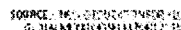




Policy Review on



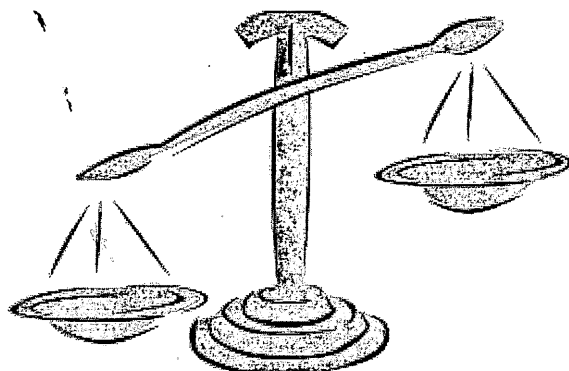
Model Director: Dr. Rizwan Khair

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Dated : 30 October, 2016



Policy Review on
**Disparity in Primary Education
In BANGLADESH**



78TH SENIOR STAFF COURSE

BANGLADESH PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION TRAINING CENTRE SAVAR, DHAKA

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ACRONYMS

ADPEO	Additional District Primary Education Officer
AUEO	Assistant Upozila Education Officer
APSC	Annual Primary School Census
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BDT	Bangladeshi Taka
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
DPEO	District Primary Education Officer
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoE	Ministry of Education
MOPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
NEP, 2010	National Education Policy, 2010
NGO	Non Government Organization
NPA ii	National Plan for Action ii
PECE	Primary Education Completion Examination
SMC	School Managing Committee
UNESCO	United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGEI	United Nation Girl's Education Initiative
UEO	Upozila Education Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Equal primary education is the fundamental right of every citizen of the country. The affiliation between education and poverty is spherical. There are many reasons for the low male gross enrolment rate in primary schooling. The lack of education may force the poor households to engage in less productivity actions, which result in poverty. On the other hand, poverty leads to low investment in education.

Inequality has appeared as a major barrier in achieving universally acknowledged primary education in Bangladesh. Disparity in primary education exists in the areas of division, locality, gender, sex and economic status in Bangladesh. Recent price hike and the failure of timely implementation of the allocation in education are the main causes of unequal primary education. There also exist some structural causes for persisting unequal primary education.

Literacy Rate

One of the targets of National Education Policy related to the literacy rate of children is to increase the percentage of literacy rate to 100 percent by the year 2014. But Bangladesh already failed to achieve that target. The literacy rate of the children was 44.9 percent in 2000 which is now only 61.5 percent. Now the literacy rate is 38.5 percent lower than the target.

Gross Enrolment Ratio

Gross Enrollment Ratio of the male children was 99.7 percent in 2000, which has been increased to 108.81 percent in 2015, which is 1.19 percent lower than the targeted value. On the other hand Gross Enrollment Ratio of the female children was 104.4 percent in 2000, which has been increased to 115.79 percent in 2015, which is 1.13 percent higher than the targeted value.

School Enrolment (age 6-10 years)

The target, related to school enrolment of National Plan for Action (NPA-ii) is to achieve 95 percent net enrollment by 2015. At the national level, the school enrollments for the both sexes were 65.7 percent and 82.2 percent for the poor households and non-poor households in 2000 which have been increased to 98.7 percent and 87.9 percent in 2015. So, in case of net enrollment rate in primary education, Bangladesh already achieved the target. But here it is remarkable that the progress of female and rural student is far better than the male and non poor student.

Disparity of School Enrolment by Division

Barisal is the division where children school enrollment is higher compared to other divisions. In 2000, the children enrollment rates at the national level for poor household and non-poor households were 74.1 percent and 87.3 percent which have been increased to 88.06 percent and 94.01 percent in 2010 with annual average increasing rate of 1.4 percent and 0.6 percent respectively. On the other hand, enrollment rate at national level stood at 95.04 percent and 97.37 percent for poor and non-poor households in 2015. However, Sylhet is the division where enrolment rate is lower compared to other divisions. In 2005, children enrolment of poor household was 52.60 percent, which has been increased to 64.16 percent in 2010 at national level with an annual average increasing rate of 2.31 percent. On the other hand School enrolment rate is 75.72 percent in 2015 in Sylhet.

Dropout Rate in Primary to Secondary Schooling

Inequality prevails in the percentage of dropped male and female children. The percentage of dropped female children is lower than that of their male counterparts. The percentage of dropped male student has decreased from 39.8 percent in 2010 to 20.41 percent in 2015. On the other hand, female dropout rates decreased from 40.3 percent in 2000 to 17.1 percent in 2015.

Student Teacher Ratio

The target of the National Education Policy 2010 related to student teacher ratio is to reduce student teacher ratio to 30 by 2018. Student teacher ratio was 57 in 2000, which has decreased to 42.55 in 2010 with an average declining rate of 1.45 percent per annum. But in 2015 student teacher ratio is 42 with an average declining rate of only 0.12 percent per annum. So, the business as usual scenario, student teacher ratio might stand at 41 by 2018, which is around 11 percent higher than the targeted value within the time limit.

1. INTRODUCTION

“THE POLICY REVIEW”- one of the important parts of the Senior Staff course training designed by the BPATC. The National Education Policy is a huge/vast area. There are 28 chapters in NEP, 2010 for separate issues. But it's really difficult to review an established government policy within the shortest possible time and with number of remarkable limitations. Consulting with our respected mentors and considering all the limitations, I have chosen to review the “Disparity in Primary Education In Bangladesh.”

Since the independence of Bangladesh, it has not been possible to implement any education policy. There were initiatives to formulate education policy, but unfortunately the initiatives were not implemented. In 2008 the Government has been taken into consideration in the formulation of National Education Policy. Within shortest possible time, the Government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh declared the National Education Policy-2010. As per the direction of chapter 2 (16), (19) and (25), the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education should look after about minimizing dropout rate among the girls student, special assistance to the marginalized indigenous children and to solve acute discrimination of Primary schools of different locations.

A plan for sustainable development should address the issue of education because it plays a vital role not only in expanding further educational opportunities but also in fostering basic intellectual abilities such as literacy. That is why primary education has received a great attention in developing nations including Bangladesh. According to the Article 15 and 17 of the Constitution of Bangladesh, education is a fundamental right and providing education to all its citizens is one of the responsibilities of the state. However, the literacy rate (61.5 percent) in Bangladesh is still low (HIES, 2010). With the chief motto ‘Literacy is freedom’, according to UN, more than 800 million people of the world and almost sixty percent of the people of Bangladesh do not know what this ‘freedom’ is.

Although Bangladesh has achieved a good progress in basic education over the past decade, but the overall situation of various education related indicators is not satisfactory. The enrolment in the primary schools has been increasing until recent times but the government has not been spending good amount on education sector. However, instead of such measures, little progress has been notified in the primary education sector over the years. Additionally, there have been problems of inequality and access. National Plan for Action (NPA-ii) has determined some targets to ensure education for all and the National Education Policy 2010 was adopted by the government to ensure inclusive education. This study on disparity in primary education of Bangladesh is an attempt to understand various inequalities in the context of primary education and to make a reality check between the promises stated in the National Plan for Action (NPA-ii) and National Education Policy (NEP, 2010), so that we can have a clear image to generate evidence and insights which can be used to formulate policy.

2. BACKGROUND

Bangladesh is an independent country. Since the Independence of Bangladesh, it has not been possible to implement any education policy. Immediately after Independence in 1971, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, formed a commission to formulate an Education Policy under the leadership of Dr. Qudrat-e-Khuda, a renowned scientist and educationist. The commission formulates a draft education policy on the basis of exhaustive inquiry and contemplation. But after the diabolical murder of Bangabandhu on August 15, 1975, the total process was hampered. In 1996 the Awami League Government again took initiative to formulate education policy. The report was ready by 1997. Draft Education Policy- was formulated on the basis of that Report. But due to change of power, that education policy was shelved again. In 2008 the Awami league again formed the government. At that time the government has been taken into consideration in the formulation of National Education Policy. Within shortest possible time, in 2010, Ministry of Education declared the “National Education Policy-2010”.

3. OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2010

In the National Education Policy-2010, there are 28 Chapters:

1. Aims and Objectives of Education
2. Pre-Primary and Primary Education
3. Adult and Non-Formal Education
4. Secondary Education
5. Vocational and Technical Education
6. Madrasa Education
7. Religious and Moral Education
8. Higher Education
9. Engineering Education
10. Medical, Nursing and Health Education
11. Science Education
12. Information and Technology
13. Business Studies
14. Agriculture Studies
15. Law Studies 16. Women's Education
17. Fine Arts and Crafts Education
18. Special Education, Health and Physical Education, Scout, Girls' Guide and Bratachari
19. Sports Education
20. Libraries
21. Examination and Evaluation
22. Students Welfare and Counseling
23. Enrolment
24. Teachers Training
25. Status, Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers
26. Curriculum, Syllabus and Textbooks
27. Educational Administration
28. Some Special Initiatives to be taken regardless of Educational Levels.

4. METHODOLOGY

This study was primarily conducted based on the data on Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) of 2000, 2005, 2010 conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) and ANNUAL PRIMARY SCHOOL CENSUS 2014 (APSC, 2014) conducted by Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) and also ANNUAL PRIMARY SCHOOL CENSUS 2015 (APSC 2015) conducted by Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME). Using these data and utilizing simple mathematical equation, some projections were made for the future educational scenarios. : The equation is as follows:

$$P_t = P_0 (1 + rt)$$

Where,

P_t = Value of the present year

P_0 = Value of the previous year

t = Time interval between previous and present years

r = Growth rate

Different statistical reports, relevant research papers, books and some of the national and international journals have also been reviewed for this study.

We also went to the field visit in Noakhali district and there we met different stake holders. It was focused group discussion with teachers of Horinarayanpur and Hatiya Deep Govt. Primary School, Parents of children and DPEO ADPEO, UEO, AUEO and other stake holders. . We got their opinion such as:

1. Gross and Net Enrollment rate is increasing day by day
2. The percentage of dropped female children is lower than that of their male counterparts
3. Poverty leads to low investment in education.
4. Progress of female and rural student is better than the male and non poor student.

5. Limitations to the Evaluation

There are many limitations in this policy review. It is really difficult task to review the government policy with short time. The limitations are:

- Time Constraint (short span of time allotted)
- Resource Constraints.
- Biasness of the respondents.
- Lack of adequate knowledge and practice regarding methodology and data analysis.

6. EVALUATION FINDINGS

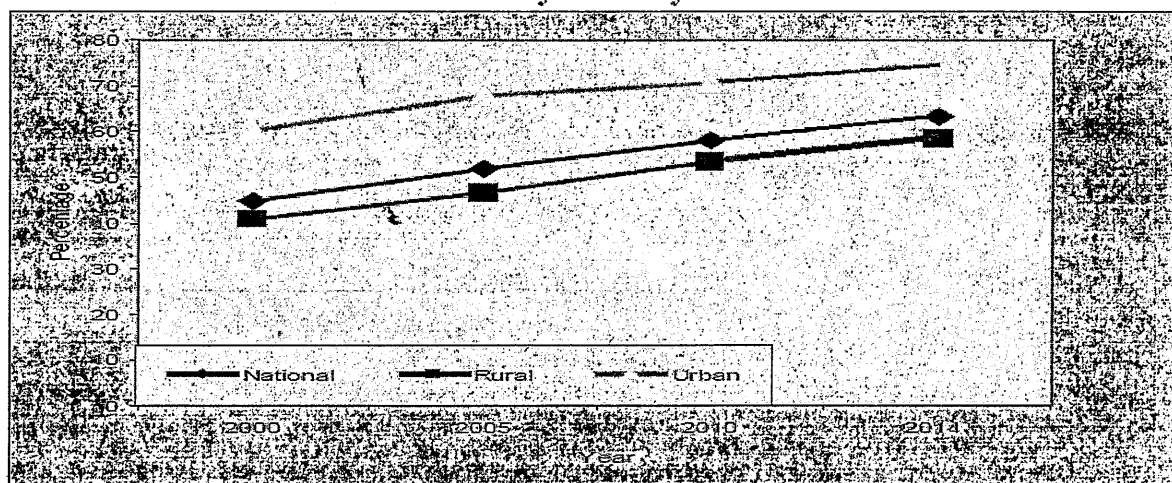
6.1. LITERACY RATE

6.1.1 Disparity of Literacy Rate by Locality

One of the targets of National Education Policy (NEP, 2010) related to the literacy rate of children is to increase the percentage of literacy rate to 100 percent by the year 2014. But Bangladesh already failed to achieve that target. The literacy rate of the children (<7 years of age) was 44.9 percent in 2000 which is now only 61.5 percent (Wikipedia, UNESCO). Now the literacy rate is 38.5 percent lower than the target.

In the rural and urban areas, the rate of literacy was 40.9 percent and 60.2 percent in 2000, which has been increased to 53.37 percent and 70.38 percent in 2014 and with the average increasing rate of 1.25 percent and 1.02 percent per annum respectively (Figure 1). But it is remarkable that the annual average increasing rate of literacy in rural areas is comparatively higher than that of urban areas. This is because of the various incentives and initiatives taken by the government, which are considered as additional income generating activities by the rural parents, which help them to maintain their family status.

Figure 1: Current Situation of Literacy Rate of Children (< 7 years of age) by Locality



Source: Calculation based on BBS 2001, BBS 2006 BBS 2011 and APSC 2014

6.1.2 Disparity of Literacy Rate by Gender

The percentage of the literate children also varies according to the gender. The literacy of the male children was 49.5 percent in 2000 at national level, which has been increased to 65.77 percent in 2015 with an annual average increasing rate of 1.16 percent. On the other hand the literacy of the female children was 40.1 percent in 2000 at national level, which has been increased to 61.5 percent in 2015 (Table 1) with an annual average increasing rate of 1.32 percent. The annual average rate of increase in case of the female literacy at national, rural and urban level is comparatively higher than that of the male. This is perhaps, because of the various education enhancing activities taken by the government and various NGOs.

Table 1: Current Situation of Literacy Rate by Gender (<7 years of age)

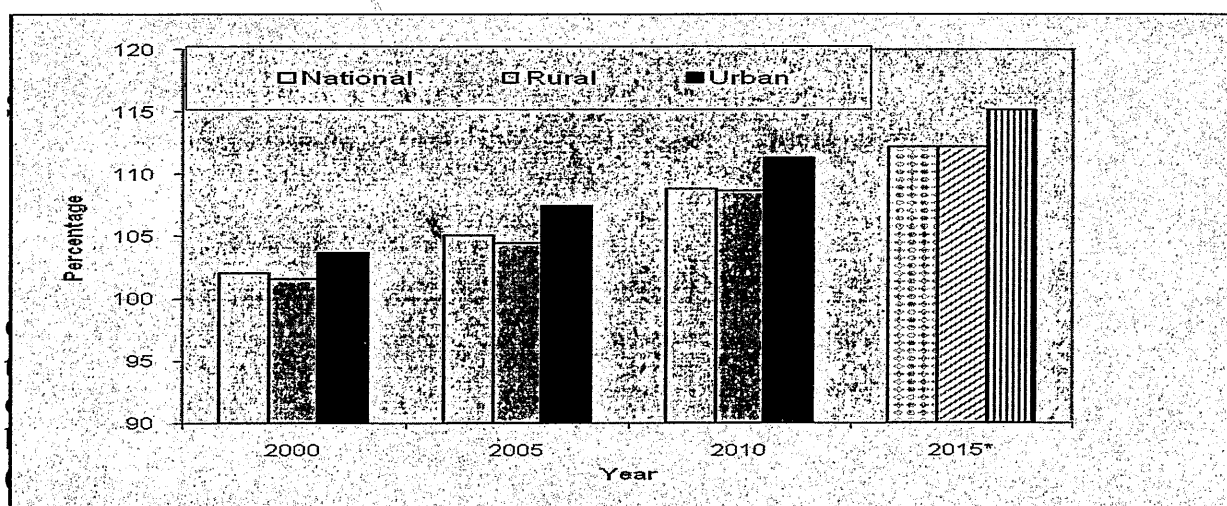
Year	Female			Male		
	National	Rural	Urban	National	Rural	Urban
2000	40.1	36.1	55.3	49.5	45.5	64.9
2005	48.1	42.9	63.2	55.8	50.4	72.1
2010	54.8	50.21	67.67	61.12	56.67	73.1
2015	61.5	55.85	72.61	65.77	61.14	76.38

Source: Calculation based on BBS 2001, BBS 2006 and BBS 2011 and APSC 2015.

6.2. GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO

6.2.1 Disparity of Gross Enrolment Ratio by Locality

The target of National Plan for Action (NPA-ii) is to increase 110 percent Gross Enrollment Rate by 2015. Now the percentage of National Gross Enrollment Rate is 111.32. So the target already achieved (Figure 2). The gross enrolment ratios of the rural and urban areas were 101.6 percent and 103.7 percent respectively in 2000, which has been increased to 111.64 percent and 114.34 percent in 2015. So both Rural and urban area achieved their target.

Figure 2: Current Situation of Gross Enrolment Rate by Locality

So on an average the National Gross Enrolment Ratio also achieved the targeted ratio 110 percent in 2015.

Table 2: Current Situation of Gross Enrollment Ratio by Gender

Year	Male			Female		
	National	Rural	Urban	National	Rural	Urban
2000	99.7	98.8	103.8	104.4	104.5	103.7
2005	104.53	103.48	108.47	105.64	105.44	106.39
2010	105.77	104.82	108.79	111.99	111.36	114.11
2015	108.81	107.83	111.52	115.79	114.8	119.32

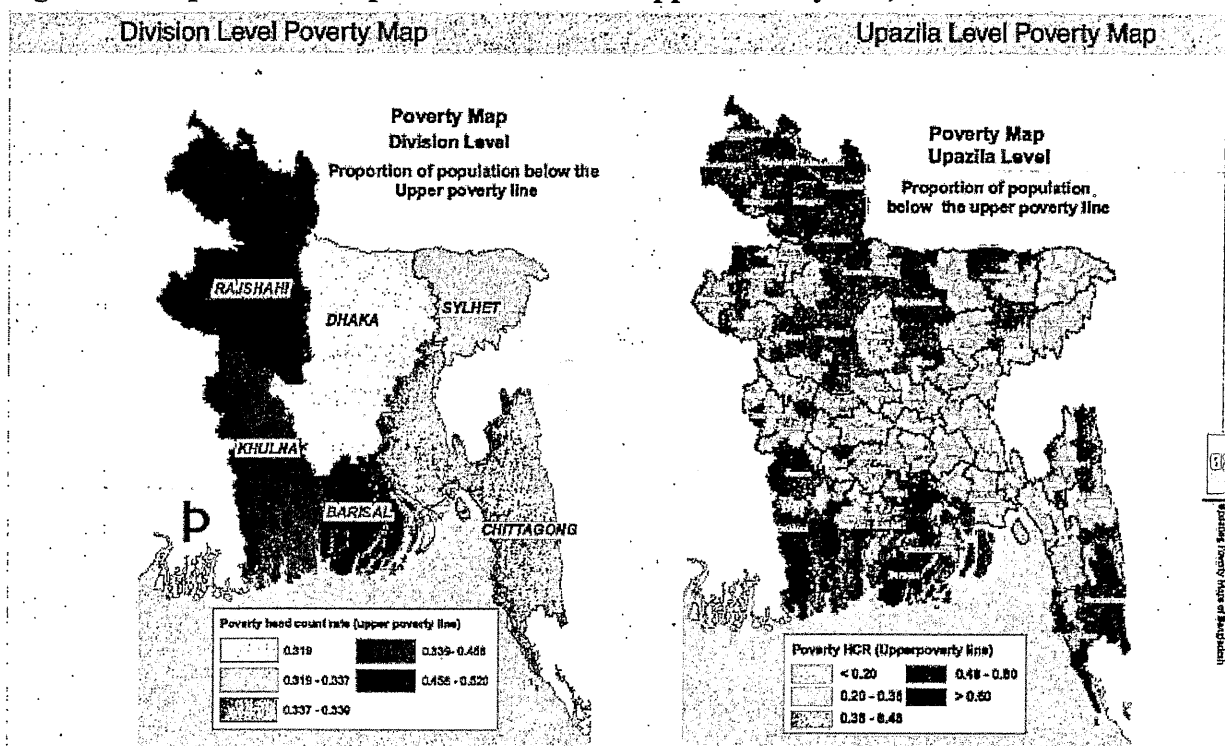
division where enrolment rate is lower compared to other divisions. In 2005, children enrolment of poor household was 52.60 percent, which has been increased to 64.16 percent in 2010 at national level with an annual average increasing rate of 2.31 percent. On the other hand School enrolment rate is 75.72 percent in 2015 in Sylhet.

Table 4: Current Situation for Divisional Disparity of Children Enrollment.

Division		Poor Household				Non Poor Household			
		2000	2005	2010	2015	2000	2005	2010	2015
Barisal	National	74.1	77.80	88.06	95.04	87.3	87.36	94.01	97.37
	Rural	74.6	77.58	87.87	94.51	87.3	86.36	92.92	95.73
	Urban	67.3	79.37	89.02	99.88	87.0	92.04	100	106.5
Chittagong	National	64.0	56.32	75.52	81.28	79.4	77.05	87.11	90.97
	Rural	65.5	55.38	74.94	79.66	79.3	74.70	84.60	87.25
	Urban	55.5	63.58	80.85	93.53	79.9	85.46	94.81	94.77
Dhaka	National	56.5	74.36	77.26	87.64	80.3	84.45	89.02	93.38
	Rural	56.7	76.25	79.38	90.72	79.2	83.50	88.05	92.48
	Urban	55.2	64.49	69.06	75.93	82.2	86.05	90.15	94.10
Khulna	National	78.4	82.03	87.29	91.74	88.0	90.57	90.08	91.89
	Rural	79.1	83.09	88.88	93.77	87.2	90.07	88.50	89.15
	Urban	73.1	77.54	82.52	87.23	92.5	92.41	95.79	97.44
Rajshahi	National	69.1	76.55	78.69	83.49	85.2	89.08	91.56	94.74
	Rural	69.6	77.00	77.66	81.69	86.0	88.51	91.74	94.61
	Urban	63.6	72.70	86.27	97.61	80.0	92.24	90.63	95.95
Sylhet	National	-	52.60	64.16	75.72	-	86.22	82.08	77.94
	Rural	-	52.13	63.15	74.17	-	85.31	81.44	77.57
	Urban	-	60.00	72.97	86.56	-	92.31	86.20	80.09

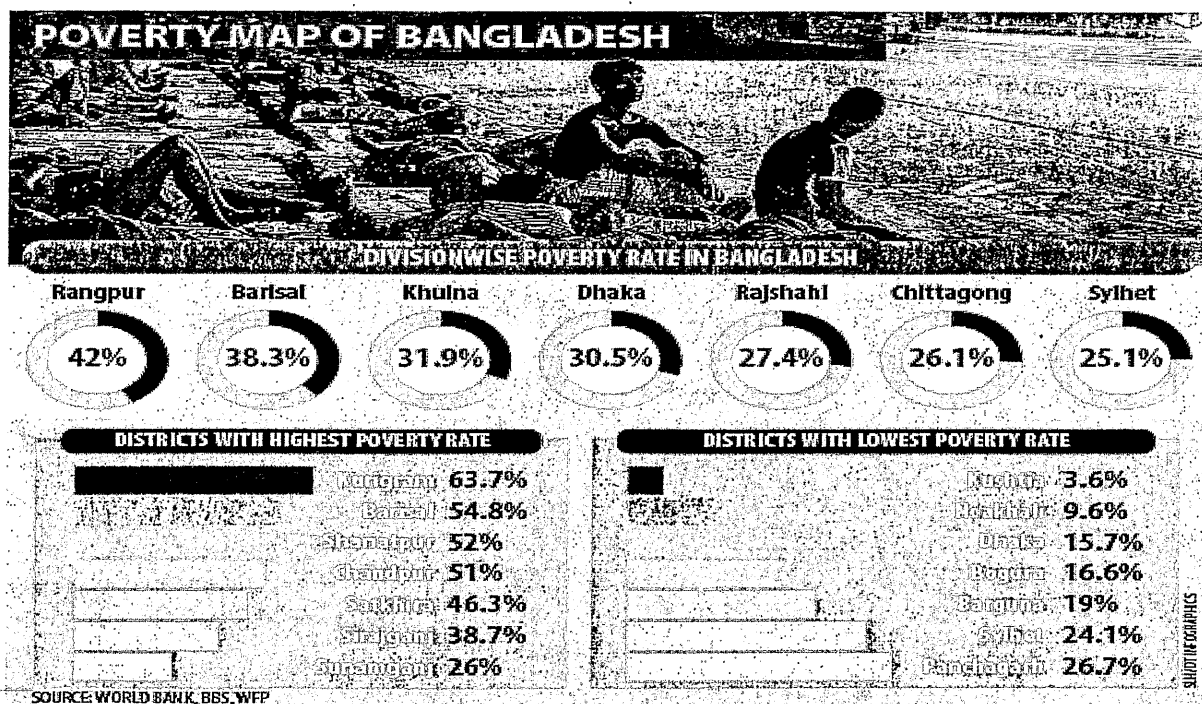
Source: Calculation based on BBS 2001, BBS 2006 and BBS 2011 and APSC 2015

Figure 3: Proportion of Population below the Upper Poverty line, 2010



Source: The World Bank and Word Food Programme, 2010.

Figure 4. Poverty Map of Bangladesh.



Source World Bank, BBS and WFP. Courtesy: The Daily Tribune, 12 March 2012

7.5. DROPOUT RATE

7.5.1. Disparity of Dropout Rate by Gender and Locality

Inequality prevails in the percentage of dropped male and female children. The percentage of dropped female children is lower than that of their male counterparts. The percentage of dropped male student has decreased from 39.8 percent in 2010 to 20.41 percent in 2015. On the other hand, female dropout rates decreased from 40.3 percent in 2000 to 17.1 percent in 2015. (Table 5).

It is remarkable that the percentage of dropped male children is decreasing day by day from 2010 to 2014 but it increased 20.9 percent in 2014 to 23.9 percent in 2015, where as in case of girls there is a sharp decline from 2014 to 2015. Girls dropout rate was 24.3 percent in 2014, where as it was only 17.1 percent in 2015.

Table 5: Current Situation of Dropout rate by Gender

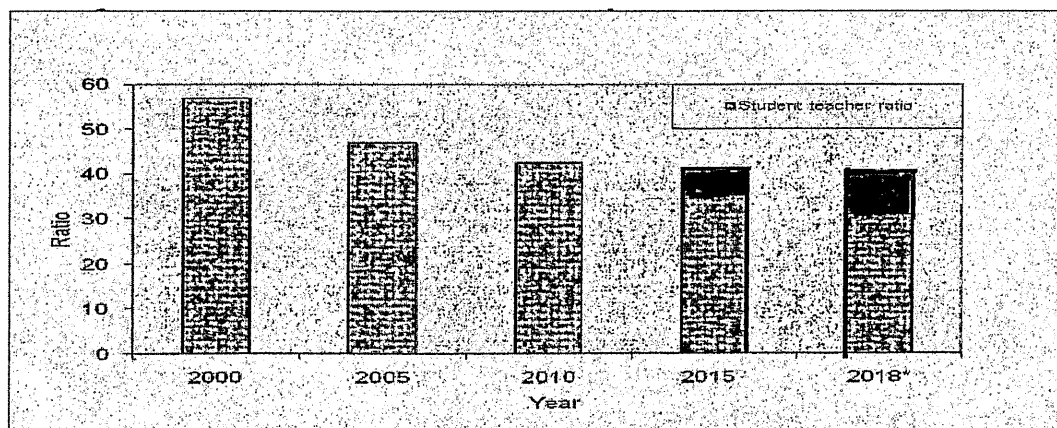
Dropout Rate	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
National	-	39.3	27.0	24.2	17.9	17.5	20.4
Boys	47.2	39.8	29.7	26.2	21.4	20.9	23.9
Girls	-	40.3	32.3	28.3	24.9	24.3	17.1

Source: Monitoring and evaluation department. DPE.

7.6. STUDENT TEACHER RATIO

The target of the National Education Policy (NEP, 2010) related to student teacher ratio is to reduce student teacher ratio to 30 by 2018. Student teacher ratio was 57 in 2000, which has decreased to 42.55 in 2010 with an average declining rate of 1.45 percent per annum. But in 2015 student teacher ratio is 42 with an average declining rate of only 0.12 percent per annum. So, the business as usual scenario, student teacher ratio might stand at 41 by 2018, which is around 11 percent higher than the targeted value within the time limit.

Figure 5: Current Situation of Student Teacher Ratio



Source:

Calculation based on BBS 2001, BBS 2006 and BBS 2011 and APSC 2015

8. FINDINGS

Major finding of this policy review are as follows:

1. Inequality prevails in the percentage of literacy rate between urban and rural area.
2. Progress of female and rural student is better than the male and non poor student.....
3. Barisal is the division where children school enrollment is higher compared to other divisions.
4. Children school enrollment is lowest in Sylhet compare to the other division.
5. Inequality prevails in the percentage of dropped male and female children. The percentage of dropped female children is lower than that of their male counterparts.
6. Increasing trend of literacy rate is in both rural and urban area. But till there is significant gap between two areas.

9. THE REASONS FOR THE SLOWER RATE OF PROGRESS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

Although there has been a progress in the primary education over the years, the rate at which it has been occurring is slower than the expectation. There might be some reasons, which are as follows:

9.1. Structural Causes

Inequality is a part of the social structure. Socio-cultural norms, religious matter, lack of parental education and less expectation for girls' education create inequality in primary education. People belonging to the lower class of the society are not allowed to be associated with the upper class in any way. There has been no strong motivation policy to address the matter of literacy towards lower castes.

9.2. Allocation in Education Expenditure and Implementation Status

The allocation of education budget is 1.3 % of GDP, which is one of the lowest in the world. Though Government of Bangladesh committed to the international educational forum to increase the allocation up to 4 %, still it is not the reality. Besides this, the overall educational improvement is not satisfactory due to the lack of timely implementation status of educational allocation.

9.3. Economic Hardship

Still around 20% of the population of Bangladesh is living under the poverty line. Specially poor people spend a large part of their expenditure on food and cut off expenditure from other basic necessities like education for their children. General peoples are spending 80 percent of their income on food and savings are falling. So both male and female children of poor households are forced to various income generating activities and popularly known as "child labor".

9.4. Geographic Isolation

Primary enrollment rate in Sylhet Division is much lower compared to the national average of other Divisions. Shunamgonj's haor area is the most deprived area where students have to suffer much in dry season. The sufferings become acute in rainy season. Whereas 23 percent of the

country's population lives in urban areas, it is 12.5 percent in Sylhet division. Although, around 20 percent of the population living below poverty line at the national level, it is only around 17 percent in Sylhet division (Education Watch Report, 2010). Economic deprivation, social inequalities, geographical isolation, unequal income distribution create unequal primary education in this area although the economic situation is better than the other Divisions of the country.

9.5. Opportunity cost of going to school

Opportunity cost of going to school for poor and vulnerable households can be affected by two factors. Firstly, by the savings in household expenses per month by not sending a child to the school and secondly, by increasing the household income per month by withdrawing a child from school and engaging him/her into work. The opportunity cost of schooling, both in terms of savings of expenditure and rise in income is found to be relatively higher in rural areas compared to the urban areas.

9.7. Population growth rate and equal access to primary education

It is the main cause of divisional inequality in school enrolment. In Barisal, the average annual growth rate of population was 0.9 percent (1991-2001) which has been decreased to 0 percent (2001-2011). So there is a trend of declining average annual growth rate of population which is positively related with equal access to primary education. On the other hand, in Sylhet the average annual growth rate of population has been increased to 2.1 percent (2001-2011) from 1.6 percent (1991-2001) (BBS, 2010). Therefore, there is a positive trend of increasing average annual growth rate of population, which is negatively related with the equal access to primary education.

10. Partnership and Cooperation

Within the preview of the Education Policy, 2010 there is scope of partnership with NGO's CSO's, local community, SMC, in most of the sides of education implementation.

SMC and Local community may look after and monitor the enrollment, dropout and absentees matter. On the other hand quality education, teacher training and awareness programmes may be supervised by the NGO's and CSO's.

11. Relevance:

Education Policy 2010 can meet up the needs of the situation of a large extent. In case of gross and net enrollment rate, minimizing gender inequality, in all these indicators, the implementation of the policy has been made a positive impact. So, it may conclude that the policy is relevant.

12. Impact

Enrollment increase, decreases in dropout rate, enhancement of literacy rate will influence the quality of education as a whole. This will in turn make a better workforce in the country. That

means education will lead us to economic and social development. This is the long term impact of implementing Education Policy 2010.

13. CONCLUSIONS

The result of this study not only determines the socio-economic factors effecting unequal primary education but also suggests where the priority should be given for solving the backdrops of unequal education. Various structural reasons like misuse of budgetary allocation, food price hike, socio-economic and religious tradition, geographic location etc. have a major impact on ensuring equal primary education. Diverse multiple providers and highly centralized public sector management prevent area-based planning for equal primary education. The projections, which are provided in this report, indicate that the country is well on the track to achieve some of the targets of the National Plan for Action- ii within the scheduled time but the maximum of the target might not be achieved within the scheduled time period.

Operational and structural reformation should involve the beneficiaries of primary education in managing school activities. Policies should be targeted towards the poor children's greater enrolment. Failure of timely implementation of the educational expenditure should be reduced. The government should attempt to take stronger measures for revising and renewing existing strategies. Otherwise, the aim of achieving universal primary education might be elusive.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The allocation of education budget is around 1.3 % of GDP, which is one of the lowest in the world. Though Government of Bangladesh committed to the international educational forum to increase the allocation up to 4 %, still it is not the reality. Besides this, the overall educational improvement is not satisfactory due to the lack of timely implementation status of educational allocation. So the allocation should be increase and need timely allocation of education budget.
- Special initiative should be taken for the people of Sylhet division. Primary education and Family planning department should be more active about the enrollment and dropout activities. Motivation programs should be taken regarding the importance of literacy among the citizen of Sylhet division.
- Safety net programme for ultra poor should be increase reasonably.
- Motivation programmes should be taken regarding the importance of literacy to the parents of lower caste.

14. LESSON LEARNT

- Increasing trend of literacy rate is in both rural and urban area. But till there is significant gap between two areas.
- Though in the Sylhet region, the economic condition is better than the other part of the country, but different parameters of education are not favorable in this region.
- In different parameters of primary education, it is observe that gender disparity has reduced enormously and in some cases girls are in better position than the boys and MDG goal has achieved in regards well ahead of schedule.

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