Study on teaching learning environment and facilities in Secondary School

Introduction

The necessity of expansion of educational facility is felt tremendously as the demand of education has seen a steady rise over time. The matching of demand and supply, however, has not been a linear story. As provision of basic education was enshrined as a constitutional responsibility, a drive was taken to ensure access to primary education for all children through the nationalization of primary schools. For the secondary education sector, however, no such corresponding policy engagement was undertaken. The spread of secondary education thus continued to be a community-driven affair but with two contrasting engagement by the state – the assumption of an expanding regulatory jurisdiction and a more limited resource engagement in the way of partial subventions of teacher salaries (a system administratively referred to as MPO or monthly payment order). For the secondary education sector, the engagement by the state was thus a much more ad hoc process based on the patronage of different echelons of the state, at different times, towards particular areas where such schools are located. Notwithstanding this process of ad hoc nationalization, the GOB is now paying out a significant subvention towards meeting the salary and benefits for the teachers of non-government schools even though the system still remains largely in private management."

Secondary education, beyond the compulsory stage of primary education, is provided through collaboration of government and non-government providers within a regulatory framework provided by the government. In broader perspective, there have been two types of secondary schools in Bangladesh:

  i.   Government secondary school: It is fully initiated, funded and managed by the government.
  ii.   Non-government secondary school: These are initiated by the community or local patrons but have subsequently come under coverage of government subvention of teacher salaries (the MPO system). Those already under the MPO system are categorized registered non- government school and those waiting to come under the MPO system are categorized as nonregistered, non-government schools.

Considering the global perspective, the secondary level education has become a part of basic education. From the beginning of in dependence, the education system of Bangladesh is continually undergoing reforms in order to meet the current and future needs and challenges of the socio-economic developments of the country. In that course of change, secondary education has achieved a number of positive developments and made significant progress in providing more young people with access to secondary education, increased enrolment, especially for girls; increased number of schools and teachers, reduction of gender inequality in education, revision of curriculum, etc. Even so, in spite of all remarkable achievements, declining quality in secondary education system, which is reflected in public examination results, remains a major concern. Bangladesh government fully recognizes the urgent need to improve the quality of

education alongside its efforts for creating equitable access to secondary education. The issues of access, equity and quality however being intertwined have to be looked at in totality in an integrated manner, and the strategies to address them must also look at the key areas simultaneously, not in a piecemeal fashion.

Proper teaching learning environment is the balance arrangement of physical, psychological, and service delivery elements like quality of school facilities, class size, school infrastructure and other quality dimension, non-discriminatory climate, teacher's good behavior, effective school discipline policies. To ensure proper educational environment in secondary school, different initiatives and strategies along with effective approaches are adopted by Government. Diversification of courses and curriculum is introduced at the beginning of secondary education (Grade 9) in general schools. Although Primary education was made free and compulsory for children aged 6 to 10 by the Compulsory Primary Education Act of 1990, currently no such act exists for the secondary level, but the Government, with support from external agencies, provides a number of stipends specifically targeted at girls to boost female participation in secondary education. Secondary Education Sector Development Program has taken to strengthen management, enhance quality, and improve equity and access to secondary education.

Background of the Study
The Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS) is an attached department of the Ministry of Education and is primary responsible for providing educational information and statistics for planning, management and decision making process in the education sector. BANBEIS has now focusing on qualitative survey and socio-economic research in addition to regular qualitative survey activities. Government allocates budget for research in each fiscal year. The study on teaching learning environment and facilities in Secondary School has been conducted under this budget and it is an effective initiative to address the present status of teaching learning environment and facilities in Secondary School.

Objectives of the Study
The overall objective of the study was to focus the present status, prospects and challenges of teaching learning environments in Secondary School. Considering the overall objectives of the assignment, it was spelled out as following specific objective:
- ♦ Focus the present status and prospects of teaching learning environments in Secondary Schools;
- ♦ Identify the challenges and problems of teaching learning environments in Secondary Schools;
- ♦ Provide recommendation to improve the teaching learning environments of Secondary Schools.

Scope of Work
According to ToR, the study was conducted covering at least 100 institutions from

different areas in Bangladesh. For better coverage of research study 112 institutions from different areas of Bangladesh were selected as sample. The scope of work of the study was to:

♦ mobilize the study team;
♦ conduct a desk review to know details about the secondary education system in Bangladesh;
♦ develop inception report including detailed work plan, methodology, sample size and strategy and share with BANBEIS;
♦ finalize data collection tools and submit to BANBEIS for approval;
♦ recruit data collectors and impart training to data collectors;
♦ conduct field test for questionnaire validation and submit outcome of field test for review;
♦ submit final data collection instruments incorporating feedback for approval;
♦ conduct interview with students, teachers and guardians;
♦ conduct FGD (Focus Group Discussion) meetings with school management committee(SMC) members and guardians;
♦ oversee all data collection including piloting, supervision and spot checking;
♦ recruit coders and data entry operators and oversee data entry and data entry quality;
♦ develop data entry program;
♦ analyze data;
♦ develop draft report and submit draft report including findings and data analysis;
♦ arrange consultation meeting with BANBEIS for dissemination of the study findings;
♦ finalize the report incorporating comments/observations of the participants; and
♦ submit Final printed Report to the Director, BANBEIS.

Study Area
This study was conducted in 112 Institutions of 4 former greater divisions in Bangladesh.

Study Methodology
The main objective of this assignment was to focus the present status and prospects of teaching learning environments in Secondary Schools; identify the challenges and problems of teaching learning environments in Secondary Schools; identify and explains major issues and constraints in the development of teaching learning environments in Secondary Schools; and provide recommendation to improve the teaching learning environments of Secondary Schools. However, this socio-economic research along with qualitative and quantitative survey findings will provide educational information for planning, management and decision making process in the education sector.

Considering the objectives of the study, following methods was applied for the study to assess the present status, prospects and challenges of teaching learning environments in Secondary School:

♦ conducted a desk review to know details about the secondary education system in Bangladesh and discuss with the concerned personnel of BANBEIS before the

commencement of the field survey;

♦ prepared a study plan and developed questionnaire to conduct the sample survey for collecting data/information from the teachers, students and guardians of the 112 institutions from different areas in Bangladesh.

♦ In addition, in-depth discussions and Focus Group Discussion was conducted with stakeholders to know the teaching learning environment and facilities in Secondary Schools of their catchment area.

Teaching learning environment and facilities in Secondary School was an empirical study and the following methodologies were applied for carrying out the research work:

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to fulfill the objectives of this research study. Information was collected from both primary and secondary sources. A rapid background document/ literature review was conducted to get an overall idea about the assignment. The study team conducted the whole study with guidance and supervision of BANBEIS. The study team developed details methodology, selected sample size, developed data collection instruments as per objectives of the assignment; collected data from sample area, processed data (coding, editing and entry) and developed report. Details methodology applied for the study is given below:
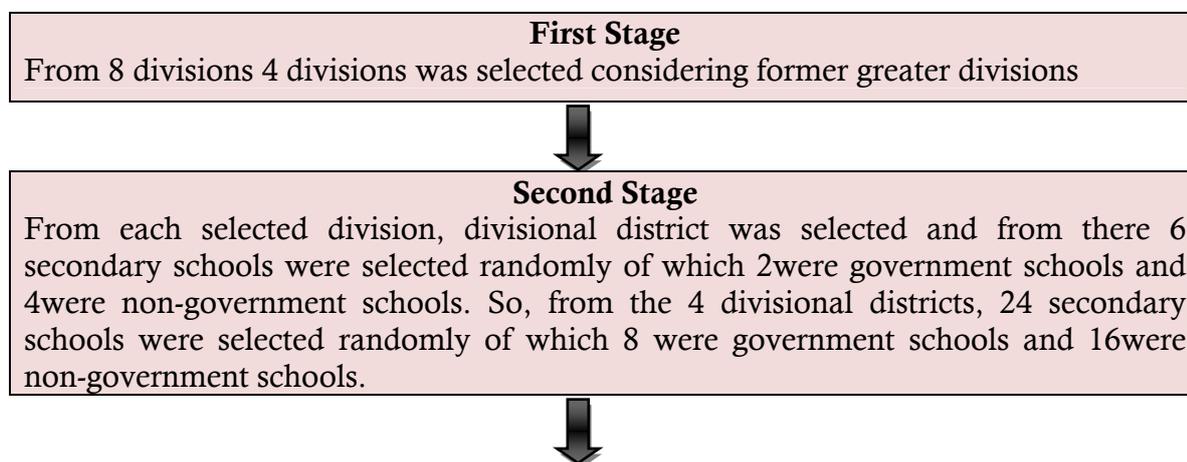
Sample Schools of the Study
According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Education Information and Statistics (BANBEIS), 2008, total number of secondary schools in Bangladesh is15298 of which 317 are public (Government) and 14298 are private schools (non-government). It is found that only 2 percent of the secondary schools are government and rest 98 percent are non-government.

According to ToR, at least 100 secondary schools should be covered from different areas in Bangladesh. So the minimum sample size was n=100 secondary schools. Secondary school was the primary sample units (PSUs) for this study.

Distribution of Secondary Schools
A multistage sampling technique was applied to get the required number of Secondary Schools (PSUs), which is described as follows:

| **First Stage** |
| From 8 divisions 4 divisions was selected considering former greater divisions |

| **Second Stage** |
| From each selected division, divisional district was selected and from there 6 secondary schools were selected randomly of which 2were government schools and 4were non-government schools. So, from the 4 divisional districts, 24 secondary schools were selected randomly of which 8 were government schools and 16were non-government schools. |

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Third Stage
From the each selected district, 2 upazilas were selected. One upazila was selected adjacent to head quarter (HQ) and another one was selected far away of the district. So, a total of 8upazilaswere selected randomly from the selected 4 divisional districts.</td></tr>
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<tr><td>Fourth Stage
Then from each selected upazila11 secondary schools were selected randomly considering boys, girls and combined and also upazila head quarter (HQ) and faraway of upazila head quarter. So from the selected 8upazilas88 secondary schools were selected of which 44 from the upazila head quarter and other 44 from the rural areas. So, the total numbers of selected secondary schools were 112 (24+88).</td></tr>
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Selection of Respondents from Secondary Schools (PSUs)

From each sampled secondary school (PSU) 11 respondents were selected for interview. The total number of respondents was 1232 of which 112 were heads of the schools, 112 were male teachers, 112 were female teachers, 672were students and 224were guardians (Table 2.1).Male teachers were interviewed in absence of female teachers.

Table-2.1: Distribution of schools and respondents by divisions, district and upazila

Administrative Area	Area covered	No. of Secondary Schools	Respondents per school	Distribution of respondents	Total Respondents
Districts	4	♦ Total 24 Schools ✓ 8 Government Schools ✓ 16 Non-Government Schools	11	♦ Total 11 respondents per school ✓ 6 students (from grade VII and from grade IX both boys and girls) ✓ 3 teachers (1 Head teacher, 1 male teacher and 1 female teacher) ✓ 2 guardians (1 male and 1 female).	264
Upazilas	8	♦ Total 88 Schools ✓ 44 from upazila HQ ✓ 44 from rural areas	11		968
Divisions	4	112	11		1232

Recommendations to Improve the Teaching Learning Environments

More important than all the others, teachers and school management need to provide a learning environment where students feel safe. This means maintaining appropriate classroom management, encouraging open communication, and following the procedures put in place by a school to ensure that student safety is a top priority. In this chapter, based on the findings of present status, prospects, problems and challenges, the study team is suggesting the following recommendation which is the third objective of the study.

1. **Vacant Post of Teachers:** In Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna division 50%, 39%, 21% and 32% schools respectively have vacant post for the teacher, thus immediate fill up of these posts needed. In Chittagon and Rajshahi division, average male and female teacher would be 10 and 7, whereas it would be 9 and 5 for Khulna respectively. Gender disparity should be addressed and reduced by employing more female teachers.

2. **Teacher-Student Ratio:** The teacher-student ration is 1:45 for Dhaka division, whereas it was 1:72, 1:38 and 1:35 respectively for Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna. These ratios could be reduced by employing subject based teachers particularly in science, mathematics and English where students may need extra attention and class practices.

3. **Accommodation of Classroom:** In Dhaka, accommodation of classroom is for 39 students per class but actually sit average 71 students which is double than the expected students. This is a huge problem for quality teaching. Ensuring immediate extension of classrooms needed. Class size should be reduced to the available accommodation before ensuring extra rooms. In Chittagong, it is for 84 students per class but actually sit average 94. 68% schools are facing sitting arrangements problem which is quite high. In Rajshahi, it is for 66 students per class but actually sit average 76 and 54% schools are facing sitting arrangements problem which is high. The class sizes are quite big for one tea her to provide quality teaching, class size should be reduced if multimedia is not used. In Khulna, accommodation of classroom is for 57 students per class but actually sit average 55 which is quite encouraging. Nonetheless 32% schools are facing sitting arrangements.

4. **First Aid Box:** In Dhaka division, 54% schools have First Aid Box, whereas it is 57%, 79%, and 36% for Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna respectively. So, 100% school should have this arrangement.

5. **Computer Facility:** Though all schools have computers in Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions but the range varies from maximum 39 to minimum 2 and 42 to 1 respectively, schools with less computers should be given priority in allocation for that for reducing disparity. Moreover, 96% of the school of Chittagong and Khulna have computers but the range varies from maximum 30 to minimum 0,

and 19 to 1 respectively. So, schools with no and less computers should be given priority in allocation for that for reducing disparity.

6. **Multimedia Facility:** Almost all of the schools have multimedia facility but the use of multimedia should be ensured by all teachers for all subjects. In fact, multimedia based classrooms can be increased.

7. **Physical Structure of the School:** 96% of schools of Dhaka, Chittagong and Khulna except Rajshahi (89%) are good in structure. Rest needs to be improved.

8. **Training of Teachers:** Training of teachers is an important issue as though teachers received training but many didn't receive in all the needed ones or on the modified syllabus or examination systems, need based training needed and in house trainings are more effective.

9. **Support Manpower:** sufficient number of librarian and peon should be recruited in the school.

10. **Logistics and Utility Support:** More academic materials and extra coaching for weak students should be provided. Use of computer by the students should be ensured through proper monitoring and guidance by the teachers. For some school hostels for students should be provided where they come from remote areas. Though there is electricity facility in school but due to frequent and long hour's electricity cut, teachers and students do not get much benefit of it in many schools. Alternative steps can be taken to solve the uninterrupted electricity supply. Subject based training and ICT based training can be provided to the teachers. In addition, student cabinet should be active and ensure scouting and deoyalika as extra-curriculum activities for the students.

11. **School Management Committee (SMC):** SMC needed to be strengthened and more accountable in ensuring their responsibilities. Awareness and encouragement needed from the research teamity. Besides, SMC community people can be involved to stop eve teasing.