

Transforming Underprivileged Children into Productive Human Resource: A case study on UCEP, Rajshahi

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Abstract

Because of poverty and family disorganization a large number of children between 6-10 years are being deprived of educational right all over the world including Bangladesh. In Bangladesh out of total 17,80,000 children 14,88,024 are enrolled in Primary schools (GOB 2009-12). UNICEF reported that after ratifying CRC (Convention on the Rights of the Child) some least developed countries failed to uphold the child right because of poverty, natural and man made disasters. For fulfilling family needs these under privileged children are being involved in hazardous child labour and illegal activities in lieu of going to schools. According to a survey conducted on street children, about 07 million children are engaged in such hazardous activities in different cities of Bangladesh (Ali-2004:12). About 4,45,226 are working in six divisional cities (GOB: 2005:10). These under privileged children are bound to work for their survival. If non-formal education can be provided to these children it may be more effective. Keeping this philosophy in mind some NGO's like Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs (UCEP), Basic Education for Hard to Reach Children (BEHRC) and Reach Out of School Children (ROSC) are working in this field. Among them UCEP is a leading and well organised NGO in Bangladesh. In this article an overview of UCEP activities has been made and a case study on UCEP programmes of Rajshahi division have been discussed in brief. Field data have been collected from the UCEP schools and from UCEP official documents. Survey method was followed. However, the article emphasized on the effectiveness of UCEP Programmes in Rajshahi.

Introduction

Underprivileged Children's Educational Program, UCEP- Bangladesh is working with the distressed urban working children. Starting in 1972 at the Dhaka University campus with only 60 students, it has now a hub of over 42 thousand working children striving to inculcate marketable skills and provide employment support service through general education and vocational training in close collaboration with industries and employers throughout Bangladesh and overseas.

The origin of Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs (UCEP)- Bangladesh is connected with a philanthropic New Zealander, Lindsay Allan

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Cheyne. Mr. Cheyne came to Bangladesh on a British relief mission in 1970 to run a mother and child health clinic for the millions of tornado affected families in the south-eastern part of the country. Cheyne had just completed establishing the clinic, the 1971 war of independence broke out and Bangladesh was born. The destruction in the wake of the tornado paled beside the tragedy of human misery left out by the war, and the new nation faced ever-greater crisis than before. Along with his relief operation duties, Cheyne worked with the Directorate of Social Welfare in planning an educational program for the underprivileged and homeless poor children. Cheyne went to work finding a sponsor. The Danish government responded to the appeal of Mr. Cheyne and extended generous financial assistance to launch a 3-year project. The government of Bangladesh provided a building as house for the program. UCEP was established in 1972 as an International Non Government Organization and started a school at the Dhaka University premise with only 60 students. UCEP was reorganized in 1988 and got itself registered as a national NGO under the Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration and Control) Ordinance, 1961.

Vision, Mission and Objectives

Vision: To be a leading human resource development organization in providing cost-effective non-formal education, marketable skills training and employment promotion for urban poor working and distressed children and adolescents in Bangladesh (UCEP Booklet, March, 2010)

Mission: The mission of UCEP- Bangladesh is "To raise the socio-economic condition of the urban poor children to a level that they can effectively participate in the national development process with enhanced capacity and dignity and fulfillment of their basic rights". (Ibid)

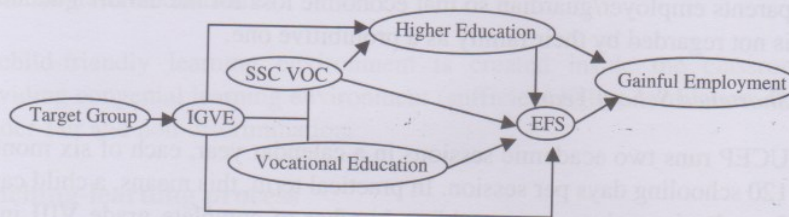
Objectives: The main objective of UCEP programs is to improve the socio-economic status of the urban poor children and support industrial growth by generating skilled manpower. Other objectives are:

1. To develop the socio-economic condition of the urban poor
2. To make the urban poor capable in participating in the national development
3. To enhance the capacity and prestige of the urban poor
4. To help the urban poor in achieving their rights
5. To create awareness and gender sensitivity
6. To promote the active participation of women in all types of development through gender equity in education and training process.

Target Group

The target group of UCEP consists of underprivileged children in general and urban working children in particular between the ages of 10 to 17. At the age when they should go to school, they either roam about in the streets or are engaged in ill-paid manual labor for sustenance or for supplementing their family income. They are to accept physical labor for their survival at a tender age when they should have been to school for their education. They should have health care and parental love appropriate for their physical, intellectual and moral development. The major groups of working children at UCEP are domestic worker, hawkers, shop assistants, porters, workshop helpers, transport helpers and day laborers.

UCEP Model Integrated Approach to HRD



The main objective of UCEP programs is to improve the socio-economic status of the urban poor and support industrial growth by generating skilled manpower. UCEP has global reputation for its unique model of human resource development.

UCEP provides a package service of Integrated General and Vocational Education (IGVE), Technical Education (TE) and Employment Support Services (ESS) along with various aspects of child rights, good governance and social life skills to the working children. UCEP operates 53 Integrated General & Vocational (IGV) Schools and 10 Technical Schools with an enrolment of over 42 thousand distressed working children with equal gender ratio.

In Integrated General and Vocational schools the children are provided education up to grade VIII with the abridged form of National Curriculum along with basics of technical education. After completion of skills training the children are provided employment support by the Employment Support Services (ESS) Component of the UCEP.

In Industrial Electrical & Electronic Control Trade, the students are taught the system of Mobile Telecommunication such as area of mobile system, area of communication, power supply system of BTS, elements of power supply, use of

auto-voltage regulator, block diagram of grounding system, etc.

UCEP is marching forward to achieve Vision – 2021, the time frame to make the country a Digital Bangladesh, which has been set forth by the Government of Bangladesh. (Source: UCEP-Bangladesh)

UCEP Schools adhere to the following strategies which are unique in types:

Working While Learning

The Children continue to work and earn while they attend schools. UCEP schools operate 3 shifts a day, each of 3 hours duration having 4 lessons per day. This allows a child to choose a shift of his/her convenience in consultation with his/her parents employer/guardian so that economic loss for the children attending school is not regarded by their family as a prohibitive one.

Shortened School Year

UCEP runs two academic sessions in a calendar year, each of six months, having 120 schooling days per session. In practical term, this means, a child can complete 2 grades in a given year enabling him/her to complete grade VIII in 4½ years, including six months' of pre-technical schooling after completing Grade-VIII.

Abridged Curriculum

The UCEP schools basically follow the NCTB curriculum both at primary and lower secondary levels. However, the curriculum has been abridged in a careful manner so that it remains comparable with that of national mainstream curriculum. The curriculum consists of Bangla (mother tongue), English, Mathematics, Vocational, Social, Environment and Hygiene.

Schools in Catchment Areas

UCEP schools are located in the vicinity of the areas where they work and/or live so that it becomes convenient for them to attend school during the most suitable shift-hours. Students live within 2 km periphery of the schools.

Linkage with the Community

Every UCEP school-teacher is indeed a social worker motivating the target group, raising social awareness in the community for deriving community support. This finally results in high attendance and low dropout rates.

Access and Equity

Every child (girls above the age of 10 and boys above 11) with diverse abilities and backgrounds have access to UCEP schools. Priority is given to the girl child since the rate of literacy and women's participation at the work places show that the women are lagging far behind than men.

School Environment

UCEP Schools are safe with spacious well-built classrooms, separate toilets for girls and 30 students class size. Each school has a welcoming, healthy, and clean environment and a supply of clean, safe drinking water. All children are protected from harms, violence and abuses.

Learning Environment

A child-friendly learning environment is created inside the classrooms by providing congenial learning environment (sufficient lights, ventilation, fans) and gender-fair and non-discrimination.

Teaching-learning process

A classroom-based approach requiring completion of all educational work at the school and not expecting homework from the children which is another innovational feature of the curriculum.

All lessons are taken preparing lesson plans & using appropriate teaching aids. Children are grouped with diversified ability for ensuring their participation in every lesson and the effective use of time. Children with learning difficulties have opportunities to review lessons in consultation with class teacher.

Social work supports

UCEP teachers are trained in social work based on the specific needs of the target group. Social work starts during the pre-admission period in order to ensure the adjustment of the children to the school environment. Throughout the school program, UCEP teachers maintain close contact with the families and employers of the students and with the community through regular home visits and meetings. As a measure to prevent student's tendency to dropout and keeping the attendance rate high, UCEP teachers conduct home visits and follow up when a student remain absent for two-three consecutive days.

Children's Council

Children councils are functioning in all schools. The executive committee members of the councils are elected through democratic process to ensure child participation in the education process, school and classroom management. It gives opportunities to demonstrate their capacity to plan, organize and implement activities, to access information and to express their needs.

Children's Library

Children's library exists in each school to encourage the students to read books and gain knowledge. News papers and journals are also supplied in the children's library of each school.

Management of UCEP

UCEP imparts vocational training to its students through 10 technical schools set up in Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi, Barisal, Sylhet, Rangpur and Gazipur. UCEP's vocational training course is low-cost and it helps a working child to learn basic technical education within 6 to 18 months to become a skill technician of any trade. UCEP introduced 17 vocational courses including Auto-mechanics, Welding and Fabrication, Machinist, Plumbing and Pipefitting, Industrial, Electrical and Electronic Control, Electronic Technology, Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning off-set Painting Technology, Industrial Woodworking, Tailoring and Industrial Sewing Operation, Industrial Woolknitting Operation, Garments Finishing and Quality Control, Industrial Garments Machine Mechanics, Textile Weaving Mechanics, Textile Spinning Mechanics, Textile Knitting Mechanics, and Aid to Nurse. The prime objective of UCEP is to rear up the poor and working children of urban area as a skilled workforce by providing them with education, training and jobs so that they can take part in national development accelerating the country's socio-economic progress and the pace of poverty alleviation.

UCEP is run by a 7-member Board of governors. The board members are elected from the 34-member UCEP Association. The chief of UCEP is the Executive Director, who is assisted by two Directors and seven Managers. UCEP is comprised of 1676 staff members, of which 30 percent are women.

UCEP gets financial assistance from various foreign agencies. A consortium of overseas funding organisations provide monetary assistance to UCEP for specific projects. In 2010, the consortium members were Department for International Development-DFID of UK, Danish International Development Agency-DANIDA,

Swiss Agency for Development Co-Operation- SDC and Save the Children Sweden-Denmark. Other funding sources of UCEP are financial contribution of UCEP beneficiaries, student sponsorship, service grant and land donated by the government, city corporations and individuals.

During 1972-2010, UCEP extended its support to 171,016 poor working children. Among those 95,026 completed primary education (class five) and 71,536 students passed class eight from general schools of UCEP.

So far, 38,318 children were given vocational training from 1983. In 2010, the number of registered students in all UCEP schools and vocational training centres stood at 37,000.

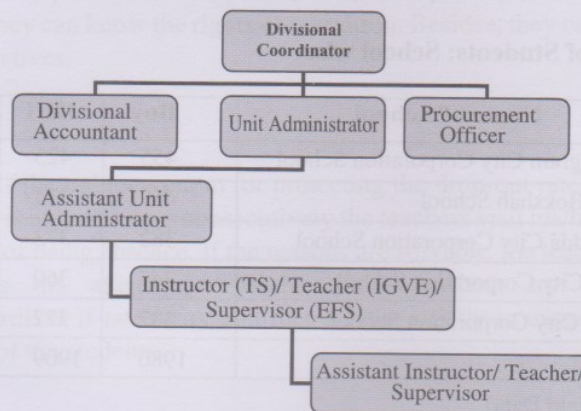
UCEP's annual budget allocation for the year 2010 was Tk 2,040, 873,66. ESCAP declared UCEP runners up twice in the competitions held among human resource development agencies of Asia-Pacific region in 1995 and 1997.

UCEP in Rajshahi

Introduction of UCEP in Rajshahi

UCEP started its programme in Rajshahi in 1993 through establishing a general school at Chotobonogram near to City Corporation Workshop in Sapura. The City Corporation donated the land to establish the school. On 11 December it was inaugurated and within a few days it started its academic activities on 4 January 1994 with only 8 students. Being closed to the City Corporation Workshop, it was able to collect hundreds of students within few months.

Administrative Structure of UCEP Rajshahi Division



Manpower

Unit	Teacher Grade	Officials	MLSS	Total
Administrative	3	2	3	8
IGVE	83	3	15	101
TE	33	10	3	46
EFS	5	-	1	6
Total	124	15	22	161

Source: (Field Data)

Programmes:

UCEP- Bangladesh, Rajshahi Division runs the programmes through three major sections.

- a) Integrated General and Vocational Education (IGVE)
- b) Technical Education (TE)
- c) Employment and Field Services(EFS)

a) Integrated General & Vocational Education (IGVE) Section

Under this section, there are 05 schools in Rajshahi which are named as Feeder Schools:

1. UCEP- Choto Bonogram City Corporation School
2. UCEP- Momena Bokshah School
3. UCEP- Basher Adda City Corporation School
4. UCEP- Tikapara City Corporation School
5. UCEP- Bulonpur City Corporation School

Number of Students: School wise

Name of School	Boy	Girl	Total	%
Chotobongram City Corporation School	455	425	880	23
Momena Bokshah School	459	374	833	21
Basher Adda City Corporation School	382	373	755	19
Tikapara City Corporation School	347	360	707	18
Bulonpur City Corporation School	337	377	714	19
Total	1980	1909	3889	100

Source: (Field Data)

Ratio of Boy and Girl

In the 5 general schools, out of total 3889 students the number of boys is 1980 and girls is 1909 which rate at 51% and 49% respectively. It stands the ratio of boy and girl 25.5 : 24.5.

Ratio of Teacher and students

The ratio of teacher and students stands at 1:47

Strategic Activities of IGVE

Guardian Meeting

Two times a year, a meeting of the guardians of the students held in the school premises. The regional coordinator or the school administrator presides over the meeting. The main objective of the meeting is to motivate the guardian so that they may be aware of education right and ensure the attendance of their children in the schools. Besides, guardians discuss the schools performance and progress along with the follow-up system. They discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the respective school. If there is any fault or lack of follow-up or of school administration they can raise it in the meeting. For this reason the students' attendance as well as the schools managerial activities becomes much effective more effective.

Community Meeting

For the direct communication with the guardian and mass people, a meeting is arranged at least 4 times a year in different communities of the schools' catchment areas. In participation with of people of all works of life the meeting becomes lively and they can know the rights of education. Besides, they can know the UCEP and its objectives.

Follow-up

Follow-up is the unique system for protecting the drop-out rate of the students. If any student is absent 3 days consecutively the teachers visit his/her home and study the reasons of being absence. If the reasons are solvable, the teachers try to solve it and ensure his attendance. Besides, the teachers try to motivate the parents/guardians if necessary and they handle strictly in cases of lacking of the employers of the students.

Elite Meeting

In association and participation with the elite persons of the schools' catchment areas, school administration arranges meeting two times a year. Local political persons, intellectuals, social workers, Imam of mosques, rich persons and highly educated and dignified persons come and remain present in the meeting. They discuss on various problems of the respective school and recommend the ways of solving those. Besides, They evaluate the schools' achievement and ask the administration on the factors of lacking if there be any.

In-house Training

Every school arranges in-house training to increase the teachers' skill two times a year. Among the teachers the most experienced and highly educated one is selected to present the lecture and before 7-10 days, the selected teacher is informed of the subject matter of training so that he/she can take preparation. It is an on going process of training which rounds the year by subject.

Recreational Activities

Children's Day

Each school arranges the children's day two times every year. It is the most delightful day for the students. In this very day, students themselves arrange various show and music. The members of the Children's Council run and control the cultural activities from the beginning to the end. All day long they observe it through arranging drama, music, show and sports.

Study Tour

There is a permission of a study tour in a year; but only for the last batch and only to visit the training school. So, if any school wants to arrange a study tour or a picnic, it may arrange with its own cost. But, it needs not to cite that the students who can not get meals two times a day can not dream of going to a picnic with his own cost. However, the school administration may arrange picnic or study tour to encourage the poor students.

Technical School

To provide appropriate skills and thereby improve the employment prospects of General School graduates, UCEP- Rajshahi is running one technical school situated close to Paba Upazilla Bhaban in Rajshahi. It established and started

curriculum in July, 2006 with only 160 graduates of UCEP-IGVE. This school is the main divisional complex of Rajshahi.

Tables of Information about Technical School

Students by different trades

Units	Trades	Boy		Girl		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Mechanical Unit	Auto Mechanics	60	29	00	00	60	16
	Machinist	41	20	12	08	53	15
	Welding & Fabrication	58	28	00	00	58	16
Electric & Garments Unit	Industrial Electrical & Electronic Control	47	23	11	07	58	16
	Tailoring & Industrial Sewing Operation	00	00	83	53	83	23
	Aid to Nurse	00	00	50	32	50	14
Total		206	100	156	100	362	100

Source: (Field Data)

From the table, it is clear that there are total 362 students in the technical school in different trades. The table also reports that the trades are divided among the students according to their sex which is naturally congenial. For this reason, all the boys are getting training on auto mechanics, Machinist and Industrial Electrical & Electronic Control trade and the girls are getting scopes on tailoring and aid to nurse trade. From the comprehensive outlook, it is revealed that the tailoring and industrial sewing operating is more favorable to the girls than any other trade.

Students by sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage	Ratio of Boy and Girl	■ Girls 43%  ■ Boys 57%
Boy	206	57	25:19	
Girl	156	43		
Total	362	100		

Source: (Field Data)

Among them the number of boys and girls are 206 and 156 respectively which represents them as 57% and 43 %

Teachers and Officials

There are 33 instructors and 13 office staff in the technical school section in different units. Among them 10 instructors are in Mechanical Unit, 10 are in Electric & Garment Unit and 13 are in special SSC Vocational Unit.

Programmes of Training School

There are 6 trades in this school. These trades are divided into three categories based on unit;

Unit 1: Mechanical Unit

Trades: Auto mechanics
 Machinist
 Welding & Fabrication

Unit 2: Electrical and Garments Unit

Trades: Industrial Electrical & Electronic Control (IEEC)
 Tailoring & Industrial Sewing Operation
 Aid to Nurse

Unit 3: SSC Vocational (on two subjects)

- i) general Mechanics; and
- ii) General Electric Works.

Strategic Activities of TE

After completion of IGV education the students can have chance to make themselves admitted into the Technical School in any one of the 6 trades. This school runs 2 shifts per day, each of 4.2 hours duration, so that working children can continue in their jobs while they acquire skills in the Technical Schools. The duration of training on the trades under the Unit 1 & 2 is from 6 months to 18 months considering the nature of students and SSC Vocational programme is of 2 years. After successful completion of the training, the trained graduates can have the employment facility from EFS section and the students who pass the SSC Vocational Examination may get themselves employed or get themselves admitted into polytechnic Institute for higher education.

Employment & Field Service

To provide adequate support services to the graduates passing out from its technical schools Employment & Field Services (EFS) section established in Rajshahi in July 2007. It is also situated at the UCEP- Rajshahi main complex. In the opening year it started with 111 trained graduates passing from the technical school. Till now, there are about one thousand graduates of 8 batches are employed in various industries in an outside Rajshahi under the supervision of the section.

Socio-economic Background of the Underprivileged Children

Under study of the students learning in different trades 87 were randomly. From the collected data, it was observed that the socio-economic background of the underprivileged children is miserable of the respondents' family, 26% can not earn over taka 100 per day. Besides, the family size of The courses offered in all private universities mostly are job oriented as the respondents is big. For this reason children of these families are involved in income earning activities. Though they earn a little amount of money which is not over taka 40 per day it supplements to their family income. Most of the respondents live in unhygienic slum houses. They do not get meal 3 times a day. The important factors of socio-economic background of the underprivileged children is shown in the following tables.

Table 1: Factors of being underprivileged

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Fatherless	14	15
Motherless	03	4
Orphan	13	15
Divorced Mother	14	15
Street Child	03	3
Landless	42	48
Total	87	100

Source: (Field Data)

The table reveals that most of the respondents are involved into works due to poverty caused by landless which rates at 48%. Besides, being fatherless 15%, motherless 4%, orphan and son of divorced mother 15% each. So, they are bound to involve into income earning activities.

Table 2: Respondents by their occupation

Types of Occupation	Total	
	Frequency	%
Domestic Aid	45	51
Factory Worker	7	8
Day Labourer	3	3
Shop Keeper/ Assistant	5	6
Wood Collector	6	7
Hawker	4	5
Tailor/ Embroider	1	1
Rickshaw Puller/ Push	7	8
Coulie (Porter)	5	6
Packet Maker	4	5
Total	87	100

Source: (Field Data)

The table indicates that most of the respondents are involved in domestic aid. Among others 8% are factory workers, 6% are shopkeepers, 7% are wood collectors, 8% rickshaw puller and 6% are labour. Besides, a considerable number of respondents are involved with various works like packet making, tailoring and day labour.

Table 3: Students by Daily Income

Income range (Tk.)	Total	
	Frequency	Percentage
Below 15	36	41
15-20	24	27
21-25	11	13
26-30	6	07
31-35	6	07
36-40	2	03
41+	2	02
Total	87	100

Source: (Field Data)

The income of the 21% respondents is below taka 15. It is first among the income level and the 27% respondents earn daily taka 15-20. Only 2% of them earn taka 41 or above. This income level indicates how pitiful the socio-economic conditions of the students are.

Table 4: Family size of the respondents

Income range (Tk.)	Total	
	Frequency	Percentage
1-2	7	8
3-4	40	52
5-6	27	31
7-8	7	8
9+	6	1
Total	87	100

Source: (Field Data)

Most of the families of the respondents consist of 3-4 members which is 52% but the 31% families are of 5-6 members and 8% families are of a highest number of members 7-8.

Table 5: Family Income of respondents

Income range (Tk.)	Total	
	Frequency	Percentage
Below 100	19	21
100-120	15	17
121-140	20	22
141-160	8	10
161-180	12	14
181-200	8	10
200+	5	6
Total	87	100

Source: (Field Data)

The table shows the families where from the students come only 6% and 10% can earn more than taka 200 and 181-200 respectively. But 21% family can not earn not over taka 100 which is very little to lead the daily life. For such inadequate family income a child becomes worker to mitigate the family needs.

Table 6: Types of houses of the respondents

Income range (Tk.)	Total	
	Frequency	Percentage
Types	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Pucca</i>	14	16
<i>Semi Pucca</i>	27	31
<i>Kacha</i>	22	25
Jhupri	24	28
Total	87	100

Source: (Field Data)

The table bears the evidence that among the respondents a remarkable number (28%) live in unhygienic slum houses called Jhupri. Only 16% respondents live in brick built house which is called pucca and 31% live in semi pucca and the rest live in the kacha house made of bamboo and straw.

Table 7: Respondents by daily food intake

Times	Frequency	Percentage
1	00	00
2	54	62
3	33	38
Total	87	100

Source: (Field Data)

From above table it is clear that 62% respondents do not get meals 3 times a day. They get it at best 2 times a day.

Table 8: Protein intake of the Respondents

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	29	33
Every 2 days	44	51
Every 3 days	14	16
Once in a week	00	00
Total	87	100

Source: (Field Data)

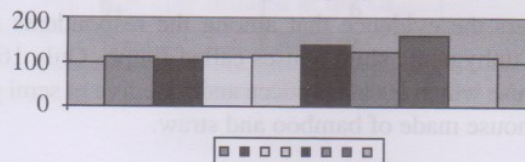
Out of the respondents, only 33% get protein daily and 51% get it every 2 days; but the 16% get it every 3 days which is needed for their proper nutrition.

Table 9: Number of employed graduates by batch

Batch	Name of Batch	Boy	Girl	Total	Percentage
1st	JD- 7	75	36	111	12
2nd	JJ-8	61	43	104	10
3rd	JD-8	65	47	112	12
4th	JJ-9	72	43	115	12
5th	JD-9	81	59	140	12
6th	JJ-10	82	42	124	14
7th	JD- 10	102	57	159	13
8th	JJ-11	65	45	110	16
	Total	606	372	975	100

Source: (Field Data)

Gradual Increasing Employment Service



The table and the chart show that the rate of employment is increasing gradually. Though the rate of 2nd batch is lower than that of the 1st batch, from the 3rd batch it continued to 12% up to 5th batch and then the rate increased to 14% in 6th batch and the latest/running 8th batch which increased to 16%.

Table 10: Number of Employed graduates by sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage	Ratio of Boy and Girl	■ Girls 38%  ■ Boys 62%
Boy	603	62	Boy: Girl = 50: 31	
Girl	372	38		
Total	975	100%		

Source: (Field Data)

Strategic Activities of EFS

Follow-up

Follow-up is an ongoing and continuous process. After every 6 months a new batch is added to the section and then the section follows up this except the previous one. ESOs supervise the employed graduates keenly whether they work well or not. If there is any report or information the ESOs get, they go to that field and try to solve it. Sometimes, in consultation with the employer they transfer the graduates from one to another institution as the graduate's desire.

Job Market Survey

The service giving officer makes survey at least 5-7 days within 6 months to update the field of employment in order to find new vacancy of the listed industries or discover new industries. They communicate continually with the owners of the industries to know the performances and activities of the employed graduates or of the new post.

Update the Employers List

The section updates the list of employers two times every 6 months. To collect the proper vacancies, requirement of the post, salary range and the eagerness of the employers this kind of visit is conducted. In consistence with the collected data, the section supplies the manpower to the industries which is convenient and beneficial for the graduates.

Job Hunting Day

Every 6 months, it conducts 3-5 job-hunting days to enlist new field. In order to do so the ESO Officers go to the new factories or industries or any other types of institutions to motivate them. They narrate the objectives of UCEP-Bangladesh and its activities so that the employer can make out and assure them to take the manpower. Thus the section creates the employment fields.

Long-term Study

Its long-term study after 3/5 years is conducted to know the situation of the employed graduates whether they are still working there or not.

Support for Higher Education

The EFS section of UCEP-Bangladesh, Rajshahi takes the initiatives to support and collects meritorious and talented graduates for higher education. For this, it communicates with the institution where the students want to get themselves admitted.

Support of Self-Employment through ESA

EFS component recently introduced Entrepreneurship Support Activity (ESA) to encourage the graduates starting their own business. The technical schools provide them training on entrepreneurship and provide financial assistance to start new business in terms of interest free recoverable grants with a very soft installment.

Comparative Involvement of boys and girls up to the 3rd stage

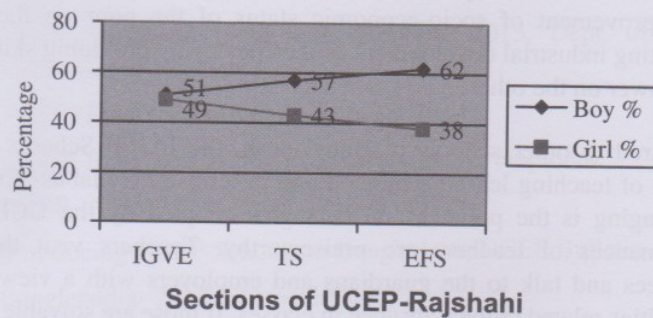
Reviewing the above analysis, it is clear that in IGVE programme the rate of participation of girls is equal to that of boys which was 49%. But in the Technical School the rate decreased to 43% and finally at the EFS Section it decreased more to 38%. From the below table and curve can be seen easily.

Sex	Programmes		
	IGVE	Technical School	EFS
Boy %	51	57	62
Girl %	49	43	38
Total	100	100	100

Source: (Field Data)

Major Employers of UCEP

Comparative Involvement of boys and girls upto the 3rd stage



UCEP graduates employed in and around Rajshahi:

A large number of UCEP graduates are working in:

1. S.N. Fashion, Seroil Colony, Rajshahi
2. Faisal Garments, RDA Market, Rajshahi
3. Nitol Fashion, Katakali, Rajshahi
4. Fan Hospital, Gonokpara, Rajshahi
5. UNIX Electronics, Uposhohor, Rajshahi
6. Kaiser Memorial Hospital, Uposhohor, Rajshahi
7. Shaheen Technology, Sapura, Rajshahi
8. Padma Engineering Works, Sapura, Rajshahi
9. Agrani Metal Industries, Rajshahi
10. Pran RFL Factory, Natore
11. Iswardi E.P.Z Area, Iswardi, Pabna.

Conclusion

UCEP- Bangladesh as one of the leading NGOs of Bangladesh is trying to impart vocational training beside general education to poor and working children and to provide them with jobs. UCEP is one of the ESCAP enlisted human resource development, research and training organisations. At the beginning UCEP established an educational institution for poor children and child labours following the model of community schools. The UCEP model for educating the poor children who were lying outside school was cordially received by all concerned. It is

striving hard to inculcate marketable skills and provide employment support services to the hardcore poor urban working children and adolescents through general and vocational education in close collaboration with large and small scale industries and workshops throughout Bangladesh and abroad. It is contributing to the improvement of socio-economic status of the poor on the one hand and supporting industrial development of the country by providing skilled/semi skilled man power on the other.

Compared to other schools of Bangladesh, the UCEP Schools are different in respect of teaching learning method and in terms of Syllabus- Curriculum. More encouraging is the policies and strategies adopted by the UCEP schools. The performances of teachers are praiseworthy. Teachers visit the home of the absentees and talk to the guardians and employers with a view to find out the difficulties related to their absence in classes. If those are solvable they try to solve it and ensure his/her attendance. Besides, the teachers try to motivate the parents/guardians and they also handle strictly in case of harassment of students by their guardians or employers. The school authority also arranges guardian's meeting, community meeting, elite meeting along with follow-up program. For all these policies and strategies the dropout rate is so little in UCEP schools. While dropout rate in Govt. and Private Primary Schools is almost 40%. Most importantly, the students of UCEP schools get the opportunity of trades training in 6 (six) trades after completing their graduation course (class VIII). The training authority also extends help and cooperation in getting jobs in the relevant fields. To provide adequate support to the graduates passing out from technical schools Employment and Field Services (EFS) section helps getting suitable jobs. Starting from 2007 with 111 trainees, till now about one thousand graduates of 8 batches got employment in various industries in and around Rajshahi under the supervision of this section.

'Learning through earning' is one of the best processes of imparting education to the children of poor families. Since, Bangladesh is a poor country, the poor families cannot provide educational expenses for their children and the children become the victim of child labour abuse.

So, UCEP programmes deserves thanks and recognition. Meanwhile UCEP achieved global reputation for its unique model of human resource development. UCEP'S success has enabled it to be listed twice in the UN ESCAP's "Compendium of centre of excellence in HRD research and training". All other private school authorities should try to follow the UCEP model. Government of Bangladesh should think positively as to how best it can accommodate UCEP policies and strategies in our primary and lower secondary level schools.

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