

An analysis of the situation of community schools in Bangladesh

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Contributing towards a strengthening of the government's Universal Primary Education Programme- Education For All- by the year 2000, has been one of the important aims of BRAC education programme. To materialise this aim BRAC has been providing Non- Formal Primary Education to the 'out of school' and 'out of reach' students, for more than a decade. Apart from this, BRAC education programme started, though in a small scale, its own formal primary schools very recently. In course of operating its education programme, BRAC has established a relationship with the education departments of the government, specially Directorate of Non-formal Education (DNFE). The community school programme is the most recent addition to such collaborative programmes. The government officially handed over 67 non-functioning community schools to BRAC by the end of 1998, of which 33 have already been started by BRAC. This study attempted to assess the situation of these non-functioning community schools. The objectives of the study were to: i) assess current and previous condition of community schools; ii) know more about the quality of teachers; iii) prepare a learners' profile; iv) document the causes of non-functioning of the community schools; and v) obtain information for future evaluation.

Methodology

Many sources were considered appropriate in designing the data collection of the study. These included: i) the schools as the outlet for imparting education; ii) parents as main sources of information on learners' background; and iii) teachers, SMC members, BRAC staffs, thana education authority and other community people who had been aware of the schools as key informants. The unit of analysis in this study remained the community schools as well as the learners. Three categories of schools- BRAC-run, close and government-run community schools- were included in the study. All the BRAC-run

and closed schools, and 28 government-run schools from the areas where first and/or second category of schools exist, were selected. Twelve schools, four from each of the three categories, were selected for in-depth case study. Thirteen learners from each of the BRAC-run and government-run community schools were randomly selected for learners background information. Three sets of instruments were developed for data collection. These are: i) school survey instrument; ii) learners' background survey instrument; and iii) checklist for group discussion and in-depth interview with key informants.

In this study 15 Field Investigators (FIs) and five Field Monitors (FMs) were recruited and trained for collecting data. To ensure the quality of data certain percentage of the sample was re-interviewed.

Key findings and implications

The study reveals that only a few schools in all the three categories had other primary schools at a distance of more than two miles. This indicates the impracticality of the condition for location of establishing primary schools set by the government. Most of the buildings of BRAC-run schools found in better condition than other categories of schools.

Number of classes found to be lowest in BRAC-run present schools. This implied a need for opening of higher grades in these schools by BRAC to fulfil the condition as BRAC has to run these schools with grade I through V according to the TOR. But enrolling learners up to grade V may lead BRAC to pull less qualified learners from other primary schools. *The number of classroom in these schools, however, indicated a need for extension of school building to run these schools with grade I through V.*

Facilities in terms of latrine and drinking water in BRAC-run community schools was found better than other categories of schools. *But still there were inadequacy, specially in the case of drinking water facility, which need to be improved.*

School discipline was found to be maintained quite satisfactorily in BRAC-run schools and was far better than in government-run schools, however, in few BRAC-run schools National Anthem was not sung at the time of survey. Performance in holding SMC meeting in the preceding one month, average attendance in these meetings, and

supervision by higher authority were found to be better in BRAC-run schools compared to government-run schools. There were misconception on SMC and number of members of SMC. Academic support to the teacher by the supervisors (higher authority) is very important to maintain quality in schools and developing teachers. Supervisors in most of the BRAC-run schools provided this kind of academic support while they were supervising the schools.

Mean class-size in both BRAC-run and government-run schools found to be almost same. But sex ratio of learners indicate a comparatively favourable position of girls in BRAC-run schools than in government-run schools. Although BRAC-run schools had favourable teacher-student ratio compared to government-run schools, however, both the school-categories showed comparatively favourable ratio than national ratio in government primary schools (1:73) and non-government primary schools (1:55).

The attendance rate in BRAC-run schools found to be much more higher than in the government-run schools. Both the school category had higher rate of attendance than national rate (52%) in non-government primary schools.

About one-third of the learners enrolled in BRAC-run community schools had previous schooling and half of them had come from other government primary schools.

Teachers in BRAC-run schools had lowest average year of education, and this was also lower than the average year of education of the teachers (11.6) in non-government primary schools. This might be due to preference given by BRAC to female teachers and the female teachers require less year of education than male to be a teacher in primary school. Even then the average year of education of the teachers is consistent with the minimum required year of education fixed by the government. More than 90% of the teachers in all school-category had no formal basic training for teachers.

The learners in the BRAC-run schools found to be comparatively older than that of the government-run schools. Parental education indicate that parents of BRAC-run school learners were less literate than parents of the government-run school learners. This implied that BRAC-run school learners would get less help at home. Household's economic and housing conditions were also found comparatively disfavoured in getting help in their studies at home. *These necessitate an initiative in schools so that learners would not need or need a little help in their studies at home.*

The performance of BRAC-run schools had been well appreciated by the community. However, charging fee created difficulties for poor guardians in continuing the education of their children in schools. In many cases, guardians had to pay for more than one month at a time. *It is, therefore, suggested that BRAC should reconsider the issue of charging fee at least in the case of poor students, and make sure that monthly fee is collected regularly in every month. This has to be ensured that the really poor is given relieve.*

Learners coming from government primary schools to BRAC-run schools. This complain lodged by the thana education authority which was supported by school-survey data, might jeopardize the existing relationship between BRAC and the government's education department. However, these learners were ex-learners of these community schools. *So, it is suggested that BRAC should be careful in enrolling learners in its community schools so that this problem of pulling learners from other primary schools (government + non-government) can be resolved.*

The study revealed that some factors were responsible for non-functioning of community the schools. Among these, non-fulfillment of personal interest, local politics and teachers' salaries were not paid by the government, were dominant. On the other hand, it was found that in areas where community people had positive motivation towards their children's education, these factors or conflicting situation responsible for non-functioning of community schools did not arise. Schools were started and running more or less smoothly there. *It is, therefore, suggested that anybody or organization expecting to run a programme which will be managed by the local community instead of centrally regulatory body, should ensure the positive motivation and consensus among the community people towards the programme so that the problems encountered by the non-functioning community schools can be minimized.*

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INTRODUCTION

Contributing towards strengthening of the government's Universal Primary Education Programme- Education For All by the year 2000- is one of the important aims of BRAC education programme (BRAC, 1998). To this end BRAC has been providing Non-Formal Primary Education (NFPE) to the 'out of school' and 'out of reach' students for more than a decade (BRAC, 1997). Apart from this, BRAC education programme started, though in a small scale, its own formal primary schools in 1999. In course of operating NFPE programme, a relationship based on co-ordination was established between BRAC education programme and government's departments of education specially Directorate of Non formal Education (DNFE). These led BRAC to operate collaborative programmes in education with the government. These programmes include among others Adult Education, Garments' Child Labour schools (GCL), Hard to reach urban working children school, etc. Community school programme is the most recent addition to this list. The government of Bangladesh officially handed over 67 non-functioning community schools to BRAC at the end of 1998 (BRAC, 1998). Of them 33 have already been started by BRAC. This study attempted to assess the situation of these non-functioning community schools that have been handed over to BRAC by the government.

The community schools

"Community schools" were constructed by the General Education Project (GEP) between 1990 and 1996. GEP objectives were to support Government policy objectives for the education sector, especially in primary education. Specifically, the objectives were to: (1) increase equitable access to primary and secondary schooling; (2) improve the quality of education at primary and secondary levels; (3) strengthen the management capacity of the primary and secondary sub-sectors, and (4) prepare future policies and programmes to reform the structure and financing of higher secondary and post-secondary education.¹

To meet the equitable access to primary education, yet in light of the high cost to meeting such objective, the GEP agreed to develop and construct lower-cost classrooms that

would be of simpler construction. Communities lacking schools where literacy rate was low, the density of population was high and where many children, particularly girls were unable to attend other schools, were to receive low cost building of minimum two classrooms (World Bank, 1997, BRAC, 1998). The project was to finance 12,000 such classrooms.

Communities were organized and trained to formulate School Management Committees (SMC) who would administer these community schools. SMCs together with community people were to arrange land for school and also to provide money (TK. 10,000) for depositing to government. The SMCs were also supposed to appoint teachers for schools. In addition, SMCs were responsible to motivate parents to send their children to schools; to handle all administrative matters including discipline, security; and to maintain the educational standard in these schools.

The government in return, was to provide cost for building construction and furniture. It was also to provide a lump sum money (presently TK. 500 per teacher per month for a maximum of four teachers) for teachers salaries. In addition, the government was to provide teaching and learning materials in the schools; carry out school supervision; assess functioning and performance of the schools with the help of SMC, the teachers and parents; and to arrange training of teachers.

There were some difficulties in the project component. For example, lower-cost building were considered of high-cost in the long run because the foundations were not strong enough to support a second floor. In addition, some communities were unable to provide money or land. Of the 2,800 communities chosen to receive community schools, 636 communities could not afford cash or land and some of the poorest communities were left without schools. As a result, although the project was to finance 12,000 classrooms, 5,350 classrooms were built by the end of the project implementation (World Bank, 1997). However, the project continued to develop community schools and established 3,259 schools by mid 1998 (BRAC, 1998). The project, in its second phase, planned to raise the number of community schools to about 5,500 by the year 2000 (PEDP, 1995).

Communities were supposed to make decisions about school construction, maintenance, and teacher appointments. Many of them fulfilled their tasks satisfactorily. But other communities did not have necessary information or experience, and could not provide much support in the process. Some communities that obtained lower-cost community schools faced difficulty in appointing teachers. The community was expected to propose qualified local residents for teaching positions and the thana education authority had to approve the appointments. But there were several disagreements among the communities and the thana education authorities. As a result, the appointments were delayed. Some communities that had contributed for their schools remained without benefit from their contribution.

These difficulties resulted in making many schools non-functional. The government assessed the performance of community schools and identified 194 schools as non-functional. The government, through newspaper advertisement appealed to the established and interested NGOs to run these non-functional community schools, initially without government finance. In response BRAC proposed to takeover these schools and the government had agreed to hand over 67 non-functioning community schools to BRAC.

BRAC and the community schools

The government officially handed over 67 non-functioning community schools to BRAC at the end of 1998, initially for two years, under certain terms and conditions (Annexure 1). The government had ordered its local authority to make all necessary arrangements to hand over these schools with building, furniture, materials, etc to BRAC by 30 November 1998 for starting operation with grade I through V by March 1999. However, till then BRAC has got possession of only 34 schools, of which it started operation in 33 schools. Due to non-cooperation of the local school authority BRAC could not get possession of the remaining schools.

With the 33 schools already started, BRAC repaired playgrounds, approach roads, floors, toilets, tube-wells, doors and windows. BRAC started operation in these schools during March- June 1999 with grades I and II in most schools and only grade I in few. The reason for not starting other grades was the lack of availability of classrooms required to run all the grades simultaneously. This requires the expansion of the school buildings. Efforts have been made by BRAC to encourage the government and the communities to help with building work (BRAC, 1998).

To operate these schools, BRAC recruited teachers and provided 15 days basic training to them at different BRAC training centres or TARCs. The project staff also received orientation and training. BRAC has supplied books and other necessary educational materials to the students free of charge and provided teachers' salaries. The government has also supplied text books free of cost to some schools. Parents have extended their financial assistance Tk. 15 and Tk. 20 respectively for grades I and II per student per month to ensure all educational materials are available. Furthermore, the government agreed that if the NGOs like BRAC were able to run these schools successfully, they would be allowed to continue with these and the government would provide the teachers' salaries, after initial two years.

Objective of the study

The broad objective of the study was to carry out a situation analysis of the community schools. The specific objectives were to:

- assess current and previous condition of community schools;
- know more about the quality of teachers;
- prepare a learners' profile;
- document the causes of non-functioning of the community schools and
- obtain information for future evaluation.

METHODOLOGY

The study design was based on the survey of community schools and students of these schools, group discussion, interview with key informants and some in-depth case studies of community schools. Many sources were considered appropriate in designing the data collection. These included: i) the schools as the outlet for imparting education, ii) parents as main sources of information on learners' background, and iii) teachers, SMC members, BRAC staffs, thana education authority and other community people who had been aware of the schools as key informants.

The unit of analysis in this study remained the community schools as well as the learners. These schools are scattered throughout 22 districts of the five administrative divisions of Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Barisal and Sylhet. Three categories of community schools were included in the study. The first category was the community schools those were non-functioning but BRAC has already started operation - termed as BRAC-run schools. To mean the previous and present condition of BRAC-run schools the terms BRAC-run past and BRAC-run present were used respectively in this study. The second category of schools was the community schools those were considered disfunctioning/ closed and BRAC expected to get those for operating. The third category was the government-run community schools. All the 33 schools that BRAC already started operation and all the 34 schools that BRAC was expecting to get, were included in the study. Apart from these schools, 28 government-run community schools from the areas where first and/or second category of schools exist were also selected. These were those of government-run community schools which were nearest to the former two categories of schools. Thirteen learners from each of the first and third category of schools were selected at random for learners' background information. However, information on background of the learners of a government-run community school could not be collected due to practical reason. Thus, the number of learners in the study were (33x13) or 429 and (27x13) or 351 respectively from the first and the third category schools (Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of study population

Category of community schools	School survey	Learner survey	
		No. of schools	No. of learners
BRAC-run	33	33	429
Close that BRAC expecting to get	34	--	--
Government-run	28	27	351
Total	95	60	780

Three sets of instruments were developed for collecting data. These include i) school survey instrument, ii) learners' background survey instrument, and iii) checklist for group discussion and in-depth interview with key informants. Instruments were pre-tested and then finalized.

15 Field Investigators (FIs) and five Field Monitors (FMs) were recruited for collecting data. They had been trained sufficiently for the purpose prior to conducting the data collection. The training included both the in-house training and field practice. Data collection was conducted in two phases. In the first phase the school survey and the learners' survey were done. After preliminary analysis of a sub-set of the data from the first phase of data collection, some schools and issues were selected for case study to get deeper understanding of the functioning or disfunctioning of the schools. An in-depth investigation on these issues had been carried out in the selected schools during the second phase of data collection. To ensure the quality of data certain percentage of sample were re-interviewed.

After completion of data collection both the survey data had been scrutinized and computerized. Statistical package SPSS was used in processing and analyzing the data.

FINDINGS

Profile of the schools

Of the 67 schools that have been sanctioned for BRAC by the government, 66 schools were observed in this study. Among these 66 schools, BRAC has started operation in 33 schools. Out of these 33 schools BRAC has already started, 17 schools never started their operation before. On the other hand, among the remaining 33 schools that BRAC either did not start operation yet or yet to get hold also termed as closed category of schools in the study, four were non-existent and nine other never started their operation before. Seven schools from this category were found in operation at the time of survey (Table 2).

Table 2: Distribution of non-functioning schools by their previous and present condition, and school category

Variable		School category		Total
		BRAC-run	Closed	
Sample schools observed	Yes	33	33	66
	No	00	01	01
Ever existence	Yes	33	29	62
	No	00	04	04
Teachers recruitment before October, 98	Yes	20	22	42
	No	13	07	20
Recruited teachers joining	Yes	17	21	38
	No	03	01	04
Ever operation status before October, 98	Yes	16	20	36
	No	17	09	26
Present operation status	Yes	33	07	40
	No	00	22	22

Table 3 represents age, distance from other nearest primary school, and building condition of schools by school category. It was revealed that more than 80% of the BRAC-run and government-run schools and about 50% of the closed schools were established more than two years before. Some of these were even five or more years old. A very small proportion of schools from closed and government-run categories were established only some few months before the survey was carried out.

There are certain conditions for establishing new primary schools in a locality. To open a new school there must not be any other primary schools (government or private) within two miles of catchment area of the proposed school. However, almost all the schools in all the three categories had other government primary schools within two miles of catchment area (Table 3). This indicate the impracticality of the set condition for establishing primary schools.

Table 3: Proportion of schools by their age, distance from other government school, building condition and school category

Variable	School category		
	BRAC-run	Closed	Govt.-run
1. Age of school			
< 1 year	—	17.2 (5)	3.6 (1)
1- 2	12.1 (4)	31.0 (9)	—
3- 4	48.5 (16)	41.4 (12)	64.3 (18)
5 +	39.4 (13)	10.3 (3)	32.1 (9)
2. Distance from other primary school			
< 1 mile	54.5 (18)	13.8 (4)	46.4 (13)
1	27.3 (9)	34.5 (10)	32.1 (9)
2	15.2 (5)	44.8 (13)	17.9 (5)
> 2	3.0 (1)	6.9 (2)	3.6 (1)
3. School building condition			
Good	84.8 (28)	26.6 (8)	42.9 (12)
Average	15.2 (5)	44.8 (13)	42.9 (12)
Poor	—	27.6 (8)	14.3 (4)
N	33	29	28

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate number of schools

Most (84.8%) of the BRAC-run and 26.6% and 42.9% respectively of the closed and government-run school buildings were found to be in good condition (Table 3). No BRAC-run school building was in poor condition while some school buildings from other two categories of schools were found in poor condition.

Table 4 presents the distribution of schools by number of classes, means of teachers recruitment and school category. Average number of classes varied with the category of

schools. The mean number of classes in BRAC-run past, BRAC-run present, closed and government-run schools were 2.9, 1.8, 2.8 and 3.5 respectively. In the cases of BRAC-run past, BRAC-run present and closed category, highest proportion of schools had grade I through II, whereas in the case of government-run schools highest proportion of schools had grade I through II and I through V. There was no school with grade I only except BRAC-run present category of schools. There was no BRAC-run present category of schools with grades III, IV and V.

In most schools of the BRAC-run past, closed and government-run category, teachers were recruited by the thana education authority which include TNO (Thana Nirbahi Officer), TEO (Thana Education Officer) and ATEO (Assistant Thana Education Officer). According to this procedure the authority advertised through handout in the locality to recruit teachers. They took interview and selected suitable candidates for recruitment. But community people complained that in most cases authority did not follow the rules and recruited teachers by taking money as bribe from the teachers. A significant proportion (35%) of BRAC-run past and a small proportion (9%) of closed category schools recruited teachers those were recommended by the SMCs of the respective schools. In a considerable proportion of BRAC-run past (25%) and closed (41%) category of schools, the teachers were recruited under either political and local pressure or a consensus between SMC and the thana education authority. In the later procedure of consensus, the SMC and the thana education authority agreed upon taking money from teachers those would be recruited. This money would generate a fund of Tk. 10,000 to be deposited to the government fund to fulfil the precondition of the establishment of schools. In most (94%) of the BRAC-run present schools, teachers were recruited following BRAC procedure. The local area education office of BRAC advertised locally, took interview and selected the most qualified candidates for recruitment.

Table 4: Proportion of schools by number of classes, teachers recruitment process and school category

Variable	School category			
	BRAC-run		Closed	Govt.-run
	Past	Present		
1. Classes in the school				
Only grade one	--	15.2 (5)	--	--
Grade 1-2	50.0 (8)	84.8 (28)	65.0 (13)	42.9 (12)
Grade 1-3	31.3 (5)	--	10.0 (2)	10.7 (3)
Grade 1-4	--	--	5.0 (1)	3.6 (1)
Grade 1-5	18.8 (3)	--	20.0 (4)	42.9 (12)
Mean number of classes	2.9	1.8	2.8	3.5
2. Teachers recruitment				
Government procedure	40.0 (8)	6.1 (2)	50.0 (11)	100.0 (28)
Recommended by SMC	35.0 (7)	--	9.1 (2)	--
BRAC procedure	--	93.9 (31)	--	--
Others	25.0 (5)	--	40.9 (9)	--

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate number of schools

Facilities in schools by different school category has been presented in table 5. On an average, schools in all category had more than two classrooms. Most of the schools in all category had either two or three classrooms. None of the schools had four or more classrooms except one government-run school.

Most of the schools in different category had latrine facility of their own (Table 4). The highest proportion of schools having latrine facility of their own were from BRAC-run present school category followed by BRAC-run past (75.8%), government-run (71.4%) and closed (65.5%) category. Around 60% of the schools in both the categories of BRAC-run past and BRAC-run present schools had drinking water facility of their own, whereas this proportion was much lower in the case of closed and government-run schools (37.9% and 32.1% respectively). Most of the schools in all categories had 30-40 decimal of land of their own and very few had more than that. However, few BRAC-run schools had less than 30 decimal of land (Table 5).

Table 6: Proportion of schools by discipline and school category

Variable	School category	
	BRAC-run	Govt.-run
1. School discipline		
National Flag	100 (33)	60.7 (17)
National Anthem	90.9 (30)	39.3 (11)
2. School contact hour		
< 3 hours	--	25.0 (7)
3-4	97.0 (32)	28.6 (8)
5-6	3.0 (1)	35.7 (10)
7 +	--	10.7 (3)
N	33	28

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate number of schools

Community participation in school management in the form of SMC and its activities are presented in table 7. Out of 33 BRAC-run schools, one had no SMC at the time of survey, and among the remaining schools SMC meeting was held in 31 schools in the preceding one month. On the other hand, in nine out of 28 government-run schools SMC meeting was held in the preceding one month. It was found that in most of the BRAC-run schools (96.9%) the meeting was held within the preceding one month. This proportion was 32.1% in case of government-run schools. In most of the government-run schools meeting was held either 1-3 or 4-6 months before. This indicated a more regularity in holding SMC meeting in BRAC-run schools. More than 60% of the BRAC-run schools had mentioned that causes of absence, financial problem, administrative issue and other issues related to schools were discussed in SMC meeting. Whereas most of the government-run schools (64.3%) mentioned other issues related to schools and comparatively lower proportion of the schools in this category mentioned other three issues were discussed in SMC meeting. Average attendance in SMC meeting were 7.2 and 5.2 respectively for BRAC-run and government-run schools. More male than female were present in SMC meeting in government-run schools. This implied the inclusion of more female in SMCs of BRAC-run schools. It must be mentioned here that the government prescribed number of the SMC member is four including a teacher as

Table 5: Proportion of schools by different facilities in schools and school category

Variable	School category			
	BRAC-run		Closed	Govt.-run
	Past	Present		
1. Number of classroom				
One	--	--	--	--
Two	51.5 (17)	48.5 (16)	72.4 (21)	53.6 (15)
Three	48.5 (16)	51.5 (17)	27.6 (8)	42.9 (12)
Four	--	--	--	3.6 (1)
Mean number of classroom	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.5
2. Own latrine facility				
Yes	75.8 (25)	87.9 (29)	65.5 (19)	71.4(20)
No	24.2(8)	12.1 (4)	34.5 (10)	28.6(8)
3. Own drinking water facility				
Yes	60.6 (20)	60.6 (20)	37.9 (11)	32.1 (9)
No	39.4 (13)	39.4 (13)	62.1 (18)	67.9(19)
4. Amount of land owned				
< 30 decimal	9.1 (3)	9.1 (3)	--	--
30- 40	78.8 (26)	78.8 (26)	89.7 (26)	92.9 (26)
41 +	12.1 (4)	12.1 (4)	10.3 (3)	7.1 (2)
N	33	33	29	28

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate number of schools

Table 6 represents the distribution of schools by performance in school discipline, contact hour and school category. All the BRAC-run and 60.7% of government-run schools hoisted national flag. In about 91% of the BRAC-run schools national anthem was sung, whereas this proportion was only about 40% in the case of government-run schools.

Almost all the BRAC-run schools had contact hour of 3-4 hours. On the other hand, highest proportion of the government-run schools (35.7%) had 5-6 contact hours while one-fourth of this category of schools had less than three contact hours. A small proportion of the government-run schools (10.7%) had seven and above contact hours. These variations in contact hour might be due to variation in number of grades/classes the schools had.

member secretary. An increased number of members in SMCs in both the school categories indicate that these work as a combination of SMCs and parent-teacher associations.

Table 7: Proportion of school by SMC meeting, issues discussed, attendance in meeting and school category

Variable	School category	
	BRAC-run	Govt.-run
1. SMC meeting in last one month		
Yes	93.9 (31)	32.1 (9)
No	3.0 (1)	67.9 (19)
No committee	3.0 (1)	--
2. SMC's last meeting		
Within one month	96.9 (31)	32.1 (9)
Within three months	3.1 (1)	35.7 (10)
Within six months	--	32.1 (9)
3. Issues discussed		
Causes of absence	69.7 (23)	46.4 (13)
Financial problem	63.6 (21)	21.4 (6)
Administrative issue	66.7 (22)	28.6 (8)
Others	69.7 (23)	64.3 (18)
4. Average attendance		
Male	2.9	4.0
Female	4.4	1.2
All	7.2	5.2

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate number of schools

School supervision by authority (supervisors) and activities during the supervision are presented in table 8. Data on the preceding one month's supervision indicate that half of the government-run schools and about 6% of the BRAC-run schools were not visited at all. The remaining half of the government-run schools were supervised once during the preceding one month. About 94% of the BRAC-run schools were supervised four or more times during the same period.

Supervisors performed many tasks while they were supervising the schools. These tasks included checking attendance and learning improvement, and helping teachers and others.

More than 90% of the BRAC-run schools mentioned that supervisors checked attendance and learning improvement, and helped teachers while they were supervising the schools. This proportion was different for the three tasks mentioned above in the case of government-run schools. These were 57.1%, 60.7% and 20.0% respectively for checking attendance, checking learning improvement and helping teachers. Less than half of the schools in both the school categories mentioned that supervisors performed other tasks which include problem solving related to learners' attendance, administrative issues, logistics, etc. The teachers having no formal training in teaching need support from supervisors. But only a negligible proportion (20%) of government-run schools mentioned that they got that kind of help from the supervisors.

Table 8: Proportion of school by frequency of supervision, tasks in supervision and school category

Variable	School category	
	BRAC-run	Govt.-run
1. Supervision in last one month		
No supervision	6.1 (2)	50.0 (14)
Once	--	50.0 (14)
Twice	--	--
Three	--	--
Four & above	93.9 (31)	--
2. Tasks in supervision		
Check attendance	97.0 (32)	57.1 (16)
Check learning improvement	100 (33)	60.7 (17)
Help teachers	90.9 (30)	20.0 (7)
Others	48.5 (16)	42.9 (12)

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate number of schools

Enrollment by grade, class-size, sex ratio of learners and teacher-student ratio are presented in table 9. On an average, 32.9 learners were enrolled in a class in BRAC-run schools and this figure was 34.3 for government-run schools. There were differences in average enrollment in a class in different school category as well as in classes. In both the

school categories of BRAC-run and government-run, a decreasing trend of enrollment was found as the learners proceeded towards higher grades.

In BRAC-run schools 54% of the students were girls and the rest were boys. On the other hand, in government-run schools 51% of the students were girls. The teacher-student ratio of the two categories of schools were 1:33 and 1:46 respectively in BRAC-run and government-run schools.

Table 9: Enrollment and teacher-student ratio by school category

Variable	School category	
	BRAC-run	Govt.-run
1. Average enrollment		
Grade one	33.8	46.1
Grade two	31.7	34.9
Grade three	--	31.9
Grade four	--	24.6
Grade five	--	19.8
2. Mean class-size	32.9	34.3
3. Sex ratio	54:46	51:49
4. Teacher-student ratio	1:33	1:46

The study found difference in attendance rate in different school category (Table 10). In BRAC-run schools, on an average, 93.2% of the learners attended whereas this proportion was 59% in government-run schools. Attendance rate was slightly higher among girls than boys in both the categories of schools.

Attendance rate was slightly higher among grade I learners than grade II learners of BRAC-run schools. In government-run schools too, attendance rate was higher in grade I than grade II. However, these rates increased gradually from grade III onward (Table 10).

Table 10: Attendance by sex, grade and school category

Attendance	School category	
	BRAC-run	Govt.-run
1. Sex		
Boys	92.6	57.5
Girls	93.7	60.5
All	93.2	59.0
2. Grade		
First	93.4	59.2
Second	93.0	54.1
Third	--	61.0
Fourth	--	62.5
Fifth	--	68.9

Table 11 presents previous schooling background of the learners who enrolled in BRAC-run community schools. It was found that highest proportion (36.9%) of the enrolled learners had no previous schooling. This proportion was higher (53.2%) in grade I than in grade II (16.4%). The other dominant group (32.1%) came from government primary schools and their proportion was higher (53.1%) in grade II than in grade I (15.5%). This trend of learners coming from government primary schools to BRAC-run community schools might contribute to the already existed misunderstanding among government schools and BRAC schools. The government school authority has already claimed that BRAC schools were pulling students from government schools. Apart from these some of the learners previously enrolled in current schools as well as in private primary schools. A small proportion (4.2%) of learners also been previously in Madrassas.

Table 11: Proportion of learners enrolled in BRAC-run school by their previous schooling status

Attended before	Grade		All
	First	Second	
Government primary school	15.5 (174)	53.1(471)	32.1(645)
Private primary school	6.7 (75)	14.8 (131)	10.3 (206)
Current school	22.9 (256)	8.6 (74)	16.5 (330)
Madrassa	1.7 (19)	7.4 (66)	4.2 (85)
No previous schooling	53.2 (595)	16.4 (145)	36.9 (740)

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate number of learners

Among the schools where recruited teachers joined, the number of teachers varied from school to school and according to school category as well. Mean number of teachers were almost similar (2.5) in different school category except BRAC-run present schools where, on an average, schools had 1.8 teachers (Table 12). Most schools in all categories had two teachers and some schools in the school categories of BRAC-run past, closed and government-run, had three or more teachers. However, a proportion of schools in all school categories had only one teacher. the highest proportion in BRAC-run present schools (18.2%).

Table 12: Proportion of schools by number of teachers, sex ratio and school category

Variable	School category			
	BRAC-run		Closed	Govt.-run
	Past	Present		
1. Number of teachers				
One	5.9 (1)	18.2 (6)	4.8 (1)	10.7 (3)
Two	47.1 (8)	81.8 (27)	71.4 (15)	50.0 (14)
Three & above	47.1 (8)	--	23.8 (5)	39.3 (11)
2. Mean number of teachers	2.5	1.8	2.4	2.5
3. Sex ratio	67:33	95:5	72:28	76:24

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate number of schools

The proportion of female teachers varied from 67 to 95% in different school category and this proportion was highest (95%) in BRAC-run present schools followed by government-run schools (76%) and closed schools (72%). Ninety five percent of the teachers in BRAC-run present schools being female was very consistent with the proportion of female teachers in NFPE schools where more than 90% of the teachers were female (BRAC, 1997/98).

Table 13 presents teachers' educational qualification and experience by different school category. The mean year of education of teachers was highest (11.5 years) in closed and government-run schools, and lowest (10.9 years) in BRAC-run present schools. Most of the teachers in all school category had 10 years of education and this proportion was highest (68.3%) in BRAC-run present schools. The proportion of teachers having 14 or more years of education varied from 11.7 to 22.9% in different school category. This proportion was highest (22.9%) in government-run schools and lowest (10.9%) in BRAC-run present schools.

Table 13: Proportion of teachers by year of education and experience, and school category

Variable	School category			
	BRAC-run		Closed	Govt.-run
	Past	Present		
1. Teachers education				
SSC	44.2 (19)	68.3 (41)	52.0 (26)	47.1 (33)
HSC	41.9 (18)	20.0 (12)	28.0 (14)	30.0 (21)
Graduation & above	13.9 (6)	11.7 (7)	20.0 (10)	22.9 (16)
2. Mean year of education	11.4	10.9	11.5	11.5
3. Experience (in year)				
< 2	58.1 (25)	87.7 (49)	76.0 (38)	20.0 (14)
2- 3	14.0 (6)	5.0 (3)	12.0 (6)	30.0 (21)
> 3	7.0 (3)	5.0 (3)	12.0 (6)	47.1 (33)
No experience	20.9 (9)	8.3 (5)	—	2.9 (2)
4. Mean year of experience	0.9	0.7	2.5	2.9

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate number of teachers

Average experience of the teachers in different school category varied from 0.7 to 2.9 years (Table 13). This average was highest among government-run school teachers (2.9 years) and lowest among BRAC-run present school teachers (0.7 years). Most of the teachers in BRAC-run past, BRAC-run present and closed category of schools had less than two years of teaching experience, whereas most teachers (47.1%) in government-run schools had more than three years of teaching experience. There were also some teachers in all school category except closed one, who had no teaching experience.

Training specially basic training is very important for anybody who want to be a school teacher. There are many basic training courses for primary teachers those of C in Ed, B.Ed, Dip in Ed and in non-formal sector, foundation training for BRAC teachers. Table 13 presents distribution of the teachers in different school categories according to basic training they received. It was found that most of the teachers in BRAC-run past, closed and government-run schools had no basic training while most of the teachers in BRAC-run present schools received foundation training for BRAC teachers. A very small proportion of teachers in BRAC-run present, close and government-run schools received C in Ed or Dip in Ed training on teaching (Table 14).

Table 14: Proportion of teachers by basic training they received and school category

Variable	School category			
	BRAC-run		Closed	Govt.-run
	Past	Present		
1. Training (basic)				
C in Ed	--	3.3 (2)	2.0 (1)	5.7 (4)
B. Ed	--	--	--	--
Dip in Ed	--	6.7 (4)	--	--
Foundation training (BRAC)	--	88.3 (53)	--	--
No training	100 (43)	1.7 (1)	98.0 (49)	94.3 (66)

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate number of teachers

Profile of the learners

Learners' age, sex and class by school categories are presented in table 15. Although there were no learners in grade III onward in BRAC-run schools, however, mean age of the learners of BRAC-run schools found to be comparatively higher than that of the learners of government-run schools. This implied that learners of BRAC-run schools were comparatively older than that of the government-run schools. If we consider the primary school age (6-10 years) of sample children, it was found that 17.5% of the learners of BRAC-run schools and 12.2% of the government-run schools were over-aged, while 7.2 and 24.8% respectively were under-aged.

Table 15: Distribution of students by their age, sex, class and school category

Variable	School category	
	BRAC-run	Govt.-run
1. Age of child		
Up to 6	7.2 (31)	24.8 (87)
7	19.1 (82)	22.8 (80)
8	23.3 (100)	18.2 (64)
9	15.4 (66)	11.7 (41)
10	17.5 (75)	10.3 (36)
11+	17.5 (75)	12.2 (43)
Mean age	8.8	8.0
2. Sex of child		
Boy	42.9 (184)	51.9 (182)
Girl	57.1 (245)	48.1 (169)
3. Class		
One	62.5 (268)	53.3 (187)
Two	37.5 (161)	27.1 (95)
Three	–	8.0 (28)
Four	–	7.4 (26)
Five	–	4.3 (15)
N	429	351

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate number of learners

Around 43% of the sample learners from BRAC-run schools were boys while this proportion was about 52% in the case of government-run schools. The proportion for girls from both the school category were about 57% and 48% respectively. Distribution of sample learners by class indicated that in BRAC-run schools 62.5% were from grade I and 37.5% from grade II. On the other hand, in government-run schools, 52% of the sample learners were from grade I and 27.1% from grade II. This proportion were gradually lower in the higher grades.

Distribution of learners by their parents' education and NGO involvement are shown in table 15. It was revealed from the study that parents of BRAC-run schools learners were less educated than parents of the government-run schools learners. Data indicated that mean year of the schooling of mothers of BRAC-run schools learners was comparatively lower (1.5 years) than that of the mothers of government-run schools learners (2.5 years). Proportion of mothers having no schooling was higher (64.8%) among BRAC-run schools learners and this proportion was 48.1% among the mothers of government-run schools learners. Among the mothers of BRAC-run schools learners only about 5% had six or more year of schooling whereas this proportion was about 13% for the mothers of government-run schools learners.

Mean year of schooling of the fathers too, was higher (3.7 years) for government-run schools learners than that of the BRAC-run schools learners (3.0 years). Proportion of fathers having no schooling was 47.8% for BRAC-run schools learners and this proportion for government-run schools learners was lower, some 37.6% (Table 16).

Table 16: Distribution of learners by their parents education, NGO involvement and school category

Variable	School category	
	BRAC-run	Govt.-run
1. Mother's education		
No schooling	64.8 (278)	48.1 (169)
Grade 1- 5	29.8 (128)	38.5 (135)
Grade 6 & above	5.4 (23)	13.4 (47)
Mean year of schooling	1.5	2.5
2. Father's education		
No schooling	47.8 (205)	37.6 (132)
Grade 1- 5	30.3 (130)	35.0 (123)
Grade 6 & above	21.9 (94)	27.4 (96)
Mean year of schooling	3.0	3.7
3. Mother's NGO involvement		
BRAC	9.1 (39)	7.4 (26)
Others	21.4 (92)	23.9 (84)
BRAC + others	0.5 (2)	1.4 (5)
No involvement	69.0 (296)	67.2 (236)
4. Father's NGO involvement		
BRAC	—	—
Others	2.1 (9)	4.6 (16)
BRAC + others	0.5 (2)	—
No involvement	97.4 (418)	95.4 (335)
N	429	351

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate number of learners

Household involvement in NGOs indicate that almost same proportion (31 and 33% respectively) of the mothers of learners of BRAC-run schools and government-run schools were involved with NGOs. Among these, less than 10% in both the school categories were involved with BRAC. The major proportion were involved with NGOs other than BRAC. A very few mothers of learners of both the school categories were involved with BRAC and other NGOs simultaneously. Less than 5% of the learners' fathers were involved in NGO activities (Table 16).

Table 17 represents learners' household economic and housing condition by school category. Economic condition of the households of learners were grouped into four

categories of always deficit, sometimes deficit, balance and surplus. These were determined considering self perceived household's yearly income-expenditure position. It was found that the proportion of learners coming from 'surplus' households, were almost similar in both the school categories. However, the proportion of learners coming from 'balance' households was higher (38.2%) in government-run schools than in BRAC-run schools (31.0%). The proportion of learners coming from 'sometimes deficit' and 'always deficit' households were comparatively higher in BRAC-run schools than in government-run schools. These indicate that learners of BRAC-run schools came from the households having comparatively poor economic condition.

Housing condition is also considered as one of the determinants of household socioeconomic condition (which further contribute to create environment for child's learning at home). This study considered condition of the household's wall in determining the housing condition and divided these into good, average and poor condition. The study revealed that about half of the BRAC-run school learners had poor housing condition and this proportion was about 40% in the case of learners of government-run schools. Among the learners of BRAC-run schools, 35.7 and 17.0% respectively had good and average housing condition. On the other hand, 36.7 and 23.1% of the learners respectively of government-run schools had good and average housing condition.

Table 17: Distribution of learners by socio-economic status and school category

Variable	Category of school	
	BRAC-run	Govt.-run
1. Household economic condition		
Always deficit	17.5 (75)	12.8 (45)
Sometimes deficit	33.8 (145)	31.6 (111)
Balance	31.0 (133)	38.2 (134)
Surplus	17.7 (76)	17.4 (61)
2. Housing condition		
Good	35.7 (153)	36.7 (129)
Average	17.0 (73)	23.1 (81)
Poor	47.3 (203)	40.2 (141)
N	429	351

Thirty six percent of the learners' fathers of the BRAC-run schools and 33% of those of the government-run schools were day labourer (Table 18). About one-third of the BRAC-run school learners' and one-fourth of the government-run school learners' fathers used to do agricultural work. The next dominant group in both the school categories was from businessmen followed by service holders. These later two groups together constituted about one-fourth and more than one-third respectively of the fathers of BRAC-run schools and government-run schools learners.

Mean size of arable land was 101.1 decimal for BRAC-run schools learners' households and 73.9 decimal for government-run schools learners' households (Table 17). More than 40% households of the learners of both the school categories had no arable land at all and around 20% had 1-50 decimal of land. These two groups together constituted landless category defined by BRAC which was about 64% for BRAC-run schools learners' households and about 62% for government-run schools learners' households. However, the proportion of learners' households having more than two acres of arable land was higher among BRAC-run schools learners (15.6%) than government-run schools learners (9.7%). This might rise up the average land size of the households of the learners in BRAC-run schools.

Table 18: Distribution of learners by socioeconomic status and school category

Variable	School category	
	BRAC-run	Govt.-run
1. Father's main occupation		
Agriculture	32.2 (138)	25.4 (89)
Service	10.7 (46)	15.1 (53)
Business	15.4 (66)	19.1 (67)
Agricultural labor	10.3 (44)	11.7 (41)
Non-agricultural labor	25.4 (109)	21.7 (76)
Others	3.5 (15)	3.7 (13)
Not applicable	2.6 (11)	3.4 (12)
2. Arable land (decimal)		
No land	43.8 (188)	40.5 (142)
1- 50	20.0 (86)	21.4 (75)
51- 100	11.7 (50)	14.2 (50)
101- 150	5.1 (22)	8.8 (31)
150- 200	3.7 (16)	5.4 (19)
200 +	15.6 (67)	9.7 (34)
Mean	101.1	73.9
3. NGO eligibility		
TG	38.7 (166)	31.3 (110)
NTG	61.3 (263)	68.7 (241)
4. Credit program		
Eligible but not participated	23.5 (101)	19.4 (68)
Participated	30.1 (129)	32.2 (113)
Not eligible and not participated	46.4 (199)	48.4 (170)
N	429	351

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate number of learners

NGO membership eligibility and involvement with NGOs of learners' households indicate that although 38.7% of the learners of BRAC-run schools were from TG households, more than half of these households were not involved with any NGO. About one-fourths of the NTG households from where learners coming to BRAC-run schools, found to be involved with NGOs. On the other hand, 31.3% of the learners of government-run schools were from TG households and more than half of these households were not involved with any NGO. About 30% of the NTG households in the

case of government-run school learners were found to be involved with NGOs (Table 18).

Factors affecting functioning or non-functioning of the community schools

It became apparent from the school survey that many issues contributed in making the schools either inactive or non-functional and in many cases a particular school might have faced multiple problems (Table 19). School survey listed eight problems that contributed in making the schools non-functional or inactive. However, most of the schools in both the school categories of BRAC-run and closed, faced mainly three problems. These were non-fulfillment of personal interest, teachers salaries were not paid by the government, and local politics. Apart from these, in some of the BRAC-run schools two other problems those of conflict between teachers and SMCs, and lack of students, were dominant. Few schools in both the school categories faced the problems of fund shortage, less teachers than required, and lack of skilled teachers (Table 19).

Table 19: Frequency of non-functioning schools by problems they faced and school category

Problems	Category of school		Total N = 62
	BRAC-run N = 33	Close N = 29	
Non-fulfillment of personal interest	14	10	24
Teachers salaries were not paid by the government	12	10	22
Local politics	10	05	15
Conflict between teachers and SMC	07	03	10
Lack of students	07	03	10
Lack of money	03	04	07
Lack of skilled teachers	03	02	05
Less teachers than required	02	00	02

Dominant five problems that emerged from the school survey were further investigated through case studies of some selected schools following interview with key informants using a checklist. Nature and magnitude of the problems that are evident from case studies are described below:

Non-fulfillment of personal interests: The problem faced by most of the non-functioning schools was the non-fulfillment of personal interests. Being aware of the government declaration for establishing community schools through the concerned government department of their locality, some villagers became interested in doing so. They considered this as an opportunity for employment of their own or nearest kin. To achieve their interest, in some cases, they donated land for schools and provided fund of Tk.10,000 that had to be deposited to the government fund. Regarding the donation of land, the study experienced irregularities in few cases. In some instances, the donors took money from the prospective applicants for appointment as teachers. Then they purchased land with that money in their own name and donated that land for the school. For this purpose they might have taken money from many prospective candidates.

All these increased the number of candidates for being a school teacher who had monetary contribution towards establishing schools. However, the number of teachers that had to be recruited for a particular school was limited. Given this situation the thana education authority advertised for recruiting teachers, and after receiving applications the candidates were interviewed. They selected the most qualified candidates for recruitment which excluded the contributing candidates. This created disagreements among SMC members whose consensus was necessary for approval of the recruitment. Thus, in turn, teachers recruitment was either delayed or cancelled. Although, in some cases teachers were recruited but the schools became non-functioning due to non-cooperation from the members of SMC who represented different prospective teacher candidates those were not recruited. These made the schools inactive in some cases and non-functioning in other cases.

Teachers' salaries were not paid by the government: The next important problem the most non-functioning schools faced was that of teachers salaries were not paid by the government. Teachers in most of these non-functioning schools provided money for depositing to the government fund for fulfilling one of the pre-conditions of establishing community schools. They did it with the hope that they would get a fixed job with a regular salary in future. They also hoped that their service will be declared compulsory

by the government in future. However, in most cases, payment of teachers' salaries was very irregular. In many cases teachers were not getting salaries at all.

Thana education authority that responsible for payment of teachers' salaries was asked to response to this problem. According to them, the reason for non-payment or irregular payment of teachers' salaries were either delay in getting clearance from the Director General (DG) office. They did not get the clearance at all. These happened, according to them, due to delay in teachers' recruitment, delay in approving the recruitment of teachers by the SMC, disagreement among SMC and thana education authority on teachers recruitment, and teachers' poor performance, etc. So, the thana education authority could not report to the DG office on time which resulted in delayed clearance in some cases. In some other cases, these resulted in not getting clearance from the DG office because the project was stopped by that time. Thus, the thana education authorities were unable to pay teachers' salaries regularly or they could not pay it at all, as they needed permission from the DG office to do so. As a result teachers became demotivated and ultimately most of them left the schools. Finally the schools became non-functional.

Local politics: Local politics, in most cases contributed a lot in making the schools non-functional. There were socioeconomically influential groups in the villages who were competitors to each other in holding social and political power. Any institution in the village was considered to be controlled by these groups to hold the power. It was in this social and political context that involved the groups fighting in the process of establishing the schools.

Whenever any influential person from any of these groups took initiative to establish the community school by providing land for the purpose, then the other groups stood against the former one. The later groups thought that the control of the school would go to the former group belonging to the person who donated land for the school, and that should not be allowed to happen. They tried to neutralise this power holding through putting their own candidates for teacher recruitment. After putting their own candidates they tried to make sure that their candidates were selected, through imposing pressure on people

involved with recruitment. On the other hand, the former group that associated with the establishment of schools from the very beginning, they had their candidates for recruiting as teachers from whom they took money for generating fund to deposit to the government. As a result disputes had been arisen in teachers recruitment. Being unable to recruit their own teachers groups complained against teachers recruitment and informed it to the higher authority that there were irregularities in teachers recruitment. These resulted in not recruiting the teachers or disapproval of teachers recruitment by the SMCs which ultimately made schools non-functional.

These conflicting groups, in many cases had external link through their affiliation with major political parties and they used these links. For instance, a school in Manikganj district was established with initiation of a person Mr. X having affiliation with a particular political party. This person provided land for the school, and he along with the members of SMC took money from the prospective teacher candidates to deposit to the government fund. So the SMC forwarded these prospective candidates to thana education authority for recruitment. Another person Mr. Y who led another political party in the locality, along with his followers thought that they must push their candidates for recruitment so that the control of the school remained in their hand. They submitted applications of their candidates and put pressure on the recruiting authority to recruit them through the then Member of Parliament (MP). This later group, with the grace from MP succeeded in recruiting their candidates.

But the SMC led by former group did not approve the recruitment as they failed to push their candidates from whom they took money for depositing to the government fund. Thus, the recruited teachers could not join and the school became non-functional.

Conflict between teachers and SMCs: This happened in two forms. In the first form the teachers those contributed money for depositing, started to think that they had all the right to work as they like. So, they were irregular late in schools. But the SMCs did not tolerate it and they complained against the teachers. This created non-cooperation among SMCs and teachers which further shaped into conflict.

The second was the conflict between SMCs and teachers whose recruitment was unfair as they gave bribe to the thana education authority for recruitment. These teachers established good relation with thana education authority through their unfair recruitment and by virtue of this relation they also behaved like the teachers mentioned in form one. Thus, a conflicting situation was prevailing in these schools and the schools became non-functional.

Lack of students: This problem was basically created as the consequence of the four problems already discussed. If there were conflict among interest and socio-political groups, then the groups failed to materialise their interests were refrained from sending their children to these schools and sent them to other schools. Teachers' irregularities and demotivation discussed in problems two and four contributed to make guardians to withdraw their children from these schools and send them to other schools to ensure their schooling. These steps taken by the guardians made the schools suffer from lack of students.

Factors contributing to/influencing smooth running of community schools: To identify the factors contributing to smooth running of community schools, case studies were done with some community schools which had been running smoothly. It became apparent from the study that the most contributing factor was the positive motivation among community people towards the education of children in their locality.

Two situations that demonstrated positive motivation among community people, found to be contributing in smooth starting and running of community schools. In the first situation, people in the village were interested to establish the schools and one or more persons in the community, having no teacher candidates of their own, provided land and money for establishing the schools. In the second situation, people of the villages were interested to establish the schools and contributed, according to their capacity, in purchasing land and providing money for establishing the schools.

Teachers in both the situations were recruited by the thana education authority following the procedure. These reduced the disagreement and increased consensus in the community which fastened the opening of the schools, and helped in smooth running of these schools.

People's opinion about BRAC-run community schools

Community people as well as thana education authority were asked to express their opinion on the operation of BRAC-run community schools. In response, both the group expressed their satisfaction and they felt enthusiastic about BRAC's teaching methodologies, co-curricular activity and the friendly relationship between teachers and learners. They also felt enthusiastic about the cooperation between teachers and staff. These had been reflected when community people and SMC members said, *'Present school is running very well. We are very happy with this activity of BRAC as we see that whenever a learner does not come to school then BRAC people go to the learner's home, try to know the problems and also try to make the learner attending the school as soon as possible by solving the problems. This is really very good. Apart from this, these schools remain open regularly and learners learn there in a disciplined way.'* Many of the thana education authorities had expressed their positive attitude towards BRAC-run community schools by saying, *'We like very much the rules and regulations in BRAC-run community schools. They (BRAC people) go to schools regularly, ensure learners' attendance in schools and try their best for learners' learning. We have lack of manpower but BRAC does not have this problem. So, BRAC is doing well at present.'*

However, two problems were mentioned by the thana education authority and community people. Thana education authority complained that BRAC took away learners from the government primary schools. They expressed their concern in this regard by saying, *'BRAC has failed to run these schools according to terms and conditions. BRAC has to enroll learners in these schools from those of out of school and out of reach children. But we see that BRAC brings over learners from government primary schools through conspiracy by doing immediate good to poor parents providing various loan. This is*

totally unexpected to us. They (BRAC people) enroll learners in these schools by satisfying guardians through giving various materials to the learners.' This also reduced the opportunity for access for 'out of school' and 'out of reach' children. The other problem was related to fee charged by the schools. Community people said that it was difficult for many guardians to pay Tk. 15 or 20 per student per month. Sometimes guardians had to pay for more than one month at a time which created added problem for them. So, they suggested that BRAC should reconsider the issue of charging fee so that poor guardians would not have to pay fee. They also suggested that it would be better for them if the schools collect monthly fee regularly in every month.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Community school programme is the most recent addition to BRAC operated collaborative programme in education with the government. The study attempted to undertake a situation analysis of these community schools in Bangladesh.

It was revealed from the study that only a few schools in all the three categories had other primary schools beyond more than two miles radius. This indicated the impracticality of the condition for location of establishing primary schools set by the government. Most of the building of BRAC-run schools were found in better condition than other categories of schools.

Number of classes found to be lowest in BRAC-run present schools. This implied a need for opening of higher grades in these schools to fulfil the condition as BRAC has to run these schools with grade I through V according to the TOR. But enrolling learners up to grade V at a time may lead BRAC to pull less qualified learners from other primary schools. The number classroom in these schools, however, indicated a need for extension of school building to run these schools with grade I through V.

Facilities in terms of latrine and drinking water in BRAC-run community schools were found better than other categories of schools. But still there were inadequacy, specially in the case of drinking water facility, which need to be improved.

School discipline was found to be maintained quite satisfactorily in BRAC-run schools and was far better than government-run schools. However, in few BRAC-run schools National Anthem was not sung at the time of survey. Performance in holding SMC meeting in the preceding one month, average attendance in these meeting and supervision by higher authority also in last one month found to be better in BRAC-run schools compared to government-run schools. There were misconception on SMC and the number of members of SMC. Academic support to the teacher by the supervisors (higher authority) is very important to maintain quality in schools and developing teachers.

Supervisors in most of the BRAC-run schools provided this kind of academic support while they were supervising the schools.

Mean class-size in both the categories of BRAC-run and government-run schools found to be almost the same. But sex ratio of learners indicate a comparatively favourable position of girls in BRAC-run schools than in government-run schools. Although BRAC-run schools had favourable teacher-student ratio compared to government-run schools. However, both of these categories showed comparatively favourable ratio than national ratio in government primary schools (1:73) and non-government primary schools (1:55) (Chowdhury and Nath, 1999).

The attendance rate in BRAC-run schools (92.3%) were found to be much higher than that of the government-run schools (59.0%). In both the school categories had higher rate than national rate of attendance (52%) in non-government primary schools (Chowdhury and Nath, 1999).

About one-third of the learners enrolled in BRAC-run community schools had previous schooling, and half of them came from other government primary schools.

The teachers in BRAC-run schools had lowest average year of education, and this was also lower than the average year of education of the teachers (11.6) in non-government primary schools (Chowdhury and Nath, 1999). This might be due to preference given by BRAC to female teachers and the female teachers require less year of education than male to be a teacher in primary school. Even then the average year of education of the teachers is consistent with the minimum required year of education fixed by the government. More than 90% of the teachers in all school categories had no formal basic training for teachers.

The learners in the BRAC-run schools were found to be comparatively older than that of the government-run schools. Parental education indicate that parents of BRAC-run school learners were less literate than those of the government-run schools. This implied that

BRAC-run school learners would get less help at home. Household's economic and housing condition was also found comparatively disfavoured in getting help in their studies at home. These necessitate an initiative in schools so that learners would not need or need a little help in their studies at home.

The performance of BRAC-run schools had been well appreciated by the community. However, charging of fee created difficulties for poor guardians in continuing their children's education in schools. In many cases, guardians had to pay for more than a month at a time. It is, therefore, suggested that BRAC should reconsider the issue of charging fee at least in the case of poor students, and make sure that monthly fee is collected regularly in every month. This has been ensured that the really poor is given relieve.

The complain that learners leave the government primary schools and enroll in the BRAC-run schools might jeopardize the existing relationship between BRAC and the government. However, these learners were ex-learners of these community schools. So, it is suggested that BRAC should be careful in enrolling learners in its community schools so that this problem of pulling learners from other primary schools (government + non-government) can be resolved.

The study concludes that some factors were responsible for non-functioning of the community schools. Among these, non-fulfillment of personal interest, local politics, and as a consequence of these two, the teachers salaries were not paid by the government were dominant. On the other hand, it was found that areas where community people had positive motivation towards their children's education, these factors or conflicting situation responsible for non-functioning of the community schools did not arise. It is, therefore, suggested that any organization expecting to run a programme which will be managed by the local community instead of centrally regulatory body, should ensure the positive motivation and consensus among the community people towards the programme so that the problems encountered by the non-functioning community schools can be minimized.

Notes

1. GEP was financed by the World Bank for US\$ 159 million, and UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, the Asian Development Bank, and the governments of Sweden, Netherlands and Norway provided parallel financing of US\$ 98 million.

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Annexure

Annexure 1: Terms and conditions for running the community schools according to Government notification no-PMED/Admin-3/community-1/98/475

শর্তাবলী :

- ১। কমিউনিটি বিদ্যালয়টি একটি পূর্ণাঙ্গ প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয় হবে। প্রতিটি কমিউনিটি বিদ্যালয়ে উপযুক্ত ছাত্র-ছাত্রী ভর্তি করিয়া আগামী মার্চ, ১৯৯৯ এর মধ্যে ১ম শ্রেণী থেকে ৫ম শ্রেণী পর্যন্ত পূর্ণাঙ্গ ক্লাস চালু করিতে হইবে। স্কুলের ক্লাস চলায় সময় হইবে সন্ধ্যা ৯.৩০ মিনিট হইতে বিকাল ৪.১৫ মিনিট পর্যন্ত।
- ২। বর্তমান সরকারী এবং রেজিষ্টার্ড বেসরকারী প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ের অনুরূপ পূর্বাঙ্ক (৯.৩০-১২.০০টা) ১ম ও ২য় শ্রেণী এবং অপরাহ্নে (১২.১৫-৪.১৫ মিনিট) ৩য়, ৪র্থ ও ৫ম শ্রেণী চালু করা বাইতে পারে।
- ৩। প্রতিটি বিদ্যালয়ে কমপক্ষে ১৫০জন ছাত্র-ছাত্রী থাকিবে এবং কমপক্ষে ৪জন শিক্ষক/শিক্ষিকা পাবিবে চন্দ্রগো ২জন শিক্ষিকা হইবেন।
- ৪। কমিউনিটি বিদ্যালয়ের জমি, ভবন, আসবাবপত্র, গাছপালা ইত্যাদি যাবতীয় সম্পত্তি বর্ধাবধানে সুরক্ষণ করিতে হইবে। এইগুলির সংস্কার ও সম্প্রসারণের প্রয়োজন হইলে প্রাথমিক ও গণশিক্ষা বিভাগের অনুমতি গ্রহণ করিতে হইবে। স্কুল পরিচালনা ব্যতীত অন্য কোন কাজে বিদ্যালয়ের ভবন বা উদ্যান কোন অংশ ব্যবহার করা যাইবে না। প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা বর্ধিত কাজে বিদ্যালয় ব্যবহৃত হইলে সরকার একতরফাভাবে হুকুম বাতিল করিতে পারিবে। আসবাবপত্র সুরক্ষণের জন্যও ২য় পক্ষ সম্পূর্ণভাবে দায়ী থাকিবে।
- ৫। সরকারী প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ের মত শিক্ষাবর্ষ এবং শিক্ষার সময়সূচী অনুসরণ করিতে হইবে। বিদ্যালয়ে জাতীয় শিক্ষাক্রম ও পাঠ্যপুস্তক বোর্ডের অনুমোদিত পুস্তক সমূহের ডিভিডে ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদের পাঠদান করিতে হইবে এবং বোর্ডের সিলেবাস বর্ধিত কোন পুস্তক পাঠ্য তালিকাভুক্ত করা যাইবে না।
- ৬। ১ম পক্ষ কর্তৃক বিনামূল্যে পাঠ্যপুস্তক সরবরাহ করা না হইলে বিদ্যালয়ের ছাত্র-ছাত্রীদেরকে ২য় পক্ষ বিদ্যালয়ে পাঠ্যপুস্তক সরবরাহ নিশ্চিত করিবে।
- ৭। প্রতিটি বিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষক ও শিক্ষিকার মধ্যে একজন পণ্ডিত ও একজন ইংরেজী বিষয়ে সু-পাঠদানে সম্পূর্ণ সমর্থ হইতে হইবে।
- ৮। সরকারী প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ের প্রধান শিক্ষক ও সহকারী শিক্ষকদের জন্য অনুসৃত শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা অনুসারে শিক্ষক ও শিক্ষিকা নিয়োগ করিতে হইবে।
- ৯। নিয়োজিত শিক্ষক/শিক্ষিকার ন্যূনতম বেতন ভাতা রেজিষ্টার্ড বেসরকারী প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষকদের সমপার্যের হইতে হইবে।
- ১০। বিদ্যালয় পরিচালনার জন্য নিম্নতে একটি কমিটি থাকিবে :

(ক) উর্ধ্বতন পর্যায়ের একজন প্রশিক্ষিত কর্মকর্তা	-সভাপতি/চেয়ারম্যান
(খ) সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ ক্লাসের সারিতে নিয়োজিত সহকারী থানা শিক্ষা অফিসার	-সদস্য
(গ) স্থানীয় সরকারী প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ের একজন প্রধান শিক্ষক	-সদস্য

সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ বিদ্যালয়ের প্রধান শিক্ষক/শিক্ষিকা সাংগঠনিক দায়িত্ব পালন করবেন।
- ১১। কোন বরকম কারণে বর্ধিত প্রয়োজনবোধে কমিটি বাতিল করিয়া নতুন আঙ্গিকে কমিটি গঠন করিবার ক্ষমতা সরকার সংরক্ষণ করিবে।

Contd annexure 1:

- ১২। চাহিদা মোতাবেক বিভিন্ন ভূখণ্ড ও নিবনগাদি সরকারের নিকট দাবি করা করিতে হইবে এবং নিশ্চিত হইলে সরকার কর্তৃক জারীকৃত আদেশ/নির্দেশ, নিয়মাবলী যথাযথভাবে পালন করিতে হইবে।
- ১৩। বিদ্যালয় পরিদর্শন, শিশু শিক্ষা ও সাক্ষরতা জরীপসহ বাধ্যতামূলক গোপনিত শিক্ষা সংশ্লিষ্ট আর্থিক বৎসরক্রমে সরকারকে গতির সহযোগিতা করিতে হইবে।
- ১৪। ছাত্র-ছাত্রী ভর্তি রেজিষ্টার, শিশু জরীপ, বৃত্তি পরীক্ষাসহ বিভিন্ন পরীক্ষার প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা সংক্রান্ত রেকর্ড সংরক্ষণ করিতে হইবে এবং চাহিদামত সরবরাহ করিতে হইবে।
- ১৫। শিক্ষার্থীদের মাসিক গড় উপস্থিতি কমপক্ষে শতকরা ৮০ ভাগ নিশ্চিত করিতে হইবে।
- ১৬। এলাকাসহ বিদ্যালয়ে গমনোপযোগী সকল শিশুকে বিদ্যালয়ে ভর্তি, উপস্থিতি নিশ্চিত করা এবং বিদ্যালয় অঙ্গী শিশুদেরকে বিদ্যালয়ে কিরাইরা আনার পদক্ষেপ গ্রহণ করিয়া সরেগড়া রোগ ও প্রতিরোধ করিতে হইবে।
- ১৭। বিদ্যালয়ে শিক্ষাদানের মান নির্ণয়ের জন্য সরকার পক্ষের পরিদর্শন প্রতিবেদন, প্রতি বছর সংশ্লিষ্ট শ্রেণী শিক্ষা কমিটির প্রতিবেদন ও স্কুল পরিচালনা কমিটির সুপারিশমালা মান্যকারিতা প্রদান করা হইবে।
- ১৮। শিক্ষক/শিক্ষিকাদের প্রয়োজনমত প্রশিক্ষণ গ্রহণের সুযোগ দিতে হইবে।
- ১৯। সরকারী বিধিবদ্ধ ছুটি ছাড়া বিদ্যালয় বন্ধ রাখা যাইবে না।
- ২০। আগামী মার্চ, ১৯৯৯ এর মধ্যে যথাযথভাবে স্কুল চালু না করিলে বা পদবর্তীকরণ বন্ধ রাখিলে বিদ্যালয়/ব্যর্থতার ক্ষেত্রে প্রদত্ত আমানত বাজেয়াপ্ত হইবে।
- ২১। যদি কোন কারণে এনজিও বিদ্যালয়ের পঞ্চম বা ষষ্ঠ তরফে আর্থনিকভাবে অসমর্থিত হইলে, সিপিইসি স্ট্রাকচারে আনয়ন হইবে। এরপরও পর্যায়ক্রমে পঞ্চম বা ষষ্ঠ তরফে আমানতের টাকা ফেরত দেয়া হইবে।
- ২২। স্থানীয় কোন রাষ্ট্রায়ত্ত্ব ব্যাংক বিদ্যালয়ের নামে দুইটি চলতি হিসাব স্থাপন হইবে। একই নামাঙ্কিত তহবিল সাধারণ মাধ্যমে বিদ্যালয়ের দৈনন্দিন ব্যয় মিটাইতে হইবে।
- ২৩। স্থানীয় থানা শিক্ষা অফিসার এবং এনজিও প্রধান/নির্বাহী কর্মকর্তার অভিমত ও এই ব্যাংক হিসাব পরিচালনা করিবেন। সরকারী অনুদান বা বেসরকারী স্বেচ্ছাসেবী সংস্থা প্রদত্ত অনুদানের হিসাব সংরক্ষণের জন্য যৌথভাবে তাহারা সরকারের নিকট দায়ী থাকিবেন।
- ২৪। সরকারী অনুদান ব্যয়ে কোন অনিয়ম ও অস্বাভাবিক অগ্রগতির অভিযোগ প্রমাণিকভাবে প্রমাণিত হইলে সরকার ২য় পক্ষের বিরুদ্ধে দেশের প্রচলিত আইন অনুযায়ী গোঁজদারী নামলা দেয় করিতে পারিবে।
- ২৫। সংশ্লিষ্ট এনজিও বিদ্যালয় পরিচালনার জন্য নিজস্ব অর্থ সংগ্রহের ব্যবস্থা করিবে। এই ক্ষেত্রে বিদ্যালয় কমিটিও অগ্রণী ভূমিকা পালন করিবে। তবে বিদ্যালয়ের সম্পত্তি হুমকণ, সূচী ব্যবহার ও শিক্ষাদানের উন্নতমানের স্বীকৃতি ছাড়াও আর্থিক পুরস্কার প্রদান করা যাইতে পারে।
- ২৬। চুক্তির কোন শর্ত আংশিক বা সম্পূর্ণ ভঙ্গ করিলে প্রথম পক্ষ যে কোন সময়ে এই চুক্তি বাতিল করিয়া বিদ্যালয় দ্বিতীয় পক্ষের পরিচালনা হইতে মুক্ত করিতে পারিবেন।