

EVALUATION OF EXISTING PEDAGOGY OF TEACHING IN THE PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES OF BANGLADESH: AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract

Higher education is acknowledged today as a capital investment and is of paramount importance for economic and social development of a country (Barnet, 1990). Some specialists called attention that the present higher education system employs rote memorization approach rather than critical thinking by students. It is, therefore, needed not only to relook at our pedagogy of teaching and learning principles including methods but also to revitalize the higher education system. Although Bangladesh has had a long history of university teaching, pedagogy has hardly entered the imagination of university educators. Today's teachers are yesterday's students, with each generation being groomed in the same cultural patterns of learning that are continually repeated without examination. Pedagogy teaches teachers how to teach, so that they may effectively teach students how to learn; it offers important training for teachers to transform students from mere parrots of information into challengers of and innovators of knowledge. Earlier public sector had monopoly in the tertiary level of education. In 1992 private sector started its function. Within a short span of time more than ninety private universities have started their action. The Emergence and the growth of the private universities in Bangladesh have taken a phenomenal shape in recent years. However, the private universities are playing an important role in spreading the opportunities of higher education in our country. But in recent years a widespread allegations were raised against PUs that some are selling certificates, easy-to-get degrees, very poor teaching qualities, poor infrastructure, high tuition fees, etc. In this context this study is an initiative to explore the education quality (EQ) of PUs that is offered by them. This paper analyses the existing pedagogy, teaching style, quality education, capability of teachers to teach students and infrastructure of the Private University of Bangladesh.

Keywords: Pedagogy, Quality education, teaching method, Private University, Faculty resources, infrastructure etc.

INTRODUCTION

Bangladesh has had strong tradition of public universities, but with the downfall of Soviet Union in 1991 and rise of a neo-liberal market philosophy, the way was paved for establishing private universities in Bangladesh. These private universities offered an alternate platform for higher education and have experienced exponential growth. Currently, there are 40 public universities, 94 private universities. The variation in global politics led to the commercialization of education, which mirrored a global capitalist ethos (Bartlett, Frederick, and Gulbrandsen

2004). Under the compulsion of globalization, the University Grant Commission (UGC), which oversees the affairs of public universities, allowed private universities to operate in Bangladesh. The UGC deals differently in its approaches to public and private universities. Public universities, which assume to promote the "value" of education, depend totally on government grants and subsidies, while private universities depend merely on market positions so as to produce the image of a "profit-making" enterprise. Private universities are primarily preoccupied with recovering their costs.

Research Objectives

To show the association between quality education and student satisfaction of private university slightly comparing with public university. It would be a matter of fact that which type of teaching method is maximum widespread among the private university students.

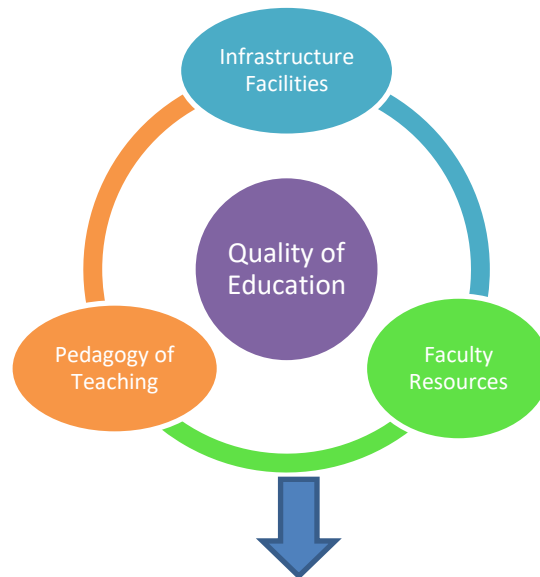
METHODOLOGY

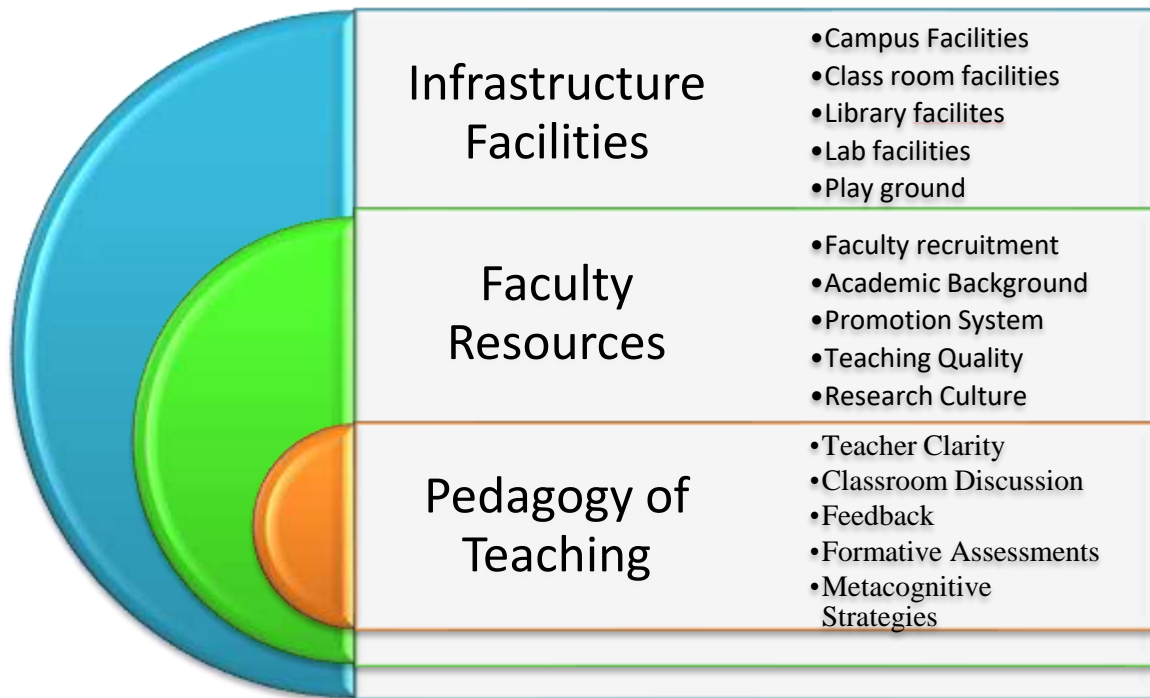
This study has been conducted by putting together both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data has been collected from individuals and secondary data has been formulated from the census, UGC's reports, articles, books and so on. In this study a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods were used. The question might arise why I used a combination of these methods. Because as Creswell (1994:177) suggests, that it is advantageous to a researcher to combine methods to better understand a concept being tested or explored. Each approach has its

strengths and its weaknesses, and I think over reliance on anyone method is not appropriate. I think if I combined both quantitative and qualitative research, it would provide a general picture of my study areas. The collected data are used to evaluate the students' satisfaction with the association of quality education. For these purpose 200 students from ten private universities and ten public universities in the academic year 2016-2017 are selected.

Analytical Framework

From the above discussion, it has been tried to clear the education quality, objectives of higher education, factors related to QE etc. under the conceptual framework to explore the Quality of Education where an analytical framework has been established. To follow the framework, I will try to collect data and information and analyze those to reach the target point.





DISCUSSION

Pedagogy of Teaching includes teacher's clarity, class room discussion, feedback, formative assessment and metacognitive strategy. When a teacher begins a new unit of study or project with students, she clarifies the purpose and learning goals, and provides explicit criteria on how students can be successful. Teachers need to frequently step offstage and facilitate entire class discussion along with individual feedback (written or verbal), teachers need to provide whole-group feedback on patterns they see in the collective class' growth and areas of need. Students are given opportunities to plan and organize, monitor their own work, direct their own learning, and to self-reflect along the way.

Infrastructure Facilities

Physical facilities are very important for tertiary level education. Quality education develops leadership quality. Jamal (2002) in his study, emphasized on some issues for judging the standards of a university, physical infrastructure is one of them. There are some direct facilities pertinent to education and

research. A well-structured and education-friendly campus, sufficient classroom, rich library, laboratory for research and lab-based courses, internet facilities for ICT related courses are very much relevant. With these some other facilities must be needed for tertiary level. As students are the future leader of the nation, they need proper mental development. Club activities like debate, environment club, nature study club, photography, cultural organization, language club, social activities club, etc. enrich them to know and to involve the relevant issues of development. These activities help them to develop social responsibility. In-door and out-door games facilities should have in a campus.

Campus facility

It was declared in PU Act that on prior approval of the government a private university was shift to permanent campus within 5 years of the temporary establishment, 5 acres of land (at least) is must for campus to get approval. In fact, only a few PUs have permanent campus and most failed even after

15 years of establishment. Universities are running in make-shift arrangement in different rented houses. Students expressed dissatisfaction in location and arrangement of university campus. As most of the campuses are rented have no sufficient space. A portion of respondents is strongly dissatisfied about their campus facility. Students are frustrated because in some university there is no canteen, playground, in-door games facility, dedicated room for club activities, no patronization for cultural activities, even there is no free place where they can meet or spend leisure.

According to survey regarding campus facilities, 80% respondents said they have no playground. They were aggrieved at the time of reply for not having any out-door game facilities. More than half of the total respondents said they have no indoor games facility even. Those have this facility, enjoying only carom and table tennis. Two or three tables or boards for huge students those are not enough. As the universities are running in several hired buildings in different locations that is why students cannot enjoy the facilities. Seventy percent (70%) respondents said they have no mosque but have dedicated room for prayer. In most cases medical facilities in campus means one general practitioner with one bed, some have no such facility. But students cannot avail this facility when they need because normally doctors room is in administrative building which is far from faculty building or classroom. A few respondents said that some students already have passed away due to the lack of medical facilities. As most of the buildings in campus are scattered they don't know the location of doctors' room.

Classroom Facilities

Classroom is a formal interaction place between the teachers and the students. If the classroom is well equipped with modern equipment that is used in learning process it

may make easy to understand the topic. Well decorated, environment and teaching-learning friendly classroom helps to achieve the goal. In this survey, classroom space, number as per requirements, white board, overhead projector, facility for Power-Point presentation, map, flow-chart etc. necessary instruments frequently used in classroom learning are available or not have been taken into consideration. With these issue adequate light and power supply, teacher's skill in using these in classroom was also considered.

Major portion of the respondents are satisfied on classroom facilities provided by the university. They said that classrooms are well-decorated. In classroom teaching learning faculties have option to use white-board, OHP, Power Point, Map, Diagram, Flow-chart, etc. Classrooms are air conditioned in three universities, spacious and majestic in looking. But one-third respondents are facing problems; they don't have enough education materials, have to wait long time outside the classroom and have very little number of classrooms as per requirement.

Library Facilities

Library is a part and parcel for education and research. It is hub of knowledge. A rich and automated library with congenial reading environment has an important role in knowledge dissemination. Faculty members and students earn knowledge from here. Latest development and up dated information, journals helps students to keep them up dated which is one of the major issues related to ensure quality education. Library with sufficient text and reference books, sufficient space for reading, electronic catalog system, online access facility, drawing books facility, photocopy facility, yearly budget allocation for collecting resources for library has been taken into consideration for survey.

Out of ten, only one university has automated library with virtual access facility. That university has 35 online data-bases that

provide 10 thousand titles of online journals and have a dedicated building. Three universities have student common rooms, others student are using their library as common room where don't have enough space even readers-friendly environment. Inadequate number of books is in library. For exam preparation, students cannot take support because library does not have two or three copies of an important textbook. In most cases, Students do not get updated journals and report on various issues published by National and Multinational Organizations. Some universities have very small collection of academic books but shelves are filled by novels and other works of fiction. Authorities are very much rigid to increase space allocation for library. As they are in temporary arrangement, have no better options now, according to officials. At the time of survey and interview with the authority, other than exceptions, authorities are not interested at all for enriching and develop the library as university standard. Even there is no seminar library for individual department or faculty, which is seen in public university. Finally, it can be said that only one university have standard library but others are not maintaining any level. So, these insufficient facilities hardly contribute quality education.

Laboratory Facilities

Lab facilities are important for lab-based courses. Business faculty and some other faculty students have to use computer lab as their course requirements. Most of the respondents said that lab facilities are not standard for user. Students those are studying in lab-based courses are unhappy about the instruments, instruments quality and sufficient chemical stock in laboratory. Most of the labs have backdated instruments. Students get opportunity for minimum time to use lab. No respondent were strongly satisfied about lab. The numbers of students those are dissatisfied

in their level of satisfaction were more than the respondents were satisfied. Lab users of top-level university also show their dissatisfaction.

In most cases, labs have back-dated, reconditioned and scrapped instruments. Some departments including Pharmacy, textile engineering, telecommunication engineering, electronics and electrical engineering are very much lab-based and need latest instrument for education and research. Everyday new developments are updating these courses. To collect latest equipment's authorities have to invest more but their expenditure table shows that they are not interested to install modern equipment. The allocation mostly spent for collecting chemicals, re-agent, to buy machine-parts and for maintenance. A university uses same lab for various purposes.

Out of ten, students from seven universities told that they have no lab as per requirements. They have to wait or reschedule classes based on tight lab schedule. Availability of power, chemicals and professional technician are also concern to use labs. All labs have no full-time technician or lab assistant experienced in respective field.

Quality Education

Faculty resources and infrastructure, if one is software then another is hardware for an institution. Under these two independent variables some other sub-variables have been taken into consideration to explore the education quality of PUs in Bangladesh. To judge the education quality five another issues has been taken in line with the objective of higher education institutions to understand the education quality of a University. Hafiz (2002) suggests that, a good quality university should meet the following conditions;

- a. The people, the government and academicians at home and abroad believe that its degree carry high academic value.

- b. Other well-known universities accept the graduates for higher studies or employ them as teachers.
- c. Credits/time completed at that university could be transferred to other good universities.
- d. International scholars recognize and cite its research publications.
- e. Graduates are in demand in the national and international job market.

As there is no approved unified faculty recruitment policy with minimum requirements and unified statutes for PUs, so universities follow their own policy. Only a few universities publish advertisement through different media and only two universities show their concern on quality recruitment. Others are not fair and transparent in faculty recruitment process more or less. To enhance faculty quality, universities don't have any plan or program. Most of the university depends on part-time teachers those are experiences and skilled having higher degree.

Research is a neglected issue in a private university. There is no established culture for research. Faculties have no scope, allocation for doing research. Part-time faculties are not concerned with research. But full time faculties those who have interest do not get facility. Authorities have no initiatives and budget allocation for this. In a private university, research means to publish a journal yearly, nothing more. Some faculties are doing research on their own initiatives for their academic development. Research is part of higher education. But private universities deduct it from their mission and vision. This trend affects the quality of an institution. Without research, achieved degree is not comprehensive, complete and inclusive.

The goal of higher education is not only to create new knowledge and disseminate it, but also create skilled forces for the country to face development challenges. Quality and balanced education system can help to

achieve this goal. In the process of judging quality of education, also need to consider national, regional and international issues. Acceptability and market demand of the degree, national and international recognition of the degree and job providers view are also important factors. In the context of these issues, the common people, the government and academicians at home and abroad believe that whether the degree carries high academic value or not. It is tough to draw common line about the quality of degree. Graduates from two universities have wide acceptability at home and abroad. Graduates are doing job in well-reputed organizations. Some students get scholarship and are conducting research based on merit; reputation of university didn't play any role in managing the scholarship. Only a small number of students may have the quality to be accepted for higher studies or to get job as a teacher. Researcher and academician Chowdhury (2001) said that though few private universities of Bangladesh have gained both national and international reputation, but not all of them are functioning with the same level of efficiency.

FINDINGS

As a whole, it is tough to draw a line about the education quality of Private Universities. We have found that universities have similarities to some extent, divergence among the universities are also existent. Respondents are different in their opinion about the EQ. Among the six universities, 20% universities initiatives are excellent providing international standard education. Many private universities of the country run academic programs in small rented buildings and have failed to create academic environment. On the other side students' satisfaction level is low on campus facility, lab, and library facilities. A few universities are ensuring standard classroom facility and library facility.

Faculties working in different Universities believe that existing faculty quality is not fit to ensure EQ. For senior, skilled and experienced faculties having foreign degree, there is no formal selection process. Senior faculties are join in contact-basis. In case of junior faculty, some sorts of selection process been followed but in most cases it is not fair and transparent. Faculties with good academic attainments, research experience and higher degree; are not interested to work as full-time faculty. Other than one or two universities, in most cases, part-time faculties are better than full-time faculties. Junior faculties are mostly appointed as full-time faculty. Faculty recruitment system is not well-structured. Most of the universities have recruitment policy but this policy is not implemented properly. In most cases authority manipulates faculty recruitment. Research is a neglected issue in PUs. Teachers are disappointed about the research facility and culture. Some teachers are doing it on their own initiative. Most of the senior teachers are coming from outside. The authorities are not interested in research. So, research is not getting preference to be an agenda in private university. Even there is no fund allocated for research activities. Students expressed their dissatisfactions for not having dedicated room for club activities that help to develop leadership quality, meet mental thirst, develop patriotism and create opportunity to involve in social work. There is no outdoor games facility in PUs. Indoor games facility is very limited. Students were looking upset and aggrieved at the time of survey for not having playground. Most cases students are satisfied about library facilities.

Most of the users and students of lab-based courses are dissatisfied on their lab facility. In laboratory, students are suffered much due to lack of modern instruments, not enough chemical supply, unskilled lab assistant, power disruption, very limited

number of lab as per requirements. Yearly allocation of the universities for collecting library and lab resources are very insignificant as per total expenditure.

CONCLUSION

Maintaining quality is becoming a vital issue in changing global scenario. No doubt PU's are contributing to meet the growing demand. But only a few are ensuring regional or global level of standard. Most are not quality concern. Poor infrastructure facilities, inefficient and inexperienced low quality teaching staff with the profit motive of founders put the sub-sector in a critical situation. Even founders are not willing to abide by related Act or Guidelines. As an apex body UGC cannot fight against irregularities with weak legal strength and logistics. But we have to move forward. A new Act with the consultation of stakeholders is immensely needed for this sector. Another positive initiative has been taken by UGC recently. A project starts to enhance HEQ of Public and Private sector institutions. This project will support universities to improve teaching-learning quality in undergraduate and master's level. It also provides fund for the improvement of research capabilities for post-graduate programs, it also has a component to recognize academic innovations for improving resources for lab, library and other related fields. The GoB and World Bank funded project also commits to strengthen institutional capacity to devise internal assessment system. It is sure that universities with positive commitment will enjoy support to enrich themselves from Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project (HEQEP).

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