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State of Supervision for Ensuring Quality Secondary Education at Upazila Level in Bangladesh: Issues and Implications

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Abstract

Quality secondary education has become a second highest matter of concern of our country in the twenty-first century. In Bangladesh, achievement in secondary education is tremendous, though there is a question in quality education. In this case, there are numerous problems that resist the process of quality education at this level and lack of effective academic supervision is one of them. The study is mixed in nature and it collects relevant data from both sources through content analysis, survey, In-depth interview, Key Informant Interview (KII) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The study highlights on the general role and functionalities of the DEO, ADEO, USEO and Head Teacher as a supervisor in improving the teaching-learning process and to ensure quality education. It tries to make a conceptual analysis on different aspects of academic supervisor, quality education, supervision and inspection, quality assurance as well as teaching-learning. The study reveals that low support and morale, inspection rather than academic supervision, lack of dedication and professionalism, etc. are the main issues of academic supervision which hamper quality secondary education. The study recommends that DEO's, ADEO's, USEO's and head teacher role as a supervisor should assist the execution of the numerous roles and functionalities which will progress the teaching-learning situation to ensure quality secondary education in Bangladesh.

KEYWORDS: Supervision; Quality; Secondary Education; District Education Office, Upazila Secondary Education Office, Head and Assistant Head Teacher.

1.0 Introduction

Education has long been seen as a useful tool for shaping people's mindsets and outlooks, improving their diverse abilities, and promoting overall national and global growth. This is also where civilization began. The goal of education is to change people's behavior and make them fit for earning certain skills to attain bread and butter for the rest of their lives (Nuruddin, 2008).

Bangladesh's education system is divided into three tiers: primary, secondary, and tertiary, each with its own curriculum, textbooks, teaching personnel, materials, and goals and objectives. Secondary education is the second most important tier among the several levels since it deals with

the learning of young, emotionally fragile, and sensitive (NEP, 2010). This education system must be re-oriented to transmit a broad repertoire of life-skills in order to educate young people for life and work in a fast changing environment. By adequate supervision, these skills should encompass important general competencies, non-occupation-specific practical capacities, ICT, the ability to learn independently, work in teams, entrepreneurship, and civic duty (UNESCO, 2000). In school administration, the job of inspector monitoring is explicitly performed by an external agent from the inspection department, with the goal of modifying all elements impacting teacher conduct and reinforcing teaching and learning activities. For ensuring expected secondary education, it is less usually planned and carried out as a cooperative effort (Ghavifekr and Ibrahim, 2014). In schools, supervision is seen as a general leadership duty aimed at improving instructors' teaching performance (Cudjoe and Sarfo, 2016) and these are implemented with the goal of maintaining and increasing student learning quality, as well as all other aspects that affect learning and teaching in any education system (Idogho and Agholor, 2013). So, school supervision has more potential for deciding the efficiency of teaching and learning in the classroom, but it is fraught with questions and inquisitiveness, as well as supervisors' dissatisfaction with the influence of supervising on the classroom (Anton, 2005). Insufficient supervision by school officers leads the schools to poor learning and teaching quality.Numerous obstacles contribute to inefficient monitoring and oversight, and instructors' perceptions of these systems are mixed (Okendu, 2012). As a result, they will contribute to continued low performance in national exams among secondary students, a poor teaching atmosphere in the classroom, increasing drop out of students, poor teacher-student relationships in the classroom, and teacher negligence because they understand they would not be carefully supervised as needed (Paschal, et al., 2020). So, the purpose of this study is to investigate the state of supervision as quality assurance technique for enhancing teaching and learning at the secondary education in Bangladesh, with the goal of influencing the government and lawmakers to develop, design, and enforce current relevant laws and regulations, as well as providing acceptable solutions to the issues.The study will also assist us in comprehending the current scenario and the issues of academic supervision. The findings will also beneficial for education planners in better understanding of current educational supervision techniques in secondary level of schools. They can utilize the data to take the required steps to strengthen academic supervision techniques in order to ensure educational success at secondary level in Bangladesh.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to explore the state of supervision for ensuring quality secondary education at Upazila level in Bangladesh. The specific objectives are:

- To review the existing rules, regulations and guidelines of government for supervision of secondary education in Bangladesh;
- To examine the effectiveness of the strategies and practices of academic supervision of the responsible officials for ensuring quality secondary education in Bangladesh;
- To identify the major issues and challenges those create hindrances in the way of ensuring effective supervision for quality secondary education in Bangladesh.

1.2 Methodology

This research has been conducted by using mixed method approach with explanatory sequential design. The study has been conducted in three Upazila's of three districts such as Rajshahi Sadar (forward), Gazipur Sadar (moderate) and Natore Sadar (backward)) in 2022-2023 fiscal year. From each Upazila one government boy's high school, one secondary co-education high school, one Secondary Girl's high School has been selected through stratified simple random sampling technique. Data have been collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include study fields, government's rules and regulations regarding monitoring, supervision and study respondents whereas secondary sources include relevant reports, articles, official orders, letters, proclamations, statistics, memoranda, seminar and archival materials, etc. The sample sizes of the respondents are 142 in this study (Akanda, 2019). Following table (Table 1) shows details about data collection techniques, tools, respondents and sample size of the study.

Table 1: Sampling Plan with Data Collection Techniques & Tools

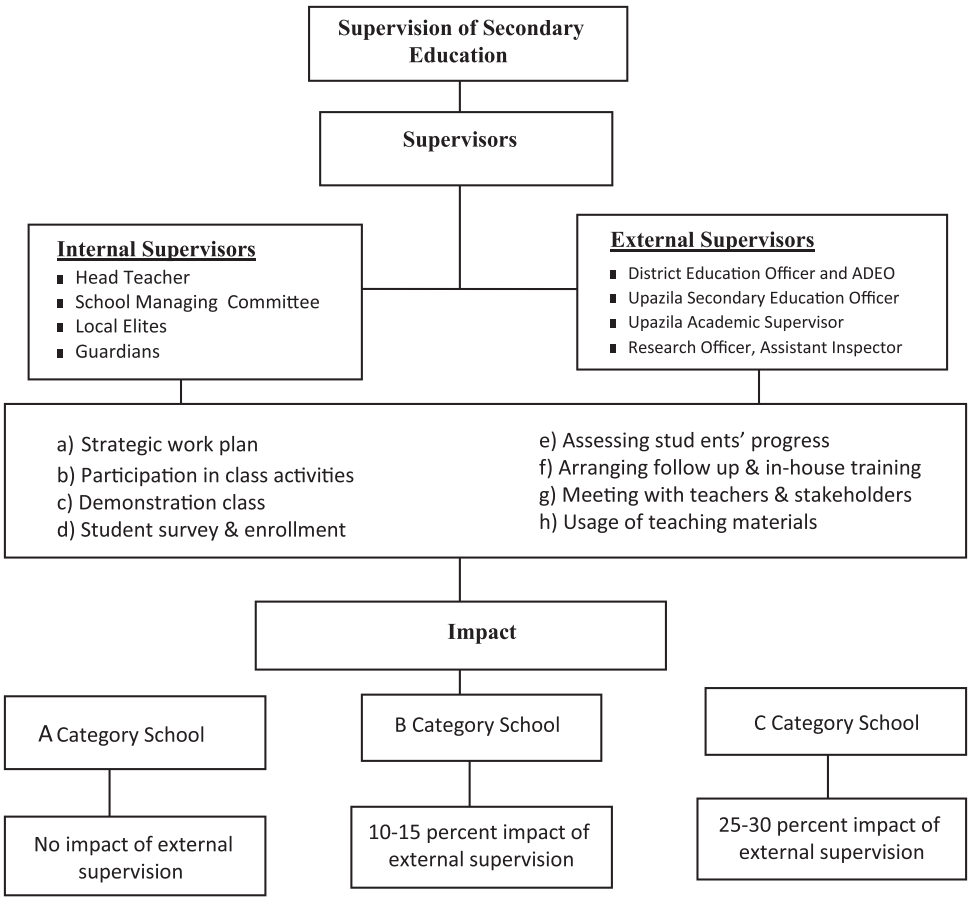
Respondents		Sampling Procedure	Data Collection Techniques & Tools		Sample Size	
			Techniques	Tools		
Head Teachers of SS (Total 09 schools, 03 from each Upazila)		Simple Random	In-depth Interview	Structured & semi-structured questionnaire	9x1	09
Asst. Teachers of SS	Co-education Schools	Purposive	FGD (1 FGD with AT in each school, total 9 FGD)	Schedule	9 FGD-X6	54
	Boys' Schools					
	Girls Schools					
DEO/ADEO, SI (Raj. Education Board) USEO/ AUSEO (Govt. Executives)		----------	In-depth Interview	Structured & semi-structured questionnaire	2X3 01	07
Local Elites & RO, AI & UAS (Officers of SESIP)		Purposive	KII	Checklist	6X3	18
School Managing Committee		Purposive	FGD (1 FGD with SMC in each school, total 9 FGD)	Schedule	9 FGDsX6	54
						142

[Here, SS: Secondary School, DEO: District Education Officer, ADEO: Assistant District Education Officer, USEO: Upazila Secondary Education Officer, AUSEO: Assistant Upazila Secondary Education Officer, RO: Research Officer, Al: Assistant Inspector, UAS: Upazila Academic Supervisor, FGD: Focus Group Discussion, KII: Key Informant Interview]

1.3 Legal Framework

Figure 1: Legal Framework

Figure 1: Legal Framework



(Source: DSHE, 2019)

1.4 Overall Scenario of Supervision for Improving Teaching-Learning Processes

Supervision has a significant effect on teaching and learning in quality of education. Various measures have been implemented by the government of Bangladesh to increase educational quality in terms of teaching-learning, and performance. As the most crucial part of teaching- learning and supervision is emphasized (Veloo, et al., 2013). Because of this, school monitoring and control has been delegated to the District and Upazila Secondary Education Office and its officers, who are ill-equipped to monitor and supervise all secondary schools under their jurisdiction. These supervisions have undoubtedly been carried out and are still being carried out, but the question remains as to how constant they are. How successful are this supervision?

Supervision is still not being carried out to their full potential and as necessary.

1.5 Observing Class Activities

Classroom supervision plays a major role in achieving quality education and the Bangladesh government seeks to implement secondary education classroom-based policies, goals, and objectives across the nation under the direction and control of DEO, USEO, and other officers (NEP, 2010). This is widely accepted to encourage teachers to collaborate and advance teaching practices, providing an opportunity to observe the teacher and students in a real-world teachinglearning setting. Supervision is very beneficial for teachers to improve their teaching-learning process and guarantee that secondary education officers will participate in class activities during the school day's supervision period (Mohanty, 2008).

Table 2: Participa tion of Supervisors in Classroom observation

Respondent (HT)-09			Respondent (AT)-54		
Opinion	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Opinion**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Yes	08	88.89	Yes	45	83.33
No	01	11.11	No	09	16.67

(**Source: Field Survey, 2022**)

Inspections of classrooms by DEO, ADEO, USEO, RO, AI, and UAS increase the visibility and appeal of the teaching-learning process. The teachers educate them better to make the lesson more engaging, fun, and participatory if this problem persists in the school. Otherwise, most teachers still teach in the old-fashioned way, which is not good for secondary school quality. According to the survey findings, 88.89% of HT and 83.33% of AT said they took part in classroom activities, whereas 11.11% HT and 16.67% AT said they didn't. When supervisors were asked this question, they replied that they always make an effort to engage in class activities, although occasionally they were unable to do so due to a lack of time or other obligations. Additionally, SMC members did not attend and consider the teaching-learning process, and local elites did not attend the school because they felt excluded from it. SMC Chairman visited the school for refreshment. Findings also reveal that the SMC members in maximum cases do not have adequate educational qualification to observe the quality of a class. Therefore, the respondents suggest that the SMC Chairman and members should have master's degree. Overall, the DEO, ADEO, USEO, RO, AI and UAS acknowledged that classroom activities of teaching-learning process should be utilized rather than inspection to assure quality secondary education.

1.6 Demonstration Class

Demonstration, which refers to carrying out a certain action in a methodical and scientific manner, may appear to be a straight forward teaching strategy. This frequently occurs when students struggle to apply theories to real-world situations or when youngsters struggle to understand how theories are applied (Kotride & Yunos, 2014). The teachers encourage the students to ask questions of their teachers and use simple language to analyze the subject in order to make the demonstration technique. Teacher demonstrations are crucial because they give students the opportunity to practice techniques that aid in learning (Tapan and Govinda, 1999).

Table 3: Demonstra tion Class

Respondent (HT)-09			Respondent (AT)-54		
Opinion	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Opinion**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Yes	02	11.12	Yes	09	16.67
No	07	88.88	No	45	83.33

(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

A demonstration class uses a visual method to evaluate concepts, information, and the learning process. The USEO, RO, AI, and UAS will perform the class as a demonstration class in front of concerned teachers in order to make the lesson engaging and fun for the students (Archibong, 2012). Table 3's survey results show that 11.12% of HT and 16.67% of AT believed that they had taken part in demonstration classes, whereas 88.88% HT and 83.33% AT said that they had not taken part in such classes in order to further the teaching-learning process. In response to this question of demonstration class, USEO, RO, AI and UAS expressed their opinion, they have to fill up an "inspection report" which encourages them to inspect school rather than supervise and it is really an "inspection report" form and they need about two hours to fill up the form. If they conduct a demonstration class, time is short to fill up the form. Moreover, there are 23 indicators and about 150 sub-indicators in this form where supervision position is very poor. In contrast, they opted out of the demonstration class out of respect for the teachers. One UAS said that in addition to academic activities, UNO offers them additional official pursuits.

1.7 Student Survey and Enrollment

Student survey is also one strategy to strengthen the relationship between DEO, ADEO, USEO, RO, AI, UAS, teachers, and parents in order to raise the likelihood of enrollment, success, and a dropout rate that is at or below zero. Many secondary school systems in Bangladesh use the teacher's student survey and enrollment program as a way to develop relationships with parents in order to increase in-school parent involvement, which in turn will increase student achievement and decrease dropout rates at secondary education (Wright, et al., 2018). However, in the majority of cases, the officers did not carry out these duties personally and instead directed teachers to carry out the student survey and program for home visits, which most of the teachers accomplished infrequently and virtually rather than physically.

Table 4: Participation in St udents' Survey and Enrollment

Respondent (HT)-09			Respondent (AT)-54		
Opinion	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Opinion**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Yes	01	11.12	Yes	04	07.40
No	08	88.89	No	50	92.60

(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

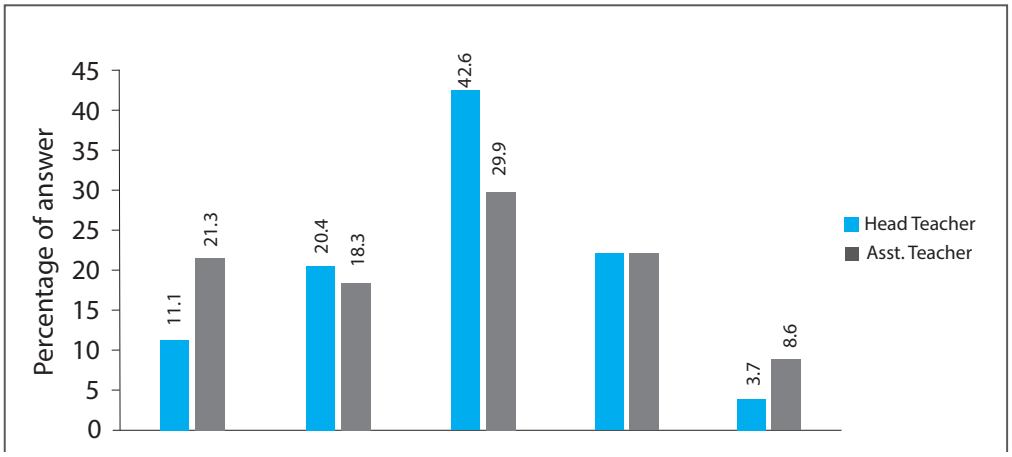
In response to this question, it was discovered that 11.11% of HT and 07.40% of AT said that they had taken part in home visits for dropout kids, while 88.89% HT and 92.60% AT accusingly responded that they do not take part in student surveys or home visits for students who are about to drop out of school. Additionally, the researcher conducts interviews

responsible officers, and they kindly acknowledge that they do not take part in this program. The majority of them expressed the opinion that they are ignorant of the law regarding student surveys and that this is a very motivating stimulus to stop dropouts, but the majority of students are poor and engage in child labor. However, the majorities of parents marry their daughters while they are in secondary school and use them as domestic helpers. In addition, UAS claimed that some students use phones. They bully the teachers if they are told to come to class. Finally, the officers said that in order to ensure that everyone in Bangladesh has access to high-quality secondary education; they should take student surveys and enrolment into account.

1.8 Duration of Stay in School

The DSHE passed the "Enhance Quality Education at Secondary Level-2019" law, which stated that a USEO would inspect and oversee 20 schools in a month and take part in all educational activities carried out by the teachers and authorities of the concerned school, but that they would not have enough time to do so. A RO, AI, and UAS on the other hand, will inspect 15 and 20 schools, respectively, in a month. The USEO and other officials typically visited five to six schools in a day that were located next to a single road within their control (Alam and Haq, 2001). An UAS will stay all day long in school to inspect and supervise to ensure quality education at primary level in Bangladesh (DSHE, 2019). A survey of nine head teachers and 54 assistant teachers was conducted, and the findings show that 11.1% of HT and 21.3% of AT said officers stay in schools for one to thirty minutes, 20.4% of HT and 18.3% of AT said officers stay in schools for thirty to sixty minutes, 42.6% of HT and 29.9% of AT said officers stay in schools for one to two hours, 22.2% of HT and 22.0% of AT said officers stay in schools for three to four hours and 3.7% HT and 8.6% HT replied, they stay in a school four to six hours or all day long to monitor or supervise.

Figure 2: Duration of Stay in School by them



[Source: Field Survey, 2022]

The results of those teachers' survey show that, on average, 6.15% of officers spend the entire day in a school where the law is broken. In response to this inquiry, USEO stated that no one attend school all day, and as a result, neither does he. They further acknowledged that it is

an offense. In the interview response, a UAS noted that there are roughly 82 schools under his control, the majority of which have politically active teachers who frequently disrupt learning. Additionally, the majority of SMC members are opposed to school development in terms of teaching and learning that does not result in new student enrollment or financial gain. They won't accept them in their school all day if he/she stays there all day, he/she will become their adversary. Besides, the UAS must carry out a variety of tasks that have been delegated by the UNO, including: old age allowance, freedom fighter allowance, Union Parishad activities, local and national elections, and various public examinations for BOU, NU, JSC, SSC, and HSC. An UAS sometimes seems to be a UNO co-up officer.

1.9 Twining Program

Twining of school is known as "partnership among school" under which two schools come together for greater exposure. The aim is to promote shared learning among students and teachers with focus to encourage learning inside and outside the classroom. In this system one school students and teachers will go another school to participate in assembly, observe/ visit of school library, laboratory, nursery, playground, drinking water and sanitation facilities, cocurricular and cultural activities, science/math fair and any other display of innovative and best practices by host school (MOE, 2008)? The officers did not arrange twining program among their school and most of them have no idea about this.

Table 5: Arrangement of Twining Program in School

Respondent (HT)-09			Respondent (AT)-54		
Opinion	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Opinion**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Yes	00	00.00	Yes	00	00.00
No	09	100.00	No	54	100.00

(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

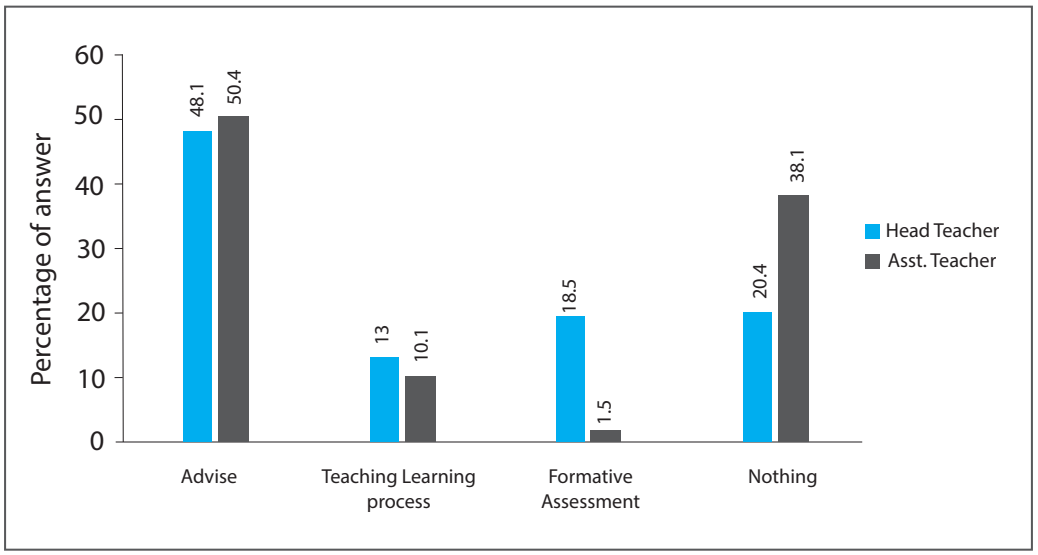
As part of the twining program, private and government school will be linked with each other through audio-visual classrooms to help teachers and students with better course content. This results in increased interaction amongst students and teachers, sharing of experiences, ideas and best practices. A survey is conducted in this question and the results is, 100% HT and AT said, they do not arrange twining program in school and they are not aware about this. The officers do not tell them about this. In the interview's response, the DEO, ADEO, USEO, RO, AI, and UAS indicated that no one had set up such a program in Bangladesh and that the weak school authorities would not allow students to travel to good/best schools for their viewpoint exchange. Uncovering a school's situation through the implementation of such a program may be shameful for poor schools, but it may also be a good program for Bangladesh's secondary education system. Therefore, they must endeavor to set up such a school curriculum.

1.10 Activities of DEO/ADEO/USEO/RO/AI/UAS in School

A school is a place where children, predominantly juvenile children go to gain knowledge about the topics of reading, writing, reviewing and arithmetic from a teacher. Learners spend most of the time in a classroom or a place where usually 30 to 40 pupils sit to engage in

learning conversation. These functions are conducted by a teacher in the school and they will maintain the teachers to improve and ensure these educational activities to ensure quality secondary education (DSHE, 2019). Most of the officer's activities are administrative, traditional, advisory and not demonstrative. They also have to fill out a detailed form on the status/situation of school. They make statements with regard to the performance of the school. If the form is characterized, then ¾ are an inspection type of visit and ¼ are support to supervision type (Alam and Haq, 2001).

Figure 3: Activities of DEO/ADEO/USEO/RO/AI/UAS in School



[Source: Field Survey, 2022]

Survey was conducted to find out the outcome of the question and 48.1% HT and 50.4% AT replied, they only advise them about different things, 13.0% HT and 10.1% AT gladly said, they advise them about improving class-base teaching-learning process, 18.5% HT and 1.5% AT replied with amusement, they assist them to learn formative assessment system which is very positive stimulus for students to ensure quality education and 20.4% HT and 38.1% AT blamed with upset, they do not do anything with them about teaching-learning process in classroom base and the teachers also claimed that the officers are also the impediment to ensure quality education. They appear to be an educational officialor a teacher's adversary rather than a manager. They acknowledged in their response to this question that some officers shared their sentiments and that if they grow close to them, they would stop respecting them. They also understand that they (officials) are powerless. Thus, they occasionally treat them harshly.

1.11 Key Findings

In Bangladesh, secondary school supervision is largely conventional, reluctant, and more symbolic, mechanical and practical than intellectual and pedagogical. It mainly promotes identifying "Faults or Mistakes," which are often handled by the education officials of

DEO and USEO offices. In the current system, education officers serve less as supervisors, facilitators, and "critical friends" of the teachers in the school and more as administrators and inspectors with a policing role. The average distance between schools and the DEO office is two to forty kilometers, and the DEO, ADEO, USEO, and AUSEO have a tendency to visit the nearby school more frequently than the detached ones. It has been noted that all high-quality schools received full attention from them, while low-quality schools only received their minimal attention. There is also no advice or pressure from them to improve and guarantee quality education in secondary schools. Without administrative oversight, they provide no benefits to the schools. The majority of the time, they visits to the school were ceremonial or administrative in nature. The majority of USEOs and AUSEOs neither visit schools frequently nor did they fully carry out their jobs and responsibilities. Even if they showed up, they would just examine the many registers, records, financial transactions, and administrative matters while enjoying refreshments in the head teacher's room. They would not support improving student learning or overseeing classroom teaching. Instead of giving suggestions to the teachers, they were harsh to the teachers for any minor administrative lapses (attendance, duration of staying in school) etc. The teachers are subjected to humiliation by the USEO when they apply for services like time scales, leave adjustments, area bills, pensions, loans from GP funds, and efficiency bar crosses. The government did not provide its vehicle for the Upazila secondary education office, and the government did not create a necessary post of AUSEO for a cluster (15-20 schools in a cluster) in an upazila according to the number of secondary schools. Because of this, an AUSEO has to monitor and supervise about 80 secondary schools as a cluster in an Upazila. They did not reach in all schools to monitor of their jurisdiction within a year. A monthly inspection form with 23 indications and over 150 sub indicators is used by the DEO, USEO, RO, AI, and UAS to monitor and inspect 5, 20, 15, 15, and 20 schools. Some officers submit the paperwork to the head teacher so that s/he can fill it out because s/he doesn't have enough time. It takes time to fill out the form because it has more overlapping or less significant indicators than academics.

In DEO and USEO offices, the RO, AI, and UAS are project officers, whereas the DEO and USEO are revenue officers. The government official and the teachers that were named are temporary project officers. As a result of the nature of their work, project officers have poor morals as well. The majority of the officers, office workers, and teachers refused to let them in, and they rarely participated in their own activities. Additionally, they are used by UNO, DEO, and USEO in a variety of activities (particularly UNO), including the distribution of VGD, VGF, TR, Kabikha, Kabitha, allowance for freedom fighters, student scholarships, and the administration of various JSC, SSC, and HSC exams as well as local, regional, national and SMC elections, as well as a variety of school-related cases other than academics.

1.12 Recommendations

Supervision requires the officers to oversee, assess, evaluate and direct teachers as well as school authorities to ensure an educational institution is meeting its goals. To ensure clinic supervision, the government should provide the necessary vehicle for the USEO office and create the post of AUSEO for 10-15 secondary schools as a cluster office at the Union Parishad

level, and the officers should lodge in their working place. Government should make free the USEO, AUSEO, RO, AI and UAS from project officers and the tag officers of UNO. The majority of the head teachers disobeyed the DEO/USEO and project officials' instructions. So, to control teachers, DEO/USEO and project officers of RO, AI, and UAS should be given the authority to withhold salary in addition to SMC and head teachers. To provide them necessary training for making patriotic academic supervisors and professionals rather than school inspectors of police.

The study finds that the DEO office and USE Office should be in the vanguard of achieving quality secondary education by ensuring the excellence of schools with the help of central to local government, SMC, different educational implementation committees and communities. The concerned DEO/USEO should also involve themselves and encourage others to participate in the teaching-learning process and educational activities to implement the law of secondary school instead of carrying their weapons on teachers. Most of the laws are very good, but some are outdated, and in practice, those are virtually ignored and little gets done to ensure quality secondary education. The study unfolds that there is a huge gap between written policies and their implementations. The overlapping of local jurisdiction should be consolidated, and one agency should be established in each Upazila to supervise secondary educational activities. The DSHE should take the appropriate actions to update the form by emphasizing academic indicators in order to guarantee Bangladesh's secondary education is of high quality. In the education board, only a school inspector and assistant school inspector oversee more or less nine thousand schools. So, in order to provide effective monitoring and high-quality education, the government should take the required steps to increase the post school inspector and assistant school inspector in this institution. In public schools, there is an "Esprit de Corps" relationship between the DD, DEO, and head teacher. As a result, they did not visit the school for monitoring and inspection and government should take necessary steps to recover this post from government school teachers grip and provide posting education cadre officer in this post to establish chain and command in secondary education sector at field level.

Moreover, the government may provide sufficient professional staff, prosecutorial power and financial backing for District Education Office and Upazila Education Office to get the job done effectively to ensure quality secondary education in Bangladesh.

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