

Development Disparity and Rangpur Division: Problems and Prospects

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Abstract

One of Bangladesh's most undeveloped areas, Rangpur Division's development has difficulties, which this study highlights. The study's authors combined three key informant interviews, one focus group discussion, and direct information gathering from 120 local residents via purposive sampling surveys and also relied on credible data from sources including the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and SDGs Progress Reports. Use of interviews and questionnaires to gather primary data on community viewpoints on agricultural practices and concerns, including food insecurity, educational possibilities, infrastructure situations, healthcare services, and industrial growth in the Rangpur area. Combining concepts from several data sources helps the study understand the developmental issues the Rangpur area faces. Data analysis shows that 91.8% of the respondents expressed a lack of industrialization. One of the most important industries for development is agriculture. As 86% of the respondents say, the agricultural sector is the most important one. Currently, the factors reducing agricultural output include inadequate access to modern technologies (69.6%) and better seeds (58.2%). Key causes of economic stagnation we find to be poor investment (46.7%) and high unemployment (38.5%). Moreover, 78.7% wish to extend agricultural technologies to boost output, while 87.7% link unplanned housing development to loss of agricultural land. The report points up various structural impediments to development, including unequal budget allocation, inadequate industrial investment, and a small number of young career paths. The results suggest that concentrated investments in industrialization, infrastructure, and education will help solve local inequities. Furthermore, true needs are more impartial resource allocation and disaster resilience techniques to strengthen Rangpur's socioeconomic framework.

Keywords: Development, Unequal, Budget, Socioeconomic, Rangpur

JEL Classification: O18, R11, I30, O10

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Introduction

After gaining independence in 1971, our country, Bangladesh, was divided into four divisions named Chittagong, Dacca, Khulna, and Rajshahi. Rangpur was established as a district after the freedom of Bangladesh, but Rangpur became a division on January 25, 2010, for the improvement of administrative effectiveness. Rangpur Division is known as an administrative division of Bangladesh in the northern part. On January 25, 2010, the policymakers established Rangpur as the seventh division of the country. It was part of Rajshahi Division earlier. The Rangpur division has a total of eight districts. The total area of the division is 16,184.99 km². These eight districts have a total of 58 subdistricts, which are generally called upazilas. According to BBS (2022), Rangpur, also known as northwestern Bangladesh, has a total population of 17,610,956. The division produces rice, jute, potatoes, tobacco, and other vital agricultural products for the whole nation. The region is vital to the culture, economy, and trade of Bangladesh.

Rangpur Division, a geographically northern area in Bangladesh, continues to face significant challenges in development as compared to the other divisions in the country. Though the governmental efforts are expected to reduce poverty, which attracts growth of the economy, and encourage social development, Rangpur lags in crucial socioeconomic indicators, including industrialization, infrastructure, income, education, and health care. The presence of these inequalities is exaggerated by various factors, which include limited access to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), a scarce supply of gas, a controlled development budget, inappropriate domestic and foreign investment, and energy poverty. Frequent natural disasters, inadequate infrastructure in the transportation sector, and the agricultural sector's technological integration pointedly hamper the progress of the division. Rangpur division's rate of development growth remains below the national average, even with the investments of government initiatives in developing skills and development projects. Moreover, challenges such as labour migration, growth in the tourism industry, and food security in the division contribute to the ongoing cycle of inadequate development. The difficulties behind these differences stem from various factors, including historical underfunding, insufficient investment, challenging geographical locations, and ineffective policy measures. Despite the non-governmental units taking various initiatives for addressing these issues, the development step in the region lags behind the national average. The striking development disparity between Rangpur and the other divisions inspires critical explorations of the effectiveness of current policies and the root causes of this ongoing inequality.

The paper has six sections. Section 2 describes the objectives of the study. The literature review is presented in section 3. Methodology is mentioned in section 4. Section 5 contains the results and discussion parts. The conclusion and policy recommendations are described in section 6.

Objectives

The Objectives of the study are:

- To investigate the challenges and barriers preventing equitable advancement within Rangpur Division.
- To present policy proposals aimed at mitigating developmental inequalities and fostering equitable growth in the Rangpur Division.

Literature Review

Development disparity refers to the irregular distribution of social and environmental prospects and resources across different areas, countries, or within countries themselves (Adelson, 2005). The disparity can be evident within a single country, yet the disparity frequently presents itself as stark contrasts between advanced and underdeveloped nations. There is limited research that has talked about the issue of development disparity from the perspective of both macro and micro and also provided a systematic inspection of regional dissimilarity. In this section, the representation of the previously discoursed studies regarding the economic system highlights both advantages and disadvantages in association with the research.

The western divisions that are underfunded require focused attention. To ensure that these areas obtain a fair share of funding for initiatives to promote development, it is essential to pursue equitable allocations of the national budget (Khan, 2014). There is a big difference in how much the government spends in different parts of Bangladesh. The allocation of political power and the consequent inequalities are frequently correlated, indicating that areas with greater political clout obtain a bigger portion of public spending (Mahmoud et al., 2008). Some parts of Bangladesh still only get a small part of the national budget and public spending, which keeps them at a disadvantage. The Gini Index for the entire budget shows that there is a large gap in wealth between people in different parts of Bangladesh. The northern and western parts of the country don't have enough money set aside for development and planning (Mithun, 2021).

Hossain et al. (2016) emphasise that Rangpur Division offers considerable opportunities for the formation of agro-based SMEs owing to its significant output of mango, banana, jackfruit, litchi, and pineapple. Small and medium-sized businesses should be helped by using low-cost financing options. The Rangpur division should cut the interest rates on bank loans to encourage investment. Tax holidays and other special financial incentives should only be given to high-priority investments in the SMEs of the Rangpur division. People have shared their thoughts on the problems that small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in the Rangpur Division face. These problems include not having enough freehold land, not being able to get financing, not having enough infrastructure and utility services, not having a legal and administrative structure, and not having enough business support services.

Rangpur has changed a lot since it grew so quickly, and these changes weren't expected. Without strategic planning, land and resources are not managed efficiently, which makes it harder to supply the expanding population the services they need (Kamrul et al., 2021). Rangpur's lack of

development is a complicated problem that is made worsened by many things, such as poverty, natural catastrophes, limited job prospects, poor infrastructure, and complicated social dynamics (Ali et al., 2016). Rangpur isn't growing as quickly as it should because more people are moving to cities, farming is declining, land-use rules are awful, the economy is bad, and the environment is getting worse (Naimur, 2019). There is a moderate to very high risk of floods in about 62.46% of the Rangpur Division. The 2020 flood inventories map achieved a score of 0.83, which confirmed the risk map through the ROC (receiver operating characteristic)-AUC (area under the curve) investigation (Rana et al., 2024). Ferdous et al. (2024) discovered a decline in the average annual temperatures of Rajshahi, Rangpur, and Dinajpur. The average amount of rain that dropped each year went up in Dinajpur and Rangpur, whereas it went down in Rajshahi. In all localities except Rangpur, the average relative humidity was going up. It felt like every place got less sun. The future seems bright for Rangpur District, especially in farming. If ICT is used wisely, there are also chances for the economy to do well (Sharmin, 2017).

The greater amount of these farmers doesn't have enough money to survive on, and many of them don't make enough money to live on each year. According to Shahidul (2017), almost 40% of farmers indicated they made Tk. 50,000 or less a year, which is not enough to live on. The Rangpur education system has many problems, such as not enough resources, not enough awareness among stakeholders, and problems in putting the curriculum into action (Feroz, 2011). Ali et al. (2016) identified a dissonance between social structure and cultural norms regarding the evacuation of residents from the slums in North Bengal, Bangladesh, as they evolve. Rangpur is a trailing region; thus, targeted improvements in transport infrastructure are needed to improve access to and connections to economic opportunities (Hasnath, 2020). One of the primary reasons visitors don't want to go to Rangpur is that there aren't enough hotels and ways to get around. Bangladesh, particularly Rangpur, doesn't have enough roads and other facilities, which makes it tougher for people to travel about (Rahman, 2021). The Rangpur division has the highest poverty rate of all the divisions, at 46.2% (Hossain, 2017). The northern part of Bangladesh, notably Rangpur, has historically been quite poor. This has resulted in low productivity and old-fashioned means of harvesting. People used to name this area the "Monga" region since it was prone to natural calamities and economic troubles (Akter, 2022). People have problems getting jobs; hence, some of them travel to different cities or places in quest of better job opportunities (Bassar, 2017).

We saw that the economy in the northern region of Bangladesh is extremely different from that in rich areas like Dhaka Division. There are concerns with regional imbalance because the benefits of economic progress aren't always shared evenly (Islam & Noman, 2015). The Rangpur Division in the north of Bangladesh is having a hard time thriving on its own. Some of these obstacles are that people don't own land, the infrastructure and service quality are terrible, the legal and regulatory framework is weak, there is a lot of poverty, there aren't enough trained workers, and there aren't enough business support services (Hossain & Rahman, 2016). The infrastructure in the Rangpur division isn't good enough since there aren't many indicators of progress, there are big

differences between places, and these problems are definitely linked to high poverty rates. These problems all make it harder for the division to do well economically (Raihan, 2019). There are many different healthcare options in Rangpur; however, there are also some difficulties. There are still problems, like not enough services in neighborhood clinics, trouble getting specialists, and trouble getting emergency care (Azmir, 2024). There are a lot of problems with the healthcare system in Rangpur, especially when it comes to tobacco. Health programs that target specific demographics and engage individuals in their communities can be beneficial (Barman & Kabir, 2019). There are a lot of reasons why agriculture is going away in Rangpur. These include the growth of towns and industries, changes in the economy and society, natural disasters, better infrastructure, and changes in the environment. These factors working together mean that land use in the area needs to change, which shows how important it is to be ready for these changes ahead of time (Rahman et al., 2024).

The Rangpur division is not growing as quickly as other divisions in Bangladesh because the budget is not being shared fairly and there is a big gap between rich and poor people. Lower allocations lead to unfair living conditions and work opportunities. These problems arise due to the disparity between rural and urban areas as well as the improper and biased policies (Haque, 2024). This needs a complete and timely plan for fixing the alterations in vocational training between different places. This should include personalized programs, cash honors, local business partnerships, awareness campaigns, flexible training methods, and regular evaluations. In very disadvantaged areas, these methods can enable people to find useful skills, which can help them in achieving better employment (Islam et al., 2021). In the Rangpur division, small businesses can perform very well if they prioritize their employees' requirements and their finances are kept in order. By dealing with important problems and getting positive feedback from its workers (Faruque & Rahman, 2021). Bangladesh still has a lot of people who can't afford energy, which is essential for their livelihood. This means that people from different economic, social, and geographic groups have different levels of access to energy services. Households in rural areas, especially in Rangpur and Barisal, are much more likely to be energy poor as compared to other divisions in Bangladesh (Karmaker et al., 2025).

We looked at a lot of scholarly works, like journals, books, and articles, and found a lot of literature that looked at the concentration levels of different things, like industrialization, education, infrastructure development, energy poverty, natural disasters, budget allocation, and technological adaptation in agriculture, the health sector, tourism, transportation, and historical and cultural aspects. Numerous studies have been conducted on the selected topic; nonetheless, these assessments have predominantly focused on various districts. There have been few studies on this problem from different angles, and there hasn't been much research on it from Rangpur's perspective. This study was undertaken to address the existing gap in comprehension.

Methodology

We gather crucial information through investigation from the Rangpur division, also known as the northern part of Bangladesh, which includes 16,184.99 square kilometers (6,249.06 square miles) of a region. Includes eight districts in the division, and for our analysis, we have chosen to cover the entire division for the collection of data. From its comparatively lower performance when evaluated compared to other divisions in Bangladesh, the selection of this study area branches. This field of inquiry provides a more reliable foundation for illustrating decisions and policy. Moreover, the interaction between industrial growth, infrastructural development, agricultural possessions, financial distribution, and the education system and healthcare system create a background that is exciting and that enriches the context of inquiry. This domain would prove advantageous in representing the real-life situation from a national viewpoint through the investigation carried out in it. The Rangpur division is a significant region of Bangladesh; however, it tends to receive less focus compared to other divisions. In a comparison, other divisions exhibit greater development than Rangpur.

Table 1: Occupations of people in Rangpur division

Job Title	Percentage (%)
Agriculture	62.99
Non-agriculture laborer	4.66
Industry	1.11
Commerce	13.28
Transport and communication	3.90
Service	6.32
Construction	1.18
Religious service	0.20
Rent and remittance	0.20

Source: Banglapedia, 2023

This study covers Rangpur Division. Rangpur has eight districts: Dinajpur, Gaibandha, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, Panchagarh, and Thakurgaon. The seventh administrative division of the country was established in 2010. Rural scenery and agriculture dominate the division's wide territory. Rangpur division covers 16,184.99 km², or 6,249.06 sq mi. The GPS coordinates are 25° 50' 54.02" N and 88° 56' 28.991 E in Bangladesh. Geographic coordinates use latitude and longitude to determine a location on Earth. It borders Rajshahi, Mymensingh, West Bengal, and Assam. The overall population is 17,610,956, with 51.18% men and 48.82% women.



Study Area

Source: Banglapedia, 2024

The demographic composition shows 82.51% Muslims and 16.98% Hindus. Furthermore, 0.02% are Buddhist, 0.41% are Christian, and 0.08% are other. This study uses purposive sampling. This method entailed finding and contacting respondents. Thus, we used categorical sampling to interview people from Rangpur, Dinajpur, Gaibandha, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, Panchagarh, and Thakurgaon. Purposive sampling of qualitative and quantitative primary data was used. Data gathering occurred October 18–28, 2024. We collected quantitative data from 120 respondents. In addition to quantitative data, two focus groups and three key informant interviews provided qualitative insights. Data collectors interviewed Rangpur's development-related organization users and non-users. Quantitative data was collected using a standardized questionnaire and qualitative data using a checklist. Table 2 contains the profile summary of the respondents.

Table 2: Respondents Profile Summary

Serial	Occupation	Number
1	Teacher	19
2	Retired Government Employee	4
3	Businessman	19
4	Farmer	16
5	Non-Government Organisation (NGO) Employee	3
6	Student	12
7	Banker	12
8	Freelancer	2
10	Job Holder	22
11	Journalist	2
12	Political Leader	2
14	Engineer	2
15	Healthcare Employee	7

Source: Authors’ Calculation, 2024

Results and Discussion

After collecting data from field survey, we expect to determine the results which are significant.

The lack of infrastructure, which results in 100%, and the lack of industrialization (91.8%) are identified as substantial difficulties for the development of the Rangpur division, the northern part of the country. By the improvement of these sectors, the economy of the Rangpur division can shift upward. The political willfulness and lack of modern agricultural technology also hamper the economic growth of the region. Ali Md et al. (2016) also pointed out such factors, which are comparable.

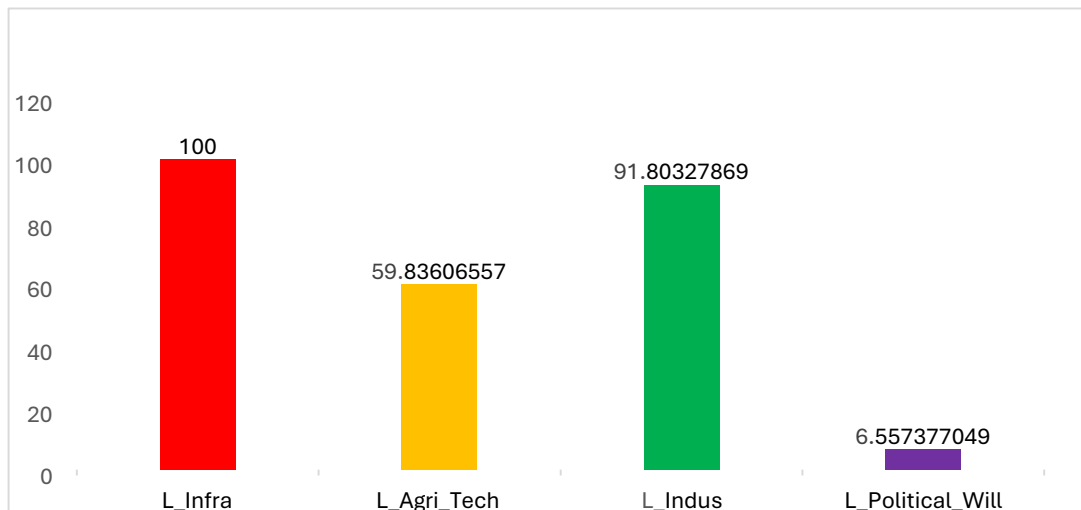


Figure 1: Main Issues Facing Rangpur Division

Source: Authors’ Calculation, 2024

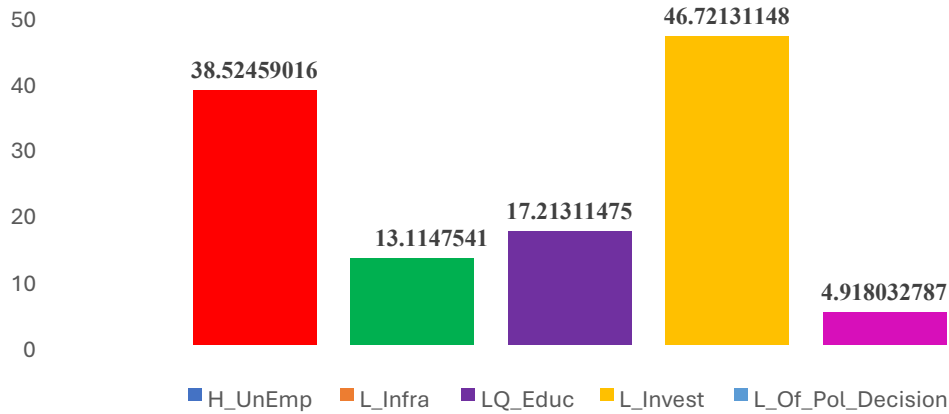


Figure 2: Main Reasons for Economic Stagnation

Source: Authors’ Calculation, 2024

Significant challenges include higher rates of unemployment at 38.5% and a notable absence in foreign and domestic investment, which stands at 46.7%. The enhancement of these potential areas can alleviate poverty boost economic growth. Rahman (2021) and the Citizen’s Consultation Meeting Rangpur (2022) have noted the comparable outcome. Hasnath (2020) and Hossain & Rahman (2016) have noted similar findings regarding Rangpur’s economic stagnation.

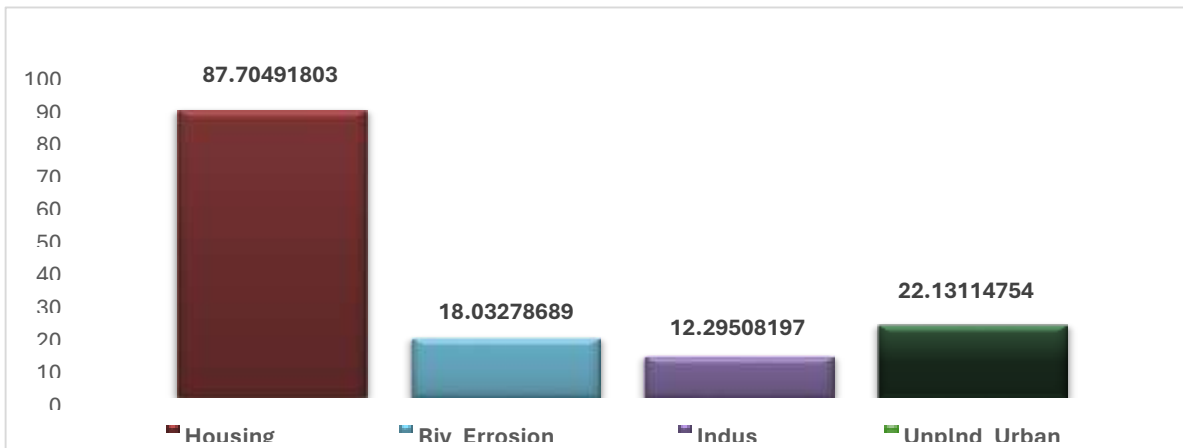


Figure 3: Reasons for Decreasing Agricultural Land

Source: Authors’ Calculation, 2024

Figure 3 depicts housing expansion (87.7%) is considered the primary reason for the reduction in agricultural land, and unplanned urbanization (22.1%) is in the second position for it. River erosion and tiny unplanned industrialization are also responsible. Md. N. Rahman et al. (2024) observed the similar factors.

Table 3: Labor Force Receiving and Wanting Training (%)

Region	Received Training (%)	Wanting Training of Any Type (%)
Barisal	8.0	22.0
Chattogram	8.4	22.6
Dhaka	9.9	18.25
Khulna	6.9	21.0
Rajshahi	7.2	14.2
Rangpur	5.8	30.0
Sylhet	7.9	17.3

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (2015); Labour Force Survey (2013)

Tabel 3 shows that only 5.8% of the labor force received any type of training in the Rangpur Division, which is the lowest rate across all divisions, despite 30% indicating a willingness to receive training opportunities. This highlights a notable disparity in skills as compared to other divisions like Dhaka (9.9%). This result proves that there is a disparity in training and skilled labor force, which is very crucial for economic advancement. Higher funding for vocational training has the potential for the appraisalment of the worker efficiency. A similar result has been observed by Islam et al. (2021).

According to the Table 4, the infrastructure of Rangpur has seen a lower improvement, which was 25% in 2010, increasing from and reaching to 50% in 2022. But the improvement it shows is not enough to cope with the other dynamic divisions of the country. On the other hand, it remains to fall short as compared to divisions like Chattogram (75%) and Dhaka (90%) concerning connectivity and economic opportunities. Advancement relies on the tactical allocation of resources towards urban infrastructure, transport, and energy systems. Raihan (2019) has observed the similar facts about infrastructural development.

Table 4: Infrastructural Comparison Among Divisions

Division	2010	2016	2022	Percentage Improvement (2010-2022)
Dhaka	70%	80%	90%	20%
Chittagong	50%	60%	75%	25%
Khulna	40%	50%	65%	25%
Rajshahi	45%	55%	70%	25%
Barisal	30%	35%	45%	15%
Sylhet	35%	40%	50%	15%
Rangpur	25%	35%	50%	25%
Mymensingh	20%	30%	50%	30%

Source: [Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Progress Report, 2022], [Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), 2022], [World Bank: Bangladesh Economic and Development Indicators, 2024]

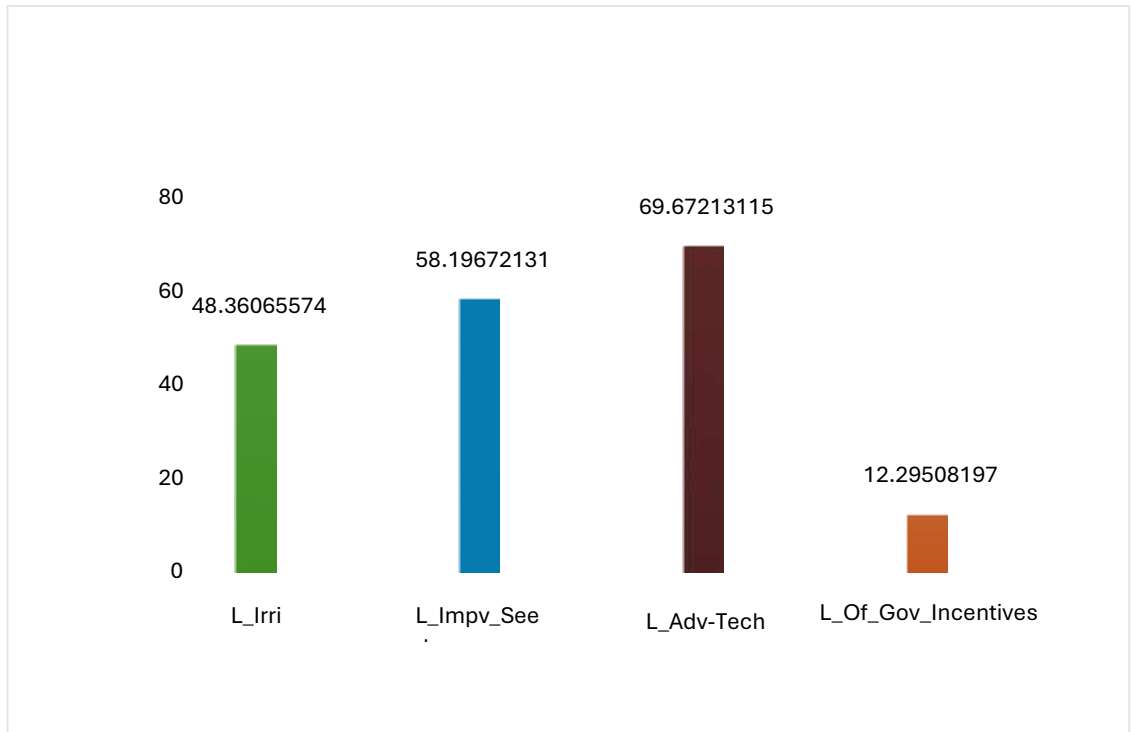


Figure 4: Primary Causes of Low Agricultural Productivity

Source: Authors' Calculation, 2024

In Figure 4, the primary cause of lower agricultural productivity is lower access to advanced agricultural technology (69.72%), and then the lower supply of improved seeds (58.20%), which is very tiny for the advancement of higher agricultural productivity. These elements have the potential to enhance and promote sustainable agricultural productivity. Akter (2022) has noted a comparable finding regarding the decline in agricultural productivity.

The primary challenges identified (In Figure 5) are the lack of quality education at 47.5% and insufficient funding in the education sector at 45%. Enhancement of the education sector, including the eradication of the shortage of teachers and the provision of comprehensive teacher training may lead to significant improvements in the quality of education. Feroz (2011) noted a similar factor affecting in the Rangpur region.

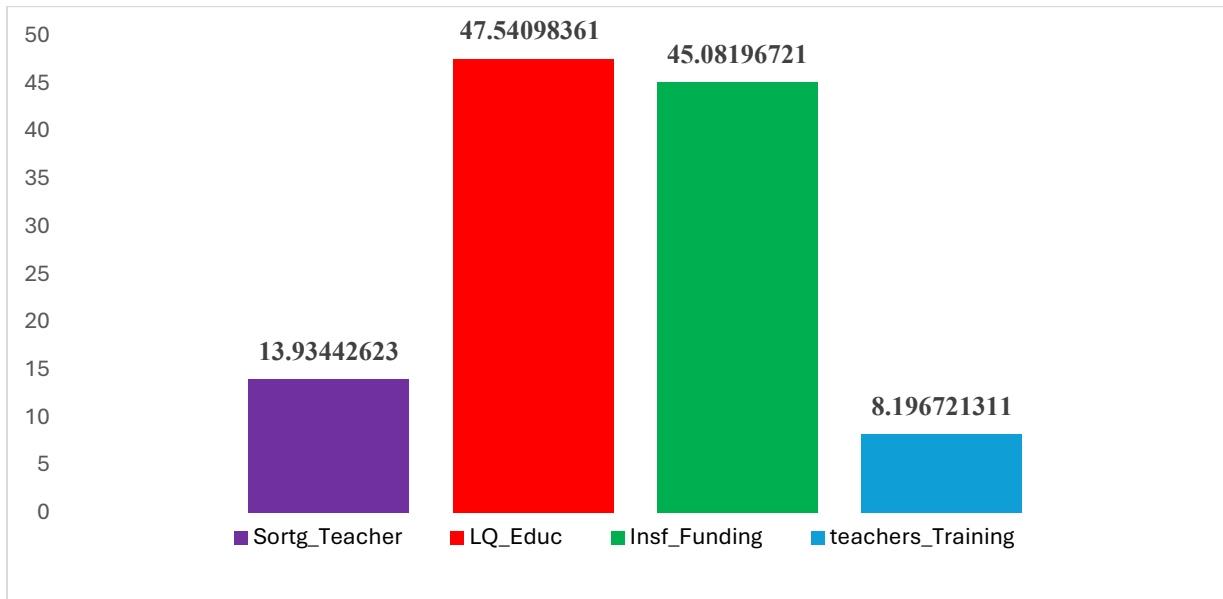


Figure 5: Primary Issue in Education

Source: Authors' Calculation, 2024

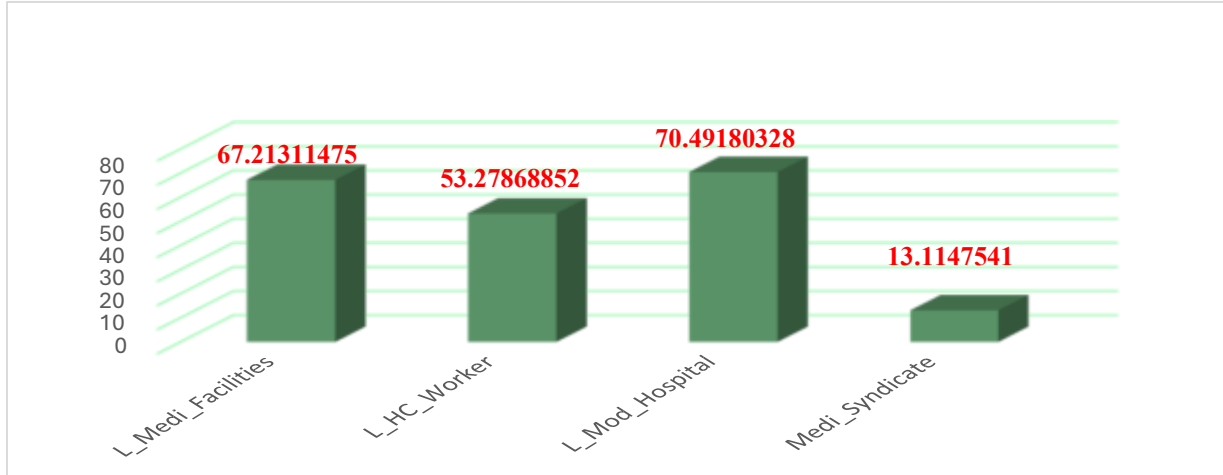


Figure 6: Main issues facing in Rangpur's Healthcare sector

Source: Authors' Calculation, 2024

Figure 6 illustrates approximately 67.21% of individuals believe that there is an insufficiency of medical facilities, which is responsible for the lower quality of healthcare service. Then 53.27% of individuals believe that there is a shortage of healthcare workers. A significant portion of the population, precisely 70.49%, believes there is a considerable deficiency in the availability of a modern medical hospital in this northern region. A remaining 13.11% of individuals believe that

a medical syndicate exists that also hampers the sound healthcare services. Azmir (2024) has observed a similar phenomenon.

Table 5: Division wise Budget Allocation

City Corporation	Budget amount in FY24 (Crore)
Dhaka (South)	6751.56
Dhaka (North)	5269.45
Chattogram	1887.28
Khulna	1082.99
Rajshahi	1015.35
Sylhet	925.4
Cumilla	748
Narayanganj	695
Gazipur	624.50
Mymensingh	572.11
Barisal	442.7
Rangpur	20

Source: Ministry of Finance, 2024

Table 5 shows that in comparison to more urbanized areas like Chattogram City Corporation and Dhaka North & Dhaka south City Corporation, the City Corporation of Rangpur is allocated one of the smallest budgets. This insufficient funding limits the advancements in public services and infrastructure, nourishing regional underdevelopment. To remove disparities, budget distribution should be equity-based, instead of equal. Haque (2024) observed the same for the budget allocation choices.

In 2022, 25% of the households in Rangpur were still energy poor. This number is considerably different from Dhaka, where only 5% of households had the same problems. The energy infrastructure isn't adequate enough because it only grows better by 10% over 12 years. This damages both the economy and people's quality of life. The division's lack of progress is made worse by the fact that it gets most of its energy from biomass production. Karmaker et al. (2025) came to the same conclusion about the energy poverty in the Rangpur division.

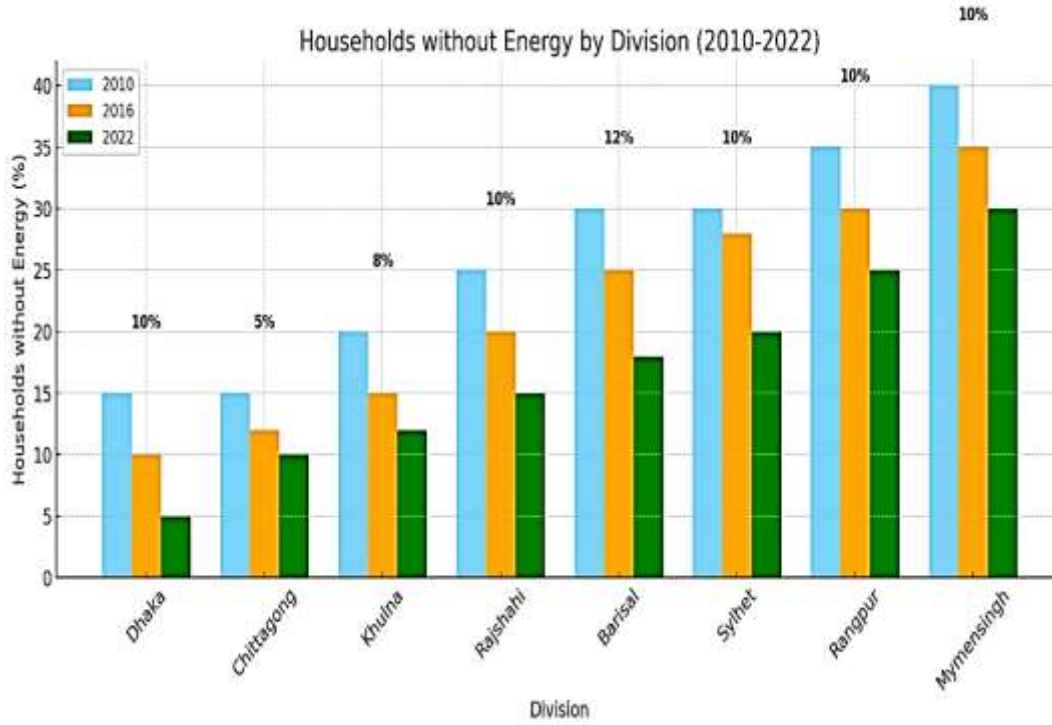


Figure 7: Energy Poverty

Source: [Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Progress Report 2022], ["World Energy Outlook 2023," United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)]

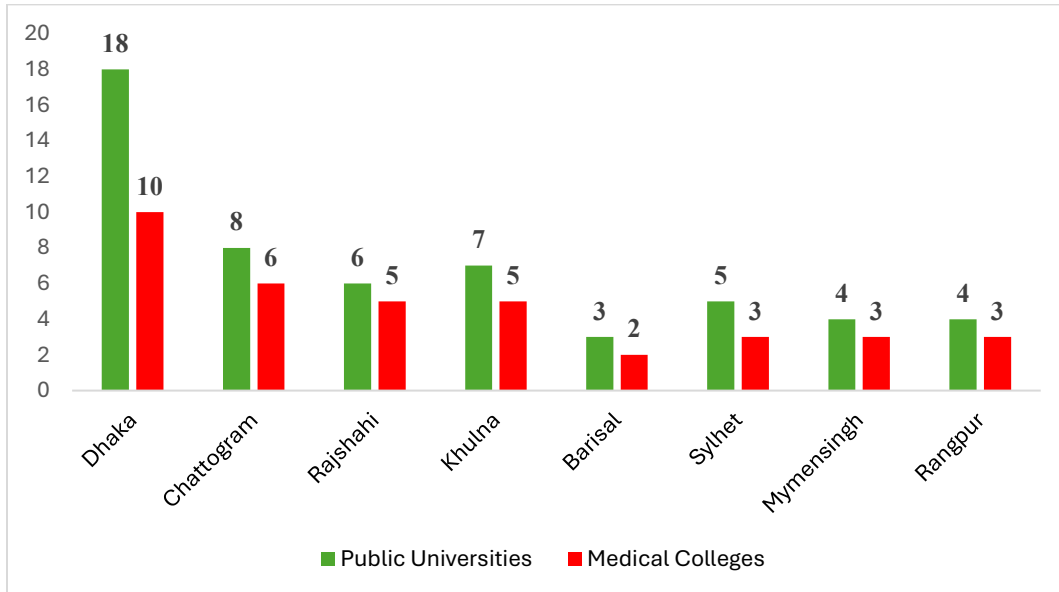


Figure 8: Energy Poverty

Source: University Grants Commission of Bangladesh (UGC), 2024

Rangpur only has four public universities and three medical institutions, which shows that it has far fewer higher education options than Dhaka and Chattogram. Not being able to get further education continues to create skill gaps and slow down regional growth. Improving the ability of schools and colleges might assist in closing this gap. Feroz (2011) has discovered the same conclusion.

In Figure 9, the primary challenges confronting Rangpur's industry include gas supply and investment, identified as major obstacles, in addition to concerns regarding communication and energy supply. Political challenges possess a certain significance, although they may not be as prominent. Hossain et al. (2016) reported findings that align with this observation.

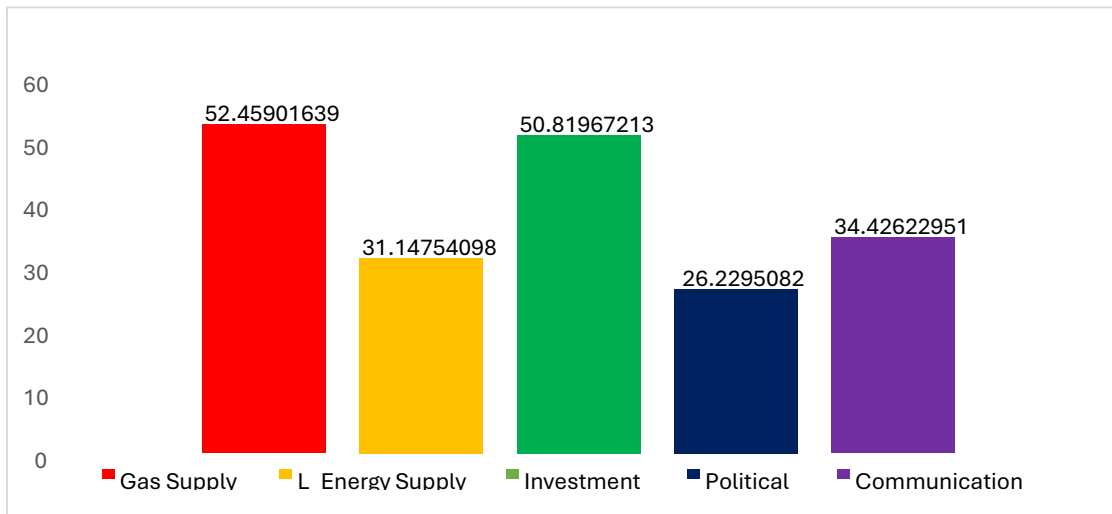


Figure 9: Challenges facing Rangpur's industrial sector

Source: Authors' Calculation, 2024

Rangpur has many problems because it doesn't have enough modern hospitals, trained doctors and nurses, or medical equipment. We can identify the differences and gaps among the divisions from the pie chart. The Rangpur division needs more financing in the healthcare sector to cover up the total population who have been deprived for a long time of living in such a huge area. Azmir (2024), Barman and Kabir (2019) noted a comparable outcome.

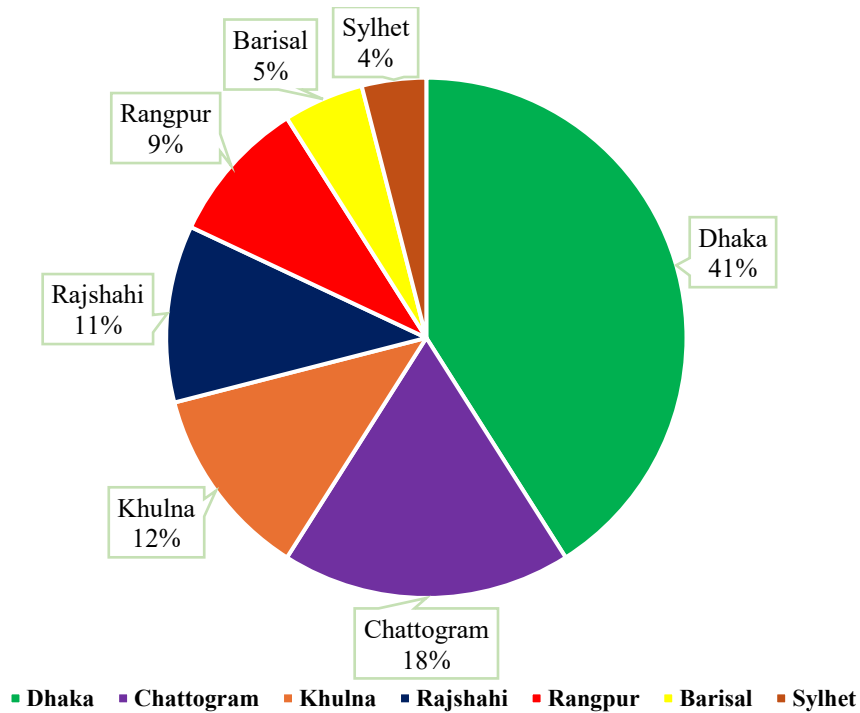


Figure 10: Healthcare Financing

Source: Hassan et al. (2016). Healthcare Financing in Bangladesh: Challenges and Recommendations. Bangladesh Journal of Medical Science, 15(4), 505–510

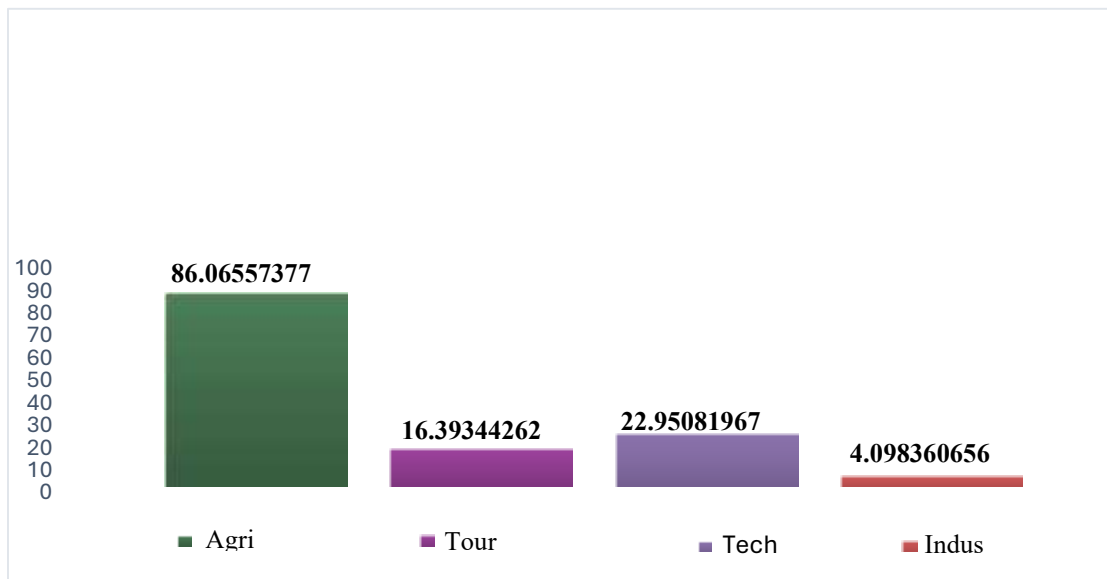


Figure 11: Most Efficient Economic Sector for Rangpur's Development

Source: Authors' Calculation, 2024

Agriculture (86%) draws the most efficient economic sector for the proper development in the Rangpur division, which shows its importance through the results from the respondents. The improvement of agricultural production methods unifies with what the region can do and could help ensure households' food security and make the economy more stable. Hossain et al. (2016) have reported a similar factor for Rangpur's development.

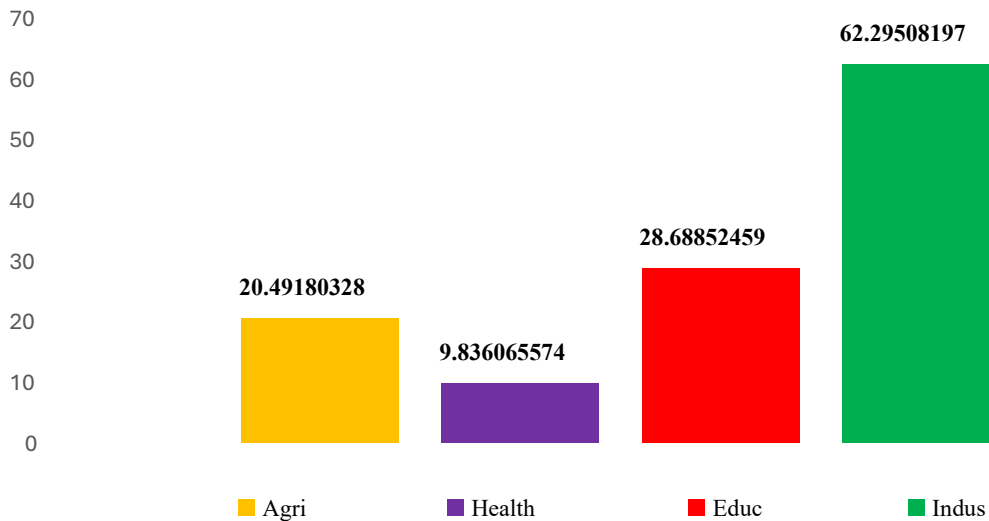


Figure 12: Prioritization Sector for Sustainable Development

Source: Authors' Calculation, 2024

Figure 12 represents that industrialization is the most effective sector for sustainable development in this region, and its score is 62.3%, according to the respondents. It will create more job opportunities and reduce internal migration. The weight on industrial expansion, succeeded by agriculture at 20.5% and quality education (28.69%), indicates a deliberate transition aimed at diversifying economic centers. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Progress Report (2022) and the "World Energy Outlook (2023)" indicate that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has focused on infrastructural development that matches our result in Rangpur. However, the presentation of our findings offers a complementary perspective, highlighting the importance of prioritizing industrial development along with educational, healthcare, and agricultural advancement.

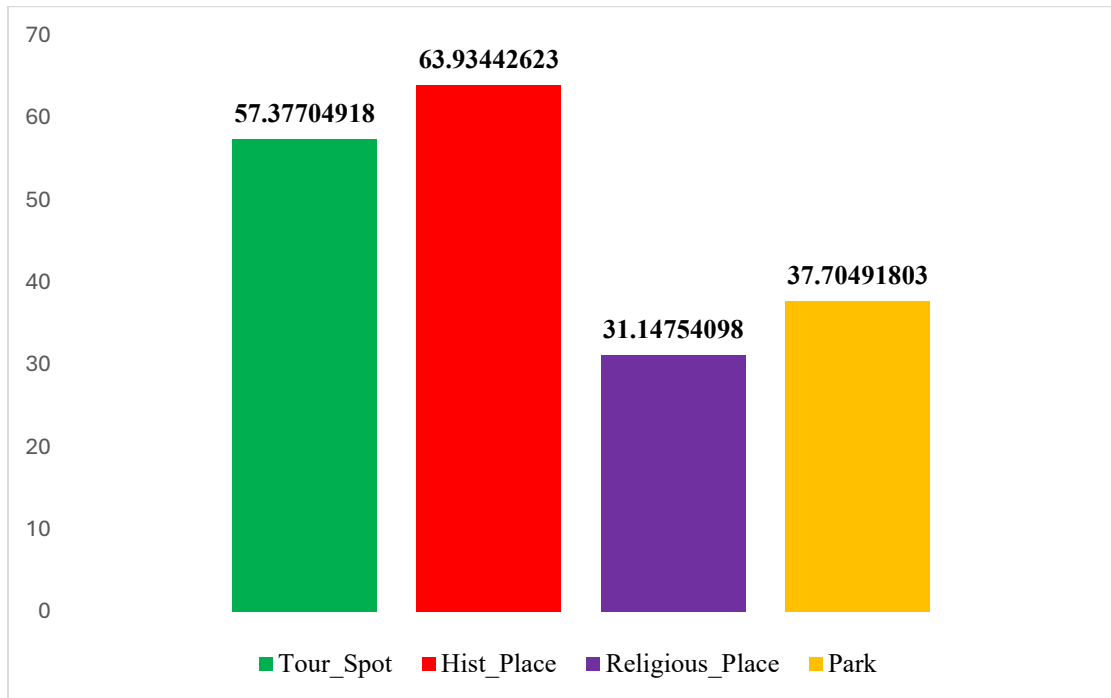


Figure 13: Potential area for development in the Tourism Industry in Rangpur

Source: Authors' Calculation, 2024

The main focus for increasing tourism in Rangpur is on historical sites and popular tourist spots. Religious places receive less attention. In the result it shows for the improvement of the tourism industry, it is important to focus on preserving and promoting historical places as well as the special tourist spots for the attraction of the domestic and foreign tourists. Whenever the responsible authority takes actions for improving these areas, that could bring in more tourists, which could shift the economy of this region. But parks and religious sites, while advantageous, are less likely to be a key part of the tourism policy. This emphasis on historical importance shows that the area of Rangpur Division has the potential for attracting cultural tourism. Rahman (2021) observed the similarity, and we delineate that factor.

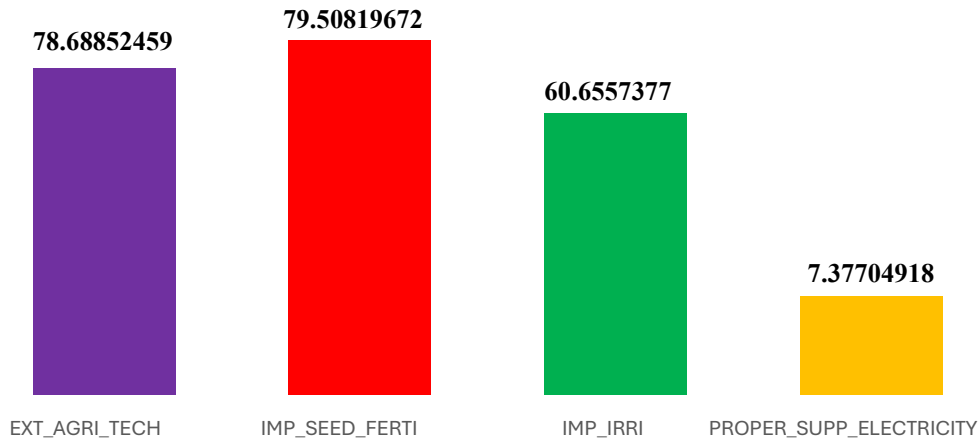


Figure 14: Steps to Advance Agriculture

Source: Authors' Calculation, 2024

For the advancement of agriculture in the Rangpur division, the improvement of seed and fertilizer scores the highest percentage (79.5%), and the extension of agricultural technology scores the second (78.7%). Irrigation improvement and proper supply of electricity influence agriculture and are efficient resource management for enhancing productivity in the agricultural sector in this area. Hossain et al. (2016) suggested agriculture-based SMEs in Rangpur, and we identified the similar measures to enhance agriculture.

In Figure 15, to enhance the education system of the region, expansion of vocational-based education is a must (63.11). There is also a need to train the teachers to cut a good result in the education system in this area. This indicates that skill-oriented and high-caliber education is more crucial for economic advancement through the eradication of unemployment. Islam et al. (2021) further underscored the educational opportunities for experiential training.

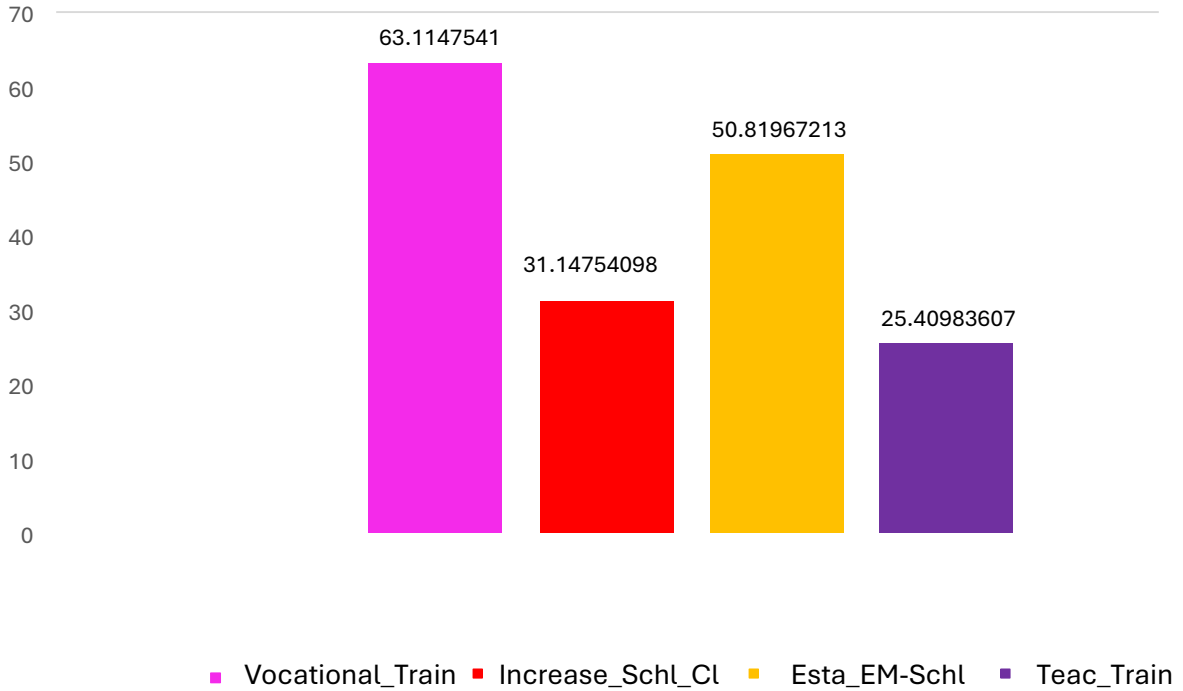


Figure 15: Initiative could be the most effective in the Education system of Rangpur

Source: Authors' Calculation, 2024

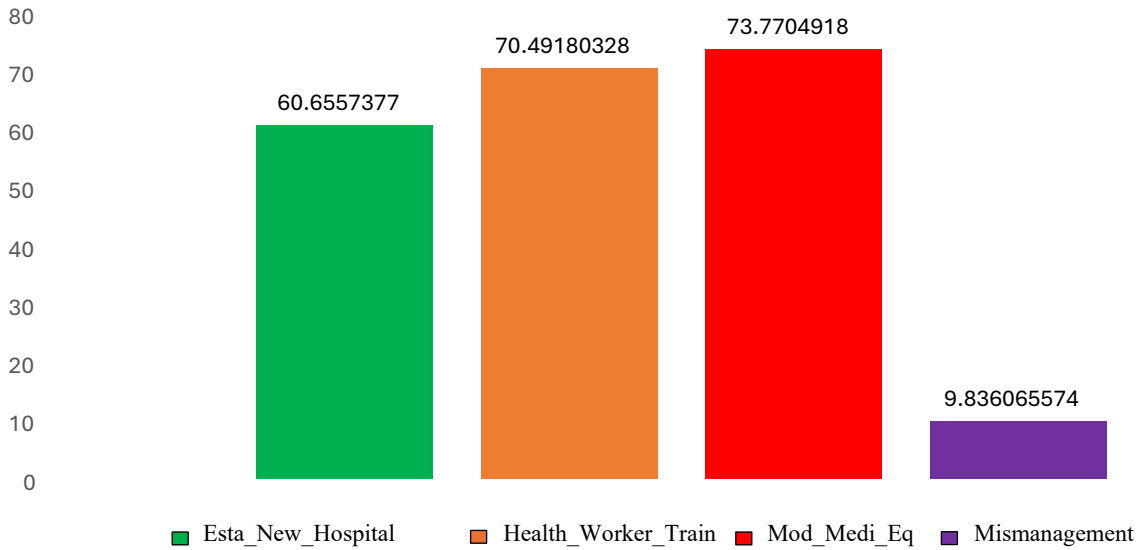


Figure 16: Initiative could be most effective for improving the health sector in Rangpur

Source: Authors' Calculation, 2024

The initiative that focused on modern medical equipment got the highest score of 73.77, which means that people think it is the best way to improve healthcare in Rangpur. The Health Workers Training and Establishing New Hospitals projects are worth 70.49 and 60.66, respectively. The lowest value recorded for the initiative about mismanagement is 9.84%.

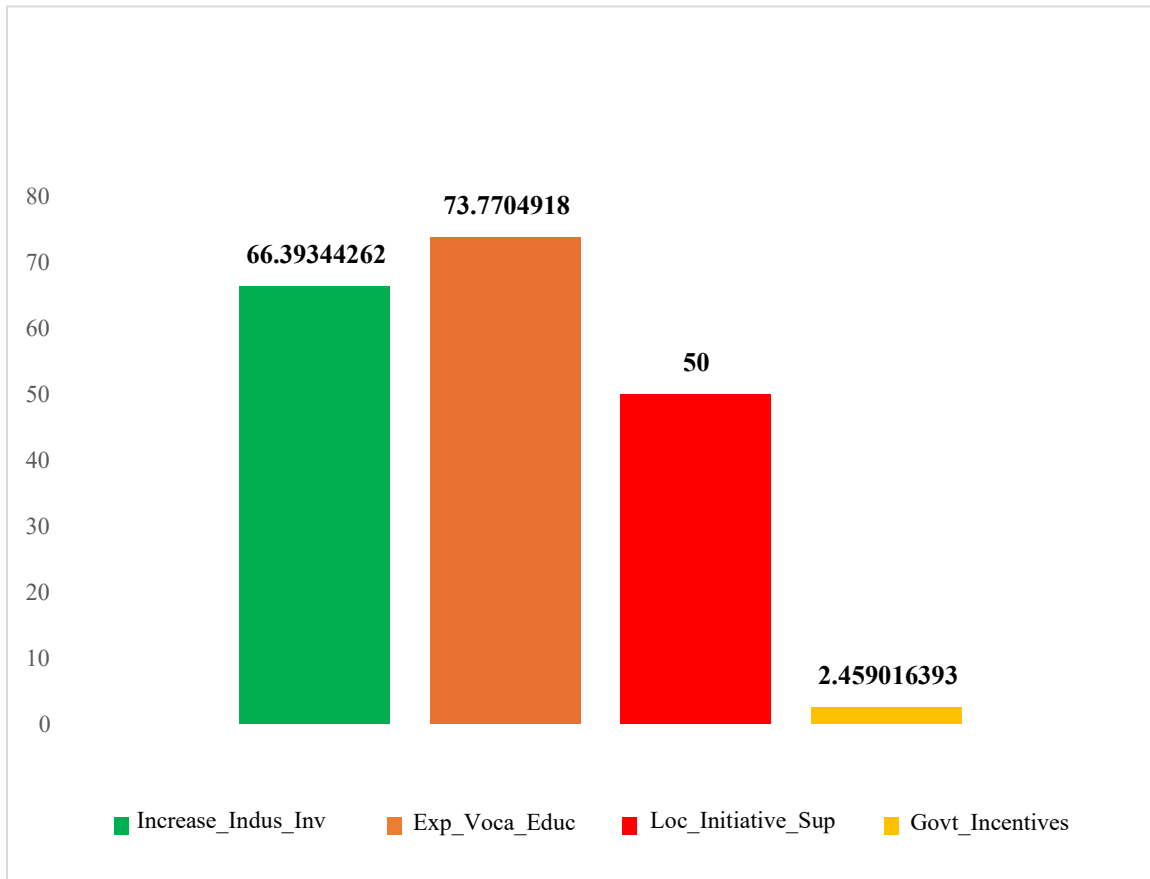


Figure 17 Steps should be taken to reduce unemployment in Rangpur

Source: Authors' Calculation, 2024

Figure 17 assures that expectation to vocational education achieved the highest score of 73.77, reflecting a significant inclination towards vocational education as a remedy for unemployment in Rangpur. Enhancing vocational training has the potential to provide the workforce with targeted skills essential for local industries, ultimately improving employability. The second-highest response, scoring 66.39, indicates that industrial growth is regarded as an important metric. Advancing industries in Rangpur has the potential to create additional employment opportunities and foster economic growth in the area. Local initiatives received a score of 50, indicating a lower yet notable level of support for community-driven efforts aimed at job creation. The strategy may involve promoting small businesses or local enterprises. This option garnered the lowest level of

support, achieving a score of 2.46. The findings indicate that respondents prefer direct skills development or industrial growth to government incentives.

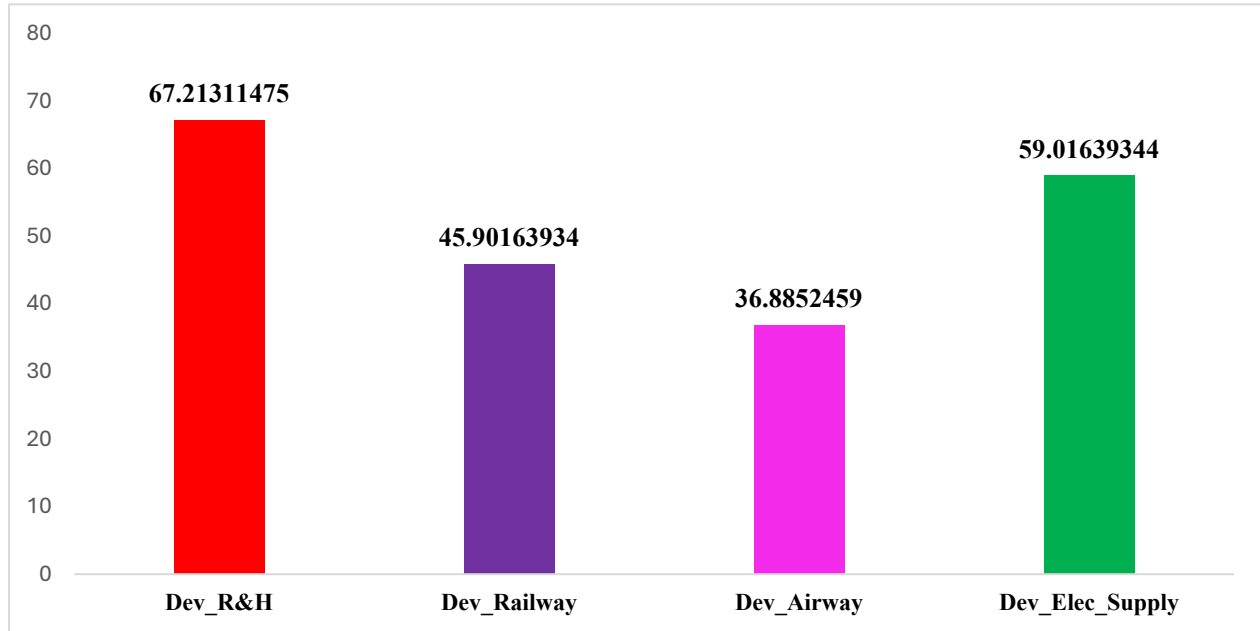


Figure 18: Most needed infrastructure project for the long-term development of Rangpur

Source: Authors' Calculation, 2024

The enhancement of the roads, highways, and energy infrastructure is regarded as the essential obligation for Rangpur's growth. While there is consensus on the significance of constructing railways and airways, it is perceived as less critical than other priorities. The findings indicate that Rangpur's future is contingent upon improved land transportation infrastructure, such as roads and trains, and a dependable electricity source. The conclusion illustrates the significance of infrastructure that facilitates mobility and ensures reliable electricity to foster sustainable growth.

Focus Group Discussion: Development of Rangpur Division

Host Organization	Chamber of Commerce, Rangpur
Interviewer Name	Md. Pias Hossain

1. The article gives important tips on how to speed up progress in the economy and health care.
2. Approaches to enhance the capabilities of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and advance agriculture.
3. Developing infrastructure and enhancing connectivity to stimulate economic activities.
4. The foundational elements of growth include education, innovation, and skill development.

A case 1:

Omar Faruk, Associate Professor at Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur, identifies natural disasters like floods and riverbank erosion of various rivers in this northern part of Bangladesh as significant barriers to the economic growth of the Rangpur region. He said that the Teesta Master Plan's successful implementation, which is important for the fair distribution of water from this river, will greatly reduce the bad effects of water scarcity and help the northern region's economy and agriculture grow.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

A case 2:

ABM Zahidul Islam, Additional Deputy Police Commissioner (Crime) at Rangpur Metropolitan Police (RpMP), points out that talking about these structural challenges like industrialization, low-quality healthcare services, unequal budget allocation etc., and their underlying causes is essential, and it must be approached initially through effective policy design and implementation. It is essential to promote industrial growth, strengthen political dedication, enhance infrastructure, improve the efficiency of the healthcare system, and address the widespread corruption affecting various sectors of society.

According to primary statistics, Rangpur is Bangladesh's least developed area, with low literacy, inadequate infrastructure, and notable poverty. Though the dominant sector in the area, inefficiencies and technical lag still cause minimal output from agriculture. Rangpur's sub industrialization regrettably, could encourage underdeveloped areas of diversification and employment generation.

The main reasons for these deviations or heterogeneities in the region include less infrastructure, inadequate policy execution, and limited expenditures. Graph 4.19 highlights policy shortcomings

in handling developing problems by showing the great discrepancy between economic development and technological improvement. Important social, microeconomic, macroeconomic, and educational variables have to be in line to guarantee Rangpur's decent quality of living and help to promote sustainable development as well as the mainstream of development.

Our recommendations, rooted in hopes and dreams, aim to bridge the development gaps and foster equitable growth in Rangpur:

1. Following the Industrial Revolution

- ✓ It needs to put more resources into travel and tourism and make special economic zones exclusively for firms that are focused on farming.
- ✓ Give small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) tax advantages and loans with low interest rates to help them develop.
- ✓ Getting businesses to invest in new projects by making it easier for them to get energy resources like gas and electricity.

2. Improving Infrastructure

- ✓ Make it easier for people to go around Rangpur and beyond by improving the road networks and transport systems.
- ✓ Make the power and internet systems better so they can handle the predicted increase in the number of households and companies.
- ✓ To decrease the effects of frequent hailstorms and floods, build solid infrastructure that can handle calamities.

3. Working with the local government to put policies into action

- ✓ Setting aside extra money just for the expansion of the Rangpur districts is highly significant.
- ✓ Work with civil society groups like NGOs and community leaders to make sure that the policies that are being put into place are working.
- ✓ Make it more honest and upfront how resources are shared and projects are run.

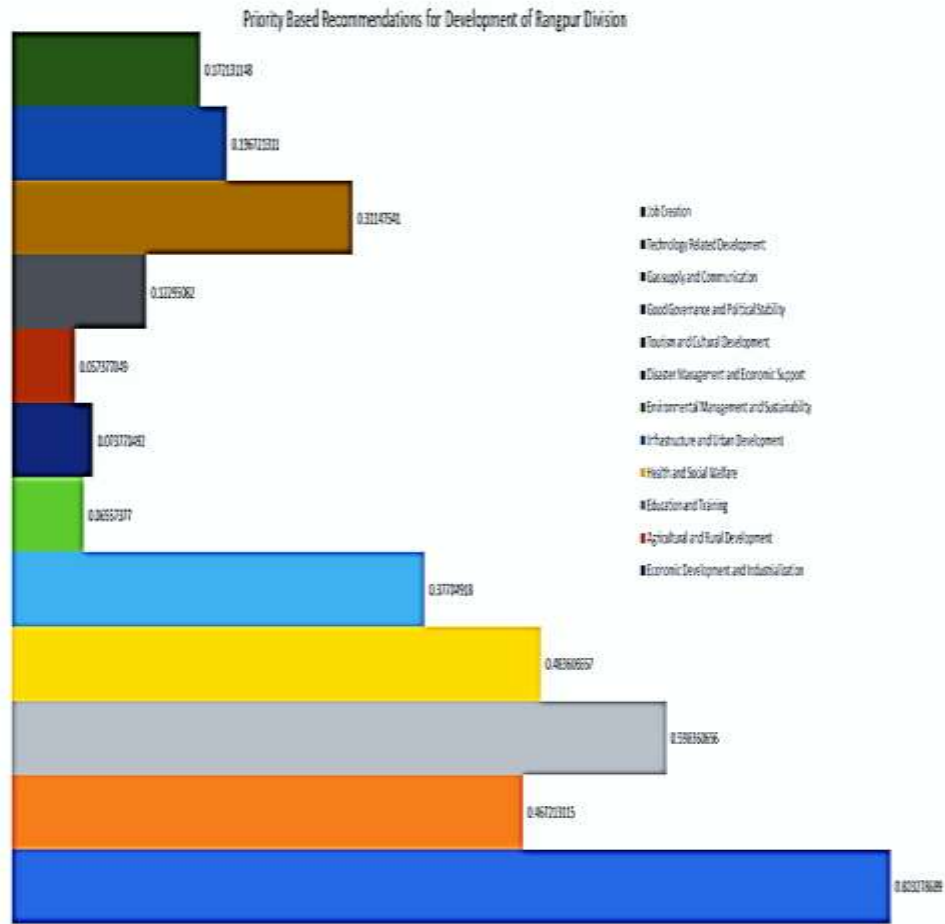


Figure 19: Priority Based Recommendations for Development of Rangpur Division

Source: Authors' Calculation, 2024

Figure 19 shows that Economic Development and Industrialization (dark blue) is the most important area for development in Rangpur Division, with a score of 0.883. Infrastructure and Urban Development (sky blue, 0.377), Health and Social Welfare (yellow, 0.486), and Agricultural and Rural Development (grey, 0.598) are other important areas. However, environmental management (light green, 0.065), disaster management (navy blue, 0.073), and tourism and cultural development (brown, 0.053) are all seen as the least important things to do.

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