

Choudhury Touhida Anwer

**Regional Inequality in the
Distribution Pattern and
Accessibility of Educational
Institutions in Sylhet Division,
Bangladesh**



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ABSTRACT

Education is one of the most important constituents of human resource development. In this thesis an attempt has been made to find out the regional inequality in distribution pattern and accessibility of educational institution in Sylhet Division, Bangladesh. Spatial dispersion with regard to city center / district headquarter has been calculated for finding out the distributional pattern. Accessibility of the educational institutions has been computed with the help of the number of educational institutions, population density and total area of the Sylhet division where relationship between density of population and educational institutions have taken in consideration. Correlation between the density of populations and the density of educational institutions is established by analyzing standard statistical techniques as well as spatial analysis. Literacy rate of the study area is 40.33 percent which is below the national average (46.26 percent). The highest literacy rate found in Sylhet district (45.59 percent) and lowest in Sunamgonj district (34.4 percent). Regional inequality of the study area shows different types of distributional pattern for schools (primary and secondary/high), colleges and madrasahs in the four district of the study area. It reveals that educational institutions are highest in Sylhet district and lower in Moulvibazar district. In all the district of the study area primary schools are more in number and are distributed by covering a wider area. Colleges are concentrated at the central point of the districts and upazilas and are gradually dispersed towards the periphery. Maximum madrasahs is located in the peripheral zone of the districts rather than the central location. This is reverse to the situation of colleges. Because in most of the cases absence of primary and secondary schools influence in the formation of madrasahs. Religious belief is also responsible for this type of distribution. In terms of accessibility Sylhet district is more accessible and Sunamgonj district is less accessible. The findings of this study also depicts that majority of the educational institutions are concentrated in the central location or head quarter of districts and upazilas, which indicates the degree of pull of the districts. The degree of pull of gravity increases with the increase of level of education of the institutions. Primary schools are more accessible in terms of Distance than the number of population.

Keywords: Educational institution, accessibility, regional inequality, spatial dispersion.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Education is treated as an important issue in every country. Total development of a nation largely relies upon the characteristics, structure and standard of education (Malek, 2009). Education in the technical sense is the process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills and values from one generation to another (Dewey, 1944). According to Hossain Education is the vital key of the development of a country (Sultana, 2005). Education is the single most critical element in combating poverty, empowering women, protecting children from hazardous and exploitive labor, sexual exploitation and promoting human right and democracy (Malek, 2009). Hullak has identified education as one of the five 'Energizer' of human resource development: education, health, nutrition, the environment, political and economical freedom.

Without education total development of any nation is impossible. If we look around to the world scenario we may see that the more a nation is educated the more they are developed. Bangladesh is a small country and its area is about 147570 sq km. But the country is carrying a large number of populations. Among them large portion is not facilitated with educational facilities.

Educational condition is not same in all over the country. According to 4th census, total population of Bangladesh is 123.15 million and literacy rate is 46.26% (B.B.S, 2001) which indicates a large part of the total population is lag behind of educational opportunities. As education is the key to successes, each and every person should be educated in proper way. But, in Bangladesh for its poverty all the people are not receiving the educational facilities equally. According to CIA Fact book of Bangladesh average literacy rate of Bangladesh at now is 42.3 % (Bangladesh government claims it to be 62%) and in Sylhet division it is about 28 % which is the lowest among the all divisions of the country. A few causes of such poor trend of literacy rate were mentioned by experts such as foreign remittance, tendency among the young to leave the country, religious backwardness (Sylhet was once a land of religious and spiritual tolerance and openness), shortage of teachers, etc. Therefore, it needs to evaluate the actual causes of such apathy and negligence in the education in this division.