

*REPORT ON*

**SITUATION OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL  
ADOLESCENTS OF BANGLADESH**

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## ACRONYMS

ATLP	Appeal Training Material for Literacy Personnel
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CBA	Centre Based Approach
CE	Continuing Education
CMES	Centre for Mass Education and Science
CMC	Centre Management Committee
CPA	Continuous Pupil Assessment
CPE	Compulsory Primary Education
DCO	District Coordinator
DNFE	Directorate of Non-Formal Education
FLE	Family Life Education
FPDA	Free Primer Distribution Approach
GO	Government Organization
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
ICMH	Institute of Child and Maternal Health
INFEP	Integrated Non-Formal Education Programme
MO	Ministry of Education
MOPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
REFLECT	Regenerated Freirian Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques
TLM	Total Literacy Movement
UCEP	Underprivileged Children's Education Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population and Activities
UNICEF	United Nations International children's Emergency Fund
WCEFA	World Conference on Education for All
WHO	World Health Organization

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Adolescents as a group is not properly recognized in any education programme in Bangladesh. Though secondary education sub-sector deals with large number of adolescents yet little emphasis is given on their appropriate psycho-social activities. Conventional and primitive ideas about adolescents are still found in the society. People look down upon them and ignore their potentials. By educational status over 46% of adolescents are still un-enrolled in Bangladesh. In absolute terms the total number of adolescents (11-20) is 32.44 million and out of this 34.5% or 11.2 million have no education at all.

According to the survey report 66% of out-of-school adolescents had been to school for sometime of which 71% were girls. Their average schooling was found to be 3.8 years for boys and 4.6 years for girls. Prior to dropping out these adolescents had varieties of schooling experience like government, private, NGO schools etc. Literacy levels of these adolescents were some what low. Only 39% of boys and 46% of girls had fluent reading capacity.

Majority (around 60%) of the out-of-school adolescents are occupied with some work though all are not income oriented. Their major earning occupations were service, small trading and day labourer. About 36% boys and 19% girls are involved in these three types of occupations. The money they earn on average from these occupations is Tk 349.00 and Tk. 177.00 respectively for boys and girls. Their average household income is Tk. 3,557.00.

Household facilities of the un-schooled adolescents shows that little over one third (40%) have electricity in their houses and less than that (30%) had own source of safe drinking water. Around 20% of them possess radio and television in their houses. Adolescents of urban areas enjoy more facilities than the rural or slum area adolescents.

Social events for adolescents are very limited in the locality. One national survey observed that the out of school adolescents' major outdoor activity is limited to spending time in tea stall, going to cinema and visiting friends' house. Girls' scope for all the above activities is always limited.

Very few of the adolescents were also found to be associated with clubs or association. Only 12% of boys and 4% of girls have such linkages. Memberships to organization, local mobility, access to

### *Background*

### *Schooling status and literacy*

### *Occupation and income*

### *Facilities available*

mass media all have impact on the quality of life of these adolescents.

Large number of adolescents are extrovert by nature and amongst them school going adolescents are more extrovert than the out-of-school adolescents. Gender wise variation indicates that boys are more extrovert than the girls. Parents also do not recognize their personality as distinct important psychological phenomena.

By temperament over one fifth of the adolescents are hot tempered. Amongst them girls in school and boys outside are more tempered. It means large number of adolescents (somewhat 80%) have good control over their emotion. They also mentioned that about two third of them can hold their patience while doing a difficult task. Of them girls are more patient than boys. Similarly large number of boys and girls (about three fourth in school and less than two third in out-of-school) can remain cool in occasions.

According to the report of out-of-school adolescents they are quiet and cool but the community people believe that they are problematic and noisy. In FGDs they uttered, “Most of them are bad, loiter here and there, create problems and are also involved in many criminal offences”.

In rural areas most of the un-schooled adolescents have nothing to do, largely unemployed and therefore create problems for the family. Along with this, parental failure to take care of these adolescents contributes to worsening the family child relationship. As a result, in the absence of love and affection they led to astray by their older associates. One participant in FGD said, “As an unemployed son becomes intolerable to a father, he becomes bad to the society as well”. Simultaneously it was reported that during harvesting season when they earn their relationship with family improves to a great extent.

Soon after attending primary school girls drop out for financial reason. By the time they live school they become grown up and social pressure increases for her marriage. The problem with this situation is that if the girl is little more educated it becomes difficult for her to get an appropriate bridegroom for higher demand of dowry but for an illiterate girl dowry is not a big problem.

In order to determine the daily life activities of the adolescents their work schedule was analyzed and found that over half of out-of-school adolescents (62% boys and 51% girls) have nothing to do in the morning. On the other hand during school time in morning nearly half of school goers did not report any schooling activity in their work schedule.

***Personality type  
and  
temperament***

***Family life and  
social pressure***

***Daily work  
schedule***

Nearly three fourth of the out-of-school adolescents (74% boys and 60% girls) also remain inactive or free during the middle of the day. Similarly about two third (67%) of boys and over half (54%) of girls have nothing to do in the evening. Other than chatting, loitering and watching TV are the common activities of out-of-school adolescents in the evening. That is large number of un-schooled adolescents are relatively free and spend their time in unproductive work.

About 81% of adolescent who do not go to school help their parents and about 86% of their behaviour is also good in family. However, the turmoil what they show in life is due to their unemployed condition and the tension created affects both parents and adolescents.

According to community people about three fourth of the out-of-school adolescents remain unconscious about their social wellbeing or get spoiled due to their absence of schooling. The suffering among the adolescents for the cause of non-schooling is more among the boys than among girls.

Social manner among the out-of-school adolescents shows that girls (69%) are better than the boys (31%). Adolescent boys do not know how to talk with the elderly person; they misbehave with people and have bad companies. Analysis shows that ill manners are the result of un-schooling and poor family background.

Study on adolescents' health is limited in Bangladesh. About 27% of adolescents are anemic with little gender difference. Literature also shows that about 67% of Bangladeshi adolescents are thin and 48% are stunted.

This study found that about 23% of out-of-school adolescents were married by the age of 18. However, at this age their knowledge of reproductive health is found to be very limited.

Opportunities were found different by the background of adolescents' schooling. But from national level very little provisions have been created for these adolescents. Even DNFE's programme for education mixed up adolescents with the children or adults. Different Ministries also have some programme for the out-of-school adolescents but they also serve them along with adults. However, private sector of course serves large number of out-of-school adolescents in their business and industry, particularly girls in garments industry.

Adolescents are most vulnerable to odd situations. About one fifth of the un-schooled adolescents and one tenth of school goers have

*Community's perception about adolescent*

*Adolescents' health and marriage*

*Opportunities*

*Threats*

association with some criminal friends. Girls are less prone to criminal offences and negligible amount of them have criminal friends. About a quarter of the adolescents have bad habit like smoking. This habit is less common among girls and school goers.

Culture gap between parent and adolescent does not allow sharing of personal problems. Absence of psychological counseling lives the adolescents in great anxiety and turmoil. Girls are mostly remain confine at home which put them into the situation of information blackout.

About three fourth of school goers and half of un-schooled adolescents mentioned that they prepare a thoughtful plan prior to undertake an important task but large numbers of them do not have any specific occupational plan for their future. Amongst those who have specific idea of future occupation do not know how to reach there.

Adolescents' enrollment in school should be a concern in Bangladesh at the same time quality schooling and achievement also needs to be monitored for its current level is not satisfactory.

Early marriage is still visible and dowry plays a significant role in Bangladesh. More campaign is needed to get rid of it. Occupational opportunities for adolescents should be created in rural sites because in the absence of occupational provisions they remain unemployed. Along with this a good wage policy for adolescents is required

More sports and cultural activities may nurture the emotional control of adolescents. Along with this educational and psychological counseling should be an integrated part of any educational programme so that adolescents have a place to go while in problem.

***Future plan of  
the adolescents***

***Policy guideline***

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

Bangladesh has agreed to ensure the learning of all young people and adults through equitable opportunities and access. It also has agreed to improve the adult literacy level to about 50% by 2015. Most of the government documents depicted nonformal education scenarios divide the target group into two halves, children and (8-14) and adults (15-45). The adolescents (11-18) are not considered independently. In order to develop better educational and supportive programme for adolescents it is necessary to have understanding about their situation and progress in different activities in particular. This is necessary to fulfill the commitment of EFA Goals. Situation of education with adults and children are mostly cited by the government in order to provide literacy scenario of the country but facts about adolescents and information on their psycho-social well being or future prospects are not provided in the literature. Whatever literature is available on them their actual status is rarely highlighted. Amongst adolescents knowledge on out-of-school adolescents is much bleak.

Data shows that net enrollment of adolescent in Bangladesh in secondary level is only 35.5 percent and in higher secondary it is far less, 14 percent<sup>1</sup>. While admitting these figures true it may be assumed that a large majority of this age group of adolescents is not in school. Only identifying the number of non-enrolled group is not enough. We need to know their present status, potential and psycho social situations prior to undertake a programme for them.

Adolescent in Bangladesh is less addressed in programmes like education, health and development. Even among researchers in Bangladesh it is less studied. We have very little understanding about the lifestyle of Bangladeshi adolescents, their perception of health, education and future planning. Few studies have been done on this age group (teenagers) by development organizations for the interest of their own programme. The only massive program for working children and adolescents has undertaken by government through NGOs in the form of non-formal and continuing education. This education program is being conducted by different NGOs under the direct guidance

### ***Background of the Study:***

*Adolescents are not treated separately in the non-formal education activities of Bangladesh. There is a dearth of knowledge about the developmental process of adolescents in education.*

*In all respect adolescents are less addressed in Bangladesh.*

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<sup>1</sup> Education Watch (2001) Renewed Hope Daunting Challenges. CAMPE and UPL. Dhaka.

of DNFE. Their coverage is limited to older children to young adolescents (8 - 14).

Unlike primary education sub-sector, secondary education deals with a large segment of adolescents but it has little impetus on age appropriate programs for them either in school or in community. The conventional ideas of adolescence still prevail in society; people look down upon them and ignore their potentials and consider them as impulsive and unproductive. Such believe about adolescents and their complicated behavioral nature led people to avoid them for many program. In order to provide support to adolescents particularly to those who are not in school demands a clear understanding of their situation. This research therefore has undertaken a situation analysis of out-of-school adolescents in Bangladesh aiming at to contributing to the pursuit of the above EFA Goals for Bangladesh.

### **Aim**

The aim of this study is to conduct an investigation into the situation of out-of-school adolescents, particularly girls in Bangladesh.

### **General objective**

The general objective of this study is to analyze the situation of the out-of-school adolescents of Bangladesh from the perspective of education and their psycho-social wellbeing with particular emphasis on girls.

### **Specific objectives**

The specific objectives are:

1. To determine the prevalence of out-of-school adolescents in Bangladesh and their present educational status.
2. To analyze the situation of these adolescents in terms of their daily living and functional abilities.
3. To determine the psycho-social characteristics of the adolescents not in school and their needs those are not being met in personal or social lives.
4. To scheme through the views of different stakeholders about the situation of these adolescents particularly girls in the focus.

*Government adolescent programme is mostly sandwiched between children and adults.*

### ***Aim:***

*To analyze the situation of out-of-school adolescents in Bangladesh.*

### ***Specific Objectives:***

- *Determine prevalence*
- *Analyze situation*
- *Determine psycho-social characteristics*

5. To examine the provisions that are available in the country for developing these out-of-school adolescents, particularly the girls.
6. To analyze the risks and potentials of these adolescents with particular emphasis on girls.

### **Significance of the study**

Strong emphasis on universalization of primary education and its compulsion should have made the education of adolescents easier but yet we could not find satisfactory result. By the age of 11 it is expected that most of the adolescents should complete primary education but unfortunately a significant number (46.47%) of these children 11 years onward still remained un-enrolled<sup>2</sup>. Among these un-enrolled adolescents (11-20) about a quarter completed primary education and 34.5% did never enroll to any school (Education Watch 2001). Thus it is easily understood that out of 32.44 million of adolescents in Bangladesh about 34.5% or 11.2 million are either illiterate or have no education at all<sup>3</sup>. There are several governmental and non-governmental organizations which address educational needs of this group along with the adult. But large majority of these organizations deal either with literacy programme or continuing education only. However, there are only a few organizations that provide formal education and vocational training to adolescents for their future survival. However, hardly a few organization is available that deal with psychosocial aspects of adolescents and their future prospects and potential risks.

In Bangladesh, though limited, civil society, NGOs and government have taken some initiative in providing educational support to this vulnerable adolescent group particularly to girls. This study will provide a clear understanding of such initiative and the nature of adolescents, their present educational status, designs of prevailing programme, materials, curriculum content and delivery mechanism etc. This study will point towards the strengths and weaknesses of different programmes, future need of the adolescents and current provisions in the country.

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<sup>2</sup> Education Watch (2002) *Op cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Population Council (2002) Bangladesh Adolescent Profile. Dhaka.

## CHAPTER TWO

### METHODOLOGY

The data for this study was collected through a household survey, personal interviews and focus group discussions with significant members of the community and GO NGO officials in the country. Household survey was conducted in five categories of areas (determined in the TOR) like, urban, accessible rural, remote rural, slum and metropolitan Dhaka. Following steps were taken to collect the data.

#### Sampling of Research Sites

The sampling of research sites was based on five predetermined characteristics like: (a) remote rural area, (b) accessible rural area, (c) provincial town, (d) peri-urban environment or slum, and (e) capital urban area. Two sites of each characteristic was identified purposively depending upon their geographical location in the country and their accessibility.

#### Sampling of Households

For household survey the areas were selected on a priori basis respectively from Sunamganj and Satkhira sadar as urban area; Lohagora of Chittagong and Paba of Rajshahi as accessible rural area; Kalaroa of Satkhira and Narayantala of Sunamganj as remote rural area; Slum from Chittagong and Rajshahi; and two thans, Mirpur and Badda from Dhaka metropolitan area. 200 households were interviewed from each of these areas. The investigators purposively selected one central household on the spot and surrounding that house 200 houses were visited for interviews. In these way a total of 2000 households were interviewed. One of the parents of each household or a knowledgeable senior person in the house was interviewed for some basic information of the adolescent. From this household survey the out-of-school adolescents were identified for further investigation.

#### *Methods of data collection:*

*Data were collected from five research areas*

*200 households were selected from each area and heads were interviewed*

Table 2.1. Number and percent of population available in households

Age group in household	Number	Percent
0 – 5 years	1067	12.9
6 – 10 years	1122	13.5
11 – 18 years	1500	18.1
Above 18 years	4596	55.6
Total	8285	100.0

### Sampling of Out-of-School Adolescents

Out-of-school adolescents available in each household were interviewed. A total of 1500 adolescents were recorded in 2000 households of them 614 were interviewed as out-of-school adolescents (Table 2.1). The remaining 886 were school goers. Detail breakup of the available adolescents are given in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2. Number and percent of out-of-school adolescents available in households

Gender of adolescents	Number	Percent
Boys	321	52.3
Girls	293	47.7
Total	614	100.0

### School Going Adolescents

Only a small number of school going adolescents were interviewed for comparison from the selected households. In this case school going adolescents available in every 10<sup>th</sup> households were interviewed. Thus a total of 191 school going adolescents were available in the survey.

### Sampling of Community Leaders

At most five community leaders from each research spot were supposed to interview for the purpose of getting community view of adolescents. These people were taken from the following available categories: UP member, religious leader, rural headman, local politician, village doctor, school teacher or any other respectable figure in the community. Only 29 respondents were available for interview in the community.

*8,285 individuals were available in the selected households*

*About 1,500 adolescents of 11-18 years age were available for investigation of which 614 were out-of-school*

*Number of school goers available was 886 of which only 191 were available for interview*

*29 community leaders were interviewed*

## **Survey of official documents**

Very few official documents are available on out-of-school adolescents. Amongst these BBS data, DNFE reports, BANBEIS reports, Watch report, Population Council reports and other NGOs' relevant documents were being analyzed.

## **Sampling of participants for FGD**

Five FGDs were conducted in five districts during June 2003 consisting of two rural groups, two urban groups and one capital city group. Two FGDs in rural areas contained seven to ten participants each consisting of school teacher, rural headman, religious leader, politician and parents.

One FGD was conducted in Dhaka in the middle of July with different segment of people (consisted of seven persons) like journalist, social researcher, academics and policy maker like government officials and NGO manager.

## **Development of instruments**

The following research instruments were developed for use:

1. Questionnaire for household survey
2. Questionnaire for the out-of-school adolescents
3. Questionnaire for the school going adolescents
4. Questionnaire for in-depth interviews of community leaders (including employers) in rural and urban spots
5. FGD guideline for group discussion

The research instruments were developed by the research team and were pre-tested in Mohammadpur area of Dhaka city. After tried out the instruments were revised and finalized and printed. The questionnaires were pre-coded for computer analysis.

## **Data collection procedure:**

Two team of field investigators (FI) consisting of five FIs and one Supervisor. The investigators and supervisors were given a training data collection procedure and field situation for three days. They were also sent to the field in Dhaka for practice of data collection. Each of two teams visited two research spots in a district at a time. They visited each of the 200 household and took interviews of the household head, out-of-school adolescents, their parents and local community leaders. Each team spent six days in a spot for data collection. The

*Available documents on adolescents were analyzed*

*FGDs conducted with rural and urban community leaders*

*Questionnaires were developed for five categories of respondents*

*Instruments were developed by research team and they were pre-tested*

*Two team of field investigators consisting of six members collected data from field*

responsibility of supervisor was to organize the team work, supervise team activity and control data quality. He was also responsible for maintaining liaison between the field work and research team. During the teams' visit to different spots the research team members supervised the work and conducted the FGDs in the respective field. The supervisor and one or two selected FIs assisted the researcher in FGD sessions.

After completing one spot the team moved to the second spot for the same work. In this way in 4 weeks time in June 2003 data collection from eight spots were completed and the team returned back to Dhaka. The two teams then simultaneously engaged for one more week in Dhaka for data collection from two metropolitan spots. Thus total time for data collection was 5 weeks.

### **Data analysis**

All the data collected from field were edited with necessary correction and computerized for processing. SPSS 2000 package programme was used for data analysis. Table plan were prepared by the researchers and final tables were prepared by the computer programmer and the researchers themselves. The qualitative data like in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and other informal discussions were noted and summarized in shorter forms to deduce the result. This report thus prepared by the research team.

*Data collection was also supervised by the research team*

*Data analysis was done by SPSS 2000*



## CHAPTER THREE

### PRESENT EDUCATIONAL SCENARIO

At present Bangladesh has two major streams of education, formal and nonformal. The formal education is divided into three major stages viz., primary, secondary and higher education. The whole education system is implemented by two different Ministries e.g., Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) and Ministry of Education (MOE). MOPME is responsible for imparting education for the children (6-10 years) in formal stream and children and adult (8-45 years) in nonformal stream. The MOE is responsible for secondary and all other post secondary education including university education.

Under the formal stream of education three different sub-streams are operating under MOE, these are secular education (like secondary, higher etc.); madrasah education which is predominantly religious and somewhat parallel to the secular stream, and the other one is technical and vocational education which starts from secondary level and goes up to university level.

The overall estimated population of each category and their enrollment rate segregated by gender is shown in the following Table 2.1.

*Formal and nonformal are the two major stream of education*

*Secular and religious education fell under Ministry of Education*

Table 2.1. Age group population by sex and their enrollment rates in different level.

	Age group population		Gross enrollment rate		Net enrollment rate	
	Both sex	Female	Both sex	Female	Both sex	Female
Primary	18114201	8877769	97.49	97.65	86.57	86.97
Junior secondary	11109851	5509387	57.54	62.20	50.23	54.28
Secondary	7207888	3566568	43.56	44.34	32.33	32.88
Higher secondary	6812746	3356289	17.32	13.21	14.04	10.73
Madrasah education	-	-	1623892*	657551*	-	-
Technical education	-	-	112060*	26523*	-	-

\* Total enrollment only. Data source BANBEIS<sup>4</sup>

The above table represents an encouraging picture of primary level but in secondary and upward levels (11 – 17 years) the rates are relatively poor. All the three sub-levels of secondary

<sup>4</sup> Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS, 2001) Dhaka.

education are occupied by the adolescents; however a significant number of children and adults are also included in this stream of education.

The alternative stream of education is the nonformal education which is the responsibility of MOPME. It deals with children and adult who are either never enrolled or dropout from different streams of education. Main objective of this alternative system is to provide literacy and life skill education to its target audience. By official source, Bangladesh has now reached an average rate of literacy at around 65%. This is a cumulative outcome of many effective efforts undertaken by the GOB and NGOs over last 20 to 25 years. This figure of literacy is quite different for an independent source which observed the national adult (15 years and above) literacy rate to be 42%<sup>5</sup> in the year 2001. Considering the importance of literacy and fulfilling the commitment of Dakar Framework the government is now preparing to bring the literacy rate to hundred percent by 2015.

The government of Bangladesh has achieved remarkable progress in its efforts to eradicate illiteracy. This has largely been possible due to the efforts of the Directorate of Non-Formal Education (DNFE). The achievement so far gained was due to the three projects NFE 1,2 and 4 launched mainly for the adolescents and adults from mid nineties. The NFE project 3 was particularly launched for the urban children and adolescents (age group 8 – 14) involved in hazardous occupations. From the mid-nineties onwards these four NFE projects have covered approximately 34.5 million illiterate people constituting around 26.5 percent of the country's population<sup>6</sup>. Short descriptions of the project are as follows:

**NFE Project – 1:** This project was started in January 1996; it had 5-year duration and a target population of 2.96 million illiterate people in the age group of 15 to 24 years, which was subsequently revised to 2.96 million of same age group. The NFE-1 project completed its duration in June 2001.

**NFE Project – 2:** The proposed period of the NFE-2 project was July 1995 to December 2002. the project started functioning from FY 1996-97. the NFE- project's initial coverage was 8.1 million learners in 31 districts in six divisions covering 190 upazilas. In 2000, this coverage was revised to

*Secondary education level is mostly occupied by adolescent*

*Nonformal education is the responsibility of MOPME*

*The adult literacy rate ranges between 42 to 65 by different sources*

*DNFE has launched four NFE projects with the subvention from different donors*

<sup>5</sup> Education Watch (2001) Renewed Hopw Daunting Challenges. CAMPE & UPE, Dhaka.

<sup>6</sup> Uddin, Md Farid et al (2003) Completion report on nonformal education project – 2. SSI, Dhaka.

65.1 million learners, of which approximately 3.5 million had completed the basic literacy course through the CBA's 12 month and the TLM's 9 month courses and distribution of books through voluntary organizations by the end of 2001. The age range of the learners was 11 – 45 years. The project also piloted a post literacy and continuing education (PLCE) component trying to link literacy to life-skills development and income generation from 2000-2001.

**NFE Project – 3:** it is still an ongoing project. The project was designed for 8-14 year old hard to reach working children in the 6 metropolitan cities of the country. The target was 351,000 learners. The project established centres in all divisional cities so far. Course education is 24 months. So far it covered over two million learners through different partner NGOs.

**NFE Project – 4:** This project is totally financed by the GOB and the entire programme is being implemented through the TLM approach. This is the largest of all four projects. It has targeted to reach 22.8 million learners with a budget of US\$ 170 million. The age group that covers by the project is 11-45 years.

### **The NFE curriculum**

The curriculum for NFE courses for adult and adolescents are more or less same. This was developed by the DNFE through a series of workshops, seminars and large number of meetings by involving different experts and professionals. The basic material for the NFE is a three-volume primer, *Chetona vol. 1, 2 and 3*. All the primers are developed in modular form with self learning approach. These volumes are used in both CBA and TLM programmes. The coverage of the primer is quite large and extensive. It contains familial, social and national events along with income generation, gender and human rights. From qualitative point of view these primers are quite comprehensive and attractive ones. Each volume of the primer is taught for three months in the centre.

A set of separate primers are used for the hard to reach children in project-3. This project largely deals with the working children of whom majorities are adolescents. Large part of the content deals with literacy, life skills, income generation, child right, legal supports, and various health measures related to adolescents' life. Most of the life skills are related to survival and economic life. The issue of gender is largely addressed in the curriculum and it is more or less balanced.

*All the NFE projects deals with children and adults and adolescents are mixed up with both the groups*

### ***NFE curriculum:***

*Curriculum for adolescents and adults is similar and deals with common interest of both the group*

*Only NFE project-3 is developed for the working children and adolescents*

As a part of their continuing education in project 3 a supplementary project called Family Life Education (FLE) is introduced. Under the project banner more than 23 supplementary reading materials related to family life were developed and used for the learners.

Evaluation of these learning materials as well as learners achievement shows somewhat satisfactory result. No standard assessment procedure is found in evaluation studies. However, in any measure of assessment learners demonstrate 50% achievement in literacy<sup>7</sup> or in life skills<sup>8</sup>.

#### Situation of Adult Literacy

The ultimate objective of NFE programme is to raise the level of adult literacy. As it was calculated by Watch Report that literacy among the population aged 15 years and older is 41.6 percent. 35.8% for females and 47.3% for males. This was 37.5% for rural and 62.3% for urban population. Statistically significant gender difference favouring males was observed in both the areas. Age specific literacy rate of the population shows that it is highest among 15 – 19 years (64.2%) and lowest among children 5 – 9 years (1.7%). In all the groups female literacy is higher than the male literacy<sup>9</sup>.

#### Community's Role in Adolescents' Achievement

Educational achievement is largely an individual effort yet environmental and societal support may work as catalyst. From our experience of wider evaluation studies it is found that wherever teacher's or the community's support was favourable learners' achievement was much better. For that reason communities are involved in all nonformal education programme. Every centre is managed by five member committee and one facilitator. The centre activities are then supervised by a fulltime supervisor who provides all types of professional support to the facilitator to impart education to the learners.

*NFE primers consists of components related to their daily life skills including survival*

*Learning materials developed seems to be satisfactory*

*Literacy rate among adolescents is quite satisfactory*

***Community's role:***

*Achievement seems to be better with the support of community and teacher*

<sup>7</sup> Uddin, Md. Farid, et al. (2003) Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> ADSL (2003) Evaluation of family life education programme. ADSL, Dhaka.

<sup>9</sup> Watch Report (2001). Ibid.

Table 2. Highlights of different NFE projects undertaken by government.

Project	Project detail
<b>Project 1</b>	
Location	32 districts
Duration of the project	January 1996 to June 2001
Objectives	Provision of NFE to young adults
Target population	3.135 million
Course duration	Nine months
Implementation partner	NGOs, Local Administration.
<b>Project 2</b>	
Location	31 districts
Duration of the project	July 1995 to June 2001
Objectives	Provide NFE to adolescents and adults
Target population	8.719 million
Course duration	9/10 months
Implementation partner	Local Administration, NGOs
<b>Project 3</b>	
Location	6 divisional cities
Duration of the project	January 1996 to December 2000
Objectives	Provide NFE to working children and adolescents
Target population	0.351 million
Course duration	24 months
Implementation partner	NGOs
<b>Project 4</b>	
Location	62 districts
Duration of the project	April 1997 to December 2000
Objectives	Provide NFE to illiterate adults
Target population	22.889 million
Course duration	9 months
Implementation partner	Local Administration

# CHAPTER FOUR

## STATE OF THE ART

This chapter provides the actual situation of the adolescents who are not in school at the moment. The findings which are generated from the field as well as gathered from different sources like parents, community people, field workers etc. are presented in the following sections.

The survey was conducted among 2000 households of which 1993 questionnaires were found valid the remaining were rejected for erroneous reasons. Within these households total population was 8285. Out of this population only 1500 or 18.1% were adolescents who fell within the age range of 11 to 18 years (Figure 4.1). Gender wise distribution of the adolescents in the sampling area by category is shown in Table 4.1.

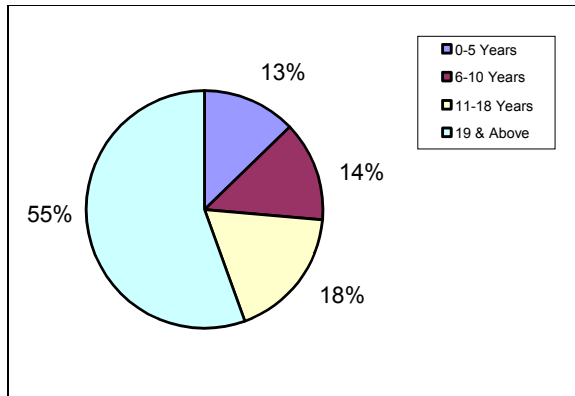


Figure 4.1. Distribution of age group of study population.

### Background of Adolescents

Out of 1500 adolescents only 614 were out-of-school i.e., they were not in school at the moment and the remaining 886 were in school of any kind. According to the report of the household heads 66.29% of out-of-school adolescents went to school for sometime and of this group 70.65% was girl. It was reported that on an average the school going adolescents had over 7 years of schooling while the out-of-school adolescents attended the school for about 4 years (Figure 4.2). This report however varied with the response of the adolescents where they reported it to be more than their guardians' report. Gender wise distribution adolescents' schooling is shown in Table 4.1.

### **Findings:**

*In all 1993 valid household questionnaires were available for analysis*

*Of the total sample 1500 or 14% were adolescents*

*Out of 1500 adolescents 614 were out-of-school*

*66% of out-of-school had been to school before of which 71% were girls*

*The out-of-school adolescents attended a school for about 4 years on average*

Table 4.1. Distribution of adolescents (11-18) by their category, type and gender.

Category	School going			Out-of-school		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Metropolitan	12 (15.0)	15 (13.5)	27 (14.1)	44 (13.7)	60 (20.5)	104 (16.9)
Urban	18 (22.5)	26 (23.4)	44 (23.0)	52 (16.2)	59 (20.1)	111 (18.1)
Accessible rural	17 (21.2)	24 (21.6)	41 (21.5)	42 (13.1)	33 (11.3)	75 (12.2)
Remote rural	19 (23.7)	22 (19.8)	41 (21.5)	76 (23.7)	49 (16.7)	125 (20.4)
Slum	14 (17.5)	24 (21.6)	38 (19.9)	107 (33.3)	92 (31.14)	199 (32.4)
Total	80 (100)	111 (100)	191 (100)	321 (100.0)	293 (100.0)	614 (100.0)

N.B.: Figures in parentheses represent percentages.

Category wise distribution of mean schooling of adolescents is shown in Annexure Table 1. In most of the categories of out-of-school group girls showed better schooling than the boys, particularly in rural areas (both remote and accessible) girls' attendance to school was much higher compared to boys. Girls' duration schooling in rural areas clearly demonstrates the effect of food for education for poor children in rural primary schools.

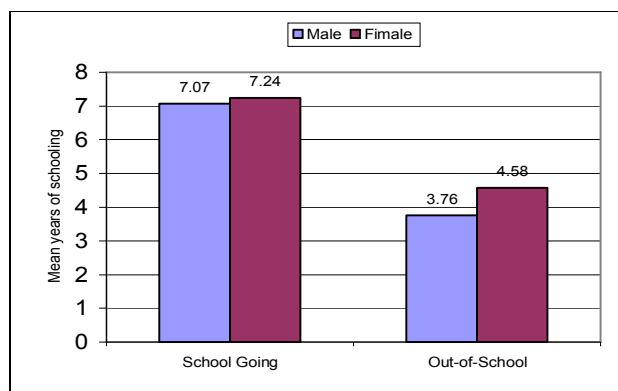


Figure 4.2. Mean year of schooling among the adolescents.

Those who attended schools prior to dropping out were enrolled in varieties of schools such as government primary school (47.42%), private school (21.38%), madrasah or religious school (15.71%) and other type of institutions including NGO schools (15.47%). According to the

***Schooling situation:***

*Girls showed better schooling than boys in any category*

*It is apprehended that better schooling for girls is the prize of food for education programme*

adolescents' self report the average rate of attending school was 5.40 years (boys 5.17 and girls 5.62).

**Level of Literacy**

Level of literacy of the out-of-school adolescents was assessed in three steps, such as reading of words, sentences and a paragraph. In order to determine the fluency of reading and comprehension ability the respondents were given a paragraph with 27 words to read and two comprehension question to answer. Those who could not read the para or failed to respond correctly to all the comprehension questions they were asked to read three sentences consisting of 3 to 5 words. Still those who failed to read all the three sentences correctly they were given to read five words consisting of 2 to 5 letters including two conjunct words. Adolescents those who successfully complete the task are shown in the following Figure 4.3.

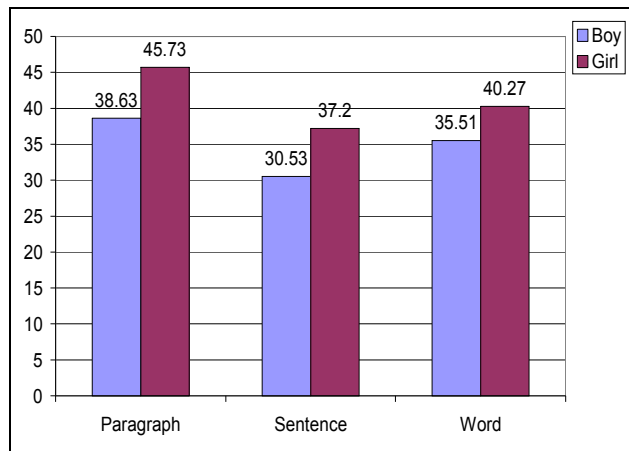


Figure 4.3. Percentage of out-of-school adolescents showing their reading ability by different reading tasks.

The above Figure depicts the interesting fact that besides three to four years of schooling large number of out-of-school adolescents failed to complete the simple reading tasks. More than a third of the adolescents could read paragraph, around one third could read all the sentences and similar number succeed to read all the words. On an average girls performance was always better than the boys. Area wise analysis of data also shows that girls' performance in reading all the tasks was little better than the boys' performance (Annexure Table 2). Better performance among girls in reading test indicates the success of national effort in developing girls' education.

**Schooling experience**

*Previously enrolled adolescents had varieties of schooling experience like government, private, NGOs, religious etc.*

**Level of literacy:**

*Literacy levels of these adolescents were some what low. Only 39% of boys and 46% of girls had fluent reading capacity. Others were either partial or incapable readers*



## Occupation of the Adolescents

Occupational information of the adolescents are shown in Table 4.2. This Table shows that majority of this group was involved in some work but around 40% were not working. Those who work among males were mostly involved in service, small trading and day labourer. On the other hand among females majority were involved in household work or some kind of services (mostly in garments). A good number of adolescents (14 to 17 percent) indicated their occupation as student which belonged to part time nonformal schools only.

Table 4.2. Percentage of out-of-school adolescents indicating their present occupation.

Occupation	Male N = 321	Female N = 293
Agriculture/Farming	3.11	0.34
Service	12.46	17.06
Small trading	11.53	0.68
Rickshaw puller	1.87	-
Day labourer	12.46	1.02
Household work	0.62	19.80
servant	0.31	3.07
Student (nonformal )	14.01	16.72
Others	2.49	1.71
No work/unemployed	41.12	39.59

According to the information provided by the out-of-school adolescents their average monthly income was found to be Tk. 349.00 for boys and Tk. 177.00 for girls (area wise distribution is given in Annexure Table 3) and their average household income was Tk. 3,557.00 per month.

## Facilities available with the adolescents

Extent of modern facilities like electricity, mass media etc. to the household were examined. Collected information on this issue is shown in Table 4.3. However, it shows that little over one third families of out-of-school adolescents had electricity and little less than that had own source of safe drinking water. About one fifth of the families had their own radio or TV. This information may provide the clues to the concerned organizations to develop plans for the adolescents.

*Girls' performance in literacy was little better than the boys' performance in most of the areas*

### **Occupation:**

*About 60% of the adolescents were working and involved in various types of occupation*

*The adolescents' average monthly income was Tk. 349 for boys and Tk. 177 for girls*

Table 4.3. Possession of modern facilities by the adolescent families.

Modern facility available	% of houses (N=614)
Electricity	39.09
Safe drinking water (tap/tube well)	29.64
Radio	20.85
Television	19.71

It is quite natural that adolescents of the urban areas enjoy more facilities than the rural area adolescents. Though electricity is available in many rural areas yet about four fifth of the adolescents' family did not have any radio or TV. Having these facilities at home does not mean a lot. Large majority of these people were totally devoid of any printed media like news paper, magazine etc. Social activities of these adolescents were very limited due to absence of such events in locality. Most of girls' social activities, apart from visiting neighbourhoods, took place within home. This situation put them in little interaction with the outside world. A government national survey<sup>10</sup> conducted among teenagers in 2002 found that among the major outdoor activities of adolescents were spending time in tea stall, going to cinema and visiting friend's house. The study reported that overall, 6% of girls compared to 64% of boys visited tea stall in last week. Similarly, 3% of girls and 23% of boys went to cinema. Another two third boys and over a quarter of girls visited their friends' house in the past week.

Affiliation or membership to club or association was investigated as part of the adolescents' social network. In this respect, our survey indicated only a few of out-of-school adolescents (12% boy and 4% girls of the respondents) were found involved with such clubs or associations. Membership to organization, local mobility, access to mass media etc. provides great opportunity for the teenagers to become experienced and educated for better life.

### Personality Type

Adolescents in the age range of 11 and 18 are lively, energetic and potential. They have strengths as well as weaknesses what are different from adults. This section provides glimpses of such adolescents' characteristics. For comparative reasons we enquired about their personal traits, attitudes, and other characteristics related to the out-of-school adolescents as well as school goers. Initially we wanted to see their personality in

#### **Facilities available with adolescent family:**

*Over a third of adolescent families had electricity and little less than that number had a source of safe drinking water*

*The urban area adolescents enjoy more facilities than the rural area adolescents*

*Around one fifth of them have radio and or TV in their houses*

*Only 12% and 4% girls of out-of-school adolescent were associated with some clubs or organization*

#### **Personality:**

*Boys are more extroverts than girls and the rate of extroversion is more common in school goers than the out-of-school adolescents*

<sup>10</sup> Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, GOB (2002) Baseline survey report on rural adolescents in Bangladesh, No. 7 (Social Life). Dhaka.

terms of their introversion and extroversion characteristics. It was found that large numbers of adolescents were extrovert; amongst them boys were more extrovert than the girls. These characteristics were determined by a question whether they like to stay alone or with friends. The responses are shown in Table 4.4. According to this Table the school going adolescents were more extrovert than the out-of-school adolescents. As the school is a place where young people have larger scope to be social therefore, a good number of them became outward by personality. On the other hand un-schooled adolescent had fewer friends, fewer chances to know others and in the absence of proper guidance they became introvert.

Table 4.4. Personality traits of adolescents in terms of their introversion and extroversion type.

Personality character	School going in %		Out-of-school in %	
	Boys (79)	Girls (109)	Boys (268)	Girls (269)
Like to stay with friends	44.31	35.78	36.19	17.48
Like to stay alone	7.59	14.68	23.51	33.83
Combination of both	48.10	49.54	40.30	48.33

Adolescent personality is largely affected by the members of family and greater community. It was revealed from the FGD that parents hardly value their teenagers and never recognize their need. One of the experts in FGD said, “Parent see their daughter first as child and then adult ignoring her adolescence”. Such a situation put the girls into a difficult status to cope with. In another voice, “All matters should be explicitly discussed with these adolescents” so that they can take their own stand (see Annexure for FGD summary).

### Temperament

Adolescents’ temperament is unstable and in many occasions they might loose their temper which is bothersome to many people. Anger expresses such temperament of the adolescents. Therefore, it was asked to the adolescents how often they become angry with something. In response to such a question, “Do you become angry with ease?” only around a fifth of them provided an affirmative response. That means only few boys and girls easily aroused to anger if something is happened to them. In this regard very little difference was observed between gender in both school going and out-of-school adolescents (Figure 4.4). However, girls among school going sample and

### **Temperament:**

*Over one fifth of the adolescents are hot tempered. Amongst them girls in school and boys in outside are more tempered*

*By temperament large number of adolescents are not always emotional*

*Over half of the adolescents can hold patience while doing a difficult task. Of them girls are more patient than boys*

boys in out-of-school sample were found little more reactive in terms of anger (for details see Annexure Table 4). This finding has clear indication that by temperament adolescents are not always emotional rather they have good control over their anger.

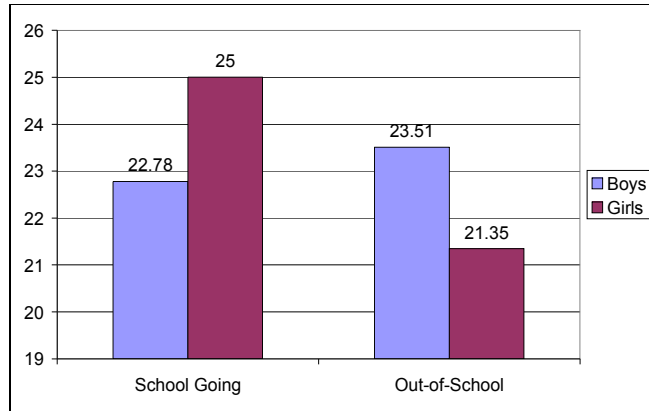


Figure 4.4. Percentage of adolescents indicating their level of anger.

The level of patience among the adolescents was also examined through interviews. It was asked whether the young people had perseverance in completing a difficult task. Their response is shown in Figure 4.5. In this Figure it is found that more than half of the adolescents could keep patience while doing a difficult task and amongst them girls were more patient than the boys in both the school going and un-schooled populations (Annexure Table 5 for details). The data explains the fact that girls are more tolerant than boys because of their introverted nature. In our society girls are always dominated and trained not to be un-polite by resentment.

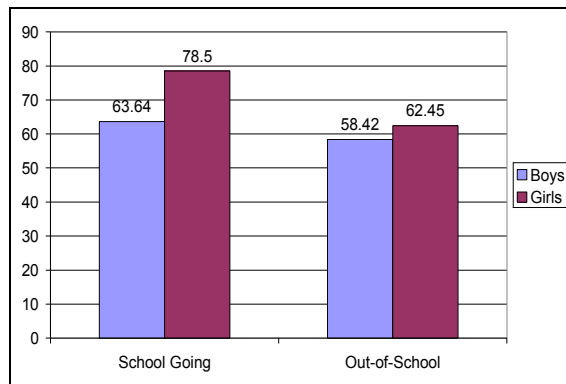


Figure 4.5. Adolescents indicating their level of patience in percent.

*School going adolescents are more patient than the out-of-school adolescents*

*Large number of boys and girls can remain cool in occasions.*

*Girls are more cool than boys though the difference is not big*

*Out-of-school adolescents are less cool than school goers*

Having patience is also supported by another temperament i.e., ‘cool headedness’. The adolescents were asked to indicate whether they could give a cool thought prior to beginning a new task. Their report is given in Annexure Table 6. It was revealed from the data that on an average large majority of the adolescents could think of a problem in cool brain prior to its beginning. Among the groups school goers had superseded the out-of-school adolescents in terms of keeping the brain cool (Figure 4.6). The gender difference indicated that girls in either group were cooler than the boys but the difference was not significant.

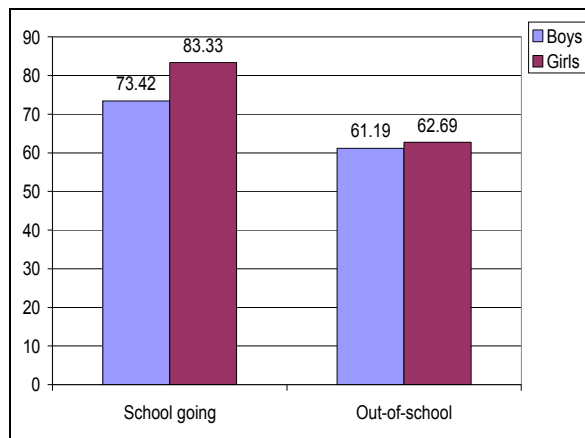


Figure 4.6. Percentage of adolescents showing their cool headedness prior to beginning a new task.

The portrait of adolescents what we received from the above data was not very discouraging. In their own report they had manageable emotion, could remain cool and had sustained effort to accomplish a task. According to them, unlike the prevailing belief, adolescents were not restless, destructive or hot tempered individuals. Comparatively the out-of-school adolescents were more quite and cool. However, contradictory to the above data the qualitative interviews in FGD with parents and community leaders showed that out-of-school adolescents were problematic and noisy. One of the discussants in urban FGD group said, “Most of them are bad, loiter here and there, create problems and are also involved in many criminal offences”. In rural areas out-of-school adolescents had nothing to do, mostly unemployed and created problems for the family too. As most of the parents of out-of-school adolescents were poor so they had little scope of taking care of their children at home. As a result, in the absence of love and affection they led to astray by their older associates. FGD participants in rural

*Comparatively the out-of-school adolescents are more problematic and noisy*

*Rural adolescents are mostly unemployed and have nothing to do*

*Parents of rural adolescents can not take proper care of their adolescents that worsen the family child relationship*

*More girls get admission to school but due to financial reason they drop out*

*Educated girls are more expensive to let her marry for dowry*

sites mentioned that due to unemployment these young people remained idle at home and did not have any financial contribution to the family that made parent unhappy and conflicts were generated between them. In the words of one of the discussants in rural Rajshahi, “As an unemployed son becomes intolerable to a father, he becomes bad to the society as well”. It was also reported by FGD participants that when these adolescents earn during harvesting season their relationship with family and society improve to a great extent (Annexure FGD summary).

The situation of girls was completely different. Many of the girls now attend school was due to CPE (Compulsory Primary Education) act. But soon after attending primary school they dropped out for financial reason. By the time girls leave school they become grown up, in the mean while social pressure increases for their early marriage. Two problems generated from this situation, if the girl is educated then it is difficult for her to find a suitable bridegroom because it would be expensive in terms of dowry. On the other hand it is easier for an illiterate girl to let her marry with any boy where dowry is not a big problem. At the same time parents also mentioned that demand for educated girl is higher because of their potential in the job market.

## Daily Life

It is a common belief of eminent psychologists that adolescence is a period of storm and stress<sup>11</sup>. Such view is also evident among the parents, teachers and general mass of the community. Along with the prevailing belief adolescents pass very vulnerable time for their bodily transition, psychological state, economic dependence on parents and social taboos. However, such view was also challenged by researchers and found adolescents to be a well organized and lead peaceful time in their daily life<sup>12 13 14</sup>. In order to ascertain this debate and

### **Daily life:**

*Common belief does not go in favour of adolescents but the situation is quite opposite*

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<sup>11</sup> Haq, M Nazmul (1986) Pattern of adolescent self-image in Bangladesh. *Bangladesh Journal of Psychology*. Vol. 9, p. 134-154.

<sup>12</sup> Offer, D et al. (1981) *The Adolescent: A psychological self-portrait*. Basic Books, New York.

<sup>13</sup> Rutter et al. (1976) *The self-concept: A review of methodological considerations and measuring instruments*. Vol.I. University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

<sup>14</sup> Douvan, E and J. Adelson (1966) *The adolescent experience*. Wiley, New York.

determining their potential of life adolescents' daily activities were analyzed. In this respect three time blocks like morning, mid-day and evening hours of the day were chosen for work analysis. During interviews adolescents were asked to list activities they perform in those hours. However, the list was not an exhaustive one but it provides a direction of their life style. For comparative reason the activities of both the group (school going and out-of-school adolescents) are presented simultaneously in single tables (4.5, 4.6 and 4.7).

Table 4.5. Percentage of adolescents' engaged in various activities during morning hours.

Activities	School going		Out-of-school	
	Male (80)	Female (111)	Male (321)	Female (293)
Free or do nothing	-	-	62.30	50.51
Sleeping	1.25	0.90	4.05	4.09
Washing	41.25	28.83	23.36	23.55
Eating	33.75	26.13	50.47	43.00
Household work	2.50	13.51	7.48	45.73
Attend school	52.5	53.15	-	-
Private coaching	42.5	43.24	-	-
Cooking	-	-	-	6.82
Income activity	-	-	33.96	16.38
Loitering/chatting	-	-	14.33	4.77
Others	1.25	1.80	4.05	5.11

Table 4.5 provides morning activities of the adolescents. Morning hour was defined to them as 7 to 11 am in the morning or 3/4 hours time after they live bed in the morning. Analysis of this time block provided the fact that over half of the out-of-school adolescents (62% boys and 51% girls) had nothing to do in the morning. About 14% boys and 5% girls passed time by loitering here and there. Besides free time they spent good time for eating, household work and washing. More girls (46%) were involved in household work than the boys (7%). Some of the out-of-school adolescents were also involved in earning as well, in this regard 34% boys and 16% girls were found to be involved in income generating work. When we compared these activities with the school going adolescents the situation provided a different picture. For example a majority of the school goers were found to spend morning time either in schools (52% boys and 53% girls) or in private coaching centres (42% boys and 43% girls). Besides this important work they spent time for washing (41% and 29%), eating (34% and 26%) and household work (which is mostly done by girls 13%). This Table provides very important observation that a large group of out-of-school adolescents

*Over half of the out-of-school adolescents have nothing to do in the morning*

*Less than half of the girls get involved in household work in the morning but only a few boys render household services*

*Nearly half of the school goers do not feel comfortable to be in school in the morning*

were relatively free and had nothing to do productive in the society. On the other hand nearly half of the school going adolescents was found not to be in school during the morning time.

What the adolescents do during the middle of the day was the second question of activity analysis. Mid-day was considered as 12 noon to 3 pm. List of activities of both the adolescents are shown in Table 4.6. According to the activities of the noon it was found that large majority of the out-of-school adolescents (74% boys and 60% girls) still remained inactive or idle during that time. About 30-40 percent of them spent time for eating; household work was mostly done by girls (27%), another 30% of boys as against girls (17%) were found engaged in income generating work. Other than these work they remained busy with washing, cooking, sleeping etc. and income generation activities (mostly boys); still others remained busy with washing, sleeping, cooking etc.

*Fewer adolescents who do not go the school work for survival. And the rest are free but do not engage themselves in any type of productive work.*

Table 4.6. Percentage of adolescents engaged in various activities during mid-day hours.

Activities	School going		Out-of-school (N=614)	
	Male (80)	Female (111)	Male (321)	Female (293)
Free or do nothing	-	-	73.52	59.73
Sleeping	32.50	32.43	11.84	17.75
Washing	7.50	13.51	19.31	19.11
Have lunch	51.25	36.94	41.12	30.03
Household work	1.25	9.90	7.16	27.30
Attend school	32.50	39.64	-	-
Cooking	1.25	-	-	15.70
Income activity	3.75	-	29.91	17.41
Loitering/chatting	28.75	21.62	8.73	6.48
Watch TV	1.25	1.80	1.87	5.80
Others	-	-	5.61	1.02

The school going adolescents as against out-of-school group spent more time in school (32% and 40%), having lunch (51% and 37%), taking small nap (over 32%) etc. It was interesting to note that about two third of the school goers did not report about attending school even during school time rather a quarter of them spent time in loitering/chatting etc. Attendance to



school was little more in girls than boys. About one third of boys and girls took nap in the noon keeping other things aside.

Adolescents' activity analysis for evening is shown in Table 4.7. It provides similar fact that large number of out-of-school boys (67%) and over half of girls (54%) had nothing to do during the evening time i.e., few hours after sun set. Having nothing to do over a fifth of them went to bed for sleeping. During that time over 40% of boys and girls used to take diner by that time, others perhaps took diner late. Only less than a quarter of girls had something to do with household. Chatting and loitering, watching TV etc. were very used to do activities among a significant number of boys and girls in the evening. Contrary to the out-of-school adolescents the school goers did not indicate any free time for them but they spend good time in eating diner, watching TV (about 31% both) and to some extent loitering and chatting (11% and 10%). It was interesting to observe that adolescents in the school going category did not mention study as an activity in their list of evening tasks.

*About two third of the school goers do not attend school even in the noon*

*About three forth of boys and over half of girls have nothing to do in the evening*

*Chatting, loitering and watching TV are the common activities of out-of-school adolescents in the evening*

Table 4.7. Percentage of adolescents engaged in various activities during evening hours.

Activities	School going		Out-of-school	
	Male (80)	Female (111)	Male (321)	Female (293)
Free or do nothing	-	-	67.29	53.58
Sleeping	13.75	13.51	21.81	20.82
Washing	6.25	4.50	2.80	1.36
Have diner	28.75	25.22	42.37	41.64
Household work	-	2.70	3.43	23.21
Cooking	-	-	0.62	10.58
Income activity	1.25	0.90	14.95	6.82
Loitering/chatting	11.25	9.91	27.72	18.09
Watch TV	31.25	30.63	15.58	20.82
Others	-	-	3.43	3.07

Analyzing the activities of adolescents over three blocks of time it appeared to the research team that large group of out-of-school adolescents were relatively free and spent time in unproductive work. Though household work was mostly done by girls yet their number did not cross half the size. Only a few of them could get chance to work outside and had little income. Contrary to these adolescents the school goers spent a significant amount of their time in study during the day time but in the evening they do something else. Very few girls

among school goers were found to be involved in household work and loitering outside work.

Information concerning the adolescents' helping nature was collected from the household heads. They were asked to tell whether the adolescents extended their hands to help parents, behave well with the members or think of about any income generation plan etc. Their responses are indicated in Figure 4.7.

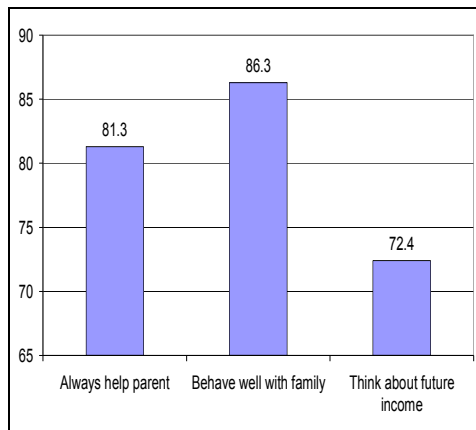


Figure 4.7. Percentage of out-of-school adolescents indicating their behaviour in family.

It was found from the household survey that 81% of the adolescents who did not go to school helped parents whenever necessary, similar numbers of them also behaved well with their parents. Little less than three quarter of the out-of-school adolescents though did nothing at the moment yet they thought of their future and try to do something. These figures however, depict the bright side of the adolescents that largely they do not suffer from any turmoil rather they tended to remain calm and maintain a peaceful life.

Data available from focus group interview (see Annexure) provides the qualitative aspects of daily life of the out-of-

*About 81% of adolescent who do not go to school help their parents*

*About 86% of un-schooled adolescents' behaviour is also good in family*

*About 74% think of their future*

*The turmoil adolescents show is due to their unemployed condition and the tension created affects both parents and adolescents*

school adolescents. According to the discussants, “They have nothing to do at home so they loiter outside”. In many occasions they try to disturb others, some used to smoke or took drug, damage property, tease girls and gossip in group. Because of poverty most of the parents work outside so they could not take proper care of these young people. The discussants in focus group or respondents of community leader survey however, mentioned that these adolescents behaved well at home, only a few became violent. A gap has generated between parent and the adolescents and this situation developed because of the adolescents’ unemployed condition. In the voice of one parent, “Tension remains in the parent and adolescent”. According to the community people’s response large numbers of adolescents had to face different problems in their daily life. Their responses are given in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8. Out-of-school adolescents’ problems as perceived by the community people

Problems that are faced by the out-of-school adolescents in their daily life	Percentage
Have to work for survival	13.79
Get spoiled or involve in unwanted work	37.93
Remain unconscious of social wellbeing	72.41
Face financial problem	20.69
Others	10.34

The above table provides the fact that due to un-schooling problem nearly three fourth of the adolescents remained unconscious about their social wellbeing. Over a third of the community people thought that in the absence of education these young people became spoiled and involved in antisocial activities. Some of course mentioned that these young people had to face financial problem for not being educated. When we asked about the gender of such suffering the community people mentioned that both the sexes were equally sufferer, however over a third of the respondents mentioned that it was boys who suffer most than the girls (Figure 4.8 ).

*According to community people large numbers of adolescents remain unconscious of their social well being due to their un-schooling problem*

*Gender wise boys are the worse sufferer of the situation than the girls*

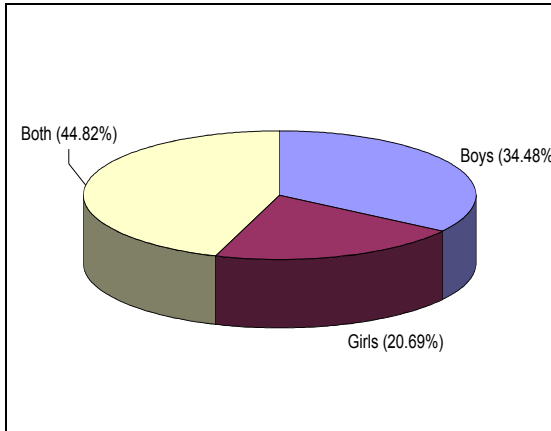


Figure 4.8. Percentage of adolescents who suffer most from out-of-schooling problem

### Social Manner

Social manner of these out-of-school adolescents was one of the concerns of this study. So the community people were asked to indicate the type of manners of these young people in the society. Their responses are shown in Figure 4.9. It is interesting to note that according to the community people's perception the un-schooled adolescent girls' behaviour were much better than the boys. Over half of the boys and less than a fifth of girls' manner were reported to be bad in terms of their social manner. The nature of badness was that, those young people who do not know how to talk with elderly persons, they misbehave with people, always show arrogance, have bad companies etc. However, this survey finding has been endorsed by the participants in the focus group discussion as well.

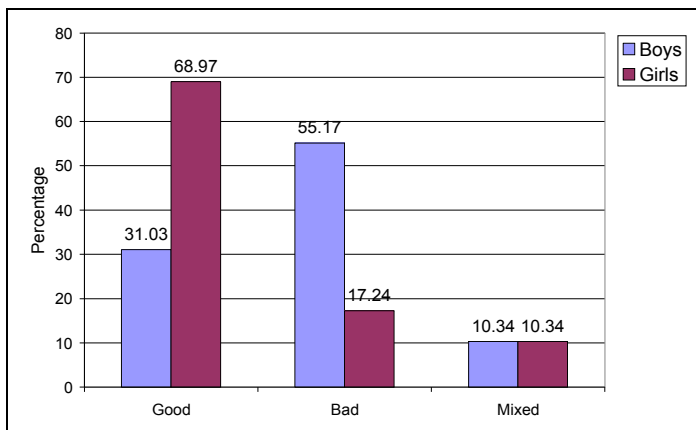


Figure 4.9. Nature of social manners of un-schooled adolescents

*Social manner:*

*Social manners in girls is better than the boys*

*Adolescent boys do not know how to talk with the elderly persons, misbehave with people and have bad companies*

*Ill manners is the result of un-schooling and poor family background*

It is an accepted truth that education makes people civilized and polished. As a large group of adolescents are dropped from school in their early grades and or never enrolled in school therefore socially they become handicapped in terms dealing with other people. Ill manners among these adolescents may also be due to their poor family background what they did not get from their own houses. Therefore, school is the only possible source from where they may learn sophistication, civic senses and other good social manners. Out-of-school adolescents are deprived of such an opportunity.

### **Health Status**

Very few studies on general health status of Bangladeshi adolescents, particularly out-of-school adolescents are available to the research team. Amongst these sporadic studies available some are for developing countries as well as for Bangladeshi adolescents. Although data about the health and nutrition of adolescents is lacking world-wide, still little amount of information that has been collated would provide us some understanding of general health of adolescents in Bangladesh.

Anemia is an important public health indicator, so it is taken as a measure of our purpose for adolescents. Adolescent anemia is a well-recognized public health problem in developing countries<sup>15 16</sup>. It has been estimated from a review of 39 studies that 27% of adolescents are anemic in developing countries as against 6% in developed countries. Boys and girls are equally anemic in this age group<sup>17</sup>. It was also found that adolescents are prone to develop iron deficiency anemia because of menarche<sup>18</sup>. In one study (Nutrition Survey on Adolescent, 10-17 years) conducted on Bangladeshi adolescent by ICMH, Dhaka, found that 67% of Bangladeshi adolescents were thin (defined as BMI <5<sup>th</sup> centile of WHO recommended reference), 48% were stunted and 75% had hemoglobin <10.5 g/dl. 86% of those children were attending school and the remaining 14% were out-of-school. Considering the above health statistics we

*Health status:*

*Studies on adolescents' health is limited in Bangladesh*

*About 27% of adolescents are anemic with little gender difference*

*About 67% of adolescents are thin and 48% are stunted*

*About 23% of adolescent girls are married by the age of 18 years*

<sup>15</sup> WHO Regional Office of Southeast Asia (1995) *Control of iron deficiency anemia in south-east Asia*. Report of an inter-country workshop, 11-14 December. New Delhi.

<sup>16</sup> UNICEF (1995) *Progress of Nations*. New York.

<sup>17</sup> DeMaeyer, E and Adiels-Tegman, M (1985) The prevalence of anemia in the world. *World Health Studies Quarterly*. 38:302-316.

<sup>18</sup> Brabin, L and Brabin, BJ (1992) The cost of successful adolescent growth and development in girls in relation to iron and vitamin A status. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. 55: 955-58.

can easily infer the worsen situation of our sample in the out-of-school adolescent group.

### Marital Status

While discussing about health it is important to mention the marriage rate of adolescents in Bangladesh. The male female marriage rate at the age 10-19 is pretty high in consideration of their physical and mental maturity. It is surprising that still in 2000 about 7% of girls in 10-14 age group and 46% in 15-19 age group were found married<sup>19</sup>. In the current sample of study 22.52% of out-of-school adolescent were found married. If these girls are

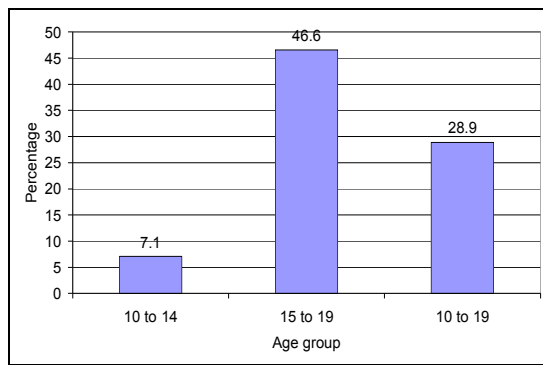


Figure 4.10. Rate of marriage among adolescent girls by age group (BDHS, 2000)<sup>20</sup>

married with all the above deficiencies like anemia, iron or vitamins then how much of their generation would suffer for the same cause. However, many studies on reproductive health of adolescents are available which have its relative importance to population researchers. Population Council, Dhaka has reviewed ten studies (2002) on such reproductive health of adolescents conducted during last five years. These studies demonstrated the knowledge level of adolescents on sexual act, contraceptive methods, STDs, some measures of reproductive health etc. However, scientific knowledge of such measures is yet to be enriched among the older adolescents.

Focus group discussion with national level experts in Dhaka also mentioned that the adolescents who are not in school are seriously lagging behind even in perceiving their needs. They do not know what to do in case of health problem, who to guide

<sup>19</sup> NIPORT (2001) Bangladesh Demographic Health Survey 2000. Dhaka.

<sup>20</sup> NIPORT (2001) Bangladesh Demographic Health Survey (BDHS). Dhaka.

*Studies on reproductive health shows that adolescents' knowledge in this topic is limited*

*Out-of-school adolescents have limitation in perceiving their won needs*

*Girls are literally confined to houses and limited scope to share their views*

*School goers have the opportunity to compensate their psycho-social deficiencies*

them to overcome psychological problems, and who to support them in case of legal matters. So FGD discussants emphasized on provision of psychological counseling for the adolescents. The un-schooled adolescents, particularly girls are literally confined to houses; they have fewer friends to share and limited places to go. Only school goers as well as working girls have greater opportunity to compensate their psycho-social deficiencies through peers and co-workers.

### **The Opportunities and Threats**

The opportunities and threats for out-of-school were discussed in detail in the expert level FGD (see Annexure). The age of adolescence is a very creative and critical period of life but it is not at all taken seriously either by the parents or community or nation. Large number of adolescents who attend school are relatively under control of their educated (whatever may be the number) parents or school. This group has the opportunity to receive guidance (though very little and of no professional quality) from their teachers and elderly members of society. On the other hand the out-of-school adolescents are left behind of this scope. Their parents are mostly illiterate and poor who do not have much quality to guide or are less concerned about it. Since the out-of-school adolescents are not enrolled in school they missed the scope of getting any guidance from this source as well.

Adolescence is a potential period of human life provided it is handled with care and attention. But unfortunately very little concerted effort is found in national activities for the development of these out-of-school adolescents. The only opportunity these adolescents have is the scope of literacy through national NFE programmes under the guidance of Directorate of Non-Formal Education (DNFE), Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME). All the programmes undertaken by DNFE were 9 to 12 months adult literacy courses provided through CBA (Center Based Approach), TLM (Total Literacy Movement, which is now suspended) and FPDA (free primer distribution approach). All the four national schemes were targeted to literacy and awareness building programme of which only one (project 3) was developed for the working children and adolescent (8 – 14 years). None of these programmes were created exclusively for adolescents; however, priority was given to never enrolled or school dropout adolescents for their education. A separate project for adolescent and adult was Family Life Education (FLE). This was UNFPA funded project implemented through hard to reach children education programme conducted in six Divisional

#### ***Opportunities:***

*Adolescence is a creative and critical period of life*

*Opportunity differ by the background of schooling and family*

*Little concerted effort for the adolescents is found from national quarter*

*Even DNFE programmes mixed up adolescents either with children or adults*

towns. This programme also addresses to the children and adolescents together. The largest project for adolescents and adults undertaken by the government is Post Literacy and Continuing Education (PLCE) programme. Limitation of this project is that only learners enrolled in previous government projects (like TLM) are eligible for getting support from this programme. Currently DNFE is supporting two mosque and temple based literacy programmes for children and adults. Though limited, curriculum of all the NFE programmes consist of contents like child rights, reproductive health, legal support, income generating work etc. These information are largely applicable to children as well as adults. Other than MOPME the Youth Ministry, Ministry of Women and Children and Labour Ministry have different vocational and educational programmes for the children, adolescents and youths.

Besides the governmental support a significant number of NGOs like CMES (Center for Mass Education and Science), BRAC, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, UCEP (Underprivileged Children's Education Programme) have different educational programmes for out-of-school adolescents. Amongst them CMES and UCEP mostly emphasized on vocational education, BRAC provide post literacy and continuing education through village library, and one specific programme for adolescents for developing their human resource capacity. It was also reported by the experts in their FGD that few madrasah also provide education programme for the adolescents and youths which is also related to adult literacy.

Another biggest opportunity for these adolescents is privately owned garment sector. Large numbers of adolescent girls are involved in this sector. They work in this field for 8 to 12 hours a day for insufficient wage. Many garments even do not pay these girls in time as well. Their living condition at home is also very poor. However, their working environment in the garments industry is not very safe, even some time their personal safety is threatened by their male counterparts. Many garments industry is accident prone and whenever there was fire mostly young girls were affected and in rare cases compensation is given.

Large numbers of un-schooled adolescents are free and vulnerable to criminal offences. In this respect girls are more prone to be victims of such situation. In order to sense threat of such criminal influence over the adolescents we asked them whether they have any friend who is involved with any criminal offence. In response to this question nearly 19% of out-of-school boys and little over one percent of girls indicated that they have criminal friends. On the other hand this number was

*NFE curriculum consists of child rights, reproductive health, legal support, income etc.*

*Different Ministries and NGOs also have their own programme for adolescents and adults*

*Privately owned garment sector also employ large number of girls for industrial work*

***Threats:***

*Adolescents are most vulnerable to odd situations*

*About one fifth of the un-schooled adolescents and one tenth of school gores have association with some criminal friends*



found to be much less among the school going adolescents (Figure 4.11). It is a big threat that nearly one fifth of the boys in out-of-school community and one tenth among school goers are in touch of criminal group. Residence wise distribution of this response shows that larger number of adolescents in out-of-school boys had friendship with criminals than the in-school boys (Annexure Table 8).

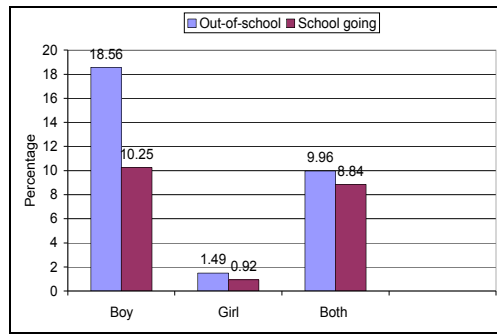


Figure 4.11. Percentage of adolescents having criminal friends.

In response to a question on having bad habit about 23% of out-of-school adolescent boys and one percent girls mentioned that they had some form of bad habit like smoking and drug addiction. Similar problems in school going adolescents are 5% and one percent respectively. The reported level of bad habits among out-of-school adolescents is an indicator of big health hazard. If this habit is continued then it would be a potential threat for their life as well. In Bangladesh bad habits like smoking or drug abuse are less common in girls.

Another threat for this group emerged from the culture gap in our society, here the parent child and teacher student relation is so formal that adolescents cannot share their views with them. Under such constraints most adolescents rely on their peers and collect incomplete or wrong information from them. So in the absence of better schooling or adolescent counseling they become prejudiced in the matter of personal hygiene or sex related behaviours. Threat for out-of-school adolescents is quite different. They are prone to be influenced by their criminal friends. As many of them are unemployed so they have frustration which brings about problems like drug addiction sexual abuse etc. Particularly girls are more prone to sexual harassment. Studies conducted in Bangladesh indicated that many adolescent girls working as house maid become victim of sexual harassment. Large number of acid victim also belongs to this teenager's group. One participant in FGD pronounced as,

*Girls are less prone to criminal offences and negligible amount of them have criminal friends*

*About a quarter of the adolescents have bad habit like smoking. This habit is less common among girls and school goers*

*Culture gap between parent and adolescent does not allow sharing of personal problems*

*Absence of psychological counseling live the adolescents in great turmoil*

“large number of sexual abuse take place at home where they work”.

“Girls particularly in rural areas lead a confined life at home”. This situation refrains them from the correct information about human right and other quality matters. Actionaid Bangladesh has an education programme for adolescent and adult women called REFLECT (Regenerated Freirian Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques). It mostly conducts education programme on conscientization of women. REFLECT is the only programme where women learn through participatory approach and without support of any printed primer. This programme has brought qualitative change in the life of some adolescents who were enrolled in.

**Future Planning**

Ability to think future is an indicator of an organized individual. It is largely believed that adolescents do not have that capability either because of their turbulent nature or they do not need to think in that way because they still depend on their parents. In order to review that idea this study examined their future planning behaviour. It was also found from the survey that large number of school goers (about three fourth) and half of the out-of-school adolescents prepare a thoughtful plan prior to conduct an important task. However, girls were found little more cautious than their male counterparts (Figure 4.12). This was an important finding that the adolescents were not exception of sensible educated adults. If it could be possible to train them to become more practical then perhaps their future could have been much brighter.

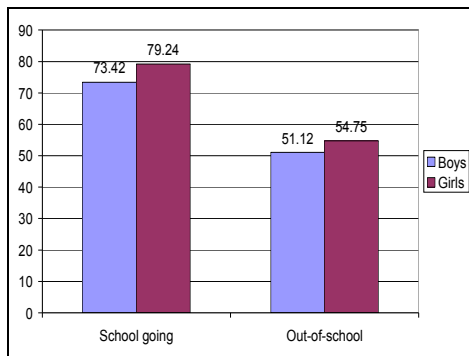


Figure 4.12. Percentage of adolescents prepare a thoughtful plan prior to conduct an important task. (see Annex. Table 5)

*Girls in rural areas remain confine at home that put them into information blackout situation*

**Future planning:**

*About 3/4 of school goers and half of un-schooled adolescents prepare a thoughtful plan prior to undertake an important task*

Along with the above information we also investigated their future planning i.e., what they want to do in future. Their responses are given in the following Table 4.9.

Table 4.9. Percentage of adolescents indicating their future plan by category

Desired activities of the adolescents in future	School going		Out-of-school	
	Boys (80)	Girls (111)	Boys (321)	Girls (293)
Become independent	-	3.6	0.6	1.4
Do business	11.3	0.9	20.6	2.4
Do service	23.7	31.5	3.4	4.4
Tailoring/knitting etc.	-	-	1.2	6.5
Mechanical work	-	-	1.2	-
Doing handicraft work	-	-	2.5	1.4
Planning to marry	-	-	0.3	0.7
Become a driver	-	-	2.5	-
To study more	10.0	14.4	0.6	1.4
Make family happy	-	-	10.0	9.6
Professional (doc., eng.)	27.5	17.1	-	-
Teaching	11.3	15.3	-	-
Others	3.7	2.7	-	-
Do not know	6.3	9.9	-	-
No response	6.3	4.5	57.6	72.4

The above Table shows the difference among the category of adolescents in terms of their future activities. It is interesting to observe that large number of out-of-school adolescents had no specific plan in their mind for their future occupation. More girls in this category were aimless than the boys. However in case of school goers only a few were aimless. About a fifth of out-of-school boys and only 4% of girls wanted to do business in future on the other hand only 11% boys and 1% girls of school goers wanted to do business. On the other hand 24% boys and 31% girls of school goers wanted to do service in future but in case of out-of-school category this number was very small. A significant number of school goers wanted to be professional like doctor, engineer etc. what is totally absent in out-of-school group for obvious reason.

However, when the respondents were asked to indicate whether they took any steps to accomplish those plans, only 36.6% of boys and 18.8% of girls of out-of-school adolescents gave 'Yes' response. But when we analyzed the steps they mentioned to accomplish the plan we could not find very satisfactory result. However, a few mentioned concrete idea to accomplish their future plan e.g., they would like to buy sewing machine to be a tailor in future. It indicates that most of the out-

*Large numbers of adolescents do not have any specific plan for their future occupation*

*Some of un-schooled adolescents have plan for their future but they do not know how to execute that plan*

of-school adolescents lack the capacity of undertaking future plan with an effective manner. When we compared this fact with the school going adolescents 72% and 71% of the boys and girls respectively mentioned that they took steps to accomplish their future plan. But while analyzing the steps most of them emphasized on studying more as their present steps to accomplish future goals.

### **Conclusion and Future Direction**

The state of the art of adolescents particularly the out-of-school adolescents' livelihood offers a comprehensive perspective on the life style of adolescents in Bangladesh. The most remarkable achievement observed in the area of girls enrolment compared to the boys. Still concern remains in the overall rate of enrollment. The shocking information is that large number of adolescents particularly girls who are now out-of-school had been to school and spent quite a significant amount of time (4-5 years) in school. Unfortunately this schooling could not exert necessary impact on them in terms of literacy and other qualitative achievement. Unless a child spends a critical quality time in school the impact of education on their achievement would not sustain.

The adolescent community as a whole is neglected in Bangladesh. Amongst them out-of-school adolescents are the most sufferers in term of receiving attention from both the community as well as government. Nearly half of adolescents are still un-enrolled and about a third of them are totally illiterate. Girls situation is little better in all respect of education which seems to be encouraging. Government's effort to enhance girls' education has contributed to their progress compared to boys.

The obtained level of literacy among out-of-school adolescents after having 4/5 years of schooling is miserable and it reflects the quality of our primary education. Different strategies to enhance girls' education contributed to their number but not their achievement in particular. If the situation with adolescents prevails and opportunities are not created for them for practicing education at this level then large majority of these poor achievers will be diminished into near illiterates. That is, the ultimate result of major educational effort what was given nationally would become a great waste. So a programme befitting to supplement the educational level of these out-of-school adolescents has to be taken for sustaining development.

*School going adolescents think that future plan can be accomplished through education*

#### ***Future guideline:***

*Adolescents' enrollment should be a concern for Bangladesh*

*Adolescent community is neglected in Bangladesh*

*After attending several years in school the adolescents' level of achievement is still low*

Early marriage is still visible in adolescents. In the absence of social security poor parents want to get rid of their young daughters by putting them on early marriage. Dowry is still a factor in marriage. It was very surprising to note that poor parents view education as a threat to dowry – the more you educate a girl more dowries you need to pay to get appropriate bridegrooms. Early marriage also creates a potential threat to the new generation with low birth weight, low intelligence and high risk of mortality.

There is an association between early marriage and off schooling. It is also a social phenomenon which is being persisted among poor families throughout the ages. There is hardly a simple solution which may stop early marriage; it needs long term planning with multidirectional approaches. Heavily involvement of girls in some activity, discouraging early marriage through mass campaign, social and economic incentives for late marriage etc. may contribute to reduction of this social problem.

Information on adolescents' livelihood activities has important policy implication. Large number of adolescents being outside education stream have nothing to do at home even they do not take part in sharing household responsibilities. Loitering, chatting, watching TV etc. are the major unproductive works that keep the adolescents busy in the whole day. Such unproductive time makes the adolescents prone to antisocial activities. Along with such situation adolescents' association with criminal friends or addicted peers pushes them towards the alarming situation. Most of the antisocial activities like, social crime, violence etc. largely emerge from idle and frustrated individuals. Unless their free time is occupied with some meaningful activities, like earning or social work this trend could not be reversed.

Very few of the adolescents had been found to be associated with local clubs or association. Only 12% of boys and 4% of girls had such linkage. Membership to organization, local mobility, access to mass media all has impact on the quality of life of these adolescents. Encouraging adolescents to organize such clubs or becoming member of such organization would not only increase their sharing of ideas it will also help raise their marital age, income generation and decrease family size.

Occupational scope for the out-of-school adolescents is limited particularly in rural areas and specially for girls. Major occupations that are available for the adolescents in rural areas are small trading, service or day labour etc. About 36% of boys and 19% girls are involved in these activities. However, their

*Early marriage is still visible and dowry plays a significant role to get a good bride-groom*

*In order to decrease early marriage multi-directional developmental plan is needed*

*Un-schooled adolescents mostly have nothing to do. Plan to utilize their time need to develop*

*The rate of employment among adolescent is very poor, their employment opportunity should be enhanced*

involvement in these works is not very rewarding because it brings them little money but it has tremendous impact on their daily life. The provision for work is also very limited in village; organized programmes need to be developed for these out-of-school adolescents so that they can be diverted from their antisocial activities in the community. As there is no wage policy in the country most of the private employer utilize their labour in a very cheap rate. On the other hand the poor wage fails to create motivation in these young people. Girls are highly affected by the job situation; they are not accessible to most of the work available in the community except house keeping or child rearing work.

Psychological variable among adolescents are quite universal, individually they have mixed personality of introversion and extroversion. Large numbers of adolescents have control over their emotion which can be nurtured through various education and sports programme. Our national curriculum has lapses in the matter of psychological wellbeing of children and adolescents. In the whole curriculum, even in primary level, physical activities like, sports, art, music etc. are underestimated. And it is very much ignored for adolescents in the secondary level. It is entirely a neglected subject in the NFE programme for the adolescents. Educational and psychological counseling of the adolescents should be an inevitable part of the curriculum but it seems to be an unheard topic in the course of education. Most of the turmoil created by adolescents is the product of their internal tension which could be managed with a simple school counseling programme. The policy implications of these findings demand the policy makers' appreciation for psychological wellbeing of these adolescent populations.

Out-of-school adolescents have nothing to do, largely unemployed and create problems for the family. Along with this, parental failure to take care of these adolescents contributes to worsening the family child relationship. As a result, in the absence of love and affection they led to astray by their older associates.

A large percentage of out-of-school adolescents show that they do not have anything to do in the morning or evening which may worsen their psychological well being as well as their social prestige. As this group is not associated with any change agent or group (school or organization) or individual (educated parent) their scope of development is narrowed down. Most of the boys or girls who live in village could not articulate their needs suitable to their own capacity. It provides a very gloomy future of the adolescents which need to be changed by different interventions. Education for conscientization is the ultimate

*Occupational opportunities for adolescents should be created in rural sites*

*Wage policy for adolescents is required*

*More sports and cultural activities may nurture the emotional control of adolescents*

*Unproductive and free time makes the adolescents prone to antisocial activities*

*Educational and psychological counseling should be an integrated part of any educational programme*

*Antisocial activities emerge from frustration and idleness*

need for these adolescents. Programmes that may lead this under privileged group to higher order of development in psycho-social and economic domains which would be beneficial for both the individuals as well as nation.

*Adolescents' future seems to be gloomy that demands multi-directional interventions*