

Impact of Curriculum Politicization on the Teaching-Learning Process in 'Patriotism-Building', Compulsory History Courses in Bangladesh's Higher Education

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Abstract : The National University, the largest public educational institution in Bangladesh, recently made it mandatory for all students to study a course in Bangladesh's history of the 1971 Liberation War. This introduction was accompanied by massive political, financial and academic movement that allocated resources towards achieving greater awareness of the country's spirit, goals of liberation and patriotism among the youth. This study argues that the infrastructure and political economy around the course heavily politicizes the education system and more specifically the teaching and learning the process. By conducting a qualitative study in three affiliated colleges under the National University, this study aimed to explore the extent to which politicization affected higher education curriculum, especially history education in Bangladesh. The findings revealed significant levels of politicization and structural constraints present in the process that restricts the teacher and student engagement with course materials. The results of this study are useful for curriculum designers and higher education teachers and staffs who wish to develop content and deliver education that promotes critical inquiry among students. The findings further shed light on the importance of identifying and addressing political influences in education curriculum and programme development.

Keywords : Bangladesh higher education, critical thinking, curriculum politicization, history curriculum, National University, teaching-learning method

Conference Title : ICES 2017 : International Conference on Education Studies

Conference Location : Paris, France

Conference Dates : August 28-29, 2017