

Challenges of Quality Higher Education in Bangladesh: A Study on Public Universities

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Abstract

The study addresses the challenges of quality higher education in public universities of Bangladesh considering teaching aids, library facilities, availability of books and journals, research facilities, and laboratory facilities as independent variables and quality of higher education as dependent variable. Data has been collected through semi-structured questionnaire/ interview schedule from two main stakeholders of higher education- teachers and students. The study demonstrates that insufficiency of key elements is the main challenge of quality higher education in public universities of Bangladesh. Budgetary provision and utilization of the same are two major limiting factors to enhance those facilities.

Keywords: Higher Education, Public University, Budgetary Provision, Likert-type scale.

1. Introduction

Education for all and assurance of quality education are the prime objectives of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (Rahman, 2010). In the era of globalization, when intellectual capital is more and more valued both by individuals and nations then higher education has become significantly important. Higher education can produce critical thinkers and innovators, as well as healthy, informed and enthusiastic citizens (Chaudhary, Iqbal, and Gillani 2009). Standard of intellectual capital depends on the quality of teaching-learning, research facilities, laboratory facilities, library facilities, modernization of course curriculum, etc. Higher education will not succeed in achieving its goal to bring out enlightened, highly skilled, trained, motivated and morally committed individuals if it fails ensure quality comparable to the developed world. Consequently, the country will fail to achieve its development objectives. Higher education endorses social mobility and a high standard of living (Chaudhary, Iqbal, and Gillani 2009). It is generally agreed by academicians, education thinkers, education researchers, education policy planners and other stakeholders that the quality of higher education in Bangladesh has been deteriorating steadily, in some areas quite alarmingly, over the last two decades (Salahuddin & Aminuzzaman, 2011). As such the reasons for declining the quality of higher education need to be evaluated and addressed properly. The cost of higher education in a developing country like Bangladesh is cheaper compared to developed nations (Bhuiyan and Hakim, 1995). But quality is more important than cost. Adequate budgetary provision and proper utilization of the same are essential to ensure the excellence in higher education. Higher education has enormous potential to promote prosperity in the developing nations (Mobasser and Muhammed, 2010). There are 95 universities in Bangladesh, out of which, 34 are public, 2 are international and the rest 59 are private. Out of 34 public Universities, 32 are teaching universities having classroom, residential accommodation and other physical facilities in their own campus. Two universities are of special type- one is the National University (NU) and other is Bangladesh Open University (BOU). The former is an affiliating university, which affiliates all degree colleges in Bangladesh, conducts examination and award certificates or diplomas depending on the nature of academic programs. The university offers subject-wise special programs of training for the teachers of the affiliated colleges. It has also made provision for conducting M. Phil and Ph.D. research works for the teachers of the affiliated colleges in Bangladesh. Open University provides education in distance mode. Number of universities, both public and private, is increasing day by day, but the quality of higher education is not increasing compare to neighbor countries. No Bangladeshi University is in the list of top 400 World's best universities (U. S. News, 2011). On the other hand, in the ranking web of world universities July 2012-position of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) is 2398 and BUET is the 1st position Bangladeshi University in the ranking. So, this is the time to identify different obstacles and challenges that hold back the quality of higher education especially in public universities.

2. Rationale of the study

The study is very essential for several reasons. Firstly, this study has contributed to the existing stock of knowledge through providing new literature on education especially quality component of higher education and budgetary provision for higher education. To survive in the global village, quality higher education is a must. And it is alleged that financing has an impact on the quality of higher education. In this context, the researchers have tried to find out the relationship between quality of higher education and budgetary provision. This study discloses all the primary factors that are capable of influencing the quality of higher education in Bangladesh. Secondly, the findings of the study would help the education policy planners to make suitable policy measures for higher education in Bangladesh. Finally, this study would facilitate proper implementation of policies to improve the quality of higher education in Bangladesh.

3. Literature review

Government funding for higher education and research is not at all adequate and UGC fails to provide fund according to the need of the public universities (Mobassern and Muhammed, 2010). There is a long run relationship between economic growth and higher education (Chaudhary, Iqbal, and Gillani 2009). In Bangladesh, different Education Commissions have theoretically emphasized on unlocking potential at all levels of the society and creating a pool of highly trained individuals, who could contribute to the nation building. But in practice the academic standard of Bangladeshi universities are very weak and as such they have measurably failed to bring any positive change (Mobasser and Muhammed, 2010). Better understanding among teachers and students, introduction of modern teaching methods and dedication of teachers and students can improve the quality of higher education in Bangladesh (Mobasser and Muhammed, 2010). The higher education is costly every where in the world, but in Bangladesh higher education is cheaper compared to developed countries. Cheaper higher educational opportunities in Bangladesh should be utilized effectively and efficiently to develop individuals for socio-economic development of the nation. Education policy during East Pakistan had emphasized on moral, ethical and religious development of a human being but after the independence of Bangladesh the National Education Policy 2010 has emphasized on learning of specialized knowledge and/ or skill. Education contributes to economic development of any nation. The improvement of higher education facilities may attract foreign students to our country as well as local outgoing students which could generate more government revenues (Bhuiyan and Hakim, 1995). There is great controversy about the quality of education that private universities provide. Most of the private universities are running their academic activities in rented buildings without enough research facilities. The quality of education depends on quality classroom teaching (Rony and Rashid, 2009). Standard of quality teaching depends on: (1) clear tasks/ aims; (2) competence of the teacher; (3) use of suitable teaching methods; (4) meaningful outcome of teaching; (5) effective presentation of scientific knowledge; (6) teacher's self-assessment (Rony and Rashid, 2009 cited in Cannon and Newble 2000:220-223). Education is neither an economic goods nor an economic service. Economic goods and services are traded in the market on the basis of commercial philosophy of profit and maximization of utility. Profit maximization motive of private investors in education has been minimizing the social objectives of education including quality. Thus business in education must be stopped by government intervention. Commercialization of education is creating negative impact on social, economical, political and cultural environment (Rahman, 2010). Teaching profession must be made attractive through offering separate salary structure so that talented and bright persons with high academic and research background come into this profession. Teachers should be evaluated on the basis of his teaching quality, research and publication. Politicization and favoritism of employment, posting, and promotion must be stopped. Quality and quality be the only criterion (Rahman, 2010). From the review of available related literature it is clear that none of the previous research had strived to find out the hidden reasons for deteriorating the quality of higher education in Bangladesh. Thus there is a research gap and as such this study has been planned.

4. Objectives

The main objective of the study is to identify the elements contributing to the quality of higher education in public universities of Bangladesh. The specific objectives of the study are-

- i. to evaluate the teaching- learning system in public universities of Bangladesh;
- ii. to identify the challenges of quality education in public universities of Bangladesh;
- iii. to find out the relationship between budgetary provision and quality of higher education in Bangladesh.

5. Methodology

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Two public universities have been purposively selected

considering the location, establishment period, and nature of education. One is Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University (JKKNIU) which is the mother University of first two authors and another is Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) which is the nearest university from JKKNIU. On the other hand, JKKNIU is a newly established general university and BAU is the oldest agricultural university in Bangladesh. Secondary data have been collected from the 37th Annual Report 2010 of Bangladesh University Grant Commission (UGC) and other published reports and literature from different sources. Primary data has been collected through face to face interview with the teachers and students of the selected universities using semi-structured questionnaire/ interview schedule. This study has covered all faculties of both the universities. There are four faculties in JKKNIU and six faculties in BAU. Sample size was 229 which included 30 teachers and 56 students of JKKNIU, and 45 teachers and 98 students of BAU. The respondents have been selected randomly, but their willingness to provide information has been taken into consideration. Qualitative data has been converted into quantitative data by using 5 points Likert-type scale from highly satisfactory/ highly appropriate/ 90 percent or above to highly dissatisfactory/ others/ less than 60 percent. Highest satisfaction level got 5 points and lowest satisfaction level got 1 point. Collected data has been analyzed by using weighted average and percentage.

6. Results and Discussion:

6.1. It is evident from table-1 that classes are held according to credit hour is more than 80 percent in both the universities. It is also found that the classes held in BAU are more than JKKNIU. About 82 percent teachers and 85 percent students of BAU opined that their classes are held according to credit hour is 90 percent or above. The mean score of classes held in BAU is about 4.80 (teachers 4.82 and students 4.80) in the scale of 5.00. On the other hand, 47 percent teacher and 55 percent students of JKKNIU gave opinion that their classes are held according to credit hour is 90 percent or above. The mean score of classes held in JKKNIU is about 4.40 (teachers 4.43 and students 4.39) in the scale of 5.00. There are different reasons for classes not held according to credit hour. The teacher respondents of both the universities mentioned different reasons. Half of the respondents of JKKNIU and one third of the respondents of BAU mentioned that the reason for not holding classes is due to meeting of academic affairs, 23 percent respondents of JKKNIU and 17 percent respondents of BAU mentioned that the reason is insufficient teaching staff, 9 percent respondents of JKKNIU and zero percent respondents of BAU mentioned that the reason is involvement in personal activities, and 18 percent respondents of JKKNIU and 50 percent respondents of BAU mentioned other reasons such as insufficient accommodation facilities, over class load, time constraints, unavoidable circumstances etc.

Table-1: Classes held according to credit hour

Range of class	Teachers' Opinion						Students' opinion					
	JKKNIU			BAU			JKKNIU			BAU		
	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score
≥90%	14	47	70	37	82	185	31	55	155	83	85	415
80% to <90%	15	50	60	08	18	32	16	29	64	10	10	40
70% to <80%	01	03	03	00	00	00	09	16	27	05	05	15
60% to <70%	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
<60%	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Total	30	100	133	45	100	217	56	100	246	98	100	470
Mean			4.43			4.82			4.39			4.80

Source: Data collected through face to face interview using semi-structured questionnaire/ interview schedule.

6.2. It is found in table-2 that one third of the teachers of JKKNIU and almost all teachers of BAU use multimedia projector in the class room. On the other hand, 38 percent students of JKKNIU and 99 percent students of BAU opined that teachers use multimedia projector. So, there is no significant difference between the opinion given by the teachers and the students of both the universities. But, the rate of use of multimedia projector in JKKNIU is very low. In another question, the teachers of JKKNIU mentioned the reasons for not using multimedia projector in the class room. About 44 percent teachers of JKKNIU mentioned that projector is not available in their department, 28 percent mentioned that projector is not important due to class nature, 16

percent mentioned that infrastructure facilities are insufficient for using projector, and 12 percent mentioned others reasons, but they didn't identify the specific reason.

Table-2: Classes taken using Multimedia/ Overhead Projector

Response	Teachers' Opinion				Students' Opinion			
	JKKNIU		BAU		JKKNIU		BAU	
	Respondents	Percent	Respondents	Percent	Respondents	Percent	Respondents	Percent
Yes	10	33	44	98	21	38	97	99
No	20	67	01	02	35	62	01	01
Total	30	100	45	100	56	100	98	100

Source: Data collected through face to face interview using semi-structured questionnaire/ interview schedule.

6.3. It is observed from table-3 that the mean score of teachers of JKKNIU about their teaching quality is 3.87 in the scale of 5.00, while the mean score of students of JKKNIU about the teaching quality of their teachers is 4.18 in the scale of 5.00. Similarly, the mean score of teachers of BAU about their teaching quality is 4.02 in the scale of 5.00, while the mean score of students of BAU about the teaching quality of their teachers is 4.18 in the scale 5.00. So, the students gave more positive response about the teaching quality of their teachers than the teacher's opinion about their own teaching quality in both the universities.

Table-3: Teaching Quality of the Teachers

Satisfaction Levels	Teachers' Opinion						Students' Opinion					
	JKKNIU			BAU			JKKNIU			BAU		
	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score
Highly Satisfactory	04	13	20	06	13	30	26	46	130	41	42	205
Satisfactory	22	74	88	34	76	136	16	29	64	37	38	148
Moderate	00	00	00	05	11	15	12	21	36	17	17	51
Dissatisfactory	04	13	08	00	00	00	02	04	04	03	03	06
Highly Dissatisfactory	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Total	30	100	116	45	100	181	56	100	234	98	100	410
Mean			3.87			4.02			4.18			4.18

Source: Data collected through face to face interview using semi-structured questionnaire/ interview schedule.

6.4. There were two types of questions about students' learning- for the teachers this question was 5 levels of satisfaction and for students this was only 'Yes/ No' type question. Mean score of teachers' opinion about students' learning is 3.47 in the scale 5.00 in JKKNIU and 3.62 in the scale 5.00 in BAU. However, 82 percent students of JKKNIU and 96 percent students of BAU are satisfied with their learning. In this question the opinions of teachers' and students' of both universities are not same.

Table-4: Opinion about Students' Learning

Satisfaction Levels	Teachers' Opinion						Comment	Students' Opinion			
	JKKNIU			BAU				JKKNIU		BAU	
	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score		Respondents	Percent	Respondents	Percent
Highly Satisfactory	01	03	05	05	11	25	Yes	46	82	94	96
Satisfactory	17	57	68	22	49	88	No	10	18	04	04
Moderate	08	27	24	14	31	42	Total	56	100	98	100
Dissatisfactory	03	10	06	04	09	08					
Highly Dissatisfactory	01	3	01	00	00	00					
Total	30	100	104	45	100	163					
Mean			3.47			3.62					

Source: Data collected through face to face interview using semi-structured questionnaire/ interview schedule.

6.5. Table-5 demonstrates that the mean score of opinion of teachers' and students' about library facilities in JKKNIU are very low at 2.33 percent and 3.00 respectively in the scale of 5.00. On the other hand, the mean score of opinions of teachers and students of BAU are 3.78 and 4.09 in the scale 5.00. In BAU, library facilities' are not up to the mark, but library facilities in JKKNIU is too poor to ensure quality higher education.

Table-5: Library Facilities

Satisfaction Levels	Teachers' Opinion						Students' Opinion					
	JKKNIU			BAU			JKKNIU			BAU		
	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score
Highly Satisfactory	00	00	00	07	16	35	02	04	10	29	30	145
Satisfactory	02	07	08	25	56	100	16	28	64	51	52	204
Moderate	09	30	27	09	20	27	20	36	60	16	16	48
Dissatisfactory	16	53	32	04	08	08	16	28	32	02	02	04
Highly Dissatisfactory	03	10	03	00	00	00	02	04	02	00	00	00
Total	30	100	70	45	100	170	56	100	168	98	100	401
Mean			2.33			3.78			3.00			4.09

Source: Data collected through face to face interview using semi-structured questionnaire/ interview schedule.

6.6. Table-6 reveals that the mean score of opinion of teachers and students' of JKKNIU about the question are very low than that of the opinion of teachers and students of BAU. The mean score of teachers and students of JKKNIU are 2.13 and 2.70 respectively in scale of 5.00. On the other hand, the mean score of teachers and students of BAU are 3.69 and 3.93 respectively in the scale of 5.00. Collection of books, periodicals, journals in the libraries of both the selected universities are insufficient. This is one of the main obstacles to quality higher education in the public universities in Bangladesh.

Table-6: Availability of Books and Journals in the Library

Satisfaction Levels	Teachers' Opinion						Students' Opinion					
	JKKNIU			BAU			JKKNIU			BAU		
	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score
Highly Satisfactory	00	00	00	09	20	45	00	00	00	24	25	120
Satisfactory	01	03	04	19	42	76	15	27	60	46	47	184
Moderate	06	20	18	11	25	33	13	23	39	25	25	75
Dissatisfactory	19	63	38	06	13	12	24	43	48	03	03	06
Highly Dissatisfactory	04	14	04	00	00	00	04	07	04	00	00	00
Total	30	100	64	45	100	166	56	100	151	98	100	385
Mean			2.13			3.69			2.70			3.93

Source: Data collected through face to face interview using semi-structured questionnaire/ interview schedule.

6.7. It is evident from table-7 that the mean score of opinion of teachers and students about laboratory facilities are very low in JKKNIU than BAU. The mean score of teachers and students of JKKNIU are 2.13 and 2.27 respectively in the scale of 5.00. On the other hand, the mean score of teachers and students of BAU are 3.53 and 3.88 respectively in the scale of 5.00. Laboratory facilities in both the universities are not enough, but laboratory facility in JKKNIU is very poor which a big barrier to quality higher education. In this era of globalization, well equipped modern laboratory is a must for quality higher education.

Table-7: Laboratory Facilities

Satisfaction Levels	Teachers' Opinion						Students' opinion					
	JKKNIU			BAU			JKKNIU			BAU		
	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score
Highly Satisfactory	00	00	00	02	04	10	00	00	00	27	28	135
Satisfactory	01	03	04	26	58	104	05	14	20	42	43	168
Moderate	06	20	18	11	25	33	09	24	27	22	22	66
Dissatisfactory	19	63	38	06	13	12	14	38	28	04	04	08
Highly Dissatisfactory	04	14	04	00	00	00	09	24	09	03	03	03
Total	30	100	64	45	100	159	37	100	84	98	100	380
Mean			2.13			3.53			2.27			3.88

Source: Data collected through face to face interview using semi-structured questionnaire/ interview schedule.

6.8. It is found in table-8 that the mean score of opinion of teachers and students about research facilities is too low in JKKNIU than BAU. The score of students' opinion is poorer than teachers' opinion. The mean score of opinion of teachers and students of JKKNIU are 2.30 and 1.98 respectively in the scale of 5.00. On the other hand, the mean score of teachers and students of BAU are 3.44 and 3.51 respectively in the scale of 5.00. Research facilities in both the universities are below the satisfactory level, but research facilities in JKKNIU are too dissatisfactory, which is one of the main challenges for quality higher education. If the university authority fails to ensure adequate research facilities within a very short time then the university will certainly fail to achieve its goal of providing quality education to the students.

Table-8: Research Facilities

Satisfaction Levels	Teachers' Opinion						Students' Opinion					
	JKKNIU			BAU			JKKNIU			BAU		
	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score
Highly Satisfactory	00	00	00	03	07	15	00	00	00	12	12	60
Satisfactory	04	13	16	20	44	80	01	02	04	45	46	180
Moderate	05	17	15	16	36	48	09	21	27	25	26	75
Dissatisfactory	17	57	34	06	13	12	22	50	44	13	13	26
Highly Dissatisfactory	04	13	04	00	00	00	12	27	12	03	03	03
Total	30	100	69	45	100	155	44	100	87	98	100	344
Mean			2.30			3.44			1.98			3.51

Source: Data collected through face to face interview using semi-structured questionnaire/ interview schedule.

6.9. It is evident from table-9 that the teachers and students of both the universities are not fully satisfied with the existing subject matter/ course curricula. The mean score of both universities is around 4.00 in the scale of 5.00. Course curriculum or subject matter is the guideline and standard of teaching-learning. So, it should be of high standard and always comparable to the developed world.

Table-9: Subject matter/ Existing courses curricula

Satisfaction Levels	Teachers' Opinion						Students' Opinion					
	JKKNIU			BAU			JKKNIU			BAU		
	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score
Highly Appropriate	05	17	25	08	18	40	16	28	80	30	31	150
Considerably Appropriate	19	63	76	33	73	132	28	50	112	53	54	212
Moderate	05	17	15	03	07	09	10	18	30	08	08	24
Not so Appropriate	01	03	02	00	00	00	02	04	04	06	06	12
Others	00	00	00	01	02	01	00	00	00	01	01	01
Total	30	100	118	45	100	182	56	100	226	98	100	399
Mean			3.93			4.04			4.04			4.07

Source: Data collected through face to face interview using semi-structured questionnaire/ interview schedule.

6.10. It is found in table-10 that the mean score of level of syllabus completed within time is between 4.73 and 4.07 in the scale of 5.00. The mean score of the opinion of the teachers and students of JKKNIU is less than the mean score of the teachers and students opinion of BAU. The mean score of teachers and students of JKKNIU are 4.60 and 4.07 respectively in the scale of 5.00. There is a significant difference between the score of teachers' and the score of students' of JKKNIU. On the other hand, the mean score of the teachers and students of BAU are 4.73 and 4.55 respectively in the scale of 5.00. The above situations testimony that overall score of the percentage of syllabus completed within time is satisfactory in both the sample universities.

Table-10: Syllabus completed within time

Range of class	Teachers' Opinion						Students' Opinion					
	JKKNIU			BAU			JKKNIU			BAU		
	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score	Respondents	Percent	Score
≥90%	19	63	95	38	85	190	22	39	110	61	62	305
80% to <90%	10	34	40	05	11	20	20	36	80	31	32	124
70% to < 80%	01	03	03	00	00	00	10	18	30	05	05	15
60% to < 70%	00	00	00	01	02	02	04	07	08	01	01	02
<60%	00	00	00	01	02	01	00	00	00	00	00	00
Total	30	100	138	45	100	213	56	100	228	98	100	446
Mean			4.60			4.73			4.07			4.55

Source: Data collected through face to face interview using semi-structured questionnaire/ interview schedule.

6.11. One comparatively big budgeted project has been taken by University Grant Commission of Bangladesh (UGC) through World Bank loan is 'HEQEP'. Objective of the project is to enhance the quality of higher education in Bangladesh. The estimated cost of the project is Taka 6810.40 million (IDA Taka 5984.80 million and GoB Taka 825.60 million) and duration for implementation of the project is 5 years from 2008-09 to 2013-14 (UGC 2009). Opinion collected from the teachers of JKKNIU and BAU about how much they are hopeful about the quality of higher education will be improved by the implementation of 'HEQEP'. There are mixed opinions of the respondents about the success of HEQEP. About 66 percent (10+23+33) teachers of JKKNIU and 67 percent (16+33+18) teachers of BAU are hopeful that the project will enhance the quality of higher education. But, 34 percent teachers of JKKNIU and 33 percent teachers of BAU are hopeless that the project will enhance the quality of higher education.

Table-11: 'HEQEP' for quality enhancement of higher education in Bangladesh

Range of class	Teachers' Opinion			
	JKKNIU		BAU	
	Respondents	Percent	Respondents	Percent
≥90%	03	10	07	16
70% to <90%	07	23	15	33
50% to < 70%	10	33	08	18
30% to < 50%	05	17	10	22
Others	05	17	05	11
Total	30	100	45	100

Source: Data collected through face to face interview using semi-structured questionnaire/ interview schedule.

6.12. It is observed from table-12 that there is a lot of discrimination between the selected universities. Per student yearly expense in JKKNIU is Tk. 24 thousand as against Tk. 1 lakh 96 thousand (8.16 times) in BAU. The teacher-student ratio in JKKNIU is 1:41 as against 1:9 in BAU. The area of JKKNIU is only 34.50 acres as against 1200 acres (34.8 times) in BAU. There are no research expenses in JKKNIU, but in BAU, the research expenses are 1.41 percent of the total expenses in the fiscal year 2009-2010. The expenses for education contingencies are more in JKKNIU than BAU. On the other hand, JKKNIU contributes a huge amount that is, 21.02 percent of the total expenses from its own income, but BAU contributes 4.14 percent only.

Table-12: Comparative key information of JKKNIU and BAU

Heads	JKKNIU		BAU	
Financial Information	Taka in Million		Taka in Million	
Total Revised Budget	Tk.46.50		Tk.961.90	
Total Expenses	Tk.46.30	99.57% of R.B.	Tk.956.70	99.46% of R.B.
Own income	Tk.9.73	21.02% of T.E.	Tk.39.586	4.14% of T.E.
Education Contingencies	Tk.5.354	11.56% of T.E.	Tk.52.058	5.44% of T.E.
Research Expenditure	Nil		Tk.13.443	1.41% of T.E.
Expenses per Student	Tk.0.024		Tk.0.196	
Non-financial Information				
Teacher-Student Ratio	1:41		1:9	
Year of Establishment	2006		1961	
Nature of University	General		Agricultural	
Area of University	34.5o Acres		1200 Acres	
Stock of Books in Library	26949		195500	
Acquisition of Books in 2010	1306		1691	
Running Research Project	No information		108	

Source: Annual Report 2010 of the University Grants Commission of Bangladesh, page 18-19, 93, & 115 and official sources.

Note: Financial information concerned with the fiscal year 2009-10.

R.B.= Revised Budget, T.E.= Total Expenses

7. Finding and Recommendation

From the above discussion it is clear that limited resources and insufficient facilities are the major challenges for quality higher education in Bangladesh. There are some key elements which have been influencing the quality of higher education in Bangladesh. Those elements are modern teaching aids, library facilities, availability of books and journals in the library, laboratory facilities, research facilities, quality of course curricula, etc. The satisfaction level of the respondents about those key elements is not up to the mark in both the sample universities. More revealing is that the level of satisfaction is lower in JKKNIU than BAU. BAU, the oldest agricultural university in Bangladesh, has more facilities than JKKNIU, a newly established general university. There is a wide discrimination in budgetary allocation for these two universities. Per student expenses of BAU is 8.17 times more than JKKNIU in the fiscal year 2009-2010. In order to increase the facilities of the above mentioned key elements, the government should make necessary budgetary provision in those heads and the respective university authority should ensure proper utilization of the same.

8. Conclusion

Quality higher education is a much debated issue in Bangladesh nowadays. The study has successfully identified the main challenges and key elements of quality higher education in Bangladesh. It is observed that insufficient budgetary provision for the key elements has been affecting the quality of higher education in Bangladesh. Comparatively, newly established general universities are suffering more due to low budgetary support than the older technical universities. Bangladesh as a developing country needs to develop and ensure minimum facilities for quality higher education in all the public universities without discrimination. Quality higher education should not be a slogan only. It should be the commitment and willingness of the government and all concerned. If Bangladesh could successfully address the existing challenges of quality higher education and ensure essential facilities for the same through budgetary provision, it could provide world class higher education at moderate cost and it could be an example to the whole world.

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