

Investigation of Market Opportunities for BBA Graduates: A Case Study on Sylhet Metropolitan Area

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Abstract

This study report aims to determine the preferences of BBA graduates in various Sylhet work sectors. To determine which company or sector in Sylhet favors recruiting BBA graduates more, the researchers have developed this quantitative study. To do that, the researchers first limit the scope of their study by focusing on specific industries that are active in Sylhet: The Banking sector, the Insurance sector, the Hospital sector, the Hotel sector, the Software and Technology sector, and the Student Consultancy and International Agencies sectors of Sylhet. To gather data for this work, the researchers surveyed various institutions within a certain sector using an 8-question, closed-ended questionnaire. The institutions have been surveyed online and in person to get important data. The Likert scale average approach has been used to examine the survey findings. High preference is indicated by a higher proportion of average scores on the scale, while low preference is shown by a smaller number of average scores. According to the paper's analysis of survey results, the banking sector highly prefers BBA graduates over all others. Hospitals, Hotels, Student Consultancies and Foreign Agencies may be the next best places to work in Sylhet after that. They also prefer BBA graduates though not as much as Banks. Thus, the paper concludes by highlighting the real scenario of the job market in Sylhet for BBA graduates, and even though some sectors have a high preference for BBA graduates, this does not mean every BBA graduate is called and offered a job by the preferred sectors, therefore the paper provided some recommendations for BBA graduates and ongoing BBA students to follow to get themselves equipped with skills required for a Job. This initial effort to identify the preference of BBA graduates in Sylhet may develop some information on the untouched field of study and further research on this field is necessary due to the rising number of BBA graduates entering the job market. The fact that this study supports both theoretical and practical fields make it significant. This knowledge gap is filled by the research, which offers comprehensive data on the preferences and career prospects of BBA graduates, which is currently lacking in this field.

Keywords: BBA, Sector, Job Opportunity, Preferences, Job availability, BBA graduates, Sectors, Likert scale, Average, Sylhet.

1. Introduction

Tertiary education in Bangladesh refers to higher education beyond the higher secondary level. Since Bangladesh's independence, more tertiary-level education systems and educational institutes have been swiftly constructed in response to the need for quality education, increased demand, and increased awareness of the need for higher education. As a result, a growing variety of institutions have offered a varied range of disciplines and departments in Science, Commerce, Arts, and other fields. Among all the subjects offered BBA (Bachelor of Business Administration) is one of Bangladesh's most prevalent degrees (SHARIF, 2020). The University of Dhaka's Institute of Business Administration (IBA) established Bangladesh's first BBA program (Dhaka University, n.d.). The Institute of Business Administration of Dhaka University launched the BBA program in response to the need for undergraduate business education. Since then, many of the educational institutions around Bangladesh have gradually introduced this subject in their curriculum. Many Bangladeshi students, particularly those with a background in business studies, choose BBA as their undergraduate major subject because of its solid course design and systematic manner of studying a wide variety of business studies courses (Chowdhury & Noor, 2022). Graduated students of BBA are also preferred and valued in the Bangladeshi employment market due to the country's economic and social progress (Chowdhury A. , 2021). Through pursuing this degree, a graduate can start his career in an industry of Finance, Accounting, Administrative, Human Resource Management, Supply Chain Management, and many other fields (Indeed Editorial Team, 2024). Many students in Bangladesh opt for a BBA degree to make them ready and fit for joining the corporate job sectors.

The northeastern portion of Bangladesh, known as Sylhet, has seen significant advances at both the educational and socioeconomic levels as higher education has advanced across the country (Islam, Sarker, & Islam, 2021). As a result, both private and public entities have developed several educational institutions to give a diverse spectrum of details to Sylhet's knowledge seekers (UNI Education, n.d.). These educational institutions have also added BBA degrees, and many BBA students graduate each year from this region of the nation. Sylhet has a significant number of universities that offer BBA programs.

1.1 Research Problem

Sylhet, being a less developed city, may not provide strong career chances due to limited economic growth in this area of the country, and BBA graduates who plan to find work in Sylhet frequently fail to do so. Thus, they leave Sylhet. The research's problem statement is that more BBA students are graduating each year from both public and private Universities, which offer BBA courses. However, due to unclear career opportunities, the majority of graduates decide to leave Sylhet and work in other large cities (Hoque & Shamin, 2024). Furthermore, students in Sylhet seeking a BBA are unaware of the career chances associated with their degree. As a result, they assert and disagree that Sylhet has few or no jobs available for BBA graduates, based on their ignorance of the present employment prospects for BBA graduates. Sylhet, producing graduates with a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) has significantly increased in recent years. In Sylhet, some renowned universities offer BBA courses: Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Army Institute of Business Administration, Leading University, Metropolitan University, Sylhet International University, and North East University Bangladesh. As a result, a good number of graduates are exposed to the labor market annually. However, there is a widespread tendency for people to go outside of Sylhet in search of employment after graduating. This results from job searcher's lack of awareness about work prospects in Sylhet. As a result, Sylhet is losing population, which is impeding its growth. Those who choose to remain in Sylhet, however, are unsure about their career and plans.

1.2 Research Objective

The objective of this research is to remove the blurriness about the job opportunities and precisely identifying the sectors that prefer BBA graduates in Sylhet.

Also, to shed light on which sectors and companies value BBA graduates more than other degrees when hiring new employees. The ultimate aim of this study is to furnish BBA graduates and prospective graduates with clear insights into the range of demand for their degrees in several fields examined and the extent of employment prospects available to them. Additionally, the overall study measures the correlation between BBA degrees and degree-specific jobs accessible in Sylhet to offer useful information for businesses, academic institutions, and BBA students in Sylhet.

2. Methodology

Primary data has provided the study's foundation. The information gathered via a questionnaire with 8 closed-ended questions. The questionnaire has been sent to the study's target industries. This study focuses on the metropolitan region of Sylhet and its environs. The focus sectors have been visited in person to gather data, which has been thereafter be rated on a 5-point Likert scale to statistically measure respondents' opinions about the survey questions. The results have been interpreted based on each sector's Likert Scale scores. Given that it is straightforward to understand even for novice researchers, the scale is appropriate for our needs. We have surveyed different organizations from a variety of industries to meet the research objective. We intend to use a Likert scale when developing our questionnaire to get quantitative data. Analyzing the data has provided useful insights based on the data-collecting circumstances. We have selected two insurance companies: Prime Islamic Life Insurance and MetLife Insurance Bangladesh. There are three hotels in the hotel sector: Hotel Star Pacific, Hotel Panshi Inn, and Grand Mustafa Ababil. Two hospitals from the hospital sector are Al Haramain and Sylhet Women's Medical College Hospital. Furthermore, we have surveyed banking companies such as Bank Asia (Dorgah Gate Branch), Brac Bank (Subidbazar Branch), and NRBC Bank (Pirer Bazar Branch). Furthermore, in the student consultancy and International Agencies sector we have surveyed VFS Global, British Council, and IDP Education Bangladesh Pvt. LTD. Lastly, we have surveyed one company from the Software and Technology Sector which is Authlab. In our survey data have been collected from the above-listed organizations from different sets of sectors operating in Sylhet city. Collected responses from the survey have been interpreted individually by their pre-set scale form (1-5). Our questionnaire had 8 individual closed-ended questions and each question had 5 options: Completely Disagree, Disagree, Partially Agree, Agree, and Completely Agree. The two extreme ends for the survey question options and its ranking scale are Completely Disagree=1 Disagree=2, Partially Agree=3, Agree=4, and Completely Agree=5. Some companies preferred responding to the survey online, thus the online soft copy of the questionnaire was provided to them. During the in-depth analysis of the survey responses, the sector's responses for each question have been analyzed. In this paper, the analysis section showed how different industries have responded to these 8 sets of questions, which sector has got the higher average score and which sector got the lower average score, and depending on the level of average score the preference for BBA Graduates have been analyzed for each sector operating in Sylhet.

3. Analysis and Discussion

3.1 Survey Respondents

To achieve the research goal, we have developed a structured questionnaire containing 8-questions that are in line with the research's objective. Surveys have been carried out at different organizations across selected industries. The first bank in the banking sector that we surveyed was Bank Asia LTD, and the respondent was Md. Shabbir Rahman, an executive officer of the bank. An officer of the bank named Md. Moydul Islam participated in the survey that we conducted at BRAC Bank PLC. We also surveyed NRBC Bank PLC, and the respondent was Md. Abdul Khayer, who holds the position of first assistant vice president at the bank.

Addressing the Hotel sector, the Grand Mostafa Hotel Ababil was the first organization we probed. Md. Shidul Islam Emon, a front desk executive there, answered the survey. The Panshi INN is the next hotel we studied and Faisal Ahmed, a front desk executive at the hotel's management, answered the questionnaire. The executive director of operations and finance at the Hotel Star Pacific, Tahmin Tahiya, was the survey respondent for the subsequent hotel that we interrogated.

Regarding the Hospital sector, the first hospital that we surveyed was Al Haramain Hospital PVT. LTD. The survey respondent, Farhana Yasmin Chowdhury, holds the title of assistant manager (admin & HR). Sylhet Women's Medical College Hospital was the second medical organization we surveyed and on behalf of this organization Md. Abdus Salam, a manager of the business's HR division, answered the questionnaire.

Two insurance companies have also been surveyed by us. The first company we surveyed was Prime Islami Life Insurance LTD., and the responder was Md. Mahbub Uddin Talukdar, the company's general manager. The second insurance business we surveyed was MetLife Insurance Bangladesh and Labib Ahmed Chowdhury, the company's assistant secretary, was the survey respondent.

A software development firm from the software sector has also been researched. The founder of the company, Md. Shahjahan responded to the survey on behalf of Auth Lab.

Additionally, three student consultancy and international agencies were surveyed by us. VFS Global was the first company we surveyed, and Addeeb Al Rahman, an operation officer there, was the respondent. We then surveyed the British Council and Md. Shahriar Hassan, a supervisor

there, was the respondent. Our last survey, conducted in IDP Education Bangladesh Pvt. Ltd., respondent by Pankaj Talukder, who is an assistant branch manager in charge of Sylhet city.

3.2 In-Depth Analysis of Each Question

In conducting the survey analysis, we used a (1-5)-ranking scale which is given in the following-

Completely Disagree=1

Disagree=2

Partially Agree=3

Agree=4

Completely Agree=5

The responses to the survey from the selected industries have been analyzed based on individual questions in the following.

Q1: BBA graduates have more preference than other graduates in your organization

The responses to this question helped us to determine which sectors are more favorable for BBA graduates. It has enabled us to find the industries that prefer BBA graduates. Responding to this question, the Banking sector showed the most interest by scoring an average of 4.3 out of 5. It means they have a high preference for BBA graduates for jobs in their organization. Hotel, hospital, and consultancy firms show an average level of interest by scoring around 3 out of 5. It indicates their mid-level preference for BBA graduates in terms of the job in their organization. However, Insurance and software firms showed little preference for BBA graduates with the score of 1.5 and 2 out of 5. It means that the jobs they offer have little need for the BBA graduates.

Q2: You search for BBA graduates very often for employment

This question showed the demand for BBA graduates in different industries. It has helped to determine those industries that demand BBA graduates more often than others. In responding to this question, the Banking and hotel sector showed the most demand scoring around 4 out of 5. That means the demand for BBA graduates is quite high in those industries. Hospital and consultancy firms showed mid-level demand by scoring around 3 out of 5. So, their demand for BBA graduates is average. Conversely, Insurance and software firms showed little demand for BBA graduates scoring 2 out of 5. As their preference is low, their demand is also low.

Q3: You think BBA graduates are more office-equipped than other graduates

This question helped us to understand how many abilities and skills BBA graduates possess in terms of doing jobs in the office. Regarding this question, banks, hotels Student Consultancy, and International Agencies have responded very positively by scoring around 4 out of 5. It indicates the high skills and quality of BBA graduates in terms of doing office work. Hospital and insurance have scored around 3. That means, for the jobs in hospitals and insurance companies, BBA graduates have average levels of skills and quality. Lastly, the Software firm has scored only 2 out of 5 in this question. It shows that BBA graduates are less skillful in the work offered by software firms.

Q4: Sylhet supplies enough BBA graduates for the job you offer

This question helped us to understand the perception of different industries about the supply or availability of BBA graduates in Sylhet. Almost all industries accept that Sylhet supplies enough BBA graduates for jobs. The average of all industries regarding the question is 4. That means they face BBA graduates for their jobs more often. However, the score of the hospital is comparatively low having 2.5 out of 5. It might be because BBA graduates apply less for jobs in hospitals.

Q5: BBA graduates are more adjustable in organizational environment

Analyzing this question has helped us to understand how capable a BBA graduate is in terms of adjusting to the office environment. Four out of six industries responded positively by scoring an average of 4.3 out of 5. These industries are bank, hotel, Insurance, and consultancy firms. That means the job environment in those industries is more friendly to BBA graduates. However, the job environment of hospitals and software firms is a bit less friendly for BBA graduates as the score is 3 out of 5.

Q6: Your industry will grow in Sylhet and create more job opportunities for BBA graduates

Regarding this particular aspect, our analysis indicates that the banking sector strongly agrees with the concept, scoring 4.3 out of 5, indicating that they want to expand and generate more employment prospects in Sylhet City for BBA graduates. After the bank, we also conducted an analysis and found that Sylhet City's software companies, international student consultancy organizations, and the hospital sectors have seen industrial growth, scoring a rating of 4 out of 5. It is reasonable to anticipate that these four industries have been continue to expand in Sylhet, and graduates of the BBA program in Sylhet should anticipate greater employment opportunities. Conversely, with ratings of 3.5 and 2.5, respectively, BBA graduates could anticipate less industrial growth from the insurance and medical industries. It doesn't mean that the Sylhet

economy won't expand; rather, the likelihood of it growing is less assured than that of the banking, hospitality and tourism, software companies, and foreign student consultancy firms.

Q7: You can fit BBA graduates in most of the roles in your organization

Based on our analysis, it appears that the banking and insurance industries, with respective ratings of 4.5 and 5 out of 5, are highly likely to be able to employ BBA graduates in the majority of their employment fields. Therefore, it can be drawn that there is a significant demand for BBA graduates in these two specific industries, as most of the positions in these sectors require most of the individuals who have BBA degree to be included in their job circulars. Additionally, there's a chance that BBA grads can get employment with international student consulting firms (rated 3.7), but the prerequisites differ from those of the banking and insurance sectors. Conversely, the BBA graduates have very little opportunity to fit into many of the positions in the hospitality and tourism, medical, and software industries, scoring 2.7, 2, and 2 out of 5 respectively. This means that these industries rarely hire BBA graduates, and the level of BBA graduates required is not as high as that of banking, insurance, and international student consulting firms.

Q8: BBA graduates possess more knowledge about different aspects of the jobs

According to our research, the insurance sector, which received a score of 5 out of 5 in this particular dimension, indicates that BBA graduates have a greater understanding of various facets of their profession. After examining the insurance sector, we also looked at the banking and hotel sector. These sectors scored 4.4 and 4 out of 5, respectively, indicating that BBA graduates have a slightly greater understanding of various facets of the job than those in the insurance sector.

In contrast, the other three industries—the Hospital sector, international student consulting firms, and software firms—have scores of 2, 3.7, and 3, respectively, indicating that their BBA graduates have less job-related knowledge than those in the insurance, banking, hospitality, and tourism sectors.

3.2 Findings from The Analysis

After analyzing all of the questions, we can conclude that the banking sector prefers BBA graduates the most. They seek for BBAs often and their office environment is suitable for the graduates from BBA. The job responsibilities of a banker match the best with BBA graduates. The knowledge and skills needed for this job are well aligned with the qualifications of BBA holders. Also, there are

large numbers of well-established banks operating in Sylhet. Therefore, after graduating, the easiest sector to look for a job in Sylhet is the Banking sector.

After banking sectors, hospitals, hotel and student consultancies and international agencies can be the next best options for jobs in Sylhet. They also prefer BBA graduates though not as much as banks. But as there are many hotels, hospitals, and student consultancy firms present in Sylhet, graduates can look at those sectors. Some positions in those sectors can be well managed by the BBA graduates and the office environment is also favorable to their capabilities of. Our survey also shows that this sector also has a potential for growth in Sylhet. So, more vacancies have been created where BBA graduates can apply.

Nevertheless, insurance companies and software firms showed comparatively little interest in BBA graduates. Although they hire BBAs, the number and frequency is low. Their job responsibilities are not well-matched with the capabilities of BBAs. Therefore, insurance and software firms are not worth looking for BBA graduates.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The paper aimed at identifying only the preferences of BBA graduates in different industries surveyed. Therefore, we showed some industries have a high preference for BBA graduates some have a low one. By preference, we do not mean that those industries that have a high preference for BBA graduates not be hired every BBA Graduate applying for the job. Theoretically, it might be possible to find out the preference of BBA graduates in a sector not all BBA graduates usually get the chance to get a job due to in real-life, job market these days not only requiring degrees but also it requires both hard and soft skills. Only having a specific BBA degree won't lever an aspirant today in this competitive field of the job market also they require a dynamic set of skills and knowledge out of their subject. Having those extra skills and knowledge added with the preference of BBA graduates helped BBA graduates secure their jobs in this competitive field. Thus, we recommend BBA graduates acquire good results in their academics also acquire skills and knowledge on different aspects of doing jobs, and have some extracurricular activities. MS Office, AI, Data Analysis, SQL, Database Management, Typing, Digital Marketing, Machine Learning, Video Editing, Graphics design, animation, and coding are some demanding skills that may help a BBA graduate get a job in the industries where there is a high preference for BBA graduates. We

also recommend BBA graduates have good communication skills and English proficiency and participate in events and case studies to increase their problem-solving abilities.

We also think that this initial effort to identify the preference of BBA graduates in Sylhet may develop some information on the untouched field of study and we think further research on this field is necessary due to the rising number of BBA graduates entering the job market. This study is important since it provides support for both theoretical and practical fields. By providing detailed information regarding the preferences and career prospects of BBA graduates which is currently absent in this field the research closes this knowledge gap. This study closes the information gaps that now exist in the subject and open the door for many more in-depth academic research initiatives. This study might be a useful resource for anybody planning to pursue a BBA degree or enrolled in BBA courses to learn critical information on the demands and preferences of different workplaces in Sylhet. This study is a very helpful resource for anyone seeking work in Sylhet who holds a BBA degree. The research's findings directly affect the prospective employees and employers. Additionally, it supports the improvement of Sylhet's economic situation. Additionally, Sylhet attracts a variety of new businesses looking to launch their operations. Consequently, our research aids in retaining that skill domestically, as many graduates relocate abroad in pursuit of employment. The findings of our study can help BBA graduates seeking for employment in Sylhet as part of career coaching. By providing information on the employment options in Sylhet that present BBA graduates with professional prospects, this research can help students make well-informed judgments regarding their future paths. In the Sylhet area, this may result in decreased unemployment rates and more job satisfaction among recent BBA graduates. The findings could influence local economic growth policies. By identifying these areas, policymakers may focus on drawing investments and boosting growth in companies that benefit BBA graduates. This improves Sylhet's overall socioeconomic growth and create more employment opportunities.

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Appendix

Table 1: Response ranking scale average by sector summary

SL No.	Statements	Sector Names					
		Bank	Hotel	Hospital	Insurance	Student Consultancy and International Agencies	Software Firm
1	BBA graduates have more preference than other graduates in your organization	4.3	3.3	3	1.5	3	2
2	You search for BBA graduates very often for employment	4	3.7	3	2	2.7	2
3	You think BBA graduates are more office equipped than other graduates	4.3	4.3	3	2.5	3.7	2
4	Sylhet supplies enough BBA graduates for the job you offer	4.7	3.7	2.5	3.5	4	4
5	BBA graduates are more adjustable in organizational environment	4.7	4	3	4.5	4	3
6	Your industry will grow in Sylhet and create more job opportunities for BBA graduates	4.3	4	3.5	2.5	4	4
7	You can fit BBA graduates in most of the roles in your organization	4.3	2.7	2	5	3.7	2
8	BBA graduates possess more knowledge about different aspects of the jobs	4.3	4	2	5	3.7	3

