

Trends, Structure and performance of Exports and Remittance in Bangladesh: An empirical analysis

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Abstract

The objective of the paper is to analyze the external sector performance in Bangladesh, especially export earnings and inflow of remittances. The main findings of this paper reveal that export earnings and remittances are the dominating external sector factors of Bangladesh economy for decades although, both remittance and migration growth decreased lately. Remittance inflows from different destination have also changed over the period. On the other hand, migration from Bangladesh is concentrated in a few destinations which may generate serious problem if any external shock creates from those destinations. However, the decreasing rate of remittance and outward migration might create severe problem in the economy by reducing employment opportunities and output level. Conversely, export growth has underperformed over the few years. Commodity exports show that Bangladesh is predominantly a manufactured goods exporting country and Bangladesh's export basket is concentrated in a few commodities. In addition, export earnings from Bangladesh are centered in a few destinations. Any fluctuations of the export demand from these regions might seriously affect the external balance of the country as well as expected level of growth. The decreasing rate of remittance and export earnings is a concern for the overall economy as well as for the policy-makers regarding the external sector.

Keywords: external sector performance, remittance, exports.

JEL Classification: B17, F24.

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Introduction

Traditionally, Bangladesh's economy heavily depends on external sector. External sector factors such as remittances, exports, imports, foreign aid have always played important role, although the relative importance of various external sector factors has not been uniform and has changed over time. Any change in the international market, either through price of commodities or international demand or changes in domestic macroeconomic policies affects these factors.

In the 1970s, the economy of Bangladesh was mainly dependent on foreign aids and imports. During the period, the country was facing various domestic and international shocks, for example, two consecutive droughts in 1972 and 1973; and flood in 1974, oil price shocks in 1973 and 1979 etc. In the 1980s, the country had started to shift from import substitution policies to export-oriented industrial policies. Towards this the country had initiated important reform in domestic industrial policies. In the 1990s, Bangladesh experienced an accelerated pace of global integration of her economy. During that period, economic reforms gained momentum and the country pursued an export-led growth strategy. As a result, export started to increase. In addition, volume of FDI lifted up gradually. At the same time the migration of Bangladeshi workers also increased in the global market which supported to boost up inflow of remittances.

A buoyant scenario started from 2000s, export earnings and remittances became the dominating external sector factors of Bangladesh economy (chart-1), while 2010s was the decade of steady growth. In FY10 all external sector factors performed highest growth (as percent of GDP) and afterwards it showed declining trend. The changing scenario of these factors also visualized from Table-1. The remittance-GDP ratio touched 5.5 percent in FY18 as compared to 1.4 percent in FY80. During the same period, export-GDP ratio increased to 13.4 percent compared to 5.4 percent in FY80. Similarly import-GDP ratio also increased to 19.9 percent in FY18 compared to 14.4 percent in FY80. The rising trends of export, import and remittance to GDP ratio support the argument that Bangladesh has become a trading nation with its rising dependence on exports and remittances. It may be noted that performance of Bangladesh's external sector such as-robust export growth, high inflow of remittance, the consequent rise in foreign exchange reserves, comfortable current account balance and stable

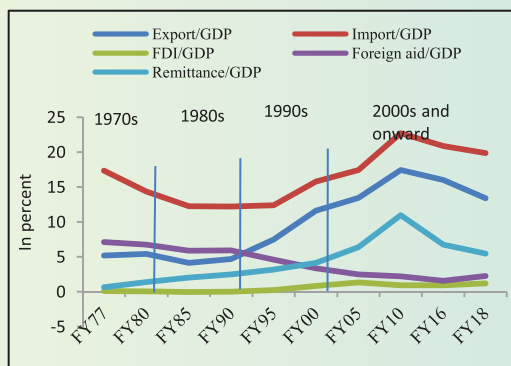
exchange rate helped to maintain GDP growth rate at the expected level (Appendix Table-I).

Table-1 Growth of external sectors variables (% of GDP)

Year	Export/GDP	Import/GDP	FDI/GDP	Foreign aid/GDP	Remittance/GDP
FY75	3.9	8.9	0.1*	6.4	0.2**
FY80	5.4	14.4	0.1	6.8	1.4
FY85	4.1	12.2	-0.03	5.9	2
FY90	4.7	12.9	0.01	5.9	2.5
FY95	7.5	12.4	0.2	4.6	3.2
FY00	11.6	15.8	0.8	3.6	4.4
FY05	13.5	17.4	1.3	2.5	6.4
FY10	17.4	22.7	0.9	2.2	10.9
FY16	16.0	20.9	0.9	1.6	6.8
FY18	13.4	19.9	1.2	2.2	5.5

Source: EPB, Annual Reports, and Economic trends, of Bangladesh Bank, Flow of external resource, MOF, world investment report, 2009 (UNCTAD). *1976-77**1975-76.

Chart-1 Relative change in external sector variables



Source: EPB, Annual Reports, and Economic trends, of Bangladesh Bank, Flow of external resource, MOF, world investment report, 2009 (UNCTAD).

In this background, the paper examined the trend, structure and changing features of remittances and exports of Bangladesh. The study has been conducted by using secondary data, which have been collected from Annual Report of Bangladesh Bank, Economic Trends of Bangladesh Bank, Export promotion bureau, Foreign Exchange Policy Department of Bangladesh Bank, Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), Bangladesh Economic Review, World Development Indicator and International Financial Statistics. The remainder of the paper is organized as follows: following the introduction in section I, review of literature is given in section II, section III gives a detailed scenario of remittance inflows of Bangladesh, section IV explains recent development of Migration, section V analyzes the performance and changing features of the export sector and finally, section VI gives the conclusion.

Section II: Literature Review

Presently, significant amount of research have been conducted on external sector performance as well as various aspects of export and remittance in Bangladesh. Some of the relevant studies on these issues are summarized below:

Raja (2015) attempts to analyze the export performance of Pakistan and investigate the weaknesses of export sector. The most distressing feature is reliance on too few exportable items and too few trading partners. This narrow base and lack of diversification of exports have made the country vulnerable to external as well as internal shocks. The paper suggests that to obviate the possibility of such occurrence, Pakistan will have to expand her production base, diversify it on need basis and craft an aggressive long term export strategy. The country also need to rationalize her economic policies with this strategy making concerted efforts to enhance exports by diversifying them, finding new markets.

Nath (2013) attempts to identify the impact of global recession in key sectors, especially in exports and remittances on the Bangladesh economy and how the country could mitigate its possible adverse impacts. The global recession that initially affected the US and EU countries, also affected Bangladesh to some extent. The major affected sectors of Bangladesh economy were exports, remittances and scale of migration. The total export value increased but rates of change decreased drastically. On the other hand, some expatriates from abroad were returning back but foreign remittance did not decline. However, Bangladesh came out very well from the global recession due to nature and extent of its integration with the world economy.

Taslim et al. (2011) examine the export performance of Bangladesh: Global Recession and after. The study find out that world trade was severely disrupted by the global recession of 2008-09 with exports of most countries declining sharply. The economies of both of the major export markets of the world, the USA and the EU, shrank substantially. This reduced their aggregate domestic expenditure, which in turn reduced their import demand for goods from the rest of the world. On the other hand, the export of Bangladesh, especially the export of readymade garments, which constitute more than three-quarters of the total export of the country, did not decrease much despite the fact that most of it is sold to the EU and the USA.

Mamun et al. (2010) analyzes the trends and various aspects of workers' migration and remittances in Bangladesh. It also discusses the micro and macroeconomic impacts of remittances. The paper find out that most remittance transfers have been used by migrant-sending households for consumption and help to reduce poverty in Bangladesh. The analysis presented in the paper further indicates that the remittances may have significant effects on other macroeconomic variables as well.

Adnan et al. (2015) reveals the absolute dominance of RMG sectors in the export earnings over other sectors of the country as its share is almost 81 percent of the export earnings. The study shows that the EU (as a zone) has been the biggest market with 55 percent of the total RMG export earning followed by the United States (as a single country market) holds 23 percent and 14 percent of the total exports of Bangladesh exported to emerging markets such as, Australia, Brazil, China, Japan and South Africa. Both product and market diversification are needed for the sustainability of this industry. New markets such as Japan, Russia, and Brazil can be lucrative destination with both high and low value ended products.

Bhattacharya et al. (2006) has projected the growth prospect and likely behaviour of Bangladesh's external sector under three scenarios: (i) optimistic scenario (8% GDP growth per annum), (ii) business as usual scenario (6% GDP growth per annum), and (iii) base case scenario (4% GDP growth per annum) based on the past performance and changes in the global economy. The study has projected the required level of exports, imports, remittances, foreign aid and foreign investment to attain a consistent GDP growth at the rate of 4%, 6% and 8% up to the year 2020. The report concludes that future growth of Bangladesh will depend on promoting export, sustaining remittances, and triggering export.

The above mentioned studies explain the performance of export and remittance during the global recession. However, there is a dearth of studies to examine the trends, structure and performance of exports and remittance in the context of Bangladesh. To fill up this gap we have taken this study since exports and remittances have played an important role in external sector performance. The findings of the study may give some policy indications to the policy maker in formulating policy for the external sector.

Section III: Developments of Remittance Inflow

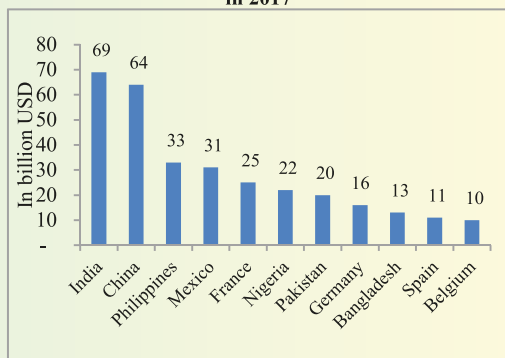
Remittance inflows to Bangladesh have grown rapidly over the last three decades. Remittances as percentage of most key macroeconomic variables showed upward trend over time (Table-2). It is observed that the remittance-GDP ratio touched 5.3 percent in FY17 as compared to 1.9 percent in FY82. According to the World Bank (World Development Indicator 2018), among the top remittance recipient developing countries, India retained the top position as recipient of remittances (USD 69 billion), followed by China (USD 64 billion) and remittances to Bangladesh stood USD 13 billion, making it the 9th largest remittances recipient country in the world in 2017 (Chart 2).

Table-2: Remittances relative to key Macroeconomic Variables

Year	Remit/ GDP	Remit/ Export	Remit/ Import	Remit/ aid	Remit/ FDI
FY76	0.22	4.30	0.3	2.0	
FY82	1.9	53.7	14.2	33.3	5,978.1
FY92	2.7	42.5	24.5	52.6	21,199.3
FY95	3.2	34.5	20.5	68.9	19,960.5
FY00	4.1	33.9	25.8	132.2	509.0
FY05	6.4	44.5	32.4	243.5	8,181.0
FY09	10.8	62.3	47.8	718.9	1,029.7
FY10	11.0	67.8	51.4	503.6	1,727.5
FY11	10.3	51.0	35.4	647.8	1,485.6
FY14	8.1	47.4	38.6	483.5	957.7
FY15	7.8	49.3	37.3	489.0	829.0
FY16	6.8	44.6	37.6	432.7	746.1
FY18	5.5	40.8	27.5	244.5	455.3

Source: Authors calculation based on data from various issues of Economic Trends, Annual Report of Bangladesh Bank and Bangladesh Economic Review, Ministry of finance.

Chart-2 Top remittance recipient developing countries in 2017^P



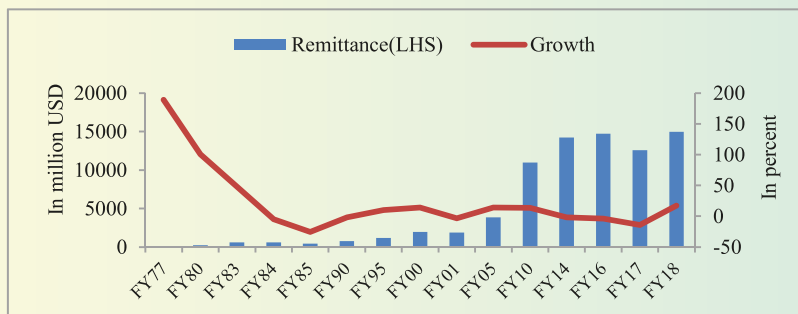
Source: World Development Indicator April 2018, World Bank. P=provisional

Performance of Remittance

Remittances play a crucial role in the economy of Bangladesh. It helps to relieve our foreign exchange constraint, stabilize the exchange rate movement, and improve the balance of payments. A comfortable foreign exchange reserves can be maintained through increasing growth of remittance which can contribute to overall macroeconomic stability and reduce aid dependency. Besides, remittances are used to pay for imports bills and to repay foreign debt. At micro level, remittance has a beneficial impact on household consumption, poverty reduction and self employment. It also improves country's creditworthiness. However, it is more stable source of foreign earnings than both FDI and foreign aid (Begum, 2012).

Remittance inflow shows increasing trend during FY77-FY18 (Chart 3). During FY84, FY85, FY90, FY01 and FY14, FY16, FY17 the remittance growth was negative. The Iran-Iraq war during 1980-1988, the gulf war during 1990-1991 and nine eleven event in 2001 were some of the possible causes to negative impact on inflow of remittances (Mamun et.al 2010). Remittance growth in FY14 became also negative of 1.6 percent due to 33 percent drop of workers migration. The growth became positive in FY15. In FY16 the growth became negative of 3.9 percent due mainly a result of the prolonged decline in oil prices in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) economies. The oil price decline, which was lowest to its historic in January 2016 affected the incomes and subsequently weakened the demand for migrant workers. In FY17 again the growth became negative of 14.5 percent due to decrease of oil revenues, increase of uses digital hundi (using apps and software) and depreciation of foreign currencies against dollar in many labour importing countries. The inflow of remittances jumped by 17 percent in FY18 following higher fuel oil prices in the global market, depreciating of the domestic currency against US dollar has also helped to increase the flow in inward remittance. Besides, the strengthened surveillance of Bangladesh Bank to check ‘hundi’, the illegal channel used to moved funds, has also contributed to raise the remittance inflow (The Financial Express, 4 July, 2018).

Chart-3 Trends of Remittance inflows



Source: Foreign Exchange Policy Department, Bangladesh Bank.

Country-wise Inflows of Remittance

The remittance inflow from different countries has changed over time. Since FY05 remittance inflow from Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) shows decreasing trend while United Arab Emirates (UAE) recorded increasing trend. KSA is the

main sources of remittance inflow to Bangladesh in the face of the substantial labour migration demand fall in the country. The country-wise dynamics of remittance flow indicates that the share of remittance from KSA declined remarkably but still highest (17 percent in FY18) destination among the other countries. Besides, contribution from UAE, UK, and USA was 16, 13 and 8 percent respectively in FY18 (Table-3).

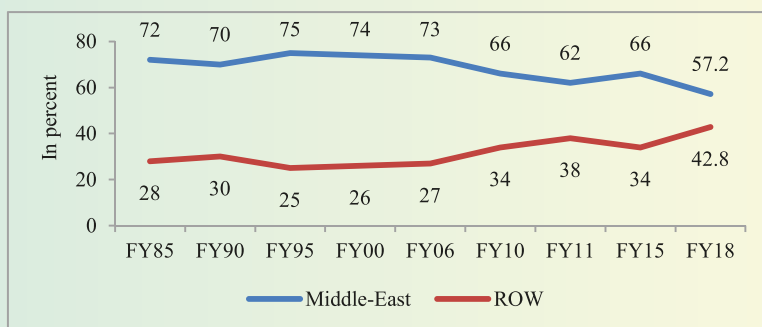
Table-3 Country-wise Share of Remittance Inflow (in percent)

Country	FY00	FY05	FY10	FY16	FY18
KSA	46.99	39.25	31.19	19.83	17.30
UAE	6.66	11.49	17.20	18.18	16.21
UK	3.68	9.76	7.53	5.77	13.34
Kuwait	11.54	10.57	9.28	6.95	7.39
USA	12.38	14.48	13.21	16.17	8.01
Qatar	3.27	3.54	3.28	2.89	6.40
Oman	4.77	3.41	3.18	6.10	7.38
Singapore	0.60	1.24	1.76	2.61	5.64
Bahrain	2.14	1.75	1.55	3.26	4.42
Malaysia	2.77	0.66	5.34	8.87	3.62

Source: Foreign Exchange Policy Department, Bangladesh Bank.

It is mentioned that, there has been a gradual change in the share of remittance inflows by regions over time. During 1980-2006, the inflow of remittances from Middle-East remained above 70 percent. Since 2007, it appears to have been a shift that is taking place with remittances increasingly coming from new sources (Rest of the World), like USA, Canada, UK, Germany, Italy, Malaysia and Japan reflecting considerable diversification of labour flows (Chart -4).

Chart-4 Intensity of Remittance Flow by Region (in percent)

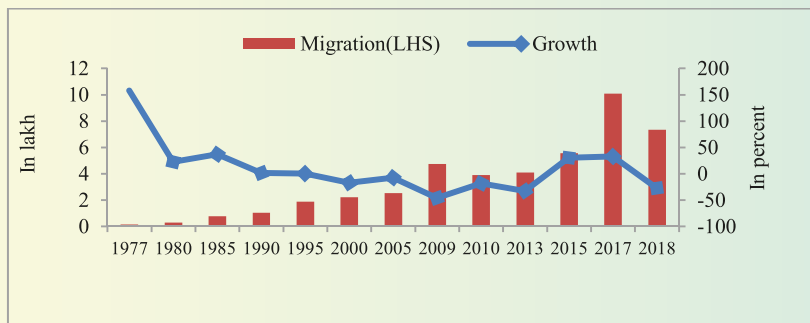


Source: Foreign Exchange Policy Department, Bangladesh Bank.

Section IV: Developments of Outflow of Migration

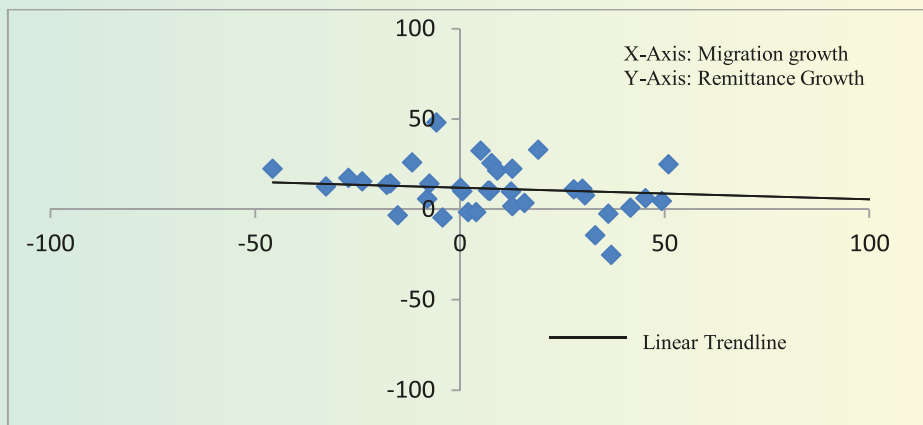
The growth of migration has been volatile for the last three decades. It increased significantly in 2007, but dropped substantially in 2009, 2010 and 2013. The growth decreased substantially in 2009 and 2010 due to worldwide financial crisis. Moreover, it decreased 33 percent in 2013. A number of factors which causes for dropping migration in Saudi Arabia. Mentionable reasons may be huge expenses made by the Bangladeshi workers in Saudi Arabia for their change of work permit, government-to government (G-G) agreement regarding manpower migration and political uncertainty in Bangladesh as well. However, the growth of migration started to increase after 2013 and it stood 33 percent in 2017 but again dropped 27 percent in 2018 (Chart-5). In 2018, job opportunity in KSA was shrinking. Besides, a significant number of women migrant workers returned due to workplace exploitation, huge number of male workers also lost job and came back (The financial Express, 18 December, 2018). Besides, changes in the global leadership, economic recessions and reforms in the destination countries are the causes of declining the overseas jobs in 2018 (Tasneem et al. 2019).

Chart-5 Trends of outflow of Migration from Bangladesh



Source: Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET).

From the above analysis it is observed that in the short run there is a puzzle between outflow of migration and inflow of remittance. There exists a negative relationship between migration and remittance growth (Chart-6). Now the question is, in reality what factors influence the remittance inflows. The factors may be: wage rate of the migrants, real exchange rate, appreciation/depreciation of exchange rate, inflation, interest rate differentiation, migration and policy shift in regulatory and institutional arrangement and host countries GDP etc.

Chart-6 Scattered Plot between Migration and Remittance Growth (in percent)

Source: BMET and Foreign Exchange Policy Department, Bangladesh Bank.

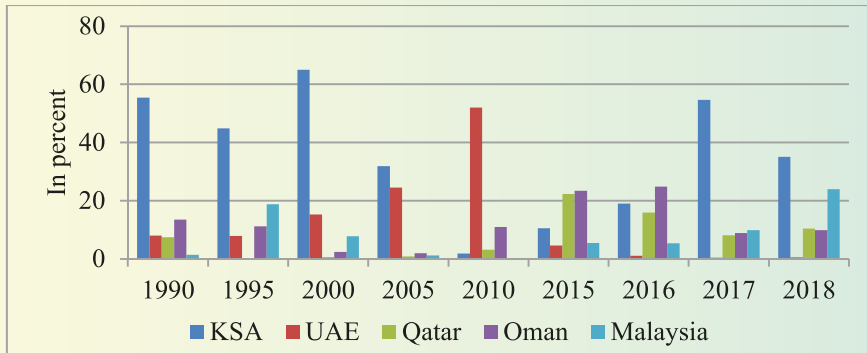
Begum, (2012) examines the determinants of worker's remittance in Bangladesh. The result of the study shows that in the short run there exist a positive relationship between domestic exchange rate and remittance. Moreover, some regulatory and institutional arrangement taken by the government and the Bangladesh Bank may have to bring the flow of remittances from informal to formal channel which contributed to boost up the remittances. According to the study, it is found that domestic inflation have a positive relation with remittance implying that higher inflation at home country, which reduces the purchasing power of migrants' family, induced migrants to send more remittances in Bangladesh. On the other hand, remittance is also very sensitive to the GDP of the host countries.

Destination of Migration

Chart-7 shows that the destination of migration has changed over the last few years. Since 1976 most of the Bangladeshi migrated in Middle East countries. Over time destination of migration has started to shift in developed countries and some Asian countries like Japan, Malaysia and Singapore since 1990 (Appendix Table- II). In 2012, The United Arab Emirates (UAE) imposed restrictions for male labor migrants, as a result number of migration from Bangladesh decreased drastically in 2013 (Etzold et al. 2015). The growth of migration started to increase after 2013 upto 2017 due to both male and female labor migration to Oman and Qatar increased significantly. In 2018, total number of migration dropped by 27 percent

and the number of migration has slowed down remarkably in some countries especially in KSA (-53.3 percent), UAE (-21.8 percent) and Oman (-18.6 percent).

Chart-7 Country-wise share of Migration (in percent)

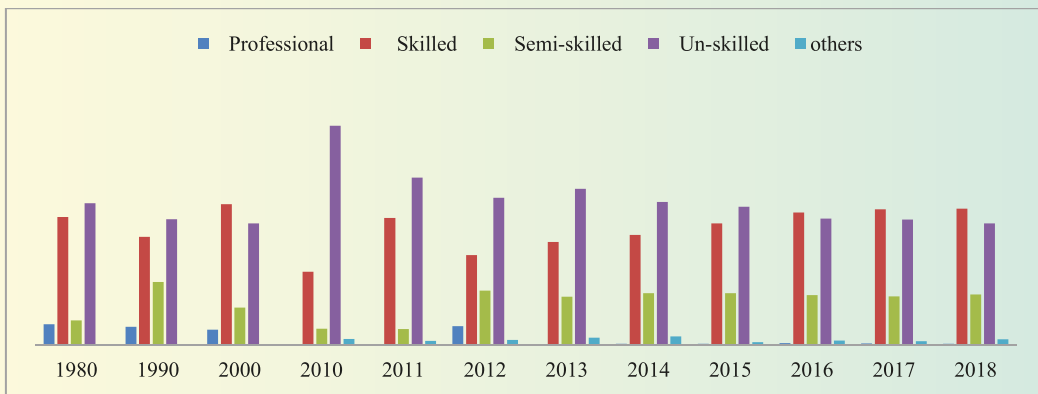


Source: Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET).

Category-wise Migration

The analysis of outflow of migration shows that unskilled migrants' are the principal sender of remittance inflows in Bangladesh (Chart-8) although, recently skilled and semi-skilled migration increased. It is observed from Chart-8 that after 2011, share of skilled and semi-skilled migration started to increase due to several initiatives and policy supports focusing mostly on skill development by the government. At the same time, unskilled migrant workers showed downward trend. So, it is imperative for strong diplomatic initiatives to increase skilled migrants which can contribute to boost the remittances inflow in Bangladesh.

Chart -8 Category-wise Share of Migration (in percent)

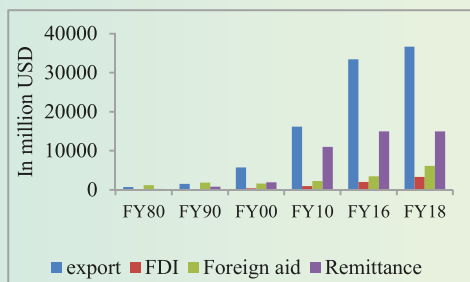


Source: Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET).

Section V: Performance and Changing Features of the Export Sector

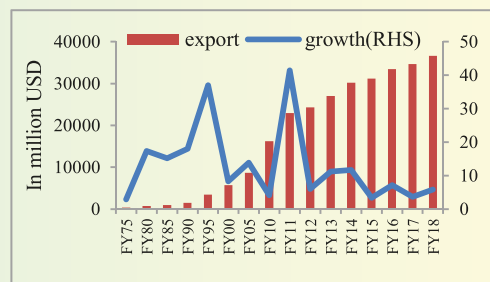
Export sector has been the major driving force of our economy. It has been a more stable source of foreign earnings over time (Chart-9). Export earnings showed increasing trend after 1980s due to pursuing liberal trade policies. For two decades, 1991-2011, Bangladesh's exports increased at double-digit average annual rate of 14 percent. Since FY12, export earnings demonstrate a moderate performance of 7.0 percent average growth. In FY18, total export receipts stood at USD 36 billion with a growth rate of 5.81 percent from 3.6 percent of the preceding year (Chart-10). The contribution of readymade garments (RMG), jute goods and leather was significant in our export earnings. However, the current performance of our export sector is alarming. It may be noted that the two episodes (Rana Plaza collapse and Holey Artisan attack) had a harmful effect on our RMG exports as well as total earnings since 2012. Two more inter-linked factors can be identified as reasons for under-performance of exports, particularly non-RMG: value chain integration and lack of FDI (The Financial Express, September, 2018). FDI inflows into some non-RMG sectors, like footwear, home textile and engineering products, could be an important way to expand exports of these products into foreign markets.

Chart-9 Sources of Foreign Earnings



Source: Annual Report and Economic Trends, Bangladesh Bank.

Chart-10 Trends of Export Earnings



Source: Export Promotion Bureau (EPB).

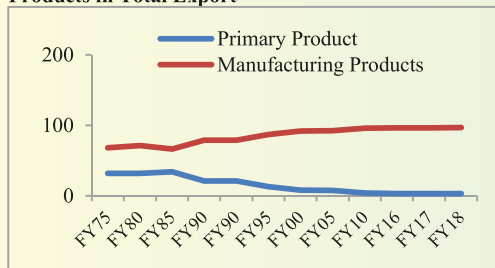
Export Structure

In the early 80s, the country's exports comprised mostly raw jute, frozen food and agricultural products. Meanwhile, the export composition changed dramatically since 1986 and over time share of primary products in the total export declined while share of manufacturing product increased. In our export basket the share of manufacturing product was 96 percent in FY18 while it was 68 percent in FY75.

Chart-11 shows that there was a major shift in the export structure of Bangladesh. Now Bangladesh is predominantly a manufactured goods exporting country.

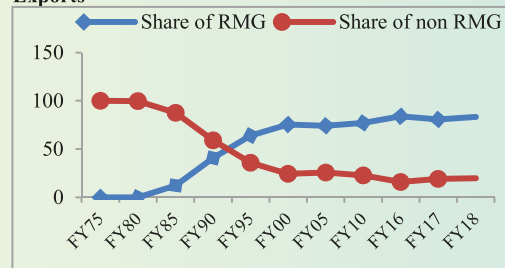
The country achieved a remarkable success in export expansion, mainly because of the outstanding performance of the readymade garments (RMG) industry. RMG emerged as the important export items and at the same time jute export slowed down. Classifying our export basket according to RMG and non-RMG it is also revealed that the share of RMG exports in total export increased significantly over time. Conversely, the share of non-RMG gradually eroded around mid-eighties (Chart- 12). Now Bangladesh's export basket is dependent on a few commodities which is a challenge for export sector as well as threat for any external shock.

Chart- 11 Share of Primary and Manufacturing Products in Total Export



Source: Export Promotion Bureau (EPB).

Chart-12 Share of RMG and Non-RMG in Total Exports



Source: Export Promotion Bureau (EPB).

In FY18 Bangladesh economy has faced some complexity in terms of the external sector dynamics and performance. External sector developments in FY18 have been dominated by import dynamics. Import growth reached a high of 25.0 percent. Current account deficit widened to around 3 percent of GDP, despite a strong and broad-based rebound in remittances growth (17.3 percent) and export growth to around 6 percent, up from 3.6 percent a year ago. Overall BoP declined to (-) 0.3 as percent of GDP. Foreign exchange reserves stood at USD 32.9 billion, around 5 month of prospective imports (Appendix Table-I). BDT's exchange rate against USD has witnessed some depreciation pressure in the secondary market.

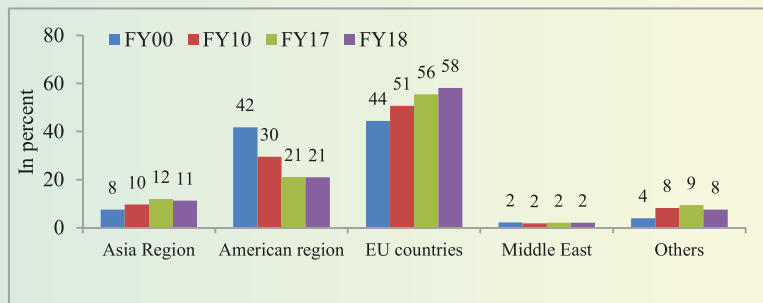
Bangladesh's GDP growth highly depends on external sector such as: (a) Promoting export; (b) Sustaining remittances; and (c) Triggering FDI. If the current trends of external sector performance persist, GDP growth may be slow down. The above

findings also emphasize the urgent need for domestic reforms in all areas such as current structural bottlenecks, manufacturing, fiscal and financial management which may be essential for achieving developments in this sector as well as overall performance of the economy and thereby fostering economic growth.

Geographical Distribution of Exports

One important feature of export diversification is the geographical diversity of export destination countries. Bangladesh's exports are now destined about 200 countries. By looking at the share of different regions, it is observed that over the years Bangladesh's exports to EU and Asia region increased but decreased in USA. Chart-13 reveals that 90 percent of our exports are destined to the EU, USA and Asian region which indicate that Bangladesh's export concentrated in a few destinations.

Chart-13 Region-wise share of export



Source: Export Promotion Bureau (EPB).

Section IV: Conclusion

The paper looks into the trend, structure and changing features of export sector and inflow of remittances of Bangladesh. It is observed that the performance of Bangladesh's external sector such as- export growth, inflow of remittance and reserves has increased significantly over time. Specially, export and remittance to GDP ratio showed rising trend which implies that export earnings and remittances are the dominating external sector factors of Bangladesh economy in recent times. In this regard, the paper analyzed the trend, structure and changing features of exports and remittances.

The findings of this paper are recently both remittance and migration growth show declining trend. Besides, remittance inflows from different region have also

changed over time. Regarding this, Government has undertaken several initiatives (to increase remittances flow in proper channel) and a number of policy supports were announced (focusing mostly on skill development) to mitigate the slowdown of inflow of remittance and migration. Nevertheless, Bangladesh has to try hard to maintain its commendable liaison with the labour-importing countries, especially in the Middle East and Malaysia. The decreasing rate of remittance and manpower exports might cause a serious hamper to the economy by reducing employment opportunities and output levels.

On the other hand, export growth has underperformed over the few years. Commodity exports show that Bangladesh is predominantly a manufactured goods exporting country and Bangladesh's export basket has concentrated in a few commodities. In addition, export earnings from Bangladesh are centered in a few destinations which indicate threat for Bangladesh's export sector. Region-wise and commodity-wise export provides an implication that the country's export earnings are vulnerable due to dependency on a few country and few products. Any fluctuations of the export demand from these regions might seriously affect the external balance of the country and thereby affect the growth of the economy.

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Appendix

Table-I External Sector Indicators

Year	Export growth	Import growth	Remittance growth	Reserve (in million USD)	FDI (in million USD)	C/A % of GDP	GDP growth	Inflation	Exchange Rate
FY80	17	39	101	262	9	-1.2	3.0	18.5	15.49
FY85	15	10.2	-25	426	-7	-1.1	3.0	10.9	25.96
FY90	18	11.4	-2	523	3	-3.6	5.9	9.3	32.92
FY95	37	39.2	10	3070	92	-0.1	4.9	5.2	40.20
FY00	8	4.9	14	1602	383.0	-0.9	5.9	3.4	50.31
FY05	14	20.6	14	2930	800.0	-0.9	6.0	6.5	63.75
FY10	4	5.4	13	10750	636.0	3.2	5.6	7.3	69.18
FY15	3.1	3.0	7.7	25021	2525.0	1.8	6.6	6.4	77.68
FY18	6.4	25.2	17.3	32943.5	3290.1	-3.6	7.9	5.8	82.12

Source: IFS Yearbook 2000, Annual Report BB, Economic trends, BB.

Table-II Country wise Overseas Employment from 1976 to 2018

up to December 2018

Year	KSA	UAE	UK	Kuwait	Libya	Qatar	Oman	Singapore	Bahrain	Japan	Malaysia	Others	Misc. Clearance	Total Employment
1990	57486	8307		5957	471	7672	13980	776	4563		1385	3217		103814
1991	75656	8583		28574	1124	3772	23087	642	3480		1628	585		147131
1992	93132	12975		34377	1617	3251	25825	313	5804		10537	293		188124
1993	106387	15810		26407	1800	2441	15866	1739	5396		67938	724		244508
1994	91385	15051		14912	1864	624	6470	391	4233		47826	3570		186326
1995	84009	14686		17492	1106	71	20949	3762	3004		35174	7290		187543
1996	72734	23812		21042	1966	112	8691	5304	3759		66631	7663		211714
1997	100534	54719		21126	1934	1876	5985	27401	5010		2844	9648		231077
1998	158715	38796		25444	1254	6806	4779	21728	7014		551	2580		267667
1999	185739	32344		22400	1744	5611	4045	9596	4639	7		2057		268182
2000	144618	34034		594	1010	1433	5258	11095	4637	22	17237	2748		222686
2001	137248	16252		5341	450	223	4561	9615	4371	19	4921	5964		188965
2002	163269	25462		15769	1574	552	3854	6856	5421	37	85	2377		225256
2003	162131	37346	166	26722	2855	94	4029	5304	7482	12	28	8021		254190
2004	139031	47012	2055	41108	606	1268	4435	6948	9194	47	224	12448	8582	272958
2005	80425	61978	2793	47029	972	2114	4827	9651	10716	79	2911	16967	12240	252702
2006	109513	130204	1625	35775	104	7691	8082	20139	16355	174	20469	20663	10722	381516
2007	204112	226392	972	4212	1480	15130	17478	38324	16433	164	273201	24489	10222	832609
2008	132124	419355	952	319	5067	25548	52896	56581	13182	133	131762	26222	10914	875055
2009	14666	258348	1253	10	22742	11672	41704	39581	28426	39	12402	35950	8485	475278
2010	7069	203308	173	48	12132	12085	42641	39053	21824	17	919	43873	7560	390702
2011	15039	282739	30	29	89	13111	135265	48667	13996	20	742	50618	7440	568062
2012	21232	215452	17	2	14975	28801	170326	58657	21777	420	804	65826	9509	607798
2013	12654	14241	14	6	7175	57584	134028	60057	25155	41	3853	85221	9224	409253
2014	19657	24232	16	3094	4461	87575	105748	54750	23378	55	5134	85894	11690	425684
2015	58270	25271	4	17472	231	123965	129859	55523	20720	99	30483	89287	4697	555881
2016	143913	8131	11	39188		120382	188247	54730	72167	165	40126	80081	10590	757731
2017	551308	4135	7	49604	1	82012	89074	40401	19318	145	99787	60431	12302	1008525
2018	257317	3235	8	27637	63	76560	72504	41393	811	163	175927	65319	13244	734181

Source: Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET).