

Overriding Need for Educational Research

By Raffat Binte Rashid

the South Asian sub-Regional meeting of Education Researchers. Each paper discusses and describes extensively about the process of Educational Research in their respective countries.

Dr Shamsul Haque in his paper discussed elaborately, Bangladesh's standings on Educational Research

highlighted that India is presently half literate and half illiterate. Literacy rate of the population has grown from 18 per cent to 52 per cent. She said that the National Policy of Education (NPE) undertaken in 1986 is a major landmark in Indian education. After independence in 1947, in order to find research-based

sponsible for promotion of research works. The Seventh Five-Year Plan of Nepal (1985-90) made some reference to the promotion of research activities in various development sectors in the country.

Dr N G Kulartna of Sri Lanka in his paper said that in Sri Lanka the universities have borne the major responsibility of educational research in the country until the establishment of the National Institute of Education in 1987. These institutions have always enjoyed a long tradition of research and are manned by personnel who pass expertise in to different fields of educational research. The Department of Educational Research of the National Institute of Education is one of the major institutions currently undertaking and promoting educational research in Sri Lanka.

At the inaugural session of this meeting the Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University, speaking as chief guest, underlined the need for identifying issues and ways of educational uplift. He urged the researchers to undertake giant strides and make best use of concrete proposals.

He said the research area was always neglected and it is time to gear up. Dr A K Jalaluddin Unesco senior Programme Adviser in his address at the meeting, pointed out a crisis in funding research in developing world. Education, Science and Technology are important to change the world because education is not for understanding reality but to change reality.

This particular area has been always neglected and with this unique initiative we can only hope and look forward to a better global interaction on this issue and put emphasis to undertake more research studies on educational issues. We should try to materialize further this professional growth by creating awareness; social consciousness and exchange of ideas and experiences. Shamsul Haque pointed out that research should be addressed to find the root causes of underdevelopment and should no longer be viewed as an input-output process. Increased emphasis should be given to combine qualitative aspect with quantitative data in research.



work. He said that the country has quite an extensive education system with more than 51,000 general primary schools, 16,000 religious primary schools and 13 universities. But the country, after independence inherited the indifferent attitudes in general and educational research which it still bears. The First Bangladesh Education Commission was constituted in 1973. But the process gained momentum during the Third Five-Year Plan (1985-90), and now with new opportunities, during the Fourth Five-Year Plan (1990-94), the scope is expanding. Educational research has not been institutionalized yet. It might be concluded that educational research has not quite developed as a profession yet.

Dr Usha Nayar in her presentation has

EDUCATIONAL research is a continuous process and has become a part of the culture and system in the developed world but not in its developing part. In this age of international cooperation, the developing countries should come forward and play a vital active role in educational research. Emphasising this issue the Southern Educational Research Initiative (SERI) decided that a South Asian sub-Regional Meeting of Educational Researchers should be held, for formulating research proposal and exploring the possibility of network in the sub-region. This meeting jointly organized by SERI and Bangladesh Forum for Educational Development (BAFED), was recently held in Dhaka, first of its kind in the sub-region.

BAFED is a voluntary, non-profit, non-governmental organization devoted to educational research, publication and educational development. Its chairman Dr Abu Hamid Latif said that this meeting has given us an opportunity for a wider South and South Asian interaction. The two major objectives of this meeting are to arrive at a state-of-the-art delineation of educational research in the sub-region with special attention to the building of research capacity building and research utilization; and to identify areas of educational research programmes and explore the possibility of establishing a network for South Asia.

Among the SAARC country delegates, the meeting was attended by Dr Usha Nayar from India, she is a Professor and the head of the department of women's studies National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). Dr Ratna Man Pradhan from Nepal, he is an executive director, Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (EERID). From Sri Lanka Dr N G Kulavaratne, Education Division, the open university of Sri Lanka and Dr Shamsul Haque from the host country. He is a forum professor of Institute of Education and Research (IER). They have all submitted papers on Educational Research Environment, at the three-day workshop from Sept. 5-7 '93 for

International Literacy Day More Impetus to Female Education

By Prof Roushanara Hoque,

INTERNATIONAL Literacy Day is being observed on Sept 8th, every year with great zeal and fervour for the eradication of illiteracy from the face of the earth. Education means pursuit of knowledge for the enrichment of man so that he or she can be useful, both for the society and for the state. Every citizen has equal right to be a worthy citizen of the state. So long our govt. and society have neglected female education, as a result of which the rate of literacy among the female populace is less than half of their female counterparts.

According to the theory of economics of female education, the nation is benefitted two-fold by the money spent of the education of the women resources who are both national wealth and potential mothers of the future generation. By educating a girl we can educate a whole family. Educated wives can also inspire their husbands for doing what is good and noble for the society and the state. Our democratic govt. has realised the necessity of uplifting the female sections. So let us hope that from the International Literacy Day of this year special new schemes will be launched for the enrichment of the souls of this so-long deprived and unprivileged womenfolk.

The present govt. has already taken some steps to raise the rate of girls' literacy. Primary education has been made free and compulsory both for the boys and the girls. To give more impetus to female ed-

ucation only girl students have been exempted from paying tuition fees up to class VIII. In every thana one Girls' School has been brought under govt. control.

The recent launching of a country wide "Food for Education" programme is also aimed at encouraging the poor and the underprivileged boys and girls, and thereby raise the rate of literacy and salvage them from hunger as well. Initially this programme will cover 4600 schools across the country. In executing this programme our Prime Minister is humbly requested to pay her kind attention to all those primary schools run by various social welfare organisations. I myself being associated with such schools, have seen that unless the poor students are being given some food or other things as token of love they feel less interested in attending their classes. The reason is that they are to work for their livelihood and therefore cannot spare any time for education. If our govt. would include those schools in the Food for Education programme by giving at least half of the amount of food to the needy students, these schools could contribute to raise the rate of literacy. Special attention may kindly be given to the girls' schools to raise up the literacy rate at par with that of the boys. Let more new schemes be launched to that effect from this Day.

The writer is the Secretary of Rokeya Sakhawati Swarni Samity of Dhanmondi, Dhaka.

A Comprehensive Educational Plan

By Md Ziaul Hassan Khan Majlis

BRIEFLY, these uses can be classified under four main headings: examination have been employed as a means of maintaining standards, as an incentive to effort, as an administrative device and as a tool of social engineering.

Examinations as a device for maintaining standards are of three categories: competitive entry, licensing and inspection. Of the three categories mentioned above, the competitive entry is discussed here. There are numerous examples, in all countries of examinations which are in reality, frequently in name only, competitions designed to eliminate the majority of candidates and allocate the remainder to certain known vacancies in, for example, the civil service, in secondary schools, in colleges or universities. The most striking instance of this sort of contest is undoubtedly the competition for entry into the Chinese Imperial service, which continued almost unchanged for over 1,500 years until the end of the nineteenth century in the form of a remarkable series of eliminating rounds.

The point to notice, throughout the series of contests, is that they were competitive. Results were governed not by an absolute standard of performance but by the level of competence of the competitors and in the last resort, by the number of posts to be filled. This is a characteristic feature of all such examinations, including the former Indian Civil Service

examination. It underlying justification was clearly enunciated by Macaulay: The youth who does best what all the ablest and most ambitious youths about him are trying to do well will generally prove a superior man. It is easy to argue that selection by knock-out competition is a chancy business, that the quality of the finalists is only proved in relation to the quality of the contestants in the earlier rounds and it may well happen that this year's victors are, in fact, inferior to some of the

been achieved. So far what has been discussed concern the administrative aspect of government functionaries. As far as the political institution is concerned, the political aspect of government functionaries deserves attention. The flaws of the government are of two types. (1) since the democracy has not been institutionalized, the steps taken by a government is wiped out by the successive government; so, no step gets matured. (2) MPs are the people's representatives but there are no checks and



Courtesy — Nijera Shikhi

last year's failures. But presumably examiners would argue that this is a risk worth taking, that losses and gains will cancel themselves out over a period of time and that the main object, the overall maintenance of standards, will have

Beijing conference supports Education Summit

THE Summit on Education for All, a bold venture planned for November this year, will bring together the Heads of State and Government of the nine most populous developing countries of the world. The countries are Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan. Together these countries account for three quarters of the world's over 1 billion illiterates and two thirds of some 300 million children who either do not compete the primary cycle of education or never even enrol in school.

The collaboration among the nine countries is expected to generate a wealth of innovative experiences and creative approaches to be shared in this south-to-south cooperation.

Support of the Summit was expressed at a national conference on education for all held in Beijing in March, attended by Vice Governors, heads of provincial education commissions and education specialists from all 30 provinces of China as well as ministerial or high-

level delegations from Bangladesh, Brazil, India, Nigeria and Pakistan.

It was the first time such overseas delegates had attended a Chinese national conference on education. Special invitees included the Executive Director of UNICEF, James P Grant, and the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Federico Mayor.

Premier Li Peng of China, who opened the conference, explained that the meeting was a way "to take stock and formulate plans about universalization of primary education and elimination of illiteracy in China and coordinate with the nine-country Summit on Education for All..." The heads of UNESCO and UNICEF originated the initiative when they reminded the leaders of the most populous countries of the goal of education for all set at the 1990 World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien (Thailand), and invited them to "Be personally and actively involved" in en-

gaging the activities in their countries and to lend their "prestige and authority" to the worldwide effort.

"These nine countries are fully capable of serving as regional and world laboratories and resources in the noble quest to bring education to all the world's citizens," said Director-General Mayor in his statement to the Beijing meeting. UNICEF Executive Director James P Grant added, "The global initiative in the nine most populous countries will provide world leadership in education for all as well as many inspiring examples of strategies and policies."

The Education Summit is expected to be held in November, immediately after the G-15 Summit (a group of 15 Heads of State and Government serving as the voice of the South on major North-South issues). India is this year's venue for the G-15, which meets every two years, and Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao has offered to host the Education Summit as well.

Source — Unicef

Population Education in Third World

By Prof. M A Mannan

WHEN the autocrats came into power, they destroyed all the important sectors of education initiated by the popular government earlier.

The second target of the autocrats was the population education. At the initial stage, they wanted to stop outright the foreign aided project (i.e. UNFPA assisted Project) on population education. But could not succeed due to social pressure. Subsequently they did not allow further continuation of population education activities. On the recommendation of the national seminar held in Dhaka in 1985, a new population education project was prepared in continuation of the earlier one and submitted but it was not approved by the Planning Commission. Available funds for population education in the form of grants were diverted to somewhere else.

In 1990-91, with the advent of the new democratic and popular govt. and with the fall of the autocracy, it was decided to revise the population education activities. It is already late. But this late is better than never. UNFPA again came up with funds, UNESCO willing to extend technical help, local specialists/experts are available to render help. NCTB was given the responsibility to start working. A project proposal was formulated and it was approved by the authority concerned.

Population Education was a motivational Programme which helps create awareness and scientific attitudes among all classes of people particularly to the teachers and the students to make rational decisions in Population matters at the personal, social, national and international levels as and when such decisions are needed

to take which is conducive to the success of population policy. We propagate one thing but practice quite a different thing in the matter of spreading Population Education which is conducive to the success of Population Policy. Why is such a paradox?

As a result, Population Education was not taught in the Schools and whatever progress was made earlier in Population Education teaching learning process was lost and has not yet been revived. NCTB (National Curriculum and Text Book Board), with the instruction from the Ministry of Education, and UNFPA financial assistance, started a new Project namely Institutionalization of Population Education in the formal school system. But till the present time (i.e. mid-1993) they have not yet been able to carry out its activities in full swing. Recruitment of personnel has not yet been completed though three years have almost finished.

Huge Funds invested in F F and Population. Many people working in Population and Family Planning. But the cent percent desired targets could not be achieved. This is due to lack of education.

Education and Education alone can help improve this situation.

Characteristics of Population Education
Population Education is a new emergence in the area of Academic discipline. It reveals a new horizon in Education. It is an innovation in Education.

To make the population education programme effective and to avoid the paradox the following suggestions may be given due importance:

- 1) To appoint suitable persons to do justice to the programme.
- 2) Population Education should be treated in letter and spirit as a priority programme.
- 3) There should be no contradiction anywhere in the programme.
- 4) Arrangement for proper monitoring, evaluation, and follow up should be made at every stage.
- 5) Population and for that matter Population Education should be treated as a socially viable programme by covering the whole education system to reach all teachers and students.
- 6) Non-specialists should have no access in any process of Population Education.
- 7) Arrangements be made for in-built system of accountability at every stage of the programme.
- 8) Extensive Training for teachers and others be organized.
- 9) Motivational measures be taken for all teachers and workers of Population Education.
- 10) Evaluative studies be arranged as and when needed.
- 11) Well-organised documentation, publications and library services be ensured.

The writer is Ex Principal, Teacher's Training College and former Executive Director, Population Education Programme of the Ministry of Education.

This is the last instalment of this article

Critical Assessment of the Bangladesh Cadet Colleges

By Abul Ashraf Noor

AFTER 35 years of their existence we firmly believe that the Cadet Colleges in Bangladesh are the mainstay of the country's academics and discipline. The people now realise that they are nurseries of potential leaders by turning out educated young men of strong moral fibre, pledged body and should to national ideals and objectives. They are viable educationally, superior intellectually and productive economically for the nation's future under the protective umbrella of the Council of Cadet Colleges and their

Governing Bodies headed by the Adjutant General as their Chairman for the smooth functioning of these institutions which are run on the lines of the British Public School System. By now the Cadet Colleges have been reorganized not only as the good places of learning but also an excellent academic industry in this part of the world.

The pioneering role of Faujdharhat Cadet College under the dynamic leadership of Sir William Maurice Brown since the days of 28 April, 1958 deserves all the support and admiration for its bold, unprecedented and, by now historical initiative as the Faujdharhat Cadet College has achieved the goals and aspirations of the people in the eyes of the outside world. Nationally and internationally the Faujdharhat Cadet Colleges in known as the "Eton of the East". The spirit emanating from it did convince the authorities of the necessity for the establishment of three more Cadet Colleges in Pakistan times and after the war of liberation in 1971 six more Cadet Colleges including one for the girls on the sacred soil of Bangladesh. The Cadet Colleges bear the responsibility of preserving profound respect for old norms of life and Bangladesh traditions and culture. Without regard to class distinction or social background they give education a new vitality and positive meaning for tangible results in the challenging situation of inter-relations of educational system in Bangladesh.

Beneath the academic excitement and joys in competitions that fill the green minds of the Cadets during their stay with us, we are very serious in the character building activities for the good of their future life. We never lose sight of the fact that on each day all of us confront a tough challenging world which is not a world of luxury, but a world of necessity.

If we wish to search for a good life out of honest endeavour, we are to think that the Cadet Colleges can combat the evils of cynicism, arrogance, brutality, dishonesty and vulgarity which appear to be the attributes of modern youth. For that purpose the cost of quality education will be high in the Cadet Colleges, like that of India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and

of the integration of policy matters in every detail. If it does, the Principalship and the Cadet College will be well-served.

Finally I wish to say that the function of educational leadership is to listen to what we value. It is also true with the Cadet Colleges. But we know hostile forces against us. Despite the threats, everyone really knows that the glorious traditions of the Cadet Colleges in Bangladesh will continue to live on in a most distinguished fashion as a powerfully constructive force in a nation-wide



Courtesy — Unicef

nately for the country, the Cadet Colleges have found out a way to survive.

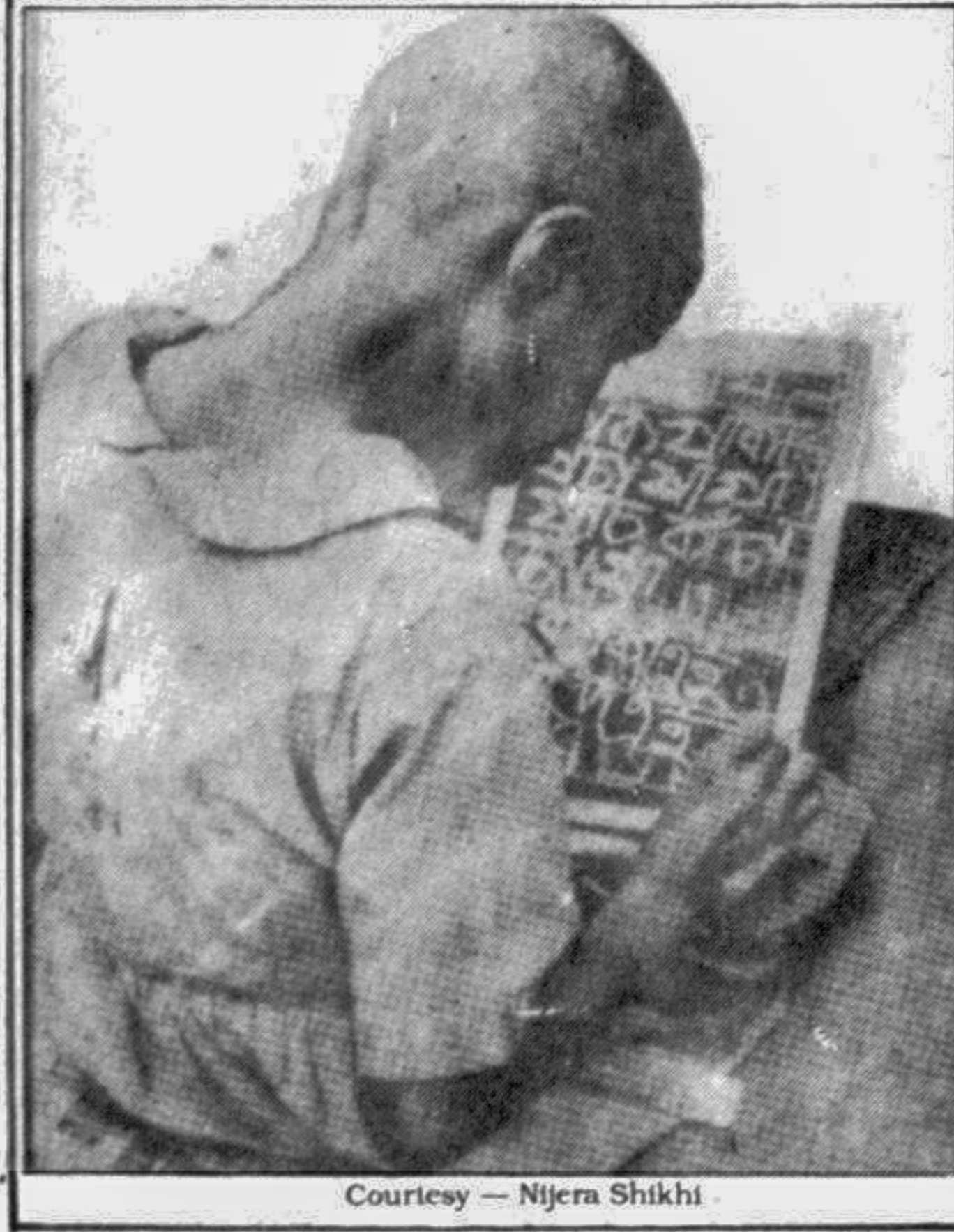
We want our Cadets to acquire four key skills: an in-depth knowledge of calculus fluency in a second language, i.e. English the ability to write clearly and precisely and a good set of ethics. We may lay claim to a future as bright and as exciting as our past if we are sincere in demonstrating the truth that the Cadets are trusted in the College by their teachers in all creative activities.

Therefore, the team approach is always good to serve strong, steady and effective leadership for the total progress of the institution. In this respect, the institutional needs and the policy goals of the Principal are more vital for making a full-proof mechanism to achieve solid achievements and decision for the promotion

quality education forever. Sir William Maurice Brown used to say, "If you can't stay here and tell instantly who's for you and who's against you, you don't belong to active environment." Sir William Maurice Brown taught us this maxim of real life. I still remember it.

The writers has taught in different Cadet Colleges for the last three decades. He is presently the Principal of Pabna Cadet College.

Corrigendum: In the article 'Vision for the Blind', published on the Education feature on 25.8.93, the term Vision was inadvertently used, instead the name of the organization Bangladesh Dristhin Foundation.



Courtesy — Nijera Shikhi