

CHAPTER 3

CAUSES OF EXCLUSION IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

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Education for All (EFA) includes universalising access, participation and achievement. Bangladesh now represents the ninth largest system of primary education in the world (PEDP II, 2002). As of 2001 it seemed that total primary school enrolment is stabilised after the rapid growth of 1980s and 1990s, but data suggest that enrolment rate has declined by 1.5 percent as compared with that of 2001. The government claimed that the gross enrolment ratio at the primary stage has exceeded 95 percent. But the flip side is that out of the total population of 137 million, 19.6 million are of primary school going age and almost 1.5 million girls are out of school. The high rate of drop out average (33 percent) results partly from the severe poverty experienced by many families and partly from the perception of many parents and children that schooling is of little value (PEDP II, 2002).

However, there is an overall positive trend since Bangladesh has increased funds for basic social services, observing a reduction in population growth and improved the lives of its children and women especially in the areas of health and education. But retention and achievement in minimum level of learning are still a problem for many. Majority of the out-of-school children come from the most marginalised groups such as families below poverty line staying in urban slums, remote villages and indigenous areas, and children from migrant families (Sharafuddin, 2001). Bangladesh has achieved good progress in basic education over the past decade, especially in terms of enrolling more eligible children and increasing the number of girls enrolled. At the same time, more initiatives are required to achieve the 100 percent enrolment of children in for primary education against; the current completion rate of only 65 percent. Apart from improving access, the challenge is to improve quality at all levels which means special attention needs to be given to training of teachers, upgrading curriculum, improvement of management, academic supervision and monitoring of activities, and building-up of data collection and data maintenance system.

The major problems in universalisation of primary education in Bangladesh relate to (a) lack of political will or commitment; (b) organizational culture to support and allow systemic change; and (c) difficulties faced by parents to educate their children. The constitutional provisions fully ensure the commitment of the Government to free and compulsory education for all children between the ages of 6-14. However, these constitutional provisions are nothing more than mere directive principles and law, which cannot really be effective unless they are implemented properly.

Lack of political will is manifested through lower financial allocation for education, high student-teacher ratio, rigid administrative procedures, poor conditions of government run schools in terms of infrastructure and quality of education, poor monitoring of the schemes, etc. Primary school teachers are often compelled to do other official works by the Government such as election duties, census data collection, organisation of rallies in observance of national and international days on various issues etc. The educational leadership must embrace a policy of change and initiative that encourages and rewards quality improvements. Unless this happens then even the investment of million of dollars will not produce the quality system of education to which the children of Bangladesh are entitled. Central to this will be a major devolution of power and responsibility of the local levels- to the schools, the teachers and the communities.

Another continuing problem of primary education in Bangladesh, is a view often found at senior levels of government and civil service and even among the educational leadership and community at large that teaching young children is easier, requires less skill, and is somehow less important than teaching secondary students and university undergraduates. Unfortunately this is not the case. The years of primary schooling which is the foundation for all future learning are the most important years of formal learning and arguably the most difficult, if the task is to be done properly. Realisation and reorganization of this reality would demand a much higher status for primary school teachers in society.

Research findings indicate that common opinions about education of children from marginalised groups are – (a) parents are not interested in sending children to school, (b) child marriage and child labour are the causes of non-enrolment and drop-out and (c) elementary education is not free for every child. Most parents wish to send the child to school. Child marriage and child labour are rather the results of non-enrolment and dropout. The hidden costs of losing the contribution of the child in house keeping, child rearing and supplementary family income are still unaffordable for families below poverty line against the provision of incentives such as mid-day meal, books, uniforms etc. Parents face a variety of poverty related problems and they equate education to improved employability and raising income level and they see the utility of education from the point of view of raising employability and earning capacity.

Demand-Supply Mismatch

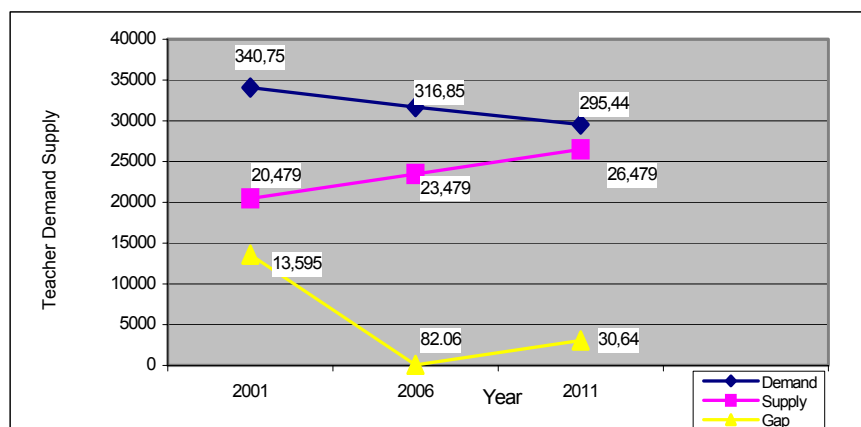
The low quality of primary education is certainly one of the most important and gravest educational problems facing Bangladesh. Major concerns result from a combination and interaction of inadequately trained teachers, often with poor curriculum, specific subjective knowledge, inappropriate teaching method, poor facilities and infrastructure and teachers absenteeism, low teacher-student contact hours, and insufficient provision of text book and supplementary teaching learning materials, together with inadequate organisational capacity across the system and low motivation on the part of the teachers and children. Unless the quality of primary education is improved, and that requires cohesive and balanced improvements in all aspects of the education system, from the PMED to class room, the prospect of future gains in participation, retention and completion will be reduced substantially and the sustainability of the gains of the past decade will be threatened.

It is observed from the earlier analysis that the supply of inputs and services is mismatched to a great extent with the demands of primary education sector in Bangladesh.

Demand for Trained Teacher

In the primary education sub-sector, the state has been continuing with a strong and active support for several decades. It is observed that enrolment size is around 17.03 million in 2001. Due to a declining trend in population growth, the primary enrolment size secularly falls in the successive years to 15.90 million in 2006 and 14.77 million in 2007. Keeping the above-mentioned demand situation of enrolment size in view, the projected estimates for PTI-trained teachers for the period 2001 to 2011 is made. The estimated demand for trained teachers for the period of 2001 to 2011, on the basis of population projections is presented below (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1 Demand and Supply Situation of the Trained Primary Teachers



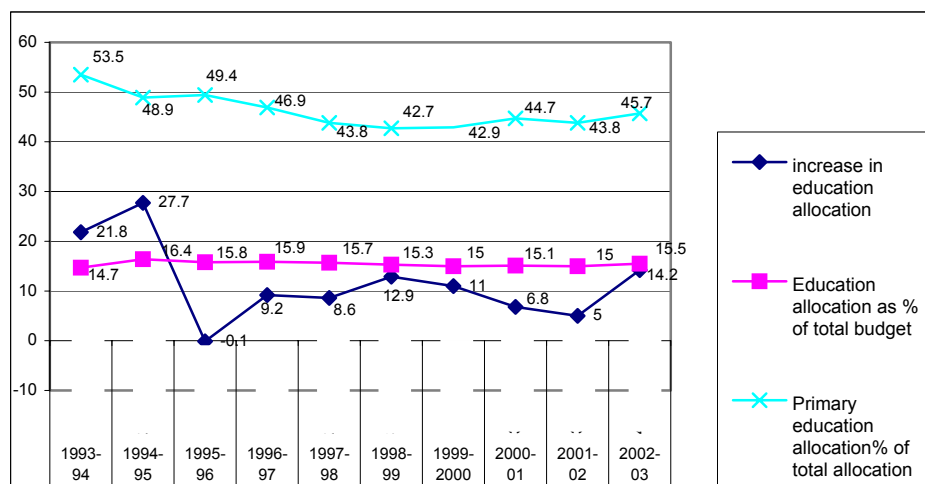
Source: Education Watch 2000

According to Education Watch 2000 estimate, there were 186,794 PTI-trained teachers in the formal mainstream schools. Thus, if the country intends to employ required number of PTI-trained teachers to administer the need of the total primary enrolment of 17.03 million in 2001 at a teacher- pupil ratio of 1:50 then the country will need roughly 341,000 trained teachers in the (mainstream) sub-sector in the year 2001. Over time, the estimate for trained teachers falls in tandem with the declining enrolment-demand in primary education. It is observed from the declining growth that the total demand for trained teachers (at the teacher-student ratio of 1:50) will be roughly 317,000 in 2006 and about 295,000 in 2011.

The PEDPII agreed to employ an additional 70,000 qualified and trained teachers, an increase of 20,000 over the numbers currently projected under ongoing plans. Across the formal primary sector, the proposed increased in capacity of the PTIs will add some 70,000 new fully trained teachers, but the loss through attrition will be approximate 48,000 giving a net gain of only 22,000 teachers. This will mean that as a result the predicted gain in enrolment i.e., the teacher pupil ratio will be unchanged at 1:55. If one fundamental quality goal is to achieve a teacher pupil ratio at 1:40 by 2015- then by that year the number of primary teachers will need to increase to 4954,000- a real gain of 15,000 approximately in the period 2008-2015, or 3,000+ new teachers each year. Even achieving a ratio of 1:50 will require 51,000 over the period 2008-2015 or approximately 20,000 new teachers each year (PEDP II Final report: 2002). Currently the PTIs have the capacity to train 10,000 new teachers per year and it has been assumed that this can be increased to 15000 per year in 2004. This indicates the limits to capacity for the training of teachers according to quality focused pre service training model.

Budgetary Allocation in Primary Education Sector

Figure 3.2 Total Government Budget Allocation for Education & Primary Education



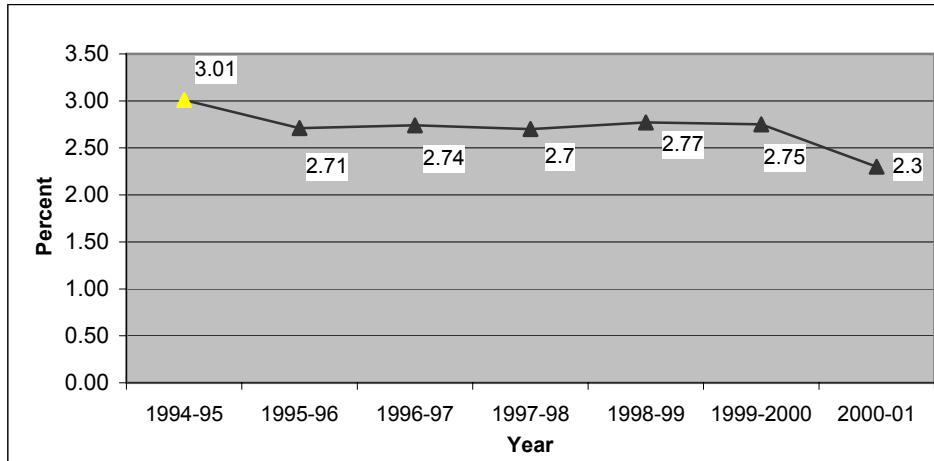
Source: PEDPII Final Plan 2002 : 20

The government has accorded high priority to education by allocating 15 percent of the national budget (2002-03), of which the share of primary and non-formal education is nearly 50 percent. As a share of GDP government expenditure on education averaged 1.2 percent (PMED, 2001). The development budget shows that the proportion of the budget allocation, after falling from the 1994-95 peak of 13.6 percent to 12.9 percent in 2000-2001, rose again to 15.1 percent in 2002-03. The allocation of the primary education fell as a percentage of the total development budget, from 65.8 percent in 1993-94 to 49.5 percent in 2000-2001 before increasing again to 54.7 percent in 2002-03, funded 36.7 percent by external donors. On the other, public expenditure on primary education per pupil rose in nominal level from 1994-95 to 2000-01 but when hand these figures are related to the rate of inflation so as to reflect changes in the value of money and real purchasing power, public expenditure on primary education per pupil in real terms, as constant prices, fell steadily from 1994-95 to 2000-01 before showing a slight increase in 2001-02 (PEDP II, 2002). Figure 3.2 depicts a clear picture in this regard.

It is observed in World Bank Report 2002 that the public expenditure on education as percentage of gross domestic product fell steadily from 3.01 percent in 1994-95 to approximately 2.30 percent in 2000-01 (World Bank 2002) (Figure 3.3). Previous reports have recommended that these findings are well below the comparable ratios in other countries, many of which have equivalent ratios within the range of 3 percent to above 4 percent. This brings the argument in favour of an increase in education expenditure in Bangladesh as a proportion of GDP.

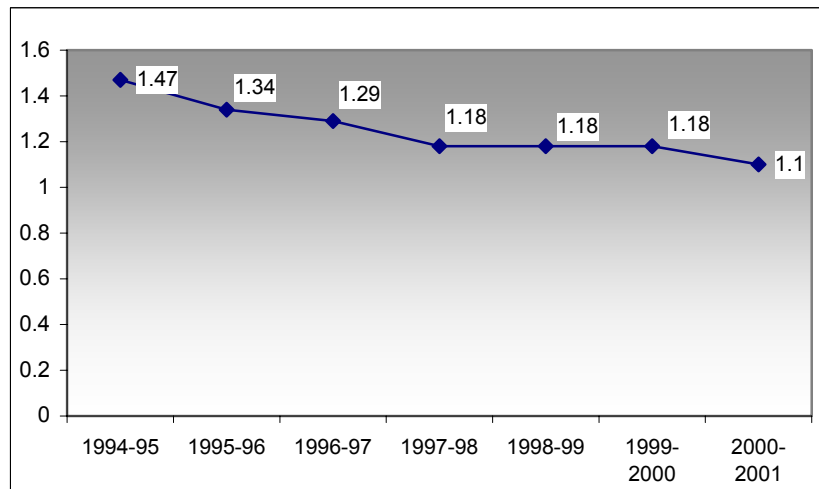
Similarly public expenditure on primary education as percentage of GDP fell steadily from 1994-95 to 2000. Public primary education expenditure per pupil expressed as percentage of GDP per capita fell from 10.2 percent in 1995-96 to 6.9 percent in 2000-2001. Internationally there has been much in the latter ratios since a study showed that across the 14 Asian countries public expenditure on primary education per pupil averaged around 10 percent of GDP per capita and that these levels are required sustainable development. Subsequently, there have been several attempts to replicate this approach in a number of other countries in different parts of the world. The above finding for Bangladesh indicates that the 2000-2001 ratio of 8.2 percent is significantly below the recommended international average of 10 percent. In the words of recent government education policy document: "Absolute increase in public expenditure in the past years has been notable. However, the limit in progress is to be attribute to, among others, the lack of increase in per pupil expenditure as a percentage of GDP per capita . It will be a significant step forward to increase per pupil expenditure for the promotion of basic continuing education, which is necessary for the development of human resource of the country. Such a policy decision is a demand of time".

Figure 3.3 Total Public Expenditure on Education as percent of GDP



Source: PEDPII Final Plan 2002.

Figure 3.4 Total Public Expenditure on Primary Education by Year as Percent of GDP



Source: PEDPII Final Plan 2002

Demand for Structural Improvement

To meet the demand for a higher quality teaching and learning will require a level of infrastructure facilities, furnishing and equipment – including new and better schools. Up-gradation of PTIs, completion of the upazilla resource centres, and proper maintenance to ensure the longevity of the existing stock of the buildings are

necessary preconditions for quality teaching and learning at primary level. PEDP II proposed to increase school capacity and infrastructure quality by providing new classroom to reduce class sizes to 46 student and to permit an increase in contact hours to average international standards reducing the number of staggered shift primary schools at least 50 percent especially in the more remote upazillas. At least 60,000 new classrooms will be required, and the budget estimate will be based on this project requirement. These additional classrooms will be designed for 40 students and will be no smaller than 504 square feet or 54.2 square meters (PEDPII: final report 2002). Education Watch 1999 found that the physical facilities of government run primary schools had 3.8 rooms per school, 3.4 for rural areas and 5.3 for urban areas. Number of rooms for registered and unregistered non-governmental school was three and the same for NGO run school was one. Over one third of school buildings were made of bricks (52.6 percent in urban Vs. 27.3 percent for rural areas). Safe drinking water is also not available as many as 30 percent of formal schools.

In rural areas the physical condition of primary school is very poor. The condition of school building is very vulnerable. The educational materials are insufficient. Sometimes there is not even a chalkboard. Classrooms in many areas tend to be roughly constructed. The rooms are dim and sunlight is the only illumination. Teaching materials frequently reinforce stereotypes, compounding the physical problems that affect girls, such as distance from home and the lack of toilet facilities. Massed together, children struggle for space, and for a modicum of attention from an overburdened teacher, often in a language they cannot grasp. Diseases and pests spread easily. The PEDP II agreed the required primary school quality standard (PSQL) for physical facilities, classrooms, equipment, flexible and movable furniture for every school.

Based on the latest data provided by the DPE, the number of new classrooms needed to provide 80 percent of schools with a single shift system is between 75,000 and 86,000. If the 86000 new classrooms are built during the PEDP II, it would reduce the ratio of class room to students to 1:56, making provisions of latrines, water supply, boundary walls and basic furniture (chair, table, blackboard etc). The provisions, however, do not include computer workstations, communications equipment etc.

Demand for Quality Improvement

The poor quality of education in schools is itself a depressant on the demand for education. Some children would rather work than be subject to a school regime that are irrelevant to their needs. In rural areas there is no organisation, which relates to enhancing quality of education. So it is necessary to develop Parent Teacher Association (PTA) at every government school. Most of the schools in our country have

simply not been good enough to attract or retain children on the scale needed for two principal reasons: they are chronically under financed, and they are too expensive for the majority of the population. Quality improvement in primary schools will require a number of coordinated interventions, including a greater responsiveness to class - room circumstances and learning environment that children should receive schooling in class rooms that are not overcrowded, that have suitable staff- student ratio, regular attendance by teachers, one teacher for each class and section, and sufficient contact hours for ensuring quality teaching and learning to take place. Both the primary curricula wing and the NCTB and NAPE that have main responsibilities in the provision of primary education therefore must play a key role in quality improvement. The excellence of teacher is seen as one of the most important factor in quality education system and it is considered critical that people are allowed to teach children in primary school in Bangladesh without any initial training. It is also considered that the minimum level of recruitment for trainee teacher should be HSC (PEDP II Final Report: 2002).

Table 3.1 The Teacher Student Ratio by Type of School and Area

School Type	No. of Schools	Teacher Student Ratio	No. of Schools	Teacher Student Ratio	No. of Schools	Teacher Student Ratio
	Rural schools		Urban schools		All schools	
Government	180	1:72	60	1:68	240	1:70
Private	180	1:55	59	1:34	239	1:47
Madrassa	179	1:29	55	1:24	234	1:28
Non formal	179	1:30	60	1:33	239	1:31

Source: Education Watch, 2001

International studies and experience indicate that the quality of head teacher is a strong indicator of quality school. Therefore, the selection and promotion of well-qualified candidates for head teacher position is essential, as is the provision for their adequate rewards and incentives. Table 3.1 shows the teacher - student ratio in various type of schools by area. The government primary schools have the highest ratio with 70 students per teacher and the Madrassa being lowest with 28 students per teacher. This ratio was 1:47 for private and 1:31 for non-formal schools. However, for all cases, the ratio was higher in rural schools than the urban ones.

In this regard, it may be said that the variation between rural and urban schools in regard to teacher- student ratio standard and quality primary education in Bangladesh.

Demand for Improved School Management

The delivery of education itself has also been poorly organised from overall management of school to lessons taught in the classroom. The decreasing quality of

education is a testimony to this. Educated guardians always complain that the quality of education is not good in the free primary school because teachers are not skilled and their educational background is poor. So they are not able to teach the students efficiently. Besides, School Management Committee (SMC) does not give attention to improve the quality of education.

The incompetence and indifferent attitude of SMCs further pushes the primary education sector into a tight corner. It is a general picture in rural areas in particular. The SMC is regarded as a prestigious committee in rural areas due to which influential persons compete to become members. This increases the risk of leaving out those who are really committed to enlightening their fellow villagers. Education Watch 1999 conducted a study which assessed the activities of SMC and parent teacher association (PTA). Almost all the government and non-government primary schools and Madrasas had SMC. The percentage for NGO School is 78.5 in this regard. The average size of SMC is 10 and only 2 members are female, women representation was highest in NGO schools and lowest in Madrasa i.e., 56.7 and 2 percent respectively. On average 8 meetings of the SMC were held in a year and only three quarters of the members were present in such meetings. So it is very essential to modify the selection process of SMC and make the Committee effective. Each school should have a policy agreed with SMC and community of parents, covering the matters such as attendance, gender discrimination, discipline, homework, inclusive education etc. ensuring effective linkage and access between formal structure of the SMC and the broader community of civil society.

Table 3.2 Structure of School Management Committee

School Type	No. of school surveyed	Percent of schools having SMC	Average size of committee	Percent of female in the committee
Government	240	97.4	11.1	13.7
Private	239	99.4	10.9	11.9
Madrassa	234	97.5	12.1	1.1
Non formal	239	88.7	6.7	60.4
All schools	952	98.7	10.7	14.3

Source: Education Watch 2001

Teaching Learning Materials

There are various learning resources which need to be made available to students and teachers to facilitate effective learning. These include textbooks, exercise books and stationeries for students, visual aids, globes, charts, maps for classrooms as well as manual for teachers. The government provides textbooks free of cost to all students in formal schools. But exercise books and stationeries are to be procured by the parents

themselves. In most of the NGO schools, however, all these are provided free of cost by the NGOs themselves. The government is supposed to provide teaching aids such as globes and charts, but studies have shown that these materials are not adequately supplied to all schools (DPC, 1993). The incidence of actual use of these materials has also been found to be much less. In some NGO schools, the teachers themselves are expected to prepare their own models, charts and other aids. As a result of greater stress on academic supervision, use of teachers' manual and teaching-learning aids is greater among non-formal schools.

It is found that children lost many contact hours of teaching and learning owing to absenteeism of teachers from their schoolwork varying period of time for a variety of reasons, including leave, sickness, in service training, initial training of PTIs and other government duties. To mitigate this problem, at the same time supporting teachers needed to enhance their teaching skills and develop their career, it is proposed to introduce a number of interventions including providing a pool for supplying teachers who are able to substitute for absent colleagues (UNICEF, 2001). Demand for quality education for girls has to be supported by quality supply. It is important to make the school environment girl friendly, and safe for her to go to school as well as to ensure required supply in this regard.

To alleviate supply side constraints that prevent millions of children from accessing and participating in formal primary education, a number of indicative suggestions would be to:

- provide financial support to the poorest families to overcome the direct and opportunity costs that prevent those families from sending their children to school by continuing the rural stipend programme, designed by the government to reach the 40 percent poorest children;
- eliminate the educational disadvantages facing the children of indigenous communities with particular attention to the children in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and in other areas of Bangladesh where the indigenous people live, where there are tribal populations;
- ensure recognition and understanding of the richness and diversity of Bangladeshi culture through the positive portrayal in the curriculum, in teaching - learning materials, and in classroom activities. This would also include the principles of human rights, gender equity, respect for language, religion and ethnicity and protection of the environment.

Dysfunctional Supply Side

The supply side constraints encompasses the schools and classrooms that limits their capacity to provide adequate opportunities of quality education for children living in

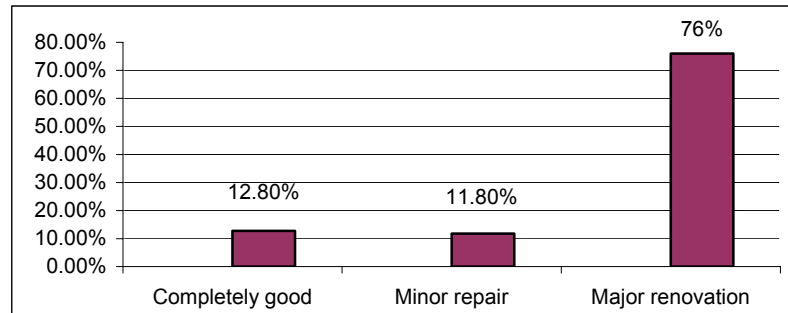
the area e.g. inaccessibility of schools, short contact hours, inadequate facilities, untrained and poorly trained teachers often with inadequate knowledge, lack of teaching learning materials, and teacher inertia and absenteeism of teacher. A related supply side issue is the fact that lack of adequate incentives compels teachers to involve in private tuition for which the poor become deprived from quality primary education. It is recognised that everywhere in Bangladesh the public education has comparable problems of inadequate, and even unhealthy physical facilities; poor motivation and commitment amongst teachers; that primary level teachers in particular have low status; that teaching method are unimaginative and outdated, relying on a heavily rote- learning; that the curriculum is often felt to be irrelevant to their needs and circumstances by children themselves; that non formal education is often unrecognised and poorly integrated; and that the limited resources that are available for basic education are poorly managed.

Contributing to the shortage of trained teachers was the low socio-economic standing of educators. The social image of teachers has been gradually eroded making it difficult to recruit young graduates to the profession. The high proportion of poorly trained teachers led to lower standards of instruction. Despite these problems, the number of secondary-school teachers increased from 83,955 in 1977 to 99,016 in 1986, according to government figures. Supply Facilities like physical condition of the schoolhouse, availability of toilets, safe drinking water, etc, are also important factors influencing the retention and attendance of children and quality of education. According to a PMED (2000) report, out of 36,651 government primary schools only 12.8 percent schools are in 'completely good' condition and another 11.8 percent need 'minor repair'. That is about 76 percent of primary schools either need major renovation or 'complete reconstruction' (61.7 percent).

One calculation indicates that if all children who are involved in primary grades are to be properly accommodated in classroom, it is necessary to construct additional 50,000 classrooms in Bangladesh. The situation of school furniture and educational equipment is not satisfactory. Existence of sanitary latrines in schools also is an important factor, particularly of girls. A study (PREPD-FORD Study, 1988) indicated that 15 percent and 58 percent of urban schools and rural schools respectively did not have any latrine. Safe drinking water is also not available in as many as 30 percent of the formal schools and 45 percent of non-formal schools (Alam *et al.*, 1997).

Though school facilities are very important factors in formal education, the situation in non-formal education is rather different. As non-formal schools are resource-poor, they cannot afford to provide the facilities that are usually available in the formal schools. The condition of madrasas is much worse in this respect.

Figure: 3.5 Physical Conditions of Government Primary School



Source: Jalaluddin and Chowdhury, 1997.

Cost Barriers to Primary Education

Majority of the parents identified reasons that related to their economic status and the fact is that a child is an important source of labour. By the age 8 boys are expected to be as active as an adult in agricultural work and by the age of 6, girls are already in household activities. Primary school - age children integrate their early years in the subsistence activities of the family in view of the fact that a marginal farmer or landless cannot afford to hire adult labour. Furthermore, the benefits of primary education are also not readily apparent to the parents who are illiterate as well as poor. To these parents, a child who can read, write and count is likely to aspire activities, which will take away from the immediate labour requirements of them. The tendency, therefore, is poor illiterate parents to never enrol their children in the school, and if they do are more likely to withdraw them after some years. It has been found that parents are more likely to allow their children to attend school if the education system is adjusted to the rhythm of economic activity in the community. Flexible scheduling of school hours and calendars to reflect local timing of local planting and harvesting would make education more available to the children involved in agricultural works.

Education Watch 2001 declared a list of eleven expenditure heads for families. The expenditure heads included: admission /readmission, monthly tuition fee, buying/collecting textbooks, buying/collecting supplementary books, stationary, school dress, examination fee, various subscriptions (e.g., subscriptions for religious festivals, social functions, amusements etc.), transport for schooling, private tutor, and transport for private tutoring. Any expenditure apart from the above was recorded under 'others' category. Table 3.3 shows that above 90 percent of the students of primary classes spent money for buying stationery such as copybook, paper, pencil, eraser etc. and three quarters are paid as examination fees. Although textbooks at primary level are

provided free of costs, slightly over one third of the students had to pay certain amount for this and 37 percent had to spend money for buying/collecting supplementary books. Over one third of the students paid money in the name of various subscriptions such as religious festivals, social functions or amusements, 30.8 percent paid admission/readmission fees and over one fifth of them paid for private tutoring. A small proportion of the students had to pay monthly fees (7.8 percent, or spend money for school dress (15.5 percent) and transportation (5 percent). About 60 percent of the students had to pay money for heads other than above.

Government primary school is nominally free. In practice, however, school charges for examination fees, admission, sports and cultural events, transfer to other school, pencil and writing books etc. have to be borne and bought. Proper school dress also demands an extra cost. All these fees and costs may amount hundred taka per year which is too much for a poor family to spend. This additional cost of education eventually pushes the underprivileged students out of the system. A survey conducted by CAMPE 2001 shows that, on an average, private expenditure per students is Tk. 82 per month with significant variations over different grades (Tk. 57 for grade one to Tk. 122 for grade five), between rural and urban areas (TK. 37 for grade one and 87 for grade five). And between boys and girls expenditure for boys is higher than that for girls. Other statistics show that the students had to pay Tk. 80 (excluding pencils, notebooks) for the textbooks. A day labourer receives Tk. 35 to Tk. 40 each day. This is a major financial burden for poor families having several school going children.

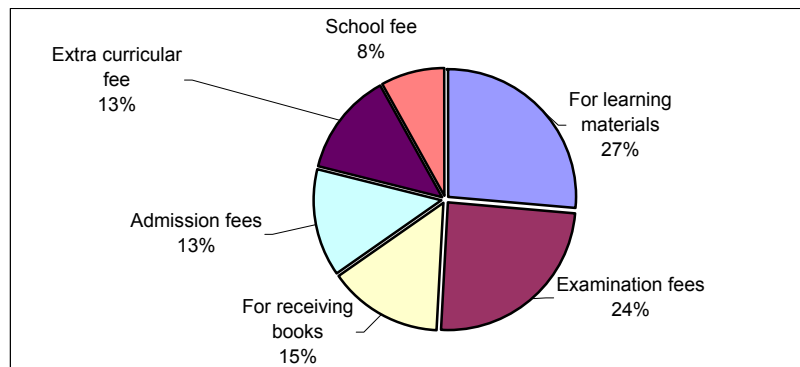
Table 3.3 Percentage of Students Spending Money for Primary Schooling

Expenditure Heads	Urban	Rural	All	Significance
Admission/readmission	27.5	53.4	30.8	p<0.001
Monthly tuition fees	5.2	25.3	7.8	p<0.001
Buying/collecting textbooks	33.0	34.4	33.2	ns
Buying/collecting supplementary books	36.9	38.4	37.1	ns
Stationery	90.9	93.4	91.2	p<0.01
School dress	12.4	37.1	15.5	p<0.001
Various fees	33.1	34.5	33.3	ns
Examination fees	75.7	75.4	75.7	ns
Transport for schooling	3.1	12.0	4.3	.001 p<0
Honorarium for private tutor	18.0	41.5	21.0	p<0.001
Transport for private tutoring	0.9	1.5	1.0	ns
Others	58.7	64.4	59.4	p<0.001
Number of students	5,190	1,364	6,594	

Source: Education Watch (2000)

Action Aid conducted another survey in order to ascertain whether the free primary school is really free. The survey showed that only 1 percent of total surveyed children did not pay any money for any reason to receive primary education while the others had to pay. Some paid for single reasons while others for multiple ones. The major heads of expenditure in primary education as depicted by the survey is shown in the following figure (Figure 3.6).

Figure: 3.6 Major Heads of Expenditure



Source: Action Aid Bangladesh 2002

The family expenditure for different schools varies from one to another. The expenditures for different types of primary school are provided below:

Admission Fees

In government primary schools, about 42.6 percent pay some amount for getting admission in primary educational institutions. But this admission fees vary from institution to institution. About 70 percent do not have to pay any amount for admission for studying in government primary schools, while 17.7, 3.8, 1.8 and .3 percent pay Tk. 10, Tk. 20, Tk. 30 and Tk. 30, Tk. 50 and more Tk. 100 respectively per year in this respect.

In registered primary schools, 27.3 percent do not have to pay any fees, while 8, 29.8, 1.8, and only one percent pay Tk. 10, Tk. 20, Tk. 31-50 and Tk. 51-100 respectively per year for admission fees. On the other hand, about 5 percent could not remember their amount paid for admission.

In government madrasa 39.3 percent do not pay any amount for admission, while 25, 10.7, 3.7, 10.7, 3.6 and 7.1 percent pay Tk. 10, Tk. 20, Tk. 30, Tk. 31- 50, Tk. 51-100 and more than Tk. 1000 yearly for the same respectively.

In private madrasa, about 27 percent do not pay any amount, while 13.5, 11.8, 9, 14.1, 3.6 and 8.4 percent pay Tk. 10, 20, 30, 31-50, 50- 10 and above Tk 100 respectively for admission yearly.

In NGO schools, 48.6 percent do not pay any amount, while 5.6, 3.2, 2.9, 2.5, 35.2 and 1.8 percent pay Tk. 10, 20, 30, 31-50, 51-10 and more than Tk. 100 respectively per year for admission.

Examination Fees

In government primary schools, 84.1 percent pay examination fees, while about 12 percent do not pay any amount for the same. Among the fees payer, 22.4, 1-.3, 17 and .8 percent pay Tk. 10, 20, 30, 31-100, 51-100 and above Tk. 100 yearly for examination fees respectively. About 2.1 percent could not recall the amount.

In Registered Primary school, about 8.1 percent did not have to pay any fees, while 18.2 percent paid 10 taka/year 17.6 percent paid 20 taka /year, 10.4 percent paid 30 taka, 15.8 percent between 31 to 50,21.3 percent paid between 51 to 100 taka/ year. And 7.8 percent have paid more than 100 taka.

In government madrasa, about 17.9 percent do not pay any amount, while 7.1, 21.4, 21.5, and 25 percent students pay Tk. 10 and 20, 30, 31- 50 and Tk. 51-100 respectively.

In private madrasa 12.9 percent did not pay any amount, while 11.8, 16.9, 15.7, 14, 15.7 and 11.2 percent pay Tk. 10, 20, 30, 31-50, 51-100 and above Tk. 100 respectively.

In NGO run schools, 53.6 percent do not pay any amount, while 10.8, 5.6, 1.1, and 2.9 percent pay Tk. 10, 20, 30 and 31- 50 and Tk. 51- 100 respectively. About 25 percent could not recall the amount.

Learning Materials

In government schools, about 4 percent do not spend any amount, while 5 .0, 8.9, 10.6, 34.7, and 26.2 percent spend Tk. 10, 20, 30, 31- 50, 51-100 and more than Tk. 100 for learning materials respectively.

In registered primary school, about 2.5 percent do not spend any amount, while 5.3, 7.1, 6.2, 24.1, 43 and 11.3 percent spend Tk. 10, 20, 30, 31-50, 51-100 and more than one hundred respectively.

In government madrasa, about 25 percent do not spend any amount, while 3.6, 10.7, 3.6, 7.1 and 25 percent spend Tk. 10, 20, 30, 31-50, 51-100 above one hundred respectively.

In private madrasa, about 7.3 percent do not spend any amount, while 2.8, 2.2, 6.7, 13.4, 33.7, 32.6 percent student spend Tk. 10, 20, 30, 31-50, 51-100 above Tk. 100 respectively.

In NGO run schools, about 48.9 percent did not spend any amount, while 1.4, 3.1, 2.7, 5.4, 11.7, and 8.3, percent spend Tk. 10, 20, 30, 31-50, 51-100 and above one hundred respectively. About 18.4 percent could not recall the money.

School Textbooks

In government schools, about 54.6 percent did not spend any amount, while 8.1, 10.5, 2.8, 6.6, 2.8 and 1.6 percent spend Tk. 10, 20, 30, 31-50, 51-100 and more than one hundred. About 12.9 percent could not recall the amount of money.

In registered primary schools, about 23.9 percent do not spend any amount, while 31.3, 22.1, 4.9, 2.9, and 1.1.3 percent spend Tk. 10, 20, 30, 31-50 and 51-100 and above one hundred respectively.

In government madrasa, about 25 percent did not spend any amount, while 17.9, 10.7, 3.6, 17.9 and 25 percent Tk. 10, 20, 30 and 31-50, 51-100 and above Tk. 100 respectively for text book.

In private madrasa, about 18.5 percent did not spend any amount, while 7.9, 10.7, 2.2, 6.7, 12.5, and 39.3 percent spend Tk. 10, 20, 30, 31-50, 51-100 and above one hundred for textbooks respectively. About 1.1 percent could not recall the amount paid for receiving books.

Extra Curricular Activities

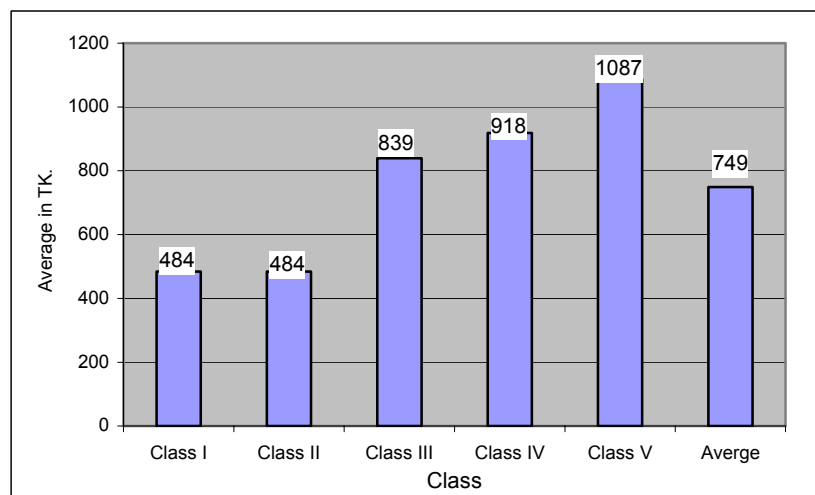
44.9 percent of the enrolled children paid money for extra curricular activities. For extra curricular activities, 54.4, percent of those who are studying in government primary schools, do not to pay any amount, while 20, 7.3, 2.4, 1.7, and only 0.6 percent pay Tk. 10, 20, 30, 31-50 and above Tk. 50 respectively. About 13 percent can not recall the amount. Among those who are studying in registered schools, 55.4 percent of do not pay any amount for extra curricular activities, while 37.2, 4.7 and the rest pay Tk 10, 20 and more than Tk. 20 for extra curricular activities. About 0.7 percent could not recall the amount.

A majority of the students studying in government madrasas (75 percent) do not pay any amount, while 21.4 and 3.65 percent pay Tk. 10 and 20 respectively. Among those who are studying in private madrasas, 57.9 percent did not have to pay any amount, while 23.6, 10.7, 1.1, and 1.7 percent spend Tk. 10, 20, 40-50 and 51-100

respectively. About 3.9 percent could not recall the amount. Among those who are studying in NGO schools, 59 percent of do not pay any amount while 8.8, 2.5, and the rest spend Tk. 10, 20 and more than Tk. 20 respectively. About 26.7 percent could not recall the amount paid for extra curricular activities.

Education Watch 2001 documented the various expenditures that the parents incur for their children's primary education. 90 percent of parents are reported as incurring some sorts of expenditure. The heads of expenditure ranged from tuition and examination fees to subscription for various school functions and to private tutoring. Most frequently cited head of the expenditure is stationary (91 percent). The expenditure patterns changed as the student climbed up-to the higher classes. On an average they spent Tk. 736 over a nine-month period. The following figure shows the average private expenditure per students by class.

Figure 3.7 Average Private Expenditure Per Student by Class



Source: Education Watch: 2001.

Social Barriers

Women's position in the family and society presents a complex picture of modernity and tradition, and of strivings for gender equity amidst pressures to maintain status quo. World-wide, girls are seriously disadvantaged. UN statistics indicate that two out of three children of school-going age who are not in school are girls (Save the Children: 2001). The education system in Bangladesh is predominantly elitist with many significant groups of people always prone to be systematically excluded, notably girl children and rural people in general.

Girls in particular face discrimination and challenging circumstances that keep them out of school or from learning effectively. Parents with limited resources are confronted with the reality that the quality of education plays an important role in their decision of whether or not to put or keep their daughters in school. If girls are not , if what they learn is not useful, or if the school environment is not safe for them, parents will not invest in sending their daughters to school. Thus, improving quality must be high on our agenda if we expect to get girls into school and retain them therein.

Girls and boys have the same right to a quality education. But the “gender gap” becomes painfully evident when one looks at who is in the classroom. One of the most important factors preventing girls from attending and achieving in school is gender discrimination. Girls and boys both have hurdles to overcome. For girls the hurdles are, for the most part, higher and more frequent—simply because they are girls. In 1990, 20 percent of the world’s primary-school-aged children were out of school, two-thirds of them girls. By 2000, the number of children out of school was about 125 million worldwide; more than 66 million were girls. And while there were more children than ever in the world’s primary schools, far too many remain absent – the majority are girls. The lack of women teachers is also disincentive to many parents for keeping their daughters at school.

Children are more likely to drop out of school if it is irrelevant to their realities. Girls face additional challenges. Females are generally absent— or portrayed stereotypically — in the content and images in lessons. This is particularly true in areas traditionally regarded as the male domain. There is a need for relevant curricula and materials for literacy and numeracy, along with “facts and skills for life,” which include education on rights, gender equality, health, and nutrition.

In Bangladesh the social and religious traditions especially affect the enrolment of girls. When girls reach puberty, particularly if they are from lower strata in society, they are not allowed to move freely. If a poor family can afford to send a child to school, it would most likely be a son. It is generally believed that girls will eventually leave the family to be married. The vast majority of primary school teachers are male and this further discourages parents to enroll their girl’s child in school. Although attitude is changing only about 40 percent* of the girls cohort ever enrol in school, and retention to class five is less than one-third of the initial enrolment. The issue of girl’s education is clearly neglected all over the time irrespective of groups (literate-illiterate), communities (majority- minority- indigenous) and areas (urban- rural). Majority of the rural males show negative attitude and express dissatisfaction regarding incentives given to girls education. For many it is a non-issue, they cannot realise why there are so much debate about it, because girls ultimate goal is to upset

the family dynamics. There is definitely a feeling of threat among rural male towards girls education.

This arises from the male dominant culture in our society. But attitudes to schooling are only part of a larger pattern of social restrictions, each of which tends to perpetuate other. Where girls have a lower social status, and their options in life are limited to motherhood and domestic roles, there may seem little point in sending them to school. In such societies there will be few job options for women, so school cannot be realistically seen as preparing them to earn a living.

In rural areas the tasks of girls do enable adults to do their own (such as looking after younger children while mothers walk long distances to collect firewood) or may be the kind that have inflexible timings (such as preparing meals). Parents may feel that they cannot manage unless they keep their daughters at home. But once the chores were done, if the times of school were adjusted they would let the girls go to school. For, boys, the calculation is different, the household can more easily do without their work when they are young, but will depend more on their potential earning capacity when they are older, so for them it is worth making adjustments to let them go to school in the hope that this might increase chances of getting paid work later. In a male dominated society it is only natural that the family and the society attributes a much lower value to the girls as compared to boys. Low value attributed to the girls is one of the key reasons why investment in the girl's education is not worthwhile. To counter the above, parents need to be convinced about the rationale for sending their daughters to school and for this an enabling environment needs to be created where demand for girls education is generated and supply of quality education is ensured.

Intra-Family Normative Attitude

The attitudes of the key adults are more decisive in determining the educational chances than is often realised. For example, what keeps children with disabilities out of school is not the disability itself, but the attitude to it that many adults think that children with disabilities cannot learn alongside others. Similar perception exists for girl's education and for the minorities. Question of attitude needs to be approached in a spirit of mutual respect. There is no set of correct attitudes, which people everywhere need to be encouraged for adoption. When government officials and NGOs blame parents for not sending their children to school and talk of making parents aware of the value of education they ignore the possibility that parents have already made a rational calculations- that the kind of schooling their children could get will be of little benefit to them. The concept of parent education is used in a way which suggest that parents need to be told how to bring up their children. Of course there

are things adults who care for children could learn, but too often the impression in such programmes is that the agency offering parent education has all the answers, and parents' own knowledge and experience is of little value.

The negative attitude pervades into many other things – the taboos surrounding puberty and menstruation, the neglect of their health and nutrition at a time when they need those most. In fact they are discriminated as opposed to their brothers when it comes to food, clothing, comfort and medical care. The very effect of psychologically negative attitude and confinement within the house replacing what is naturally to be an exuberant adolescence, is sufficient discouragement for a healthy development. As a result they are pushed towards a very early and unprepared womanhood – ignorant, meek, helpless, without the developed personality of their own, totally fatalistic, with no voice over their own future.

It is also a vital aspect to recognise that people do not change attitudes simply because someone else tells them to do so (through there are many examples of development workers assuming that they will). Is an individual view of life made up of beliefs and values that may never have been questioned, and are absorbed from the society around them? Being asked to re-examine these beliefs can be a disturbing experience, one which most of us would rather avoid. Yet few individuals go through life without changing their attitude about at least some issues and what bring about changes in a new experience. So the route to helping people acquire new attitudes to children's learning is to provide them opportunities to experience things in a different way.

Perceived Value of Education

Children and adult alike express popular sentiments on education; education is the backbone/lamp/light/ crown of man and society. Another view is that education is the most sophisticated development of consciousness. As for example an urban high income man defines that education is the means through which the positive collection of values get a chance to develop by discerning evil and good principles in men, while a rural low income illiterate man gives a simple but functional definition that education is to respect elders and show effect on to younger generation. Most of the definition articulated by the urban middle income groups of teachers and literate adults were conceptualised like the education system is one through which man makes himself more human; that which develops the potential, develops positive qualities of mind so that man becomes a better human being; help to analyse etc. On the other hand the illiterate adults from urban and rural areas define quality education in a more functional term like a book and pen, building life, carrying out any activity. Some say

that education cannot be divided like a property. Rural madrassa children define it as knowledge about this world and the world beyond death. And other rural school children define it as knowledge of technology, language, and accounting.

The gender difference in the definition may also be noticed. Urban women emphasised the inner qualities, the values, morality and humanity much more than men. A gradation from the substantial and visible to the most abstract was also noticed (SCF, 1999).

One of the Action Aid Bangladesh organised survey (2002a) focused on perceived value of education. A number of such perceptions are:

- Most villagers consider primary education creates opportunities for a better living.
- Among many, only primary education is less important, they feel that further education should also be available.
- Villagers listed the followings as outcome of having primary education: Skill of reading letters, capability of managing documents, receiving others' respects, skill of maintaining accounts, and becoming a perfect human being.