Public Private Partnership in Higher Education in Bangladesh: A Study of Stakeholders’ Conceptualization and Critical Success Factors

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Abstract: Public Private Partnership (PPP) is an increasingly popular choice for policymakers in implementing important public projects. Many government projects were delivered via PPP. To ensure the ultimate objectives of PPP, identifying the critical success factors (CSFs) of PPP implementation is crucial. Based on both secondary and primary data, the paper first presents a conceptual clarification of PPP and then argues that good governance, commitment of the public and private sectors, favorable legal framework, sound economic policy and availability of finance market are the top five CSFs of PPP implementation in Bangladesh. The paper finally provides a discussion on the directions for future research.

Keywords: Public Private Partnerships, partnerships, higher education, critical success factors, hybrid, government.

1.0 Introduction

PPPs give rise to a series of ideological and managerial choices. These concerns the relationship between private actors and the state, extent to which businesses and not-for-profits should substitute for government, and the costs and benefits of different public-private solutions (Linder and Rosenau, 2000). The way in which these choices are constituted and resolved is a function of the particularities of different political and cultural contexts. PPPs present a framework that engaging the private sector for acknowledge and structure the role for government in ensuring that social obligations are met and successful sector reforms and public investments achieved. A strong PPP allocates the tasks, obligations, and risks among the public and private partners in an optimal way. The public partners in a PPP are government entities, including ministries, departments, municipalities, or state-owned enterprises. Increasingly, PPPs may also include non-government organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations who represent stakeholders directly affected by the project.

In Australia, New Zealand, Scandinavia, and UK, PPPs introduce a significant disjunction to the tradition of public provision through a social democratic welfare state (Castles et al. 1996; Savitch, 1998). This contrasts with the US where historically there

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has been closer involvement of business in the provision of government (Moulton and Anheier, 2000; Salamon, 1981).

In many countries, particularly, developing countries shortage of public funds have led governments to invite private sector entities to enter into long term contractual agreements for financing, construction and operation of capital intensive infrastructure projects. A Public Works Financing Database of worldwide projects between 1985 and 2004 shows that 1,121 PPP infrastructure projects (road, rail, airport, seaport, water, and building), representing $450.9 billion worth of investment, were funded and completed with the majority of the projects being in Europe, Asia, and the Far East as shown in Table-1.

Table-1: Regional Share of PPP Projects funded and completed between 1985 and 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>37.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asia and the Far East</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>15.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latin America, Africa, Middle East</td>
<td>9.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL ($450.9 billion)</td>
<td>100.00</td>
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Source: US Department of Transportation, 2005

In Asia the notion of public private partnership is difficult to translate to societies whose cultural and political traditions do not easily accommodate the western distinctions between private sector and state (Moulton and Anheir, 2000). Republic of Korea, India and Japan, are the top performing countries in robust institutional and regulatory frameworks. India is slightly ahead of Japan, reflecting strong political will and rising capacity for PPPs, although problems with implementation remain a challenge. The People’s Republic of China (PRC) also performed well with a mammoth 614 PPPs between 2000 and 2009, despite a relatively underdeveloped institutional and regulatory environment.

Bangladesh is undergoing an era of reform. The Bangladesh people, whose inherent talent and productivity are crucial to the success of enterprise, have reaffirmed their participation in the pursuit of economic development and equitable progress. In turn, our government has set in place the conditions necessary for the realization of these aspirations. PPP is a form of mid/long term contractual agreement between public
services, and, therefore, the understanding of the nature of public services is very important before commencing any PPP project. Strategy for PPP (Bangladesh Gazette, 2010) sets out the nature of public services. Public good provision (non-rival and non-excludable) is an important feature of public services. The topmost priority sector for PPP is social infrastructure e.g. health, education, and human resource development.

To develop human resources, it is important to raise awareness in higher education. Quality education will play a vital role to lead Bangladesh to face global competition in knowledge economy. Various studies and media reports indicate that the higher education in Bangladesh is facing multifarious challenges due to limited access, less relevance to market needs, inadequate financing, and many other constraints. It seems difficult for the government alone to address all of these challenges effectively. There is thus a need to involve the non-state sector for ensuring a quality-laden higher education that can play a crucial role in nurturing human capital through establishing a vertical linkage leading towards social transformation and fueling the economic growth.

1.1 What Public-Private Partnerships Are and What They Are Not?

Defining PPPs is not easy as there is no definition generally accepted by practitioners or academia. A general definition given by a paper prepared by the Fiscal Affairs Department of the IMF that leaves space for a great variety of organizational arrangements: “Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) refer to arrangements where private sector supplies infrastructure assets and services that traditionally have been provided by the government.” It is true that the IMF recognizes that this definition does not help to an agreement on what does and what does not constitute a PPP. From its own perspective, the IMF further limits the scope of this definition by considering that “a typical PPP takes the form of a design-build –finance-operate (DBFO) scheme. Under such scheme, the government specifies the services it wants the private sector to deliver, and then the private partner designs and builds a dedicated asset for that purpose, finances its construction, and subsequently operates the asset and provides the services deriving from it. This contrasts with traditional public investment where the government contracts with the private sector to build an asset but the design and financing is provided by the government. In most cases, the government then operates the asset once it is built. The difference between the two approaches reflects a belief that giving the private sector combined responsibilities for designing, building, financing, and operating an asset is a source of the increased efficiency in service delivery that justifies PPPs”. But the IMF also recognizes that other forms of cooperation between the public and the private sector may come under the general category of PPP.

The reasons for promoting partnership are relatively simple – within this spectrum of globalization and global economy, partnerships can be used to effectively expand
resources, and improve services. In short, partnerships can work to improve infrastructure and citizen services, while reducing financial and other burdens on government. Partnerships can leverage resources and funds. Further, partnerships mean policies that work to strengthen cooperation and information sharing, and therefore go to the very heart of the future economy (Yoshitomi, 2000).

1.2 Aim and Motivation

This research will explore the realize and potential organizational response of public owned firms and public organizations to public requirements which tend to drive the transformation of value networks and promote public-private partnership in higher education. The study will present a mechanism for bridging the present status of higher education with future potentials and its implementation through which capabilities and resources are acquired for novel service concepts. Furthermore, reasons for the increasing popularity of PPPs will be examined. The outcome of this interdisciplinary research is the evaluation of theoretical concepts that will explain different partnership models.

An analysis of trends which may influence, or have influenced, organizations’ willingness to exploit PPPs in education sector constitutes the empirical pattern of this research. The promoters of PPPs from government and international agencies, both donors and financiers wish to increase the coverage of education to ensure that all children go to school, especially in developing countries. The need to ensure Education For All (EFA) and the challenge of the Millennium Development Goals has resulted in growing support for partnerships as an instrument to increase the current provision of education during the first decade of the twenty first century (Fennel, 2010, P.3). The framework of PPPs has been regarded by international financial institutions such as the World Bank as a possible way to ensure this objective by bolstering demand-driven provision as well as more cost-effective supply of education (World Bank, 2009, Tooley and Dixon, 2005).

PPPs are widespread in all parts of the world and they have a significant impact on the quality of education, its accessibility and on the working conditions of teachers and education employees. PPPs are transnational and their policies and the practices they encompass in one country can easily be applied in another (Education International, 2008). Therefore, the research will focus on the impact of a case where PPPs are newly adopted; in the higher education field in Bangladesh, and to analyze in which manner the mechanism can be conducted nationally.

2.0 Statement of the Research Problem

Bangladesh historically lags behind industrialization (Sharker et al., 2006). After liberation, the Government of Bangladesh has been endeavoring to improve its industrial
growth (Karim, 2009). However, it faces manifold problems; one of them is lack of managing the human component and best utilization of modern technology to attain human efficiency. Skill and human efficiency depends on proper education, it could be technical or non-technical. Developing countries like Bangladesh are now enjoying an excellent favorable atmosphere in terms of supply of educated manpower. People are much aware and aggressive about acquiring knowledge and training on modern business and information technology. Employers have started to understand that the more they invest in human resources, more output is likely which lead them to emphasize on employee capability development.

Therefore, now is a good time for the industry leaders of Bangladesh to seriously think and take initiatives to work for developing efficient human resources that can compete in the global market. Firstly, it can create a win-win solution for universities and industry by allowing them to collaborate in research and development. Industry can leverage universities research and development capacity based on basic and applied science disciplines. Universities can tap on industry’s financial and human resources and physical facilities to train students to gain practical experiences, which will increase relevance of higher education. Secondly, universities may have excellent technology, but most of times do not have capacity and financing for product development, marketing, and distribution in commercial scale. Universities or their graduates can collaborate with industry in commercializing their technology products. PPP arrangements can increase relevance, quality and financial capacity of higher education to serve the national interest better.

3.0 Rationale of the Study

Owing to the popularity of the public-private partnerships in provision of public goods, in this study researcher tried to analyze whether public-private partnerships could work in higher education and if yes, than what should be the proper model which should be followed. Public-private partnerships are not that much effective in the higher education sector and that the benefits they seek to bring in the higher education system could easily be achieved by de-licensing and having amore market friendly approach towards higher education in Bangladesh. Since independence Bangladesh’s education sector has grown enormously although Bangladesh has a low literacy rate, estimated at 61.3% for males and 52.2% for females in 2010 (Central Intelligence Agency, 2012). The educational system in Bangladesh is three-tired and highly subsidized. It also subsidizes parts of the funding for many private schools. In the tertiary education sector, the government also funds more than 15 state universities through the University Grants Commission.
There were only 6 universities in Bangladesh at the time of independence in 1971. Today it has grown from 6 to 104 universities in 2011-12 (University Grants Commission, 2012). Even with such rapid expansion the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education remains very low, and lower than many developing countries. Unfortunately, the said expansion of the higher education system has failed to fulfill the need for quality higher education among the Bangladeshi youth, and also it did not keep pace with the growing demand.

The Government of Bangladesh have formed a general opinion that resource gap should be met using public-private partnerships because the socio-political structure of Bangladesh would not allow for commercialization of education. In order to achieve the vision 2021 goal of Bangladesh becoming a middle income country by 2021, Government of Bangladesh announced a notification in 2010 on Policy and Strategy for Public-Private Partnership, under section 4, it is mentioned that “Any project that generates public goods and services may be considered under the public-private partnership.”

There is no mechanism developed to ensure quality education. Each public university relies on its own mechanism to ensure quality. There is no provision for external review of quality for the universities. The National University (NU) is responsible for maintaining the quality at the tertiary level colleges. Nevertheless, the NU is busy mostly with arranging exams and publishing results and there is no activity to ensure quality of the affiliated colleges. The UGC carries out monitoring of private universities in a limited extent. The private universities need UGC’s permission to open and operate departments. However, most of the private universities have failed to meet the minimum requirements of physical infrastructures, fulltime qualified faculties to provide proper education. This study will allow to develop the mechanism to ensure quality education. Furthermore, no research yet conducted on improving quality in higher education and how PPPs can contribute in this area.

4.0 Literature Review

The process of reviewing the literature in the area of public-private partnerships and its impact in higher education uncovered a huge range of study material. It is deemed necessary to investigate the literature in the area of PPPs of various project in different countries to look into the implementation status of various models, benefits achieved, problems encountered as well as improvement of performance achieved by implementing PPPs. This review, therefore, serves to see through the study in terms of what has been
researched over many years in this particular domain. PPP issues have been subject of an increasing amount of research over years.

Bangladesh has been enjoying steady economic growth at 6 to 7% per annum in recent years with a per capita income reaching $1700 (adjusted by purchasing power parity). It has been identified as the Next-11 (Goldman Sachs), or 11 countries with a high potential of becoming, along with the BRICS, the world’s largest economies in the 21st century. It has a population of 158.6 million (2011 estimate). The population is young (median age of 23.3 years in 2009) and provides a large workforce of 73.87 million and an estimated 22 million new entrants between 2005 and 2015. Unemployment rate is estimated at 5.10% in 2010, but underemployment is high at 28.70% and youth unemployment rate is over 13%. Remittances from more than 5 million overseas workers amount to 12% of GDP in 2009. Its abundant human resources have great potential for boosting Bangladesh’s economic growth. But challenges remain in turning the young and growing population into a skilled and productive workforce.

The government’s sixth Five Year Plan emphasizes “accelerating economic growth – productive employment (high income jobs in formal sector) – poverty reduction” nexus, and stresses the needs to address both demand and supply sides of human resources. Being the goal as well as the means of national development, the government continues to make education of masses one of its top priorities. It should be noted that secondary and tertiary level enrolment rates are below the South Asian average, and quality remains a significant issues to address. In the global knowledge economy, higher education has crucial role in nurturing human capital that will fuel economic growth, lead social transformation, and find solutions to many development challenges that the country is facing.

PPP in higher education has several advantages considering the current challenges in higher education and its role in transforming Bangladesh into a knowledge economy that can compete in the global market. Planning commission of India has zeroed in on four business model to promote higher education through public-private partnership mode and they have identified 4 PPP models for higher education (Press Trust of India, May 21, 2009). The four models are the Basic Infrastructure model, the Outsourcing model, the Hybrid/Mix/Equity model and the Reverse Outsourcing model.

Under the Basic Infrastructure model, private sector will invest in infrastructure while government would run the operations and management and make annualized payments to the private player. The Outsourcing model suggests that private players should invest in
infrastructure and also run the operations and management while government would pay for specific services. The **Hybrid** model suggests that private player and the government should share investment in infrastructure while operation and management should be taken care of by the former. The **Reverse Outsourcing** last suggests that the government should invest in infrastructure and private players should run operations and management. The Education Division is of the view that all four models are not only feasible but also have their own strengths and are not mutually exclusive. The division opines that these models are possible choices and opportunities of PPP engagements in not only setting up new institutions but also running existing institutions.

In Bangladesh, PPPs have been used since the 1990s as a means to finance large infrastructure projects. Since the adoption of IPP policy in 1996, about 50 initiatives in telecommunication, power plants, land port and other physical infrastructure projects have been successfully implemented till date. Surprisingly, one of the very first PPP projects was in the ICT sector, The Railway Reservation and Ticketing System which was initiated in 1993-94, first developed by Techno haven and later managed by Daffodil, the project was a major success, increasing revenues by more than 130% in eight years, cutting staff by half, and increasing productivity by 200% (Bangladesh Enterprise Institute, July, 2010).

After success of this project, utility bill payment systems developed by telecom operators in 2008. The most significant recent success has been the Custom House Automation Project in Chittagong in 2008 and Dhaka Custom House Automation Project has also been undertaken by DCCI and Data Soft Ltd., which promises to double the revenue in two years, reduce cost of doing business by at least 70%, save customs processing time by 80%, enable precise monitoring of international and domestic price, and ensure accountability and transparency, auditability, etc.

The Universidad Politecnica de San Luis Potosi (UPSLP) was founded in 2001, and built to establish the growing demand for higher education in Mexico. UPSLP is a public university dependent upon the local government, endowed with legal status and its own resources. The model of PPP was evaluated by the university and finally adopted as a way to build the UPSLP campus (The World Finance). A PPP scheme provides an opportunity to increase private sector participants on in the provision of high-quality services under competitive conditions for public education institutions. The advantages of UPSLP contracting services with the private sector through a PPP instrument are:

- The ability to operate with services intended to offer quality and reliability under competitive conditions;
- To make sure services can be received on times;
- To allow the university to concentrate on academic issues;
- To assure the completion of strategic plan objectives.

Through the activities that UPSLP is developing, supported by the PPP model, the university is contributing to economic development in the region.

There are many evidence and projects which are successfully operating through PPP model. In Bangladesh not only private sectors, but also public funds like Equity and Entrepreneurship Fund (EEF) is available to nurture and increase investments in two promising industrial sector viz Software Industry and Food Processing and Agro-Based Industry. Government is also interested to increase quality and enrollment ratio in higher education. PPP can play a vital role to increase enrollment ratio and quality.

5.0 Research Objectives

Besides looking at the impact of PPPs, the purpose of this research is to give ‘voice’ to stakeholders that are outside the direct policy promotion (e.g. civil society organizations) that have a comprised space for advocacy.

5.1 Major objectives

The overall objective of this study is to examine stakeholders’ conceptualization of PPP, impact of CSF on PPP and organizational form and managerial strategies related to PPP projects, the current status of PPP in higher education, explore the potentials, and developing implementation plans in the context of Bangladesh.

5.2 Specific Objectives

Specifically the objectives of this study are to:

Identify the degree of conceptualization of PPP among the stakeholders in higher education institutions and industries.

Identify the stakeholders’ perception of the importance of CSF in PPP projects in higher education in Bangladesh.

Assess the relationship between PPP and organizational form and managerial strategies.

Providing directions for future research.
6.0 Research Methods

Despite the importance of the issue, very little research has been done in Bangladesh. The review of literature established the need to investigate these issues in the context of Bangladesh. The purpose of this section is to outline the research process. It is organized as follows: the theoretical framework of the study is outlined. The subsequent subsections provide an outline to the development of the questionnaire; a discussion of the features of the questionnaire; the selection of samples, and finally the issues of processing of the data from the questionnaire are discussed.

6.1 Research Design

This study is carried out by applying the quantitative approaches. A survey with a semi-structured questionnaire is used to collect primary data. The benefit of this is to be able to focus on the breadth and depth of the research while also increasing the validity and truthfulness of the research and thereby minimize confounding factors. The questionnaire comprises 18 factors that contribute to the success of Public-Private Partnership Projects, as shown in Table-2. The rationale adopting similar success factors to those used in prior studies is that the factors identified have received recognition by the industry (Cheung, 2007). More importantly, using similar success factors would allow apple-to-apple comparison between the results of the present study and the evidence obtained by the two prior studies, which have been conducted in different geographical locations – Hong Kong, Australia and the United Kingdom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Critical Success Factors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Stable macro-economic condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Favorable legal framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sound economic policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Available financial market</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Multi-benefit objectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Appropriate risk allocation and risk sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Commitment and responsibility of public and private sectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Strong and good private consortium</td>
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</table>
The survey is comprised of a semi-structured questionnaire followed by interviews and observation. The questionnaire is developed based on the framework of Esther Cheung. This approach of questionnaire is developed to get some specific as well as detailed views of respondents regarding the PPP related issues. This method of questionnaire is being used because it provides a comprehensive and holistic view of PPP implementation.

Basically, the research is exploratory wherein qualitative and quantitative data are collected and researched upon. Primary data are the findings from the interviews. The secondary data are used from internet websites, policy papers, journal articles, newspapers and magazine articles.

6.2 Method and Procedure

6.2.1 The Questionnaire: Development and Administration

Based on the literature reviewed in section 4, a survey questionnaire is developed for the top-level administrators and selected Trustee Board Chairperson/Members of private universities. Expert advices are solicited before finalization of the questionnaire which is then administered to the sample universities.

The study is conducted by using two stages: questionnaires and interviews. A semi-structured questionnaire (open ended and close ended) is developed. The questions mostly deal with PPP implementation issues. A face to face interview is carried out for
approximately 20 to 30 minutes. The interview schedule is semi-structured. However, when the respondent identifies issues relevant to the research, the researcher investigated these issues and also asked the same question to the next respondent. When any respondent faced difficulty in understanding a particular item or point, it has been clarified by the researcher at the time of interview. The concept of PPP is not very old in Bangladesh and there is a lack of empirical research in this field of study. The above mentioned methods of research are selected to obtain a detailed view of the extent of PPP practices in higher education.

6.3 Sampling

6.3.1 Selection of Areas

For the purpose of the present study higher education institutions, both public and private, situated in Dhaka, are selected.

6.3.2 Selection of Sample Institutions and Respondents

Out of a total population size of 105 (34 public and 71 private universities) from the list collected from UGC, a total of 4 universities (2 public and 2 private) are selected primarily as sample institutions. The top-level administrators such as VCs, Pro-VCs, and Treasurers are selected to fill in the questionnaire and for interviews. Selected Trustee Board Chairperson/Members of private universities are selected for interview. Fourteen industry leaders are selected purposively for interview and FGD.

6.4 Data Collection

Before visiting the institutions, appointment was made with at least one of the management personnel of each institution. The researcher himself attended the respondents, gave a brief explanation about the research topic and made the statements under each variable clear to them so that no ambiguity and/or confusion arise and thus ensured that the respondents filled in the questionnaire with confidence from their own perspective.

6.5 Processing of Data

The questionnaire is edited after having been filled to ensure relevancy and correctness of data. The questionnaire items are coded for feeding into the computer. The data is processed by using statistical techniques. The researcher himself tabulated the data. Before feeding the data into computer, all data is converted into numerical codes and
details of this coding are recorded in separate sheets. In addition, data cleaning and consistency checking are also done.

The tabulated data are used for analysis of results. The recommendations are made based on processed data.

7.0 General Discussion

The concept of PPP is still nascent in Bangladesh, especially in higher education. Although there are a few good cases of linking university’s function in human resource development and research and development with industry, most of them are rather ad-hoc and based on individual relationship. It is necessary to raise the awareness and reach a shared understanding of stakeholders on the knowledge economy and the role of higher education in leading Bangladesh to face the global competition in knowledge economy.

However whatever form of PPP we are talking about, the assumption that a PPP leads to better value for money and thus better outcomes can both be found in all the government documents (Kenniscentrum, 2002; NAO2002, ODPM2002, 2004) as well as in the academic literature (Osborne, 2000; Savas, 2000; Klijn and Teisman, 2003; Hodge and Greve, 2005). In their evaluation of a PFI (a form of PPP), established in relation to British schools, The British Audit Commission (2003) states that it provides: (1) better value for money; (2) buys services and not things; (3) provides better risk management; and (4) leaves a long-term legacy. We find the same kind of arguments in other countries, like The Netherlands (for details, see Kenniscentrum, 2002).

In general, these outcomes related improvements can take several forms. The literature speaks mostly in terms of securing the same outcomes for lower costs (efficiency), or greater outcomes for the same cost (added value) (Kenniscentrum, 2002). One could however add a third category of innovative solutions, or solutions that have not been achieved before (Borys and Jemison, 1989; Faulkner, 1995; Hodge and Greve, 2005):

- **More efficiency**: partnerships and the co-operation they engender result in lower costs and greater efficiency (McQuaid, 2000; Savas, 2000). One example of this is in the area of building projects where decisions might be made faster. Of course, more intense co-operation implies greater transaction costs, which should not exceed the possible revenues (Williamson, 1996).

- **Added value**: public and private actors can add value to each other’s performance because their efforts enhance the value of the product or service that is being delivered. The classic example is that of a co-operative effort of drafting a master plan for a newly built neighborhood that gives coherence to the total project, and thus raises the value of the individual dwellings.
More innovative results: another often heard advantage of partnerships is that actors are able to realize better, more innovative solutions by harnessing each other’s knowledge and expertise (Parker and Vaidia, 2001; Huxham and Vangen, 2005).

All else being equal, one would expect that partnerships involving a higher degree of PPP would have a better division of risks, greater co-ordination activities, and more organizational arrangements which would all serve to generate better outcomes.

7.1 Deconstructing ‘partnership’

The first point that should lead to discussion is the deconstruction of the PPPs discourse, due to its negative consequences. As Burgos (2004: 56) argues: “The way in which partnership is construed has political and ethical consequences that may appear overlooked in the rhetorical construction of reforms”. Therefore, there should be an investigation into what is meant with the partnership and which partnership processes or interactions take place between the designed policy tools and the education problems these tools address. Before using the concept of “partnership” strategies of policy interaction must be appointed, which can be implemented to address specific goals, instead of, as in the case of Bangladesh, claiming certain problems are addressed but not expanding sufficiently how this is exactly executed. Therefore the PPP concept must be “unpacked” of its rhetorical implications and valued for its actual policy interactions. In this way, as Srivastava argues (2010: 551):

The challenge at the heart of the institutional context for education delivery lies in deconstructing the conception of “partnership” as a justifying principle that is seemingly neutral, normatively correct, and a viable solution for severely resource constrained countries to achieve EFA goals quickly.

Deconstructing such partnerships means that education management arrangements and regulation should be reassessed. While this does not necessarily imply full state control of all aspects of education, it also does not mean an uncritical acceptance of any strategy using the discourse of partnership as “a universal – almost a neutral – value upon which all specific agents and governments in general, would agree” (Burgos, 2004: 58).

7.2 Critical Success Factors (CSFs) in PPP

The concept of ‘Critical Success Factors’ (CSFs) was first introduced by Rockart and the Sloan School of Management (Jefferies et al., 2002 and Hardcastle et al., 2005). Rockart
(1982) defined CSFs as ‘those few key areas of activity in which favourable results are absolutely necessary for a particular manager to reach his or her own goals’. Critical success elements are significantly important to help firms or organizations to identify key factors that firms should focus on in order to be successful in a project (Rowlinson, 1999).

Prior literature has assessed the critical success factors (CSFs) of construction projects in general (see for instance: Chua et al., 1999; Chan et al., 2004; and Saqib et al., 2008). In terms of CSFs of PPP projects, studies have emerged since the 1990s. In general, there are two types of literature on the CSFs of PPP:

1) studies that assess the CSF of PPP projects in general and 2) studies that examine the CSFs of a specific PPP project. Although the present study intends to assess the CSFs of PPP projects in Malaysia in general, the review of literature will cover both types of study.

In respect of specific case studies, Jefferies et al. (2002) examined the CSFs of a stadium in Australia, which was built using the Build Operate Own Transfer (BOOT) mode of PPP. The authors identified and examined 15 success factors relevant to the project and the most significant CSFs include: ‘compatibility/complimentary skills among the key parties’, ‘technical innovation in overcoming project complexity’ and ‘efficient approval process’. Other important success factors include ‘environmental impact’, ‘developed legal/economic framework’, ‘political stability’, ‘selecting the right project’, ‘existing strategic alliances’, ‘good resource management’, ‘trust’, ‘community support’, ‘feasibility study’, ‘transfer of technology’, ‘financial capability’, and ‘consortium structure’. Likewise, Jefferies (2006) investigated the CSFs of the Super Dome PPP project, which was also constructed using the BOOT scheme. The study considered the same CSFs examined in Jefferies et al. (2002) and included new success factors: ‘negotiation’, ‘client brief/outcome’, ‘bid feature’, ‘competition’, ‘credit rating investor’, ‘teamwork’, ‘existing infrastructure’, ‘delivery of asset’, ‘investment growth’, and ‘project identification’. The findings reveal that the most important success factors for the Super Dome project are: ‘the issue of bidding, which is successfully managed by the Government’, ‘the project agreement, which is a very streamlined approval’ and ‘the negotiation process’.

Jamali (2004) investigated the CSFs for PPP implementation in the telecommunication industry in Lebanon. Using a case study approach, the findings indicate that ‘trust’, ‘openness’ and ‘fairness’ are basic foundational underpinnings of successful PPPs. Zhao
et al. (2010) investigated the factors contributing to the success of two PPP power projects – thermal power and wind power – that were developed using the Build Own Transfer (BOT) mode. From an extensive review of relevant literature and interviews with experts, the authors identified 31 success factors for the power projects. Then a questionnaire survey was conducted to investigate the relative importance of the success factors specific to the individual thermal and wind power. The results revealed common CSFs for the two projects, which include: ‘the necessity for the project’, ‘the expected debt paying ability of the project’ and ‘the financial capacity of the contractor’. In addition, there are CSFs that are unique to the individual projects. For the thermal power, ‘level of project financing management of the project company’ and ‘level of business operation and qualification of the contractor’ are the important success factors while for the wind power, ‘competency of personnel of the project company’, ‘financial capacity of the contractor’, ‘expected profitability of the project’, and ‘legal environment’ are the CSFs.

In another case based study, Abdul Aziz (2010) who adopted a questionnaire survey and interviews to examine the CSFs of ten PPP housing projects in Malaysia. The study identified 15 success factors for PPP housing projects: ‘action against errant developer’, ‘robust and clear agreement’, ‘reputable developer’, ‘constant communication’, ‘developer’s profit sharing accountability’, ‘developer’s social accountability’, ‘house buyer’s demand’, ‘negotiation skills’, ‘adequate negotiation staff’, ‘realistic projection’, ‘competition’, ‘ample time to evaluate proposal’, ‘political influence’, ‘consistent monitoring’, and ‘compatibility between partners’. The results reveal that all 15 factors except ‘political influence’ contribute significantly to the success of a PPP housing project. More recently, Abdul Aziz and Kassim (2011) conducted a similar study that also focuses on PPP housing projects and uses the same 15 success factors as identified by Abdul Aziz (2010) but extended the study by investigating the objectives as well as the success and failure factors of PPP housing projects. In terms of the CSFs, the study reveals that ‘action against errant developers’ is the most influential variable on the success of PPP housing, while ‘absence of robust and clear agreement’ has the most impact on the failure of housing PPP.

Despite the unique characteristics of individual PPP projects, prior literature has also examined the CSFs for PPP projects in general. The studies in the 1990s on CSFs for PPP tend to focus on the CSFs for winning PPP contracts. For instance, Tiong (1996), Tiong and Alum (1997), Gupta and Norasimham (1998) identified CSFs in winning BOT contracts, which include factors such as ‘right project identification’, ‘strength of consortium’, ‘financial package differentiation’ and ‘supportive and understanding community’. Later, Li et al. (2005) conducted a questionnaire survey to examine the relative importance of 18 potential critical success factors (CSF) for PPP/PFI
construction projects in the UK. The study concluded that the three most important factors are: ‘a strong and good private consortium’, ‘appropriate risk allocation’ and ‘available financial market’.

Zhang (2005) identified 47 CSFs of PPP projects, which have been classified into five main aspects of CSFs: ‘economic viability’, ‘appropriate risk allocation via reliable contractual arrangements’, ‘sound financial package’, ‘reliable concessionaire consortium with strong technical strength’, and ‘favorable investment environment’. The author also examined the relative importance of the CSFs based on the perceptions of experts comprising academics and industry players. The results show a good agreement in the ranking of the factors between the respondents from the industrial sector and those from the academic sector. A grounded theory research undertaken by Trafford and Proctor (2006) discovered five key characteristics that are crucial in ensuring the success of PPP projects: good communication, openness, effective planning, ethos and direction.

Jacobson and Choi (2008) adopted a qualitative analysis using in-depth interviews and observations to examine principal factors that contribute to successful PPP projects. Ten success factors were investigated: ‘specific plan/vision’, ‘commitment’, ‘open communication and trust’, ‘willingness to compromise/collaborate’, ‘respect’, ‘community outreach’, ‘political support’, ‘expert advice and review’, ‘risk awareness’, and ‘clear roles and responsibilities’. The results show that ‘high degrees of commitment’ and ‘shared vision between the client, architect, and contractor’ are the most important factors for construction success.

Despite a number of prior studies that have investigated the CSFs of PPP projects, studies on CSFs for PPP implementation in Bangladesh remain scarce. Moreover, the unique characteristics of PPP to a particular country require a study on CSFs specifically for PPP in Bangladesh. Hence, this present study fills the gap by investigating the CSFs for implementation of PPP in Bangladesh, in general, without referring to any specific PPP sector or project.

7.3 Involvement of stakeholders

Therefore the researcher recommends more involvement of other education stakeholders than the government. This could lead to a better representation of the public interest, first of all by creating more transparency and secondly by inducing more discursive priority on quality of education.

Transparency

First of all, more involvement of other stakeholders should be pursued because of the need of increased transparency of the PPPs policy. Governmental activities can be highly
influenced or, in some cases, even taken over by private sector decision makers, such as is the case in Bangladesh, where the private school head teachers run the schools with little government interference and private school associations deliberate with government planners over the set policy. This is what makes PPPs a very touchy business in political terms and it therefore needs a third party to be involved in the policy, for some semblance of the public interest to be identified and served. Therefore, this requires at least the active participation of government in some role throughout the process i.e. more involvement at school level for instance and it also probably requires other major societal actors to be involved, such as national constituencies as teacher unions.

**Discursive priority on quality**

Secondly the public interest could be better served with a stronger advocacy for quality of learning to be provided by the PPPs. Like in other developing countries the PPPs promoting discourse in Bangladesh is introducing the PPP approach, simply because the mode in favor of PPPs has become pervasive among donor agencies.

However, such a “mode” among international organizations could be argued to lack legitimacy, especially among international education stakeholders.

**8.0 Data Analysis, Discussions and Findings**

**Conceptualizing the degree of PPP**

An important variable in our research is the degree of PPP employed in this study. This degree of PPP can be defined as the degree to which activities of the private and public partners are attuned to each other. The researcher measured this by translating the three main characteristics of PPPs discussed above into three questions for our respondents. The respondents were asked whether:

1. Organizational provisions were made with which to structure the co-operation between public and private parties;
2. Financial risks were shared between public and private parties;
3. The coordination of activities between public and private parties was addressed.

Each item could be answered on a five point Likert scale. Cronbach alpha can find out to what extend a set of items measures a single, unidimensional latent construct (Cronbach 1951), in this case the degree of PPP. The researcher performed reliability analysis (SPSS) to find out whether the three items specified above give a consistent measurement
of the underlying theoretical construct ‘degree of PPP’. The items were found to have a high Cronbach’s alpha of 0.84. This implies a high internal consistency and means that by adding the items a scale can be constructed measuring this degree. Researcher recoded the variables so that a higher score on the scale implies a higher degree of PPP. Researcher then divided this score by three. The final score varied between 1 and 5, with an average of 3.58. Of the resulting scores, 12 per cent were at 2 or below and 28 per cent of the scores were above 4. Therefore, it can be concluded that the degree of PPP of this study was relatively high.

**Conceptualizing and measuring outcomes: process and content outcomes**

Measuring outcomes for these fairly complex projects is not an easy feat. One of the reasons for this is that actors have different goals and it is difficult to pick a goal by which to measure outcomes for the whole study. Measuring outcomes is also problematic because these studies take a long time, and the goals of actors tend to change over time. Goal displacement is the commonly adopted term for this which carries a negative connotation. The same phenomenon can be looked at in more positive terms, and ‘learning’ is the term adopted to refer to the more positive aspects of goal displacement (for details, see Koppenjan and Klijn, 2004).

Table 3 lists indicators of the two outcome dimensions and the 12 items that were used to measure them. A factor analysis performed on the 12 items (not included here) confirmed our initial opinion that there exists a process and a content dimension of the outcomes of PPPs.

**TABLE – 3: Measurements of outcomes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content outcomes</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Innovative character</td>
<td>Do you think that innovative ideas were developed during the project?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Integral nature of solution</td>
<td>Do you think that different spatial functions have been connected sufficiently?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Involvement of actors (content)</td>
<td>Do you think that, in general, the actors involved have made a recognizable contribution to the results?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Effectiveness solutions</td>
<td>Do you think that the solutions that have been developed really deal with the problems at hand?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Effectiveness in the future</td>
<td>Do you think that the solutions developed are likely to be durable?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Relation costs and benefits</td>
<td>Do you think that, in general, the benefits exceed the costs of the co-operation process?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Process outcomes | Items
---|---
1. Level of management | Do you think that the actors involved have contributed substantively to the management of the project?
2. Conflict resolution | Do you think that conflicts and differences of opinion have been solved adequately during the project?
3. Deadlocks | Did you witness any disturbing deadlocks during the project?
4. Productive use of differences | Do you think that the actors have made use of the different perspectives and insights that exist in an adequate way in their efforts to frame the problem and find solution?
5. Contact frequency | Do you think that the actors were in frequent contact with each other during the project?
6. Support | Do you think that the outcome of the project will be supported by the individuals involved in its establishment?

The Cronbach alpha of the six items measuring process outcomes is 0.80. Therefore, they can be assumed to form a single scale measuring the perception of process outcomes. The scores on these six items were added up, and divided by six. A higher score on the scale indicates a more positive perception of the process outcomes. The resulting scale has a mean score of 3.39 and a standard deviation of 0.60. Measured in a similar way, the Cronbach’s alpha of the six items measuring content outcomes was 0.84. The resulting scale has a mean score of 3.90 and a standard deviation of 0.62. In both cases, the scores are above the theoretical mean (3), which indicates that the respondents are generally positive about the outcomes. Comparing both means, it also appears they are somewhat more positive about the content outcomes than the process outcomes.

PPP: complexity, organizational form and managerial strategies

Table – 4 provides information on the relationship between complexity, organizational form and managerial strategies. It includes the correlation coefficients indicating the degree of association between PPP, complexity, managerial strategies, and organizational form. Organizational form is an ordinal variable and so the table lists the eta coefficient of this with the three other variables.

The degree of complexity is also significantly related to organizational form. A tighter form of organization is chosen. The joint project office and the autonomous judicial
entity forms are more often selected in these situations. However, the degree of complexity is not related to the number of employed managerial strategies. Similarly, there is no correlation between organizational form and strategy (see table 4).

**TABLE – 4: Correlations between degree of PPP, complexity, organizational form and managerial strategies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PPP</th>
<th>Complexity</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Organizational form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>.03 (ns)</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational form</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>.10 (ns)</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p < 0.01.

Thus we can conclude that the degree of PPP is positively correlated with outcomes and that both dimensions of PPP, that is, the form and the number of strategies, are positively correlated with the degree of PPP. However, organizational forms and strategy are not related to each other.

**Importance of CSFs in PPP Projects**

Table 5 illustrates the mean scores and the rank of the relative importance of each of the eighteen CSFs based on the overall respondents, as well as based on sector (i.e. public and private sectors). The results indicate that all 18 CSFs are perceived by respondents as either ‘most important’ or ‘important’ to ensure the success of PPP projects implementation since the mean scores for the CSFs range from 1.73 to 2.45.

Based on the overall respondents’ results, the top five most critical factors, in descending order of importance are:

1) good governance; 2) commitment and responsibility of public and private sectors; 3) favorable legal framework; 4) sound economic policy; and 5) available financial market. The two factors that were ranked as least important for PPP project success are government involvement by providing guarantee and political support.
Table – 5: Perception of Survey Respondents Concerning the Relative Importance of CSFs in PPP Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Critical Success Factors</th>
<th>Public University</th>
<th>Private University</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Good governance</td>
<td>1.650</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Commitment and responsibility of public and private sectors</td>
<td>1.680</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Favorable legal framework</td>
<td>1.730</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sound economic policy</td>
<td>1.730</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Available financial market</td>
<td>1.800</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Strong and good private consortium</td>
<td>1.730</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Stable macro-economic condition</td>
<td>1.760</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Project technical feasibility</td>
<td>1.700</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Transparency of procurement process</td>
<td>1.700</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Appropriate risk allocation and risk sharing</td>
<td>1.750</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Thorough and realistic assessment of the cost and benefits</td>
<td>1.830</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Well organized and committed public agency</td>
<td>1.940</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Multi-benefit objectives</td>
<td>1.820</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Competitive procurement process</td>
<td>1.840</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Social support</td>
<td>2.140</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Shared authority between public and private sectors</td>
<td>2.010</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Government involvement by providing guarantee</td>
<td>2.450</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Political support</td>
<td>2.370</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Good governance was ranked first as a necessary factor to ensure the success of PPP projects. It is crucial to have good governance, as claimed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE, 2007), because inefficiency in governance has led to the failure in the implementation of PPP in many countries. The ‘commitment and responsibility of both public and private sectors’ is the second most important CSF, as perceived by the overall respondents. This is consistent with the argument by Chan et al. (2004), and Li et al. (2005) who claimed that commitment is one of the fundamental principles in partnership. Hence, to secure a successful PPP, all parties have to commit their best resources to the project. Therefore, commitment from both parties is essential to ensure the attainment of the ultimate goals of the PPP projects (Romancik, 1995).

The third most important CSF for implementing PPP projects in Bangladesh, as perceived by the overall respondents, is the ‘existence of favorable legal framework’. According to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD, 2008), PPP projects tend to work best when a good legal framework exists. Furthermore, Farhana (2010) argued that a well-defined legal framework is necessary for PPP projects to prevent corruption. Despite the importance of a legal framework for PPP implementation, as perceived by the overall respondents, there is no specific legal framework for PPP projects in Bangladesh.

As shown in Table 5, ‘sound economic policy’ is the fourth most necessary success factor for PPP projects in Bangladesh. Hardcastle et al. (2005) claimed that the adoption of appropriate economic policies might lead to a stable and growing economic environment, which allows the private sector to operate with confidence. Furthermore, a stable economic environment will lead to reasonable certainty of market, which, consequently, reduces the risk for the private sector operators (Li et al, 2005). The fifth ranked factor is ‘easy access to financial market’ (mean value 1.799). Since one of the objectives of PPP implementation is to reduce the financial burden of the government, with the private sector financing the PPP projects, the availability of flexible and attractive financial instruments, such as debt, equity, supplier and purchaser credit, and securities, is considered important to enable the private sector to finance the PPP projects (Zhang, 2005).

According to the Asian Development Bank (ADB, 2008), the government, as a political decision maker, has to set out the case for PPP in a convincing and transparent manner and any political changes can hinder the PPP implementation. In other words, politics has a close relationship with the development and implementation of public policy (Li et al., 2005). Of the 18 CSFs ‘political support’, with a mean value of 2.28, was ranked last by the respondents. The result does not mean that political support is not an important factor for successful PPP implementation in Bangladesh, as this could be due to the fact that in
Bangladesh the government and opposition parties are in support of PPP, which means this success factor is being perceived as relatively less critical.

**Perceptions of Public and Private Sector Respondents Concerning the Importance of CSFs**

As illustrated in Table 5, the top five most critical factors, as perceived by the respondents from the public sector are: 1) good governance; 2) commitment and responsibility of public and private sectors; 3) project technical feasibility; 4) transparency procurement process; and 5) favorable legal framework. Whilst, for the private sector, the top five most important CSFs are 1) good governance; 2) available financial market; 3) favorable legal framework; 4) commitment and responsibility of public and private sectors, and 5) sound economic policy.

Based on the results in Table 5, the rankings concerning the importance of the factors between the public and private sectors were mostly different. The factor ‘availability of financial market’ was ranked second by the private sector respondents but was ranked tenth by the public sector respondents. The possible reason for the difference in the ranking between the two sectors might be because under the public private partnership scheme, the responsibility to obtain finance is more on the private sector, hence, the private sector respondents perceived it as more important to ensure the success of PPP implementation than the public sector respondents.

Likewise, although the factors ‘project technical feasibility’ and ‘transparency of procurement process’ were ranked third and fourth, respectively, by the public sector respondents, they were ranked lower by the private sector respondents. The finding concerning the lower ranking by the private sector respondents for ‘project technical feasibility’ implies that the private sector respondents were less concerned about the factor, possibly because they already have the expertise in the technical aspects of project implementation.

Although the rankings of importance for many factors were different between the public and private sectors, both sectors ranked good governance as the most important CSF for PPP implementation. Likewise, both sectors ranked ‘strong and good private consortium’ as the seventh ranking.

As shown in this study, international organizations belonging to the Education Development Program (EDP) group are either part of the discursive “common ground” of the PPP promoters (following face-value arguments) or they are aware of the quality issues on which they “do not act”. Instead they support the government’s effort that
emphasizes access above quality, so taking for granted many of the quality and equity issues that the PPPs program is reaffirming. This position of the international organizations in Bangladesh is paradoxical in relation to the “international rights”, that such organizations convey internationally, e.g. the several declarations stressing equity and quality. From an international perspective these organizations should underline quality as equally important. It could even be questioned whether quality should not come before access, taking into account the Universal Declarations and covenants (e.g. Jomtien and Dakar). As asserted by UNESCO (2005, 28-29), education is a set of processes and outcomes that are defined qualitatively: the quantity of children who participate is by definition a secondary consideration, merely filling spaces called schools with children would not be sufficient to achieve quality education objectives. Which leads to the question: In what way is the EDPs role legitimate and should they not re-evaluate their positions on the matter of PPPs?

Therefore, besides deconstructing the “partnership” discourse the researcher recommend further revision of the international actors’ positions that support PPP plans, which are perceived to be in contra to their internationally set goals i.e. their priority for quality of education.

What the study has demonstrated is that there are strong countering arguments against PPPs available which promote quality, coming from a civil society organization “rights based approach discourse”. The pitfall however is whether critical arguments can truly be expressed by the EDPs in the Bangladeshi education sector without risking its position within the sector. Then the question is: What is more legitimate; ensuring your position in the education sector and undermining international conventions or advocating these principles but risking reprimands?

Either way the first step this research recommends is to challenge existing PPPs on their discourse, whether for inconsistencies or alternatives. If we do not undertake such practices, as people interested in development, we could be stuck in an existing discourse that represents “one side of the story”. As an example of this we could think of one famous discourse. Such as Margaret Thatcher’s slogan went: “TINA, There Is No Alternative” to economic liberalism for societies to develop (Berlinski, 2008).

8.1 Conclusion

The findings of this study provide practitioners who tend to spend great lengths of time on the form of their partnerships with something weighty to think about. It similarly provides important insights that would contribute both to governmental and academic discussions on partnerships. Great emphasis has been traditionally placed in these discussions on the organizational forms of partnerships.
To realize the objectives which the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) articulated in its 8-point agenda, public-private partnership is central to the achievement of sustainable development through higher education research. The focus is on how much of research outcomes are critically responding to the issues in sustainable development. Programs and outputs of fundamental and applied research from higher institutions must be technologically driven and economic development based. And as noted by Ebong (2007) a knowledge-based workforce is a prerequisite for the rapid and sustainable transformation of an economy. Bangladeshi universities have to explore all existing opportunities as provided for in the UNESCO’s 1998 mandate for research practice in the light of contending challenges through reforms in order to attain and sustain sustainable development driven by public-private synergies. Overall, the paper prepares the industrial leaders and other stakeholders for giving a renewed thought to go for implementing PPPs and also provides them with the necessary knowledge for putting their thoughts into concrete shape.

**Directions for Future Research**

While the focus on discourse in this research explains what is represented of reality, the researcher did not explore directly how “things actually work in reality”. For instance one of the arguments in this research is that the PPP project is perceived not to be able to guarantee or even worsens the access to quality education. The indicator of the quality of education in the PPPs is the stakeholders’ perceptions. Meaning what the stakeholders have seen, heard and discussed. This indicator is valid to investigate relations between stakeholders and the role of ideas and policy formulation; as has been done in this research, nevertheless it should be doubted for its external validity because the findings cannot be generalized beyond the specific research context (of stakeholder discourse). To put it more simply, this research has been about the discourse of the stakeholders on what happens in the PPPs but the researcher has not visited the PPP projects to actually investigate the provided education and compare this to non-PPP institutes.

Therefore, self evidently, the best complementation that further research could contribute to this effort would be a (quantitative) approach measuring the impact of the PPPs in the places where the project is implemented. For instance, the way the policy interaction between the public and private sectors works in practice could be researched. What are the measurable benefits of private provision of education at university level? In this way, since this research only touched the perceptions of these PPP institutes realities this kind of further research would complement the present efforts.
Public Private Partnership in Higher Education in Bangladesh: A Study of Stakeholders’

References:


