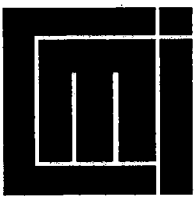


**Secondary and Higher Secondary
Education in Bangladesh**
Its Growth and State Expenditures:
A Time-series Analysis of 1981-90

Mahmudul Alam

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Summary:

This paper first identifies trends and patterns in the growth of the secondary and higher secondary schools in Bangladesh, while differentiating between the Islamic *madrassa* schools, and the general (mainstream) ones. Substantial differences are also found between rural and urban schools. Secondly the role of the state in this sub-sector of education is related to general policies of regulation, standardisation, certification, and most important to its financial role for recurrent and development costs. The third objective of this paper is to formulate some suggestions for policy conclusions and future research.

Sammendrag:

Dette notatet analyserer utviklingstrekk i veksten av den videregående skolen i Bangladesh, som omfatter både de islamske *madrassa*-skolene, og de mer "vanlige" skolene. Det viser seg at det eksisterer betydelige forskjeller, bl.a. mellom skoler i byene og på landsbygda. Ettersom det er få statlig eide skoler, består statens rolle i hovedsak i regulering, godkjenning og standardisering, og ikke minst ved finansiering av både løpende utgifter og investeringer. I siste kapittel formulerer forfatteren sine forslag til ny politikk overfor dette skoletrinnet, samt forslag til videre forskning.

Indexing terms:

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*To be ordered from Chr. Michelsen Institute, Department of Social Science and Development,
Fantoftvegen 38, N-5036 Fantoft, Norway. Telephone: +47 5 574000. Telefax: +47 5 574166*

Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Salient features of secondary and higher secondary education sub-sector	3
2.1 Institutions, students, teachers, physical facilities, recurrent costs	3
2.2 Institutions by management type	5
2.3 Enrollment-growth	5
2.4 Transition rates	6
3. State participation	10
3.1 General policies of regulation, standardization, certification	10
3.2 The financial role of the state	12
3.2.1 Principles	12
3.2.2 Recurrent cost	12
3.2.3 Development or capital costs	13
4. Conclusions, policy-suggestions and future research	17
4.1 Conclusions	17
4.2 Policy suggestions	18
4.3 Future research	19

Tables

1.1 Secondary school system. Institutions, teachers, students, class-area, public-private, urban-rural. 1981 and 1991	4
1.2 Educational institutions at secondary and higher secondary levels by management type 1991	5
1.3 Enrollment at secondary and higher secondary levels, 1981-1990	8
1.4 Cohort analysis of secondary school students who entered class VI in 1985	9
1.5 Recurrent costs to the state by major categories for secondary and higher secondary sub-sector, FY 1981-1990	11
1.6 Unit recurrent costs per enrolled students for secondary and higher secondary sub-sector, FY 81-90	15
1.7 Unit development cost per enrolled student for secondary and higher secondary sub-sector in Bangladesh, FY 81-90	16

Appendix A: Concepts and definitions of costs	20
Appendix B: Secondary and higher secondary education sub-sector: Development activities/projects, 1980-90	21

1. Introduction

The present paper intends to analyse the development of the secondary and higher secondary sub-sector of education in Bangladesh in the last decade of the 1980s. It will try to relate the development in the sub-sector with the role of the State.

Why are we interested in studying the role of the state vis-à-vis the development of secondary and higher secondary education sub-sector in Bangladesh? *Firstly*, in general, a case is made for treating entitlement to/availability of basic education (along with health) as a public good, in addition to defence, law and order, and justice.¹ In Bangladesh it has been found that a person in most cases does not acquire the general standards of basic education (with regard to reading, writing and arithmetic) before completing eight years of formal schooling years.² Therefore, education up to junior secondary level (i.e., class VIII) defines basic education in Bangladesh. The state should play an important role, indirectly or directly if necessary (when and where other agents such as individuals and community are not playing the desired role) to make the vast multitudes of people (around 65 per cent of the total population aged nine years or above) equipped with basic education and help them become better economic and social agents. *Secondly*, and this is linked to the last sentence, people armed with basic education are more productive.³ For efficiency and growth, education (up to secondary level in Bangladesh) should be made easily accessible and available, if possible

¹ See Tanzi, Vito, 1991, *Public Finance in Developing Countries*, Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd., England, Chapter 1, pp. 1-9.

² As recent as February, 1992, we conducted a set of tests on 30 male-adults in the metropolitan area of Dhaka. The tests were designed keeping in mind the broad aims of basic education agreed upon at the World Conference on Education, held in Bangkok (Jomticu) Thailand, 1990. It was found that the people with education upto class (grade) VIII or above could satisfy the basic education levels with regard to reading, writing and arithmetic tests.

³ See Wadi D. Haddad et al. (1990), p.6. A review of empirical studies on relationship between education and economic development by the authors shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between farm productivity and years of schooling. When modernizing inputs such as mechanized irrigation, fertilizers, pesticides, are combined with basic education (upto eight years of schooling) the farm productivity is much higher as compared with a control ('without') situation. In case of non-agricultural activities, inspite of a number of difficulties (e.g., not being able to control for ability differences, social class differences), the estimates of rates of return give us important insights into the relative economic payoff to education. The rates of return for each level of education differs among countries at varying levels of development. It shows countries with lower level of development obtain higher degree (rate) of economic payoff from each level of education.

universal. On Bangladesh, Hossain⁴ shows with a country-wide sample survey of households that there is a statistically significant relationship between farm productivity and basic education (with schooling up to eight years i.e., class VIII). He also shows that in non-agricultural activities, people engaged in petty-trading, groceries, small-scale or cottage industries, obtain economic return for their education. *Thirdly*, education has a clear equity aspect. Like any other society on earth, Bangladesh has an unequal distribution of assets and opportunities among its people. A more egalitarian access to education should help economic and social mobility in the country.

With the above mentioned perspective of basic education for the country in our mind, we will try to explore the following topics in this paper:

- (1) What has been happening to the secondary and higher secondary education sub-sector in terms of enrollment-growth and transition-rates? What types of institutions, public or private, are engaged in the sub-sector and what are their salient features?
- (2) How is the State involved in the maintenance and development of the sub-sector?
- (3) Some suggestions for future research and policy conclusions.

⁴ Hossain, Mahabub (1988), "Return to Education in Bangladesh", *Bangladesh Development Studies*, September issue.

2. Salient features of secondary and higher secondary education sub-sector

2.1 Institutions, students, teachers, physical facilities, recurrent costs

In 1991, there were 16,653 institutions in the sub-sector (see Table 1.1). Two broad types of institutions are covered in the sub-sector, namely (a) the mainstream (relatively secular) general education; (b) the Islamic (*madrassa*) education. Over the years the *madrassa* education has also become a general type of education (thus differing from vocational/ polytechnic type of education) with a good mix of subjects on literature, mathematics, social sciences, general science but with definite specialization on the Koran and the Hadith (the life of prophet Muhammad). Of the total institutions of 16,653, the highest share (about 52 per cent) is by the secondary (general) type, then follows the *madrassa* secondary (26 per cent) and the junior secondary (around 12 per cent). Institutions teaching higher secondary levels of education comprise a small share. Over the last decade (1981-1991) the institutions in the sub-sector have grown (simple average) at a rate of 4.41 per cent per annum, the highest rate (15.4 per cent/annum) being for the secondary *madrassas* and the lowest (a negative rate of 1.91 per cent/annum) for the junior secondary schools. It is likely that a good number of junior secondary schools have been upgraded to fully-fledged secondary schools in the reference period.

In 1991, there were about 4.5 million students enrolled in the secondary and higher secondary sub-sector; roughly 70 per cent of the total students were in the secondary (general) schools and 14 per cent in the secondary *madrassas*. It is clear that both types of secondary institutions carry a higher number of students per institution when compared with the higher secondary institutions e.g., colleges and *Alim madrassas*. Again, among the secondary schools, the urban schools are more intensively utilized as compared with their rural counterparts. For example in 1990, the average enrollment size per rural secondary school was 405 and the comparable estimate for the urban school was higher by 61 per cent i.e., 653.

Student-teacher ratios do not vary significantly between the urban and the rural schools. In 1990 there were 3.6 to 3.7 per 100 students in the secondary schools. Four-fifths of total teachers in the secondary schools are qualified with at least the first degree and there is no significant rural-urban gap. Class area per pupil is an important index of physical facilities available, though there may be significant differences of quality of physical facilities among schools (e.g. the rural schools

may possess mud-built floors and the urban schools concrete cemented floors). A comparison of class-area availability per pupil between the public and the private schools shows a striking difference in favour of the public schools. An estimate for 1990 reveals that a public secondary student enjoys roughly 46 per cent more space (i.e., class-area) as contrasted with a private secondary student. There is no doubt that the physical facilities in the public schools are also of much higher quality. The public schools are exclusively concentrated in the metropolitan areas of Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi and the district towns. Therefore, these are urban schools. A comparison of physical facilities between the urban private schools and the rural private schools can be made. There is a small advantage by the urban private schools, as shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1
Secondary school system¹. Institutions, teachers, students, class-area, public-private, urban-rural. 1981 and 1991

Aspect	Estimates		Annual Rate (1981-91) of growth in percent (simple average)
	For 1981 (1)	For 1991 (2)	
1. Number of institutions	11,559	16,653	4.41
(a) Junior Secondary	2,039	2,000	-1.91
(b) Secondary (general)	6,721	8,175	2.97
(c) Dakhil (Madrassa, secondary)	1,682	4,270	15.4
(d) Higher Secondary (Intermediate Colleges)	263	323	2.28
(e) Alim (Madrassa, higher secondary)	530	798	5.05
(f) Degree Colleges ²	324	547	6.88
2. Total students	27,13,360	45,15,136	6.64
(a) Secondary (general)	22,17,000	31,56,119	4.24
(b) Dakhil madrassa	2,11,210	6,14,213	19.1
(c) Higher secondary	2,06,000	5,79,824	18.1
(d) Alim madrassa	79,150	1,64,980	10.8
3. Students per school ³			
(a) Urban secondary		653	
(b) Rural secondary		405	
4. Teachers in Secondary Schools ⁴			
(a) Per 100 students in urban school		3.6	
(b) Per 100 students in rural school		3.7	
(c) Per urban school		23.5	
(d) Per rural school		14.9	
(e) In urban School qualified upto First degree or beyond, percent of the total		81.05	
(f) In rural school, qualified upto First degree or beyond, percent of the total		82.02	
5. Class-area per student (in sqft.) in secondary schools ⁵			
(a) Public		19.2	
(b) Private		13.1	
(c) Rural (private)		13.6	
(d) Urban (private)		14.8	
6. Recurrent costs (Taka) per student / year in Secondary Schools (1987-88) ⁶			
(a) Urban private		2,072	
(b) Rural private		1,013	

- Notes:
1. By the term we include here all the classes from VI to XII under the general education system and the *Madrassa* (Islamic school) system.
 2. Almost every degree college in Bangladesh provides education to students at classes XI and XII. In a typical degree college, roughly 60 percent of the total students belong to the higher secondary level. That is the reason behind including the degree colleges here.
 3. See Alam and Salimullah, 1991.
 4. Alam and Salimullah, 1991.
 5. Alam and Salimullah, 1991.
 6. Alam, 1992.

- Sources:
- BANBEIS, *Bangladesh Educational Statistics, 1987*, Dhaka 1988.
 BANBEIS, *Bangladesh Educational Statistics, 1991*, Dhaka 1992.
 Alam, M. 'Performance of Non-Government Secondary Schools in Rural Bangladesh', *Bangladesh Development Studies* (forthcoming) September 1992.
 Alam, M. and Salimullah, M., *Performance of Secondary School Students in Bangladesh: Individual, Family and School-based Determinants*, BIDS, Dhaka 1991.

Another glaring aspect of urban-rural difference in terms of opportunities is reflected in the recurrent expenditures (or costs) per pupil in the private secondary schools. For example in 1987-88, per capita recurrent expenditure for an urban (private) school student was Tk.2072, which was double the comparable estimate for a rural (private) school student (Tk. 1013). It is obvious that the urban (private) schools can mobilize more resources from the community and parents in terms of tuition fees, subscriptions and donations. The rural areas are starved of financial resources and cannot offer their students as much resources and facilities as the urban students get in their schools.

2.2 Institutions by management type

The secondary and higher secondary education sub-sector of Bangladesh is an example of private provisioning of public goods; over 92 per cent of the total institutions belonged to the private sector in 1991 (see Table 1.2). In fact, the institutions under the Islamic system are 100 per cent under private management. In larger number of cases the secondary schools are under private management. The inclusion of degree colleges (which comprise higher secondary section) brings down the average (per cent) share under private management.

Table 1.2
Educational institutions at secondary and higher secondary
levels by management type, 1991

Level	Management type (% of total)		Total (absolute) numbers
	Public (1)	Private (2)	
(a) Junior school		100.0	2000
(b) Secondary school	3.3	96.7	8715
(c) Dakhil Madrassa		100.0	4270
(d) Intermediate college	4.0	96.0	323
(e) Alim madrassa		100.0	798
(f) Degree college	37.3	62.7	547
Total	7.8	92.2	16653

Source: BANBEIS, *Bangladesh Educational Statistics, 1991* (Dhaka 1992).

2.3 Enrollment-growth

It is estimated that secondary enrollment (both general and *madrassa* together) grew at a rate (annually compounded) of 4.1 per cent/annum in 1981-90 (see Table 1.3). The estimated rate of growth for general secondary section was 3.08 per cent/annum while the comparable estimate for the *madrassa* (*Dakhil*) section was

much higher at 11.4 per cent/annum. The enrollment in the *Dakhil madrassas* started from a low base of around 2,11,000 in 1981 and increased to 6,14,000 in 1990. The comparable figures for the general secondary schools were much higher; the enrollment size in 1981 was 22,17,000 and 31,55,000 in 1990.

In the higher secondary section (both general and *madrassa* together) enrollment grew at a rate (annually compounded) of 10.3 per cent/annum in the reference period. In contrast to the secondary section, the rate of growth was estimated to be higher for the general type of institutions (i.e., in the colleges) than in the (*Alim*) *madrassas*. We can observe a tendency among the students from this pattern — a large number of students (most probably in the rural areas) enrolling under the Islamic system at the secondary school level and then switch to the general system (i.e., to the colleges) at the higher secondary level. The rate of growth of enrollment for the whole secondary and higher secondary sub-sector was around 5 per cent/annum for the period. It seems the enrollment growth rates have been good for the sub-sector if one compares it with the growth rate of population.

Estimates of participation in education by level (i.e., secondary and higher secondary) and gender should give us some idea with regard to achievement in enrollment compared to population growth. Table 1.3 shows that the male participation rate (gross) at the secondary level went up from 31.0 per cent in 1981 to 35.5 per cent in 1990. The female participation rate (gross) for the same level was much lower 12.2 per cent in 1981 and 16.1 per cent for the terminal year. At the higher secondary level, the (gross) participation rate for the male was 11.0 per cent in 1981 and 21.5 per cent in 1990. For the same level, the (gross) participation rate for the female was much lower, only 3.2 per cent (in 1981) and 7.6 per cent (in 1990). Thus, the society has to do a lot to bring a huge number of potential students under the educational system.

2.4 Transition rates

Transition rates for all types (both general and *madrassa* and secondary and higher secondary) are not available for the past years. Only a recent study by Alam and Salimullah (1991) comes up with definite estimates of transition for the general secondary schools. The study presents estimates by public-private, rural-urban and male-female divides for the cohort which entered class VI in 1985 (see Table 1.4). For the country as a whole, it is estimated that of the cohort only 45 per cent make it (i.e., are promoted) to class X in the right year (i.e., 1990). A huge amount of wastage in resources can be observed during the transition of the cohort from class VI to X. Around 27 per cent of the total students originally enrolled either fail or discontinue. Another 20 per cent repeat at different grades. Significant differences are observed in promotion rate (and also in other similar indicators of performance) when a comparison is made between the males and the females (in favour of the former), and between public and the private school (in

favour of the public school students). In general, the promotion rate does not significantly vary between urban and rural schools.

The public exam results (conducted by the educational boards) give another indicator of performance of the students and also of the education system. In 1985-90 the graduation rate (of those who appeared at the secondary school certificate exam) was 49.2 per cent. It was roughly 91 per cent for the public schools and 47.6 per cent for the private schools. (See Alam and Salimullah, 1991, chapter 2). The graduation rate (of those who appeared at the public exams) for the higher secondary (general) level varied roughly between 40 and 70 per cent in the last decade.

Table 1.3
Enrollment at secondary and higher secondary levels, 1981-1990
(Figures in 100,000)

Type/level of education	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	Percent rates of growth (exponential), 1981-90	
1. General Secondary (classes VI - X)	Male (M)	15.85	16.64	16.50	16.83	17.43	17.92	19.22	19.40	19.29	19.78	
	Female (F)	6.32	7.64	7.83	8.01	8.41	8.68	8.20	9.28	9.72	10.16	
	Total (T)	22.17	24.28	24.33	24.84	25.84	26.60	27.42	28.68	29.01	29.94	3.08*
2. Madrasa Secondary (Dakhil)	M	1.92	2.25	2.27	2.81	2.98	3.55	4.62	4.06	4.28	5.56	
	F	0.19	0.27	0.27	0.33	0.35	0.43	0.54	0.56	0.59	0.59	
	T	2.11	2.52	2.54	3.14	3.33	3.98	5.16	4.62	4.87	6.15	11.4*
A. Sub-total	M	17.77	18.89	18.77	19.64	20.41	21.47	23.84	23.46	23.57	25.34	
	F	6.51	7.91	8.10	8.34	8.76	9.11	8.74	9.84	10.31	10.75	
	T	24.28	26.80	26.87	27.98	29.17	30.58	32.58	33.30	33.88	36.09	4.1*
1. General higher secondary (classes XI and XII)	M	1.49	2.05	2.07	2.22	2.45	3.09	3.84	3.87	3.81	3.96	
	F	0.57	0.78	0.79	0.86	0.95	1.27	1.45	1.49	1.63	1.69	
	T	2.06	2.83	2.86	3.08	3.40	4.36	5.29	5.36	5.44	5.65	11.3*
2. Madrasa Higher secondary (Alim)	M	0.75	0.95	0.95	1.15	1.15	1.24	1.42	1.45	1.47	1.46	
	F	0.04	0.07	0.07	0.08	0.08	0.09	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.11	
	T	0.79	1.02	1.02	1.23	1.23	1.33	1.52	1.55	1.57	1.57	7.3*
B. Sub-total	M	2.24	3.00	3.02	3.37	3.60	4.33	5.26	5.32	5.28	5.42	
	F	0.61	0.85	0.86	0.94	1.03	1.36	1.55	1.59	1.73	1.80	
	T	2.85	3.85	3.88	4.31	4.63	5.69	6.81	6.91	7.01	7.22	10.3*
C. Grand Total Secondary and Higher Secondary (all types) = (A + B)	M	20.01	21.89	21.79	23.01	24.01	25.80	28.10	28.78	28.85	30.76	
	F	7.12	8.76	8.96	9.28	9.79	10.47	10.29	11.43	12.04	12.55	
	T	27.13	30.65	30.75	32.29	33.80	36.27	39.39	40.21	40.89	43.31	5.0*
Gross enrollment rate (percent)												
A. Secondary level	M	31.0	32.2	31.3	32.1	32.8	33.8	36.6	35.1	34.1	35.5	
	F	12.2	14.4	14.1	14.6	15.0	15.4	14.3	15.7	15.9	16.1	
	T	21.9	23.6	23.2	23.6	24.2	24.9	25.9	25.7	25.4	26.1	
B. Higher secondary level	M	11.0	14.3	14.0	15.1	15.6	18.4	21.7	21.8	21.3	21.5	
	F	3.2	4.4	4.3	4.5	4.8	6.2	6.9	7.0	7.5	7.6	
	T	7.3	9.5	9.3	10.0	10.4	12.5	14.6	14.7	14.6	14.8	

Note: * means statistically significant at one percent level.

Sources: 1. BANBEIS, Bangladesh educational statistics, 1987, Dhaka 1988
2. BANBEIS, Bangladesh educational statistics, 1991, Dhaka 1992
3. UNFPA, Population projection for Bangladesh, 1960-2000 A.D. (Medium variant).

Table 1.4
Cohort analysis of secondary school students who entered class VI in 1985

Class and year	Percent distribution of total students who entered class VI in 1985											Bangladesh
	Public		Private		Urban		Rural		Boys		Girls	
					Metropolitan	District town	Accessible	Remote				
VI (1985)	881	3421	1006	1040	1006	1040	1355	901	3381	921		
R	4.8	6.2	9.2	5.6	9.2	5.6	5.5	3.3	5.7	6.7	6.1	
D	8.0	15.6	9.0	12.2	9.0	12.2	17.4	16.3	14.0	14.0	15.1	
P	87.2	78.2	81.7	82.2	81.7	82.2	77.0	80.4	80.3	79.3	78.8	
Total	100.0	100.0	99.9	100.0	99.9	100.0	99.9	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
VII (1986)	3.7	4.5	6.9	2.6	6.9	2.6	3.5	5.7	4.3	4.3	4.4	
D	6.2	4.8	1.3	8.4	1.3	8.4	6.3	3.8	5.0	6.0	4.9	
T	1.3	4.1	2.3	4.2	2.3	4.2	5.0	1.8	2.5	7.2	3.9	
P	76.0	64.8	71.2	67.0	71.2	67.0	62.1	70.1	68.5	61.8	65.6	
Total	87.2	78.2	81.7	82.2	81.7	82.2	76.9	81.4	80.3	79.3	78.8	
VIII (1987)	3.9	4.3	5.5	4.0	5.5	4.0	3.8	4.0	4.4	3.8	4.3	
D	2.4	4.6	0.7	6.4	0.7	6.4	3.9	5.5	3.6	5.8	4.4	
T	3.7	2.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.4	2.6	0.9	2.8	1.7	2.4	
P	66.0	53.6	61.8	53.2	61.8	53.2	51.8	59.7	57.7	50.5	54.5	
Total	76.0	64.8	71.2	67.0	71.2	67.0	62.1	70.1	68.5	61.8	65.6	
IX (1988)	2.3	5.5	5.9	5.7	5.9	5.7	3.5	4.8	5.0	4.2	5.3	
D	2.9	2.3	0.9	4.5	0.9	4.5	1.4	3.3	1.9	4.7	2.3	
T	1.1	1.8	1.3	1.5	1.3	1.5	1.6	2.3	1.5	2.3	1.8	
P	59.7	44.0	53.7	41.5	53.7	41.5	45.3	49.3	49.3	39.3	45.1	
Total	66.0	53.6	61.8	53.2	61.8	53.2	51.8	59.7	57.7	50.5	54.5	
X (1989)	526	1503	540	431	540	431	614	444	1667	362		

Notes: 1. The following abbreviations apply:

P = promoted

D = dropped out (either failed or discontinued)

R = repeater

T = out-migration

2. Absolute numbers given in *italic* typeface

3. The Bangladesh estimates are properly weighted. See footnotes to Table 2.1 of Alam and Saimullah (1992).

4. Accessible schools within three kilometres of a metalled road

5. Remote schools more than three miles away from a metalled road

Source: Alam, M. and Saimullah, M., *Performance of Secondary School Students in Bangladesh: Individual, Family and School-level Determinants*, BIDS, Dhaka, 1992.

3. State participation

3.1 General policies of regulation, standardization, certification

In general, from the British colonial period, Bangladesh has inherited a strong role of the State in the field of education. At present, in the secondary and higher secondary sub-sector, the State plays an important role by setting the standards for education (i.e., the quality aspect), regulating the number of institutions and by certifying the successful completers (i.e., the graduates) through public exams. The standards for education for secondary and higher secondary sub-sector are mainly decided through development of curriculum and textbooks. There is a national curriculum/textbook agency known as the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) which develops and publishes textbooks for all classes from the secondary and higher secondary sub-sector. All the institutions in the country belonging to the sub-sector uniformly have to prescribe these textbooks for their students. The number and the quality of educational institutions in the sub-sector are regulated by two state agencies: (1) the Directorate of Secondary and College Education (for general education) and (2) the *Madrassa* Board (for Islamic education). The Directorate or the Board (as the case may be) has to approve the recognition (on a renewable or permanent basis) of an educational institution in the sub-sector before it (the institution) can operate in the field. The Directorate/the Board must be satisfied that there is a demand for the (proposed) educational institution in the area, the organizers have enough physical and financial resources to back up their institution and also that the institution has adequate number of trained and properly qualified persons on the teaching staff. Lastly, there are four divisional education boards (belonging to each of the four administrative divisions) in the country which organize public exams every year for the secondary and the higher secondary final (certificate) students. The *Madrassa* Board located in Dhaka organizes the similar exams for the Islamic stream and is responsible for the whole country. Thus, for the education sub-sector by conducting the public exams through the divisional education board and the *Madrassa* Board, the State keeps an ultimate say on the quality and the quantity of the completers from the secondary and higher secondary education sub-sector.

Table 1.5
 Recurrent costs to the state by major categories for
 secondary and higher secondary sub-sector, FY 1981-1990
 (in current crore Taka)

FY	1. Public Secondary (Percent share)						2. Private secondary (salary subventions)						3. Public higher secondary (Percent share)						4. Private higher secondary (salary subventions)		5. Private Madrasahs (both Deakhit and Alim, salary subventions)									
	Pay of officers (1)	Pay of establishment / admin. staff (2)	Allowances / honoraria (3)	Contingencies (4)	Grants (5)	Subtotal (6)	Pay of officers (1)	Pay of establishment / admin. staff (2)	Allowances / honoraria (3)	Contingencies (4)	Grants (5)	Subtotal (6)	Pay of officers (1)	Pay of establishment / admin. staff (2)	Allowances / honoraria (3)	Contingencies (4)	Grants (5)	Subtotal (6)	Pay of officers (1)	Pay of establishment / admin. staff (2)	Allowances / honoraria (3)	Contingencies (4)	Grants (5)	Subtotal (6)	Pay of officers (1)	Pay of establishment / admin. staff (2)	Allowances / honoraria (3)	Contingencies (4)	Grants (5)	Subtotal (6)
1981	55.3	8.3	20.2	16.2		100.0	36.187	52.6	7.9	28.9	10.6	100.0	9.414					100.0	6.171											
1982	46.9	7.1	32.6	13.4		100.0	43.138	53.0	7.0	31.0	9.0	100.0	11.385					100.0	7.218											
1983	46.4	10.0	31.8	10.6	1.2	100.0	69.284	48.7	10.6	28.8	11.0	100.0	12.459				1.2	100.0	18.086											
1984	36.5	9.1	43.3	10.2	0.9	100.0	94.913	36.5	9.1	43.3	10.2	100.0	16.783				0.9	100.0	34.409											
1985	48.8	13.9	29.5	7.2	0.6	100.0	106.593	41.4	11.7	40.3	6.1	100.0	14.994				6.1	100.0	14.070											
1986	48.2	13.6	29.7	7.9	0.6	100.0	148.152	48.1	11.6	32.0	7.8	100.0	27.003				7.8	100.0	63.071											
1987	41.7	12.2	36.9	8.7	0.5	100.0	160.041	41.7	12.0	36.8	8.6	100.0	32.717				8.6	100.0	68.090											
1988	42.4	11.8	37.3	8.0	0.5	100.0	160.041	42.8	11.7	37.3	8.0	100.0	35.722				8.0	100.0	68.090											
1989	38.4	10.8	42.8	7.5	0.4	99.9	185.587	38.9	11.0	42.1	7.6	100.0	42.815				7.6	100.0	78.630											
1990	38.2	11.1	42.8	7.5	0.4	100.0	194.856	38.0	11.2	42.9	7.5	100.0	43.637				7.5	100.0	86.907											
ALL	42.5	11.4	36.9	8.6	0.6	100.0		42.3	11.2	37.9	8.2	100.0					8.2	100.0												

Sources: GoB, Ministry of Finance, Annual Budgets (Revenue), various issues from 1981 to 1991

3.2 The financial role of the state

3.2.1 Principles

The State follows a simple set of principles in financing the secondary and higher secondary educational (both general and *madrassa*) institutions. All the costs (whether recurrent or capital) of the publicly-owned institutions are borne by the State. (See Appendix A for the concepts and definitions of costs utilized in the educational financing of Bangladesh.) From section 2.2 (and Table 1.2) we know that the overwhelming 92.2 per cent of the total institutions belong to the private (non-State) sector. The State finances 70 per cent of the salary bills of the staff (mainly teachers) of the recognized or approved institutions. The recognition part of the institutions by the State is quite tough and time-consuming. Following the general principles (described in section 3.1) with regard to regulation, standardization and certification of the educational institutions, the relevant directorate or Board scrutinizes each of the institutions, especially the new private ones. If an institution passes the general scrutiny, the salary-subvention aspect is only natural to follow.

3.2.2 Recurrent cost

Pattern

Since the private (non-State) educational institutions are overwhelming in number and there is only a salary-subvention aspect of these institutions, the State's financial role mainly relates to recurrent costs of their operation. Table 1.5 presents estimates of recurrent costs for the sub-sector, in the period 1981-90. Column 2 gives estimates for the private secondary schools, column 4 for the private higher secondary institutions and column 5 for the private *Dakhil* and *Alim madrassas*. The estimates are given in current crore (1 crore = 10 million) Taka. It is observed that the allocations in current Taka for the private educational institutions have gone up by more than five times in the case of secondary schools, more than 14 times in the case of higher secondary institutions and more than four times in the case of *madrassas*.

In the same table, more information is given about the recurrent expenditures of the public (i.e., fully State-owned) institutions. Column 1 gives the estimates for the public secondary schools and column 3 for the public higher secondary institutions. The pattern of recurrent expenditures in these institutions can be summed in the following way:

- (a) The pay of officers (all white-collared staff, including the teachers) comprise the largest part of the recurrent cost, averaging roughly 42.5 per cent of the total in the last decade. The percentage share was much higher in FY 81. But it has gradually come down to a share of 38 per cent.

(b) The pay of blue-collared staff comprises on an average 11 per cent of the total recurrent expenditures. Over the decade, it has grown by 2 to 3 per cent.

(c) One curious development is the growth of allowances/honoraria from 20 per cent in FY 81 in the case of public secondary institutions to 43 per cent in FY 90. Similarly in the case of public higher secondary institutions the share of this particular component has grown from 28 per cent in FY 81 to 43 per cent in FY 90. These financial benefits are mainly enjoyed by the white-collared first class job-holders.

(d) The shares of contingencies and grants averaged out to around 8 per cent (in both cases of secondary and higher secondary) and 0.6 to 0.4 per cent respectively.

Rate of growth

Table 1.6 presents estimates of recurrent costs per enrolled student for FY 81-90 for four different categories of students i.e., general (secondary and higher secondary) and *madrassa* (*Dakhil* and *Alim*) types. The estimates are given in 1989-90 constant Taka. See column 4 of the table. For secondary (general) category, the unit cost was Tk. 398 in FY 81 which has increased to Tk. 694 in FY 90. The estimated rate of growth (annually compounded) for the period is 7.25 per cent/year. For higher secondary (general) category, the unit cost was Tk. 1520 in FY 81 and it has risen to around Tk. 3000; the rate of growth (annually compounded) is estimated at 8.21 per cent/year. For *Dakhil* and *Alim* students, the unit costs in FY 83 (from that year budget-allocations have been made by the State) have risen from around Tk. 735 to Tk. 833 (in the case of *Dakhil*) and to Tk. 795 (in the case of *Alim*) respectively; the rates of growth of unit costs are 1.2 per cent/annum (for *Dakhil*) and 1.1 per cent/annum (for *Alim*) respectively. The estimates are not statistically significant. It is observed that the *madrassa* education vis-à-vis the general category has a lower unit cost and a low rate of growth of the unit cost. In fact, this is quite expected.

3.2.3 *Development or capital costs*

The State incurred capital or development expenditures for secondary (general) and higher secondary (general) institutions. No such costs were incurred for the *madrassa* education in the period under review. In the total developmental allocation for education sector the share of secondary and higher secondary (general) institutions averaged around 12 to 19 per cent. The allocation for FY 81 was Tk. 976.84 crore (in current taka) and the highest was for FY 87, which was Tk. 4898.97 crore (in current taka). For the FY 90, the allocation was unusually low, only Tk. 20.00 crores (in current taka). A detailed list of the development projects in the secondary and higher secondary sub-sector is given in Appendix B. Broadly, the development projects were on conversion of secondary schools into

community schools, science education programme, improvement of physical facilities, conversion of private institutions to public institutions (mainly colleges), internal scholarship for general education.

Table 1.7 presents the development costs (in 1989-90 constant taka) per enrolled student for secondary (general) and higher secondary (general) categories for the period FY 81 to FY 90. For the secondary category, the unit cost was Tk. 4498 in FY 81, then it went upto Tk. 18047 in FY 87 and again went down to Tk. 50 in FY 90. Similarly, for the higher secondary category also, one observes a highly erratic behaviour of the per unit allocation of development expenditures by the State. For example, for FY 81 the estimate was Tk. 15692. The following year i.e., FY 82 the estimate fell to Tk. 4337. It increased to Tk. 29842 in FY 85 and again fell to an abnormally low estimate of Tk. 49 in FY 90.

The estimates of rates of growth of development cost per enrolled for student secondary and higher secondary education for the period are negative, though not statistically significant. The estimates are: (-) 11.1 per cent/annum for secondary education and (-) 13.7 per cent/annum for higher secondary education.

Table 1.6
Unit recurrent costs per enrolled students for secondary and
higher secondary sub-sector, FY 81-90

Fiscal years (FY)	(1) Students (in 100,000)				(2) Total Recurrent Costs (in current 10,000,000 Taka)				(3) Conversion ratio for constant price ('89-90=100)	(4) Unit Cost (in 1989-90 Taka)			
	1. General		2. Madrassa		1. General		2. Madrassa			1. General		2. Madrassa	
	(a) Secondary	(b) Higher secondary	(a) Dhakil	(b) Alim	(a)	(b)	(a)	(b)		(a)	(b)	(a)	(b)
1981	22.17	2.06	2.11	0.79	43.383	15.585			2.01	398	1520		
1982	24.28	2.83	2.52	1.02	51.690	18.603			1.90	406	1249		
1983	24.33	2.86	2.54	1.02	78.949	20.545		4.610	1.63	532	1171	735	736
1984	24.84	3.08	3.14	1.24	108.068	28.614		7.197	1.40	609	1300	824	806
1985	25.84	3.40	3.33	1.33	126.669	37.155		8.093	1.34	657	1464	876	815
1986	26.70	4.36	4.08	1.52	171.481	90.074		12.716	1.24	796	2562	1184	1037
1987	27.42	5.39	5.16	1.56	187.174	100.807		13.233	1.17	798	2188	1017	954
1988	28.68	5.36	5.62	1.57	190.858	103.812		12.714	1.08	722	2092	882	874
1989	29.01	5.44	5.87	1.58	221.924	121.445		13.425	1.00	765	2232	857	849
1990	29.94	5.65	6.15	1.65	233.416	130.544		14.737	0.89	694	2497	833	795

Rates of growth (percent/annually compounded) of recurrent cost/student at 1989-90 constant Taka are:

- (1) For secondary general (rs) = 7.25 *
- (2) for higher secondary (rns) = 8.21 *
- (3) For Madrassa, Dhakil (rd) = 1.2
- (4) For Madrassa, Alim (ra) = 1.1

Note: * means the estimate of growth-rate is significant at one percent level.

Table 1.7
Unit development cost per enrolled student for secondary and higher secondary sub-sector in Bangladesh, FY 81-90

Fiscal years (FY)	(1) Students (in 100,000)		(2) Development Costs (in current 10,000,000 Taka)		(3) Conversion ratio for 89-90 price	(4) Unit Cost (in 1989-90 constant Taka)	
	(a) General secondary	(b) General higher secondary	(a)	(b)		(a)	(b)
1981	22.17	2.06	496.14	160.82	2.01	4498	1565
1982	24.28	2.83	1275.38	64.60	1.90	9980	433
1983	24.33	2.86	1973.22	301.96	1.63	13220	1721
1984	24.84	3.08	1217.43	108.33	1.40	3500	492
1985	25.84	3.40	1476.01	757.18	1.34	7654	2984
1986	26.70	4.36	3167.21	880.62	1.24	14709	2504
1987	27.42	5.39	4229.37	669.60	1.17	18047	1453
1988	28.68	5.36	2449.00	272.80	1.08	9222	549
1989	29.01	5.44	1295.24	333.18	1.00	4465	6125
1990	29.94	5.65	16.90	3.10	0.89	50	49

Source: Planning Commission, GoB, Annual Development Programme (ADP), various issues between 1981 to 1991.

Rates of growth (percent / annually compounded) of unit development cost:

- (1) for general secondary = (-) 11.1
(2) for general higher secondary = (-) 13.7

- Notes: 1. Development costs (actual) incurred by the state are available in the Annual Development Programme (ADP), published by the Planning Commission, GoB.
2. The allocation of development funds to the higher education sub-sector (consisting of classes XI and XII and degree-level classes) are usually lumped together. To bring out the allocation for the higher secondary part, by a rule of thumb, we multiplied the total allocation to the higher education sub-sector by the percentage-share of the students belonging to classes XI and XII in the relevant year. The percentage-share of the students belonging to classes XI and XII in the total college students varied between 62 to 75 percent.
3. In the period 1981-90, there has not been any development allocations by the state to Madrasa education for *Dakhil* and *Alim* levels.

4. Conclusions, policy-suggestions and future research

4.1 Conclusions

From the empirical estimates and related analyses presented in sections 2 and 3 we can conclude the following:

(1) The gross enrollment-rates (from both sexes), 26 per cent for secondary-level and 15 per cent for higher secondary level, are quite low by any international comparison. The comparable estimates for the female are much lower, only 16 per cent (at the secondary level) and roughly 8 per cent (at the higher secondary level) respectively. A lot of efforts, at State, community and individual levels, may be necessary to double or triple the enrollment-rate. At the secondary level, the rate of growth of *madrassa* (education) enrollment has been almost four times. While at the higher secondary level it is the other way around; the general (mainstream) enrollment grows around three times more compared with the growth-rate of *madrassa* enrollment. It will be interesting to know the reasons behind this pattern and also the switch by a large number of students from *madrassa* education to mainstream education.

(2) In terms of availability of resources (physical and financial) per pupil there is a significant difference between the public and the private schools, in favour of the former. Again, a comparison between the rural and the urban schools on this score shows a highly unfavourable situation for the rural schools.

(3) From the British colonial past, Bangladesh has inherited a strong role of State in the field of education. Fortunately, for the secondary and higher secondary sub-sector, the role has been an indirect one. The general principles with regard to regulation, standardization and certification through the educational directorate and *Madrassa* board, curriculum and textbook board and divisional (administrative) educational board have been more or less effective.

In financing of the sub-sectoral education, the salary-subvention part (70 per cent by the total salary-bills of all staff) of the non-State institutions has been quite useful. In the case of State-owned institutions, it seems an unproductive pattern of recurrent expenditures has emerged over the decade (1981-90). More resources are being diverted to allowances/honoria than to salary/wages of the officers/semi-skilled workers. In fact, one would like more resources for instructional materials. The present break-up of recurrent expenditures (as given in the State budget) does

not give a clear idea about the allocation on instructional materials. But the share of other items (i.e., contingencies, grants) and also our casual visits to a number of State-schools and colleges show that the level and quality of instructional materials are on the decline.

(4) The State support for development expenditures to the institutions in the sub-sector, has been both erratic and also highly inadequate. It is most probably due to the overall macro-economic (budgetary) constraints facing the State in the reference period. It has been an usual practice to allocate development resources to the directly productive activities and also sectors with comparative advantage, e.g., agriculture, irrigation, small-scale and rural industries and so on. Whatever development resources were available to the education sector (or the secondary and higher secondary sub-sector) was mainly due to the specific (tied) foreign-aid, multilateral (in most cases from the Asian Development Bank) or bilateral. For the sub-sector there was no well-thought out development plan by the State.

4.2 Policy suggestions

From the analyses of the role of the State with regard to the secondary and higher secondary sub-sector in Bangladesh, we would like to advance the following policy suggestions for the sub-sector:

(1) The overall allocation to education sector (which comprises 11 to 12 of the actual revenue budget) and to the secondary and higher secondary sub-sector should be raised. It is difficult to envisage a higher relative share (of the total budget) for the education sector. In the recent past, two sectors, education and defence, have received the highest financial allocations. The size of the total budget (in real terms) has to be increased. Also, an intra-sectoral reallocation in the educational budget may be made from the higher (or tertiary) education sub-sector (e.g., general universities) to the secondary and higher secondary sub-sector. Both efficiency and equity considerations will be served by such reallocation.

(2) A large number of rural and private institutions are starved off the minimum physical facilities e.g., science labs, instructional materials, reasonably-built classrooms. The State should try to finance capital expenditures of these institutions provided they perform well in terms of the public exam-results and also if they maintain an accountable and transparent administration. A regularly constituted and working management committee (MC) for the institution should be a clear index of good administration. Even, the recurrent salary-subvention by the State to a particular educational institution may be linked to a reasonable performance in the public exams plus the soundness of the management in the institution.

(3) The State-owned educational institutions (located mainly in the metropolitan areas and old district-towns) leave much room for efficiency in management. The teachers in general are low in motivation. There is a highly centralized administrative set-up based in the Directorate at Dhaka, the national capital. There is a corrupt and slow-moving bureaucracy involved in transfers and promotions of the officers and teachers and other staff-members of the State-owned institutions. Is there any scope to reduce the bureaucracy for the public institutions by more de-centralization, e.g., delegating power to administrative divisions?

4.3 Future research

The following issues may be considered for further research in the sub-sector:

(1) There is a need to estimate the private rates of return from different types (e.g., secondary general, secondary-*madrassa*, higher secondary-general, higher secondary-*madrassa*) of education in the sub-sector. It is also important to know the social rates of return from these types and levels of education in the sub-sector. Definite estimates will help the policy-makers to know whether there is any basic defect with the education sub-sector in terms of its course-contents, pedagogy and other related aspects. Such a comparative study should tell us whether there is any big gap between the world of work and the world of knowledge.

(2) From the estimates of low-level enrollment (1981-90), we have observed that there is an abundant scope for enrolment expansion in the sub-sector, especially for females. Is the low enrollment-rate due to under-investment in educational institutions, whether by community or by the State? Some estimates of total investment necessary to enroll all the potential pupils in the educational institutions under different scenarios (e.g., different educational technologies, different mixes of general educational institution and *madrassa* institutions) should be helpful for policy-decision.

(3) A thorough analysis of the institutional aspects of the sub-sector should be quite useful. Why do the State-owned institutions inspite of being favourably endowed with physical, human and financial resources, perform at a level which is considered as less than optimal? Is there any way to reform the administrative or management set-up to make the State-owned institutions more accountable and transparent to the clientele? Similarly, some comparative analyses of different management arrangements of the private educational institutions in the sub-sector is necessary to guide the future policy-makers.

Appendix A

Concepts and definitions of costs

1. Costs incurred by the state

In any exercise on the education sector of Bangladesh, it is relatively easy to estimate the costs incurred by the State. In maintaining and developing the education sector or any of its sub-sectors, different agents participate and share costs. Other than the State represented by the central government, there may be stake-holders at the local (e.g., *thana* in Bangladesh), community and household-levels. For example, in the case of a secondary school in rural Bangladesh, there may be four types of stake-holders, the State (supplying salary subventions to the tune of 70 per cent of the total bill), the local government (time to time providing some grants), the community (participating through donations, subscriptions) and the household (through paying fees and other charges for their children). In the exercise, we shall be concerned only with the state-related expenditures. For lack of dependable data, the estimates of costs shared by other stake-holders will not be given here. Therefore, no attempt is made here to estimate the fuller concept of opportunity costs. Our belief is that with a good representative survey of relevant educational institutions it is also possible to estimate the fuller opportunity costs.

2. Recurrent and development costs

Broadly, two types of costs borne by the State will be considered. They are: (a) recurrent costs and (b) development or capital costs. Direct costs to the State will be analysed. The recurrent costs are those which are related to operation and maintenance of the system. For example, for a non-government secondary school, salary expenditures (both for teacher and non-teacher staff members), costs for facilities, services and maintenance of school-buildings, are recurrent items. On the other hand, expenditures on enhancement of the school's physical capacity and/or performance will be considered as capital (or development) costs. Expenditures for extra class-rooms, construction of new science labs, curriculum diversification, replacement of worn-out capital-assets, similar other items are capital costs.

We shall present the estimates in market prices, both in current and constant Taka. These figures are available in the national budgets i.e., Revenue and Development (known as the Annual Development programme or *ADP*) budgets of the country.

Appendix B

Secondary and higher secondary education sub-sector: Development activities/projects, 1980-90

Detailed list by fiscal years (FY)

In the period 1980-90 on the fiscal years 80-81 to 89-90 the following projects were funded by the State:

1. For Secondary Education FY 1980-81

- (1) Development of 66 Secondary Schools at Sub-divisional Headquarters
- (2) Development of 79 Government Schools
- (3) Development of 700 High Schools
- (4) Non-government Schools at Sub-divisional Headquarters
- (5) Development of Non-government Schools
- (6) Development of Rangpur Cantonment School
- (7) Development of Chittagong Cantonment School
- (8) Community Schools

For Higher Secondary Education

- (1) Development of 35 Colleges
- (2) Development of Selected Non-government Colleges
- (3) Development of Colleges under Presidential Commitment

2. For Secondary Education FY 1981-82

- (1) Development of 700 Non-government Secondary Schools at Thana Levels
- (2) Establishment of Community Schools at Thana Levels

For Higher Secondary Education

- (1) Selected Non-government Schools for Science Education
- (2) Development of 35 Government Colleges

3. For Secondary Education FY 1982-83

- (1) Conversion of Selected Secondary Schools into Community Schools
- (2) Introduction of Science Course in Non-government Secondary Schools

For Higher Secondary Education

- (1) Introduction of Science Course in Non-government Colleges

4. For Secondary Education FY 1983-84

- (1) Conversion of Selected Non-government Schools into Community Schools
- (2) Introduction of Science Course in Non-government Schools
- (3) Development of Government School

For Higher Secondary Education

- (1) Development of Facilities at Newly Nationalized Colleges
- (2) Internal Scholarship for General Education
- (3) Development of Educational Institutions by President's Commitment

5. For Secondary Education FY 1984-85

- (1) Conversion of Selected Secondary Schools into Community Schools
- (2) Introduction of Science Course in Secondary Education (Development and Improvement)
- (3) Development of Facilities of Government Secondary Schools

For Higher Education

- (1) Development Facilities of Newly Nationalized Colleges

6. For Secondary Education FY 1985-86

- (1) Conversion of Selected Secondary Schools into Community Schools
- (2) Secondary School Development Project with Emphasis on Science Education
- (3) Improvement of Existing Physical Facilities of Government Schools

For Higher Secondary Education

- (1) Improvement of Facilities in Government Colleges Including Newly Nationalized Ones
- (2) Internal Scholarship for General Education

7. For Secondary Education FY 1986-87

- (1) Community School Project
- (2) Secondary School Development Project with Emphasis on Science Education
- (3) Improvement of Existing Physical Facilities of Government School

For Higher Secondary Education

- (1) Improvement of Existing Physical Facilities of Government Colleges including Nationalized Colleges
- (2) Internal Scholarship for General Education

- (3) Development of 75 Selected Intermediate Colleges with Emphasis on College Science Education
 - (4) Establishment of Sanskrit College
8. For Secondary Education FY 1987-88
- (1) Secondary School Development Project with Emphasis on Science Education
 - (2) Improvement of Existing Physical Facilities of Government Secondary School

For Higher Secondary Education

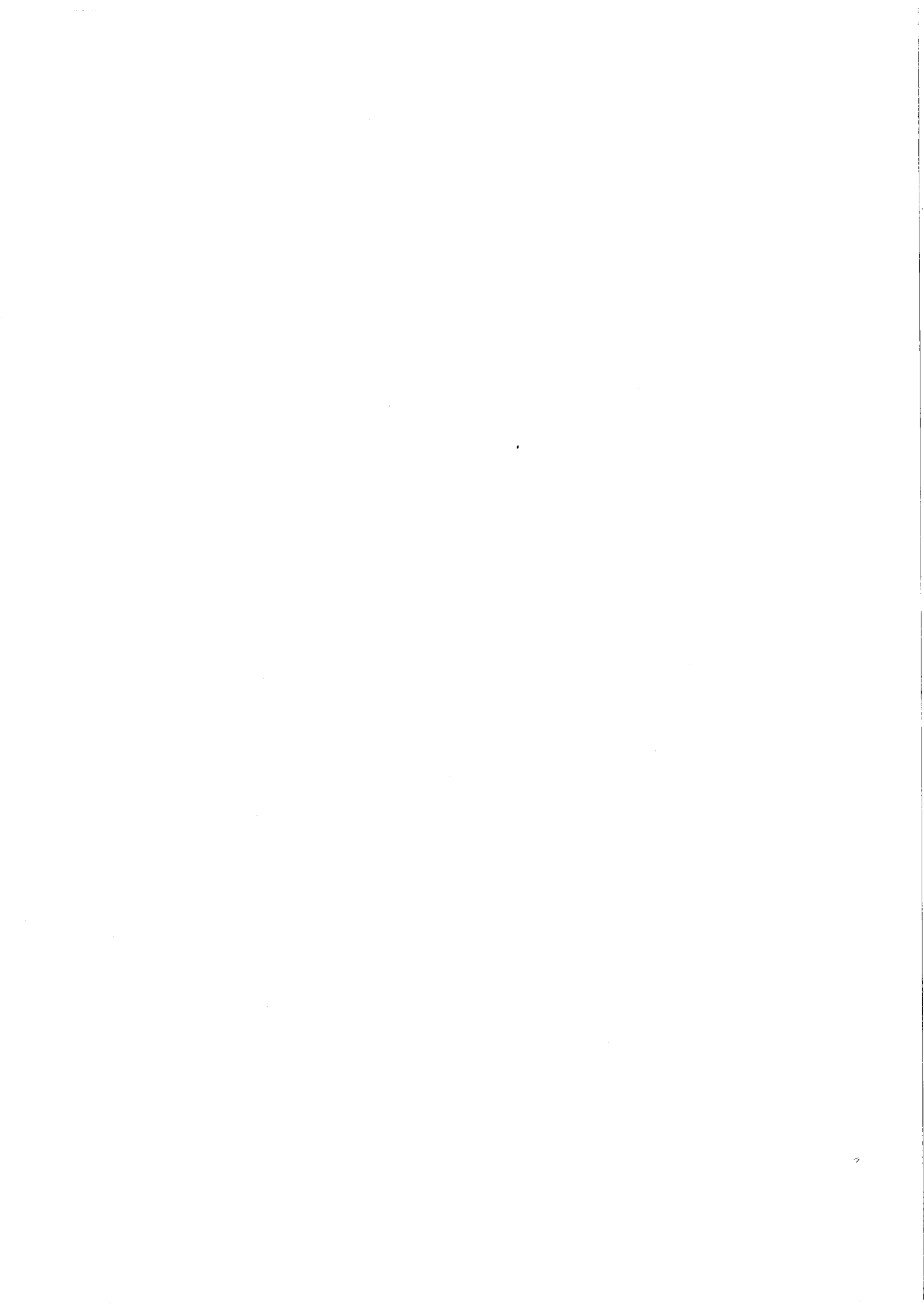
- (1) Improvement/Development of Existing Physical Facilities of Government Colleges Including Newly Nationalized Colleges
 - (2) Internal Scholarship for General Education
 - (3) Development of 76 Intermediate Colleges with Emphasis on Science Education
9. For Secondary Education FY 1988-89
- (1) Improvement/Development of Secondary Education
 - (2) Development of Government Schools Actual Facilities

For Higher Secondary Education

- (1) Improvement of Facilities in Government Colleges Including Newly Nationalized Ones
10. For Secondary Education FY 1989-90
- (1) Secondary School Development Project with Emphasis on Science Education
 - (2) Development of Government Secondary Schools Actual Facilities

For Higher Secondary Education

- (1) Improvement of Facilities in Government Colleges Including Newly Nationalized Ones
- (2) Development of 76 Intermediate Colleges



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