

*Full Length Research Paper*

# **Quest for a better operation system in education: Privatization and teacher educationalization or voucherilization glimpsing from consumer and product perspectives**

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Inevitably, education is considered as the main tool for development. Regardless of nationality, race, age and culture, everyone in this contemporary world believes that education is the commonest medicine that cures every disease hindering the development of a nation. Keeping this view, countries put endless efforts in the development of education. Major phenomena for the development process of education include: privatization, teacher education, design of modern and well-timed course and curricula and establishment of infrastructure and logistics. For the allocation of national budget, most of the states provide the highest preference to education. Despite these efforts, many countries fail to achieve the target that is especially aimed for their national development through education. Why is this happening, since the purpose of education is to ensure national development? Encompassing of many research findings sums up that education is not playing the role according to its purpose. Thus, many prescriptions have been provided through researches with an ideology of "Education as Right" to solve the problems. All these suggestions are still unsuccessful to make the education system desired functional. The conducted research for this paper has to understand what would be the difference if students do not consider education as their rights, but do judge it as their assets and property. Results assert that this attitude would be able to change the psychological setup of poor students developing an ownership attitude toward education. This would irrevocably help to achieve the national goal of education. However, a new paradigm called voucherilization would be the key for the change of psychological and mental current setup of the underprivileged students.

**Key words:** Voucher system, privatization, free education, education as right, education as product, education as asset.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Education is considered as the key to national development. Some scholars believe that well functional education system of developed countries guides their development. In the contrary, others argue that other functions of developed countries (that is, fiscal policy, culture, equability concept, natural resources and heritage

of development) help them to stay in an advantaged position allowing more investment in education. This attitude ultimately results a well functional education system which also plays a vital role in supporting the continuous development process and to cope with the global competition of development (Fagerlind and Saha, 1989). Within the running competition, the vehicles of development of developing countries are currently far behind. Thus, to compete with developed countries, vehicles of developing countries need to run faster compared to their developed counterparts (Alam, 2008,

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2010). Moreover, there is a need of an appropriate time and place for vehicles of developing countries in order to overcome their counterparts. This is not easy for developing nations because they are experiencing a high volume of financial crisis and social constraints. Along with these constraints, the less and faulty functional vehicles of developing countries are running far behind than the champions (Alam, 2009a). These days, the champions even stay out of sights of the drivers of slow vehicles of developing nations. If this is the case, how can education play a role for developing countries' development? However, probably the education system of developing states is not aimed to follow the global competition, rather trying to run with their own capacity (Alam, 2009b).

### Research problems

Considering education as human right, developing countries are striving to progress forward through their public system. However, the little public fund allocated in education in developing world results more in private operations. While private provision of operation considers education as product consumed by their affordable clients, public provision considers it as free service (human right) to poorer cluster of the population (Farag, 2002; Alam and Khalifa, 2009). This kind of psychological differences result a need and product based education concept in private operation of primary and secondary levels, while public provision seems very reluctant to provide the service for the poorer clients (Alam, 2009b). Traditional belief is that the purpose of primary education is to enable primary graduate to be competent for secondary education with a moderate level of civic value, while secondary education caters to ensure a higher level of civic value and to be competent for higher education. The goal of higher education is to provide a skilled manpower for the state. Much debate is ongoing, arguing that both private and public provisions fail to foster a high level of civic value (Hallak, 1990). However, using 'customer need-based' concept towards products, private provision<sup>1</sup> is somehow able to make their graduates ready for non-functional higher education with a narrow, shortcut and précised courses and curricula (Alam, 2009b). Many individuals with a high level of potential from ultra poor cluster even may not enter into the education system. These days, a larger portion of poorer individual may enter into public and NGO school provisions. Since both public and NGO provision adopt a concept of human right theory in education for the delivery method and mentality, education is not need-based and customer oriented, rather it is manufacturer dominated (Alam et al., 2009). While private provision uses need-based concept for

education delivery, both public and NGO provisions use human right theory (Huong and Fry, 2002). Statistics shows that more graduates from private provision<sup>2</sup> are going to higher education compared to public and NGO provisions, while these two provisions provide services to the majority of the population. Consequently, many individuals studying at public and NGO provisions with high potentials may not be able to enroll into higher education because of adopted human right concept in education (Alam, 2008a). Moreover, higher education in developing countries is highly privatized restricting poorer cluster to access it.

Theoretically, the purpose of higher education is to develop skilled manpower in the light of economic and social needs. Unfortunately, due to suffering of 'diploma diseases', higher education is a manufacturer of diploma at a glitter paper without ensuring a right knowledge. Experience of 'diploma diseases' within private higher education provision is even more dangerous (Psacharopoulos and Patrions, 2002). Since the history and heritage of education is longer in existence, the diploma at a glitter paper still works as an amulet not as medicine. If these circumstances subsist for a longer period, the forthcoming scenario not only at higher education, but also at every level of education will be a case of unforeseen. So, it is easy to understand that the forthcoming scenario as the target of primary and secondary education is to make the graduates qualified for higher education (Alam, 2008). While higher education is being forced to follow a different direction, what difference can be made by the primary and secondary education while their journey end with a view to making their graduates competent for tertiary education (Alam et al., 2009).

### Importance of the issue

The discussion of earlier subsections shed some light on the problem. Many of the researchers believe that teacher education would be able to solve the existing problem. The belief is that if teachers are provided adequate knowledge for the subjects and with a deeper understanding on moral and ethical value highlighting a focus of education philosophy through both pre-service and in-service operations of teacher education, this will provide a wider impact on students' productivity (Hamman et al., 2010). However, teacher education of many countries fails to do so. To many countries, the problem does not lie within the teacher; rather it lies with course and curriculum along with school infrastructure (Hoque et al., 2010). Therefore, a high volume of budget has been allocated to resolve the problem. Evidence asserts that due to corruption and other professional inefficiencies, these methods fail to do so (Conway and Clark, 2003).

<sup>1</sup> Some extend of public provision where a high level of prenatal participation within school management involved

<sup>2</sup> Some extend of public provision where a high level of prenatal participation within school management involved

At the level of primary and secondary schools, private providers<sup>3</sup> are somehow meeting the target better than their public counterparts (Alam, 2008a). A question is always asked; why these schools are performing well. A number of answers can be outlined; a swift management, less bureaucracy, students learning centered activities, need-based concept and elitism culture. Indeed, all these are appropriate to consider. However, it is also evident that unit cost of public schools is higher than their private counterparts (Jimenez et al., 1989). Thus, it is not an excuse for public counterparts anymore. It is significant to understand that financial constraints of developing countries may be burden for global competition, but of course not for internal competition. So the big question is; where does the defect lies? One possible answer is that, it lies on the buying power of consumers or buyers. In the case of private provision, the fund directly comes from the buyer/consumers, while fund for public provision is allocated by the state on behalf of consumer. Thus, a system with an assurance of fund delivery directly from buyers or from consumers to pay either public or private providers would solve the problems in some way and entertaining consumers' need-based concept at the same time pushing away the human right concept in education.

### Aims and objectives

Introduction of voucher system in education may be able to provide a concept of consumers' need-based education for primary and secondary education. A massive and wider practice of 'concept of consumers need' for the majority of the population may confiscate the so called human right concept for primary and secondary education. This may ultimately ensure real concept of human right in higher education by demolishing existing 'diploma disease' concept. This may also results an assurance of enrolment of genius group in higher education (Alam, 2008). Once a state can ensure the enrolment of the most capable group into the higher education, the research and higher education would dramatically change assuring a decent education system as a whole.

Adopting voucher system and its proper implementation are not an easy task. There are many threats which need to be overcome through proper strategy and policy. The aim of this research is to understand how a vouchering method can help the education system function effectively. In order to achieve this aim, the following research issues will be explored.

### Research Issues

- \* Concept of voucher system
- \* Advantages and disadvantages of voucher system

<sup>3</sup> Moreover a few public school where high level of parental participation is involved making significant progress

- \* Strategic, policy and implementation constraints of voucher system

- \* Plausible ways to address the constraints

This research intends to achieve its objectives by providing some pragmatics suggestions before the concluding remark. Prior to this, four sections namely (that is, conceptional framework and literature review, research design, current practice of operation in education system and voucher system in education) along with their subsections will explore this research phenomenon with a wider discourse analysis. Thus, this research is a product of discourse analysis with an aim of contribution towards knowledge through Lakatos's theory of degeneration (Alam, 2008).

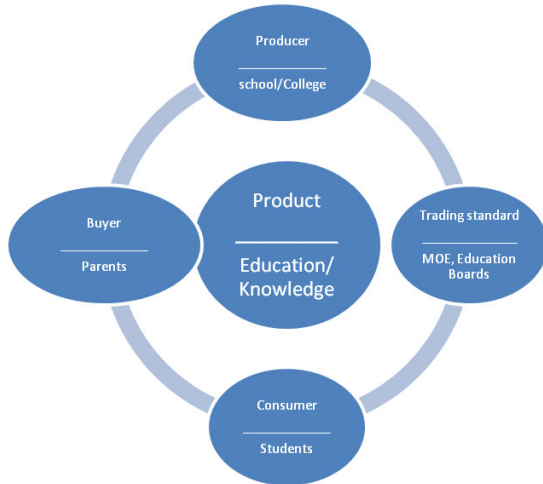
### Conceptional framework and literature review

It is widely accepted that education is a public goods. Defining the product, consumer and buyer is a complex task in the context of education manufactured by schools. Criteria of education product and their schemata have evolved out of historical social practices (Alam and Khalifa, 2009). Consequently, the concept of product, buyer, consumer and manufacturer always vary with the change of situations and way of interpretation (Lockheed and Jimenez, 1994). Interpretation of social events is guided and constrained by the prevailing rationality which in itself reflects the dominant constellation of power. However, while defining product buyer, consumer and manufacturer within education production cycle as a complex task, knowledge is always considered as the only product of education<sup>4</sup> (Huong, 2002). In order to have more idea on product, buyer, consumer and manufacturer within education production cycle, the authors drew several diagrams under three subsections to elaborate their concept.

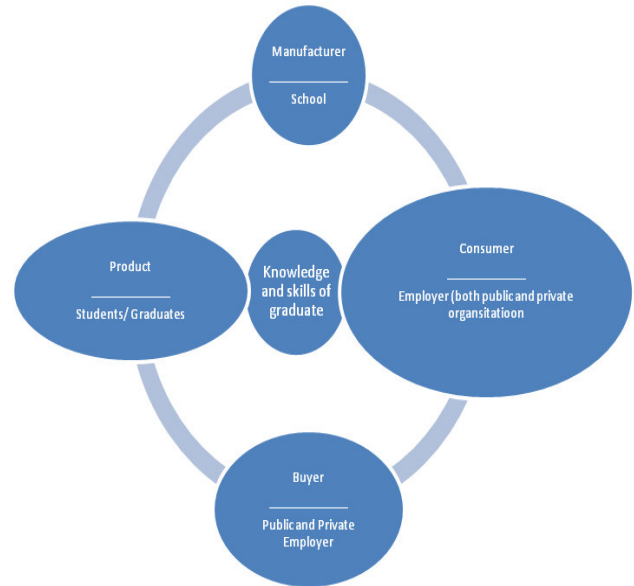
### Consumer cycle in education

Considering consumer concept as the key within this cycle, a common group of consumer is found for both provisions of operation. For the case of both private and public provisions of operations, students are always to be considered as consumer. All parameters of two provisions are the same except buyer (Diagrams 1 and 2). It is well established that while consumers has no buying capabilities, their choices and needs are predominately biased by the choices of buyers and producers. Many evidences show that a consensus between buyers and producers often deprive the consumers' rights, needs and freedom, even though trading standard agency may only be able to put a motionless effort on behalf of the

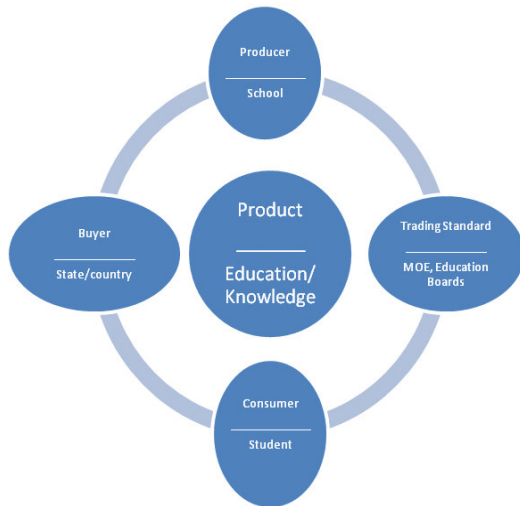
<sup>4</sup> Mistakenly, some time degree, diploma or certificate is considered as the product of education. Indeed, these are parameter but not product



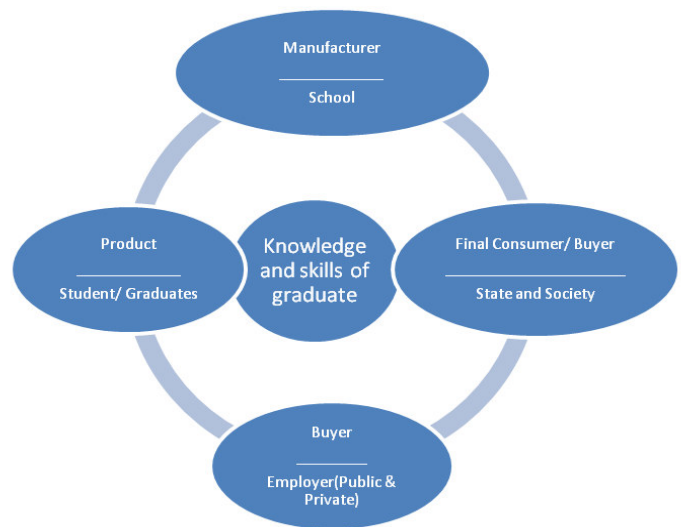
**Diagram 1.** Consumer cycle in private education.



**Diagram 3.** Product in the eye of employer.



**Diagram 2.** Consumer cycle in public education.



**Diagram 4.** Product in the eye of state.

consumers (James, 1993).

**Product cycle in education**

Within the product cycle in education, in the eye of the employer, indeed graduates are the products (Diagrams 3 and 4). Although there are some businesses that employ graduates as show piece, most of the employers do not necessarily want to buy the graduates as product; rather they consider their knowledge and skills as product (Mabizela, 2000). The quality of products is often judged by the amount of skills and knowledge posed within the graduates. Of course, employers are the buyers and consumers of graduates’ knowledge and skills (Alam, 2009; Alam and Khalifa, 2009). The success of a business

owned either by state or private organization and individual provide the gross weight to national development. Thus, it can also be argued that state and society would be the last consumer of the graduates’ knowledge and skills (Alam and Hoque, 2010). This is probably the main reasons why states still become the buyer of public schools and students, the consumer. State buyer concept may be one of the best options for a nation having high level ethical and national value, and no operation for private provision. However, a country experiencing high volume of private operation and unethical activities, buying power of consumers at least help them to proceed



Diagram 5. Manufacturing cycle in education.



Diagram 6. Manufacturing cycle in education.

with their choices and needs. Indeed, trading standard agencies must need to play a rigorous role for both consumer and procedures for awareness of state goal (Mabizela et al., 2000). Moreover, a proper policy and regulatory control should be in place always with proper monitoring and evaluation.

**Manufacturing cycle in education**

Moving to the context of manufacturing cycle in education, an education provided by a school can be defined as

a ‘product’ named as knowledge, while the school as an industry (the manufacturer). The school authorities<sup>5</sup> are profoundly engaged in ensuring freedom from errors within the education provided (Alam, 2008b). The course curricula can be defined as raw materials, while the schools use up-to-date teaching and evaluation techniques, modern teaching materials (multimedia projectors and audio-video graphics) and have well-stocked libraries, laboratories and support services in order to ensure the education provided is error free (Diagrams 5 and 6).<sup>6</sup> The teaching and support staff are the manpower, and they are principally responsible to ensure that the education provided is free of errors (Ravisankar and Murthy, 2000).

Considering this view, improvement of education quality in public schools is targeted through teacher training, design of well-timed course and curricula and establishment of infrastructure. Within the processes of doing all these, consumers have no rights to provide guideline and direction. Moreover, since they do not have buying power, only they might have a voiceless shout if their participation is considered to be luckily attempted (Jimenez et al., 1989).

Many evidences assert that even though private provision employs less able graduates and do not spend unnecessary huge budget for their development, only the challenging minds and attitudes of the graduates employed at private sector would help them perform more efficiently.

**DATA**

This is a discourse analysis for a ‘conception paper’ mainly with an adaptation of descriptive research conducted through desk study method (Bell, 1999). Many data are gathered from secondary literature. The key tool of this research is a different look and standpoint of many established concepts and postulates within the concept of education theories and practices (Kane, 1997). Many observations and summaries of findings are considered from a number of works of the first author. These works include his and his students’ PhD researches. Moreover, a 13-year of experience at both institutions of higher education and donor agencies also helped to testify the issues with the knowledge of researchers and their colleagues.

The key strength of this research is that it has compiled the ideas of different proponent and opponent groups without prejudice (Riessman, 1993). In order to do so, the authors created a database based on secondary literature. This database was well connected with the geographical, cultural, economical and social contexts of the researches conducted earlier. This helped in understanding their influences towards the findings of earlier works (Patton, 2002). Moreover, a caution step was taken to understand

<sup>5</sup> The term authority used can be varied. For instance, ‘managing committee’ (such GB, Senate and syndicate) may be the authority for a school (i.e. university, institutes and colleges). However, if we see the educational context broadly, the Ministry of Education is the main authority of the state education system. However, Ministry of Education mainly depends on education policy currently practiced in order to control and monitor the state education system, so the existing educational policy hence play the most important role as being the main authority.

<sup>6</sup> This education is a product shaped from the course curricula

their influences towards findings of the previous works that could be caused by the scholars' culture, ideology and country's bureaucracy (Ping and Crowley, 1997). This was taken into consideration because in the context of the developing country due to cultural, political, educational and economical differences, a huge gap always exists (Pring, 2000). The results of this paper are products of secondary analysis of the data stored at the database.

### Limitation

It is worth mentioning that in collecting data from secondary literature, there are some predictable but unavoidable limitations that the authors experienced throughout the process (Robson, 2002). A vast amount of research works were conducted in the area of both teacher education, privatization in education and voucher system in education.

Unlike the study, almost none of them were focused predominantly in targeting the research issues that this paper intended to explore. Thus, the authors were unable to consider the 'raw data' from secondary sources (Bell, 1999). Within its limitations and scope, in order to avoid such limitation without making any prejudice to the study's research, the authors did not mainly consider the data but highly linked the concepts that various scholars established (Nichols, 1991). They gained their concepts either from their writings or through secondary analysis of the database (Smith, 1999; Bell, 1999 and Cohen et al., 2002). Therefore, within the scope of this paper, it should be limited to a concept based paper but not essentially data oriented paper.

## CURRENT PRACTICE OF OPERATION IN EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education is considered as the main medicine in order to cure the diseases hindering the development of a nation (Ronlad, 1997). To prevent or cure the diseases that education is experiencing, a few fundamental antibiotics have been introduced. These are privatization, teacher education and establishment of infrastructure and logistic support. While establishment of infrastructure and logistic support process is seriously contaminated through political and financial corruptions, the phenomena of privatization and teacher education are not also well functional (Kotecha, 2002). The following writing will not illuminate the issues and challenges that the process of establishment of infrastructure and logistics support is experiencing. It will fundamentally include the major issues and concerns centering the privatization and teacher education cycles of operation with an aim to provide a solution (Al-Qudsi, 2003).

### Privatization

Although it is claimed that private education is a recent phenomenon in the developing world, criteria of private educations and their schemata have evolved out of historical practices. Deeper investigation indicates that the introduction of private education was implemented by a process known as 'Guru-Shiso' (Alam, 2008). Many forms of private education still exist within the education.

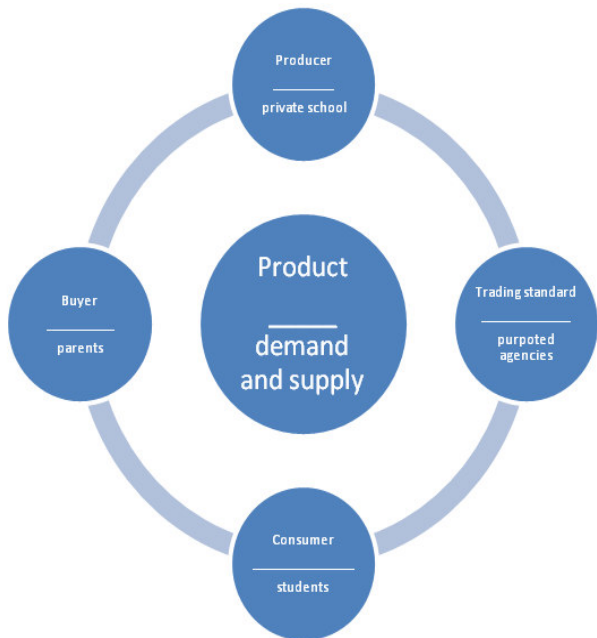
Main forms of private provision are private tutor/lodging-master, private coaching and private schooling. The main underpinning reason on expansion of private education is either inefficiency or inadequacy of public provision (Altbach, 1999). Currently, in order to provide access to primary and secondary education for the disadvantaged cluster, the door of private provision is greatly opened allowing public counterpart to serve the needy with best care.

The operation of private education at HE level is extremely high (Farag, 2002). As a result of these policy changes, no remarkable development can be marked for the services provided by public providers. Despite no remarkable improvement, education is still considered as the weapon of development, and it is important to ensure the equal right of every individual to have access to education (Alam and Khalifa, 2009). However, with the advantage of a sound financial background, privileged individuals are not only accessing better quality education at primary and secondary levels, but also gain a better quality of life through improved access to better quality fundamental goods and rights (Jimenez et. al., 1989). The recent expansion of private higher education has thus not only opened the door for the privileged to access better quality education, but it has helped those within the elite that would not normally get access to higher education the means by which to enter this form of provision (Huong and Fry, 2002). This has had significant impact on the quality of HE and research. Higher education and research are interrelated which is considered as the shaper and roller of education system and the nation as a whole (Kotecha, 2002).

Since consumer and buyer of private education have buying capacity, this somehow helps them to have the product that they are looking or targeting for to be a short term mission. An unwritten consensus between private provision and buyer/consumer develops a market approach to run this provision, bypassing the governance and regulatory control developed by the education agencies (James, 1993). This may help both the producer/seller and buyer/consumers for the short term mission and their aim and objective, but the final consumer (state) of skills and knowledge does not gain what it suppose to have gained (Diagram 7).

### Teacher education

After a huge investment made through both public and private fund, a graduate becomes qualified for teaching in the institutions of education (Gorski, 2009). With a long investment of time, effort and money, individuals become involved with teaching. This situation develops psychological constraints amongst teacher community to earn money while they get involve with any activity (Pantić and Wubbels, 2010). Thus, they consider their professional and continuous development not to be necessary in



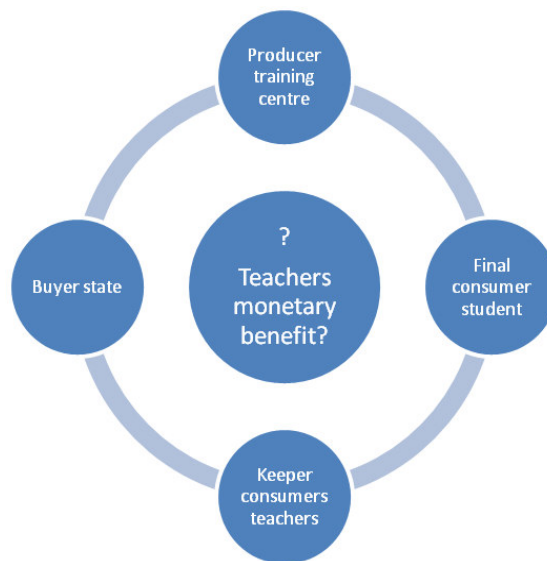
**Diagram 7.** Consumer and product cycle in private education for primary and secondary provision.



**Diagram 9.** Product cycle in teacher education.



**Diagram 8.** Consumer and product cycle in private higher education



**Diagram 10.** Consumer cycle in teacher education.

updating the knowledge, rather as a key to increase their income potential (Diagram 8). It is widely believed amongst teachers that they are investing their time for the benefit of the students, thus they are reluctant to invest their time unless they are highly compensated with direct or indirect monetary benefits (Diagrams 9 and 10). In order to attract the teachers joining with the training programmes, both the government and teacher training

provider (NGO) provides higher incentives. Moreover, many countries also allow the teachers to use this training qualification for the promotion of salary and position (Korthagen et al., 2006; Fajet et al., 2005). Despite these, it is well evident that teacher training ultimately has no wider impact on students' academic excellence. It is also only evident that after having training, teachers can update their knowledge with a very minimum scale. However, further investigation asserts that most of the teachers forget their updated knowledge received from training as little scope to use it or have reluctances on using it (Cochran-Smith, 2003).

As teachers are neither buyers nor consumers of such training offered, they are not serious in the account of teacher education. It is well evident that the teachers<sup>7</sup> who offer private tuition supports to students (especially for Mathematics and English), somehow increases their need based knowledge which is demanded by their clients (Cochran-Smith, 2003). Evidence confirms that these teachers eventually do not necessarily go through the teacher training programme. Criticism can be made that these teachers have only precise knowledge and technique for the subject without having overall education philosophical knowledge and needs or to the pedagogical aspect (Robinson and McMillan, 2006). It might be true, but unfortunately, their affordable clients are maintaining higher grade at primary and secondary education allowing them to enroll into higher education. Thus, the system ultimately fails to filter the most capable students for higher education, which applies for elite jobs too (Anthony, 2001).

## GENESIS AND CRITERIA OF FREE EDUCATION

Free education concept and its criteria are not new. Wealthier people of the community, religious and charity organizations established schools as part of their philanthropic activities. Later on, their initiatives were especially targeted to motivate and support the less advantaged with academically well fitted group through the operation of scholarship scheme. Moreover, examples can be noted that many wealthier parents extend their hands to support especially poor male graduates for their education with a condition of marrying their daughters (Ziderman, 2002). In addition, high interest rate of education loan scheme was in operation from the very beginning of education history. In the course of time, official education loan provision provided through formal banking system was introduced. All these activities remarkably neither succeed motivating the poor to education nor providing them an equal access to education, or to have an access to same quality education (Ionescu, 2009). Unemployment and under-employment rate is higher amongst educated graduates with an increasing curve compared to their uneducated counterpart. High interest and non-friendly repay scheme of education loan restricts the consumer/ buyer not to step forward to education loan (Al-Qudsi, 2003). All these catastrophes force the government to introduce massive 'free education for all' concept through the subsidy of public fund. Government initiatives also fail to develop equal quality education for all, rather it reveals that the advantaged group takes the double opportunities (Alam, 2008). For instance, with the parental participation and investment of different kinds of efforts, advantaged group develops an inequality of education quality concept at

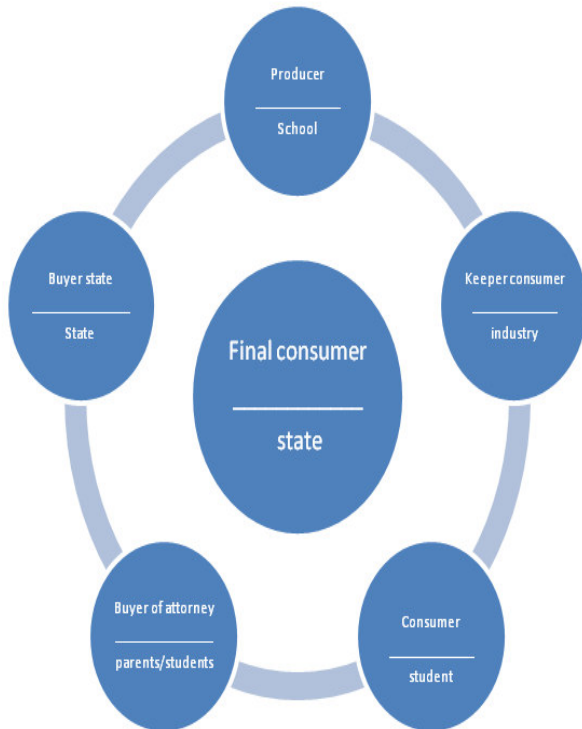
public provision. Moreover, private tuition also works as supplement for them resulting to higher performance. As a result, these groups are awarded the scholarship (Hill and Wallace, 1985). These circumstances motivate the elites to progress with education cheerfully, while the poor must be disheartened in contemplating 'education is their right but not their property, rather it is the sole property and asset for the elites'. Thus, it is now time to rethink the concept of education rights (Chapman et al., 2010).

## Concept of voucher system

In a society, people live with different economic and social backgrounds. One cluster may be able to buy their needs and demands with a high level of buying power, another can be able to cope with the march, and the other might not be able to cope or they are rather passing a hard time in balancing and minimizing their needs and demands (Alam et al., 2009a, 2009b). It may be a fact that an over squeezing is needed in order to balance and minimize their needs and demands, so the poorer are dying slowly or always sacrificing their needs and demands, let alone to dream about wants and wishes. While these situations are experienced within the poorer cluster, the 'super elite cluster' may deem that their wants and wishes are to be the key fundamentals for daily lives (Alam et al., 2009a; Alam and Hoque, 2010). While this is a common culture in the developing world, the concept of 'education for all as right' is crying and staying in its own corner, while education as goods for elite are laughing to celebrate its success. So, it is now a demand of time to have another concept that may be able to bring a real concept of equality in education. The new concept is defined as voucher system in education. According to this concept, the state/country is considered as the final buyer/ consumer of knowledge and skills provided by any form of school and education, and training providers (Hamman et al., 2010).

Although this is factual within the cycles, there is an area of middle buyer and consumer. As a result of lack of buying capacity, they have no real rights to their choice of education products (Diagram 11). With the scope of new vouchering system, government handovers buying attorney to the midlevel consumer/buyer through voucher (Diagram 11). In order to do so, government has to review and allocate its education budgets in accordance of various levels, types, patterns, locations, nature of subjects and courses. Keeping this view, government needs to find out an exact 'unit cost' for each level, type, pattern, location, nature of subject and course (Li et al., 2010). After this calculation, government will provide the voucher in the worth of full unit cost or unit cost plus supplement, or unit cost minus buyer original capacity in accordance to the economic cluster. This voucher should only be provided to those people who need support. It will not be provided to anyone who has full buying power.

<sup>7</sup> Teachers either involved with teaching in school or not (just provide a tuition only)



**Diagram 11.** Consumer cycle in voucher.

With the power of the voucher, the mid level buyer/consumer would not be able to take any direct cash.

They would be provided a voucher to buy education from their desired education institutions. These institutions of education could either be public or private. Upon enrolment, this voucher will be given to the school by the clients at monthly basis. Thereafter, schools will collect the fund when submitting the voucher (Sandström and Bergström, 2005). Within this system, schools are also obliged to collect the same amount of fees from the own fees paying group. Schools can neither collect the different scale of fees from their affordable elite clients nor be a beneficiary of extra fees for private tuition.

### **Advantages and disadvantages of voucher system**

The following two sections highlight the key characteristics of voucher system as a way of understanding its potential impact. These sections will not focus on the *comparative debate*. However, some of the facts which have been discussed as a *comparative debate* in literature may be analyzed and interpreted. It is important to note that what is seen as an advantage in one region may be seen as a disadvantage in another region. On the other hand, situations regarded as disadvantage of a specific circumstance can be advantageous in other circumstances.

### **Advantages of voucher system**

#### ***Ownership attitude instead of rights***

Accessing any goods as an option of rights concept always deprives the prestige of the consumers. They often judge them as either beggars or mercy takers from others. This situation even develops into a more humiliated and shameful atmosphere for consumers who are children and adolescents, while they see their other counterparts who are buying the same goods as wearing a diadem (Wells and Zunz, 2009). These psychological constraints prevent them not to be careful buyers. They do not apply the theory of consumers' rights and carefulness rather they consider the goods as donation product. So the consumer and buyers keep silent even if the product is substandard. This problem may be addressed through voucher system.

#### ***Assurance of Equability***

Both concepts named 'equability' given by the school of Sociology, and 'Jakat' concept of Islam are familiar and popular with their cultural, regional and religious basis. However, while the debates for both concepts are ongoing with the participation of the adherents and opponents, introduction of voucher concept is beyond this debate. It neither clashes with the concept of 'equability' nor 'Jakat' but provides a decent balanced education operation system for a state (Luengo-Prado and Volij, 2003; Wells and Zunz, 2009).

#### ***Competitive atmosphere between public and private provision***

As a result of this voucher system, each of these institutions has to earn money regardless of their types and level capitalizing the success of institution. Moreover, prudence and transparency in dealing with budget and other activities relating to the education quality and institutional benefit will only be the parameter for development and further progression. Sustainability of the development also depends on continuous and uptight efforts (Levin and Schwartz, 2007).

#### ***Reduce of Burden from Education Agencies***

Within the current climate, education agencies are overburdened with many activities. These are quality control, funding mechanism, governance and regulatory control, designing and implementation of course and curricular, addressing discrimination, assuring equability and many more. In order to work for all of these, education agencies are passing a period of anxiety. While government institutions are not providing adequate

support and cooperation to education agency because of the high level of sustainable security for public provision, private counterparts have also no time to extend their cooperation to education agency as they are having hard time in the usage of their time paramountly in order to sustain or stay far away from the potential threats. Voucher system will introduce a system of self responsibility for education institutions allowing education agencies to concentrate on their main businesses (Alam, 2008). The main businesses of education agencies are to present well-time courses and curricula for national development and to assure more progressive education with the highest quality in order to confront the challenges of the 21st century.

### ***Fostering self responsibility and ethics***

Providing freedom with a well guidance and direction helps both the individuals and institutions to understand the significance and real meaning of independence. Rigidly, controlling neither helps nor fosters the responsibilities of guiding anyone to be an independent performer. Moreover, this approach almost results a derailment for both individual and institutions. Thus, graduates produced from such circumstance may suffer a number of constraints preventing them from been the key players in both economic and social development. Moreover, teachers will be self-responsible for the continuous development (Levin, 1992; Hamman et al., 2010).

### **Disadvantages of voucher system**

#### ***Corruption in the distribution process***

Within the distribution process of voucher, a number of stakeholders and organizations would be involved. Many countries experiencing high volume of corruptions in education will also not be exempted for the operation of voucher system. Many individuals may earn illegal money by practicing abominable activities as the way they are involved in currently (Levin, 1992). If this exists, the targeted group beneficiaries will not be benefited. Moreover, in order to have the funds, individuals and schools as well as education agencies may get involved with high level of corruptions as what they are currently practicing and are habituated with.

#### ***Influence of marketism in education***

It is well evident that private education invest unnecessarily bigger portion of budgets for their promotional activities, which as a result restrict them from investing more money for the actual development of education quality (Alam and Khalifa, 2009). In order to attract students, institutes may get involved with a high level of

marketing and promotional activities. A decent marketing is good for product promotion, but an unfair and show-down competition of marketing does not essentially work for product promotion, rather it increases the production cost. In order to invest for marketing activities, institute minimizes the budget sacrificing quality assurance and control (Kotecha, 2002).

### ***Lack of infrastructure and logistic support***

Infrastructure and logistic supports are also significantly important for the development of education industry. Development budget is always used for establishing infrastructure and logistic supports, while a revenue budget is used to meet the regular expenses (Alam et al., 2010). If both budgets (revenue and development) are used through voucher system, schools with a short term vision and mission, and the school experiencing lack of good co-ordination and leadership may only use the funds that are gained through vouchers for daily activities and development. These may result a weaker infrastructure and logistic support for the school. This issue needs to be dealt with prudently and with enough maturity (Korthagen et al., 2006).

### **Strategic, policy and implementation constraints of voucher system**

Introducing voucher system for education is not a simple transformation as it is to be considered a shifting of paradigm. Moving towards a new paradigm always requires two types of preparations. One of them is prerequisite setup and the other is postrequisite (Alam, 2010). While prerequisite setup addresses the main and major constraints that are hindering to start flying, postrequisite setup ensures a well function for daily life with an assurance of smooth running and landing. Having an error-free setup for postrequisite always requires a longer experience (Robinson and McMillan, 2006). An experience of learning from mistakes and commitment for not causing mistake along with good working culture, asserts that coordination and leadership are vital for postrequisite. However, with ensuring a well functional prerequisite setup, no new operation and introduction of new paradigm is impossible. A good prerequisite setup always requires an in-depth critical analysis of probable constraints. The writing that follows includes the probable strategic, policy and implementation constraints of prerequisite setup for voucher system of paradigm shifting (Hashim et al., 2010).

### **Improper and unacceptable database**

Providing voucher to true buyers/consumers is the major challenge. Many countries lack a proper database for

information, data and statistics of their massive people. The purpose of this database is to include a wider information, data and statistics of demography. Information is required from all population of a state in a proper database that is able to provide much information both precisely and details ways (Robinson and McMillan, 2006). Moreover, the database would be able to analyze the data with multi diversify ways ensuring statistical significance. Information is in many regards such as economic condition, total number of family members, age and physical condition of the family members, number of income holders of a family, probable future length of income capacity of each income holder, gender of family members, potential time to join with income activity of other members and many other issues (Hashim et al., 2010). These will not only help the voucher system in education, but will also support every activity of any kind of national policy (that is, manpower planning, overall education and tanning planning, fiscal policy and development activity planning). Most of the countries might have this database; however, some of them are having very solid system. Recent development of information technology would be the best use of this database and for various analyses. Without having national ID system along with details database (such as IC, NI and social security number), it is hard to progress into this new paradigm. An e-paradigm on national database would help to solve the problem in many ways (Hashim et al., 2010).

#### **Lack of awareness of midlevel buyers/consumers**

The mid-level buyers/consumers of many countries are not well familiar with philosophy of education and the need, role and purpose of education. Moreover, they suffer with a number of superstitions and traditions (Alam, 2003). Furthermore, while anyone who lives under extreme poverty tries to overcome short term mission, planning for long term can be considered as a nightmare for this circumstance. Within such circumstance, voucher system even fails to attract them towards education. It is worth noting that, if voucher system fails to motivate, of course 'free school concept' cannot resolve this issue. A voucher that includes unit cost plus additional subsidy may be useful for this kind of situation (Psacharopoulos and Patrions, 2002).

#### **Political and bureaucratic corruption**

Politicians and bureaucrats always like to have a control of everything. Moreover, education sector always receive high priority for allocation of budget. Some degrees of corruption of these huge budgets at every level help to have financial gains for politicians and bureaucrats (Fisher, 1999). Voucher system would engrave the financial power and control from politicians and

bureaucrats. Within the current climate, politicians and bureaucrats of many countries will not be happy to lose their financial power and control, thus introduction of voucher paradigm and its implementation will be hampered.

### **PLAUSIBLE WAYS TO ADDRESS THE CONSTRAINTS**

Before putting forward the potential ways to help voucher system function effectively, it should be appreciably noted that the constraints in regard to implementing voucher system are not created by the voucher system itself. The constraints are already in existence within the system of education in many countries with a long history. The disadvantages and constraints noted earlier are not exclusive to voucher system (Li et al., 2010). The current problems, constraints and challenges are the main enemies for the education system of developing world (Alam et al., 2010). Voucher system aims to work more functionally than the existing mechanism of operation. However, results would be much better through the activation of voucher system if the following issues can be resolved and researches can be conducted.

#### **Development of an extensive database**

The states that lack a better database for their population and demography should design a well and vast database both with the consultancy guidance of different levels (that is, micro, macro and organizational) and types (that is, economic, education, health, social and environment and some other sector) of policy makers, scholars, implementers and practitioners (Alam and Hoque, 2010). Involvement of both international policy and information technology experts is to be considered. This master database will not only help the voucher system, but will also play a vital role for any kind of national policy formulation of a state through its micro and macro inputs (Hashim et al., 2010).

#### **Common fees structure**

Government needs to prescribe a common fees structure for each type of providers with a rationally justification in connection to level and types of education, types of courses, location of the schools and considering some other factors that influences the production cost of graduates.

#### **Campaigning for awareness**

Communities of many developing countries are not well aware of education philosophy, the purpose of education and the role of education in national development (Al-Qudsi, 2003). Thus, a campaigning might help to make

education product popular. However, it is also well evident that most parts of the world and communities perceive that education is the key to development. It is only the unpleasant realities that restrict many poor people not to be the beneficiary of education.

### Change of mentality and eye sight

It is common that most of the individuals by nature want to have a short term benefit without investing much time (Alam and Hoque, 2010). Moreover, cash incentives are very attractive. Politicians and bureaucrats are not an exception of it. Since they have more options to take opportunities, thus they are always blamed to be opportunists. Majority of the population of developing nations are ready to follow that path if scopes are provided (ibid). This disease has affected and is spreading hastily. Thus, the mentality should be broaden to long term vision with an idea that, to be a normal citizen of a developed world (a world of desire) is better than to be a high income holder and powerful citizen of a developing nation. It is worth mentioning that even many developing world lacks a minimum standard of basic citizen and civic life, just as many examples can be cited that many countries lack basic supply of drinking water, gas, electricity and some other elements that are necessary for an urban or rural life, let alone a state of peace.

### Concluding remark

In the Third World, any research carried out invariably results in a long list of recommendations. Policy-makers consistently fail to follow any of the suggestions made or, at best, partially implement them (Alam et al., 2009a and Alam and Hoque, 2010). A comprehensive solution continues to be elusive whilst the prevailing culture of corruption and political influence prevents the effective implementation of policies.

However, the authors wish to emphasize that the straightforward and direct implementation of suggestions emerging as a result of this paper which was noted above, may not fully address all of the existing problems. They firmly advocate that, if a transparent and open policy structure could be achieved and political interference minimized, the suggestions could go a long way towards solving at least some of the problems facing the education sector.

The voucher system cannot operate in isolation, thus, the gradual improvement of many issues which require attention to find out solutions with deeper investigation and research, would take this voucher system a long way to shape the education and its needs and roles for cotemporary developing world. This paper concludes with a statement and slogan of their children "education is not my right but my asset."

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