

## CHAPTER

# I

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Every new nation feels compelled over and above the general development efforts, to develop certain minimum capabilities in the area of science and technology, industry and security, and certain basic commodities that are needed to maximize the independence and freedom of choice, even in this interdependent world. The concrete examples of this desire are the efforts to reduce their dependency with respect to food, fertilizer, fuel and energy and to retain adequate control of national resources.

Moreover, the newly independent nations aspire to change as rapidly as possible their subordinate place in the international division of labour as mere producers of raw materials and market for other peoples' finished products. This means rapid industrialization along with other development goals aspired. Again, at the same time, in the context of the international economic and monetary system, these newly independent nations need to develop their capabilities to deal with new and complex international questions on an equal footing with other countries in terms of general principles and at the technical and operational levels. Hence a whole range of functional transnational organizations may be required to deal with the many new problems of a global nature.

The access to the most recent advances in the sciences and in technology the world over, is of great importance, because the development of the so called intermediate technology needed for a broadly based employment oriented development strategy, requires familiarity with sophisticated scientific advances and high technology. Without such familiarity, no break-throughs are possible. In short, nations on roads of development have to push harder on all fronts to achieve their different goals of development. This exercise generally puts greater emphasis on economic development of the country, for, it is considered to be the main force in the national development.

## 1.1 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCE

In recent past, national development was primarily referred to in terms of economic growth. But the concept of national development goes far beyond economic growth. It embraces the whole gamut of nation's economic, social and cultural life. Though tendency to identify development with economic growth still persists, it is recognized as a multidimensional concept by both developing nations and the international development community. Development is not merely an economic process. The improvement of living conditions as a goal is not enough; it has to make sense in terms of the broader purposes of society if motivations for development are to be maintained. A sense of moral direction, cultural continuity, self-image and identity as a nation, as well as the capacity to relate economic and social goals to moral purpose, are crucial elements in any sustained development effort.

The viability of many developing nations on the roads of development, as well as their capacity for increased self-reliance and the social cohesion will to a large extent depend on the gradual transformation of traditional social structures into modern communities with the help of communication media with other developed and developing nations.

In this progress and process of development a nation has to nurture the potentials lying in its womb and that are not the mines or minerals, soil or substance, but it is the nurturing of human resources. For as Rao (1971) puts,

VKRV  
"science provides knowledge and technology, the tools for the harnessing of natural resources, the development of machinery to exploit them, the gigantic power needed to drive the machinery, and the skill and know-how required for operating the machinery, but one can never ignore the inevitable force of human resource development that controls the entire endeavour of economic development."

Harbison (1973) too, writing about human resources in the context of national development states that capital and natural

resources are passive factors of production, human beings are active agents who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, build social, economic and political organizations and carry forward national development.

It is clear from a number of evidences that countries remain under developed because their human potentials are not nurtured, unfolded and utilized to its fullest extent in the services of society. People well informed in different areas of knowledge are generally found to be more cosmopolite, ready to understand and adopt changes for their personal and professional growth and thus contribute in overall national growth and development.

Harbison and Myers (1964) state,

"Human resource development is the process of increasing the knowledge, the skills and the capacities of all people in a society. In economic terms, it could be described as the accumulation of human capital and its effective investment in the development of an economy. In political terms, human resource development prepares people for adult participation in political processes, particularly as citizens in a democracy. From the social and cultural point of view, the development of human resources helps people to live fuller and richer lives, less bound by tradition. In short, the process of human resource development unlocks the doors to modernizations."

The developing countries are fully aware of this fact, i.e., development of human resources. This is evident from the study of their national educational objectives as well as commissions' reports. For example, the reports of the education Commission of India (1964-66) and that of Bangladesh (1974) have clearly stated that, adequate development of physical resources is not possible until the most powerful force existing in the country in the form of human resources is well equipped and utilized to its maximum extent.

But like other natural resources which have to be processed and are subjected to various degrees of refinement human resources too, rather more seriously need better care and greater attention for its necessary refinement process which consists of education and training.

## 1.2 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

Human resource development in this late twentieth century means training and retraining of people with respect to their area of knowledge and information, skills and competence, attitude and aptitude and interest and awareness. Today's problem is not of providing just more education, it is a problem of preparing for twenty first century living which means different kinds of education. Challenge of changes touches every facet of society which demands expansion of the learning capacity of an individual, of the whole nation.

Education, good or bad, adequate or irrelevant has its own impact in an individual's life. Naik (1975) rightly expressed his view as,

"Man is distinguished from other animals by his infinite educability, and hence education is as vital for the intellectual, emotional, cultural and spiritual development of man, as food is for his physical survival."

Education changes the perceptions as well as expectations of a man. This happens more frequently in today's world due to the easy access to information, especially the transborder information and data-flows and the expansion of communication net works. The societal impact of communication is tremendous.

Again, powerful forces like industrialization, urbanization, rapid technological changes, the erosion of old social structures and the emergence of new ones, lead to structural changes within our societies - developed as well as developing ones. These forces affect people's expectations, their time horizons, their political awareness and their willingness to compromise with

their present states. The problem is to equip the generation with such learning tools which can help them to increase their 'cope ability' avoiding too much conflict and retaining their creativity and thus helping them to live with dynamism rather than succumbing to disappointment.

Based on the advances in biotechnology, microelectronics and information technology and materials technology, a third industrial revolution is getting shaped. This will soon ask for leaping over outmoded technologies and innovations that are consonant with the real needs of the emerging society and its manpower. Both the context and the content of learning are changing together and mutually reinforcing each other. Hence, the acquisition of knowledge is not the endpoint of learning, the challenge is to develop, both in individuals and in communities, a capacity for continuous learning, for creative responses and for critical assessments. The mission of education at whatever stage form remains to develop the capacity to learn and educate for an unforeseeable future in the children as well as in intellectual adults. There is no meaning in educating people in the same old fashion for, it involves the risk of making them more and more ignorant about the evolving needs of their own times.

However, pragmatic an approach to educate may be, is bound to miss the hit, without a forward-looking orientation. For example, the emphasis of linking education with work has once again resulted into appreciation of vocational education. But, looking to the fluid job markets, the jobs for which people will be trained may no longer exist at the end of the training cycle. Hence, for developing the human resources, the emphasis should be on such training which can cultivate the capacity for innovation, for improvisation, for recognition of emerging opportunities in new social and technological situations which we cannot exactly foresee now. The net gain should be cultivated adaptability, enhanced creativity and robust courage for non submission to despair among the people of the country.

These expectations from education offer a different dimension in educational innovations for any nation. It is clear

by now that education does not mean mere acquisition of knowledge of three R's, nor does it mean mere development of certain skills, what is required really is a much wider and deeper capacity for learning that is not limited to the educational system. Learning capacity is not confined to individuals alone. It comprises the learning capacity of institutions too - governmental and non-governmental; formal and non-formal, trade unions and business corporations as well as voluntary associations. All have to increase their learning capacity that is to absorb and utilize creatively new informations and skills in order to ingest a much larger amount of information and respond to it creatively. It is only this process that can help a society, a country, a nation to respond to rapid transformations, to increasing demands of man power resources.

Analysing critically, it becomes evident that 'increasing learning capacity' of the people, stands out as the main responsibility of the system of education in any country. Education tries to meet with this call mainly through its formal agencies viz., schools and institutions of higher learning. Children, when they enter primary school, possess a wider range of intellectual and social skills and abilities than they have traditionally been credited with. At this stage the focus is on formation of certain basic concepts, attitudes and skills in literacy and numeracy. The 'socialization process' plays the major role at the primary level as development of certain basic qualities like perseverance, integrity, virtuosity etc. takes place in the early formative period. It is a way develops the basic qualities which are needed for 'man' to become 'manpower'.

Nurturing of the potentials in the society remains in the focus at the secondary stage of education. It prepares adolescents for higher education where the fuller development of their qualities takes place. /At the same time manpower which maintains the infra-structure of technology and services in a modern society, is essentially a product of secondary level of education. /

The crucial role to be played by education in human resource development for the country remains at the higher education stage. University is the traditional seat of higher education and whether in the advanced or the developing countries, the classical role of the university - to preserve, transmit and increase knowledge, cannot be neglected. Especially in developing countries its main function remains to be of raising the level of the nations' intellectuals and therefore economic, political, social and cultural development. Higher education on one hand sets pace and tone of education throughout the system through its products who staff all the educational institutions as teachers, Supervisors and administrators. On the other hand, it supplies personnel of very innate ability and skill, and with special training and knowledge to cope with the demands of present day societies, as it demands more specialized activities, vocations and professions. Higher education supplies a wide variety of sophisticated and everchanging manpower needed by education, industry, agriculture, administration and other different services. The self-reliant and endogeneous character of a national economy can only be maintained and advanced if competent personnel are available to foresee, plan and execute research and developmental activities. Higher education also helps to develop leadership qualities, independence of thought, rational outlook, openness to change, proper habits of work, commitment to truth and justice, moral and human values, desire for knowledge and desire to serve the society, which are all important for the development of the nation as a whole.

It has the potential to do all these performance!  
 Higher education a predictor of ability or a supply of skills.  
 Controversy raised by the sector, Blom, Aronson,

Crucial as universities are to national development, higher education also takes place in colleges below university status, technical schools, community colleges and special institutions for various specializations.

The concept of education for an individual or for a nation has been changed now in this far advanced techno-wave society. It is no more confined in the formal structure and institutions. Besides formal schooling, people learn on the job, through extension courses, short term training programmes, radio and TV



series as post secondary education. People also learn through their participation in various social, political and cultural organizations. As human resource development is a life time process, skills and knowledge generated in pre-career formal schooling is also being updated by non-formal education. Human resources are developed as much on the job as in formal education, through systematic or informal training by employing institutions e.g., civil servants and enterprise executives up date their skills through participation in staff training programmes. Technicians are best trained by combining formal instruction in technical and vocational institutions with on the job experiences in the work place. Teacher equip themselves with the latest knowledge and teaching skills through inservice training programmes.

Human resources are also developed by self-development on individual's own initiative. People acquire knowledge, skills and develop capacities by self learning, through radio, TV, informal discussions, by attending public lectures or by taking correspondance courses in their area of interest.

open-  
mini-  
units  
also

### 1.3 AIMS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Since higher education is a pre-requisite for most positions of trust, initiative, responsibility and leadership in the society and plays the role of passport to employment opportunities and employment media, it has long been regarded as a major channel through which one goes up in the world economically and socially. People from higher class utilize higher education to maintain their socio-economic supremacy; for the members of middle class, higher education has become a social necessity, a necessary means for holding their position; lower class youth visualize it as a royal path for social advancement. The benefits of higher education can be viewed differently from different angles, e.g., by an individual from his personal growth point of view, by a psychologist as a change of behaviours and abilities of individual students, by an economist as an investment and by a sociologist as a means of upward mobility for lower class.

Robbins  
Committee  
Report

Radhakrishnan  
Committee

Carnegie  
Commission  
Report

Cardinal Importance  
→ The 1st of 3  
functions

Research & Service (extension)

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Various educational philosophers and thinkers of past and present, different authorities, committees and commissions everywhere in the world have set the aims and objectives for higher education. Though it is very much likely that the specific aims and objectives of higher education will vary from the socio-economic-politico-cultural setting to setting, yet there are some features common every where.

Soon after world war II, the world map started changing with the emergence of new nations and independent countries. After achieving political independence these nations have been trying to achieve economic emancipation, solve social, racial and ethnic problems, bring common standard of life to all its citizens.

Thus the aims and objectives of higher education for these countries have become different from those during their colonial days. Along with the classical aims of 'seeking and cultivating knowledge' and 'preparing competent personnel for specific professions', great importance has been given to the objective of 'social and national development'. Higher education essentially seeks and cultivates knowledge, but the emphasis is to apply the knowledge for analysing the social and economic problems and finding the way to solve them. Though higher education necessarily prepares a wide variety of sophisticated manpower needed for national development, its aim is not the production of mere specialists. Nurturing of cultivated men and women imbued with a sense of social purpose for transmission of common culture and common standards of citizenship remain the focal aim in higher education. In today's world, every citizen of a country is also a world citizen, higher education aims to foster the principles of equality, peace, fraternity and international brotherhood in the young generation.

Extension of  
Knowledge

Thus to keep pace with time and developments, preparing worthy citizens and needed manpower for various vocations for the smooth functioning of state machinery and thus for achieving rapid development of the nation, every country imparts higher education to its citizens, so does Bangladesh. Bangladesh Education Commission (1974) in its report formulated the following objectives of higher education for the newly born nation:

- (a) to prepare skilled, learned and farsighted personnel for various professions;
- (b) to prepare a group of educated people whose habits of work, desire for knowledge, independence of thought, sense of justice, moral and human values would have been properly developed;
- (c) to unveil the new horizon of knowledge through research; and
- (d) to analyse the social and economic problems and find the way to solve them.

#### 1.4 THE PROBLEM AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

The area which now comprises Bangladesh was a part of British India before 14th August, 1947 and a part of Pakistan upto 16th December, 1971. In Bangladesh, about 87 million people live in an area of 144000 sq.km. About 85 per cent of its total population reside in the rural areas and the percentages of male and female population are 51.56 and 48.44 respectively. The muslims form the 86.6 per cent and the hindus form 12.1 per cent of the total population. The overall literacy rate is 23.8 per cent. Agriculture contributes nearly 80 per cent of total employment in the economy. More than 50 per cent of the rural population are landless peasants (Census Report 1981).

In Bangladesh, higher education is imparted after twelve years of schooling through degree colleges, professional colleges, general and technical universities. At present there are 6 universities and 300 affiliated colleges. The enrolment at higher education is about 3 per cent of the age group 18 - 24 years (UNESCO, 1983). About 23 per cent of the total expenditure of education is spent for higher education. The total expenditure for education is about 1.7 per cent of GNP of Bangladesh (BANBEIS, 1986). The average recurring cost per student in the general universities is TK 5,788, as against the recurring cost per student for government primary and secondary schools are TK 98 and TK 437 respectively. Islam (1981) estimated

\* Land distribution

that about eightynine to ninetyseven per cent of the recurring cost per student in the general and technical universities was met from public contribution while the rest was met from the fees.

Who exactly receives this expensive higher education? Do the fruits of publicly provided facilities reach those who deserve it the most? This question is vital in the sense that not all the sons and daughters of rich parents have the ability to benefit by the intellectual discipline which the work in college and university demands, nor will all the students who can benefit by such discipline have enough financial resources to go ahead.

As our society has become more and more complex, the nation not only needs scientists, technologists, teachers, doctors, administrators, lawyers, but for moral and spiritual development it needs artists, singers, musicians, dancers, litterateurs, authors, poets, novelists and athletes too. It therefore becomes imperative that higher education should attract children of highly diversified ability and intellect. Colleges and universities aim to bring about changes in the skills, attitude and values with which students arrive at these institutions. The characteristics that students bring to college are obviously crucial in determining the effects of college on them. The abilities, aptitudes, attitudes, interests, values, beliefs, orientations, origins and social and personal characteristics of students play an essential role in shapping their experiences. If only the children of elites have access to higher education, if students from a particular sex or religion come to higher education, it will perpetuate inequalities of social and economic disparities. If they come from a particular stratum of society, not only that social mobility will be stagnated, but the state power is likely to be concentrated in the hands of a small minority group. It will be very difficult for them to come out from their class interests and the probability is likely that their efforts will be directed for the welfare of their class instead of general masses.

Decades ago in this land, college or university admission process was a relatively simple affair. Sufficient seats were usually available, so that if an applicant could afford to pay the tuition fees and resident costs of a college, if he had taken his matriculation, then the applicant could find seat in any college he wished to attend. Since few could pay for education, college admission essentially was guaranteed by socio-economic status. But now the scene has changed. Where formerly young people of a certain social status who wished to prepare for a few professions like superior governmental jobs, college teaching, law, medicine, were expected to go to college now society expects every one with necessary ability to acquire college education and it expects colleges to prepare them for a wide variety of occupations and professions. With the growing demands of higher education in every sphere of life, more applicants than the colleges and universities can accomodate want to enter into these institutions. Thus there has evolved a complex and variable process by means of which secondary school graduates enter the colleges and universities. A number of factors interplay in this process of entry to higher education and at times make it more complicated.

As the number of seats are limited due to limited resources and the students have to pay a lot if not by way of tuition fees but for boarding and lodging and other personal expenses, everybody who wants to get higher education cannot afford it. Also student's aspiration, motivation, influence of the peers are likely to play important roles in shaping his/her college plan. As the admission requirements vary from institution to institution, from course to course, students do not find themselves always in the desired courses and colleges.

In an egalitarian society, theoretically students are not barred in taking admissions into the institutions of higher learning because of his/her sex, religion, caste, ethnicity or place of residence. /But in practice, these factors also play important roles in the entry process./ More than three decades

ago Hollinshead (1952) while investigating 'who should go to college' found even in a country like USA these factors affecting students' entry to higher education. Commenting on that he writes,

"... this one-third who went to college is by no means a random group who just happened to go.... Those of high ability and good academic record were more apt to go than their less able classmates. Those whose parents had high incomes or were in the professional classes were more apt to go than those who had lower incomes or lower social status. Girls went less frequently than boys, even though their abilities were as high or higher. Negroes do not go in the same proportion as whites. High school graduates in certain regions of the country do not go in the same proportions as those in other regions. Urban young people were more apt to go than rural young people. Those who were near a college were more apt to go than those farther away and those with a strong drive for a vocation which required college training were more apt to go than those of equal status and no strong vocational interest."

In a democratic society each individual should have an opportunity to decide for himself his educational and occupational future in the light of his own interests and in the light of his information about society's needs (Berdie, 1954). Such a society has obligations to provide opportunities for individuals to develop and use their talents and the interests of the society require that such opportunities should be made attractive. But in reality no society has unlimited opportunities and there is no society which is homogeneous in terms of the abilities of individuals. Thus educational and vocational choices of individuals are limited both by the individuals' inherent characteristics and by the opportunities available. Working within these limitations, no nation can provide higher education to all of its citizens. Bangladesh is no exception.

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necessary  
also

As it happens everywhere and specially in newlyborn nations that of the total number of students studying at higher secondary stage almost half of them fail, of the remaining half who are

eligible for admission in institutions of higher learning a large number of them do not enter higher educational institutions may be on their own, or due to number of reasons which can be socio-economic, personal, psychological, familial etc.

We are interested in the behaviour of those students who enter into higher education (and) who do not or cannot enter. This is not only for the sake of gaining knowledge, but also to evolve a rational policy regarding the entry into higher education as this particular annual process has implications for the nature of the entire society. Another reason is as the pressure for access into colleges and universities becomes greater, there is a need to understand the entry process too. What are the factors that affect the entry process? Does the student's sex, religion or place of residence play a part; or his financial status; or his parental education; or his high school record; for his aspiration? What kind of individuals receive the highly advantageous treatment which the entry into higher education institutions offer? Who go elsewhere and why? ".... are the questions of crucial nature for any education system. After twelve years of schooling, i.e., after passing the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examination, students go for higher education in Bangladesh. On an average about 65% of the students who pass the HSC examination go for higher education, the remaining students do not go. This calls for an inquiry as to what are the differences between those who go for higher education and those who do not go? Do they differ in their socio-economic background? In what way the students differ in respect of their parental education and occupation? What are other possible factors in their home environment and interests that constitute the differences?

Still further, what are the (causes) of not entering into higher education though they pass the HSC examination? What are the constraints that stand in their way of higher studies? Are they unable to avail themselves of higher education due to financial or any other reason though they are willing for it? What are their perceptions about higher education? Are they

attracting  
of the 300  
market  
?

engaging themselves in any occupation or are they preparing themselves for any other vocation? Or are they only increasing the numbers of unemployed youth?

For the future planning of higher education and also for human resource development, it is therefore necessary to seek answers to these questions. The answers to some of the above mentioned pertinent questions may be helpful in the planning of admission policies, scholarship schemes, setting up of new educational institutions, reforming courses and syllabi, extending facilities for co-curricular activities, guidance and counselling, introduction of correspondence courses etc., i.e., in the overall planning of the process of higher education in Bangladesh.

Classification and description constitute the necessary beginning step in accumulating knowledge about any kind of physical, biological or psychological process - and the process of college entry is no exception. We will realize the potential dangers of ill-fitting classifications and the typologies that fail to do justice to the facts. Whatever the pitfalls, however, a beginning must be made. Keeping this picture in mind with respect to the entry to higher education, the present investigation has been undertaken with a view to studying the characteristics of two groups of students, viz.

- i) entrants - students those who passed the HSC examination and have entered higher education;
- ii) non-entrants - students who passed the HSC examination but have not entered higher education.

#### 1.5 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The title of the present study is —

"ENTRY TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH — AN INVESTIGATION INTO STUDENTS' CHARACTERISTICS."



## 1.6 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The major objectives of the study are:

1. To study the socio-economic background, home environment, academic performance, co-curricular interests and other characteristics of
  - a. those who pass the HSC examination and enter higher education;
  - b. those who pass the HSC examination but do not enter higher education.
2. To ascertain if entry into higher education is associated with the characteristics of students.
3. To have an indepth study of the students
  - a. who have entered higher education and
  - b. who have not entered higher educationwith respect to their perception regarding higher education motivational and aspirational aspect and reasons for not entering higher education etc.

For better understanding of the problem, evolving a theoretical framework for this study, and for drawing meaningful conclusions from the present investigation, a review of the related researches has been presented in the next chapter.