

Beyond Dropout: A Study on BRAC Primary School

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Abstract

This study explored the reasons of dropout of students from BRAC primary schools. Data were collected in two phases through qualitative and quantitative methods. In the first phase, 681 schools were visited to find out the proportion of students dropped out. In the second phase, out of these 681 schools 128 were randomly selected to explore the reasons of dropout. The study was conducted on the schools located in Dhaka and Chittagong cities and in Bandarban and Rangamati districts. Overall dropout rate was 6.13% in the 681 schools visited. The reasons of dropout were grouped under five heads: familial, personal, educational, school- and community-related. Their contributions to dropout were 53.3%, 34.2%, 18.1%, 14.5% and 14.1% respectively. The incidence of dropout was higher among the female students and in the urban areas. The dropout in 3rd grade was the highest as the students found their text books difficult at that grade. Thus, it was recommended that the text books might be revised to make them easier to the students.

Introduction

Dropping out of schools means failing to complete a minimum expected amount of schooling. A dropout can be defined as a child who enrolls in school but fails to complete the primary level of the educational cycle. At the primary level this means that the dropout fails to reach the final grade, usually grade 5 (Sattar 1984). A study indicated that dropout rate in primary education in Bangladesh increased from 33% in 2002 to 47% in 2006 (IRIN 2009). Several studies identified three dominant reasons for student dropout, which are relating to family/individual, society and schools (Fiske 1998, Sattar 1984). So, achievement of education depends on completion of schooling of the enrolled students. The incidence of dropout varies from region to region, and the socioeconomic condition of dropped out students' family is closely associated with the incidence of dropout (Sattar 1984).

BRAC, the largest non-governmental development organization (NGO) in the world launched an experimental education programme in 1985. The programme started with 22 one-room schools providing non-formal primary education. To date 3.80 million children have been graduated from BRAC primary schools (BPS)¹.

BRAC intends to provide quality education through improved service delivery system to children who are excluded from primary education for various reasons. It could be mentioned here that BRAC Education Programme (BEP) initiated its function targeting the achievement of the objectives of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations in 1948. Thus, the objective asserts that 'everyone has a right to education' (UNESCO 1998). At present there are six types of schools set up by BRAC:

- BRAC primary school (BPS) launched in 1985, runs a four-year programme to provide 5-year primary education to 8-10 years old students.
- BRAC adolescent primary school (BAPS) offers four-year programme for 11 to 14 years old students. The four-year cycle includes basic education similar to that of the primary schools.
- BRAC community school, launched in 1998, offers education from nursery to fifth grade.
- BRAC formal school, inaugurated in 1999, provides primary education following the model of BPS.
- Ethnic education programme, initiated in 1999, targeted to expand primary education to children of different ethnic communities in Bangladesh.
- Disabled education programme, launched in 2001, designed for disabled children who failed to attend regular school.

¹ www.brac.net/content/bangladesh-education-primay-schools, accessed on October 14, 2010.

All these educational programmes are referred to as BRAC schools, and they together contribute to expanding education, thus reducing the rate of illiteracy in different section in the community. BEP has expanded its programme from urban areas to remote villages through non-formal education and improved service delivery to meet the Millennium Development Goal². Almost 7% of the students at primary level are enrolled in NGOs schools, of which about three quarters are in BRAC schools (Chowdhury *et al.* 2002). These schools have distinct approach to educate their students; however, they follow the curriculum of National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) of the government.

Another study reveals that enrolment in primary education remained significantly low in urban slums and Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), while BPS increased the rate of enrolment in these areas through non-formal education (United Nations 2005). Enrollment rate has increased while students' dropout remains a challenge. The net enrollment rate at primary level was about 80% and nearly three quarters of which completed the full cycle (Chowdhury *et al.* 2002). This reveals that considerable students of primary schools were dropped out at different schooling years or without completing of full courses of primary education.

BRAC primary school (BPS) and rationale of the study

In 1985, BEP launched non-formal primary education (NFPE) which is now called BPS. The aim of the programme is to enroll the children dropped out from schools earlier or did not enroll. The children aged 8 to 10 years can enroll to these schools. BPS begins a cohort of 33 students in 1st grade and completes the five-year academic calendar within four years as well as one teacher serves the whole academic years from 1st to 5th grade. As a policy, girls receive priority in enrollment. BEP provides pencils, notebooks, textbooks, slate boards, chalks, etc. to the students and teacher manual to teachers. Teachers are nominated with nine or more years of education and are recruited from the locality and married females are preferred. The teachers are trained. The training is arranged by BEP staff at a BRAC office near the teacher's schools. BPS are closely monitored by the Programme Organizers (PO) of BEP. The POs are full-time staff while the teachers are recruited as part-timer. In 2002, BRAC set up BPS among the indigenous group in CHT. BEP has replacement policy to enroll new students against dropout students only in the first year of academic cycle.

BEP has been playing a significant role in accelerating primary education, especially to the children of poor households, thus concerned with reducing the rate of student dropout from BPS. The study considered dropout student who already left BPS but might be or might not be enrolled in another school other than BPS.

² www.undp.org.bd/mdgs.php

Objective of the study

Enrolment has increased after independence of Bangladesh with effort of various programmes of government and NGOs but dropout rate in primary education remains in deep crisis yet (Education Watch 2006). BEP is aware of students dropping out of BPS and has felt that it has been increasing since last few years, especially from the schools located in Dhaka and Chittagong cities, and Bandarban and Rangamati districts. This study explored the reasons of student's dropout from BPS.

Specific objectives are to:

1. Explore the current situation of BPS in terms of student dropout
2. Find out the factors contributed to dropout
3. Look into the regional dimensions of dropout
4. Find out present status of dropout and continuing students of BPS
5. Compare parent's views of dropout and continuing students

Methods

The continuing and dropped out students of BPS were the target population of this study. Using both qualitative and quantitative approaches data were collected in two phases. In the first phase, data were collected from all the 681 BPS in Dhaka and Chittagong cities and Rangamati and Bandarban districts to find out the proportion of dropped out students. The local BRAC offices provided the addresses of these schools in their catchments areas. Twenty-eight trained enumerators visited these 681 schools to collect information on dropped out students. This phase required focus group discussion (FGD) with the continuing students who provided information of dropped out students and filled up survey questionnaire along with other information. The continuing students of these schools were instrumental, who provided information on their classmates who dropped out from schools. We did not find 3rd grade schooling in Dhaka, Chittagong and Rangamati during this phase (Table 1). Data gathered at this phase helped in drawing sample for the second phase. The first phase survey took place between April and June 2008.

In second phase, 128 out of 681 schools selected randomly. Eight trained enumerators visited these schools for exploring the reasons of dropout. A total of 199 dropped out and 236 continuing students were interviewed (Table 2). Interviewing the same number of dropped out students could not be possible due to displacement of dropped out families. The semi-structured questionnaires were used. The parents of both groups, schoolteacher, PO of BEP also provided information. Data collection in second phase continued from August to September 2008. We found 3rd grade schools in all regions during this phase as new academic sessions started in July, which helped conduct interviews of the students of all regions.

Table 1. Distribution of schools surveyed by regions and grade

Region	2- Grade	3- Grade	4- Grade	5- Grade	Total
Chittagong	45	0	110	44	199
Dhaka	98	0	120	138	356
Rangamati	20	0	14	34	68
Bandarban	8	30	5	15	58
Total	171	30	249	231	681

Table 2. Distribution of students interviewed by grade, regions and sex

Grade and region	Dropped out			Continuing		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1- grade						
Dhaka	2	3	5			
Chittagong	3	1	4			
Bandarban	4	3	7			
Rangamati	3	3	6			
2- grade						
Dhaka	10	4	14	7	5	12
Chittagong	8	11	19	6	7	13
Bandarban	9	7	16	4	3	7
Rangamati	6	8	14	2	2	4
3- grade						
Dhaka	9	4	13	2	2	4
Chittagong	1	0	1	18	18	36
Bandarban	11	16	27	6	6	12
Rangamati	4	5	9	20	18	38
4- grade						
Dhaka	3	8	11	8	7	15
Chittagong	8	8	16	7	8	15
Bandarban	2	3	5	5	5	10
Rangamati	6	1	7	8	8	16
5- grade						
Dhaka	1	2	3	7	7	14
Chittagong	9	9	18	8	5	13
Bandarban	0	2	2	7	7	14
Rangamati	1	1	2	5	8	13
Total number of interviews	100	99	199	120	116	236

Findings

Trend of dropout

A total of 681 BPS were visited to understand the proportion and trend of dropout by sex, region and grade. Replacement against dropout also discussed to understand the prevailing situation of dropout and replacement.

Overall dropout rate was 6.13% in 681 schools visited. On the other hand, incident of dropout by grade observed 5% in 1st grade, 6% in 2nd grade, 9% in 3rd grade (highest), 7% in 4th grade and 3% in 5th grade (Table 3). In terms of regional comparison, Dhaka placed higher dropout rates calculating all grades compared to Chittagong city. At the same time, Bandarban peaked higher dropout counting all grades compared to Rangamati. Finally, the 3rd grade experienced higher dropout rates, particularly, in Dhaka and Rangamati.

The incidence of dropout was higher among female students in all schools visited (Table 4). Female students in Dhaka and Chittagong cities dropped more compared to other regions. The reasons behind such dropout discussed in the next sections.

Table 3. Distribution of dropped out students of 681 schools (%)

Region	1 st grade		2 nd grade		3 rd grade		4 th grade		5 th grade	
	Total	Dropout % No.	Total	Dropout % No.	Total	Dropout % No.	Total	Dropout % No.	Total	Dropout % No.
Dhaka	12474	6 (703)	12303	5 (675)	8683	10 (908)	8083	9 (728)	3398	3 (96)
Chittagong	6133	3 (172)	6192	4 (274)	4787	7 (345)	4567	3 (151)	1241	2 (27)
Bandarban	1535	4 (61)	1394	10 (139)	1128	8 (89)	299	10 (30)	184	5 (9)
Rangamati	1396	4 (53)	1311	7 (96)	822	11 (94)	781	7 (53)	526	6 (32)
Total	21538	5 (989)	21200	6 (1184)	15420	9 (1436)	13730	7 (962)	5349	3 (164)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate total number of students dropped out in each grade

Table 4. Students dropout by region and sex in 681 schools (%)

Region	Male	Female
Dhaka	30 (933)	70 (2177)
Chittagong	36 (349)	64 (620)
Bandarban	42 (138)	58 (190)
Rangamati	40 (131)	60 (197)
Total	33 (1,551)	67 (3,184)

Table 5 shows the percentage of schools by the extent of dropouts in different grades. Though overall dropout rate ranged mostly between 5 to 10%, not all the schools experienced similar levels of dropout. In the first three grades of schooling, which was observed to be relatively crucial period for student dropout, about half of the schools did not have any dropout at all. For example, in the third year, 47% of the schools from Dhaka did not have any dropout and the figures for Chittagong, Rangamati and Bandarban were 56%, 56% and 59%, respectively. The incidence of dropout was substantially smaller in the fourth and fifth grades. About 80-90% of the schools did not experience dropout at all during the fifth grade of the school.

Figure 1 shows that the incidence of dropout was higher in the 3rd grade then declined steadily. On the other hand, the replacement rate was higher in the 2nd grade and gradually declined. The gap between dropout and replacement rates became widest in the 3rd grade.

Figure 2 shows replacement against dropout in all grades except Bandarban where replacement did not take place in the 4th and 5th grades. In Dhaka 77% schools replaced new students against dropout students in the 1st grade, while 30% schools in Rangamati took replacement against dropout in the 5th grade. Again, Dhaka experienced higher replacement in all grades while Bandarban and Rangamati did not experience replacement in 4th and 5th grades. So, replacement was found in all regions under any circumstances. But replacements were not expected to allow all the grades according to procedure of BPS.

Reasons of dropout

The reasons of dropout are grouped under five factors: familial, personal, educational, school- and community-related factors.

Figure 3 shows that family factors that included parents' education, parents disinterested in schooling, taking care of younger, early marriage, migration, poverty, etc. (54.3% of the dropout students) were identified as dominating factors to induce dropout. Personal factors (34.2%) included disinterested to study, difficulties in following textbook, involvement in work, illness, etc. Education factors (18.1%) included inefficiency of teacher, getting fear of teacher, irregularity of teacher, and language problem. School factors (14.5%) covered a variety of reasons including absence of benches to sit, absence of fan in classroom, leaking rain water, lack of drinking water, and lack of toilet. The community factors (14.1%) are long distance and transportation problem, slum eviction and quarrels with neighbors. Figure 3 indicates the familial factors contributed most in the dropout of students from the schools followed by personal factors. The factors of dropout have been categorized into these five dimensions for simplicity.

Table 5. Distribution of 681 schools by dropped out students, grade and regions (%)

Range of dropout by grade	Dhaka	Chittagong	Bandarban	Rangamati
1st grade				
No dropout	61.6 (221)	77.3 (153)	71.2 (42)	76.9 (50)
1-5%	25.3 (91)	17.7 (35)	23.7 (14)	16.9 (11)
6% and above	13.1 (47)	5.1 (10)	5.1 (3)	6.2 (4)
Total	100 (359)	100 (198)	100 (59)	100 (65)
2nd grade				
No dropout	52.1 (187)	57.1 (113)	35.6 (21)	46.2 (30)
1-5%	38.2 (137)	37.4 (74)	55.9 (33)	47.7 (31)
6-10%	8.4 (30)	4.5 (9)	6.8 (4)	6.2 (4)
11% and above	1.4 (5)	1.0 (2)	1.7 (1)	0
Total	100 (359)	100 (198)	100 (59)	100 (65)
3rd grade				
No dropout	46.8 (168)	55.6 (110)	55.9 (33)	58.5 (38)
1-5%	35.9 (129)	33.3 (66)	37.3 (22)	33.8 (22)
6-10%	13.9 (50)	9.6 (19)	5.1 (3)	7.7 (5)
11% and above	3.3 (12)	1.5 (3)	1.7 (1)	0
Total	100 (359)	100 (198)	100 (59)	100 (65)
4th grade				
No dropout	224 (62.4)	73.7 (146)	79.7 (47)	72.3 (47)
1-5%	78 (21.7)	23.7 (47)	18.6 (11)	23.1 (15)
6-10%	47 (13.1)	2.5 (5)	1.7 (1)	4.6 (3)
11% and above	10 (2.8)	0	0	0
Total	100 (359)	100 (198)	100 (59)	100 (65)
5th grade				
No dropout	91.9 (330)	92.9 (184)	89.8 (53)	81.5 (53)
1-5%	6.7 (24)	7.1 (14)	10.2 (6)	15.4 (10)
6% and above	1.4 (5)	0	0	3.1 (2)
Total	100 (359)	100 (198)	100 (59)	100 (65)

Figure 1. Incidence of dropout and replacement by grades (%)

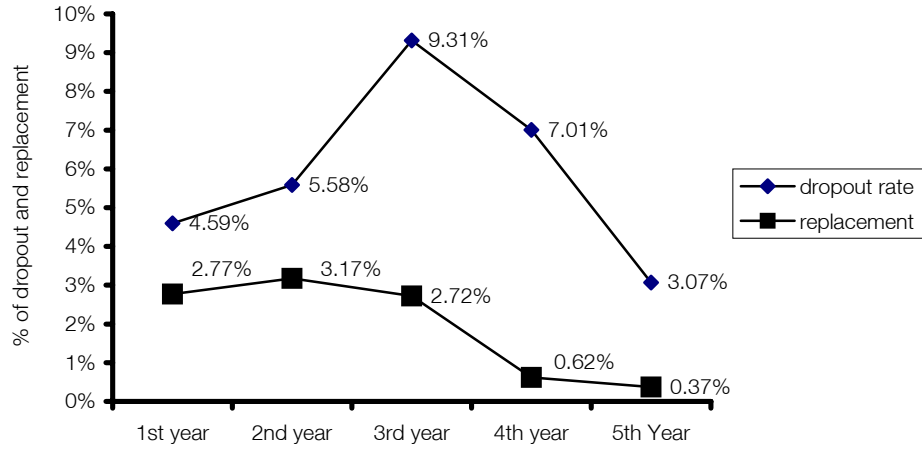


Figure 2. Replacement against dropout in regions by grade (%)

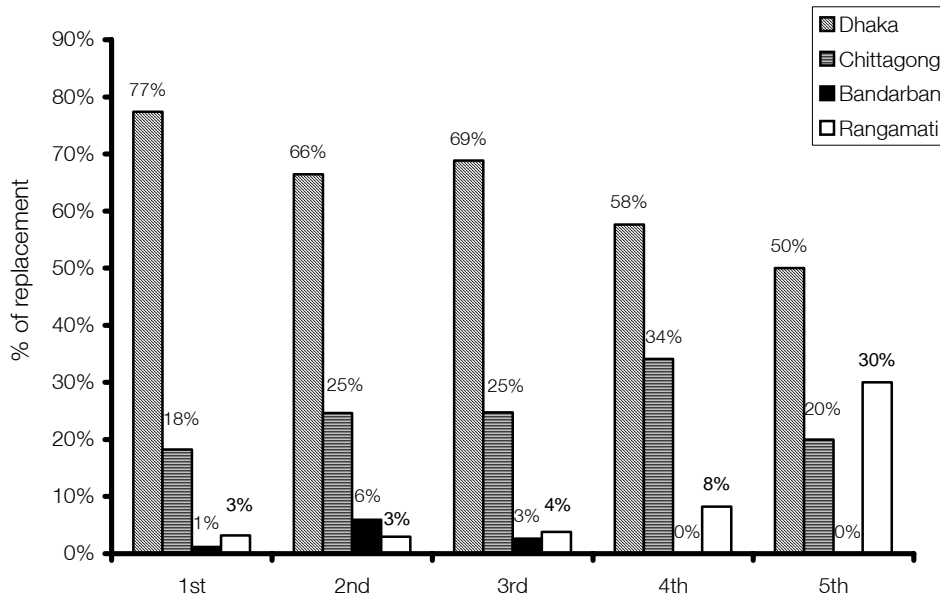
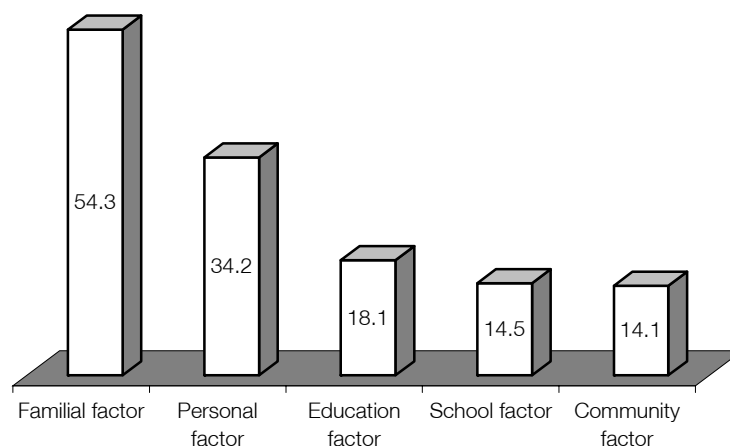


Figure 3. Factors of student's dropout (%)



Note: Multiple responses considered (n =199)

Poor education of parents affected children's education as such the parents could not assist their children in preparing the assignments given by the school teachers (Table 6). As a result, poor performance might be reflected to their schooling. Many parents were concerned while their daughters grew up physically. Parents do not want to send them to schools. Besides, many dropout students had to engage themselves in income generating activities to run the family. In number of instances, dropout students had to keep busy in taking care of their younger siblings while their parents were staying away from households for livelihood. Maintaining household chores including cooking meals, sweeping the surrounds of households, rearing younger siblings, etc. were common activities to be done in absence of their parents.

Table 6. Reasons under familial factors caused dropout by regions and sex (%)

Reasons	Urban		CHT	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Poor education of parents	13	28	25	7
Parents discouraged in schooling	13	19	16	30
Taking care of younger	2	6	3	10
Early marriage	0	0	0	2
Migration	4	6	2	7
Poverty	2	0	3	3

Note: Multiple responses considered (n=199)

Personal factors show second highest catalyst of dropout. Students' disinterest in education and difficulties in understanding textbooks of BEP were found as dominating reasons induced to leave BPS (Table 7). Most of the dropped out did not feel interest to continue schools as they physically grew up. Some students did not attend schools regularly as they found textbooks (mainly mathematics and English) difficult to follow. The difficulties in following textbooks started particularly when the dropped out students were promoted to third grade. Many students in Bandarban and Rangamati could not complete homework because they faced difficulties in following textbook due to differences in language profoundly, especially, found in the third grade.

Table 7. Reasons under personal factors that caused dropout by regions and sex (%)

Reasons	Urban		CHT	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Not interested in studying	43	33	32	11
Difficulties in following textbook	8	5	43	18
Involvement in work	3	3	4	4
Illness	0	5	4	7

Note: Multiple responses considered (n=199)

Educational factors included a range of reasons that contributed to dropout. These are poor performance of teacher, afraid of teacher, irregular attendance of teacher, and language barrier (Table 8). A few teachers were not able to teach properly and were inattentive to their students. Poor performance of teachers reflected to overall performance of a school and its students. The parents were discouraged to continue their children's education in such schools. Sometimes, students were punished by the teachers if they failed to complete the given tasks. Frequent change of teachers also had adverse impact on schooling and many students left schools due to change or depart of his/her favourite teacher. Teacher's seriousness in teaching was emphasized in schooling because parents were encouraged to follow the responsibilities of respective teachers. Sometimes, students faced difficulties in following the classes when the teacher deliberated speech or instruction in his or her language. But, students attended from different linguistic groups in CHT region. So, most of the students of different ethnic groups could not follow the class lecture while the teachers were giving lectures other than their languages. Same scenario reflects when a teacher is recruited from a specific ethnic group of CHT, and there were a number of students of other ethnic groups in the class.

Table 8. Reasons under educational factor caused dropout by regions and sex (%)

Reasons	Urban		CHT	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Poor performance of teacher	14	24	7	20
Afraid of teacher	24	24	13	0
Irregular attendance of teacher	5	5	13	33
Language barrier	14	5	7	13

Note: Multiple responses considered (n =199)

Some components in school-related factors observed exclusively in context of urban students, who claimed that absence of sitting arrangement, fans, drinking water and toilet were the major factors of dropout for them (Table 9). Sitting problem followed by absence of toilet facility were the two most frequent problems in schools that contributed to students dropout. The absence of sitting arrangement created problem in writing on the floor while the teachers were giving class lectures. Other reasons like absence of fans in classroom, absence of supply of drinking water and toilet discouraged study at BPS specially, urban students who mentioned frequently such problems. Rainwater poured down in the classroom of a few schools, especially during the monsoon, due to lack of proper protection on roofs. This also discouraged students from attending the school.

Table 9. Reasons under school-related factors caused dropout by sex (%)

Reasons	Urban	
	Male	Female
Sitting problem due to absence of benches in school	38	24
Absence of fans in classroom	21	14
Rain water licked through roof	21	24
Absence of drinking water	14	7
Absence of toilet facility in school	28	21

Note: Multiple responses considered (n=199)

Community-related reasons were identified that include distance of schools and lack of transportation, which were common problems for the school-going children of CHT region (Table 10). Female students were reluctant in attending schools because of inadequate transport facility particularly in the CHT regions. In remote areas of CHT, students could hardly manage their transport to reach schools in time due to topographical diversity. That is why long distance of schools raised few concerns like eve teasing that resulted in dropout of female students. Female students in Bandarban and Rangamati regions identified long distance as a problem in attending

school regularly due to inadequacy of transport like vessel or boat. Slum eviction and quarrel with neighbours displaced many families along with their children in Dhaka and Chittagong cities.

Table 10. Reasons under community-related factors caused dropout by regions and sex (%)

Reasons	Urban		CHT	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Distance of schools and transportation problem	32	32	33	67
Slum eviction	14	9	0	0
Quarrel with neighbours	9	5	0	0

Note: Multiple responses considered (n=199)

Present status of the dropped out students

The current status of dropped out students and the reasons behind their dropout from BPS are discussed in this section. Many students joined other schools leaving BPS.

Figure 4 gives a comprehensive idea about the present status of dropped out students of BPS. Most of the dropped out students were enrolled in other schools (31%). About a quarter of them (24%) sold manual labour to earn livelihood.

Figure 4. Types of involvement of dropped out students (%)

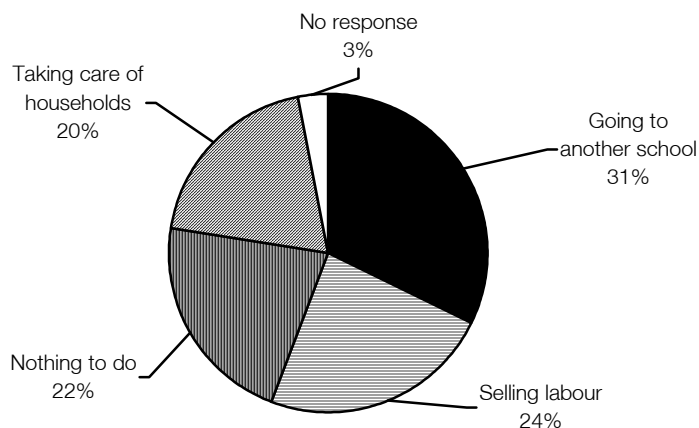


Table 11 shows the types of schools where dropped out students were found studying. Most of them enrolled in the government primary schools (35% in urban and 63% in CHT) compared to other institutions. This is because of some opportunities or incentives that government institution provides such as stipends,

sufficient sitting arrangements, availability of playing field in the school, religious texts, and flexible study methods. On the other hand, parents were also interested to enroll their children in religious institution so that they could learn religious values. A few students were also studying in other NGO schools after leaving BPS.

Continuing student at BPS

The continuing students of BPS experienced some positive incentives, which encouraged them to continue with BPS. Table 12 indicates the reasons why the students were continuing at BPS. Some incentives encouraged them to continue like good learning environment and free study materials. After all, the BPS are situated extensively throughout the country and created opportunity to provide primary education. This opportunity especially helped the female students who were suffering from long distance of schools and excluded earlier in getting primary education.

Table 11. Types of schools where dropped out students of BPS enrolled by location and sex (%)

Factors	Urban			CHT		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Government primary school	22	13	35	26	37	63
Semi-government primary school	11	5	16	4	7	11
NGO	8	8	16	7	8	15
Religious school	11	14	25	4	7	11
Vocational	5	3	8	0	0	0
Total	21	16	100	11	16	100

(n=64)

Table 12. Reasons to continue study at BPS by regions and sex (%)

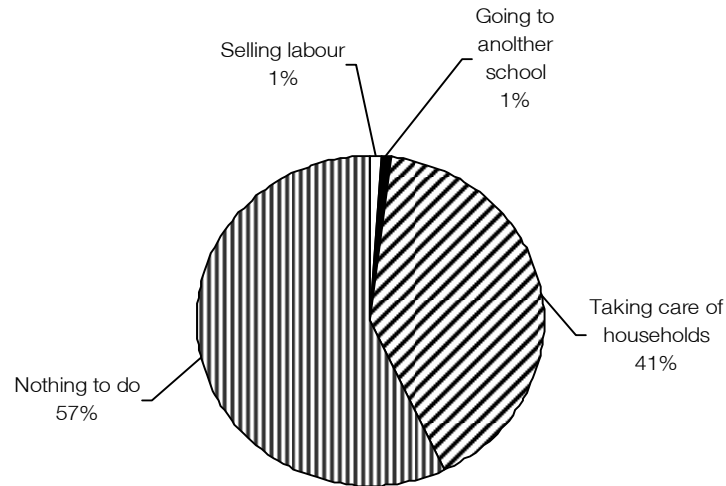
Reasons	Urban		CHT	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Good at learning	36	30	28	27
Only one school in area	27	29	30	42
Providing reading materials	17	9	23	23
Encouraged by family	5	10	20	16

Note: Multiple response considered (n=236)

Figure 5 reveals that most of the continuing students (57%) were not involved with any kind of paid employment; they merely studying at BPS with no involvement. Only 1% continuing students were going to another schools for learning religious education while another 1% student were employed after school hour. But many

students helped their parents after school hour. Being members of the poor households, the students had to take care of their households (41%) that included helping parents in the household chores (cooking or agricultural) or rearing to their sibling or younger.

Figure 5. Types of involvement of BPS students (%)



Parent's view of dropped out and continuing students

The different views of parents of both groups (continuing and dropout) are discussed to understand to what extent they became interested to enroll their children at BPS.

Parents of both the households emphasized the location of BPS that helped them to take decision in enrolling their children at BPS (Table 13). But, getting free materials (Books, pencil and pad) worked as incentive, which attracted parents to enroll their children. The parents also confessed that the quality of education of BPS has been enhanced.

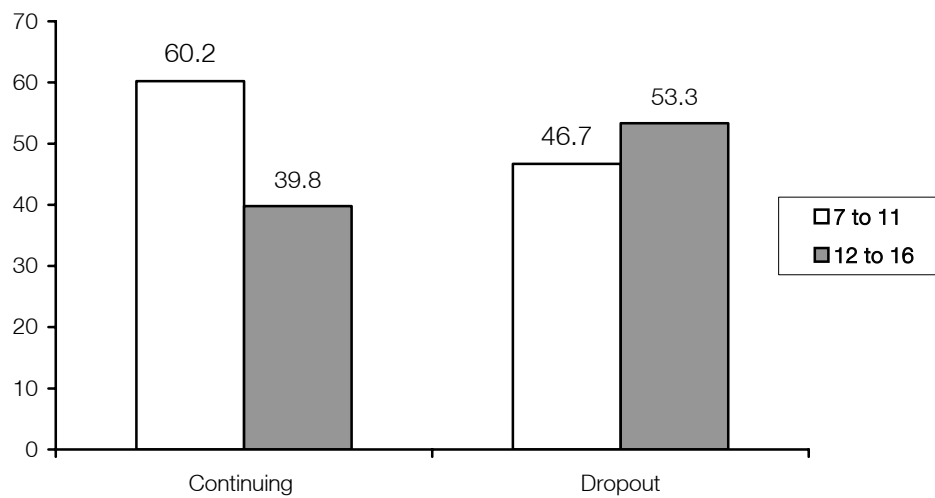
Figure 6 indicates that age is seminal factor to leave or continue at schools. A number of students expressed feeling of shyness to go to schools while they grew up physically compared to their classmates. Parents were also reluctant to send their aged children to schools. Highest dropout took place (53.3%) between the age of 12-16 years. The parents of dropped out children also opined that children aged 12-16 years should involve to work rather than studying at primary schools.

Table 13. Parent's view to continue at BPS (%)

Factors	Parents of dropped out students (n=199)		Parents of continuing students (n=236)	
	Urban	CHT	Urban	CHT
No admission fee	26	18	25	16
Good at learning	10	17	14	33
Only school	24	27	14	39
Providing free materials	27	30	18	34

Note: Multiple responses considered

Figure 6. Age difference between dropped out and continuing students (%)



Discussion and Conclusion

This study discussed the dimensions of dropout of students at BPS. BEP created an opportunity for the students who dropped out earlier or students of poor households. Several dimensions were identified and some of which were embedded reasons and discussed discretely. It is widely discussed that household condition is closely associated with the incidence of dropout because most of the parents could not take care of their children's education due to involvement in income generating activities. So, students did not feel interest to continue study in absence of their parents' interest. Thus, many students dropped out. It is revealed that BPS requires no help from family or tutors outside the classroom, which is more appropriate for poor families (Case study, Meeting EFA: Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) Primary School; USAID, page-9). But, the study identifies that parents' education is an integral factor which encourages children to continue schooling as parents could assist their children in preparing the assignments given by the school. However, many dropped out students had to take care of their young sibling in absence of their parents at home, and had to involve in work to support their families. Therefore, the incidence of dropout was higher among the female students. Regional variation was also observed which contributed to dropout. We identified some issues in terms of access to income generation activities and communication problems that induced dropout.

The language of instruction in BPS is different for the CHT students. So, a few problems arouse while the teacher and students interacted in the classroom, because teacher and student had different languages considering ethnicity. However, BEP began working with indigenous children. BRAC curriculum and material developers produced first to third grade textbooks in two or three indigenous languages and collected storybooks in these languages from other sources (Case study, Meeting EFA: Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) Primary School; USAID, page-09). It has been helping indigenous children immensely to continue study at BPS. Besides, policy makers of BEP should consider other languages of CHT to produce text books for different indigenous communities to reduce dropout.

Textbooks play important role to continue study. The students could concentrate on their study if the textbooks provide congruency with the previous year's textbooks. Most students faced difficulties in following textbooks while they were promoted to third grade. So, textbooks play important role in attracting students in school. A few facilities like fan and toilet are required at BPS, especially in urban areas to reduce dropout. Some female students encounter difficulties in long journey. Some of them experienced verbal abuse or eve teasing while they were going to schools. Many students dropped as they became older. Dropped out students were involved in income generating activities to support their families. Sometimes, students willingly left schools by the influences of their friends who have already involved in income generating activities.

Recommendations

This study explored the reasons for students' dropout from BPS. Some of the reasons were integrated and deep-rooted at household level and some of these could be solved by adopting appropriate strategies, which are discussed below:

1. Students of BPS encountered difficulties in following textbooks compared to previous years when they are promoted to third grade. So, we suggest to rethink about the textbooks of third grade and to make those easier.
2. Schools (BPS) should be set up targeting different ethnic groups in Rangamati and Bandarban. The teachers and students should be from the same ethnic group. On the other hand, the length of language training provided to students of different ethnic groups was inadequate. So, it would be convincing if the duration of training could be extended.
3. Regular attendance of teachers in schools is also important to reduce dropout. Because some parents are interested in sending their children to schools where teachers are serious in teaching. Schools remain closed for a period if teachers change frequently under any circumstances. The teacher dropout became a factor which contributed to student dropout. So, incentives of teachers should be considered which could attract them in attending schools regularly.
4. Many students faced difficulties in following complex textbooks introduced in third grade, especially English and Mathematics. As a result, they were punished by schoolteachers that discouraged them to attend schools regularly. Students should be encouraged to study more rather than giving punishment if they would fail to complete their given assignments.
5. Facilities like toilet, ceiling fan, benches, and supply of drinking water might be introduced in BPS. The damaged roofs of the school and its fences should be repaired in time. Otherwise, rain water leaking from the ceiling could damage their books in the classroom.
6. Students feel shy while they grow up physically and age should be considered while the enrollment takes place.
7. Annual cultural event could be organized in the schools which would attract students and parents. On the other hand, students will get opportunity to compete and uphold their cultural identity.

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