



NON-FORMAL EDUCATION FOR ETHNIC CHILDREN: BRAC ROLES IN BANGLADESH

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ABSTRACT

Education contributes significantly to socio-economic growth and development through human capital formation. BRAC has engaged crucial steps to raise literacy rate through non-formal education along with government efforts. Non-formal education for ethnic children provided by BRAC is a unique program to increase literacy rate of Adivasi population in Bangladesh. The study explores BRAC roles in promoting education for ethnic minorities in Bangladesh. Here the researcher applies a mixed method approach of social research where BRAC Education for Ethnic Children (EEC) program is selected purposefully. Data is derived from BRAC field officials, EEC teachers, students and their guardians by using a set of questionnaire for officers and teachers, an interview schedule for guardians and focus group discussions with the students alongside a close observation for better result. The findings show that BRAC plays pivotal roles to create opportunity for the ethnic children to access to basic education. About 94% of guardians and 96% of teachers are strongly agreed that BRAC Schools contribute positively a lot in basic education of tribal students in Bangladesh. Study also illustrates that sustaining quality of education and ensuring governance in BRAC's non-formal education is continuous efforts. Almost all group of respondents say that BRAC education has positive impact on the society as change agent. The findings lead to some recommendations which will give insights to policy makers and professionals engaged in this field.

Key Words: Basic Education, Ethnic Children, Governance, Quality Education, Women Empowerment, Change Agent, Social Impact.

1.0 Introduction

Bangladesh is a developing country with a fast-rising population, where the literacy rate is growing rapidly among the third-world countries. According to UNICEF and the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the literacy rate among Bangladeshi adults (15+ years) was 32% in 1980, which rose to 38% in 1995 and 51% in 1998 (BBS and UNICEF, 1998). Education Watch Report 2003 states that the literacy rate among those of 11 years or older is 41.4% (Male 47.6%, Female 35.6%), which raised to 59.8% in 2010 (BBS, 2010). However, UNESCO reported that the literacy rate among 15+ people was 61.49% in 2015 (UNESCO, 2015). These figures show a significant number of population are still illiterate and inadequately schooled in a country of some 160 million people. It simply is not possible, under existing conditions, to bring all sections of the population immediately into the formal system of education. At this backdrop, Non-Formal Education (NFE) is considered to be a priority area and the government, in this regard, has extended more resource allocation and policy support to NFE sector. The co-operation and collaboration between the government and the NGOs on NFE expansion in Bangladesh resulted in increased enrolment in primary schools and ever-increasing adult literacy rate (Akhter, 2014). Since the independence of the country in 1971, the number, the roles and function of NGOs in the primary education sector have progressively increased. Currently, there are over 400 NGOs involved in the transfer of elementary education programs. BRAC, a National NGO, provides non-formal primary education (NFPE) to over one million children through 34,000 education centers nationwide. BRAC education system and their roles are considered as change agent among the minorities and poor communities. Nath, Sylva and Grimes (1999) explored the positive impact of the non-formal education program (NFPE) of BRAC and said that BRAC children are significantly better in life skills and writing among the four components of basic education than their peers in formal schools. It has also some constructive socio-economic effects in the society (Hossain, Nath and Chowdhury, 2005). Again, the quality of BRAC Education Program was satisfactory compared to the mainstream primary education (Nath, 2006). However, a large number of ethnic populations living largely in the Chittagong region as well as Sylhet and remote parts in the north have not yet been reached by primary school expansion (BANBEIS, 2005). Similarly, Girls, children from rural areas and urban periphery areas, children from socioeconomic backwards families and ethnic minorities are often denied access to the governmental education system (Kabeer et. al., 2003). In this study, the researcher takes efforts to explore the opportunities for ethnic children to have basic education through non-formal education provided by BRAC. It is a distinctive study in the

area as there is a little extensive research on non-formal education for Adivasi children in Bangladesh.

2.0 BRAC Education for Ethnic Children (EEC) Program

Bangladesh is a diverse and culturally rich country in which different ethnic groups co-exist with the mainstream Bengali population. According to the 1991 census, there are approximately 1.2 million ethnic people in Bangladesh (1.13% of the total population), divided among 45 distinct ethnic groups. But the literacy rate of this marginal groups is very low. Ethnic students have been enrolled in BRAC's non-formal primary education schools since 1998 to overcome this problem. However, BRAC has started targeting these ultra-poor ethnic people by providing non-formal primary education in 2001 to the children between the ages of seven to thirteen. This is a challenge for BRAC whose highly successful Non-Formal Primary Education model must now be adapted to work with ethnic minority groups who have different linguistic, cultural and learning needs than mainstream Bengali BRAC students (Sagar and Poulson, 2003). Currently, approximately 73186 ethnic students are enrolled in 2836 BRAC NFPE schools with either a mixed inhabitants or entirely ethnic student body in different regions of the country. The largest initiative of the Education for Ethnic Children (EEC) program serve about 22 ethnic groups in three clusters: North Bengal, Mymensingh (or plains), and the tea gardens of Sylhet. Another schools are conducting for ethnic children in the Chittagong Hill Tracts under funding from BRAC Education Program (BEP) donor consortium funds.

Table 1: Featured information of Education for Ethnic Children (EEC) Program

Sl. No.	Description	Number
01	Total EEC Schools	2836
1.1	In BRAC Primary School	2295
1.2	In ESP School	426
1.3	In BRAC Pre-primary School	115
02	Total EEC Students	73186
2.1	In BRAC Primary School	58821
2.2	In ESP School	11556
2.3	In BRAC Pre-primary School	2809

Data Source: MIS, BEP, BRAC, April 2015

3.0 Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to explores BRAC roles in promoting education for ethnic minorities in Bangladesh. The specific objectives will be as follows:

- 1) To what extent the 'ethnic minorities' access to the educational services provided by BRAC.
- 2) To reveal the governance of BRAC Education for Ethnic Children program.
- 3) To measure the quality issue of Education for Ethnic Children program
- 4) To ascertain the outcome of non-formal education for the ethnic children.
- 5) To find out the challenges they face in service delivery to ethnic minorities.

4.0 Methodology

Research design and methods should be determined by research objectives and questions (Creswell 2002, Borrego et al. 2009). No particular method, quantitative, qualitative or mixed, should be advantaged over one-another (Mehrin, Yasmin and Nath, 2014). Both quantitative and qualitative methods are thought to be relevant and appropriate for adequately addressing the specific research questions mentioned previously. Quantitative method was suitable for answering some of the research questions and qualitative method was suitable for others. Thus, a mixed method approach is employed to congregate quantitative and qualitative data from both primary and secondary sources.

4.1 Study Location, Population and Sampling

The study is conducted in Mymensingh region, especially in Dhobaura and Haluaghat Upazila purposively because of different ethnic group are living here. All ethnic minorities and BRAC education officials, teachers and students in the regions are considered as the study population. From the Education for Ethnic Children (EEC) program 4 schools (Grade-I, Grade-II, Grade-IV and Grade-V) are selected randomly with a consultation to BRAC officials, from where 84 interviewees (students, guardians, teachers and officials) are selected randomly for data and information for the study.

4.2 Data Collection Methods Study

Both primary and secondary data are analyzed in the study for better result. Primary data is collected through interviews with semi structured questionnaire, participatory observation, case study and Focus group discussion. Secondary data is collected from different research papers, books, documents, articles through desk study. Data collection instruments, respondents, sample and sampling procedure are shown in the table 1 below:

Table 2: Data collection instruments, respondents, sample and sampling procedure

Research instruments	Respondents	No. of Sample	Type of Sampling
Semi-structured questionnaire	BRAC field Officials	4	Purposive sampling
Semi-structured questionnaire	EEC Teachers	23	Random sampling
Semi-structured interview schedule	Guardians of EEC students	30	Random sampling
Focus Group Discussion (FGD)	3 groups of EEC Students from 3 grades	Grade-II=10 Grade-IV=09 Grade-V=08 Total=27	Random sampling
Observation	All groups		

4.3 Data Analysis Technique

Collected data is coded, classified and edited with the help of Microsoft Excel. Microsoft Word is used to describe the data and information and SPSS is used to process, analysis and presentation of the data with tables and figures.

5.0 Findings and Analysis

The study findings are analyzed appropriately dividing by six sections according to the objectives of the research for better understanding.

5.1 Demographic and Socio-economic Conditions of the Respondents

5.1.1 Age of the Respondents

The table 02 shows the age of the respondents. The highest percentage of the respondents was 35-40 age group and the lowest was 55-60. The age of 21.1 % respondents was 30-35 age group where 25-30 and 45-50 age group were 12.3%. Again 7.0% of the respondents were 40-45 and 50-55 age group where respondents of 20-25 age group were only 3.5%.

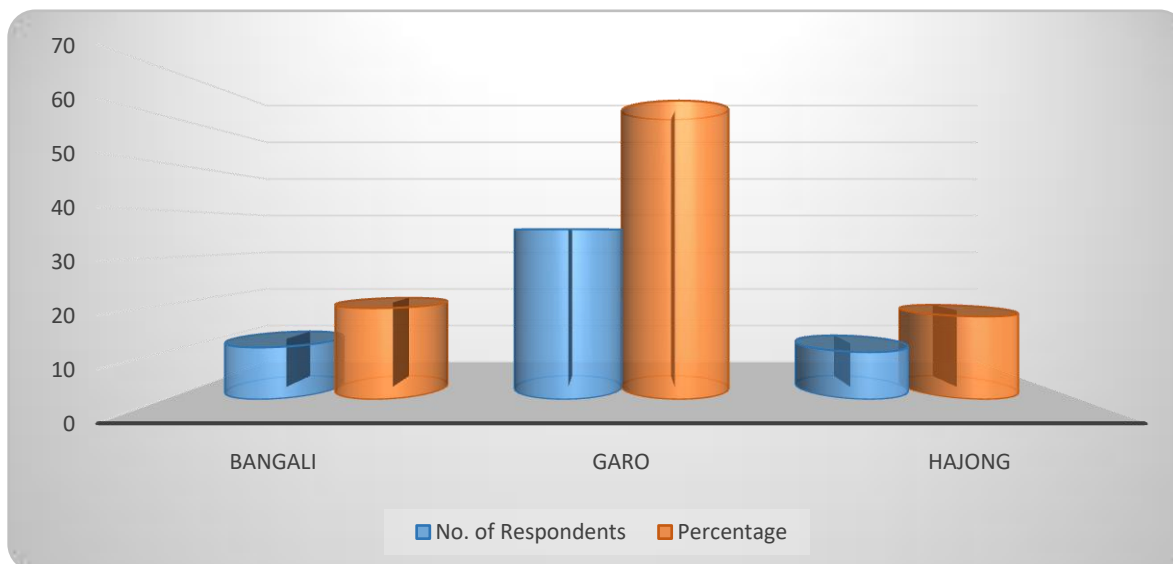


Table 02: Age-wise distribution of the respondents and their percentage

Age group	Number of Respondents	Percentage
20-25	2	3.5
25-30	7	12.3
30-35	12	21.1
35-40	20	35.1
40-45	4	7.0
45-50	7	12.3
50-55	4	7.0
55-60	1	1.8

Data source: Field survey

5.1.2 Gender of the respondents

The table 03 reveals the gender-wise distribution of respondents. It is observed the female gender is more than their counterparts. 77% of the guardian respondents were female where 100% of the teacher was female and 50 percent of the program organizers were male respondents.

Table 3: Gender-wise distribution of the respondents

Respondent group	Gender		Number of Respondents	Female Percentage
	Male	Female		
Guardians	7	23	30	77
Teachers	0	23	23	100
Program Organizers	2	2	4	50

Data source: Field survey

5.1.3 Ethnic Identity of the Respondents

The figure 01 represents the ethnic identity of the respondents. It is found that most of the respondents were from the ethnic minority groups. 80.7% of the respondents were Adivasi among which 63.2 % was Garo and 17.5% was Hajong. Only 19.3% was Bangali respondents.

Figure01: Distribution of the respondents by ethnic identity *Data source: Field survey*

5.1.4 Education of the Respondents

The Table 04 illustrates the educational qualification of the respondents. It is clearly seen that 12.3 % of the respondents were illiterate. All of them were guardians. 19.3% of guardians were class on to class five passed, where 24.6 % of them was under SSC level passed. Another 24.6% of the respondents were SSC passed 3 were guardians and 11 were teachers. Again, 19.3% of the respondents were HSC passed, where only 3.5% of the respondents were Degree passed among whom 1 was teacher and 1 was program organizer. The data shows that most of the teachers are SSC passed.

Table 04: Distribution of the respondents by level of education

Level of Education	Respondent group			Total	Percentage
	Guardians	Teachers	Program organizer		
Illiterate	7	0	0	7	12.3
1-5	11	0	0	11	19.3
6-10	7	7	0	14	24.6
SSC	3	11	0	14	24.6
HSC	4	4	3	11	19.3
Degree (Pass)	0	1	1	2	3.5

Data source: Field survey

5.1.5 Occupation and Income of the Guardians

It is found that most of the mothers (53.33%) are housewife, though they do other work of the family. On the other hand, 40% of the fathers are service holder. 23.33% of parents are surviving with agricultural activities. More mothers (13.33%) are laborer than their counterparts (6.67%). 10% father guardians are unemployed. Some parents are in different other occupation like mechanic, village doctor, teacher, laborer, cook, driver and businessmen. But their percentage is very low. On the other hand, the majority percent of the household income is less than 5000 Taka per month, where only 6.7% household income is more than 20000 Taka. 33.3% of household's income range is 1000-5000 Taka.

Table 05: Distribution of monthly household income of the respondents

Income Range	Number of Household	Percentage
1000-5000	10	33.3
5001-10000	8	26.7
10001-15000	7	23.3
15001-20000	3	10.0
20000+	2	6.7

Data source: Field survey

5.1.6 Amount of lands per household

The table 06 shows the distribution of lands per household of the guardian respondents. It is found that about 17% of the guardians have no lands. They live in other's house as renter or asylum. However, 23.3% of the households have more than 50 decimals of land. Most of the family has only living area-they have no agricultural land. They mainly survive with some service or work in other's land, house or working places.

Table 06: Distribution of lands per household of the respondents

Amount of lands (Decimal)	Number of Household	Percentage
0	5	16.7
1-10	5	16.7
11-20	5	16.7
21-30	5	16.7
31-40	2	6.7
41-50	1	3.3
50+	7	23.3

Data source: Field survey

5.2 Access of Ethnic Children to BRAC Education

5.2.1 Students by types of ethnicity

The table 07 shows the distribution of students of surveyed schools by type of ethnicity. It is observed that most of the students come from the Garo families, which represents almost 80% of the students in different classes. On the other hand, 16.95% of the students represent from the Hajong community, where lowest 3.39% of them are from Dalu community. Again, among the Garo students 53.19% are girls. But boys' students are more than their counterpart from Hajong community. However, no girl students from Dalu community are found in any schools.

Table 07: Distribution of Students by types of ethnicity

Types of Ethnicity	Number of Students			Percentage		
	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls
Garo	47	22	25	79.66	46.81	53.19
Hajong	10	7	3	16.95	70.00	30.00
Dalu	2	2	0	3.39	100.00	0.00

Data source: Field survey

5.2.2 Opinion on BRAC roles in educating ethnic children

The table 08 demonstrates the respondents' opinion on the role of BRAC primary schools in educating Adivasi children in Mymensingh region. Almost all respondents have a positive response on the statement. 93.33% of guardians, 95.65% of teachers and 50% of Program organizers are strongly agree with the statement that BRAC Schools plays vital roles in education of tribal students.

Table 08: Opinions of the respondents on BRAC roles in educating ethnic children in researched area

Statement	Opinions	Respondents Group and Percentage					
		Guardians	%	Teachers	%	POs	%
BRAC School plays vital roles in education of tribal children	Strongly Agree	28	93.33	22	95.65	2	50.00
	Agree	2	6.67	1	4.35	2	50.00
	Neutral/Uncertain	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
	Disagree	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00

Data source: Field survey

5.2.3 Number of Ethnic Children in the Study Area

The table 09 figures out the access of ethnic children in different grades schools in Haluaghat and Dhubaura upazila. A total of around 704 Adivasi children get access to BRAC schools among which 417 are from Haluaghat and 287 are from Dhubaura. From both Upazilas 73 are from grade-01, 198 are from grade-02, 360 are from grade-04 and 73 are from grade-05. It is observed that grade-03 schools are not available there. Most of the students are studying in grade-04 schools.

Table 09: Distribution of Ethnic children in education by surveyed area and grade of schools

Sl. No	Surveyed Area	Grade of School	Total Ethnic	Percentage of Total
1	Haluaghat	Grade-02	122	17.33
		Grade-04	222	31.53
		Grade-05	73	10.37
2	Dhubaura	Grade-01	73	10.37
		Grade-02	76	10.80
		Grade-04	138	19.60
Number of total students in Haluaghat and Dhubaura			704	100.00

Data source: Field survey

5.2.4 Opportunity of Ethnic Children to access to education

The table 10 defends the opportunity provided by BRAC for ethnic children who get to access to basic education. Almost all groups of respondents give strong positive opinion on the statement. About 97% of the guardians strongly agree with the statement that Adivasi children get opportunity to access to basic education for BRAC schools. They think that for BRAC schools their children are going there very easily as most of the schools are on their home yard. 95.65% of the teachers think same as the guardians' review. 75% of the program organizers agree with the statement.

Table 10: Opinions of the respondents on the opportunity of Ethnic Children to get access to basic education

Statement	Opinions	Respondents Group and Percentage					
		Guardian	%	Teacher	%	POs	%
Adivasi children get opportunity to access to basic education for BRAC Schools	Strongly Agree	29	96.67	22	95.65	1	25.0
	Agree	1	3.33	1	4.35	3	75.0
	Neutral/Uncertain	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
	Disagree	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00

Data source: Field survey

5.3 Ensuring Governance in BRAC EEC Program

5.3.1 Accountability of Field Officials

The table 11 shows the accountability, which is directly related to good governance, of field level staffs of EEC program. Hundred per cent of the Program Organizers strongly agree with the statement that they are accountable for their responsibility to the officials of head office.

Table 11: Opinions of the respondents on Accountability

Statement	Opinions	No. of Respondents	Percentage
We are accountable for our responsibility	Strongly Agree	4	100.00
	Agree	0	0.00
	Neutral/Uncertain	0	0.00
	Disagree	0	0.00
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00

Data source: Field survey

5.3.2 Governance of EEC Program

The table 12 reveals the governance situation of BRAC EEC program. A Statement-Governance of BRAC education program is good-is placed to the Program Organizer. Some 25% of the respondents strongly agree with the statement, where other 25% of them disagree with. On the other hand, 50% of the program organizers agree with the statement.

Table 12: Opinions of the respondents on Governance of EEC

Statement	Opinions	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Governance of BRAC Education program is good	Strongly Agree	1	25.00
	Agree	2	50.00
	Neutral/Uncertain	0	0.00
	Disagree	1	25.00
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00

Data source: Field survey

5.3.3 Monitoring of EEC program

The table 13 shows opinions of the POs on monitoring of BRAC EEC programs. It is found that 50% of the program organizer strongly agree with the statement of monitoring of EEC program and its field offices by head office. Rest 50% of the respondents also agree with the statement that BRAC Education program is closely monitored by head office.

Table 13: opinions of respondents on monitoring of EEC

Statement	Opinions	No. of Respondents	Percentage
BRAC Education program is closely monitored by head office	Strongly Agree	2	50.00
	Agree	2	50.00
	Neutral/Uncertain	0	0.00
	Disagree	0	0.00
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00

Data source: Field survey

On the other hand, the table 14 shows opinions on monitoring and supervision of BRAC EEC schools and teachers by program organizers. 100% of the teachers strongly with the statement that they are monitored and supervised by their program organizers regularly.

Table 14: Teacher’s opinions on monitoring and supervision by POs

Statement	Opinions	No. of Respondents	Percentage
We are monitored and supervised by program organizers	Strongly Agree	23	100.00
	Agree	0	0.00
	Neutral/Uncertain	0	0.00
	Disagree	0	0.00
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00

Data source: Field survey

5.3.4 Maintain the rules of law

The table 15 reveals the opinions of the program organizers on maintain official rules and regulations at the time of selecting ethnic children for the schools from the community. Hundred per cent of the program organizers said that they strictly maintain their rules to select students from the community.

Table 15: Opinions of POs on maintain official rules at the time of selecting students

Statement	Opinions	No. of Respondents	Percentage
We are strict in our rules to select students	Strongly Agree	4	100.00
	Agree	0	0.00
	Neutral/Uncertain	0	0.00
	Disagree	0	0.00
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00

Data source: Field survey

5.4 Efforts to Maintain Quality in BRAC EEC Program

5.4.1 Training for the Teachers and Program Organizers

BRAC field officials and teachers receive various kinds of training related to the academic subject of different grades and some special training to maintain teacher’s quality. The training is provided by BRAC field officials and head office representatives. The table 16 reveals data on training got by program organizers and teachers in different times. It is found that all teachers and program organizers have received basic training. Almost 70% of teachers have taken training on math, where 56.5% have taken English training. 25% of POs and 17.4% of teachers have got training on Bangla subject. Hundred per cent of POs and 78.3%

of teachers have received training on children with special needs (CSN). Almost all POs have taken different subject-wise training from BRAC head office and from their representatives and 75% of program organizers have got other trainings like ToT, CFL, PMC1 etc.

Table 16: Distribution of Teachers and POs by training received on different areas

Types of Training	No. of Respondents			
	Teachers	POs	% of teachers	% of Pos
Basic Training	23	4	100.0	100.0
Training on Bangla	4	1	17.4	25.0
Training on English	13	2	56.5	50.0
Training on Math	14	2	60.9	50.0
Training on Science	0	2	0.0	50.0
Training on Environment	0	2	0.0	50.0
Training on Children with Special Needs	18	4	78.3	100.0
Others (ToT, CFL, PMC1)	0	3	0.0	75.0

Data source: Field survey

5.4.2 One-school one-teacher system

The table 17 shows the teacher's opinions on one-school one-teacher system of BRAC education program. Most of the respondents think that it will be better if more than one teacher is provided for one school. Almost 48% of them strongly agree with the statement, where about 40% of them also agree. They said that it is difficult for one teacher to teach all subjects and manage students in the classroom. Some of them (8.70%) strongly disagree and 4.35% disagree with the statement. They argue that they can handle the school though some problems occurred.

Table 17: Distribution of respondents by opinions on one-school one-teacher model of BRAC Schools

Statement	Opinions	No. of Respondents	Percentage
It will be better if BRAC provide more than one teacher for one school	Strongly Agree	11	47.83
	Agree	9	39.13
	Neutral/Uncertain	0	0.00
	Disagree	1	4.35
	Strongly Disagree	2	8.70

Data source: Field survey

5.4.3 Infrastructure of BRAC Schools

The table 18 reveals opinions on infrastructural facilities and adequacy of BRAC Schools in study areas. About 83% of the teachers argued that the school infrastructure is not adequate to arrange teaching facilities properly. They think the schools need to be restructured for better education. 13.04% of the disagree with the statement, where 4.35% were neutral.

Table 18: Distribution of respondents by opinions on infrastructure of BRAC Schools

Statement	Opinions	No. of Respondents	Percentage
School infrastructure is adequate to arrange teaching facilities	Strongly Agree	0	0.00
	Agree	0	0.00
	Neutral/Uncertain	1	4.35
	Disagree	3	13.04
	Strongly Disagree	19	82.61

Data source: Field survey

5.4.4 Availability of teaching materials

Teaching materials are vital to teach students properly. The table 19 shows opinions of the respondents on availability of the necessary teaching materials in schools timely. All of the respondents strongly agree with the statement. They said that it is a good side of BRAC schools.

Table 19: Distribution of respondents by opinions on availability of teaching materials on time

Statement	Opinions	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Necessary teaching materials are always available	Strongly Agree	23	100.00
	Agree	0	0.00
	Neutral/Uncertain	0	0.00
	Disagree	0	0.00
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00

Data source: Field survey

5.5 Returns of BRAC EEC Program

5.5.1 Social benefits of BRAC Schools

Every education has its socio-economic returns and benefits. The table 20 shows the social benefits of education for ethnic children on early marriage in the area. Almost all groups of respondents say that BRAC education has positive impact on their society. 50% of guardians, 43.48% of teachers and 75% of POs strongly agree with the statement that BRAC schools

reduce or prevent early marriage in their regions, where 46.67% of guardians, 52.17% of teachers and 25% of POs agree with the statement of the role of BRAC schools on preventing early marriage.

Table 20: Distribution of the respondents by opinions on the role of BRAC Schools on early marriage

Statement	Opinions	Respondents Group and Percentage					
		Guardians	%	Teachers	%	POs	%
BRAC Schools Reduce/prevent early marriage in the area	Strongly Agree	15	50.00	10	43.48	3	75.0
	Agree	14	46.67	12	52.17	1	25.0
	Neutral/Uncertain	1	3.33	1	4.35		0.00
	Disagree	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00

Data source: Field survey

5.5.2 Learning beyond the textbook

Co-curricular and extra-curricular learning are common activities in our schools. The table 21 shows the teacher's teaching areas beyond the textbooks in BRAC schools. Almost 74% of the teachers say that they teach their students cleanliness for good health, where 4.3% teach them how to write creatively. 56.5% of the teachers claim that they teach them using sandals at latrine and other 56.5% of the teachers said that they teach them rules and discipline. Near 30% of them teach students to use sanitary latrine, where 47.8% teach them cutting nails regularly. 47.8% teach them social norms and values and 39.10% of the teachers teach them to respect parents and elders.

Table 21: Distribution of teachers by opinions on what they teach beyond textbook

Teaching options	No. of Respondents (teachers)	Percentage
Cleanliness	17	73.9
Norms and Values	11	47.8
Creative writing	1	4.3
Using sanitary latrine	7	30.4
Using sandals at latrine	13	56.5
Rules and Discipline	16	69.6
Cut nails regularly	11	47.8
Respects parents and elders	9	39.1

Data source: Field survey

5.5.3 Parents' attitude on girl's education

Higher girl's education rate indicates the socio-economic development of a country. The table 22 shows the parents' changing attitude on girl's education for BRAC schools in the area. 83.33% of the guardians think that BRAC schools plays critical role in changing parents' negative attitudes towards girl's education and almost 17% of them strongly agree with the statement.

Table 22: Distribution of respondents by opinions on relation between BRAC schools and parents' attitude on girl's education

Statement	Opinions	No. of Respondents	Percentage
BRAC Schools are changing parents' negative attitude to girl's education	Strongly Agree	5	16.67
	Agree	25	83.33
	Neutral/Uncertain	0	0.00
	Disagree	0	0.00
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00

Data source: Field survey

5.5.4 Empowerment of the Female Employee

BRAC plays pivotal role in creating employment for the female in Bangladesh. Against a question of BRAC roles in finding a job for the female employees, 65.22% of the respondents strongly agree with the statement that BRAC helps to find a job for them, where 17.39% of them agree with though 13.04% of them are uncertain and 4.35% are disagree with the statement. Employment is a tool of women empowerment. The table 23 reveals opinions of respondents on participating family decision after having a job in BRAC schools. Almost 61% of the respondents agree with the statement that after their job in BRAC schools they can participate in most cases of family decision, where 21.74% of them strongly agree with the statement. Some 8.70% of them is neutral or strongly disagree with the statement.

Table 23: Distribution of respondents by opinions on women participation in family decision for their jobs in BRAC Schools

Statement	Opinions	No. of Respondents	Percentage
After my job in BRAC School I can participate in family decision	Strongly Agree	5	21.74
	Agree	14	60.87
	Neutral/Uncertain	2	8.70
	Disagree	0	0.00
	Strongly Disagree	2	8.70

Data source: Field survey

5.6 Constraints of BRAC EEC Program

5.6.1 One-school one-teacher problem

The table 24 shows the opinions on the problems of one-school one-teacher system of BRAC schools. Researcher placed a statement to the teachers of BRAC EEC program that one teacher is not enough to teach all subject. Almost all teachers and program organizers express positive opinion on the statement. 56.52% of the teachers and 25% of program organizer strongly agree with the statement and 34.78% of teachers and 75% of program organizers agree that it is difficult for one teacher to teach all subjects.

Table 24: Distribution of Teachers by opinions on the problem of one-school one-teacher model

Statement	Opinions	Teachers	Percentage	POs	Percentage
One teacher is not enough to teach all subjects	Strongly Agree	13	56.52	1	25.00
	Agree	8	34.78	3	75.00
	Neutral/Uncertain	0	0.00	0	0.00
	Disagree	2	8.70	0	0.00
	Strongly Disagree	0	0.00	0	0.00

Data source: Field survey

5.6.2 Problems faced by the teachers in the classroom

Though BRAC Schools play vital roles in educating Ethnic children, there are some problems faced by the teachers in the classroom, which is shown in table 25. Most of the teachers (73.9%) of BRAC ethnic schools claimed that they have to bear extreme hot in the classroom in summer season. All BRAC schools are made up of tin sheets, which become sear in the daytime. 56.5% per cent of teacher said against the seating arrangement on mat. The students need to seat for long time to receive lessons on different subjects. They feel pain in their knee and back. Among the teachers 39.1% said that the classroom become dark at most of the time of raining season where 34.8% claimed the lack of outdoor game facilities of the students. Some of them said that the toilet facilities of the school are not sufficient.

Table 25: Distribution of respondents by problems faced by them in the classroom

Problems	No. of respondents	Percentage
Extreme hot in Summer	17	73.9
Rainy water enters into room	3	13.0
Problem of seating on mat	13	56.5
Lack of outdoor game facilities	8	34.8
Unavailability of electricity	2	8.7

Room remain dark while raining	9	39.1
Inadequate toilet facilities	4	17.4
Lack of tube well	3	13.0
Problem of understanding textbook	2	8.7

Data source: Field survey (N.B: One respondent has the opportunity to give more than one answer)

5.6.3 Drop out of Students

It is mentioned that the dropout rate of ethnic minorities is higher than the mainstream children due to language barrier and poverty (IRINnews, 2011). The table 26 shows different factors associated with drop out of students in the research area. A well-known factor of student's drops out is poverty. About 44% of the respondents say that poverty is the main causes of drop out from schools. Parents migration to city for employment is another factor of drop out mentioned by 35.1% of the respondents, where 5.3% of respondents think that early marriage and reluctant are also the factors of drop out. 7% of them refer parents' death or unawareness as causes of the problem, where 3.5% indicate school is far away from their home. Some of them talk about peer influence, father's illness etc. as factors of drop out.

Table 26: Distribution of respondents by factors of drop out

Factors	Number of respondents	Percentage
Poverty	25	43.9
Parents Migration	20	35.1
Early Marriage	3	5.3
Reluctant	3	5.3
Peer Influence	1	1.8
Father's Illness	1	1.8
Parents death	4	7.0
Parents' unawareness	4	7.0
School is far away	2	3.5

Data source: Field survey

6.0 Result of Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

In this study the researcher efforts to employ this tool to collect data and information from the students of BRAC EEC in a small scale. 27 students are selected from three different classes among whom 10 are from class two, 9 are from class four and 8 are from class five. Researcher discuss various issues with students related to the roles of BRAC schools, education system, teaching system, education quality, learning materials, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities and learning etc. with the help of BRAC field officials and teacher. All of the students said that they feel very comfortable to come and stay in the school. They

learn poems, rhymes, various stories from their books. Beside this, they learn different social issues like-the use and benefit of sanitary toilet, show respect to elders and affection to younger, social norms and values, rules and disciplines, dance and songs, drawing and reciting etc. from their teacher. They said that they help other weak students and learn in group in the afternoon. They help their classmate and peers when they fall into some socio-cultural problems. Some of the students would not go to schools because the government schools and other NGO schools are far from their house. A table chart is used to understand the daily behavioral activities of the students of BRAC EEC programs which are given below:

Table 27: Students’ daily behavioral activities before and after joining BRAC EEC School

Activity Options	Before School			After School		
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Always	Sometimes	Never
Using sanitary latrine	0	8	19	27	0	0
Using sandals at latrine	2	9	16	27	0	0
Wash hands before meal and	1	11	15	27	0	0
Use safe water for drinking	5	17	5	27	0	0
Help parents in their	6	7	14	27	0	0
Cut nails regularly	3	5	19	27	0	0
Wear clean cloths daily	4	13	10	27	0	0
Respect parents and elders	7	9	11	27	0	0

The above daily behavioral options are placed to the students at the time of FGD. Most of the students acknowledged that they are not habituated to majority of the activities. They sometimes or never used to do these activities before coming to EEC schools. However, they all are habituated to do all of the activities after getting admission into the BRAC EEC Schools program.

7.0 Case Study of Asha Bazi

Asha Bazi, a 19 years Garo girls, lives in Jairamkura of Haluaghat Upazila with her parents and siblings. She was a student of BRAC School in Jairamkura Branch. She was a student of first batch of that school. Her mother Bibali Manking is a cook and father Asem Manking is a day labourer. They passed class three and four respectively. Among the siblings Asha is second in number. Her younger sister, Sanchari, is now also a student of class two of the same BRAC School in Jairamkura. Asha was a student of that school up to class five. Asha said, “I was very lucky to get the opportunity of admission into BRAC school at that time in

the area.” She had to walk a long way to reach government school. However, BRAC relieved her sorrows by setting up a school in the area. The school is almost closed to Asha’s house. Her aunty Margina Manking mainly help Asha to get admission into BRAC school. Asha said that the education system and quality of BRAC schools is better than any other schools in the area. She acknowledged that BRAC provide all kind of educational materials for the students and teaching materials for the teachers. Without BRAC support it was really difficult for me to complete my primary education, and even, come to the present position- said Asha Bazi. After BRAC school Asha got admission into Mission School for secondary education. She Passed Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination in 2012 from Business Studies Group and obtained GPA 3.05. Then she admitted herself into Shaheed Smriti Degree College of Haluaghat. She has appeared in the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examination this year from humanities group. Asha thinks that BRAC School plays crucial roles in educating Adivasi children in their area. Shae request BRAC to open secondary school for ethnic children in the area.

8.0 Discussion on Findings

Non-formal education for ethnic children provided by BRAC is a unique program to increase literacy rate amongst Adivasi population in Bangladesh. It is found that almost all of the ethnic children of study areas are going to schools, among which most of them are the students of BRAC schools due to different economic and technical facilities. Though most of the guardians are living below the poverty line, they have eagerness to send their children to the schools, which may be government, non-government or NGO schools. Majority per cent of the inhabitants of the area are Garos (60.2%) followed by Hajong (17.5%). For this reason, most of the students come from the Garo families, which represents almost 80% of the students in different classes. Though there are some other students from the Hajong and Dalu communities. However, more than 50% of the students from different ethnic groups are girls. Guardians, teachers, BRAC field officials and peoples of various occupation agree that BRAC plays crucial roles to create opportunity for the ethnic children to access to basic education. Good governance is the key pre-condition of successful program implementation. Accountability, monitoring, participation etc. are the measures of governance. BRAC education program is trying to maintain the conditions of good governance opined by the respondents. They sturdily said that they are accountable for their responsibility to the officials of head office. BRAC gives efforts to maintain quality in its education. BRAC field officials and teachers receive various kind of trainings related to the academic subject of different grades and some special training to maintain teaching and education quality. There

are some factors for why guardians and children of study area are choosing BRAC schools, though the govt. schools are available there. Almost 50% of the respondents said that the government primary schools are far away from most of their household; 31.6% of them claimed good quality of BRAC education. However, about 83% of the teachers argued that the school infrastructure is not adequate to arrange teaching facilities properly though school environment is essential to sustain quality of education. They think the schools need to be restructured for better education. On the other hand, teaching material are vital to teach students properly. All concerned respondents agree that BRAC provide necessary educational materials regularly and timely. Though some problems are existence, all group of respondents positively talk about the significance of BRAC education for ethnic children. They think that BRAC schools are better than other primary schools and they demand more BRAC schools in the area.

9.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

Non-formal education in Bangladesh has a long tradition and history. BRAC reshape it to increase the literacy rate of Bangladesh quickly having different non-formal education programs. By expanding its EEC program BRAC hopes to provide equal opportunities for education to the children of ethnic minority populations in Bangladesh. It is also trusted that BRAC may create an innovative model for non-formal primary ethnic minority education which may be adopted by the government of Bangladesh, other NGOs, or perhaps even other governments around the world in an effort to provide a supportive learning environment for ethnic minority children and to attain the goal of education for all.

The EEC program has some significance roles in increasing literacy rate of Adivasi children without any doubt. However, there are some problematic debates behind the success. We would like to recommend following options to the proper authority to resolve for better outcome:

- 1) BRAC provide small amount of salary for its school teachers. Most of the teacher complained that they are to face economic crisis with the small amount. Therefore, teacher's salary should be increased so that they can concentrate their teaching properly.
- 2) Sanitary toilet facilities should be renovated. On the other hand, as all of the schools are made by tin that become very hot in summer, necessary steps should be taken to overcome these problems.

- 3) One program organizer monitors 16 schools per week. They said that it is very difficult for them to monitor all schools as they are also to take part in training sessions of the teachers and other official activities. Therefore, Number of POs should increase for better monitoring.
- 4) All of the teachers said that they are given a small amount of money for T. A D. A at the time of training, which is not enough for their transportation and daily food cost. For this, Teacher's training allowance should be increased.
- 5) Most of the guardians and some villagers said that the ethnic children cannot cope with the Bangali students in secondary schools. So BRAC should take necessary steps to establish secondary schools for ethnic children with the cooperation and partnership of Government of Bangladesh.
- 6) BRAC can negotiate with Government of Bangladesh to pay some portion of the teacher's salary with the inflations yearly.
- 7) Government should take this innovation into the Public Private Partnership (PPP) program with the help of other NGOs to increase literacy rate of the remote community.
- 8) BRAC can build up Private-NGO partnership with the help of Civil society and businessmen in the country to rise literacy rate rapidly.

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