



ASSESSING IMPACT OF HIGHER EDUCATION: A STUDY ON PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN BANGLADESH

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Abstract

There are five basic human needs, education is one of them. At present, near about four lacs students are studying in Private universities and recent year's opportunity has been expanded in public sector but according to the demand these are not enough. Government of Bangladesh has taken various initiatives for expansion in secondary and higher secondary level education for this huge pressure creates at the tertiary level. For this, students have to peruse their higher education in private university. Against these backdrop, the study attempts to focus upon impact of higher education of private universities in Bangladesh. It was an empirical study based on Primary data and Secondary data. The study found that there is a positive impact of higher education of private university in Bangladesh and demand of higher education to private universities increasing day by day. The study suggests that university authority will follow proper admission procedure and they should have a quality control mechanism in place for admissions and subsequent processing of students.

Key words: Bangladesh, Higher Education, Impact and Private University.

Prelude

It is needless to mention that education and development are entwined. By the quality higher education, a country develops its productive human resources that serve as the engine of social and economic transformation. There are three level of education system in Bangladesh like; secondary level, higher secondary level and Higher study level. Government of Bangladesh has taken different initiatives for development of education in Bangladesh. For this, with the expansion of education facilities in secondary and higher secondary levels the demand for higher education has increased dramatically in recent years. There are two types' higher educational institutions in Bangladesh one is Public higher educational institution and other Private higher educational institutions though the Public higher educational institutions were not successfully meeting this pressure. To meet this demand, the government opened the opportunity for private sector participation in higher education. As a result, the number of private universities and students are increasing day by day. According to the UGC report in 2011, the numbers of Private Universities are 52 and numbers of students are 280822 and in 2015 numbers of Private Universities are 85 and numbers of students are 350130. Harbison (1973) has said 'human beings are the active agents who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, build social, economic, and political organizations, and carry forward national development.' For quality human resources higher education is important. To achieve sustainable development of Bangladesh need skilled, efficient and knowledgeable manpower. Only quality higher education can ensure expected level of human resource. Private Universities in Bangladesh first introduces American system in country's higher education. By the higher education private universities introduce four years first degree, grading system and some other innovation have come here through private universities. With some mismanagement and profit motive, they are helping to reshape the higher education to create competent and market oriented human resources. Not all universities are equivalent in standard, this also true for Public University. Some are doing excellent, some are average and some others' standard is questionable. But it is tough to draw a common line about the standard and performance of the institutions (Naser, 2012). After the enactment of the Private University Act in 1992, the private universities in Bangladesh recorded a phenomenal growth. Both public and private sector institutions are providing higher education. Against these backdrop, the study attempts to focus upon impact of higher education of private universities in Bangladesh. It was an empirical study based on Primary data and Secondary data. The study found that there is a positive impact of higher education of private university in Bangladesh and demand of higher education to private universities increasing day by day.



Literature Review

Literature review is the critical assessment of the previous study that helps to present research work. The propose study has to examine the impact of higher education of private university in Bangladesh. The academicians and researcher have written a very few articles or report on this matter. An attempts is made here to present a review of some article and book that may have some bearing the present research problem as well as its design.

A study by Jamal (2002) explored the role of private universities in human resource development. The aim of the study is to analyze the contribution to human resource development (HRD) in the country and the effectiveness of private universities in promoting quality higher education in Bangladesh. It was an empirical study, based on secondary data. He said that private universities provide a global flavor to their students and some of their facilities were of a very high standard in Bangladesh. He also argued that many universities have been established that lack essential academic infrastructures and these universities were likely to bring bad name to others who are providing high quality education in the country. Lastly, he said that though at a high cost, private universities in Bangladesh definitely have contribution in human resource development.

Lamanga (2002), the objective of this study was to measure quality education in private universities in Bangladesh. He highlighted three different aspects involved in measuring: the quality of teaching and research, responsiveness to the demands of the labour market, and equity.

Andale (2003) has analyses for effectively fostering higher education in Bangladesh, on the basis of seven issues namely, teaching quality, method, content, peer quality, direct facilities, indirect facilities and political climate.

Sabur (2004) has discussed private and public educations system in Bangladesh on the basis of quality assurance. He discussed several points of debate in quality education of two different Universities in Bangladesh but he did not given prescribing any solutions to problems regarding the quality of education associated with the two different Universities.

Aminuzzaman (2007) said that most the departments of universities do not have a long-term national vision, but that such a vision is crucial to quality education. Universities will be achieved through changing the method of teaching and learning as well as assessment methods, renewing the curriculum continually, updating and upgrading professional knowledge and skills and improving the broader educational, administrative and resource environments.

Mohammed Ehsan (2008) in his book Higher Education Governance in Bangladesh focused that qualified full time faculty members must be recruited in the private universities, at least 80percent faculty members should be full time. Ehsan expressed his concern, unless campus facilities are upgraded largely, we cannot expect vibrant academic atmosphere in the private universities. In his book he tried to explore the status of governance in Public and Private Universities in Bangladesh.

Ibrahim & Joarder (2009), An exploratory survey was conducted to analyse the students evaluation of private higher education sectors in Bangladesh with particular reference to the quality as well as the cost of education. The sample was taken on a random sample basis from about ten private universities in the Dhaka metropolitan area. The respondents were asked to assess the quality and the cost of education at private universities in Bangladesh. Respondents ranked the attributes according to a number of itemized seven points scale ratings bounded at each end by one of two bipolar adjectives. The study found that faculty credentials, the academic calendar, campus facilities, research facilities and cost of education are associated with quality education, and that the consumers feel most of the private universities in Bangladesh provide quality education at unreasonably higher costs.

Naser (2012), the objectives of this study were to assess the quality of teachers of Private Universities, to know the selection method of private universities; and to explore the infrastructure facilities those were provided by the private universities. The study based on primary and secondary data. Primary data have been collected by a questioner and secondary data collected from the different secondary sources. The study found that



Universities were different in shape, size, location, enrolment, course offered, funding authority, financial and managerial capacity and only a few universities were providing quality education and some were not quality concerned. Most of them were depending on part-time faculties. Some universities have not required number of experienced teachers but were being run by junior and inexperienced faculties. The study strongly recommended that University Grant Commission will take necessary action for quality higher education of private university in Bangladesh.

Hossain et al (2014), the objective of this study is to know how private universities were involved with providing quality education for the future leaders and to highlight the present scenario of the private universities in Bangladesh. The study based on secondary data. Data has been collected from the different sources such as articles, books and web side. The study found that number of students and facilities in private universities are increasing day by day and a pivotal role is being played by the private universities in expanding higher education in Bangladesh. The study recommended that every private university needs to the permanent campus for provide more facilities to the students and the universities should encourage poor but meritorious students to study at free of cost and University Grant Commission (UGC) will arrange fair admission test.

Islam & Salma (2016), it was an explanatory study based on primary data. The sample of this study was taken on a random basis from about six private universities in the Dhaka metropolitan area. The objective of this study was to bring into light the role played by the private universities in ensuring higher education in Bangladesh. The study found that contribution or role of private universities for the task of nation-building and reforming the education sector.

From the above discussion it is found that most of the private universities in Bangladesh have operated their educational activities on the basis of UGC curriculum and they have followed international standard for teaching activities but they have not available infrastructure facilities.

Significance of the Study

There are a large number of reports and research works have done on quality of higher education such as prospect and problems of higher education, quality education management, and the role of private university for higher education in Bangladesh, from the different perspective of private university higher education system in Bangladesh. However, there is no article or research work or a very limited amount of empirical work is available on this particular issue in the case of Bangladeshi private university higher education system. That is why, the present study focus upon on impact of higher education of private university in Bangladesh.

Objectives

At the backdrop the circumstances described above, specifically the objectives of this study are:

1. To know the present scenario and educational system of the private universities in Bangladesh.
2. To know the impact of higher education of private university in Bangladesh.

Methodology

Sample of the study

At present there are 105 private universities in Bangladesh and all private Universities approved by University Grant Commission (UGC). For effective analysis and objective interpretation the study has selected those universities, which main campus have situated at Dhaka City. From these universities the study has selected 200 students randomly.

Data Sources

The study based on Primary data and Secondary data. Secondary data has been collected from different secondary sources such as Articles, Relevant Books, Reports, Magazines, UGC reports, Annual reports of private university and website. Primary data has been collected through survey structured questionnaire was used in the survey. One common questionnaire was designed to elicit information on the contribution of private universities in



Bangladesh. The questionnaire included 10 questions on various aspects of impact higher education of private universities in Bangladesh. Questions were consisted of mainly open-ended and close-ended questions.

Private University in Bangladesh

Private Universities are those higher education institutions established privately by a group of People or an organization with the Government permission with an aim to spreading the opportunities of higher education among larger number of students under Private University Act, 1992 (Amended 1998) that was passed on 9th August in 1992 (Hossain et al, 2014).

“According to the Act ‘**Private University**’ means; any private university establishment under **this Act**; and following the provisions of this act and in fulfillment of the conditions provided by the government, any institution managed under the affiliation of any foreign university which is operating courses of honors or master Degree, Diploma or Certificate Courses or any institution which is offering Degree, Diploma or Certificates (Section-2, Subsection-(g), Private University Act, 1992, Amended 1998). Each private university must fulfill the minimum requirements i.e.; 5 acre land, Tk. 5 crore fixed deposit to any recognized Bank, qualified teaching staff, $\frac{3}{4}$ full time faculty members, modern lab and library which are set by the UGC in matters of academic standard and physical facilities” (UGC act, 1992).

Scenario of Higher Education in Bangladesh

In the developing countries, most of the higher education’s institutions are providing in the public sector. Government is built, provided financed and staffed of these universities. Higher education in the college and university level has been a rapid acceleration in the rate of growth of demand for educational services at all levels in Bangladesh, the demand for educational services started increasing since early 1980s. “As per Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, in 1992 the number of medical colleges, engineering colleges and universities were 17 (Govt. 13, NonGovt-4), all Govt. and 17 (Govt. 11. non govt. 6) respectively” (Islam & Salma, 2016). At that time a small percentage of students have got the opportunity for higher education. But quality educational personnel are needed for quality jobs. For full filling demand of higher education in Bangladesh, Government has established ‘National University’ and given permission to start private university.

At present, there are 150 universities of which 105 are private and 45 are public universities in Bangladesh. Government has taken varies initiatives for expansion of education facilities in secondary and higher secondary level. For this, the demand for higher education has increased dramatically in recent years. But, the public higher institutions were not successfully meeting this demand. To meet this demand, government opened the opportunity for private sector participation in higher education. As a result, the number of students has got opportunities for higher education in the private universities and the number of private university and number of students are increasing day by day. The private universities in Bangladesh recorded a phenomenal growth after the enactment of the Private University Act in 1992. Public and private sector higher educational institutions are providing higher education in Bangladesh. But, it makes a competitive environment in higher education and they have not maintained of quality of higher education in Bangladesh. On the other hand, this interaction and competition opens aspace to enhance the quality of higher education of private university in Bangladesh. As per economic condition of Bangladesh, numbers of higher educational institutions are sufficient. At present, government needs to ensure quality of higher education and environment of private university. Government of Bangladesh cannot ensure higher educated personnel for job but government can ensure quality of higher education both general and technical It is now an admitted fact that no Government can employ all educated people both in the development education system such as medical, engineering, agricultural, pharmaceutical, business studies.

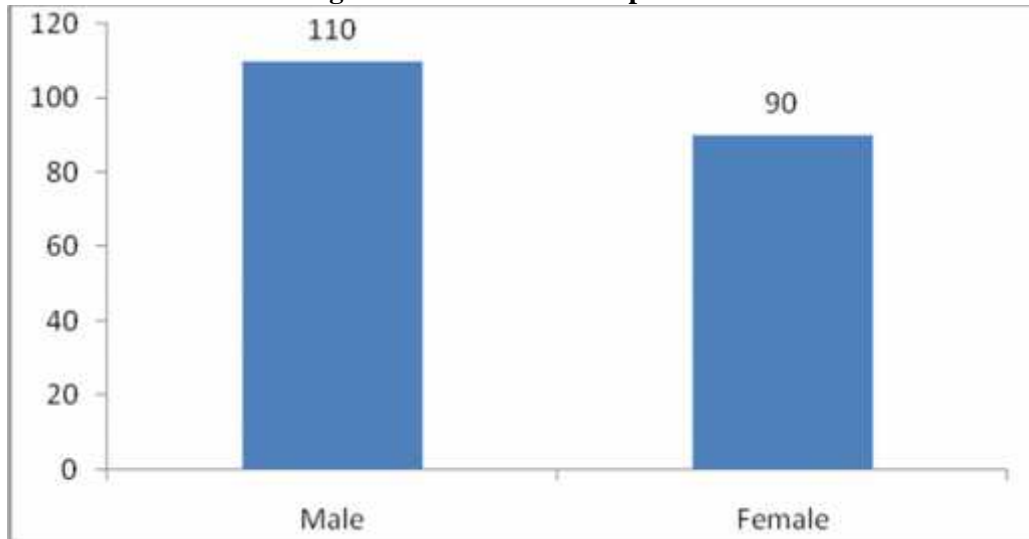
Impact of higher Education of Private University in Bangladesh.

The expansion of tertiary education in Bangladesh has largely been due to the rapid growth of the private university in the last 20 years. Private universities have played important role for development tertiary education. The study discussed below the impact of higher education of private university in Bangladesh.



Data Analysis and Findings.

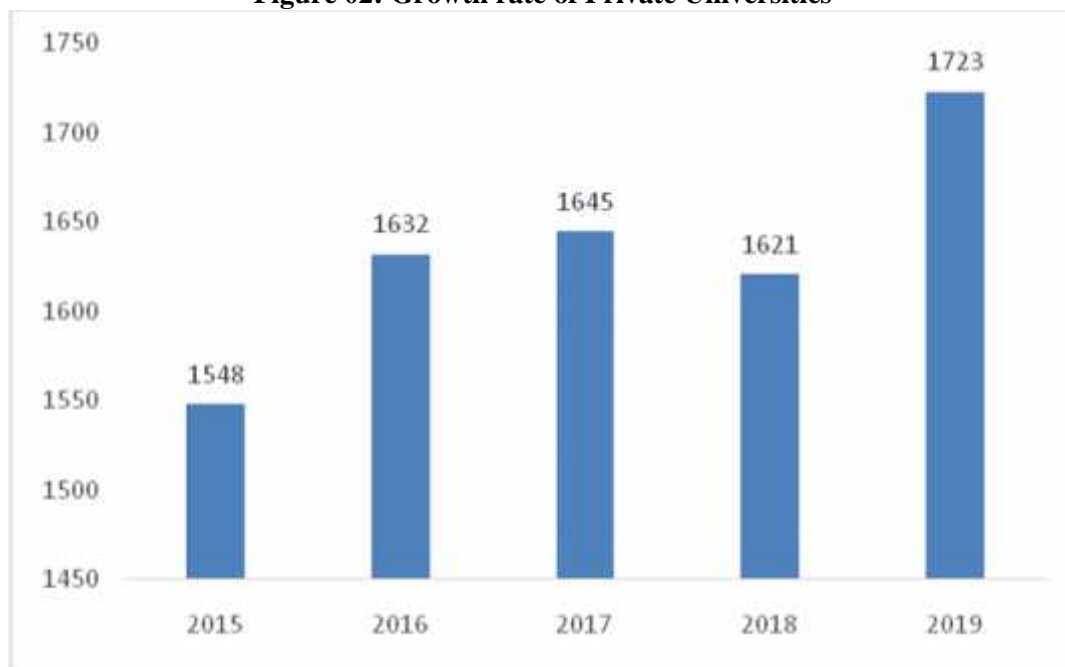
Figure 01: Number of Respondents



Source: Field survey.

The study has selected 200 students from the different private universities in Bangladesh. From which are 110 students male and 90 students female. Respondents have been selected from those universities which are situated main campus in Dhaka city.

Figure 02: Growth rate of Private Universities

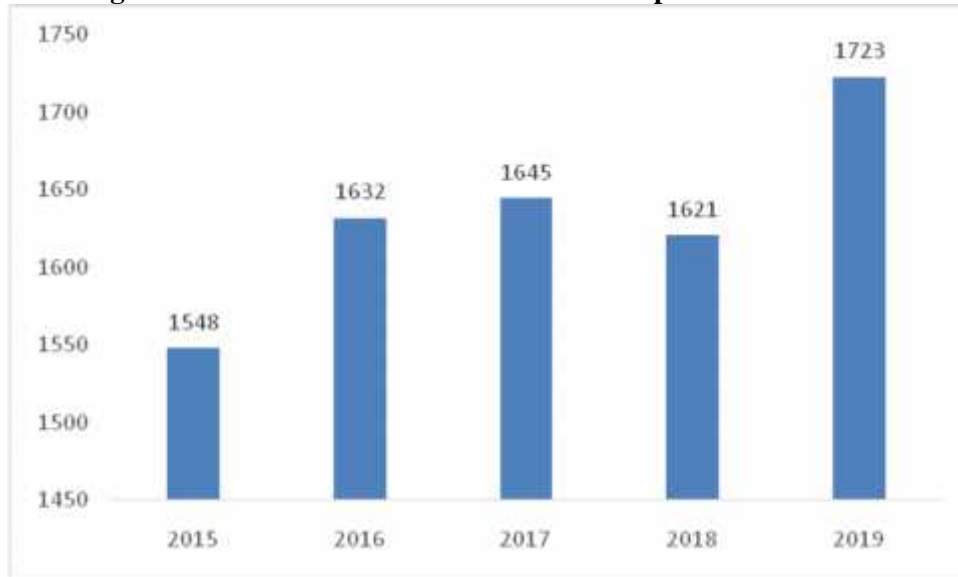


Source: UGCAnnual Report- 209.

In this study found that the growth rate of private universities in Bangladesh is positive. In 2015, the numbers of private universities are 85 and in 2019 number of private universities are 105. For increasing higher education Government has given permission to establish private university.



Figure 03: The Number of Students in all the private universities



Source: UGC Annual Report- 2019.

The study found that the growth rate of student enrollment in private universities is positive. Average growth rate of student enrollment from 2015 to 2019 is 10.05 percent. Students' enrollment increase yearly because private universities have established different part of Bangladesh and UGC has taken proper monitoring for ensuring higher education.

Figure 04: Foreign student enrolment in Private Universities



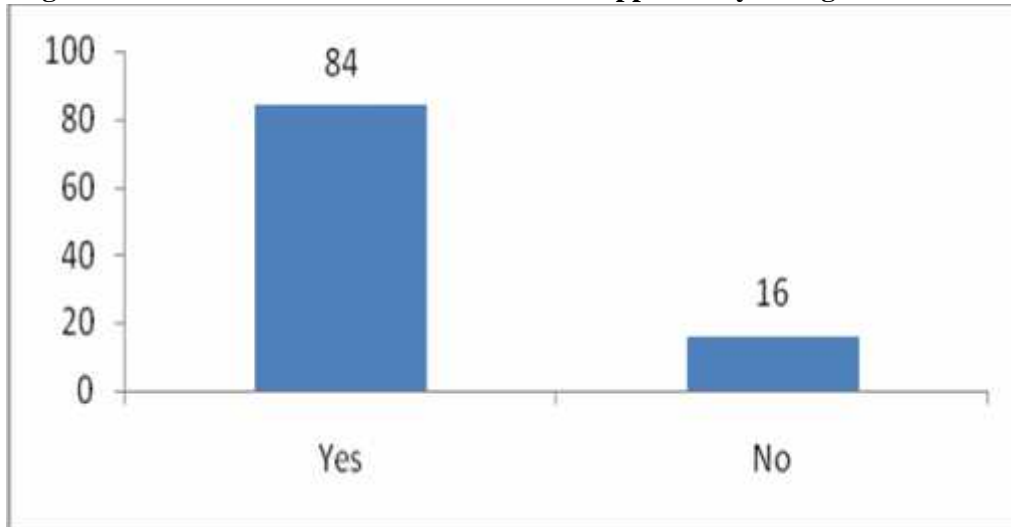
Source:UGC Annual Report-2019.

The study found that the foreign student enrollment rate of private universities is positive. Every year foreign students are increasing because the quality of education of private universities increases. Some private universities education system are world class standard and they follow international standard of education.

1. Do you think that Private Universities has increased opportunity of higher education?



Figure 05: Private Universities Has Increased Opportunity of Higher Education

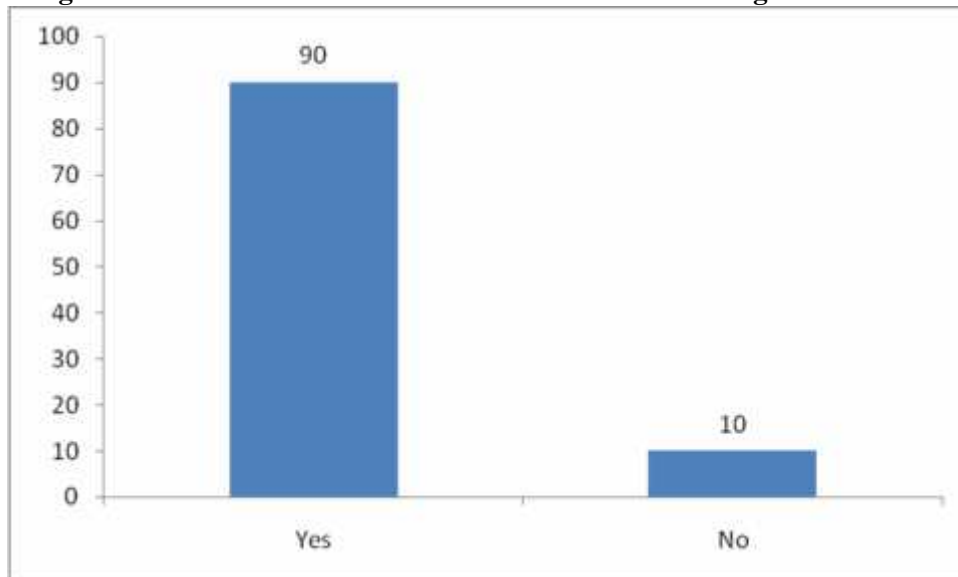


Source: Field survey

In this study, 84 % respondents said that private universities are increased higher education and 16 % respondents said that education system of private university is not increased higher education in Bangladesh. Government of Bangladesh has taken varies initiatives for expansion of Secondary and Higher secondary education for this private universities have played important role for increased higher education.

2. Do you think that Private Universities has increased areas of higher education?

Figure 06: Private Universities Has Increased Areas of Higher Education



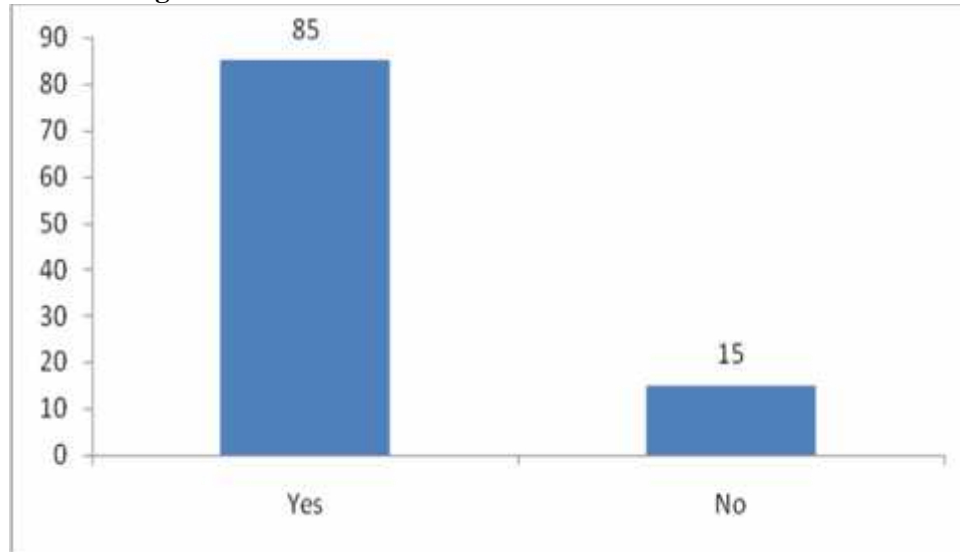
Source: Field survey

In this study, 90 % respondents said that private universities has increased areas of higher education and 10 % has said private universities not increased areas of higher education. According to population size government's higher education instantiations are not sufficient and areas of higher education are not sufficient but private universities covered much more areas of higher education.



3. Do you think that Private Universities has increased job's areas?

Figure 07: Private Universities Has Increased Job's Areas

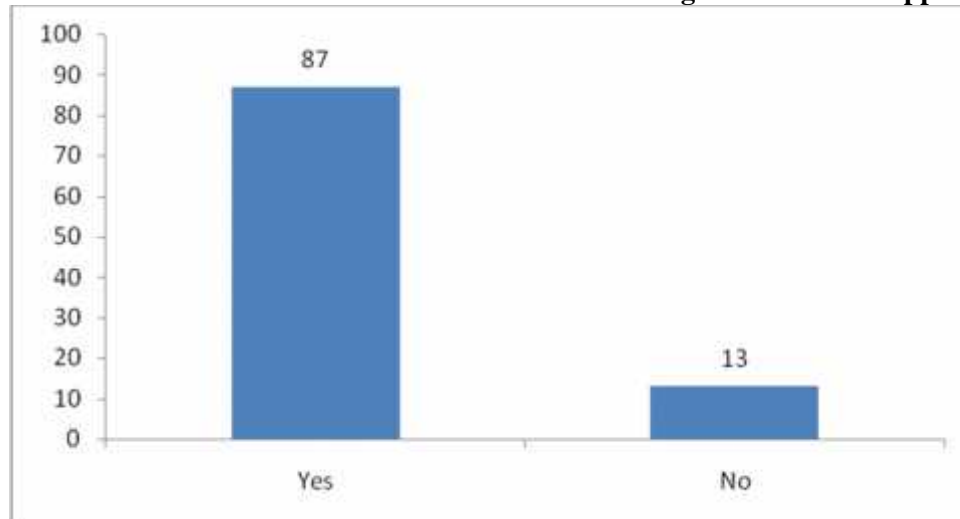


Source: Field survey

Most of the private universities has followed international curriculum for this, they have studied new and job oriented subjects. In this study, 85.00% respondents said that private universities has increased areas of job and 15.00% has said private universities not increased areas of jobs. Government's higher education instantiations has not taken sufficient initiatives for job after finishing higher education but private universities has taken sufficient initiatives for job after accomplishing higher education.

4. Do you think that Private Universities has increased Technical higher education opportunity?

Figure 08: Private Universities Has Increased Technical Higher Education Opportunity



Source: Field survey

At present there are 93 private universities in Bangladesh. Every university has established technical education department but Government technical higher education facilities are not available in Bangladesh. The study found that 87.00 % respondents said that private universities has increased technical higher education opportunity and 13.00 % has said private universities not increased technical higher education opportunity in Bangladesh.



5. Do you think that Private Universities has increased opportunity of Collaboration education with Foreign University for higher education?

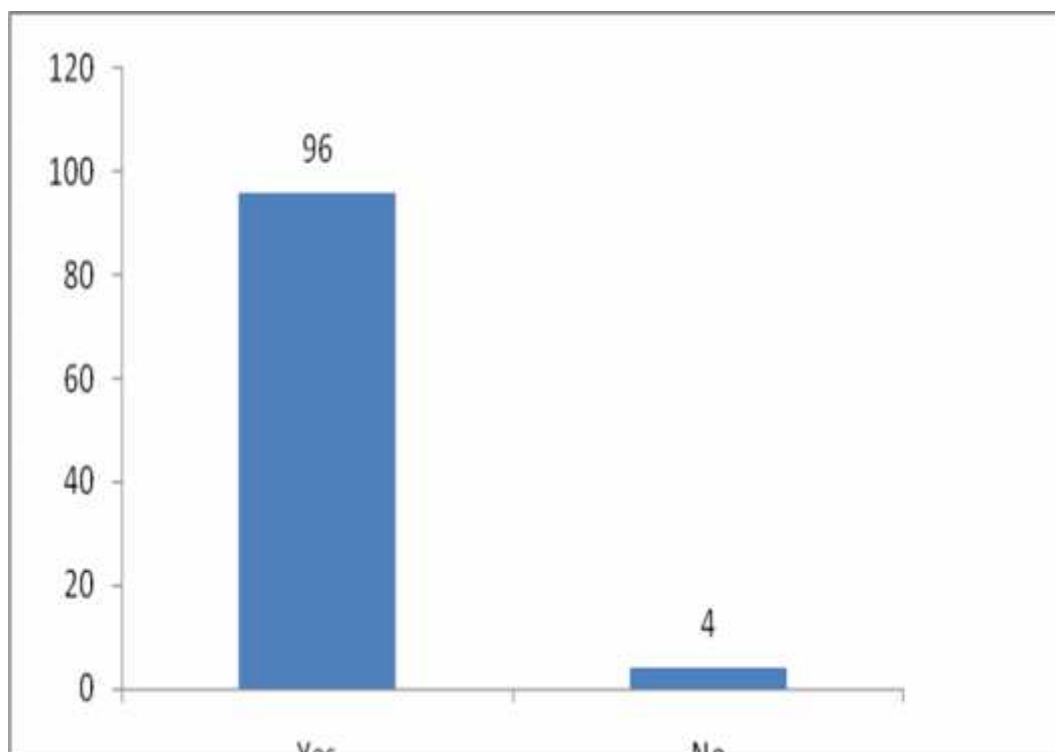
Most of the respondents said that every private university has given opportunities to its students for credit transfer from Bangladesh to other foreign countries. Most of the respondents have said that a certain percentage of private universities given this opportunity every year.

6. Do you think that M Phil, PhD course should be introduced in private University for ensuring higher education?

Most of the respondents said that only the best private universities have introduced M Phil, PhD courses but not all the private universities should have permission to introduce. Public Universities have taken much more time for complete M Phil and PhD degree but Private universities have taken less time than public university, for this students are interested to study of M Phil and PhD degree in private university.

7. Do you think that Private Universities has used modern technology in the class room?

Figure 09: Private Universities Has Used Modern Technology in the Class Room



Source: Field survey

In this study, 96 % respondent has said that for teaching in the class room, every private university used modern technology for their students and they used modern technology for field survey and practical class. Private universities student have more knowledge about modern technology than public university.

8. What are the positive sides for higher education in Bangladesh?

All the respondents said that private universities students have enjoyed some advantages such as, there is no session jam, students get modern technologies oriented classroom, communicate with teachers easily, they can collect study material easily and they get job opportunities after completing their higher education.

9. What sort of extra-curricular activities the students are engaged with in your universities?

Private universities in Bangladesh are not only providing education at minimal cost but also provided various opportunities such as opened-up, create new scope, avenue for cultural nourishment, development of the students and learners coming from varies strata of the society. In this study, all the respondents said that their universities



are engaged with various sorts of extra-curricular activities such as debate competition, cultural exchange program, publishing news letter, magazines, arranging annual picnic-program, and sports of different types etc.

10. Do you think that after completing the education the students can make them successful in job market?

There are various options for competitive job market in Bangladesh; higher education is one of them and to keep pace with modern world higher education is necessary. After completing the higher education, students can easily get and secure government job, in multinational companies and other non government jobs as well.

Recommendations

Last 20 years, the private universities in Bangladesh have rapid growth. Now this time, there are areas which need immediate attention by the providers and policymakers to improve the quality of education and to take necessary actions for the next phase of development in Bangladesh. The study has suggested some recommendations below:

1. To monitor all private universities, Government will formation of an accreditation council composed of representatives of universities and faculties, regulatory bodies and other stakeholders. Recently, UGC has been talk of forming such a council.
2. Educational cost of private universities is higher than public universities. In this situation, private universities should not charge exorbitant fees to the students for the purpose of future university development and growth.
3. Demand of private universities for higher education is increasing day by day, for this, university authority follow admission procedure and they should have a quality control mechanism in place for admissions and subsequent processing of students.
4. Every private university will ensure job placement after completing higher education. Each university should focus attention on this vital point.
5. The study suggests that all private universities should follow or maintain an equal salary system and tuition fee because it could encourage teachers and students. Through a uniform salary structure universities will get more experienced teachers.

Conclusion

Bangladesh emerged an independent country in 1971 and at present near about 70 percent people are educated. Without higher educated manpower a country cannot develop because education is the backbone of the nation. For increase of higher education government of Bangladesh has taken varies program. Establishment public university one of them but according to population and financial capacity government cannot fulfill demand of public university. For this, in 1992 government of Bangladesh has given permission for established private university for fulfilled demand of higher education. At present number or private universities 105. For higher education in Bangladesh is getting more competitive with the remarkable increase in the number of private higher academic institutions in the country. The ineluctable forces of globalization in this new millennium make this growth path more complex and challenging. Despite the relentless and continuous effort of private higher educational institutions at tertiary level but quality has not yet achieved at the expected level. The cost of private education is main problem, as it is unaffordable in Bangladesh economic condition. For this, financially poor and mid level student cannot gets opportunity for higher education in private university. At that time more effort needs to be made if costs are to be lowered. However, government of Bangladesh and UGC has taken different steps for this the system is proceeding gradually towards greater improvement. Nevertheless, all the problems considered here should be addressed more rigorously to ensure the quality of higher education in Bangladesh at private university reaches the desired level. This study has indentified the impact of higher education in private university. The study concludes that the expansion of higher education in Bangladesh private universities played important role but the tuition fees are imbalance and private universities need to increase amount of financial support and scholarships.



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