Bangladesh. Bangladesh is my motherland; this is not the only reason. The main reason is Bangladesh can be a very good example for the third world countries. They will believe that if a country like Bangladesh can ensure higher education why not they do? It is really positive for Bangladesh that Bangladesh is trying its level best to ensure higher education. Bangladesh has more than 110 public and private universities. Most of the public university proves their quality. Buet, Dhaka University is now the example of all over the world. Some private universities are doing fantastically well. Reach University or north south university can be a great example for this. Not only in Bangladesh but also some other countries like Malaysia, India, Iran are trying exceptionally well. Because of the initiative of the third world country the total picture of the higher study has been changed. It's very positive news. But I think that higher education still not in the exact position where it should be. If the government of every country takes their initiative for the better world it will be effective. Development is a very important word, it is used regularly. But the new thinking is not development, but sustainable development. For ensuring sustainable development higher education should be ensured. After solving present loopholes hopefully the entire system of higher education will be changed.

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