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# Impact of Globalization on Education Policy: Bangladesh Perspective

Shah Shamim Ahmed\*  
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## Introduction

Globalization is a process, which affects many areas of human life and education is one of them (Chinnammai, 2005). Education is a preliminary medium of globalization and an incubator of its agent (Marginson, 1999). Globalization encompasses positive and negative aspects such as, e-learning, e-book, life long education, environmental education, open learning, distance learning, English medium educational institution, educational pedagogy and brain drain (Al' Abir, 2011). All those positive and negative issues are evident in the education system of Bangladesh as an impact of globalization. Globalization is also being used as context and condition of education system all over the world, (Okoli, 2012).

The impact of globalization on education is all the more evident by the Information Communication Technology (ICT). This concept is gradual application of helping to change the learning systems all around the world. ICT has changed the education system as new ideas, values and knowledge have developed and due to increased role of teacher and students, it has shifted the society from industrialization to ICT based one (Chinnammai, 2005). Globalization also influenced to change and develop education policy which forms the nucleus of the overall education system. According to Al' Abir (2011), Education policy is much affected by the experience of globalization. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Education policies (2000 & 2010) have been formulated in Bangladesh by the Ministry of Education (MoE). These policies have been influenced to great extent by the effects of globalization, as reflected in the education policies of development countries. Chinnammai (2005)

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proved that globalization of education is the way of shifting of knowledge and ideas from western countries into the developing countries.

Moreover, globalization is a buzzword of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Lam, 2010) the process of which started right from the beginning of world civilization. Day by day the word 'globalization' has been referenced increasingly in the media, academic literature and everyday talk (Priestly, 2002). It is dramatically making our globe smaller, our spectrum wider and our various network larger (Isozaki, 2005). According to Giddens (1990), 'Globalization refers to the intensification of the world wide social relations which link distance localities in such a way that local happening are shaped by events occurring many away and vice versa'. In this academic definition he argued that globalization has turned the world into be a global village. Now there has been a strong debate about globalization and its nature. A school of thought believes that globalization is a harmful phenomenon which has had negative impact on the world. They believed that globalization has brought an undesirable consequence to the society, affecting their pace. A good number of Muslim people are apprehending that due to the impact of globalization and the presence of dominant western culture their cultural heritage is losing its identity and characteristics (Al' Abir, 2011). Simultaneously, another school believes that globalization is a fruitful phenomenon which has changed the world in positive ways. It is also connecting to the movement of the world's people, images, technologies, finance (trade, money and capital) and ideas (Appaduria, 1996). Globalization as a process has transformed the world into a small village through time and space compression with new technologies and its concomitant linkage to the education policy. This process is marked by speedy, free movement of people, services, capitals, goods, ideas and knowledge across borders.

Furthermore, globalization means that education opportunities are wider and borderless (Van Dame, 2011). There is no doubt that education is ranked among the major concern of developing countries as it is playing the tremendous role in preparing children for unborn future. In 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is proved that education has become a primary medium of globalization (Marginson, 1999). Policy making in education has been much influenced by the phenomenon of globalization (Al' Abir, 2011). At present, education policy is formulated and implemented in a global

context. The impact of globalization on education is becoming one of the major sector and retraining of education policy and organizing educational development are being demanded (Lam, 2010). National education system has been changed quite noticeably by the process of globalization and that most changes occurring recently in education can be attributed to the effect of globalization (Pristly, 2002). From these discourse it is seen that our education policy has been affected by globalization. Internationally no education system can run and stay without being affected by any aspect of globalization (Isozaki, 2005). Green (1999) stated that developed countries are less affected by the globalization than developing countries. Therefore, as a developing country the education policy of Bangladesh is influenced by globalization and its multi-faceted nature.

It is known to all that international governmental and non-governmental organizations have been influencing the education system of developing countries (Robertson, Novelli, Dale, Tikly & Nodebela, 2007) as well as education policy. As a developing country, Bangladesh has been affected by various international governmental and non-governmental organizations such as United Nations (UN), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nation Children Fund (UNICEF), World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Trade Organization (WTO), Organization for Economic Co-operation development (OECD), Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) and South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) etc. As another offshoot of globalization, some national and international conferences and dialogues have been influencing developing countries Education Policies in various aspects (Al' Abir, 2011). Through these effects our (Bangladesh) socio-economic, cultural and educational sector is being developing gradually (Maleque, Begum, Islam & Riad, 2009).

In order to explore the effects of international organizations, declarations, conventions and conferences on education, within the context of global perspective Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, International Commission on education in 1971-1972, Convention of the Elimination of all form of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1979, Convention on the Right of the Child in 1989, World Declaration of Education for All in 1990, The Delhi Declaration in 1993, International Commission on education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century in 1993-

1996, The Dakar Framework of Action (DFA) in 2000 and the Millennium Declaration in 2000 have been considered. These declarations, commissions, conventions and conferences have promoted education policy. As a result of globalization in the 21<sup>st</sup> century such as, to promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, to ensure the same condition for career and vocational guidance for access to studies in rural as well as urban areas and also ensure all types of vocational training in addition to pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher technical education. In addition, the International Commission on education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century is influencing six major themes: education and development, education and science, education and citizenship, education and culture, education and social cohesion also education and work. The Millennium Declaration 2000 is also promoting education policy as an effect of globalization. In this declaration universal primary education has been a declared objective to be attained by the effect of globalization.

This paper attempts to measure the impact of globalization on education policy of Bangladesh in twenty first century. The impact of globalization on education policy of Bangladesh has identified some key themes, such as aims and objectives of education, structure of education system, new subjects and issues of education, vocational and technical education, higher education and religious (known as madrasa) education on the basis of national education policy in 2000 and 2010.

### **Methodology**

In order to explore the main objective of this study, this paper focuses on qualitative method. The qualitative data have been collected from two education policies those are formulated in 2000 and 2010 by the Ministry of Education, the People's Republic of Bangladesh. The education policies are selected purposively as a study sample.

To achieve the main objective of this study and gauge the effect of globalization on education policy document analyses are used as a data collection method. The collected data have been analysed based on qualitative analysis methods. Therefore, at first the policies are reviewed on the basis of nature of globalization, and then the major themes from data are identified. Furthermore, the major themes have incorporated some specific themes based on research objective. The researchers

ensured the accuracy of data in every section and completed the study without being biased.

### **Overview of Educational arena in Bangladesh**

The government of Bangladesh formulated four Education Commissions and two Education Policies in last 41 years. These two Education Policies were framed in 21<sup>st</sup> century by the Ministry of Education (MoE) for creating skilled manpower of global village. The first National Education Policy of Bangladesh has been formed headed by Professor Shamsul Haq along with 53 associates (member of education policy formulation committee) in 2000. Another National Education Policy has been formed by National Professor Kabir Chowdhury along with 17 associates in 2010. These two policies are affected by the impact of globalization and its nature in various aspects. Through thematic analyses it has been found that effect of globalization on education policy has been gradually improving. Al' Abir, (2011) also support this statement. He stated that there are so many global conversations encouraged by globalization that influenced our local and national education practices and policies such as knowledge, life long learning, English as an international language, national curriculum and other than construction of education policy worldwide.

Some specific themes like aims and objectives of education, structure of education, new subject and issues in Education, technical and vocational education, higher education and madrasa education (religious education) have been discussed and analyzed in the sections to follow.

### **Aims and objectives of Education**

The aims and objectives of education is identified as the prime concern of formulation of an education policy in a country. The Education Policy of Bangladesh in 21<sup>st</sup> century, the aims and objectives of education has been affected by globalization. In National Education Policy of 2000, a total of 15 aims and objectives are included. One of them (sub section: 15) is fully related to globalization and its impact. It is emphasized to ensure participation with continuous globalization process in different areas that is to create manpower in global village. This policy also includes three aims and objectives (sub section: 4, 6 & 7) and these are partially influenced by the impact of globalization (National Education Policy, 2000). On the other hand, the National Education Policy of 2010

is highly affected by the nature of globalization and its different aspects. Chowdury and his associates have identified 30 aims and objectives of education in this policy. One of them (sub section: 11) is affected directly and others six aims and objectives (sub section: 2, 6, 7, 12, 18 & 21) are influenced positively. In sub section: 11, it is stated that, “to ensure skills of high standard at different areas and levels of education so that learners can successfully complete at the global context” (National Education Policy 2010).

Both the education policies have been focused on to establish scientific and social value at personal and national level, create scientific mind set of all students, develop global fraternity, attach substantial importance to information and communication technology (ICT), build students as skilled human resources to the challenges of world threatened and to extend the use of ICT instrumental and educational process at all levels.

Aims and objectives of education are illustrated by the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries Education Policies like; education will help us to grow up as a nation, to obtain the qualities and skills that will strengthen Bangladesh to work with equal capacity and pace of international community. All these elements are added in education policy of Bangladesh as the consequences of globalization and its effect on education.

### **Structure of Education**

The impact of globalization is realized on structure of education in Bangladesh. National Education Policy 2000 clearly mentions the duration of primary education will be eight years (National Education Policy, 2000, p. 3). It also has given importance on pre-primary education for 5+ age's children and also importance for secondary education pupils that have eight to twelve grades. In the case of structure of education the National Education Policy 2010 is similar to the National Education Policy 2000. The present structure will also be applied to 2018 as directed by National Education Policy 2010. All these aspects are adapted in the education policy of Bangladesh from western countries as impact of globalization.

### **New subject and issues in Education**

As a result of globalization, National Education Policy 2010 has included some new subject and issues in our education system and these are the

social environment, natural environment with emphasis on climate change, social sciences and information technology. The National Education Policy 2000 has stressed that English should be learnt at grade one and two and it also should be included as a compulsory subject in grade three to all primary and secondary level. This initiative incorporated our education system to inspire the globalization process. In that case, the government has given emphasis to create new subjects like Social Science and Business Studies subjects (Economics, Accounting, Management etc.), Vocational education, Computer and Science education.

Some new issues are included in our National Education Policy like Primary School Certificate (PSC) examination at the end of grade five and Junior School Certificate (JSC) examination at the end of class eight. All those issues are introduced in the education policy as an impact of globalization on education in the twenty first century.

### **Technical and Vocational Education**

The technical and vocational education has been affected gradually in the developing countries by globalization. As a result, in Bangladesh, vocational and technical education has been given more importance in 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. It also expressed the two education policies as a particular chapter entitled '*Technical and Vocational Education*'. Both education policies have given importance to skilled manpower as a principal concomitant of national development. Methods and tactics of development have changed by the new invention and innovation of science and technology internationally. Each and every day, developing countries have been facing unequal and aggressive competition in the world of business, transport, marketing of production, export of skilled manpower and communication in the international market.

For a developing country like Bangladesh, opportunities of economic development have been created in this state of unequal competition and value of physical labor has been enhanced. Therefore, maximum emphasis has been given to turn our students into competent and skill manpower through technical and vocational education with highlighting on science and technology and particularly on Information Technology (National Education Policy 2010).



## **Higher Education**

Globalization focuses on higher education in each area across the world. In order to make progress of higher education, globalization has emerged as a great media which has both positive and negative aspects. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the effect of globalization on higher education is clear in education policy of Bangladesh. In National Education Policy of 2000, four years of Bachelor Honours degree has been introduced instead of three years Bachelor degree to uplift the status of education in tune with the developed countries. Higher education also has laid stress on English as International language by introducing English with 100 marks as a compulsory for all. To enhance investment on higher education the public private partnership (PPP) has been given substance. National Education policy 2010 is also affected by globalization and its' various impacts. This policy presents that the area of knowledge is gradually improving. A counter action takes place leading to increasing interdependency of different branches of knowledge. As a result science and technology, literature, art, economic and other subject are becoming interdependency. This has been aided by invention of new technologies.

Through these policies higher education of Bangladesh has been modernized clearly and globalization is being considered progressively in different disciplines.

## **Madrassa Education (Religious Education)**

Religious education has been given institutional form by madrasa education in Bangladesh. But gradually this education system has also been affected by globalization although they were not focused in the past several decades. For the consequences of globalization in 21<sup>st</sup> century the subjects of general education are included in madrasa education system. In that case, the National Education Policy 2010 has emphasized on teaching learning process and subject matters of this stream of education. This policy has identified that they can contribute in the development of the country by ensuring learning English and Sciences in the general stream and English medium schools. Government has also given substantial subject matters of madrasa education as a result of globalization. They have already included English, Social environment, Natural environment, Social Sciences and Information Technology as compulsory subject in this particular stream of education.

## Evaluation

Al' Abir (2011) mentioned that globalization has seriously affected the education policy of Oman and the developing countries are seriously affected by the nature of globalization due to their economic, social and cultural problems. This study determined a similar result in Bangladesh. The education policy of Bangladesh is moderately dominated by the effect of globalization. Razak (2011) explain how globalization affects the education system all around the world. He stated that explosion of knowledge and information in the era of information technology has somehow helped the globalization of education. The introduction of computers and internet and other technology-mediated learning through the use of VCD, CD-ROM, Email, E-Chat, database, webpage, LMS, digital library, etc. have helped in the dissemination of information and knowledge to millions around the world.

Moreover, Lam (2010) stated that under the impact of globalization, the education commission requires a visionary response in order to answer the proposed curriculum changes, with their greater emphasis on practical skills, vocational skills and generic skills in Hong Kong. Similarly, in Bangladesh, the education policy makers took some initiatives to update our education system including curriculum. For example, some new subjects and issues in our education system such as social environment, natural environment with emphasis on climate change, social sciences and information technology are included in National Education Policy 2010.

Isozaki (2005) mentioned that as the impact of globalization the Japan government introduce English lessons into elementary schools, establishment of secondary education schools, an increase of class hours, implementation of the renewal system of teaching certificate, and shock therapies such as appointment of universities as Center of Excellence and turning national universities into independent administrative corporations. This study has found similar result in Bangladesh. For example, the National Education Policy 2000 has illustrated that "English should be learnt at grade one and two and it also should be included as a compulsory subject in grade three to all primary and secondary level".

Impact of globalization on education has been gradually developing and it is reforming the education system on a long-term basis. Carnoy (1999)

identified three broad types of reforms driven, respectively, by competition, finance, and equity concerns, which are not mutually exclusive. First of all, competition-driven reforms “aim primarily to improve economic productivity by improving the ‘quality of labour’ and of educational institutions. Such reforms include decentralization, the introduction of achievement standards, the improved management of educational resources, improved teacher recruitment and training and changes in the curriculum and pedagogy aimed at improved educational quality and relevance. In Bangladesh, the same scenarios in our education system and education policy have been found. The last two education policies have emphasized technical and vocational education for quality labor, schooling life rearranged with the standard of other countries, madrasah education reformed on the basis of general education to ensure quality education.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has reviewed the literature on globalization and education policy, with a focus in the 21<sup>st</sup> century’s education policy of Bangladesh. Through those thematic analyses, it has been found that in this present era of globalization new concepts and issues of education have been generating in the National Education Policy which are in turn impact of globalization. In general, the paper has tried to determine the aims and objectives of education which are gradually changing by the impact of globalization and its different aspects. Some new subjects and issues are incorporated in the primary and secondary education system. In the primary education system, these subjects are suggested as compulsory for new generations like, science and technology, climate change and environmental education. On the other hand, in the secondary education science and technology and technical education have most priority subject as the effects of globalization. The education structure of Bangladesh (Primary schooling shifts from 5 years to 8 years), higher education system (extended from 3 years Honours to 4 years) and madrasah education (new subjects & teaching learning process) are also enhanced by the influence of globalization. In the ultimate analysis the education policy of Bangladesh has witnessed profound changes and to a great extent influenced by the ongoing phenomena of globalization.

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