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Quality of Services in the Secondary Educational Organizations of Bangladesh: An Evaluation by Secondary Graduates

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ABSTRACT

Despite the burgeoning quantitative progress in tertiary and pre-tertiary levels, popular discourses render a growing concern that the quality of education has deteriorated over the years in Bangladesh. In identifying problems of the educational system in Bangladesh, a majority of previous macro-level studies adopted the approaches of policy-makers, NGOs, international organizations, and other intervening authorities. This study, in distinction, tries to explore the issue from a micro-perspective – students' views regarding the quality of educational services they received in colleges and high schools, which makes it unique. Using a cross-sectional survey research design, data were collected from 114 first-year students from the University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh. Findings show that regardless of having good teachers, classrooms, and other facilities, students were heavily dependent on private tuition at the pre-tertiary education level. The services and facilities offered by the colleges of the respondents were of better quality than that of their high schools. Schools/colleges in district towns/divisional cities offer better quality services/facilities than those located at the union/village level. Respondents' SSC result was significantly associated with the locality and quality of classrooms whereas HSC result was significantly affected by computer and internet facilities as well as the overall quality of services/facilities they enjoyed in their colleges.

INTRODUCTION

Stable economic growth combined with a hefty investment in pre-tertiary education in recent years has developed a sizeable middle class in South Asia, including Bangladesh, with mounting demand for higher levels of education (Economic Intelligence Unit 2014). As a result, the number of secondary school graduates enrolling in tertiary education institutions increased by about 245% in the country over a span of only seven years – from 821,364 in 2004 to 2,008,337 in 2011 (Economic Intelligence Unit, 2014). Similarly, in line with the constitutional pledge of establishing a mass-oriented education system, mushrooming of new education institutions at all levels took place in the country in recent years, which may be viewed as the outcome of an expansionist approach (Ahmed

2011). For example, between 2010 and 2016, the total number of primary education institutions, junior and secondary institutions, and colleges increased by 53.2%, 7.4%, and 27.5% respectively (BANBEIS 2016a, BANBEIS 2016b, BANBEIS 2016c). In addition to the number of enrolments, the rate of success of students in terms of the percentage of passed students in public examinations at pre-tertiary levels jumped heavily in the last two decades. For example, as the BANBEIS data show, 72.47 percent of the appeared students passed the HSC examination in 2016, while this value was only 24.77 in 1996. A similar rate of success is also marked at the SSC level.

Notwithstanding this rapid progress, popular discourses depict a rising concern that the quality of education has dropped over the years (Ahmad,

2000; Ahmed, 2011; Ahmed et al., 2006; UGC 2006). Among different levels, primary and secondary education sectors are plagued with multifaceted crises (BANBEIS, 2016a). Though the transition rate of primary graduates enrolling in secondary level institutions is about 80%, less than 20% of the students who enroll in Grade Six pass the SSC level, and only 10% complete the HSC (Ahmed 2011; UGC 2006). The average dropout rate at each grade in the junior secondary level is 14%, while this figure is 37% and 17% in secondary and higher secondary levels, respectively (Ahmed 2011, BANBEIS 2006). Thus, the high level of wastage indicates that the crisis is more severe at the secondary level.

A number of previous studies focused on the problematic nature of the secondary education system in Bangladesh. Rahman et al. (2010) have drawn a historical overview of the development of secondary education in Bangladesh. Citing references from Wood's Educational Despatch, Qudrat-i-Khuda Commission Report, Maniruzzaman Mia Commission Report and the recent Education Policy of Bangladesh, the authors have delineated the evolution of secondary education in Bangladesh. The authors note that although significant positive changes have been brought about, declining quality has been a concern. They suggest the identification of the factors that can enhance the quality of students' learning irrespective of their socio-economic background. Rahman et al. (2018) have identified some concrete challenges in secondary education in Bangladesh: deficiency in trained teachers and equipment, outdated curriculum, weak management system, insufficient funds and problems in efficient utilization of funds, inappropriate and inefficient examination system, and rural-urban disparity in education services. Prodhan (2016) has pointed toward the absence of "a unified education system with unified standardized syllabus under central supervision" as a hindrance.

The Asian Development Bank in a topical paper (ADB, 2015) observes that despite substantial improvements in terms of gender equity and access, quality is a major concern in provisions made for secondary education in Bangladesh, with a low level of learning and insufficient acquisition of non-cognitive skills among students, a wide gap between the quality of schools, developing a

tendency of rote learning due to a weak examination system' and lack of motivation among teachers in an inadequate system for teacher development. According to Masum Billah (2017), "inadequate schools, heavy school curriculum, complex textbooks, outdated teaching methods, and poor teaching-learning approaches, dropping out, teacher's shortage and poor infrastructural facilities" are the most visible problems related to secondary education in Bangladesh. A study by Rahman et al. (2012) has emphasized the need to incorporate ICTs in the education sector in Bangladesh. Imon (2017) found that although the government has been encouraging the use of computers, projectors, and ICTs in classrooms, the reality is that the use of these in practice is still limited. Overall, poor qualitative achievement at the secondary level of education is attributed to a number of structural, institutional, and socio-economic constraints (Ahmed 2011, Ahmed et al 2006, UGC 2006).

The World Bank (2013) considers efficient teachers as the single most important school-related factor that contributes to better learning. However, teachers are not being utilized effectively in Bangladesh. "The current system does not attract, constitute, and retain the best professionals, and once recruited, it provides little incentive to keep them motivated" (p. xxi). They are interested in using neither innovative pedagogical approaches nor peer-learning networks. Additional experience of teachers does not help enhance students' learning because of lower levels of motivation of teachers. Thus, the quality of teachers remains a challenge and as Kono et al. (2018) have indicated, low levels of teaching and learning continue to be an issue from which shortcomings in the education sector arise in Bangladesh. The UNESCO Office in Dhaka (2018) recommends that in light of the Education Policy of Bangladesh, 2010, a teacher development policy should be prepared to address the issue of elevating the quality of secondary level teachers, including their recruitment and continuous professional development.

A study carried out by USAID (2021) has shown that there are various areas of concern that need to be addressed to develop the higher secondary education sector of Bangladesh. Some of these areas are management and supervision system, funding, recruitment of teachers and their training, and facilities like classrooms and

laboratory, libraries, ICT etc. A study by Hossain et al. (2019) has emphasized having ICT facilities in the libraries of secondary schools. Their findings show that most libraries of schools and colleges located in rural areas do not have ICT facilities. Moreover, in the libraries that do have such facilities, the Assistant Librarians do not have ICT literacy to provide services to the library users.

Drawing on the above-mentioned narratives, this study aims to explore a particular aspect of the quality of the educational system – learners' evaluations of the services/facilities that prevailed at their secondary and higher secondary education institutions. Moreover, it depicts whether the quality of these facilities is significantly associated with their performance in their SSC and HSC examinations. A scrutiny of the existing literature on the quality of education at pre-tertiary levels reveals few knowledge gaps in research scholarship, which rationalizes the undertaking of this study. The vast majority of research concentrated on the study of macro-level factors including the institutional-structural interventions, the overall education policy, and the education system as a whole. The uniqueness of the current study lies in the fact that it primarily focuses on a micro-level study designed to bring out evaluations of the students who were successful in getting admission into one of the top-ranking higher education institutions in Bangladesh.

Furthermore, as far as the authors have gone through there has been no significant study conducted in Bangladesh to find out whether there exists any substantial association between the quality of facilities/services in secondary institutes and the student's achievements in secondary examinations (i.e. SSC and HSC). Thus, this research aims at contributing to the expansion of knowledge by adopting an entirely novel approach (by having students as the source of information) and through its attempt to find out the association between the quality of facilities/services enjoyed by the students and their achievements in secondary and higher secondary public examinations. Hereby, the purposes of the present paper are: (1) To depict students' evaluations of the quality of facilities/services they enjoyed in their high schools and colleges with reference to their locality; (2) To compare between the quality of facilities/services they enjoyed in their high schools and colleges; and

(3) To assess the relationship between different facilities and services provided in the secondary institutions and students' achievement in SSC or HSC Examinations.

METHODS

This study was designed to explore learners' evaluations regarding the overall quality of their high schools and colleges and to find out whether there is any association between the quality of the facilities/services they enjoyed in their school/college and their achievement at SSC/HSC levels. A quantitative approach has been adopted in this research to achieve its objectives. A questionnaire survey was conducted among 114 selected undergraduate students in the first year (session 2016-2017) enrolled in the University of Rajshahi (RU). Two students (one male and one female) from each of the 57 departments/institutes took part in it. The respondents were selected from the top ten students of their respective classes based on their merit position achieved in the university admission test. Thus, the population of the study consisted of 570 students. A purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents for this study. In sociology, purposive or judgmental sampling is applied to select units of observation "based on researcher's judgment about which ones will be the most useful or representative" (Babbie 2013). To select the respondents for this study, three conditions were considered: (1) The respondents had to be First Year (session 2016-2017) undergraduate students of RU; (2) Two students from each of the 57 departments/institutes of RU had to be selected; and (3) Generally, one male student and one female student from each department (based on the availability of interested students) must be selected. To address the issues mentioned above, the purposive sampling technique was deemed more suitable. The second and third conditions helped make the study more representative in terms of gender and discipline.

The University of Rajshahi was selected purposively as the study site as it serves as an excellent case in point to examine the research topic for several reasons. Firstly, being established in 1953 and currently having about 37,200 students (DoS 2018), it is the second oldest and second largest university in the country. Every year above 4,000 students take admitted to the undergraduate

level at this university. Secondly, from fine arts to computer engineering, from fisheries and agriculture to sociology, and from languages to business studies, almost all the major classical and modern branches of knowledge are taught here, which makes it a hub for students and scholars from all academic fields. Thirdly, coming from all socio-economic strata and geographical regions of the country, the students of this university can be regarded as true representatives of their cohort. Finally, admission seekers at RU come from all major streams of secondary level of education: General, Madrasah, Vocational, and English Medium institutions. Therefore, secondary graduates' evaluation of the quality of different secondary educational organizations can be studied by gathering information from the students at this university.

The questionnaire for this study was semi-structured in nature and included both open-ended and closed-ended questions. The study used a five-point psychometric response scale (Likert scale) – very bad to very good – in which respondents specified their level of agreement with some statements regarding their satisfaction with different services at school and college levels. The collected data, after being processed on a spreadsheet of SPSS software, were analyzed by employing simple statistical techniques (e.g., frequency distributions, Chi-square tests).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Location of the high school and college of which the respondents were students

It is generally believed that the quality of education imparted in schools and colleges in an urban locality is better than that offered in schools and colleges in a rural setting. Assuming that location of the school/college is very likely to be associated with the quality of the services received by the respondents, this factor is being discussed at the outset of explaining the results of the study. Findings show a trend among the respondents to go to colleges situated in district towns and divisional cities even though families of 47% of the respondents lived in rural areas. Table 1 shows the location of the schools and colleges from which the respondent students had passed their SSC and HSC examinations.

It is observed that although 45.2% of the respondents went to union/village level high schools, only 13% of them went to village/union level colleges. A reason for making such a choice was that there were fewer colleges at the union/village level than schools/madrasahs. Survey results also show that only 16 (13.9%) of the students studied in schools located in divisional cities, but 31 (27%) were students from colleges located in divisional cities. Similarly, only 16.5% of the students went to schools located in district towns, whereas almost 34% of the respondents went to colleges situated in district towns.

Table 1. Location of the high school and college from which the respondents graduated (in percent)

Location of the institution	High school	College
Union/village	45.2	11.3
Upazila/Thana	24.4	27.8
District	16.5	33.9
Division	13.9	27
Total	100	100

Evaluations and comparison of the quality of services students received in high schools and colleges

1. Quality of teachers in high schools and colleges

The respondents were asked to rate the quality of their teachers. They rated their teachers from their general perception rather than based on any specific indicators (e.g., educational qualification, academic result, teaching experience, etc.). Table 2 demonstrates respondents' views regarding the quality of their teachers in college and high school. Most of the students have rated their teachers at college as either 'good' (45.22%) or 'very good' (33.91%). The figure also shows that almost a similar proportion of respondents have rated the quality of their high school (46%) and college (45%) teachers as 'good'. However, a higher percentage of students have rated their college teachers (34%) as 'very good' in comparison to their high school teachers (27%). A substantial proportion of respondents posited their teachers in 'neither good nor bad' standing in high schools (16%) and colleges (14%). Only 5% of the respondents considered their teachers in colleges as 'bad' or 'very bad', but 9% of the students held similar opinions about their high school teachers.

Table 2. Respondents' opinion regarding quality of their high school and college teachers (in percent)

Opinion	In high school	In college
Very good	26.95	33.91
Good	46.09	45.22
Neither good nor bad	15.65	13.91
Bad	6.09	3.48
Very bad	2.61	1.74
No comments	2.61	1.74
Total	100	100

2. Quality of classrooms, and libraries in colleges and high schools

Table 3 depicts that most of the respondents have expressed a 'good' opinion regarding their classrooms in colleges (58.26%) and high schools

Table 3. Quality of classroom and library facility in the college and high school (respondents' opinion in percent)

Opinion	Classroom facility		Library facility	
	College (n=114)	High school (n=114)	College (n = 98)	High school (n = 78)
Very bad	0.87	2.61	6.12	15.38
Bad	6.09	4.35	6.12	17.95
Neither good nor bad	13.91	26.09	21.43	25.64
Good	58.26	52.17	34.69	29.49
Very good	20.87	14.78	31.63	11.54
Total	100	100	100	100

3. Availability and quality of computer, projector and internet facilities

Findings of the present study show that computer facilities in the respondents' colleges were of better quality than that of their high schools. About 85% of the respondents' colleges and almost 74% of their high schools provided computer facilities to them. Table 4 reflects the quality of computer facilities in the students' high schools and colleges. The quality of computer facilities in 52% of the respondents' colleges was either 'good' or 'very good'. However, only 27.06% of the respondents' high schools had 'good' or 'very good' computer facilities.

In the age of the 4th Industrial Revolution, education systems must provide students ample opportunities to sufficiently develop their ICT knowledge base. However, schools and colleges in Bangladesh are trailing behind in this regard. A

(52.17%). Almost 21% have rated their college classrooms as 'very good', while 14.78% have rated their high school classrooms in a similar fashion. Thus from the table, it is clear that the respondents' classrooms at the college level were of better quality than their high school classrooms. Table 3 also shows that 85.22% of colleges and 67.83% of high schools provided library facilities. More than 66% of the college libraries were of 'good' or 'very good' quality, while only 31% of the respondents opined that their high schools provided library facilities of such quality. Overall, the library facilities provided by the colleges of the respondents were of better quality than that of their high schools.

survey carried out by Saha et. al. (2021) shows that with a teacher-student ratio as high as 288:1, it is very difficult to ensure quality ICT education. Moreover, it was found that 80% of the teachers who taught ICT had graduated in subjects other than ICT (or related subjects).

Findings of the present study depict that colleges of 63.48% of the respondents provided internet facilities but only 48.7% of their high schools provided such facilities. According to Table 4 only 8.22% of the colleges provided 'very good' quality internet services while none of the respondents' high schools provided them with such quality internet facilities. On the other hand, 43.84% of the colleges provided 'very bad' or 'bad' quality internet services. However, 67.86% of the internet facilities provided by the respondents' high schools were either 'very bad' or 'bad'.

Table 4. Quality of computer, projector and internet facilities (respondents' opinion in percent)

Opinion	Computer facility		Internet facility	
	College (n = 98)	High school (n = 85)	College (n = 73)	High school (n = 56)
Very bad	9.18	16.47	21.92	37.5
Bad	11.22	15.29	21.92	30.36
Neither good nor bad	27.55	41.18	31.51	16.07
Good	39.8	20	16.44	16.07
Very good	12.24	7.06	8.22	0
Total	100	100	100	100

4. Availability and quality of other facilities and services

The study findings demonstrate that 90.43% of the respondents' colleges and 92.17% of their high schools provided sports facilities for them. According to Table 3, more than 15% of the colleges provided sports facilities of 'very good' quality, while none of the high schools was able to offer such quality sports facilities to their students. More than 43% of the colleges provided 'good' quality sports/games facilities, while almost 52% of the high schools provided sports facilities that were of 'neither good nor bad' quality.

In analyzing the quality of services, the scope of community involvement while studying in

colleges and high schools has been incorporated as well. Findings show that 78.26% of the colleges and 73.91% of the high schools gave such opportunities to their students. Forty-two (46.67%) of the colleges and 36 (42.36%) of the high schools provided scope for 'good' or 'very good' quality involvement with the community.

There were some activities for 84.35% of the students at the college level to maintain their campus. Almost a similar proportion of students also had such activities in high school. Table 5 shows that almost 57.89% of the respondents' schools had activities of 'good' or 'very good' quality to maintain their campus, while 55.67% of the colleges had such types of activities.

Table 5: Quality of sports/game, voluntary services, and campus maintenance activities

Level of attributes	Game facility (%)		Voluntary/community involvement (%)		Campus maintenance activity (%)	
	College (n = 104)	High school (n = 102)	College (n = 90)	High school (n = 85)	College (n = 97)	High school (n = 95)
Very bad	3.85	6.86	8.89	14.12	5.15	9.47
Bad	13.46	20.59	14.44	12.94	11.34	9.47
Neither good nor bad	24.04	51.96	30	30.59	27.84	23.16
Good	43.27	20.59	37.78	28.24	39.18	37.89
Very good	15.38	0	8.89	14.12	16.49	20
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

5. Overall rating of the educational organizations by the respondents

The study reveals that the majority of learners were satisfied or highly satisfied regarding the overall quality of their secondary institutions. Table 6 shows the overall rating made by the respondents regarding their colleges and high schools. According to most of the respondents (67.82%), their colleges were of very good/good

quality, whereas 62.61% of them rated their high schools as very good/'good' on an overall basis.

Table 6. Overall rating of the college and high school by the students

Overall rating of the Institutions	High school	College
Very good	15.65	17.39
Good	46.96	50.43
Neither good nor bad	23.48	19.13
Bad	7.83	7.83
Very bad	0.87	1.74
No comments	5.21	3.48
Total	100	100

Association between different facilities and services provided in the secondary institutions and students' achievement in SSC or HSC Examinations

Associations between different variables from sections 3.1 and 3.2.1 to 3.2.5 with students' achievement in SSC or HSC Examination have

been calculated using the Pearson chi-square test as shown in Table 7.

The results show that the location of educational institutions and quality of classrooms have significant associations with the achievements of the students in the SSC Examination but they are not substantial for the students' attainment in HSC Examination. In contrast, the quality of computer and internet facilities show a strong association with the student's achievement at the HSC level but not in SSC Examination. However, the two most important variables for educational attainment – the quality of teachers and the quality of library facilities – fail to establish strong associations with the student's achievement both in SSC and HSC Examinations. However, the X^2 test shows that the overall quality of the educational institution is significantly associated with the student's attainment at the HSC level but it is not significant for their previous achievement in SSC Examination.

Table 7. Pearson Chi-square test results regarding the association between different variables and achieved results in SSC/HSC

Variables	Chi-square value	Degrees of Freedom	p-value	Whether significant at 0.05 level
The locality of high school and achieved results at the SSC level	4.066	1	.034	Yes
The locality of college and achieved results at the HSC level	1.652	1	.137	No
Quality of Teachers at High School and Achieved Results at SSC Level	.087	1	.494	No
Quality of Teachers at College and Achieved Results at HSC Level	2.314	1	.095	No
Quality of Classroom at High School and Achieved Result at SSC Level	5.642	1	.017	Yes
Quality of Classroom at College and Achieved Result at HSC Level	3.154	1	.060	No
Quality of Library at High School and Achieved Result at SSC Level	1.522	1	.162	No
Quality of Library at College and Achieved Results at HSC Level	.053	1	.484	No
Quality of Computer Facility at High School and Achieved Result at SSC Level	1.742	1	.147	No
Quality of Computer Facility at College and Achieved Result at HSC Level	5.017	1	.020	Yes

Quality of Internet Facility at College and Achieved Result at HSC Level	3.963	1	.042	Yes
Overall Quality of High School and Achieved Result at SSC Level	3.152	1	.062	No
Overall Quality of College and Achieved Result at HSC Level	5.282	1	.017	Yes

Findings presented above reveal that the services and facilities offered by colleges of the respondents were of better quality than that offered by their high schools. Although almost 70% of them went to high schools located in Upazila/union/village area, 60% went to colleges located in district/divisional cities. For this reason, the locality of high school significantly affected students' results in SSC Examination but the locality of college did not significantly affect their achievements in HSC Examination. According to the respondents, almost 80% of their teachers in college and 73% of the teachers in high schools were of good/very good quality. However, the quality of teachers in high school/college did not significantly affect students' results in their SSC/HSC Examination. The reason for this finding could be that teachers were not being utilized in an effective manner (World Bank, 2013). Students were more dependent on private tuition than what their teachers taught in their high school/college classrooms. Table 8 shows that only 2.5% and 9.6% of the respondents refrained from seeking private tuition at college and high school levels, respectively.

According to institutional theorists, schools and colleges are positively reinforced and receive funding from the government by adopting the recommended and standardized structural practices. Teachers are monitored for completing administrative work (e.g., submitting grades) but not for their performances in classrooms. Monitoring of instructions are avoided as they pose some problems that 'undermine public trust'. Teachers also consider such monitoring as a violation of their professional autonomy. Thus in spite of being qualified in terms of credentials the teachers remain unmonitored in isolated classrooms, which does not guarantee their good performance in teaching (Davies and Guppy, 2006). Following this theory, the authors surmise that the learning deficiencies that remain in classrooms of

schools/colleges because of the inefficiency/insincerity of teachers are usually covered through private tuition/coaching centers/guidebooks. It is to be stated that a large number of the school/college teachers themselves offer private tuition before or after office hours.

The respondents had to study a compulsory course on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at the HSC level but not at the SSC level. For this reason, the quality of computer and internet facilities in college was significantly associated with respondents' results at the HSC level but the quality of these facilities in high schools did not significantly affect their results in SSC Examination.

Table 8. Status of availing private tuitions (respondents' opinion in percent)

Status of availing private tuitions	High school	College
No private tuition availed	9.6	2.5
Tuition availed at home	8.7	10.4
Tuition availed at the coaching center	62.6	69.8
Tuition availed both at home and coaching center	19.1	17.3
Total	100	100

High school/college students hardly use their libraries to prepare for their public examinations. Therefore, the quality of the library did not significantly affect the achievements of students in their SSC/HSC examinations.

The authors have reviewed some studies carried out in different countries (USA, Nigeria, Philippines, Ghana, etc.) that have tried to relate the quality of facilities/services delivered in secondary schools and educational achievements made by their students. Some of these studies found a significant association between the quality of facilities/services and students' academic achievements (e.g., Otchere et al., 2019; Figueroa et al., 2016; Ahmodu et al., 2018), while others did not (e.g., McGowen, 2007). Findings of this study show that only some

facilities/services under investigation were significantly associated with academic achievement at SSC and HSC levels and this association differed across levels (for example, quality of computer and internet facilities were significantly associated with respondents' achievement in HSC Examination, but not with achievements in SSC Examination).

This study is afflicted by a notable constraint that it relied on information gathered from current students of only one public university. Again, although the respondents were selected by following a list of strict criteria and hence they are deemed representative, the sample size (114) was meager. Therefore, the authors recommend the readers' discretion to interpret and generalize the findings of this study. In addition, the socioeconomic background of the students and other confounding variables were not controlled, a fact that might have affected the results. Despite these shortcomings, conclusions about the educational and infrastructural facilities and the student's academic achievements at the secondary level drawn from statistical analysis portray the picture of a pertinent issue in the education sector in Bangladesh.

CONCLUSION

The principal objective of this paper was to present an evaluation of the quality of facilities/services enjoyed by tertiary level students in their respective high schools and colleges. Two other objectives of this study were to compare between the quality of facilities/services received in high schools and colleges and to determine whether the quality of these facilities/services was significantly associated with their performance in their SSC/HSC examinations. Information collected from the students shows that most of them rated the overall state of learning arrangements in their secondary institutions as 'good' or 'very good'. Facilities/services enjoyed by the respondents in their colleges were of much better quality than those enjoyed in their high schools. SSC result of the respondents was significantly associated with the locality and quality of classrooms in their high schools. The respondents' HSC result was significantly affected by the computer and internet facilities they enjoyed in their colleges. The overall quality of college had a significant impact on respondents' HSC results but the overall quality of

high school did not have a significant influence on their SSC results.

As the services and facilities offered by colleges of the respondents were of much better quality than that of their high schools, more emphasis should be attached to ensuring better quality services/facilities in high schools. It has been noted that many of the respondents who went to high schools located in rural areas, later, went to colleges located in district towns. This also points to the possibility that high schools/colleges in district towns/divisional cities offer better quality services/facilities than those located at the union/village level. Therefore, the authors recommend that steps must be taken immediately to curb discrimination against schools/colleges located in rural areas.

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