

Glimpse at education system

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I am a student. I received my education from primary to bachelor level in Bangladesh. After experiencing the present educational system in Bangladesh, I think the time has come for all of us, the intellectuals in particular, to think about the whole system.

It is a pity that a large number of our children do not have an opportunity to get any formal education. Students in our country are mainly from the middle class and the elite or, in other words, the privileged class. It seems that education is limited to a certain class of people.

At the primary level there are various categories of schools. All schools are not equal. Why?

1. Education is not free. (Of course there are some so-called free primary schools).

2. Facilities vary from school to school.

3. Quality of teaching is not uniform.

Once teaching was known as noble profession with the changes of time and the value sense it has lost much of its previous glory. Poverty is indeed a factor here. This profession does not provide adequate financial support now-a-days. So, we find teachers very much preoccupied with so many other things that they are not in a position to give their full energy and devotion to their occupation which has created quite an unhealthy situation in the education sector.

Another irony is that Bangladesh being a poor country we are not advancing technologically and even commercially. The job opportunities

are limited to certain branches of knowledge. It is unfortunate that a student of humanities group or social science seldom gets an opportunity to take to a profession which he/she will feel at ease with or will be able to use whatever he/she studied. Another unfortunate thing is that we have a tendency to categorize students taking SCIENCE as grade A, students taking COMMERCE as grade B and students of HUMANITIES group as grade C. Of course this is a very secular way of categorizing students.

Though a school is basi-

cally meant for education, I find it works like an industry where a child is first a primary product who in the long run will come out as a finished product. The quality is controlled through examinations at the end of every term. Examinations, even class tests, is a phobia for the students mostly because they are not taught to understand the matter of a subject. Rather they are taught to answer some set questions. Students are treated as objects who are meant to grasp all, that is being taught and give a feed back during the exams not as they understood but as the tea-

cher teaching them understands. Here we often forget that all students do not have the ability and interest to learn and understand all the subjects that are being taught.

It is a pity that children in our country do not have enough time to play or recreate. Nowadays, one serious crisis is the Kindergarten virus in the urban areas. The kindergartens that exist in Bangladesh are commercialized without any conducive atmosphere for the kids. Guardian rush here with their kids for his/her proper schooling whereafter he/she can compete to get admi-

tted in a better school. This is more often a competition between guardians, because admission facility is limited. The irony is that the kindergartens are categorized according to the bulk of books the guardians have to carry with the kids while going to schools.

At that early stage a child starts to fear examinations and studies. The little child hardly enjoys studying. He rather worries about how to fill up his/her examination paper at the end of the week. If he fails to do well, he is categorized at that very level and also sometimes gets bad treatment from

his/her parents, because the parents pay money only for good results.

A mentality of competition grows, and as they find no other alternatives to good results, they cheat and find very many ways to obtain them. What a shameful story it is, when it comes out in the media, "Mass cheating in examination hall." What do we feel when we see this? How do the teachers and the parents feel? Why this infiltration of immorality? Where is the standard of our education? How long are we going to allow this? It is a pity that the so-called teachers and even parents do not feel ashamed to support this. And that's why we produce very low quality students who copy in the examinations.

Students in the humanities

or commerce streams seldom score more than those in science. Why? Don't they study well? Or don't we teach them well? Then why do we assume that a student could have written better in the examination paper at that level? Another strange phenomenon is that the students are found to obtain a very low score in Bengali. Do our teachers who teach this subject understand the subject well? The same is true about English. I would like to conclude with some questions.

Education—for a better job or to learn to live?

Education—to teach and learn or to learn to search?

Education—to answer a question as it is taught or to express what is understood by the subject?