

WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH

Md. Abu Sayem

Department of Statistics, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka-1342

ABSTRACT: *Formal education is a fulcrum of sustainable development. Education allows individuals to develop within their community and country, and allows nations to compete and survive in the global economy. Education plays a critical role in fostering basic intellectual abilities, expanding further educational opportunities that are vital to success in a world where power is closely linked with knowledge. Education is the nourishment of the mind with knowledge and as such it helps in the formation of an integrated personality of an individual. Education has a special significance in the context of a quasi-traditional or transitional society like Bangladesh. In this paper I shall try to delineate the picture of women participation in higher secondary education in Bangladesh. I shall also mention the necessity and factors responsible for women participation in higher education. From the analysis it is observed that there is a skyward trend for the female passed students that lead to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).*

KEYWORDS: Higher Secondary Education, Higher Education, Knowledge, Women, Women Education, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

INTRODUCTION

Women and girls in the developing world are often denied opportunities for education. Lack of education limits prospects, decreases family income, reduces health, puts women and girls at risk of trafficking and exploitation, and limits the economic advancement of entire countries.

World Education believes that education for girls and women is the single most effective way to improve the lives of individual families as well as to bring economic development to poor communities worldwide. By improving educational opportunities for girls and women, World Education helps women develop skills that allow them to make decisions and influence community change. In turn, these programs have a positive impact on some of the most profound issues of our time: Population growth, HIV, peace and security, and the widening gap between the rich and poor.

Bangladesh is an agrarian country. It has a patriarchal society. Bangladesh has a population of about 164.82 million where male constitutes 50.459% and female constitutes 49.541%. Women represent around fifty percent of population. This makes Bangladesh the 8th most populous country in the world. The country has a population density of 1266 people per square kilometer which ranks 9th in the world (UN report 2017). As Bangladesh is a densely populated country it needs to develop human resources. While, education is the formal process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills, customs and values from one generation to another. Adult literacy rate of Bangladesh is 55% where male constitute 60% and female constitutes 49% (Nazmuunnessa Mahtab, 2012). To get an educated nation it is important to ensure female education. Improving girls' educational levels has been established

to have clear impacts on the health and economic future of young women, which in turn improves the prospects of their entire community. Female education incorporates surrounding all education primary, secondary and tertiary (Nazmuunnessa Mahtab, 2012).

In the present research higher education of women is core concentration. Higher education creates a human being self dependent, self reliant, self confident. In Bangladesh higher education of women depends upon several factors. Socio-economic status influence education of female students. For instance it has been noted that high level of parental education of the family and high income positively influences academic achievement of children (Juma & Lee, 2012). Higher education of female students accelerates the level of empowerment. Empowerment is an ability to enhance women's self confidence and internal strength. Women's ill health and lack of education may stand in their way of true liberation (Naz, 2006).

Education is the key yardstick by which the growth and development of a country can be delineated and as such it has occupied an honoured place in the society. None can deny that in the life of an individual as well as society education has a vital role. In this paper I will try to delineate the present picture of higher education in Bangladesh and women participation in it.

Necessity of Higher Education for Women

Almost half of the population in Bangladesh is occupied by women. They are the half of the human resources. But it is very unfortunate to say that for long years there have been a strong bias against women and thereby there is a tendency to deny equal socio-economic opportunity for them. This neglecting attitude towards women is prominent in many respects particularly in the field of education. None can deny the fact that education is the fundamental agents for the socio-economic development of a country. But women access in the domain of education has not been fairly treated.

There are two different views on the question of women participation in higher education - traditional and modern. The traditional view supports women's education to equip them to become better wives and mother. This view believes that women's present education is entirely irrelevant in their lives. It is only waste of time and this does not help them to solve the problems of their daily life. This view believes that modern educated women are neither happy nor contended nor socially useful. She is misfit in life and needs opportunities for self expression. But modern attitude visualizes education as an instrument for women's equality and development.

Theoretically the need of higher education for both males and females is the same. But practically it could be said that female education is more important than that of male. In this connection I may refer a statement of philosopher-president and noted educationist Dr. S. Radhakrishnan (1948). He says "there cannot be educated people without educated women. If general education has to be limited to men or women, the opportunity should be given to women. From them it would most surely be passed on to the next generation." (S. Nath, 2014).

DATA SOURCE AND METHODS

The data for the present study has been taken from Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS) for the year 1990-2015, the only government organization responsible for collection, compilation and dissemination of educational

information and statistics. The Bureau was established as an attached department of the Ministry of Education (MOE).

Bivariate frequency distributions are used to depict the picture of women participation in higher secondary education in Bangladesh.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Result of Higher Secondary School Certificate (H.S.C) by Gender, 1990-2015

Year	Total No. of Appeared Students	Total No. of Passed Students	Total No. of Appeared Female Students	Total No. of Passed Female Students
1990	294391	87419	77927	24285
1991	261308	132619	70151	37713
1992	247663	162118	71439	48618
1993	318312	147429	101042	47555
1994	398540	161045	130801	54764
1995	468801	217546	160606	74890
1996	514668	127504	189667	46560
1997	584962	229796	213368	86798
1998	479028	220748	177949	83640
1999	518648	290687	198314	115448
2000	470541	181768	180231	73728
2001	525755	149358	209137	62153
2002	538296	145867	216274	60067
2003	501507	192713	208983	79712
2004	483481	230787	204050	95455
2005	415088	245549	176793	102256
2006	412024	263358	180969	114949
2007	431835	277523	194621	123438
2008	496139	371382	231387	172390
2009	489102	344485	230104	160610
2010	580623	416987	277946	199797
2011	622277	450254	297368	215932
2012	742448	567940	362083	279710
2013	814469	579297	402556	288397
2014	914603	692690	452129	346708
2015	876476	577087	430901	289794

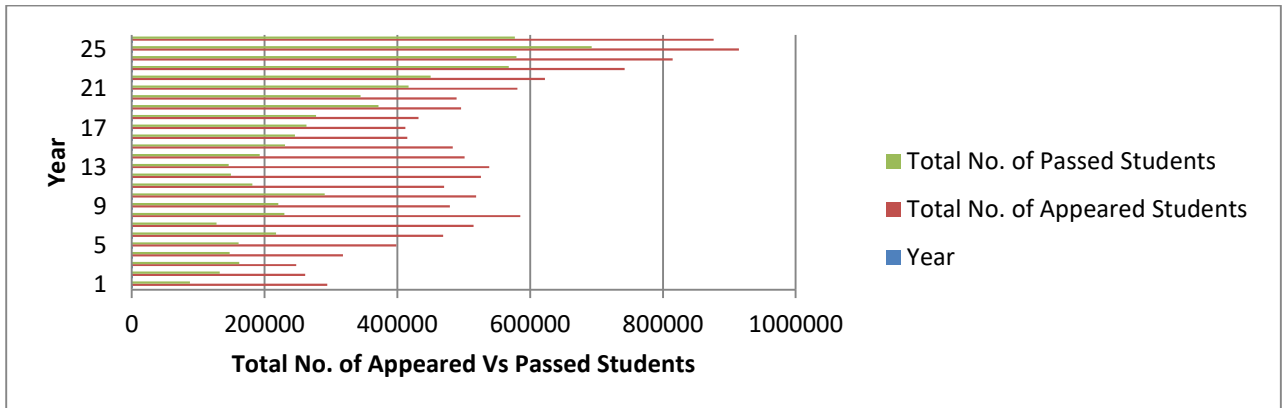


Figure 1. Bar Diagram for the Total No. of Appeared Vs Passed Students for the Year 1990-2015.

From the figure 1 it is observed that as the year increases, the total number of appeared and passed students also increases where the total numbers of passed students are comparatively lower than appeared students. But there is a dramatically changed in the result of the year 2000, 2001 and 2002 because of developing an education policy in order to introduce a pragmatic education system suitable for the country. The distribution is positively skewed.

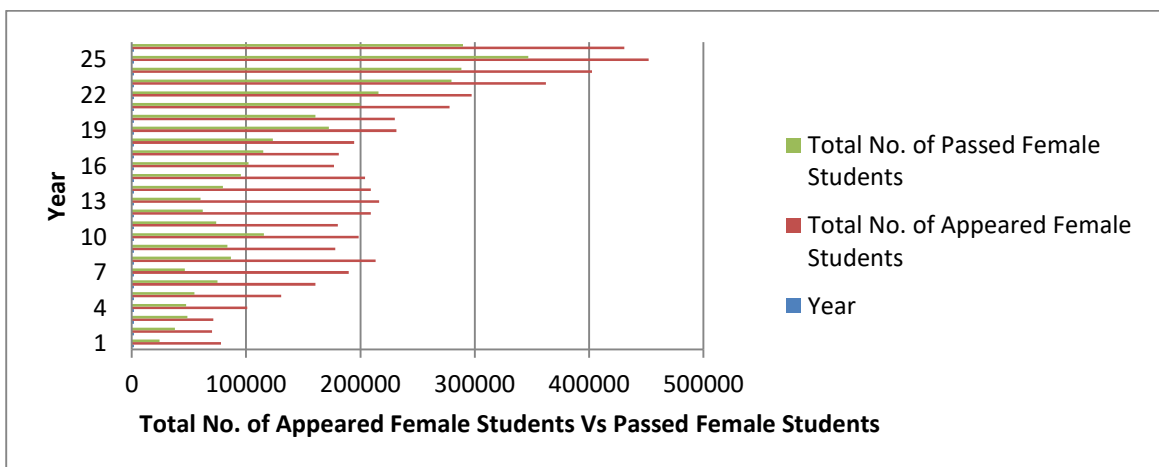


Figure 2. Bar Diagram for the Total No. of Appeared Female Students Vs Total No. of Passed Female Students for the Year 1990-2015.

From the figure 2 it is observed that as the year increases, the total number of appeared female students in higher secondary examination and passed female students also increases but the total number of passed female students are correspondingly pared down than the total number of appeared female students. As we see that there was a hysterically change in the total number of passed students of the year 2000, 2001, 2002 that affects the total number of passed female students of that year badly. But the distribution is positively skewed.

Table 2. Result of Higher Secondary School Certificate (H.S.C) by Stream, 1990-2015

Year	Total No. of Appeared Science Students	Total No. of Passed Science Students	Total No. of Appeared Humanities Students	Total No. of Passed Humanities Students	Total No. of Appeared Business Studies Students	Total No. of Passed Business Studies Students
1990	82825	30965	153251	38003	57143	18072
1991	69474	40072	142271	64860	48692	27186
1992	53854	39325	152459	84135	40737	33204
1993	53974	34968	212926	84121	50795	27341
1994	75602	41572	261408	92330	61530	27143
1995	77812	48089	318518	133292	72471	36165
1996	78931	40536	357986	62506	77751	24462
1997	109215	57097	390251	134700	85496	37999
1998	90451	56961	311910	126685	76667	37102
1999	101446	68113	333477	176333	83725	60346
2000	107406	51288	290445	94502	72690	35978
2001	126315	41289	305157	72410	94283	35659
2002	139097	41201	293478	66169	105721	38497
2003	126021	48730	254555	84003	120931	59980
2004	117766	60510	240987	97921	124728	72361
2005	96500	64589	204313	105843	114275	75104
2006	82199	55892	206498	115353	123327	92113
2007	87207	59450	211298	118631	133330	99442
2008	95805	72873	242092	167186	158242	131323
2009	94523	66851	237725	152771	156854	124899
2010	106527	77804	286563	187407	187533	151776
2011	114621	85936	302574	196261	205082	168057
2012	129645	101615	368546	260726	244257	205599
2013	138537	100477	397443	263504	278489	215316
2014	155755	129167	461262	321770	297586	241753
2015	151259	117464	444888	257995	280329	201628

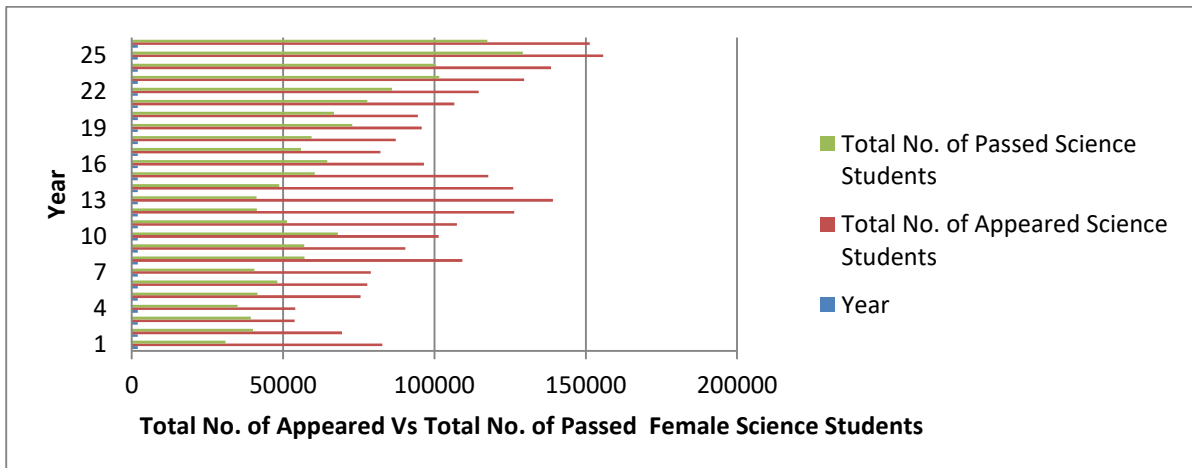


Figure 3. Bar Diagram for the Total No. of Appeared Vs Total No. of Passed Science Female Students for the Year 1990-2015.

From the figure 3 it is observed that there is a fluctuation between the total numbers of appeared vs passed Science female students for the Year 1990-2015 but not too much fluctuation as the year increases. The more mutability is seen in the year 2000, 2001 and 2002 because of developing an education policy named Shamsul Haque Education Committee- 1997. The distribution is positively skewed.

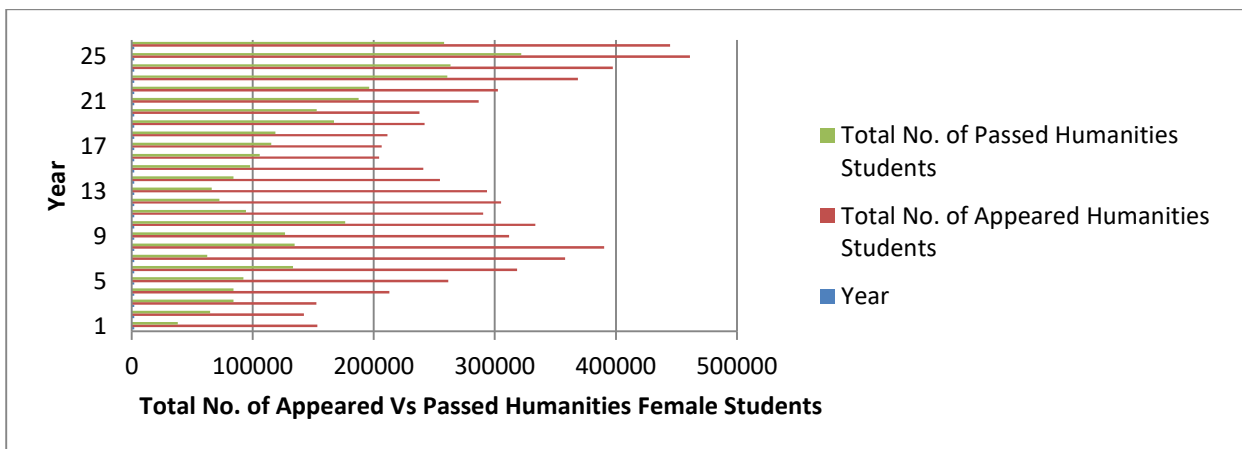


Figure 4. Bar Diagram for the Total No. of Appeared Vs Total No. of Passed Humanities Female Students for the Year 1990-2015.

From the figure 4 it is observed that there is much more ups and downs enclosed by the total number of appeared vs passed Humanities female students for the Year 1990-2015. But there is a fiercely transition of the year 2006 compared to the year 2000, 2001 and 2002 because Mohammad Moniruzzaman Mia Commission-2003 was formed in order to improve the quality of education and initiate a set of reforms to develop the sector government undertook several actions. The rate of failed students is approximately equal to the passed students. The distribution is positively skewed.

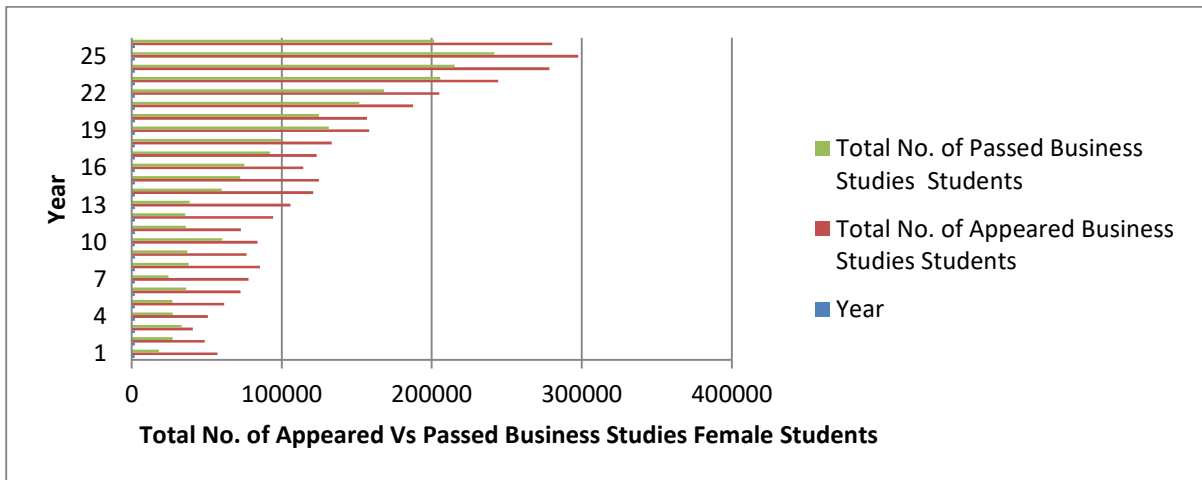


Figure 5. Bar Diagram for the Total No. of Appeared Vs Total No. of Passed Business Studies Female Students for the Year 1990-2015.

From the figure 5 it is observed that there is a flip-flop in the midst of the total number of appeared vs passed Business Studies female students for the Year 1990-2015. But there is a perilously mutation in the year 1996 where 77751 female students of Business Studies appeared in the examination but only 24462 female students passed in the examination although the rate of failed students is consonantly minor than appeared. The distribution is positively skewed.

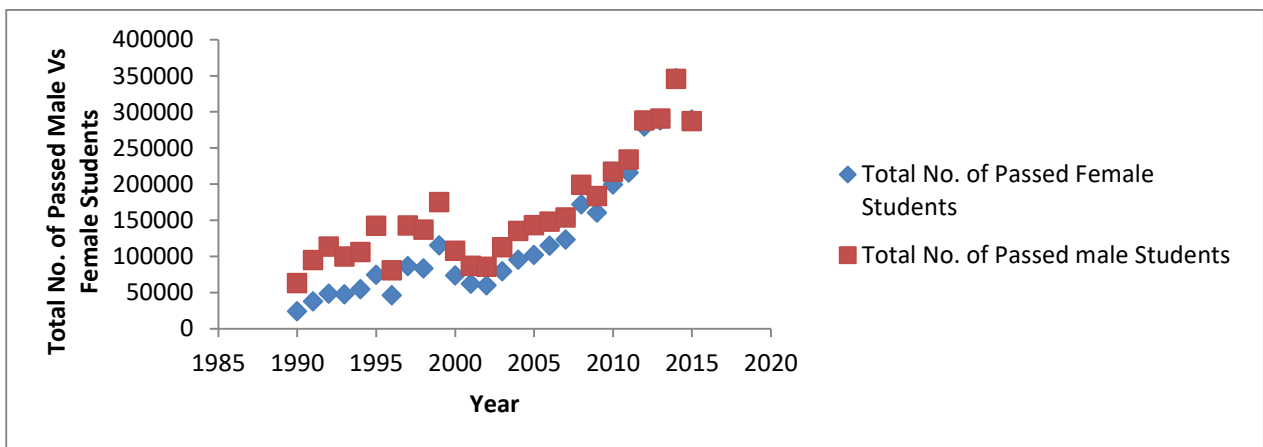


Figure 6. Scatter Plot for the Total No. of Passed Male and Total No. of Passed Female Students for the Year 1990-2015.

From the figure 6 it is observed that there is a rising trend for both the male and female students who passed in the year 1990-2015. As the year increases, the rate of passed female students also increases but at the time of 2009 the total number of passed male and female students is approximately same while in the year 2014 and 2015 the rate of female passed students transgressed the male passed students that leads to achieve equality and women’s

empowerment. Sustainable development is only possible when women and men enjoy equal opportunities to reach their potential.

CONCLUSION

Bangladesh is one of the least developed countries of the world. Enrolment rate is very important determinant of educational achievement of a country. But it has made notable progress in the education sector in the last two decades.

From the distribution it is observed that the total number of appeared and passed students raises as the year expansions. With the extension of the years, the total number of appeared and passed female students (Science, Humanities and Business Studies) also increases. The more splendid matter is that the rate of female passed students surpassed the male passed students afterwards 2013. This histrionic diversification leads to achieve Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As we surprised the world with our MDG achievements, we are committed to lead by example again in the case of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on or before 2030 by increasing women participation through education.

Suggestions for Promoting Women Participation in Higher Secondary Education

- i. Introduce attractive scholarships for both financially poor students and meritorious students to encourage women students in higher secondary education.
- ii. Provide counseling for both family and person concerned at the secondary stage of education.
- iii. Make skill-oriented higher secondary education.
- iv. Improve transport facilities for women students.
- v. Establish more female educational institutions.
- vi. Provide Bank loan facilities for women students.
- vii. Establish higher educational institutions in rural and tribal areas.
- viii. Check sexual harassment within and outside institutions.
- ix. Increase women teachers in co-educational institutions of higher education.
- x. Increase women representations in decision making bodies of higher educational institutions.
- xi. Government should formulate and implement policies for stopping drop out of girl students in secondary and lower classes.
- xii. In many cases early marriage leads to withdrawal of women from higher studies. This must be stopped.
- xiii. Increase hostel facilities for women students.
- xiv. Above all, attitudes of the male oriented society must be changed. This will undoubtedly help in increasing women participation in higher education.

REFERENCES

- Brokwell, P.J. and Davis, R.A (1996) *Introduction to Time Series and Forecasting*, Springer, New York.
- Gujarati, D. N. (2003) *Basic Econometrics*, 4th ed., McGraw Hill, New York.
- Juma, N. & Lee, J.(2012) *The moderating effects of traditionality-modernity on the effects of internal labor market belief on employee affective commitment and their turnover intention*, International Journal of Human Resource Management, 23(11), 2315-2332.

Nazmuunnessa Mahtab *Women, Gender and Development: Contemporary Issues*, Published in Dhaka: A. H. Development Pub. House; Kolkata: Distributor in India, Paragon Enterprise, 2012.

S. Nath (2014) *Higher Education and Women Participation in India*, Journal of Business Management & Social Sciences Research (JBM&SSR) ISSN No: 2319-5614 Volume3, No.2, February 2014.

Singh, G., Pathak, RD and Naz, R.(2010) *Women Entrepreneurship: A case study of SMEs in Fiji Islands*, Published in 'International Research Handbook on Successful Women Entrepreneurs' edited by Sandra L. Fielden and Marilyn J. Davidson from Manchester Business School, University of Manchester, UK. This book is being published by Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

World Population Prospects - Global demographic estimates and projections by the United Nations, 2017.