

Socio-economic Factors of Dropout Situation in Rural Primary Education: A Study of Two Villages in Rajshahi District

Md. Rokonzaman Ansary*

Department of Sociology, University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh

Abstract

Dropout from school impedes development as it imposes human creativity and potentiality. It is the root of all backwardness. Rural communities are more backward particularly in Bangladesh, where the dropout rate is high. Parental decision to drop out their child from primary education does not depend upon gender but depend upon their economic status. Poverty influences the parents to withdraw their children from school. Studies on dropout in primary level, particularly Bangladesh, are inadequate however. The results of the study further suggest that girls were more likely to be out of school compared to their peer boys counterparts, indicating gender disparity in formal education. Results of the multivariate analysis reveal that individual as well as household level attributes are important determinants of school dropout. Age, sex, parent's education and occupation, residence and land ownership pattern were found to be highly significant predictors in determining dropping out from school among the rural children of Bangladesh.

Keywords: Dropout; Backwardness; Economic status; Gender; Child labor; Child marriage; Primary education

Introduction

Man is a rational being. Education is a very essential element to develop the rationality. There are various steps of education. Primary education is the foundation of those steps. "Primary education is a base for a person, from where the person has started to build the educational citadel for his own that is also the important part of social knowledge. In fact the primary education shapes up the mental make-up of a human being" [1].

It is clear that primary education is the first step to make a person skilled and productive. So this is a part and parcel stage in our life. On this context it has been taken general compulsory primary education in 1980 in our country. Taking all the children in the age limit of 6 to 11 under primary education is one of the most important targets. Government has taken various necessary steps such as to build new school, to supply furniture, to ravier old school, to recruit new teachers, to trend up teachers, to improve P.T.I, to supply free text books, to improve administration, management, monitoring and inspection to fulfill this desire within 2000. From the decade 80 the UN, UNICEF, UNESCO and many international organizations were loud for children's education. Bangladesh has taken decision to enroll 95% children within 2000 and the reducing dropout controlled within minimum stage. Thus Bangladesh has taken "Primary Education (Compulsory) Act, 1990 [2]. This rule comes into effective all over the country from 1993. Interestingly, the initiatives taken by the government have been appreciated in home and abroad. Despite this, the education programs have not been spread out equally in every corner of the country. There are some geographical pockets in the country which have remote terrains where children are disadvantaged in terms of economic status and are being deprived of quality education due to scarcity of quality institutions. So it is clearly apparent that, equally development of primary education did not possible.

According to IRIN Asia news and analysis (2007), about 50% of primary and 80% of secondary level students' dropout in schools in Bangladesh. Social and economic factors were found to be the cause behind. Sabates et al. reports that in all countries dropout rate is low at 6-8 years but drastically high at 10-14 years of age [3]. There are

many factors associated with drop out, some of which belong to the individual, such as poor health or malnutrition and motivation. Others emerge from children's household situations such as child labor and poverty. However, so far known, study on dropping out from school particularly of the children of the different remote villages is still inadequate. Hence, this study is an effort to fill in this gap through a micro level investigation in understanding the socioeconomic determinants of dropping out.

Objectives of the Study

Analysis of dropout from education, pattern and its socio-economic correlates are studied to fulfill in following objectives:

1. Look into the regional dimensions of dropout
2. Explore the current situation of student dropout
3. Find out the factors contributed to dropout
4. To recommend policy programs to reduce the drop out of students from school.

Literature Review

Nath and Hadi showed inverse relationship between child labor and years of schooling [4]. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics conducted a study on five types of child labor-Welding, auto workshop, road transport, battery recharging and recycling and street children where working was considered hazardous for the children. Its findings revealed that most of the children had little or no education. Dott in

*Corresponding author: Md. Rokonzaman Ansary, Former Student, Department of Sociology, University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh, Tel: +8801717032893; E-mail: mrzrokon@gmail.com

Received October 03, 2017; Accepted October 17, 2017; Published December 19, 2017

Citation: Ansary R (2017) Socio-economic Factors of Dropout Situation in Rural Primary Education: A Study of Two Villages in Rajshahi District. Social Crimonol 5: 176. doi: 10.4172/2375-4435.1000176

Copyright: © 2017 Ansary R. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

his research article, "Medical and Social Factors Affecting Early Teen Pregnancy" has explained the sequence of teenage pregnancy of the mothers both in their health and social life [5]. He also explained that the teenage mothers are more likely to dropout of school. Hossain in a study found that in Bangladesh enrollment rates have sharply increased, dropout rates have gone down, significant progress has been made in raising equality of access between different geographic and socioeconomic groups, and the gender gap has literally been removed at the primary level [6]. Girls have actually crossed boys in rates of enrollment, completion, and attendance in primary school. Ahmed and Akhter conducted a study on access to education in Bangladesh [7]. Their findings showed that about half of the children (48% in 2004) enrolled in grade 1 did not complete grade 5. The World Bank education sector review in Bangladesh-2000 comments though Bangladesh has recorded outstanding progress in education, it has a long way to go in terms of human development in the 21st century [8]. Empowerment as the expansion of freedom of choice and action is identify the World Bank as one of the key elements of poverty reduction and primary education.

Methodology of the Study

Methods of data collection

For concept building, an extensive literature survey covering relevant books, government ordinance, rules and regulations, seminar paper etc. were undertaken. The consultant also made a through survey of relevant official records, documents, inspection notes etc. Sholuya union office gave some important documents. The required data for this study have been collected from both in sources: primary and secondary.

Primary sources of data: In order to collect substantial and reliable information from the primary sources, multiple methods have been applied.

a) Use of questionnaire: An informative questionnaire has been formulated with a set of questions. It has been prepared keeping in view the objectives of the study for collecting relevant information from the respondents. There are two types of questions: closed questions with short replies and multiple choice questions. The questionnaire has been pre-testing several times. The researcher went to the study area several times and meet the respondents and other key persons of the locality for pre-testing the questionnaire. Interviews of 4 headmasters of primary schools, other teachers and managing committee and 105 dropped out students have been taken.

b) Observation: Observation methods have been applied to get reliable and authentic information. Usually, non-participant observation method has been used at the time of data collection through questionnaire. The real age, behavior, habits, intelligence, sincerity about learning, awareness of health care, physical and mental disorder, life style and other matters relevant to the research objectives have been observed carefully at the time of interviewing.

Secondary sources of data: All kinds of material documents like books, articles, newspapers, relevant research papers, government and non-government reports, magazines, official documents of NGOs school is the secondary sources of data.

Data collection

The study is based on primary data. The dropout students of 6-12 years were the respondents. They are suitable for going school. So the researcher considered them only. The researcher could not

take interview from all the students because the questionnaire was prepared only for the dropped out student. It is noted that all of the respondents were both boys and girls. While taking interview some of the respondents were not found. So we had to talk with the guardians of the absent respondents. A well-structured questionnaire was used to collect data on drop out of children and socio-economic status of their parents. The data collection period was the second quarter of 2014. The data were collected with the assistance of a group of well-trained young persons with direct supervision of the researcher. Data also have been taken from different published source which is relevant for this study.

Data checking and analysis

a) Data generating process: The data are generated in the following: 1) Qualitative approach and 2) Quantitative approach. Both types of data collect from research tools or instrument, such as Questionnaires (Open ended and closed ended), interview schedule, selected NGOs school and observation.

b) Data analysis procedures: During the field study a lot of data and information has been collected. All the data collected obviously are not directly useful for the study as some of them are indirectly related to the research problem. So, collected data and information needs to be scrutinized well before analysis. The scrutinization refers to the process of selecting; focusing, simplifying, abstracting are transforming the data came into view in written up field notes, and transcriptions. Data have been analyzed in the following ways: 1) Descriptive approach, 2) Tabular approach, and 3) Statistical approach.

In the statistical approach, use the different types of statistical technique and software like statistical package for social scientists (SPSS), MS Excel, MS Word also used to analyze the qualitative and quantitative data.

Limitations of the Study

Most of the dropped out boys were busy with their financial activities and the dropped out girls were married. The boys had to manage their jobs while girls had to maintain their families. So, they both felt negligence at the time of giving interview. Furthermore, the respondents were not educated enough to realize why they are asked that type of questions, what would be done by their given information and value of their responses, so they replied according to their will. Actually, they were also afraid of speaking the truth. Specially, they thought that their authorities, husbands and mother-in laws might inflict torture upon them if they would expose the right things to the interviewer. Moreover, they thought it was useless and needless to say anything about their dropping out. The education officers at Upazilla level did not show interest in providing information about the dropout because they also did not maintain proper record about stipend of the girl students and up-to-date data about school going children. Moreover, it was a small scale research work involving a few numbers of schools in a specific district of Bangladesh. The findings of this research work might not be generalized at the nation level. But it is true that the practice of early age at engaging with financial activity and marriage are almost common throughout the rural areas of Bangladesh which are the major causes of drop out of the students at every level of education.

Findings and Discussions

Socio-demographic background of the dropped out children

This section deals with the socio-demographic background of the

dropped out children. The concept of socio-demographic background is associated with the social structure and the demographic system of the people in which they live. The concept of social structure is used widely in the discipline of anthropology and sociology with variety of meanings. It may refer to social differentiation, relations of productions, forms of association, value integration, functional inter dependence, statuses and roles, institutions or a combination of all these and other factors [9]. On the other hand, demographic system refers to some inseparable part of everyday life. For instance, the place where they live, water they drink, land on which they cultivate these things are discussed in demographic chapter. However, the socio-demographic background helps to understand the lifestyle they lead and its impact on dropout and consciousness level on their children's education.

From Table 1 we can know that the parents of Sholuya and Dawlatpur birth registered the birth event of their children (approximately 98.04) in the government record book (Table 2). Interestingly, all the household members of responding children drink safe tube well water. Though, all of them don't have own tube well. They have to take water from their neighbors' tube well. The sanitation situation of these selected areas are strikingly unsatisfactory. Only 40.78 percent (n=42 of 105) children use hygienic latrine in their everyday life. It is quite surprising that almost 60 percent children are vulnerable to unhygienic and hazardous familial environment. Their religious affinity is with Islam (93.82%) and rest of the people follow Hinduism. The average land ownership per household is 0.80 acre.

Factors contributed dropout

According to Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002, a dropout is somebody who fails to complete an educational course, usually at a college or school. A dropout can also be termed as a pupil who was enrolled in the beginning of the school year and has left before the end of the school year, and was not enrolled elsewhere. By reviewing the previous reports that have been conducted on the primary school dropouts of Bangladesh, it can be said that, in general dropouts come from very poor households. Most of the parents of dropouts are illiterate, so they are unaware and do not understand the value of education that's why guardians want to get married their children at early age. Usually, dropouts come from large families with few earning members, so the earnings or the labor of the dropout are important for the survival of the family. Mainly, the opportunity costs, direct and indirect costs of schooling, poor performance in school, unsupportive

school environment, etc. are the reasons behind dropouts in primary schools in Bangladesh.

The above Table 2 shows that guardians' unconscious and child marriage is the main cause of drop out. About 59.05 percent drop out cases occur due to this factor. In this study area almost 70% people depend on agriculture. So, poverty is the daily partner of these families. 23.81 percent students drop out happened for poverty and social insecurity. Because the guardians think education as an unproductive source in life. That's why they send their children to work for money in the very early age of life. It is apparent that 14.29 percent drop out cases happen because of child labor. Moreover, migration, rigid and cruel behavior of teachers also contribute drop out.

Educational status of the dropped out children

Education plays an important role for the development of personality as well as to improve the quality of lifestyle and status of the individual. It makes person conscious about their rights, responsibilities and obligations with respect to themselves, their family to society and largely to nation. Education, even at a basic level, is not only about livelihood and technical skills but more importantly provides social connectedness or aptitude which enables one to access key resources to alleviate poverty [10]. The basic education in almost compulsory irrespective of gender in our country. But the government of Bangladesh has given emphasis on primary education through various projects. A table is given below to know the level of education of 105 dropped out children at primary level.

It is evident from the Table 3 that about 38.09 percent boys were dropped out when they were the students of class five. Similarly, 28.57, 21.43, 7.14 and 4.76 percent boys were dropped out when they were the students of class four, class three, class two and class one respectively. It is interesting to note that more than one-third of the boys were dropped out from their education where they are the students of class five. Moreover, 23.81 percent girls were dropped out when they were the students of class four. While, 22.22, 7.94 and 6.35 percent girls were dropped out when they were the students of three, class two and class one respectively. But 39.68 percent were the students of class five. Interestingly, more than one-third from total dropped out girls are in class five as like as the boys students.

Educational status of the parents

Education has a vital role to play in increasing and securing the

Village	Children	Birth Reg. Coverage	Drinking Tube well water	Latrine Use			Land ownership (acre)	
				Hygienic	Unhygienic	Religion: Islam	Land	Land/HH
Sholuya	44	43 97.73	44 100	20 45.45	24 54.55	40 90.91	1.13 0.814.3	0.46
Dawlatpur	61	60 98.36	61 100	22 36.1	39 63.93	59 96.72	73.2	1.13
Total	105	98.04	105 100	42 40.78	63 59.22	99 93.82	87.5	0.80

Source: Field survey 2014.

Table 1: Socio-demographic distribution of the dropped out children.

Main Reasons	No. of Dropped out children	Percent
Guardians unconscious and child marriage	62	59.05
Poverty and social insecurity	25	23.81
Child labor	15	14.29
Others	3	2.86
Total	105	100

Source: Field survey 2014.

Table 2: Distribution of information about the main reasons of drop out.

Class of Dropped out	Boys		Girls	
	Number of children	Percent	Number of children	Percent
Class One	2	4.76	4	6.35
Class Two	3	7.14	5	7.94
Class Three	9	21.43	14	22.22
Class Four	12	28.57	15	23.81
Class Five	16	38.09	25	39.68
Total	42	100%	63	100%

Source: Field survey 2014.

Table 3: Distribution of information about the dropped out by class.

Father's education level	No. of Dropped out children	Percent	Mother's education level	No. of Dropped out children	Percent
No education	58	55.24	No education	69	65.71
Class 1-5	33	31.43	Class 1-5	29	27.62
Class6-10	11	10.48	Class 6-10	07	6.67
SSC	03	2.86	SSC	Nil	-
HSC	Nil	-	HSC	Nil	-
Above HSC	Nil	-	Above HSC	Nil	-
Total	105	100.00	Total	105	100.00

Source: Field survey 2014.

Table 4: Distribution of information about education level of parents.

Father's occupation	No. of Dropped out children	Percent	Mother's occupation	No. of Dropped out children	Percent
Agriculture	71	67.62	Housewife	78	74.29
Hawker and day labor	17	16.19	Day labor	11	10.48
Small business	11	10.48	Small	09	8.57
Small job	06	5.71	Small job	07	6.67
Total	105	100.00	Total	105	100.00

Source: Field survey 2014.

Table 5: Distribution of information about occupation level of parents.

levels of living. The level of education of the parents refers to the academic qualification of both the father and mother of the dropped out girls individually. The education of the parents either individually or jointly has impact on the education of their children and the consequence of their dropped out at different grades. For the girls, it also affects the selection of educated husbands of their daughters. However, a table is given below to know the level of education of the parents of dropped out students.

The Table 4 shows that about 55.24 percent fathers and 65.71 percent mothers do not have no social and basic educational ability to know how to read and write but only a few parents can put their signature. About 31.43 percent fathers and 27.620 percent mothers have primary education. Additionally, 10.48 percent fathers and 6.67 percent mothers read up to class ten. On the other hand, 2.86 percent fathers complete SSC level while, this situation is nil in the context of mothers. That means no female guardian complete SSC level. It is interesting to note that the fathers have higher educational qualification compared to the mothers which is similar to the national figure.

Occupational status of the parents

This section deals with the occupation pattern of the parents of the dropped out children at different level of education. Occupation means sources of livelihood through which people survive. I.e., the main sources of income through which the parents maintained the family expenditure. Occupation pattern is an important indicator of economic well-being. It shows the mode and dimensions of economic activities. The survey reveals that the members of the poor heterogeneous occupational status. Occupational status is categorized on the basis of

principal occupation. It should be mentioned that almost three-fourth of the mothers of dropped out children are involved in house hold activities. A table is given below to know the occupation of the parents of the dropped out children at any level of education.

Table 5 shows that occupation structure of 105 parents of the dropped out children. In this table only primary occupation has been included. About 67.62 percent fathers are involved in agricultural activities directly through cultivation of their lands while 74.29 percent mothers are busy with their household chores. It has been found that there is a correlation between the land ownership and education of their children especially the girls' education in peasants' society of rural Bangladesh. About 16.19 percent fathers are involve some kinds of manual jobs like hawker and day labor (including rickshaw puller). They work as hired labor in agriculture fields and other sector. These sections of people are hand to mouth. Moreover, 10.48 percent mothers also have to some kind of day labor. In maximum of these cases are found that they are widow, divorce. Serious sickness of their husbands they have to come out from home. For the same reason 8.57 mothers continue different kinds of small business and small job as well. About 10.480 percent fathers depend on small business (tea stall, fisherman). 5.71 percent fathers have small job including office bearer etc. night guard.

Level of income

People not having income to cover up expenditure on various basic needs are regarded as poor. So income is the most important indicator to measure the economic well-being of the poor household. The level of income refers to the monthly income of the parents together of the

Monthly Income of parents	No. of Families	Percent
Below 1000	2	1.90
1000-2000	2	1.90
2000-3000	6	5.71
3000-4000	14	3.33
4000-5000	16	15.24
5000-6000	19	18.10
6000-7000	15	14.29
7000-8000	17	16.19
8000-9000	3	2.86
9000-10000	7	6.67
10000 and Above	4	3.81
Total	105	100

Source: Field survey 2014.

Table 6: Distribution of Information about income of parents of dropped out children.

dropped out children at different level. It is very difficult task to get accurate information about income of the parents because many of them do not have monthly fixed income. While many of them were hesitating to say actual income. However, many techniques have been adopted to get accurate information on income. A table is given below to understand the level of income of 105 of the dropped out children.

Table 6 shows that about 18.10 percent parents earn monthly 5000-6000 taka. It seems to be a significant percentage of them are marginal farmers. Approximately 14.29 percent parents get 6000-7000 taka per month. They are considered as middle class in relation to their level of income. 15.24 percent parents of dropped children earn 4000-5000 taka. Moreover, there are 17 families whose monthly income is almost 7000-8000 taka. Interestingly, among the 105 families four families have an income of 1000 and more than that amount and seven families have 9000-10000 taka per month. These families are identified as well to do and considered as upper class is the existing socio-economic condition in the area under study. It is clearly evident that there are almost ten families whose monthly income is not more than 3000. It indicates that many of them are living in below poverty line.

Summary

Means of prevention and solution of dropping out

This study explored the reasons for students' dropout. 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:

We should reduce the number of students in a class. The students of a class are to divide into certain sections. Every sections will have a respective teacher as a class teacher. In this way a teacher will arrange examination to evaluate them and should give them promotion at the end of the year.

Non aged babies should be separated from the aged babies. We should not give them the books of a class rather we should emphasize on pre-primary education to increase their reading capacity.

- The mutual help and suggestion of the guardians and teachers will help to prepare the students.
- The monitoring system and various training can help to increase the professional skills, knowledge and experience of the teachers.

- Well experienced and educated teachers should be inspired and employed in this sector.
- To make the environment favorable for education some recreational activates should be included into their syllabus.
- The building, the playground and the environment of the class should have been attractive for the children.
- If there is any problem in the way to school, the managing committee will take the necessary steps to solve it.
- Discipline should be improved. It must be helpful for education.
- The teacher should use instruments related to the lessons to make them interesting.
- Suitable and experience teachers should be employed in this sector.
- The children should be provided free dresses, books, papers to encourage them in the school.
- The teachers should visit the house of the irregular students and inform the parents of their absence from the school.
- And finally, public awareness is essential to solve the problems.

Conclusion

After describing all the factors we may conclude that Economic problem, personal problem, social problem and illiteracy of parents are main factors of dropout. With the combined effort of parents, teachers, elite of the society, government can stop the problem. At present, large number of students leave school at primary level and gradually become illiterate. We need to identify these problems and need to take necessary initiatives to prevent dropout. There are some parents who can continue their children's education if they get some financial assistance. On the other hand, some parents have narrow view about education. As a result, they are not interested to continue their education. Their view need to be changed. Education is the means of development of a country but if a huge number of students leave school that makes obstacle for the development of themselves, their families and their country. So we need to take necessary steps that are mentioned in recommendation to solve the problem immediately for the improvement of primary education enrolment, improve the quality of education and development of the country wholly. Additionally, the free primary schooling and female stipend programme in education are yet to attract the rural community in staying their girls in institutions for prolonged education which is an obstacle in achieving the target of the Government of Bangladesh.

References

1. Elias Ali M (1999) Juge Juge Shikkha Commission O Shikkar Uttaron. JagoraniPublications Dhaka.
2. Chowdhury AMR, Nath SR, Choudhury RK (2001) Equity Gains in Bangladesh Primary Education BRAC Research evaluation division, Dhaka.
3. Sabates R, Akyeamong K, Westbrook J, Hunt F (2010) School dropout: patterns, causes, changes and policies, Background paper prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report.
4. Nath SR, Hadi A (2000) Role of Education in Reducing Child Labor: Evidence from Rural Bangladesh. *Journal of Biosocial Science* 32: 301-303.
5. Dott AB, Fort AT (1976) Medical and social factors affecting early teenage pregnancy. *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* 125: 532-536.
6. Hossain AFA (1980) Educational Development and Reforms in Bangladesh. The chr Micheisen institute (DERAP) Bergen Norway, p: 276.

7. Ahmed, Akhter U (2004) Impact of Feeding Children in school: Evidence from Bangladesh. Food Policy Research Institute, Washington.
8. World Bank (2000) Bangladesh Education Sector Review Vol. I and II Dhaka: The University Press Limited.
9. Blau PM (1974) Parameters of Social Structure. *American Sociological Review* 39: 615-635.
10. Harper C, Marcus R, Moore K (2003) Enduring poverty and the conditions of childhood life course and intergenerational poverty transmissions 31.