

BANGLADESH, a small, over-populated country with vast unskilled manpower and a low literacy rate, is now about to go in its development way under Third-Five Year Plan (1985 to 1990). In the plan a great importance has been given to primary education and development of manpower. It is fact that after imparting primary education a large portion of total students are isolated from next higher education due to many reasons. But the present education system is not the less responsible for its problems. This education system had been implemented by the British to produce the administrative clerks for their ruling assistance in India and till now we have been continuing it to expose our national problems. A detailed study of the situation can be placed statistically for future socio-economic and educational planning for Bangladesh.

The position of Bangladesh in adult literacy can be measured by comparing it with the literacy rate of the same age group of some South Asian countries. Bangladesh was the second lowest country with 25.8 per cent literacy rate of population in 1974. Nepal was the lowest with 12.5 per cent in 1971. Philippines was the highest with 83.4 per cent in 1970 and Thailand was the second highest with 78.6 per cent in 1970. Indonesia occupied third position in 1971 by 1.6 per cent more than Malaysia. Malaysia was 58 per cent in 1970. The literacy rate in Bangladesh increased to 29.2 per cent in 1981.

The literate persons of all ages in Bangladesh increased gradually as 8955501, 14420368 and 17186442 in 1961, 1974 and 1981 respectively. The rates were 17 per cent in 1961, 20.2 per cent in 1974 and 29.7 per cent in 1981. Generally, the age below 5 years is not considered due to inability of mental growth for literacy. In that case, the literacy rates of population in Bangladesh were 21.5 per cent in 1961, 24.3 per cent in 1974 and 23.8 per cent in 1981. This rate has been defined as the ratio of the literate persons of aged 5 years and above to the population.

The rate of literacy in 1981 was a bit lower than 1974 and the same thing happened to the rural and urban areas. The rates of urban were 45.7 per cent in 1961, 44 per cent in 1974 and 40.7 per cent in 1981 which were also happened to the rural areas. In the rural the rates were 20.2 per cent, 22.3 per cent 20.6 percent in 1961, 1974 and 1981 respectively. The number of literate persons of above mentioned age group increased no doubt, but the decrease of rate of literacy in 1981 in both urban and rural areas compared to 1974 was due to change in definition in 1981 which was more

as, 417 thousand persons completed only secondary and higher secondary level of education i.e. 3.4 per cent and 293 thousand persons completed only graduation and above i.e. 2.4 percent of the total.

Difference between the attainment of primary level and secondary and higher secondary and above level of education was very high. Similar picture was obtained from the 1981 census. In 1981 total literate persons were 23671 thousand. Among them 2280 thousand completed degree level of education. In terms of percentage persons completing primary

countries are mostly the illiterates but skilled in technical and vocational sides. Most of them acquired technical and practical knowledge by undertaking training in commercial institutions by their own enterprises. According to the statistics given in statistical year Book-1983-84 of BBS, only 5.5 per cent and 0.2 per cent of total exported manpower were Technicians, engineers, doctors, teachers and professionals in 1982 and 1983 respectively.

In our country, there is much need of skilled manpower everywhere, but there is dearth of this type of manpower. Hence, we have to import experts from foreign countries for processing of economic development. Except this, there are greater problems of unemployment due to the present education system. Generally having passed the primary level of education, the people do not achieve the broader outlook of consciousness and mental growth and they can hardly contribute enough to the nation. So, to solve the problems and to develop the manpower in future, we should have to rearrange the education system in two ways: (1) FIRST, compulsory, and free-education at least upto junior level (VI-VIII) should be introduced for all in general and SECONDLY; along with the system, the opportunity of vocational and technical education should be introduced for the students those who are not meritorious or have got no capabilities for higher education and are compelled to seek jobs. On the contrary, much more avenues and privileges for higher education should be made for the meritorious students. Therefore, the government should have to implement the system of technical and vocational education side by side the general education after completion of compulsory education in school at the junior level. In view to this a comprehensive survey in various sectors may be made for the measurement of needs of the country and effective employment policy may be taken for the same purpose. Then the manpower of our country will not be the burden for the nation.

Education And Manpower uplift

Dilip Kumar Bhadra

stricter than the previous censuses. It is noticed in general that the literacy rates of rural areas were almost half of the urban during the various periods whereas, the rural population at the age of 5 years and above to the total population of the same age group was 84.3 per cent and urban population was 15.7 per cent in 1981. On the other hand, the population in rural was 90.9 per cent and in urban was 9.1 per cent in 1974. This shows that the literate persons of rural area at the age of 5 years and above maintained a very low per cent compared to the total of the same age group. That is, a greater portion of rural population had been deprived of education more than that of urban population.

The number and percentage distribution of persons completing different educational levels are placed. The literacy rate in Bangladesh at the age group of 5 years and above was 23.8 per cent in 1981 and indeed, a greater portion of literate persons completed only primary level of education. In 1974, the total literate persons were 12269 thousand of whom 7570 thousand completed primary level of education which constitute 61.7 per cent of the total persons completing different levels of education where-

level was 64.5 percent, secondary and higher secondary level was 9.6 per cent and graduation and above level was 2.2 per cent of total. In 1974, 32.5 percent attained junior level (VI-IX) of education, which was almost half of the primary level and in 1981 the rate was 23.7 per cent which below the half.

Now let us see the situation of expenditure incurred on education in our country. The expenditure on education as per cent of BDP or per capita expenditure clearly shows that there was no significant improvement in the educational sector of the nation. Because, total expenditure as % of GDP was 1.56 in 1977-78 which was almost the same in 1981-82 as 1.58. In constant price per capita expenditure was 11.39 per cent in 1977-78 and 12.98 per cent in 1981-82.

Although in the Third Five-Year Plan there is given a great emphasis on the primary education to improve the manpower and literacy situation, we should have to think deeply over the matter that only the importance on primary education will not give the solution of creating over vast manpower strength active in the economy. The manpower which Bangladesh exported to the Middle-East