CHAPTER - 2

EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE
BACKGROUND OF EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH

History of man's education is as old as that of human civilization. But his early educational activities were not as formalised as it is now. The teaching processes in the past were handed down to the next generation from father to son or from old to young through their day to day activities. The father or the head of the family used to teach his sons or the younger persons the skills which he considered useful for their living or survival. From the period of hunting, first occupation of man upto the new stone age, this trend of informal type education continued. Formal education with the purpose of serving specific groups like the ruling class first started in the early civilized countries like India, Egypt, Iran and China. However, from the available materials and documents it is extremely difficult to make a comprehensive study of the development of education in the ancient civilized countries. Similarly, it is difficult to trace the origin of education in Bangladesh which for centuries, was a part and parcel of the great Indian civilization.

Bangladesh has a glorious past and an ancient civilization. Her educational and cultural tradition is the most ancient in the world's history. All that Bangladesh is today, is the gift of its cultural and social heritage of the last 5000 years. When India was partitioned in 1947, the portion now known as Bangladesh a part of the old undivided Bengal went to Pakistan.
and came to be known as East Pakistan. For various reasons which need not be mentioned here the Bengalis of East Pakistan began a struggle to secure their rightful place in Pakistan. As this was denied, a bitter nine-month war of independence was started which took a very heavy toll of human lives, property and art treasures. As a result the new independent state of People's Republic of Bangladesh was born on December 16, 1971. The present has its roots deeply embedded in the past. An attempt to inquire into the historical perspective of educational system of Bangladesh with the objective of seeking honest answers one has to probe into the ancient education systems of the Indian sub-continent. This is necessary because we belong to the same heritage of education which took its present shape through ages under diverse political, religious and cultural context.

India is a land of many traditions deriving originally from the Aryans and the Dravidians and also from Brahmanical, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Mohammedanism, Sikhism, Christianity and a countless variety of tribal religions. It is a land of many nations and many communities. The traditions of one blending with those of the other (Jha 1978). This sub-continent is a multi-lingual and multi-racial region. Since time immemorial, it was inhabited by different races and groups of people, most of whom came from outside. Among these races, the Dravidians, the Aryans, the Huns and the Mongolians were the prominent. In later periods some of the European races, like the Portugese
and the English also came. Many of these multi-national groups of people in course of time, fused and formed a greater Indian race. Out of these diverse religious, political and cultural groups, the Aryans, the Buddhists, the Muslims and the English could make a definite contribution to the development of education in this country. The education imparted in the periods of Brahmanic, Buddhists and the Muslims were completely different from the education in the British period. The 19th century saw the birth of the modern age in India. A new type of education termed as western education was introduced in this subcontinent by the Europeans and this was a key factor in ushering the age. The foundation of modern education in India was established by the British.

Christian missionaries opened schools along with their centres of religions propagation in Bengal, Bombay, Madras, Agra, Meerut, Banaras, Jaunpur, Mathura, Ludhiana, Ajmer and other places. In these schools knowledge of the Bible was imparted along with education in other subjects through the medium of the regional languages. Among the many who propagated the cause of education through their individual efforts were Raja Rammohun Roy, David Heyer, Edward Hide East, Radakant Daye, etc.

In 1853, Marx saw the coming of modernity in India in terms of the destruction of the objective conditions of tradition and their replacement by the objective conditions of modernity, that is replication of western history and social relations.
"England has broken down the entire framework of Indian society, without any symptoms of reconstruction yet appearing. It has, however, a double mission to fulfill...one destructive, and the other regenerative - the annihilation of the old Asiatic society - and the laying of the material foundation of Western society in Asia" (Marx, 1975).

Singh (1973) while describing the broad structure of educational organisation emerged in India, classified it into three groups: first, primary-vernacular education (with the exception of the English missionary schools); secondly, high school and secondary school education, and thirdly, college and university education. From the very beginning a contradiction between the primary and the college, university level of education emerged in India on account of the medium and content of education. At the primary level the medium of instruction (with the exception of missionary and public schools) was the regional language and at the college level it was English. Teaching of science and European literature was done at colleges and universities to which only a few selected had access; but the mass education at the primary level remained isolated from this main current. This lag in the structure of education which started from the time of Macaulay has still not been fully bridged.

Modernization through education thus right from the beginning in India has been confined to a sub-culture of college and university educated youth and elite people and never did become a mass phenomenon.
Status of Education in East Bengal on the eve of Independence

East Bengal, as stated earlier, the Eastern wing of the province of Bengal on the 14th August of 1947 became a part of Pakistan a new sovereign state carved out of the Indian Sub-continent, and was named East Pakistan. During this transition period East Pakistan had to make a heroic attempt to keep the status of the tradition of education inherited from the British rule. With all the political and economic disturbances the trend and pattern of education that was in operation in pre-partition East Bengal was continued in East Pakistan until a new system of education was developed and implemented. Actually the pattern and system of education in Pakistan was same without much change in the educational structure.

During the Pakistan period although successive five year development plans were implemented, Bangladesh did not get its due share as most of the development work was concentrated in the western wing. The country remained as an underdeveloped region even after two and half decades of Pakistan rule.

Emergence of Bangladesh

Bangladesh appeared on the world map as a sovereign state on December 16, 1971 following the War of Liberation from March 25th to December 16, 1971.
In short, the area constituting the country was under Muslim rule for five and a half centuries i.e. from 1201 to 1757 A.D. and passed into British hands after the defeat of the last sovereign ruler, Nawab Sirajuddowla, at the battle of Plassey on June 23, 1757. The British ruled over India for nearly 190 years i.e. from 1757 to 1947 when the country was a part of the British Indian provinces of Bengal and Assam. During the British period Bangladesh was mainly a supplier of raw materials to the industries and export-houses located in and around Calcutta which was the capital as well as industrial and commercial centre of British Indian Province of Bengal. "With the end of British rule in India in August, 1947, Calcutta with its industrial environs fell to the share of India and this country was left with only a few cotton textile industries, one or two sugar mills, some jute baling presses a number of tea-estates and the like" (Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh, 1979).

There was practically no infrastructure available in the country at that time. With the termination of British rule in August, 1947, it constituted the eastern wing of Pakistan and was known as East Pakistan. During the Pakistan period Bangladesh (East Pakistan) was neglected. Only a few large scale industries and some of medium and small industries were set up and limited socio-economic infrastructure was created but these were far short of the actual requirements. Thus Bangladesh stays backward and exploited.
It remained with Pakistan for about 24 years i.e., from August 14, 1947 to March 25, 1971. "During the Liberation war in 1971 the occupying army, as a last hostile act committed upon a people that it could not subdue, killed several hundred intellectuals. They knew what they were doing, depriving the nation of its most vital resource. Bridges and factories can be easily rebuilt, a highly educational individual needs upto 20 years of schooling" (Sattar, 1982: 19).

The country, at birth, had inherited 'a poor undiversified economy characterized by an underdeveloped infrastructure, stagnant agriculture and a rapidly growing population plus the widespread damage to life, property, industry, trade and commerce caused by the war of Liberation. Just after liberation top most priority had to be given to the task of relief and rehabilitation of millions of people affected by the war and reconstruction of the War-ravaged economy. In fact, during the first one and a half years of the post-liberation period i.e., January to June, 1973, the Government had to divert most of its resources for relief operation repair of the communication system and current administrative and other expenditure.' International communications came forward to help in the humanitarian works. "Since obtaining its independence from Pakistan, the nation had faced repeated economic crises. Bangladesh's problems stem from two factors: difficulty in rebuilding its war-shattered economy and an explosive growth in population" (Morton, 1979: 471).
The new nation, Bangladesh is engaged in a form of social change that makes nation building and material development. Bangladesh wants to have rapid socio-economic development. In economic development education is not an end in itself, it is an end with a purpose in mind. It is necessary to design educational systems that can assist in attaining the purpose. Thus to achieve the process of modernization and to bring about a change in the mind and character of men, education is expected as an important agent of change. For the selection of right sort of innovation and acquisition of new traits and their integration into cultural pattern can be done very well by means of education.

Education impinges on every aspect of development in Bangladesh. The present system of education is widely regarded as being unsuitable for the needs of a developing country. It still reflects the needs of a bygone age concerned more with colonial administration and academic content than with the information, mind-training and orientation needed for development. It is curious that inherited systems of education can change so slowly. Britain has introduced vast changes in her educational system since 1947 when India gained independence, but the British system of education seems to have rested largely immune to change in Bangladesh (Faaland and Parkinson, 1977: 159).

Finally, education is a key to all round progress and it should be used in this country as an instrument of creating skilled manpower. Education should be purposeful, timely,
work-oriented, functional and dynamic to serve that purpose. "What is, therefore, required is a reorientation of our system of education before it can become an effective medium of inculcating attitudinal modernity in the young generation." The similar kind of reorientation (Sharma, 1979: P IV) is required in Bangladesh education system.

Educational Plans in Bangladesh

Education is an essential pre-requisite of socio-economic development. The rate of economic growth is related to the quality of manpower. Bangladesh enters the decade of the 1980's with an enhanced awareness of educational problems and needs. All over the country groups and individuals are at work in numerous ways contributing to the growth of education. Some of the educational schemes are large and expensive, others are small and inexpensive. All these activity springs from the independence of country. The initial years were difficult as recovery from the devastation of the liberation was slow, but the vision and persistence of many people found expression in these education activities.

By the late 1970's there was greater attention being paid to the needs of primary education. In 1980 the second five year plan spelled out the new direction, and universalization of primary education with political support, became the major educational innovation of the decade.
Time and again attempt has been made of introducing universal primary education in this country. Several important policy decisions have been made in this respect. In Article 17, in the constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh it is clearly stated that: "The State shall adopt effective measures for the purpose of establishing a uniform mass oriented and universal system of education to all children of such stage as may be determined by law, relating education to the needs of the society and producing properly trained and motivated citizens to serve these needs, removing illiteracy within such time as may be determined by law.

The First Five Year Plan (1973-1978) emphasizes that all citizens should have an inherent right to a minimum level of education and be able to receive it at any age convenient of them. An open educational system should, therefore, be developed which could widen the range of choices available to the learners and permit them to move both horizontally and vertically. All children must however, be assured of basic formal education at least at the primary level.


The National Educational Advisory Council in 1979 recommended the introduction of universal primary education by 1983. It was not until the First Five Year Plan of Pakistan (1955-60) when the first step in universalizing primary
education by accelerating girls' education was promoted by opening up all primary schools to girls.

The present government is very keen on introducing universal primary education in the country. In the Second Five Year Plan (1980-85) universal primary education has been recognized as one of the most important areas for the development of the country and it is expected that through the introduction of universal primary education 90 per cent of primary age-group children will be in schools by 1985. The new curriculum that has already been introduced at the primary level will be further updated through increased emphasis on work experience in curriculum content. Education will be gradually made universal up to grade VIII during the perspective plan.

In the educational and cultural fields Bangladesh occupies an important position in South Asia. There are six universities in the country - four general type and one each for agriculture and engineering and technology. The general type universities are located in Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Savar (near Dhaka). The number of students in the universities is around 32,000 and number of teachers around 2400. A programme has been taken up to establish an Islamic University. There are nearly 650 intermediate and degree colleges and vocational institutions and 9,000 secondary schools in the country with an enrolment of about 2 million. At present there are 2,684 Madrasahs in the country offering courses from Dakhil to Kamil level. Efforts are under way to modernise Madrasah education by
introducing science and vocational courses and emphasis will also be laid on the attainment of proficiency in Arabic speaking. There are 10 medical colleges, and one dental college. Engineering colleges are located in Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajashahi and Khulna. At present there are around 44,000 primary schools with an enrolment of 8.2 million.

Co-education facilities are available at the college and university levels while there are separate institutions for boys and girls at the high school level. Besides, there are art college, law colleges, colleges of music and fine arts in the country (1982 Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh, 1983: 6).

**Education System of Bangladesh**

Primary education is the base of entire structure of education. In Bangladesh there is a five-year Primary education (Class I to Class V: Age 5 to 9) followed by a three-year Junior Secondary (Class VI to Class VIII: Age 10 to 13), a two year secondary (Classes IX and X: Age 14 and 15), and a two year Higher Secondary (Classes XI and XII: 16 to 17) courses. Secondary education is offered in High schools (schools having classes upto X) and higher secondary education in the Intermediate colleges/Intermediate Sections of Degree Colleges. There are two public examinations, the Secondary school certificate examination (SSC) at the end of
Class X and the Higher Secondary certificate examination (HSC) at the end of Class XII, both of which are conducted by the four regional Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education.

After HSC, students can pursue, in accordance with their ability and aptitude, higher education in Pass/Honours Bachelor's Degree courses (duration 2 years/3 years) in the Degree Colleges or the universities, which are followed by the Master's Degree course mostly available in the universities. The Master's Degree Course is of one year duration for holders of an Honours Bachelor's degree and of two years duration for holders of a Bachelor's Pass degree. The general pattern of education is, therefore, 5+(3+2+2)+(2/3+2/1). The duration of Degree course is four years in Engineering and Agriculture and five years in Medicine after HSC.

The organization of Technical Education in Bangladesh is in three tiers: certificate courses, diploma courses and degree courses. The certificate courses, in general, are meant for training skilled workers and are of 1-2 years duration. Entry into these courses (in vocational schools and training centres) generally needs 8 years of schooling. Each vocational school offers two skill areas whereas the training centres offer 3 to 8 subject areas.

The polytechnic and monotechnic institutes offer diploma courses, of three years duration, in engineering and industrial fields after 10 years of schooling. In the commercial institutes
and also in the commercial sections of the polytechnic institutes courses of 2 years duration are offered. The Board of Technical Education prescribes courses and syllabi and awards the diploma.

Higher education in engineering and technology and agriculture is offered in the colleges and universities of engineering and technology and agriculture.

Besides the above general system of education there is a parallel system known as the Madrasah education which offers traditionally Islamic institution to Muslim boys and girls and prepare them for religious duties. The Madrasah education has the following stages: Ebtedayee (i.e., primary of 4 years duration), Dakhil (6 years duration after Ebtedayee), Alim (2 years duration after Dakhil), Fazil (2 years duration after Alim) and Kamil (2 years duration after Fazil). Subjects taught in these institutions focus mainly on the study of the Holy Quran, Hadith, Tafsir, Fiqh, Usul and Arabic language and literature. In addition, provision has also been made for the teaching of General Science, Mathematics, Social Studies, Bengali, English, Persian and Urdu at appropriate levels so that the Madrasah products become qualified for general vocations as well.

Position of Education in Bangladesh

Immediately after the liberation of Bangladesh a great emphasis was laid on educational reforms and on measures to make all tiers of education financially cheaper and physically
closer to the people. However, due to resource constraint coupled with lack of adequate preparation of details most of the basic policies remained unimplemented. While the literacy rate is around 24 per cent primary education has remained only in name. About 66 per cent of the children of primary age group are enrolled in schools, the drop out rates between classes I and II and classes I and V being 60 per cent and 80 per cent respectively (The Second Five Year Plan 1980-85, 1983: 283). Most of the secondary schools lack guidance, supervision and material means. There has been a sharp drop in the quality of teachers both at the secondary and higher levels. Specialised and higher courses like the honours degree programme have been introduced in many colleges without appropriate provisions, and a number of non-government colleges in each district have been nationalised without any forethought or preparation for raising the quality of instruction.

Bangladesh with a population of 94 (1982/83) million has only 30,000 scientists and technologists and barely 100,000 skilled workers. It has less than 4 scientists, technicians and skilled workers per 10,000 people as against over 21 in some of the neighbouring countries. Against the international guideline of 15 skilled workers and 5 technicians for each graduate engineer, the ratio in Bangladesh is 2 : 3 : 1. While on the one hand the country stagnated for shortage of technical hands at home and for employment abroad, 40 per cent of those with 12 years of schooling and above remained unemployed.
In 1981 the number of unemployed people with 12 years of schooling and above was around 4.2 million (The Second Five Year Plan 1980-85, 1983: 284). Over the year the percentage of expenditure on education has declined both in terms of GDP and annual budget. During 1973-81 the share of recurrent expenditure on education has undergone a gradual decline from 15.5 per cent to 13.10 per cent. In terms of GDP the 1982/83 budgeted expenditure on education is less than 1.4 per cent while most countries of the region spend in the neighbourhood of 3 per cent and UNESCO recommendation is for 7 per cent. Furthermore, the share of education in total public expenditure is equally low as compared with other countries at the same stage of development. In current prices, the per capita expenditure on education in Bangladesh in 1982/83 is only TK 38.77. The distribution of public expenditure over various levels of education is highly skewed; the recurrent cost on a primary child and a university student being TK 76 and 10,333 respectively. The average cost of an undergraduate in a government college is TK 2,100 while in a non-government college the average cost is TK 210 (The Second Five Year Plan 1980-85, 1983: 284). Furthermore, over 70 per cent of the investment in education goes to the urban areas where the universities and most of the government colleges and schools are located.
Review of Progress

Education system in Bangladesh has three distinct stages, viz., primary, secondary and higher. The secondary stage is subdivided into junior secondary, secondary and higher secondary. The system is in a way unique in its finance and management structure. Primary schools and universities are mostly financed by the Government while secondary schools and colleges are mostly privately managed and financed. Financing of the system is highly skewed in favour of higher education. A comparison of actual and plan allocations of the First Five Year Plan shows that share of university education went up from 10 per cent to 30 per cent of the allocation for education, whereas share of primary education declined from 17 per cent to 12 per cent. The cumulative effect is that educational inequalities not only persist, but also have widened. Consequently, the rural urban gap, imbalances among levels and within each level have increased. While literacy scene has remained more or less stagnant, the university education has been extended in the areas where the need is the least. It resulted in acute unemployment among the university graduates of liberal education which is as high as 25 per cent.

Plan Allocation and Expenditure

The total plan allocations during the First Five Year Plan and Two Year Plan (1973-1980) for education was TK. 45,400.52 Lakh (30,730.20 + 14,670.32). Actual allocations, however,
amounted to TK. 28,952.36 Lakh which constituted 63.77 per cent of the Plan allocation of which an amount of TK. 25,885.50 Lakh could be utilised up to June, 1980 representing 89.41 per cent of actual allocation and 57.20 per cent of Plan allocation as illustrated in Table 2.1. Table 2.1 also shows the position with regard to Plan allocation, ADP Provision & expenditure of each sub-sector. The achievement made in respect of various programmes during the period under review are as follows:

Table 2.1

Development Expenditure on Education during the First Five Year Plan and Two-Year Plan (1973-80)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Sector</th>
<th>Plan Allocation</th>
<th>ADP Provision</th>
<th>Actual Expenditure</th>
<th>Actual Expenditure as percentage of Plan Allocation</th>
<th>Actual Expenditure as percentage of ADP Provision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Education</td>
<td>80,03.83</td>
<td>36,80.45</td>
<td>34,11.45</td>
<td>42.62</td>
<td>92.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Education</td>
<td>88,64.93</td>
<td>35,05.28</td>
<td>30,11.09</td>
<td>33.97</td>
<td>85.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Education</td>
<td>38,54.93</td>
<td>17,17.92</td>
<td>14,75.39</td>
<td>38.27</td>
<td>85.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Education</td>
<td>28,23.54</td>
<td>10,18.13</td>
<td>7,92.14</td>
<td>28.05</td>
<td>77.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Educational Activities (DPI)</td>
<td>18,54.63</td>
<td>49,38.39</td>
<td>47,99.39</td>
<td>258.78</td>
<td>97.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Education</td>
<td>88,63.30</td>
<td>59,50.56</td>
<td>47,07.25</td>
<td>53.11</td>
<td>79.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Education</td>
<td>57,15.72</td>
<td>69,10.88</td>
<td>68,30.38</td>
<td>119.50</td>
<td>98.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Education's own Schemes</td>
<td>54,19.64</td>
<td>12,30.75</td>
<td>8,58.48</td>
<td>15.84</td>
<td>69.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>454,00.52</td>
<td>289,52,36</td>
<td>258,85.50</td>
<td>57.20</td>
<td>89.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIG. 2. SEX-WISE NON-SCHOOLING GAP OF PRIMARY AGE GROUP POPULATION IN BANGLADESH.
Primary Education:

The number of primary schools increased from 30,446 in 1973 to 44,000 in 1982. Of the War-damaged schools, 8,000 primary schools were taken up for rehabilitation/reconstruction under UNICEF assistance programme. The total enrolment at the primary level increased from 60 Lakh in 1973 to 70 Lakh in 1980 and 8.2 million in 1982. The enrolment of girls during the period increased from 20 Lakh to 22.40 Lakh. The number of primary school teachers increased from 1,24,146 in 1973 to 1,59,000 in 1980 (The Second Five Year Plan 1980-85, 1983: 284-85).

Female Primary Education:

Despite the significant increase in enrolment the target has not been achieved and undoubtedly a lot more ground has to be covered before the nation can achieve this goal. In that process one of the pre-requisites will be to accelerate female education which lags far behind male education in the country. A glance into the Table 2.2 suggests that female literacy has always lagged behind that of males, and their pace of improvement is much slower than that of males. Between 1901 and 1974, rates of improvement for females was 2% compared to 3% for males.
FIG. 3. SEX-WISE NON-SCHOOLING GAP OF PRIMARY AGE-GROUP POPULATION IN BANGLADESH.
Table 2.2  
Sex-wise literacy rate in different census years  
(in percentage)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1941</th>
<th>1951</th>
<th>1961</th>
<th>1974</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census Reports, 1951, 1961 & 1974

Considerable expansion has taken place in absolute number of females enrolled. Table 2.3 suggests that female enrolment in 1951, 1961 and 1975 stands at 0.49, 0.96 and 2.7 millions respectively and it is estimated that if this trend continues, by 1985 there will be 3.4 million girls in the primary schools of the country. This enrolment figure which undeniably looks very impressive, is a point of concern when compared with male enrolment figures of 1.91, 2.5 and 4.7 million in 1951, 1961 and 1975 respectively and given the existing trend, this enrolment will rise to as high as 6.7 million. These enrolment figures and sex-wise non-schooling gap of primary age-group population in Bangladesh were shown in Fig-2 and Fig-3.
FIG. 4. SEX-WISE NON-SCHOOLING GAP OF SECONDARY AGE-GROUP POPULATION IN BANGLADESH.
### Table 2.3

**Age group population and Participation rate at the Primary Level in Bangladesh.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age group population</th>
<th>Enrolment</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
<th>Out of School population</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4,102,326</td>
<td>1,964,414</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>2,137,912</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3,799,003</td>
<td>485,022</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3,314,001</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4,868,687</td>
<td>2,568,278</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>2,300,403</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4,660,743</td>
<td>958,451</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3,702,298</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7,140,328</td>
<td>4,714,000</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>2,897,829</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6,901,046</td>
<td>2,739,000</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4,441,745</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9,217,860</td>
<td>6,714,000</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>2,686,760</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8,905,550</td>
<td>3,415,000</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3,743,650</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Based on

(a) Census 1961,
(b) Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh, 1975,
(c) Population projection of Bangladesh by age and sex from 1960 to 20015,
FIG. 5. AGE-GROUP POPULATION AND PARTICIPATION AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL IN BANGLADESH.
Secondary Education

The number of secondary schools increased from 6,000 in 1973 to 8,327 in 1980 and 9,000 secondary schools with an enrolment of about 2 million in 1982. Enrolment of girls increased from 2.72 lakh in 1973 to 5.20 lakh in 1980. Number of teachers increased from 60,500 to 70,000 during this period. During this period out of 468 secondary schools taken up for development under the scheme 'Development of 700 Non-government secondary schools at Thana Headquarters', works on 181 high schools were completed by 1980. The participation rate in secondary (10-14 years) education increased to 20.92 in 1982-83. Table 2.4 suggests that if this trend of enrolment continues, by 1985 there will be 2,723,100 boys and 1,170,000 girls in the secondary school of Bangladesh.

Table 2.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age-group population</th>
<th>Enrolment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2,174,013</td>
<td>259,216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1,663,564</td>
<td>9,009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2,610,351</td>
<td>433,079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2,036,533</td>
<td>39,526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4,986,950</td>
<td>1,505,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4,723,450</td>
<td>457,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6,435,467</td>
<td>2,723,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6,084,766</td>
<td>1,170,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:
(a) Census 1961
(b) Census 1974 Bulletin & Projection
(c) Enrolment from D.P.I. Report and Statistical Profile of children and mothers in Bangladesh, ISRT, 1977.
FIG. 6. SEX-WISE ENROLMENT IN INTERMEDIATE AND DEGREE (PASS) COLLEGES.
College Education

The number of colleges increased from 500 in 1973 to 650 in 1982. Enrolment during this period increased from 3.28 lakh to 4.03 lakh. Enrolment of girls at the college level increased from 0.27 lakh (8.5 per cent) in 1973 to 0.53 lakh (13 per cent) in 1980. Out of 191 Non-government colleges including 17 for girls taken up for development, works on 174 colleges were completed. Fig. 6 shows the sex-wise enrolment in Intermediate and Degree (Pass) colleges. These figures have been prepared on the basis of Table 2.5.

Table 2.5
Sex-wise Enrolment in Intermediate and Degree (Pass) Colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>14,911</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>55,007</td>
<td>3,717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>3,01,000</td>
<td>27,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>3,43,000</td>
<td>53,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:
(a) Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics.
(b) 1982 Statistical Yearbook of Bangladesh, December 1983.
(c) The Second Five Year Plan 1980-85.
Teacher Education:

The intake capacity of the 47 Primary Training Institute (PTIs) increased from 8,000 in 1973 to 9,200 in 1980. The enrolment in the Teachers Training Colleges did not increase and stood at its original number of 2,500. The development work of 23 PTIs and Bangladesh Education Extension and Research Institute, Dhaka, were completed.

Other Educational Activities:

The total number of Madrasahs increased from 2386 in 1977-1978 to 2833 in 1982-1983. Development work of 157 Non-Government Madrasah was completed and that of two Government Madrasah was also completed. About 3.40 Lakh students enjoyed scholarships and stipends at different levels of education. The Madrasahs of the country with an enrolment of 4.30 Lakh remained outside the pale of modernising influences, no serious attempt being ever made to update their academic programme and introduce science & technical subjects in their courses of studies.

Technical Education:

The enrolment capacity of 3 Engineering colleges increased from 1,220 in 1973 to 2,110 in 1980. Enrolments at the polytechnic, commercial and vocational levels
FIG. 7: SEX-WISE ENROLMENT IN THE SIX UNIVERSITIES OF BANGLADESH FROM 1979 TO 1982.
increased from 10,900 to 12,420; 2,550 to 2,720 and 3,700 to 6,420 respectively. In the field of technical education, Scholarships/Stipends were awarded to 45,512 students costing TK. 351.85 Lakh.

**University Education:**

Higher education in Bangladesh was unplanned and its growth was phenomenal during the last 34 years. The number of colleges increased from 48 in 1947 to 650 in 1982-83 with the increase in the number of colleges, demand for more universities became intense and three more general universities were established in quick succession. In addition, two more professional universities viz., Agricultural University, Mymensingh and the University of Engineering and Technology, Dhaka were set up. The total enrolment of all the 6 universities is 39,699 in 1982-83 as against 1700 in 1947.

**Table 2.6**

Sex-wise Enrolment in the Six Universities of Bangladesh from 1979 to 1982

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>1979-80</th>
<th>1980-81</th>
<th>1981-82</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>29,572</td>
<td>30,471</td>
<td>32,351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6,958</td>
<td>6,637</td>
<td>7,348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36,530</td>
<td>37,108</td>
<td>39,699</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIG. 8: COMPARATIVE SEX-WISE SHARE IN UNIVERSITY ENROLMENT IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BANGLADESH.
The sex-wise enrolment in the six universities of Bangladesh was compiled in Table 2.6. The comparative sex-wise share in university enrolment in the universities of Bangladesh was compiled in Table 2.7. On the basis of these tables Fig. 7 and 8 were drawn to show the sex-wise enrolment and sex-wise share in university enrolment of Bangladesh.


**Table 2.7**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>97.52</td>
<td>92.29</td>
<td>87.02</td>
<td>82.07</td>
<td>79.23</td>
<td>81.48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>7.71</td>
<td>12.98</td>
<td>17.93</td>
<td>20.77</td>
<td>18.51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. D.P.I. Reports.

However, this growth of higher education has been made possible by squeezing funds from lower levels which has resulted in acute imbalances in the education system. At the university level the strategy was consolidation of existing facilities and qualitative improvement of higher education.
A critical appraisal of progress reveals a wide gap between the Plan targets and actual performances. This was due to marked departure from the programmes envisaged in the Plan. In short, educational development could not bring about equality of educational opportunity as was envisaged. The pressure group, having access to the authority, had considerably larger share of allocation than was actually due.

During the SFYP (Second Five Year Plan) the system of Education will be rationalized. This will be done through curriculum changes, diversion of larger number of students to vocational and technical courses, creation of opportunities for non-formal education for various clienteles, greater flexibility of student mobility both vertically and horizontally, reforms of educational administration and reduction of pressure on university and higher education.

Conditions of University Education in Pre-Independence era

While fostering the growth of university education in the country, no conscious attempts were made in the past to co-ordinate their activities in determining the courses of studies and student enrolment in terms of high level manpower requirements. Notwithstanding the allocation of comparatively large sums of money during the last decade, the universities had not succeeded in significantly raising the standards of
Several factors were responsible for this. First, even during the period of British colonial rule, the universities and other institutions of higher learning were centres of protest against foreign domination and oppression. During the last decade the university students and teachers were held in distrust by the ruling circles of Pakistan because of their undisguised opposition to anti-democratic, authoritarian and illiberal policies followed by the country. The universities were continuously subjected to all kinds of pressures to prohibit free thinking and discussion of the relevant issues of the day. The various attempts at denying academic freedom to these institutions slowly led to a situation where these could no more hope to grow as centres of excellence.

Second, the tremendous pressure of admission into the universities generated by a large number of college leavers with High School Certificates and B.A. & B.Sc. (Pass) degrees with no other opportunities of acquiring a useful skill or employment, made it impossible on the part of the university authorities to limit the number of the university entrants.

Third, the teacher-student ratio also fell below 1 : 20 and in many Arts Subjects it went beyond 1 : 40 or so. This made it impossible for the teachers to organize tutorial classes or pay adequate attention to their students' problems in lecture rooms and laboratories.
Fourth, the development programmes of the universities in the past primarily related to building modern structures with expensive building materials. Necessary facilities were not created because neither the universities nor the Government showed sufficient interest in such ventures (The First Five Year Plan 1973-78, 1973: 473-474).

Besides the formal system of education, there are two other types of education, namely, Informal and Non-formal education.

**Informal Education**

Informal education is playing an important role in the villages of Bangladesh. Apart from formal schooling there is informal education at home aimed at fulfilling children's future adult roles. The vast majority of children who do not receive any or adequate formal school do in fact receive informal education in their own milieu. Besides the teaching at home, this indigenous informal education is quite organized, as in the religious schools of Maqtabs and Madrasahs and plays a major role as an alternative to schooling because it meets urban and rural parental expectation as an organized initiation into the children's role.

There is hardly any data especially about the Maqtabs (schools attached to mosque but not registered), to show the magnitude of the task performed by this informal sector. But
it is a common sight to see girls along with their brothers and neighbour boys taking trips early in the morning and attending varieties of Maqtabas and Madrasahs located in the village, where the teacher is the male religious leader of the community. Besides, there are innumerable female religious instructors sitting in their homes and coaching a number of girls at a time who pay her in both cash and kind. On top of that, roaming instructors, both male and female, using their spare time, teach boys and girls in their own homes. These are relatively well-off houses in the community.

Thus, it is clear that although this form of education is quite rudimentary in nature and most of these institutions are hardly ever registered, it is part of the way of life of the villagers and the urban poor. In this informal sector, the girls and boys are said to be equally represented and parents, despite their inconvenience and economic hardship, try to give at least this organized informal education to their daughters which gives status to them because of its supplementary nature as an initiation process to the girls' role.

**Non-formal Education**

Non-formal education includes different types of education (outside of traditional schooling) which cover a wide spectrum: co-operative movements, family planning programme, skill training or literacy campaigns, all of which
are concerned with educating. They focus on the improvement of social and personal living occupational capability, and vocational competency through education. The non-school sector of education, up till now, has been a little interest and concern to the traditional planners and policy-makers.

The post-independence period has been the birth of some systematic non-formal education programmes in the country. The programmes, in general, include two forms - adult literacy education and skill training. Only few organizations, however, attempt to provide both.

The few programmes which are trying to reach out beyond the urban and semi-urban centres are mostly isolated pilot projects like Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), Gono Shyastha Kendra (GSK), and Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRD), which try to devise ways to impart education to rural women.

There were some efforts on the part of few educated elite ladies to organize non-formal education programme in the form of social welfare activities.