

SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS JUNIOR SCHOOL CERTIFICATE (JSC) EXAMINATION IN BANGLADESH

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Abstract

The study investigates secondary students' attitude towards junior school certificate (JSC) examination in Bangladesh. The study is mainly quantitative and data was collected in a computable manner through questionnaires. Secondary students who would take the JSC examination were the main data source of the study. Two hundred fifty students (120 male and 130 female) were chosen randomly from ten secondary schools (five private and five government) in Dhaka. The study revealed that secondary students have a positive attitude towards JSC examination. There was no significant difference between male and female students' attitude towards JSC examination. JSC exam had increased students' both quality of study and study time, enhanced students' creativity, and reduced the fear of examination. On the contrary, JSC examination had hampered students' normal life by extra stress, reduced their playtime, and made them dependent on guidebooks for better grades. Therefore, the study suggests changing current JSC examination systems by creating test items focused on creativity and problem-solving tasks to ensure the quality of education in Bangladesh. These findings can inform the government as well as other relevant stakeholders in making necessary changes in the JSC examination in Bangladesh.

Keywords: Attitude; Bangladesh Certificate Examination; JSC; secondary school.

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INTRODUCTION

The examination is a central part of formal education in many countries of the world. Assessment refers to any technique or activity that is designed to get information about the knowledge, attitudes, or skills of a student or group of students. An examination or test is an assessment planned to measure the exam taker's knowledge, attitude, skill or commitment to a cause. A test can be administered orally, on paper, on a computer or in a confined area that requires the exam taker to physically perform a set of skills. Formal examinations often produce grades or marks (Longe & Ajike, 2014). Latham (1877) considered examinations as an 'encroaching power' that influenced learning - 'the power of test'. According to Cheng (2003), Examination and assessments have continued to play a crucial role in education into the new millennium. Testing functions as a powerful director of teaching and learning in many countries around the world.

National examination is an assessment type, which is conducted at schools and tailored to national achievement standard. It is a standardized test

developed and administered by a country's national examination body to determine whether students can pass and continue to higher education, and it is aimed at maintaining quality education nationwide and setting of national standards in education. It is held at the end of the learning process. It is used to obtain, examine, and understand the students' learning process and their learning outcomes analytically and sustainably. Examination results of a school will provide information on the success rate of students achieving the learning objectives.

Public examinations may be used for a multitude of purposes; one of their most important features is their accuracy of measurement. Examination grades may improve or weaken a student's self-concept of his activities, praising or convicting him/her in the eyes of teachers who are considering him/her for further education, and in many ways may have continuing effects upon an individual's upcoming career and well-being (Skurnik & Nuttal, 1968).

The education system of Bangladesh is generally divided into three levels (i) Primary (Grade I to V) (ii)

Secondary (grade VI to XII) and (iii) Higher Secondary. Besides, there are some private institutions providing English medium education. They offer O level and A level courses. The age for entering primary education is 6 years, where the lower secondary, secondary and upper secondary is 11-13, 14-15, and 16-17 years respectively (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2017).

Primary level education is provided under two main streams (institutional arrangements)-general and madrasa, while secondary education has three major streams: general, technical-vocational and madrasa. Higher education, likewise, has three streams: general (inclusive of pure and applied science, arts, business and social science), madrasa and technology education (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2017).

The secondary level of education consists of seven years of formal schooling. The first three years (grades VI-VIII) is referred to as junior secondary; the next two years (grades IX -X) is secondary, while the last 2 years (grades XI-XII) is called higher secondary. There is diversification of courses after three years of schooling in junior secondary level (Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics, 2013).

Public examinations in Bangladesh are a sensitive issue. The Junior School Certificate (JSC) has been administered annually since 2010 by the eight region-based Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education to grade VIII students in general education programs in public and private schools. This examination targets students enrolled in the general education system. The JSC is a low-stake examination that certifies completion of lower secondary education. The JSC is a written examination, administered face-to-face and delivered through paper-pencil tests. All exam takers are presented with the same cognitive questions or tests, which are aligned with the national curriculum. (Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education–Government, 2015)

According to Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education–Government (2015), the JSC serves the following purposes:

- a) student certification for completion of lower secondary general education programs
- b) student selection to higher education programs or admission into specific courses or tracks
- c) Supporting teachers (training, relevant materials, etc.)
- d) school or educator accountability
- e) promoting competition among schools
- f) sub-national level monitoring of learning outcomes
- g) monitoring education quality levels
- h) planning education policy reforms

The purpose of the public examination is to assess the competency of student learning relative to some established standards, and the results of these

examinations are used to differentiate among students with regard to their preferred careers, further education or employment or fit into societal strata. Public examinations seem to lead the work of secondary schools, even though teachers and students might perceive goals other than examination success (e.g., the development of personal characteristics such as self-confidence and independence as being educationally more important). According to Khan (2015), Junior School Certificate (JSC) examination is one of the best ways of stealing our children of some of their childhood. In Bangladesh, many educationists have opined that public examination should be reduced and we need to reconsider the JSC exam and its modalities. JSC examination is increasing pressure upon students and bending them towards coaching centres and notebooks. Therefore, this is drawing our students more and more towards exam and away from learning. Raven (1977) explained that examination has created dissatisfaction and concern about the appropriateness of exam to assess the attainments of the increasing numbers of students who are entering secondary schools, which have led to recommendations for changes in the system of examinations. Thus, the present study is a pointer to grasp considering the negative aspects of JSC examination whether secondary school students possess positive or negative attitudes towards JSC examination. The rationale for the present study and a review of related previous research are provided in the next section.

RELATION BETWEEN ATTITUDE AND EXAMINATION

Attitude is a central part of human identity. Ajzen (2005) believes that an attitude is a disposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, institution, or event. Everyday individuals love, hate, like, dislike, favour, oppose, agree, disagree, argue, persuade etc. All these are evaluative reactions to a thing. Hence, attitudes can be referred as a summary assessment of an object of thought (Bohner & Wanke, 2002). They are feelings and predispositions that guide an individual's behaviour (Rubinstein, 1986) and persuade to an action that can be evaluated as either positive or negative (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Katz (1960) asserts that the reason for holding on to or for changing attitudes is found in the functions they do for the individual. The functions are those of adjustment, ego-defence, value expression and knowledge. According to (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993), attitudes are influenced by three components. The cognitive component, which is made up of the thoughts and beliefs people hold to about the object of the attitude. The actual component, which consists of the feelings inspired by the object of attitude, and the behavioural component, which consists of tendencies to act in

certain ways towards any, object attitude (Maio, Maio, & Haddock, 2010).

A person who shows a definite attitude towards something is responding to his conception of that thing instead of to its actual state. Attitude is shaped by people because of some kinds of learning experience if the experience is favourable a positive attitude is found and vice versa (Orunaboka, 2011). The attitude individuals hold can often influence their action in person and larger situation. For this reason, educationist, psychologists and sociologists are concerned with attitude development, how they affect behaviour and how they can be modified. Attitude does not only include the negative attitude such as biases, prejudices and hatreds, but also positive attitudes are sometimes called sentiment, which includes our attachment and loyalties to individual, matters and ideas (George, 2000). Attitude thus seems like a system of ideas with an emotional core or content. Human beings are not born with attitudes, they learn later. Some attitudes are based on the people's own knowledge, understanding, and skills and some are grown from other sources. However, the attitude does not remain the same. It changes in a couple of time and regularly (Olasheinde & Olatoye, 2014).

Attitudes towards assessment are a hypothetical-deductive concept, which can be measured because of certain behavior (Burns, 1990). Attitudes towards assessment based on two parallels, first of which Gee's theory, which is based on deep beliefs in the significance of the provision, which has been, identified as socio-cognitive outlook (Gee, 2004). The second theory is relies on social constructive behaviour; such an idea would be connected with societal beliefs, customs and traditions.

This study is based on the concept of attitude formation. There is no doubt that there exists an association between students' attitude towards examination and students actual practice of learning activities. Although many psychologists disputed the direct influence of attitude on behaviour, however, they opined that attitudes were valuable in the sense that they gave people an easy and practical guide for proper behaviour (Johnson, 1979). Feldman (2000) suggested that whereas attitude sometimes influenced our behaviour, our behaviour on its part sometimes formed our attitude. Amoo (2002) stated that favourable or positive attitude can enhances active performance that leads to success. On the opposite hand, unfavourable or negative attitude often reflected by an individual's lack of interest and non-participation in an activity.

Amoo and Rahman (2004) also claimed that the connection between attitudes and performance is a consequence of mutual influence, as attitudes affect accomplishment and in turn, achievement affects attitude. According to Johnson (1979), some attitudes aided students to function efficiently in school while

some others interfered with school life. In addition, Udokang and Okoro (2004) intimated that the attitudes possessed by kids affect their schoolwork as well as their learning. In the opinion of Blair, Jones and Simpson (1975), a child with a positive attitude about his or her teacher, who also likes school work, will certainly experience some success. Johnson (1979) intimated that some attitudes, like positive self-esteem, help students to function effectively in class, on the contrary, students being negative in nature, like fear of failure, disturbs with school activities. Possessing a negative attitude towards examination will most probably interfere with an individual's performance in the examinations. Broadfoot (cited in Mkandawire, 1989) stated that positive attitudes towards standardized tests could help increase students' motivation to do well in these tests. It is obvious from the discussion that one's favourable attitude towards examination is related to the possibility of one's actual learning activities for the examination.

Despite the importance of standardized tests, some educators have criticized these tests. According to Kaira (2002), one of the criticisms is that standardized tests cover only a minor portion of what schools try to achieve. Schools undertake a variety of activities, most of which are not assessed by standardized tests. As Kellaghan and Greaney (1992) explained that, most examinations are paper pencil test and it ignores a variety of skills that cannot be measured in this approach. As such, tests are regarded as biased towards those activities that are assessed through the tests. Examination, being an instrument for decision-making, is always prone to fear and anxiety. According to Islam (2017), JSC examination makes students as well as their guardians too anxious about the board exam. Students are being deprived of the joy and happiness of their childhood due to overburdened with a load of the study of JSC examination. Therefore, they hardly have a chance to do something creative according to their own will because they remain busy for studying books, guidebooks and running to coaching centres for getting GPA-5 in the exam. In 2017, the pass percentage of the Junior Secondary Certificate (JSC) examination has hit a record low of 83.65% falling 9.41% from 2016. Across the country, 1, 84, 397 students have secured GPA-5 under eight general education boards down by 50,662 from 2016. Although in 2018, the pass rate in JSC examination has increased to 85.83%, only 68,095 students secured GPA-5 that is one-third of 2017. Furthermore, in 2018 girls have outperformed boys in the JSC examination by securing higher pass rates and more GPA-5. Among the total 66,108 GPA-5 achievers, 39,905 were girls and the remaining 28,190 were boys. Additionally, Girls had 86.43% pass rate while boys had 85.12%. The drastic decline in overall result and boys result than girls result in JSC examination clearly indicates that students are not as motivated to JSC examination as they should be.

As the attitudes are determinants of human behaviour, so the study occupies a prominent position in psychology, person studies and group dynamics (Melhem, 2006); it determines the behaviour and interpret it, controls the processes of motivation and conscious of the individual, and then guides the individual's responses towards people, things and subjects (Merie & Balqis, 1991). The study of attitudes towards JSC examination is one of the most important aspects that we should take into consideration when evaluating the reality of the experience and rationality of JSC examination in Bangladesh. This evaluation is not only limited to the theoretical and practical sides but also will extend to cover the emotional side. The knowledge of attitudes helps us to predict and interpret the behaviour of students in the future.

The purpose of this study is to examine students' attitude towards JSC examination and finding the significant difference between students' attitude towards JSC examination with regard to the gender of the students. To achieve the purpose of this study, more specifically, intends to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the attitude of secondary school students towards junior school certificate (JSC) examination?
2. What is the effect of sex on the attitude of secondary school students towards junior school certificate (JSC) examination?

METHOD

This is a quantitative study which explores secondary students' attitude towards JSC examination in selected secondary schools of Bangladesh. In this study, data were collected in a computable manner through questionnaires. In quantitative data analysis, all the procedures are statistical. The present study also uses the mathematical way to analyze the data.

The study was conducted in the secondary schools situated in Dhaka City of Bangladesh. The study included both private and Government controlled schools. The population of this study consisted of students studying in Grade VIII in different secondary schools of Bangladesh. Five government and five private schools were chosen using purposive sampling to create a balance in a number of male-female students. A sample of 250 secondary students was selected from ten schools, which were located in Dhaka city using random sampling. Thirty secondary students who will appear in JSC examination were chosen from each school randomly. A total of 120 male and 130 female secondary students were chosen for this study. A questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data from secondary students about their attitude towards JSC examination. The questionnaire had a five-point Likert type scale (i.e. strongly agree - 5, agree - 4, neutral - 3, disagree - 2, strongly disagree - 1). The

Likert type scale consisted of 24 statements. It was constructed with the help of existing international scales, references and sources available, and previous studies that have benefited the current study.

A pilot study of the questionnaires was administered to different respondents (20) and the responses checked to see if the questions were interpreted the same or differently by different respondents. After assessing their feasibility and identifying any problems that could be encountered during data collection, the researcher modified the questionnaire. The academic advisors and experts in this field of study checked the validity of the questionnaire.

Reliability of the study tool was verified according to the internal consistency method using Cronbach's alpha formula by applying it to a prospective sample of (20) individuals, from the population and outside the sample, the overall reliability of the instrument reached (0.71), and this indicates that the tool is valid and reliable enough to meet the objectives of the current study.

The quantitative data from the questionnaire were analyzed using a quantitative or statistical approach. The analysis included descriptive techniques as percentages, mean and standard deviation. In data analysis and extraction of statistical results, the response rate from the respondents was 100% and the researcher used Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) program version 20, and descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations were used to measure the level of students' attitudes toward JSC exam. To find a significant difference between gender and attitude towards mathematics a *t*-test was conducted. After analyzing the data results of quantitative data, findings were presented through tables.

The data obtained from Likert type scale were analyzed based on four levels of attitude degree were adopted according to the following criteria, on the grounds that the degree (3) is the neutral point given by Da'asin (2016).

Table 1. The degree of attitude with an interval of the mean

Degree of Attitude	Interval of Mean
Significantly Negative	1.00-1.99
Moderately Negative	2.00-2.99
Neutral	3.00
Moderately Positive	3.01-3.99
Significantly Positive	4.00-5.00

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion of the study are presented based on the research questions and major themes of JSC examination.

JSC Examination Enhances Students' Study

Students showed a highly positive attitude towards the statement "JSC examination enhances their study" by increasing their study quality and interest to study, making more attentive to study, and increasing daily study time. Most of the students strongly agreed (67.1%) that JSC exam has increased their daily study

time (M=4.5; St. De =.880) and study quality (M=4.65; Std. De =.513) also. Similarly, More than 76% students have strongly agreed with the idea that JSC examination has increased their interest to study (M=4.65; St. De =.775) and made them more attentive to study (M=4.72; Std. De =.615). See details in Table 2.

Table 2. Students' attitude towards JSC examination enhances their study

Statements	Percentage of Agreement					Total	Mean	Std. De	Attitude Degree
	SD	D	N	A	SA				
1. Students' study quality has increased for JSC examination.	0%	0%	1.7%	31.2%	67.1%	100%	4.65	.513	Significantly Positive
2. JSC examination has increased student' interest to study.	1.7%	1.7%	2.9%	16.8%	76.9%	100%	4.65	.775	Significantly Positive
3. Students became more attentive to study for JSC examination.	0%	1.7%	3.5%	16.2%	78.6%	100%	4.72	.615	Significantly Positive
4. Students' daily study time has increased for JSC examination.	2.3%	2.3%	5.2%	23.1%	67.1%	100%	4.5	.880	Significantly Positive

Note. SD= Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree, Std. De= Standard Deviation

Table 3 shows that male students have a more highly positive attitude than female students considering JSC examination has increased their study quality, made more attentive to study and increased their daily study time. However, *t*-test result represents that gender wise students attitude towards JSC examination enhances

study quality has no statistically significant for these statements, as *p*-value is greater than 0.05. JSC examination has increased male students interest to study than female students (M=4.81>4.56) is statistically significant as *p*-value is lower than 0.05.

Table 3. Gender-wise students' attitude towards JSC examination enhances their study

Statements	Gender	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation	<i>t</i> -value	Significance at 0.05 level
1. Students study quality has increased for JSC examination.	Male	120	4.73	.479	1.602	Non-significant
	Female	130	4.60	.529		
2. JSC examination has increased student' interest to study.	Male	120	4.81	.468	2.083	Significant
	Female	130	4.56	.906		
3. Students became more attentive to study for JSC examination.	Male	120	4.79	.565	1.265	Non-significant
	Female	130	4.67	.643		
4. Students' daily study time has increased for JSC examination.	Male	120	4.63	.714	1.478	Non-significant
	Female	130	4.42	.966		

Rationality of JSC Examination

Students showed a moderately positive attitude towards rationality of JSC examination. As shown by Table 4, most of the students showed their agreement (71%) that JSC examination should remain in future also (M=3.82; Std. De =1.405). Maximum students (62%) think JSC examination is rational for them (M=3.52; Std. De =1.493). Nearly 48% of students agreed that JSC examination is better than an annual exam, while nearly 40% of students did not agree with this idea, and 11% of students remain neutral in this case.

Similarly, Longe and Ajike (2014) found that 86% of students agreed that public examinations are taken more seriously than internal examinations. This study also revealed that a large number of students (40%) wanted annual exam rather than JSC examination. If any student cannot take part in the JSC exam, he or she will be eligible to have a certificate from the school attesting the completion of studies until Class VIII. If the school authority can give a completion certificate to those students who did not take part in the JSC exam, then the question arises that why schools cannot hold JSC exam (Khan, 2015).

Table 4. Students' attitude towards rationality of JSC examination

Statements	Percentage of Agreement					Total	Mean	Std. De	Attitude Degree
	SD	D	N	A	SA				
1. JSC examination should remain in future also.	11.6%	11.6%	4.6%	27.7%	44.5%	100%	3.82	1.405	Moderately Positive
2. Students' think JSC examination is rational for them.	16.8%	12.7%	7.5%	27.7%	35.3%	100%	3.52	1.493	Moderately Positive
3. JSC examination is better than annual examination of schools.	26.6%	13.3%	11%	31.2%	17.5%	100%	3.01	1.496	Moderately Positive

Note. SD= Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree, Std. De= Standard Deviation

Table 5 shows that male students have a more positive attitude than female students considering JSC examination should remain in future also (M=4.36>3.48), this exam is rational for them (M=3.88>3.29) and it is better than annual exam (M=3.37>2.77). The *t*-test result represents that gender

wise student's attitude towards rationality of JSC examination is statistically significant for all the statements, as *p*-value is lower than 0.05. Therefore, male students are more positive than female students in case of the rationality of JSC exam.

Table 5. Gender wise Students' attitude towards rationality of JSC examination

Statements	Gender	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation	<i>t</i> -value	Significance at 0.05 level
1. JSC examination should remain in future also.	Male	120	4.36	.965	4.188	Significant
	Female	130	3.48	1.532		
2. Students' think JSC examination is rational for them.	Male	120	3.88	1.365	2.565	Significant
	Female	130	3.29	1.530		
3. JSC examination is better than an annual examination of schools.	Male	120	3.37	1.380	2.611	Significant
	Female	130	2.77	1.526		

JSC Examination Enhances Students' Knowledge

Students showed both positive and negative attitude towards JSC examination enhances their knowledge (see Table 6). Almost 90% students disagreed that by suggestion based learning they cannot do well in the examination (M=1.49; Std. De =.826) which means students can do well in the JSC exam by studying only suggestions. This is a clear indication that the JSC exam is not fulfilling the real purpose of the national examination. The main purpose of the examination is to determine how much the student has mastered a subject matter of a particular field of study. Islam (2017) explained that JSC exams have unlocked a door of enormous opportunity for coaching business as they provide the students with some 'short-cut suggestions' along with an assurance of 'good result' in the exams. This also indicates that JSC examination has encouraged the students to drill and rote memorization. Students do not get a chance to understand the subjects or get the opportunity to create something on their own (Azad, 2016).

More than 76% of students strongly agreed that they can learn deeply (M=4.70; Std. De =.630) and practice more (M=4.62; Std. De =.823) in different subjects for JSC examination. Similarly, students showed a significantly positive attitude towards doing

coaching classes (M=4.50; St. De =.833) and school's model test (M=4.84; Std. De =.617) for JSC examination. However, nearly 45% of students believed that only book knowledge is enough for JSC exam. These students are only focused on textbook and neglect to gather knowledge from outside of books. According to Azad (2016), reference materials are one of the vital information resources of the modern education system. Newspapers, journals, periodicals, internet, literature, reference books, notes, guidebooks etc. may be the sources. In this research, the other half students (46%) who believed that book knowledge is not enough for JSC exam are depending on only guidebooks and coaching notes. Azad (2016) found that in a survey 47% teacher rely on guidebooks to prepare lessons while 92% of students take the help of guidebooks to understand their lessons. Guidebooks have become the main instrument for studying to most JSC examinees. Students find ready-made answers resemble exam questions so they feel reading textbooks, learning the content, and figuring out own answers is totally unimportant for them. Dependence on these kinds of books is the outcome of some gaps in our education system.

Table 6. Students' attitude towards JSC examination enhances students' knowledge

Statements	Percentage of Agreement					Total	Mean	Std. De	Attitude Degree
	SD	D	N	A	SA				
1. By studying suggestion based learning, students cannot do well in different subjects of the JSC examination.	65.9%	24.9%	5.8%	1.7%	1.7%	100%	1.49	.826	Significantly Negative
2. Students' can learn deeply about different subjects for JSC examination.	0%	1.2%	5.8%	15%	78%	100%	4.70	.630	Significantly Positive
3. Only book knowledge is not enough for JSC examination.	22%	24.3%	7.5%	32.9%	13.3%	100%	2.91	1.409	Moderately Negative
4. Students' can practice more in different subjects for JSC examination.	1.7%	2.3%	4.6%	14.5%	76.9%	100%	4.62	.823	Significantly Positive
5. Students' like to do coaching classes on every subject in schools for JSC examination.	.6%	5.2%	2.9%	26.6%	64.7%	100%	4.50	.833	Significantly Positive
6. Due to JSC examination model test in schools are very necessary for students.	1.2%	1.7%	0%	6.4%	90.8%	100%	4.84	.617	Significantly Positive

Note. SD= Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree, Std. De= Standard Deviation

Table 7 shows that male students have a more positive attitude than female students considering they can learn deeply about different subjects for JSC examination and due to this exam school model test was very necessary for them. On the contrary, female students have a more positive attitude than male students in case of book knowledge is not enough for JSC exam and they like coaching classes for JSC exam. However, *t*-test result represents that gender wise students attitude towards JSC examination enhances students' knowledge has no statistically significance for these statements as *p*-value

is greater than 0.05. Male students showed more negative attitude than female students in case of suggestion-based learning they are not enough to do well in the JSC exam ($M=1.33 < 1.58$), but male students showed a more positive attitude in case of they practice more in different subjects for JSC exam ($M=4.87 > 4.47$). The *t*-test result represents that gender wise student's attitude towards JSC examination is statistically significant for these two statements as *p*-value is lower than 0.05.

Table 7. Gender wise students' attitude towards JSC examination enhances students' knowledge

Statements	Gender	Sample Size	Mean	Std. De	<i>t</i> -value	Significance at 0.05 level
1. By studying suggestion based learning, students cannot do well in different subjects of the JSC examination.	Male	120	1.33	.660	-2.009	Significant
	Female	130	1.58	.904		
2. Students' can learn deeply about different subjects for JSC examination.	Male	120	4.78	.573	1.274	Non-significant
	Female	130	4.65	.662		
3. Only book knowledge is not enough for JSC examination.	Male	120	2.73	1.399	-1.353	Non-significant
	Female	130	3.03	1.411		
4. Students' can practice more in different subjects for JSC examination.	Male	120	4.87	.385	3.144	Significant
	Female	130	4.47	.978		
5. Students' like to do coaching classes on every subject in schools for JSC examination.	Male	120	4.46	.876	-.431	Non-significant
	Female	130	4.52	.807		
6. Due to the JSC examination model test in schools are very necessary for students.	Male	120	4.87	.457	.465	Non-significant
	Female	130	4.82	.701		

JSC Examination for Judgement

Creativity is the skill to recognize the world in new ways, to search hidden patterns, to form connections between seemingly unrelated phenomena, and to come up with solutions. Creativity involves two processes: thinking, then producing (Azad, 2016). Students showed a highly positive attitude towards JSC examination judges them well by increasing creative thinking, judging intellectual

capability and students can also judge them. As indicated by Table 8, more than 75% of students strongly agreed that they can judge their ability ($M=4.63$; Std. De =.771) and intellectual skills ($M=4.76$; Std. De =.557) through JSC exam. Similarly, 68% of students have strongly agreed with the idea that JSC examination has increased their creative thinking capability ($M=4.50$; Std. De =.880). Learning should be always problem-

based and creative thinking is enhanced through problem-solving tasks. Therefore, the examination should create a scope that will help students to create and solve things creatively.

Table 8. Students' attitude towards JSC examination for judgement

Statements	Percentage of Agreement					Total	Mean	Std. De	Attitude Degree
	SD	D	N	A	SA				
1. Students can judge their ability through JSC examination.	1.2%	2.9%	2.3%	19.1%	74.6%	100%	4.63	.771	Significantly Positive
2. JSC examination has increased students' creative thinking capability.	1.7%	2.3%	8.7%	19.1%	68.2%	100%	4.50	.880	Significantly Positive
3. JSC examination is a very good way to judge students' intellectual skills.	0%	1.2%	2.9%	14.5%	81.5%	100%	4.76	.557	Significantly Positive

Note. SD= Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree, Std. De= Standard Deviation

Azad (2016) suggested that students do better when they able to share their own thoughts without relying on teachers and manuscripts. Nevertheless, the teachers barely inspire the JSC students to write on their own views. They have to write according to teacher's instructions or from a guidebook selected by the teacher. According to Islam (2017), the most important aspects for a student to build up his/her personality are related to the acquisition of knowledge, emotional responsiveness and intellectual abilities. Among these three areas, only the first one is assessed in the existing

or traditional system of our schools, colleges and universities.

Table 9 shows that male students have a more highly positive attitude than female students considering JSC examination judge their ability, intellectual skills and creative thinking capability. However, *t*-test result represents that gender wise students attitude towards JSC examination for judgement has no statistically significant for these statements as *p*-value is greater than 0.05.

Table 9. Gender wise Students' attitude towards JSC examination for judgement

Statements	Gender	Sample Size	Mean	Std. De	<i>t</i> -value	Significance at 0.05 level
1. Students can judge their ability through JSC examination.	Male	120	4.73	.642	1.377	Non-significant
	Female	130	4.57	.840		
2. JSC examination has increased students' creative thinking capability.	Male	120	4.69	.633	2.278	Non-significant
	Female	130	4.38	.990		
3. JSC examination is a very good way to judge students' intellectual skills.	Male	120	4.85	.359	1.657	Non-significant
	Female	130	4.71	.647		

Side Effects of JSC Exam

Students showed both positive and negative attitude towards the side effects of JSC examination. Almost 58% students disagreed that JSC exam has not increased their stress level ($M=2.79$; $St. De = 1.361$) and the JSC exam question is not more difficult than other questions ($M=2.49$; $Std. De = 1.301$). Therefore, students are feeling stressed due to JSC exam and its higher difficulty level than other questions. Thus, the extra burden of public exams is hampering students' proper physical and mental wellbeing largely. It is hardly possible to improve the standard of education in the

country by increasing the numbers of public examinations (Islam, 2017).

Nearly 80% students showed their agreement that JSC exam has decreased their fear of exam ($M=4.23$; $St. De = 1.035$) and students showed a moderately positive attitude towards not getting physically sick due to overpressure of JSC exam ($M=3.42$; $St. De = 1.377$). However, Students showed a moderately negative attitude towards JSC exam has not hampered their day-to-day life ($M=2.94$; $St. De = 1.388$), have enough time for playing ($M=2.39$; $St. De = 1.292$) and not have to study late night ($M=2.12$; $St. De = 1.248$) for JSC examination.

Table 10. Students' attitude towards side effects of JSC examination

Statements	Percentage of Agreement					Total	Mean	Std. De	Attitude Degree
	SD	D	N	A	SA				
1. JSC examination has not increased students' stress level.	12.7%	46.8%	8.7%	12.1%	19.7%	100%	2.79	1.361	Moderately Negative
2. JSC examination helped students' to decrease their fear of examination.	2.3%	6.4%	11.6%	26%	53.8%	100%	4.23	1.035	Significantly Positive
3. JSC examination did not hampered students' day-to-day life.	16.2%	32.4%	10.4%	23.1%	17.9%	100%	2.94	1.388	Moderately Negative
4. Students' can have enough time for playing due to JSC examination.	27.2%	41%	7.5%	14.5%	9.8%	100%	2.39	1.292	Moderately Negative
5. JSC examination questions are not more difficult than other examination questions.	27.2%	31.2%	16.8%	15%	9.8%	100%	2.49	1.301	Moderately Negative
6. Students do not have to study late night for JSC examination.	37.6%	39.9%	4%	10.4%	8.1%	100%	2.12	1.248	Moderately Negative
7. Students' do not get physically sick due to over pressure of JSC examination.	8.7%	26.6%	8.1%	27.2%	29.5%	100%	3.42	1.377	Moderately Positive

Note. SD= Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree, Std. De= Standard Deviation

Table 11 shows that male students have a more negative attitude than female students considering statement 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Nevertheless, male students have a more positive attitude than female students considering statement 2 and 7. However, *t*-test result represents that gender wise students attitude towards JSC examination enhances study quality has no

statistically significant for these statements as *p*-value is greater than 0.05. Male students showed a more negative attitude than female students in case of having enough time for playing due to JSC exam ($M=2.12 < 2.56$) which is statistically significant as *p*-value is lower than 0.05.

Table 11. Gender wise students' attitude towards side effects of JSC examination

Statements	Gender	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation	<i>t</i> -value	Significance at 0.05 level
1. JSC examination has not increased students' stress level.	Male	120	2.627	1.1913	-1.271	Non-significant
	Female	130	2.896	1.4536		
2. JSC examination helped students' to decrease their fear of examination.	Male	120	4.34	.993	1.192	Non-significant
	Female	130	4.15	1.058		
3. JSC examination did not hamper students' day-to-day life.	Male	120	2.70	1.303	-1.826	Non-significant
	Female	130	3.09	1.424		
4. Students' can have enough time for playing due to JSC examination.	Male	120	2.12	.962	-2.192	Significant
	Female	130	2.56	1.441		
5. JSC examination questions are not more difficult than other examination questions.	Male	120	2.30	1.243	-1.556	Non-significant
	Female	130	2.61	1.328		
6. Students do not have to study late night for JSC examination.	Male	120	2.06	1.153	-.468	Non-significant
	Female	130	2.15	1.308		
7. Students' do not get physically sick due to overpressure of JSC examination.	Male	120	3.60	1.268	1.332	Non-significant
	Female	130	3.31	1.437		

The examination is a major component of education in Bangladesh. The results of the study reflected secondary students' positive attitude towards JSC examination. The finding is similar to Longe and Ajike's (2014) research in which students showed a positive attitude towards formal examination. This study also revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female students attitude towards JSC exam. However, Chrysolyte and Raja (2016) found that female

higher secondary students' attitude is more favourable towards the public examinations than male higher secondary students'.

In Bangladesh, examination refers to formal test of students' knowledge or skills in a particular subject, especially by means of answering questions or practical exercises. Based on the above discussion Figure 1 is drawn to show that JSC examination has both positive and negative effects on student learning.

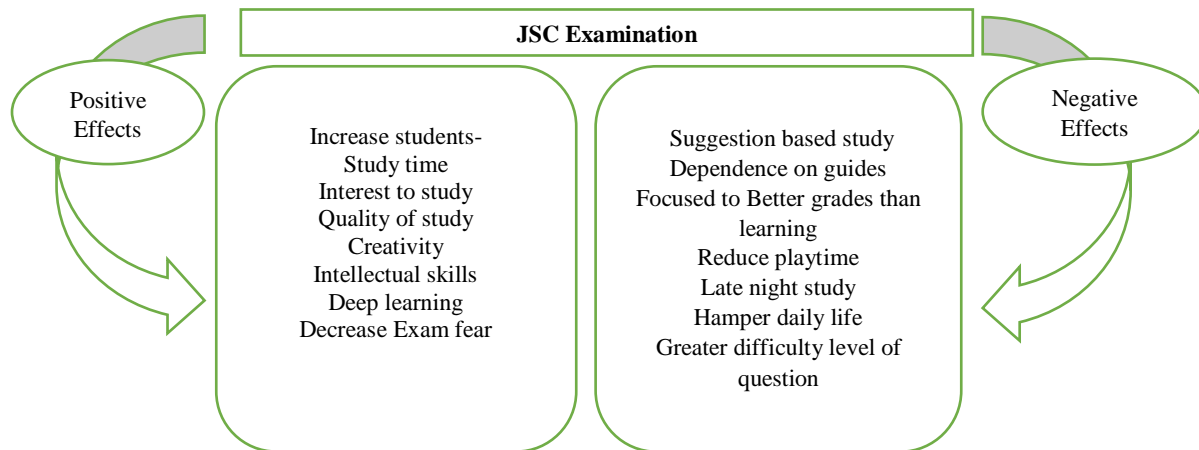


Figure 1. Effects of JSC examination on students learning

JSC exam has increased students' both quality of study and study time, created more interest in the study, and reduced fear of examination. At the same time, JSC examination has hampered their normal life by over stress and reduced playtime. Although students believed that this exam has increased their creativity and intellectual skills, they became dependent on more guidebooks and coaching notes. Every year, students are focused to get better grades by following guidebooks and notes. Parents, students and school authorities are happy for the overall performances of the students in JSC examination. We have to change our assessment system to get rid of this coaching- guide-notebook culture, which has been the unavoidable part of our education.

CONCLUSIONS

An examination may be a good way to measure students learning but it has some limitations. Although students may be positive towards JSC examination, this examination could not fulfil the expectation level of our students, parents or the education system. Question setters should not follow guidebooks to set JSC questions rather than questions should focus on creativity and problem-solving tasks. This will open a window for students to move forward from guidebooks. The aim of education is to make the students learn their subjects deeply and acquire necessary skills. The aim of examinations should not be to prevent them from learning. Government and necessary stakeholders need to improve examination system to achieve the goal of assessment for learning.

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