



**The role of NGO schools in decreasing the
dropout rate of girls in primary level.**

Nafisa Tunazzin

Sharaban Tahura

Nusrat Aman

Researcher/Investigators

Dr. Tiffany Cone

Supervisor

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Acknowledgement:

First of all, we would like to convey our sincere gratitude to Asian University for Women for funding our project and assisting us throughout the task. Our appreciation towards our advisor Dr. Tiffany Cone for guiding us from the very beginning as well as the Summer Project committee. Secondly, we would like to thank the authorities of Program for Sustainable Development, Ghashful, Abinta Kabir Foundation, SOS, Mamata NGO School for giving us permission to conduct the research as well as providing us helpful information/data about their organization.

Abstract:

Accomplishing Universal Primary School education is one of the Goals of United Nations which is included Millennium Development Goals (MDG). However, it's very unfortunate that in a developing country like Bangladesh, the enrollment rate in Bangladesh is not very satisfactory as Bangladesh is way behind its compeer countries. Bangladesh reportedly has a percentage of 70 in enrollment as of 2016. Among this percentage, the male has significantly higher rate than female and the main reason of that is the dropout rate of girls. The NGOs which are actively working for the socio-economic development of the country are trying to approach this problem by providing opportunities to those who are very likely to drop out because of several reasons. These NGOs run primary schools to provide the primary level of education to the people who are living under the poverty line and often find educational a luxury when it comes to survival. The main focus of this project is to study how the emergence of NGOs in primary education has affected outcomes of girl's education. Moreover, we will study how much the NGOs contributed to the increase in the enrollment rate of girls in recent years in Bangladesh.

Introduction:

Bangladesh is a developing country with a huge number of population hence it becomes difficult to meet the basic need of all the people. However, the government of Bangladesh has given highest priority in meeting the need of education amongst its population by particularly emphasizing on primary education as it is recognized as the foundation of the total education system. But due to various underlying socio economic problem mostly among

the marginalized group, children, specially females are not being able to continue their further studies and dropping out from primary level. NGO's are working in shoulder besides the Government and are coming up with different programs and project to decrease literacy rate and promote primary education among female students.

Literature Review:

By United Nations education is considered as the basic human rights inscribed into its laws in 1948 and is used as an instrument in achieving social equality and higher economic growth (UNICEF, 1992). Governments use education as a tool for fighting ignorance, poverty and disease. It is a vital factor for socio-economic developments (Belfield, 2008). In this case it is therefore used, as a means for training and producing human resources needed to manage the economic, social and political sector of the country.

According to the report of World Bank, 2001 allowing women with adequate and quality education ensures improved health and education, reduce infant mortality rate and allows to improve quality of life. Again, despite of having the benefits of female education, most emerging developing countries like Bangladesh are still at a level of analyzing their situation and coming up with ways and policies which addresses the problems related to improve female education (Jabbar, 1995). Hence the Government of Bangladesh as well as other organizations are working to implement proper policy which will directly address this issue. Education being equally important for both the genders this study only focuses on female as because a huge gap persists in the dropout rate of male and female child.

According to few recent reports, Bangladesh has made progress in quality education, increased equitable access to education and has shown a remarkable improvement in decreasing the dropout rate. However, within the goals of MDGs the challenges that currently lies are the target of completing primary education, increase adult literacy rate and improve quality education. (MDG: Bangladesh Progress Report 2011). Working on such huge target and meeting the national policy as well as the goal of MDGs is indeed a big responsibility and challenge for the Government of Bangladesh, and the government alone cannot meet the need of education to its population. NGO's are playing an important role by sharing this responsibility by promoting basic formal and non-formal education in the country (Hossen, 2015). Currently, the largest primary education program is run by BRAC a nongovernmental organization, with around 30,000 schools and about a million pupils (Bhuyan, 2013). Unlike the primary school, NGOs are the possible source who can meet the demands of necessity by providing a comprehensive package of education. In Bangladesh over 500 NGOs are actively involved in basic primary education, particularly

NFE programs (Haq, 2007). The number of NGO schools has increased four times since the early 1990s and now comprised 8.5% of the educational system in Bangladesh. Many of these NGO schools are widely considered to be more effective than government schools. BRAC schools make up 76% of all NGO primary schools (Kabeer et al 2003). Given the contribution of NGOs in the development sector it is difficult to ignore their role and impact in promoting female education in Bangladesh.

Defining terms:

Dropout rate: According to Dictionary definition, the percentage of students failing to complete a particular school or college course. This refers to a certain group of people who are admitted in the beginning of the academic year but unfortunately no longer are admitted at the end of the academic year. **NGO:** According to the Dictionary definition, a non-profit organization that operates independently of any government, typically one whose purpose is to address a social or political issue. In this study we will explore how NGOs are playing an important role in decreasing the dropout rate of girls in Primary level.

Objective of the study:

To understand NGO's impact in decreasing the dropout rates of girls in the primary level in the context of Bangladesh

To study how the NGOs are approaching the problem in order to create a positive impact

Significance of the Study:

Previously, there has not been any noteworthy research conducted on this topic and therefore this research will play a significant role as a background for any future research. This research is also significant for future research in this field because it is important to know how the emerging NGOs are working to decrease dropout rate of females and which factors contribute towards the increase in the rate of girls finishing their education. Furthermore, we will be representing AUW in front of different educational institutions.

Methodology:

Our research will be both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Instruments used to collect data are: interviews, observation, secondary data of analysis and for more extensive data collection, both qualitative and quantitative data analysis will be used through conducting direct survey. For quantitative research we will use survey. Quantitative research includes conducting surveys and collecting numeric data. We have chosen quantitative method because data can be collected and analyzed quickly. As surveys are extremely flexible and can be constructed and modified to answer a wide variety of research questions, we are choosing it as our instrument. Through the survey, we can generalize findings beyond our participant group. As we are going to conduct surveys in different schools, we can develop our understanding of the general scenario of the primary schools and their curriculum.

For qualitative research, we will be using interviews with our participants. We will come to our conclusion through observation and interpretation. We will also collect data from the schools. Our targeted group is students, parents and teachers and NGO officials. We have chosen this method because it will give insight about how they are impacting the education of girls. At first, we will start with generalized questions and gradually go deep into our topic by asking semi-structured (both open-ended and close ended) and probing questions. Before we do so, we will approach them giving enough information about our project and our research questions. We will take their consent before taking their interviews. Then we will give the potential interviewees enough time to decide whether they accept to participate in our research or not.

Sample Questions:

We came up with three different questionnaire targeting three different types of participant. One of them is for the teachers and other three are for the parents and NGO officials respectively. In this report, we would like to include some of the question from each of the question set.

Teachers:

- How would you rate the quality of the learning resources and facilities in your school?
Excellent Good Fair Bad
- If there are no proper latrines that are safe for girls, the girls may dropout.
Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Strongly disagree Disagree

- Longer distances from home to school discourage girls from pursuing education and eventually dropout?

Yes No

- The school environments for girls contribute greatly to high dropout rate

Strongly Agree [] Agree [] Undecided [] Strongly disagree [] Disagree []

- Do you think that the learning facility in NGO schools is helping girl's education?

Yes No

- Do you believe that NGOs are providing girls educational help at a level where the state-based educational system has failed to reach?

Yes No

If yes, please explain

briefly_____

Parents:

- Do you think NGO schools should provide programs to enlighten parents on the importance of girl education?

Yes No

- The school environments for girls contribute greatly to high dropout rate

Strongly Agree [] Agree [] Undecided [] strongly disagree [] Disagree []

- Do you think teacher's attitude affect the coming of girls to school?

Yes No

- Availability of necessary facilities is core to retention of girls in schools.

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Strongly disagree Disagree

NGO Officials:

- Do you maintain any coordination with the school authority and other organizations in the area?

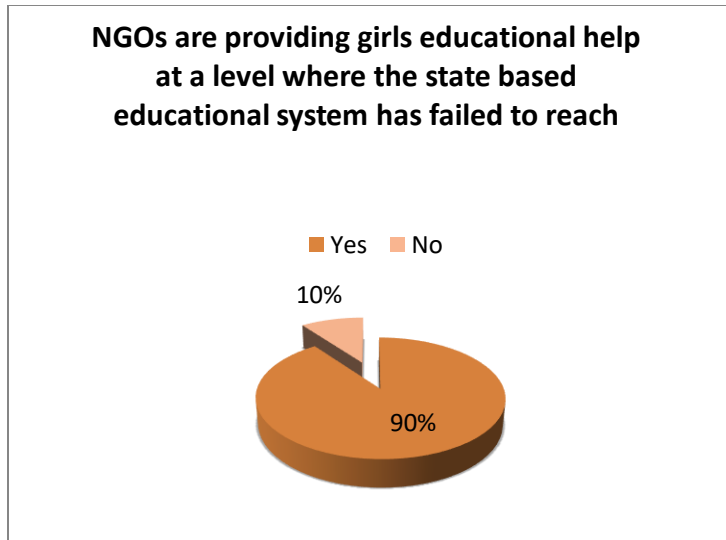
Yes No

- Have you used any innovative idea for improving the education system of the area?
Please explain
 - Are the NGO schools providing any special facilities to decrease drop out among girls in primary level?
Yes No
 - Do you think that the learning facility in NGO schools is helping girl's education?

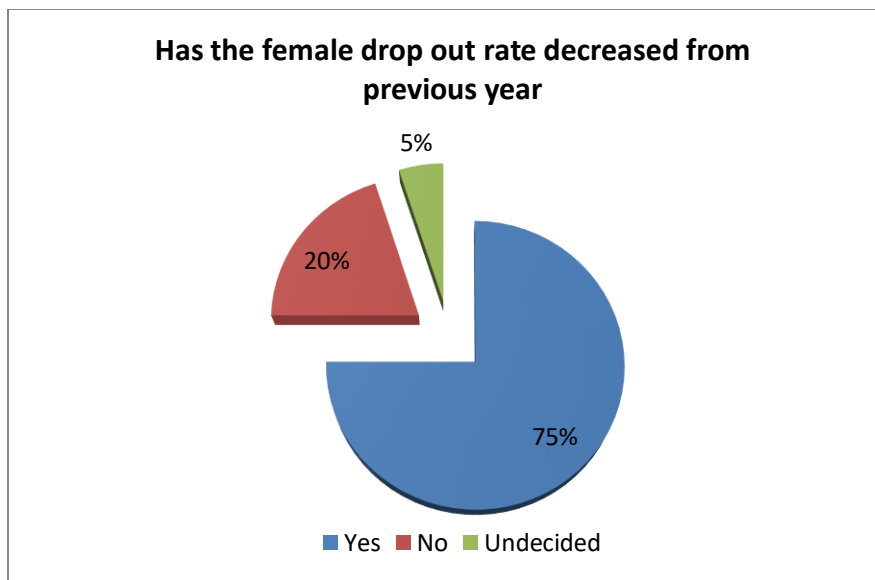
Yes No
 - Has the dropout rate of female students decreased from the previous year?
Yes No
 - By what percent has the dropout rate of girls decreased? Please mention a percentage_____
 - Please put your comment on drop out situation. How we can reduce the trend of drop out?
-

Findings:

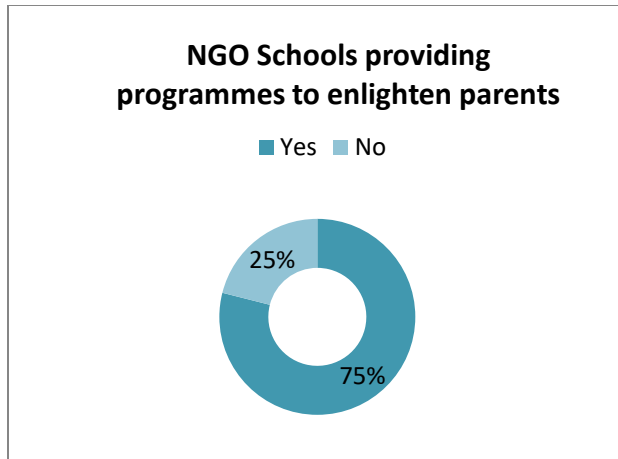
90% of the teachers believe that NGO s are providing girls educational help at a level where the state based educational system has failed to reach. On the other hand 10% disagree in this point as there is no profound study on this particular topic. However, they acknowledge the NGOs in the education sector.



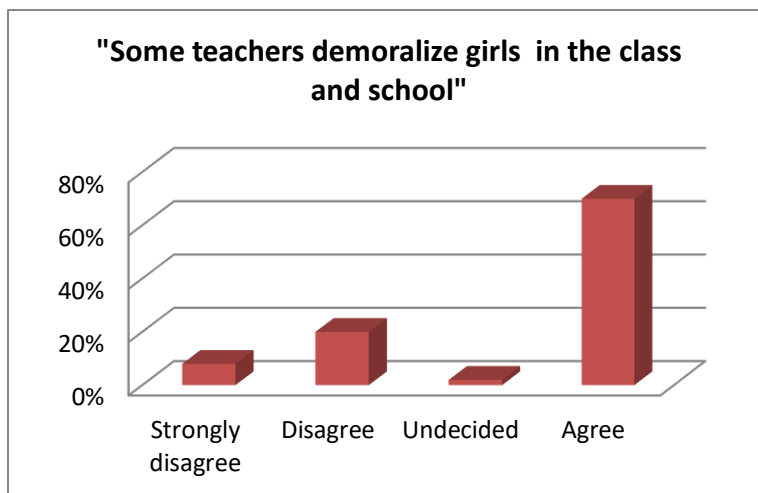
According to 75% of the NGO officials, the dropout rate has decreased in the NGO schools in comparison with the previous year. However, 25% suggest that there is no significant decrease in dropout rate. 5% of the participant has failed to reach any conclusion as their annual report does not provide any specific data on this.



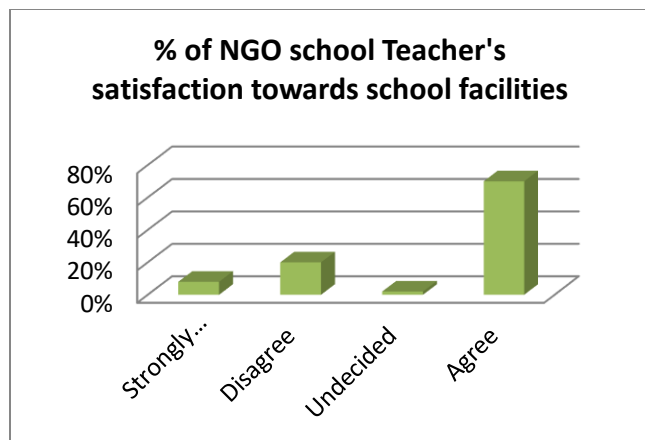
According to 75% of the parents whose children are attending NGO schools, the NGOs which that are running those school has provided programs that have help them in understanding the importance of girls education whereas 25% has mentioned about not getting any of these.



Almost 80% of parents have agreed that teacher's attitude affect their children's interest in going to school as some teachers demoralize girls in school. However, about 20% people did not support the statement and some of them were neutral about this.



A huge percentage of teachers have shown their dissatisfaction about the school facilities of the NGO schools as those are not sufficient for the students. However, it was not same for a very few school. Teachers from those specific schools seem to disagree on this point which resulted in a small percentage of people that is shown in the chart below.



Analysis:

From the findings of our survey, it is clear that a lot of different aspects affect girls' dropout rate in school. One of the important things that came out from this study is that although NGOs are trying their best to provide quality education, they are facing difficulties because of insufficient facilities. As the NGO schools are providing the students all of their educational necessities, their ability depends on the amount of funds they are getting. A huge percentage of parents have agreed on the fact that teachers tend to demoralize female students in the school. This shows that the attitude of the teacher has a significant impact on girl's education. Teachers in NGO Schools have agreed to this but mentioned that they are trained in way that asks them not to discriminate within the classroom. One of the most important things that NGO schools do is that along with providing education to the children they try their best in enlightening the parents so that they themselves would understand the importance. This helps in decreasing the dropout rate as it creates a social awareness. Finally, state based school which provides free education for all in the primary level has failed to do what NGO schools has done as they did not try to eradicate the reasons of dropout. That is exactly what makes NGOs schools stand out in the education sector as they are dealing the dropout issue through working in the root of it.

Limitations:

- Targeted school couldn't be covered as there was lack of permission from authorities.
- Access to resources such as annual report, attendance sheet etc.
- New teachers lacking information regarding dropout rate percentage
- Interviewing parents was difficult as they rarely came to school
- Collecting data from NGO officials was difficult due to lack of access and permission

Conclusion: From the study it is seen that NGO primary schools are few in number in comparison to the number of government primary school but have a great contribution in girl's education. From the study we found that the NGO School's follow learning based education which encourages student to participate in the classroom more. The Activity based learning system used by various NGO schools has made great impact on student's learning. Although NGO schools are very organized and disciplined, they have some limitations such as weak infrastructure, lack of playground, inadequate classroom, etc. We found out the NGO schools keep up higher attendance and completion rates. They are organizing programs that involve mothers making them aware about the importance of female education. Although we had several limitations like lack of access and permission, we were able to get an overall understanding of the impact of NGO schools in reducing girl's dropout rate and ensuring quality primary education to all children.

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