

## Notes from the Editor

This issue of Bangladesh Journal addresses a range of policy and practical topics – education agenda in the context of SDG, shaping of gender role in high school, perception about children’s play, recognition of prior learning in skill development, and quality concerns at the secondary level.

Manzoor Ahmed and Md. Mostafizur Rahaman write about aligning national and global education agenda in the context of SDG4 and the Bangladesh 7th plan. Their paper focuses specifically on the education agenda of SDG 4 and Education 2030 as well as the Seventh Five-Year Plan Education objectives. The authors argue that it is not so important to dwell on the specific differences between the official and civil society formulation of post-2015 goals, objectives, targets and indicators or between the national and the global agenda. It is more important, in their view, to look ahead in order to come to a consensus on the agenda for education and sustainable development that serve the aspirations for development and change for the people of Bangladesh.

Shamnaz Arifin Mim in her paper about “Construction of Gendered Identities in a Secondary School” describes how daily practices within the school context shape gender identities. She takes gender role as the analytical frame to explore the nature of schooling through interaction among the existing heterogeneous groups of teachers and students in a school setting. Her conclusions have a bearing on training and orientation of teachers and concepts about curriculum and learning objectives for promoting a gender neutral experience for adolescents in their socialization process.

Shahidullah Sharif in his paper “Rural Mothers’ Perceptions of Play in Children’s Learning and Development” attempts to fill the gap in research and writing in this area in Bangladesh. The study with children of 3-5 years and their mothers show that mothers in rural Bangladesh have lacks in clear and specific knowledge about the benefits of play. They prefer academic activities rather than play activities for their children. On the issue of gender differences in play, mothers' educational level makes differences in perceptions regarding gender orientation in child's play. The writer reports that parents seldom play with their children, and do so only when they are requested by their children. At best, they play a supervisory role in their children’s play.

Haripada Das describes the concept and rationale of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and the mechanism and process to be applied in this effort in his short article on this topic. The challenges and lessons are noted briefly. An annex includes a fact sheet on RPL as a ready reference for readers.

Dr. A.T.R. Rahman is the founder and chairman of Volunteers Association for Bangladesh (VAB), a non- profit organization, established in 1998 by Non-resident Bangladeshis (NRB) in USA to expand opportunities for rural children of Bangladesh in quality education and skill training. Over the last fifteen years, working with over a hundred rural secondary schools, VAB has helped more than 50,000 young men and women and their families in the villages and underprivileged areas of Bangladesh to overcome poverty and elevate their lives. Press report about a meeting hosted by the Ministry of Education on education quality on 26 May, 2016 prompted Dr. Rahman to offer some insightful comments which are presented for our readers in the short article “Challenges of Quality Education at the Secondary Level.”