

# Impact of COVID-19 on the Dropout Scenario of Primary Education in Bangladesh: An Empirical Study

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## Abstract

In Bangladesh, the COVID-19 epidemic has posed an unprecedented challenge to the primary school system, with a large increase in dropout rates among young children. This detailed study looks at the intricate dynamics and diverse elements that contribute to the dropout scenario in the unique setting of Bangladesh during the pandemic. This study, which examines both quantitative and qualitative data, reveals the substantial influence of socio-economic inequality, restricted access to technology, mental health difficulties, and alterations in learning settings on the country's primary education landscape. By going deeply into the Bangladeshi context, this study not only emphasizes the need of recognizing and solving this issue, but it also tries to give evidence-based insights and solutions targeted to the particular issues that students and educational institutions confront in Bangladesh. In doing so, it hopes to influence policy decisions and initiatives that will not only address the current dropout epidemic, but also develop a more resilient, inclusive, and equitable primary education system capable of overcoming the difficulties posed by the ongoing pandemic and future disruptions. The research's ultimate goal is to contribute to the collaborative effort of preserving Bangladeshi students' educational journeys and future chances, ensuring that they have access to excellent education and the possibilities it provides, even in the face of enormous global crises.

## Keywords

COVID-19, Student, Primary Level, Education, Drop-Out, Primary School, Bangladesh

## 1. Introduction

The COVID-19 epidemic emerged in late 2019 as an unparalleled worldwide calamity that quickly infiltrated practically every aspect of life. Among the several issues it posed, one of the most severe and long-lasting was the influence on elementary education. The traditional landscape of education witnessed a seismic change when schools were abruptly and unavoidably closed to prevent the virus from spreading (Rawal, 2021). In this new world, virtual interfaces replaced the once-familiar classrooms, in-person interactions gave way to digital connections, and instructors and students both faced unfamiliar ground. However, in the midst of this disruptive change, a real and worrying issue arose: an alarming increase in elementary school dropout rates (Kumar et al., 2021). This issue went beyond statistical findings to become a crisis of significant significance, endangering the educational paths of countless young learners while also raising concerns about the larger implications for communities and cultures (Takács et al., 2023). Bangladesh had serious interruptions to its educational system during the COVID-19 epidemic. Closings of schools affected almost 41 million pupils, according to UNICEF. According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS), just 36% of pupils have access to possibilities for remote learning. In addition, a study conducted for UNESCO by the Bangladesh National Commission revealed that 70% of students had trouble attending online courses because they lacked equipment or internet connection. These data emphasize how urgently creative solutions are needed to close the digital gap in Bangladeshi education and guarantee ongoing learning amid emergencies.

As we dive into this research study, we hope to unravel the complexities of this multifaceted problem, attempting to understand the underlying factors, the immediate and long-term implications, and the critical need for evidence-based strategies to reduce dropout rates and ensure equitable access to quality primary education for all.

## 2. Problem Statement

The COVID-19 outbreak has disrupted elementary schooling in Bangladesh. More than 40 million primary school kids in Bangladesh had protracted school closures, according to BANBEIS. Remote learning was only available to 36%, worsening educational inequality. According to a Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO study, 70% of elementary pupils had trouble accessing online classrooms owing to a shortage of devices or internet (Islam et al., 2021). This stark reality emphasizes the need for comprehensive digital divide solutions and fair access to quality primary education amid crises.

As governments dealt with the virus's numerous issues, the shutdown of schools, a necessary step to control transmission, triggered a crisis marked by an alarming increase in primary school dropout rates (Meinck et al., 2022). This spike, a reflection of the pandemic's impact on the educational scene, goes

beyond statistical data to represent a crucial issue with far-reaching ramifications. It jeopardizes not only the immediate educational journeys of numerous young learners, but also raises serious worries about the long-term social consequences of a generation of pupils left behind. The issue at stake is as complicated as it is urgent, with a slew of interrelated variables leading to rising dropout rates (Ane & Nepa, 2021).

This complex problem includes socioeconomic inequality, the digital gap, mental health challenges, alterations in learning settings, and unfair resource allocation. In light of this problem, it is critical to untangle the nuances of the dropout scenario in order to properly comprehend its magnitude, understand the distinctive vulnerabilities of various demographic groups, and find targeted treatments (Madhukar, 2021). The stakes are high, affecting not just the destiny of individual pupils but also the course of society development. As such, this research study is motivated by a desire to rigorously investigate the impact of COVID-19 on primary education dropout rates, with the goal of providing a comprehensive understanding of the issue and offering evidence-based policies, interventions, and strategies to protect the educational journeys of the most vulnerable, ensuring that they continue on the path to a brighter future (Gandhi, 2020).

### 3. Objectives of the Study

The main goal of this study project is to find out how the COVID-19 pandemic affected the number of primary school dropouts in Bangladesh. The exact goals are listed below:

- 1) To find out what caused more kids in Bangladesh to drop out of primary school during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- 2) To look into how dropping out of school affects a child's chances in school, with friends, and with money.
- 3) To come up with plans and strategies for lowering the number of kids who drop out of elementary school and making sure that kids stay in school.

### 4. Rational of the Study

COVID-19's influence on elementary school dropout rates in Bangladesh is critical and urgent. The epidemic, which resulted in national school closures and disruptions to the educational system, has the potential to increase the country's already high dropout rates. Primary school is the cornerstone of a child's academic path, and any interruption or dropout at this point might have lifelong effects (Dutta & Smita, 2020). During the pandemic, school closures and the change to online or remote learning posed issues in terms of technology access, internet connectivity, and the digital divide, which disproportionately affected students from marginalized and disadvantaged households. Economic challenges caused by the epidemic also drove families to prioritize immediate financial necessities over schooling, resulting in higher dropout rates (Almendingen

et al., 2021). Understanding the scope and nature of these disruptions to primary education is critical for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders developing targeted interventions and measures to reduce the pandemic's long-term impact on Bangladesh's youth's educational opportunities. Addressing the dropout epidemic and ensuring that all children have access to excellent primary education remains a critical aim for Bangladesh's development, making research on the impact of COVID-19 in this area both pertinent and urgent (Kavitha & Padmapriya, 2021).

## 5. Literature Review

The COVID-19 epidemic has had enormous consequences on education systems worldwide, particularly in Bangladesh. Understanding the pandemic's influence on the dropout rate in primary school in Bangladesh necessitates a study of current research that provides light on the challenges and consequences of this issue. Several significant elements arise from the existing research:

Firstly, studies show that sudden school closings are one of the main reasons why students might drop out. According to a study by Mahmud et al. (2020), the quick end of in-person teaching messed up the flow of learning and made many kids lose interest in school. Students from low-income families were hit the hardest by the shutdown because they couldn't get to the technology and tools, they needed to learn from home (Meinck et al., 2022). There are worries that this digital gap will lead to higher dropout rates, especially in underrepresented groups. Second, the pandemic has had a big effect on the economy, which is another important factor. Families have had to put pressing needs ahead of school costs because of lockdowns, job losses, and unstable finances (Gandhi, 2020). Studies by Ahmed et al. (2021) and Haque et al. (2020) show that kids, especially girls, may have to work or get married young because of money problems, which raises the chance that they will not finish primary school. Third, study shows that differences between men and women in dropout rates during the pandemic are very important. Bangladesh already had problems with equal schooling opportunities for men and women, and closing schools made these problems worse (Almendingen et al., 2021). Kavitha & Padmapriya (2021) did a study that showed the digital gap and more housework had a bigger effect on girls than on boys, making them more likely to drop out of school. Also, the research points to the fact that COVID-19 might have long-term effects on basic education in Bangladesh. The disruptions in learning could cause fewer people to finish school and less development of human capital, which would hurt the country's future workforce and economic chances (Dhiman & Chauhan, 2020).

## 6. Research Methodology

This study on the Effects of COVID-19 on the Dropout Scenario of Primary Education in Bangladesh will use a variety of research methods to look into all the complicated factors that have led to high dropout rates since the pandemic.

To get a full picture of the problem, the approach will include both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods.

### 6.1. Research Design

The study uses a concurrent mixed-methods design, which means that both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered at the same time but were analyzed separately. The results were then interpreted together (Aminuzzaman, 1991). Triangulation was possible with the research strategy, which made the study more accurate and reliable (Uusitalo, 2014).

### 6.2. Data Collection

Use a combination of primary and secondary data sources to gain a comprehensive perspective (Kothari, 2004). Primary data were gathered through surveys, interviews, and observations, while secondary data came from educational institutions, government papers, and academic research.

### 6.3. Sample Size

**Table 1** revealed that the research is based on a survey that was filled out by 150 students, teachers and guardians from Dhaka, Chittagong, and Comilla city. In order to gather sufficient data to answer the test inquiry, fifty university students are selected for the study using the convenience sampling approach. The respondent list are follows:

**Surveys Questionnaires:** Make organized questionnaires to get information from parents, teachers, students, and school managers. Ask about demographics, mental health, access to technology, and reasons for dropping out.

**Interviews:** To get qualitative information, make sure you have in-depth conversations with important people like school officials, experts, and community leaders.

**Document Analysis:** Look at government reports, academic papers, and school records to find out about dropout numbers in the past and in the present.

### 6.4. Sampling Techniques

**Quantitative component:** Primary schools in rural Bangladesh were selected using stratified random sampling. A representative sample of pupils from these schools was selected based on their grade level and gender.

**Table 1.** Study area and respondent scenario.

Sl. No	Name of the City	Nature of Institutions	Total Respondents
01.	Dhaka	Public and Private Educational Institutions	50
02.	Chittagong	Public and Private Educational Institutions	50
03.	Cumilla	Public and Private Educational Institutions	50
<b>Total (One Hundred and Fifty)=</b>			<b>150</b>

**The qualitative component:** involves selecting important informants, such as teachers, parents, and community members, to gather in-depth insights on the dropout phenomena.

## 6.5. Data Analysis Techniques

**Quantitative Data:** To look at the poll answers, descriptive figures like frequencies and percentages was used. We used inferential statistics, like chi-square tests and logistic regression, to find important factors linked to failure.

**Qualitative Data:** Interview and focus group results will be analyzed using thematic analysis (Downs, 1990). Iterative coding procedures will be employed to identify emerging themes and patterns.

Through this research method, an in-depth look at how COVID-19 affected the number of primary school dropouts can reveal useful information and help come up with useful ways to help students and the school system deal with the problems they faced during and after the pandemic.

## 7. Impact of COVID-19 in the Bangladesh Education System

Bangladesh has achieved great strides in gender equality and basic education under the MoPME and MoE (Madhukar, 2021). Two government programs aid the entire educational system: PEDP4 and SEDP. They are managed by the two ministries above. Bangladesh was plagued before COVID-19. Many youngsters didn't attend to school, and others fared poorly (Dutta & Smita, 2020). Rich kids and city kids do better than impoverished kids and country youngsters. COVID 19 prevents 36.8 million children from attending school (Pareek & Soni, 2020). The shutdown of learning centers has also made it tougher to reach 1 million out-of-school youth in the pilot phase of the second chance education initiative. Government and non-governmental organizations have also discontinued reading and writing programs for children and adults (Almendingen et al., 2021). This may affect reading rates, which were improving before COVID-19. The coronavirus outbreak has had a significant influence on schooling in Bangladesh, as follows:

**Learning loss due to discontinuation:** Children would lose the progress they've made in school if they weren't involved in learning tasks for a long time. The present situation is making it hard to do the things that were planned for the school year. In the worst case, there could be a gap of one year. To make sure that learning continues during this crisis, it is also hard to keep kids interested in and motivated to learn, especially those from low-income homes and places where poverty is common (Paul et al., 2022).

**Increasing risk to learning outcomes and assessment:** National student exams show that 62% of third-graders lack the required math skills. In fifth grade, 36% of Bangla and 24% of Math students met grade-level proficiency. In eighth grade, 44% attained grade-level English criteria and 35% met math standards (Mohan et al., 2021). The epidemic will delay classroom learning and ex-

aminations. This will make improving learning outcomes and maintaining grade-level targets harder (Rasheduzzaman et al., 2020). As school closures and other factors reduce learning, authorities and teachers will struggle to find a solution for national exams.

***Inequality in learning:*** Educated and wealthy families should be permitted to homeschool during school breaks. Computers, the Internet, a study place, and books and other learning tools are more common. Using technology-based learning and digital literacy can help their kids study (Dhiman & Chauhan, 2020). Thus, when school resumes, kids from hard-to-reach areas and impoverished families, including those who can't afford high-tech and pricey schools, will be even further behind. Teachers may have to cope with a greater range of kids when schools resume because to the projected learning gaps (Alam et al., 2020).

***Health and nutrition of school children:*** Globally, 364 million students are hungry. The government-run Poverty Prone Area School Feeding program feeds 2.7 million Bangladeshi pupils. Every kid in 104 poverty-prone Upazilas receives 75 gm enriched biscuits from MoPME five days a week since 2010 (Shuchi et al., 2021).

## 8. Research Findings and Analysis

### 8.1. Teachers Perception

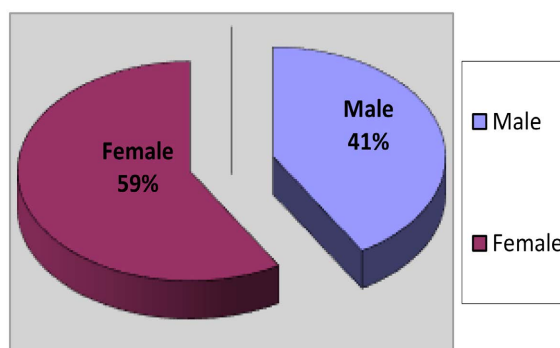
#### 8.1.1. Scenario of Respondent

After 60 surveys were given out to various secondary school teachers, the following 50 were deemed valid:

**Figure 1** showed that the socio-economic conditions and also affiliation with the social institutions maximum respondent were male in lieu of female. The above graph, 30 were male and 20 were female respondents as a sample and the graph shows 60% was male and 40% was female respondents.

#### 8.1.2. Causes of Dropout

According to the data, 90% of teachers said that parents' lack of interest in their children's schooling was a big reason why students dropped out seen by the **Figure 2**. Consequently, 83% of instructors said that parents were unable to provide



**Figure 1.** Scenario of respondent.

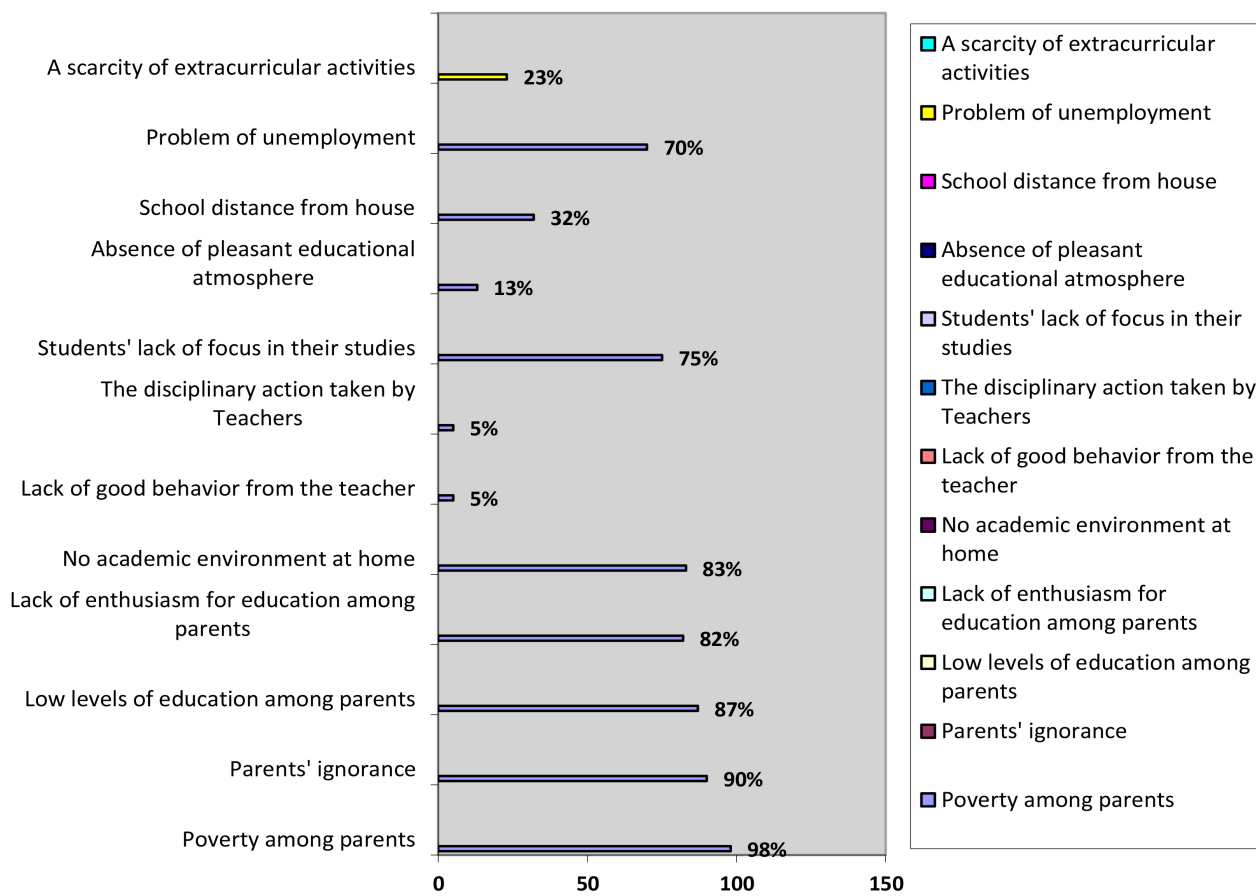


Figure 2. Dropout causes perceived by the dropout students. \*Multiple response.

a good learning environment at home for their students, and many parents didn't realize how often they needed to communicate with school officials on their students' progress. Illiteracy and low education of parents (reported by 87% teachers) were major causes of primary school dropouts. Most instructors (98%) blamed low parental income for dropout, as they couldn't buy teaching materials. Some dropout factors may be related to parents' socioeconomic situation. These were 1) parents were not engaged in their children's academic activities (82% teachers) and 2) parents may not want to take their children to school since there are few jobs for educated people (70% teachers). Accordingly, their children become less attentive in class (75% teachers), less willing to study (67% teachers), and lose confidence in their ability, resulting in poor exam grades. These kids leave school.

Teachers also listed many reasons for dropping out, including not paying attention or not understanding the material. Some worth-mentioning reasons are: 1) the students did not feel comfortable in the class due to having so many students, 2) the classes are not well decorated/unattractive, 3) the students feel insecure in their school environment and teachers use traditional methods of teaching that are not attractive and effective, and 4) teachers do not help students solve their problems. 5) Teachers provide a lot of schoolwork to their pu-

pils. 6) Schools are far from their homes, especially for girls who live in remote locations. 7) There are no extracurricular activities or playgrounds.

## 8.2. Students Perception

### 8.2.1. Demographical and Educational Details of the Students

**Table 2** figured out the demographic and educational information were gathered to learn about the students' backgrounds, including gender, living place, field of study, types of college, and grade point average. This will allow us to better understand the diversity of students in the research field. The details are provided below. The graph depicts the demographic and educational characteristics of the respondents, revealing that the majority of the students (75%) are female and just 25% are male. It shows that 42% of respondents live in cities, 40% live in rural regions, and the rest respondents live in semi-urban communities. According to the data, just 40% of students pursue their education in private institutions, while 60% attend government schools. The research shows that the frequency of students is distributed equally among demographic and educational characteristics.

### 8.2.2. Causes of Dropout

According to **Figure 3**, the most common reason for dropouts was because their parents were unable to assist them in completing their schoolwork. Parents of dropout students held a similar attitude. Another two main reasons for dropout

**Table 2.** Student demographic and educational information.

Demographical and educational variable	No. of respondents	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	37	75
Female	13	25
<b>Living location</b>		
Urban	21	42
Rural	20	40
Semi urban	9	18
<b>Type of school</b>		
Government school	30	60
Private school	20	40
<b>Dropout level</b>		
Class-V	25	50
Class-IV	18	35
Class-III	5	11
Class-II	2	04

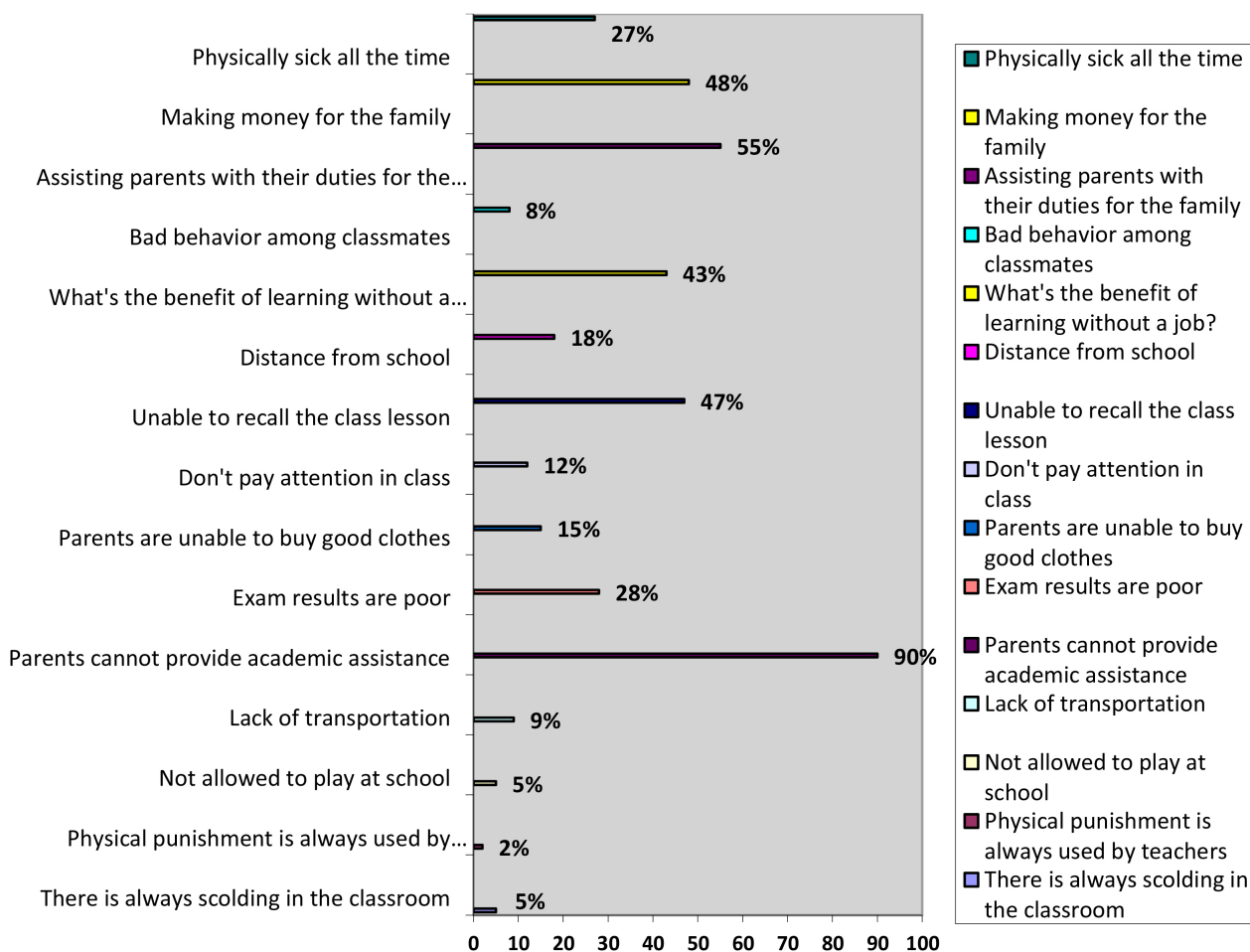


Figure 3. Dropout causes perceived by the dropout students. \*Multiple response.

were that the children had to work with their parents (as claimed by 55% of students) and participate in other activities to support their family, which was pretty comparable to their parents’ perspective. It was shown that 47% of dropout students struggled to recall the teachings provided in class, making it difficult for them to prepare their courses on time and correctly. As a result, they lost interest in class, performed poorly on exams, and eventually dropped out. Furthermore, 40% of dropout students believed that finishing their studies would be of little advantage to them since they expected to have few career opportunities, a reaction identical to their parents’.

### 8.2.3. Correlations among Different Variables

Table 3 shown that Different types of livelihoods saw the big effects of different factors. A correlation analysis showed that a drop in earnings had a big effect on other factors, such as increased study stress (0.98), less time spent on social media (0.98) and study fulfilment strain (0.98). Also, it made people more likely to need financial help (0.98) and unable to buy big things (0.99). The increase in wages and security, on the other hand, gave students more freedom in their studies (0.88) and financial health (0.88). The study found that private school kids

**Table 3.** Pearson correlations among different variables.

	Earnings decrease	Private institution	Public institution	ID high PRICE	ID low price	
Study Pressure	0.98	-0.48	-0.08	0.98	0.99	-0.53
Flexible Study	-0.42	0.87	0.79	-0.5	-0.32	0.99
Online Course useful	0.94	-0.19	0.22	0.94	0.96	-0.19
Online Course less-useful	0.95	-0.31	0.08	0.95	0.99	-0.56
Time on social media	0.45	0.5	0.9	0.48	0.63	0.15
No Time in social media	0.98	-0.52	-0.146	0.98	0.97	-0.48
Job flexibility	0.78	-0.16	0.17	0.78	0.76	0.08
Study fulfillment	0.99	-0.36	0.1	0.99	0.98	-0.48
Study Lack	0.84	0.04	0.43	0.85	0.88	0.03
Need Help	0.98	-0.5	-0.12	0.98	0.99	-0.63
No Help	-0.24	0.87	0.89	-0.23	-0.13	0.94
Large screen Devices	0.28	0.63	0.87	0.29	0.46	0.3
No Large screen Devices	0.99	-0.33	0.09	0.99	0.98	-0.39

spend more time on social media (0.81), and they don't need any money to deal with this problem (0.89). Another thing they have is big screen devices (0.89 inches) for taking online classes and other things. Public school kids, on the other hand, feel a lot of pressure to do well in school (0.98), and they spend less time on social media (0.98). Their stress about jobs is much higher (0.94) because of the study's flaws (0.85) and the length of time it takes to graduate (0.96). They also want to ask for money (0.98) to help pay for their studies. Also, most of them don't have any devices with big screens (0.99). The high cost of internet access increased stress about studying (0.99), not being on social media (0.97). However, cheap internet may also lead to more study options (0.99) and economic growth (0.93).

### 8.3. Guardians Perception

Questionnaires were delivered to various secondary school guardians, and 50 valid surveys were returned.

#### 8.3.1. Respondent Sex

According to the socioeconomic situation and membership in social groups, more men than women answered the survey.

From the below **Figure 4**, 40 were male and 10 were female respondents as a sample and the graph shows 79% was male and 21% was female respondents.

#### 8.3.2. Occupation of Parents

**Figure 5** shows that farming is the most common employment of dropout students' dads (43%), followed by labor (42%), and 10% of dropout students come from homes where the father runs a small company.

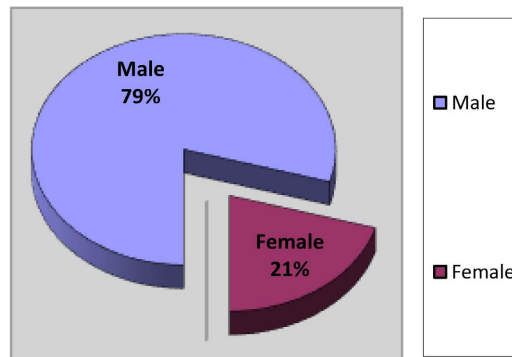


Figure 4. Gender basis scenario of respondents.

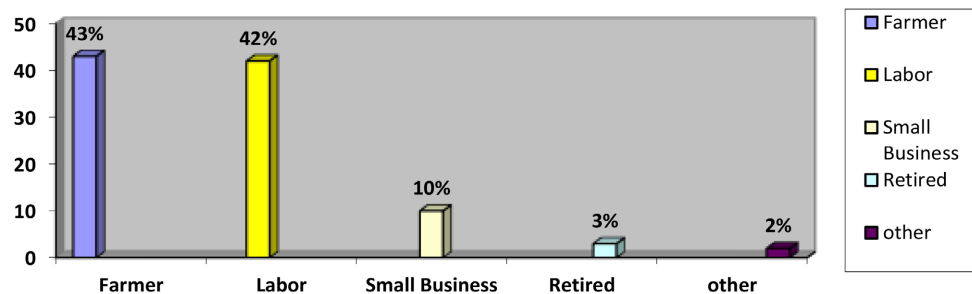


Figure 5. Dropout student's parents' occupation.

### 8.3.3. Monthly Income and Expenditure of Parents

The data showed at Table 4 that whereas 52% of parents reported an income over Tk. 5000 per month, 48% of dropout students' families earned less than or equal to Tk. 5000 per month. In contrast, 38% of households whose members dropped out of school reported spending more than Tk. 5000 per month, while 62% spent less than or equal to Tk. 5000 per month.

### 8.3.4. Household Size and House Ownership

Figure 6 showed that, 50% of dropout students' households have 6 - 7 members, with 3 - 5 members accounting for 45%. The majority of dropout students' families (76%) live on their own property, with the remainder (24%) living on khas or other people's land.

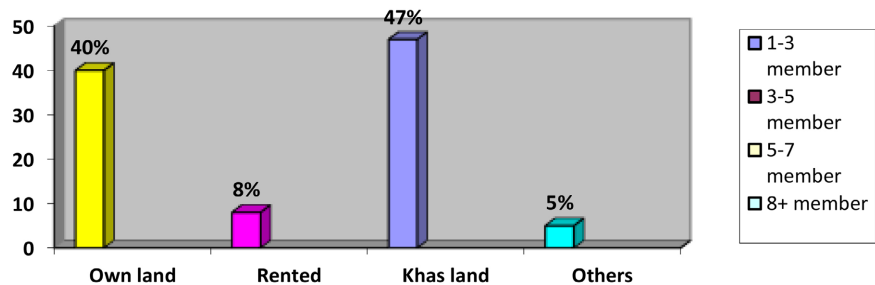
### 8.3.5. Dropout Causes

Figure 7 revealed that the parents identified several factors that contributed to their children's absence from school; however, over 60% of the parents cited the following as the most significant: 1) the parents' inability to assist their children with their homework at home. 2) Two of the children were required to assist their parents with housework. And 3) exhibit a deficiency in focus while engaging in academic pursuits. Each participant provided a variety of justifications for their decision to withdraw. A significant proportion of parents (90%) indicated that their children withdrew from school due to their lack of ability to provide academic support at home. Due to their low socioeconomic status, approx-

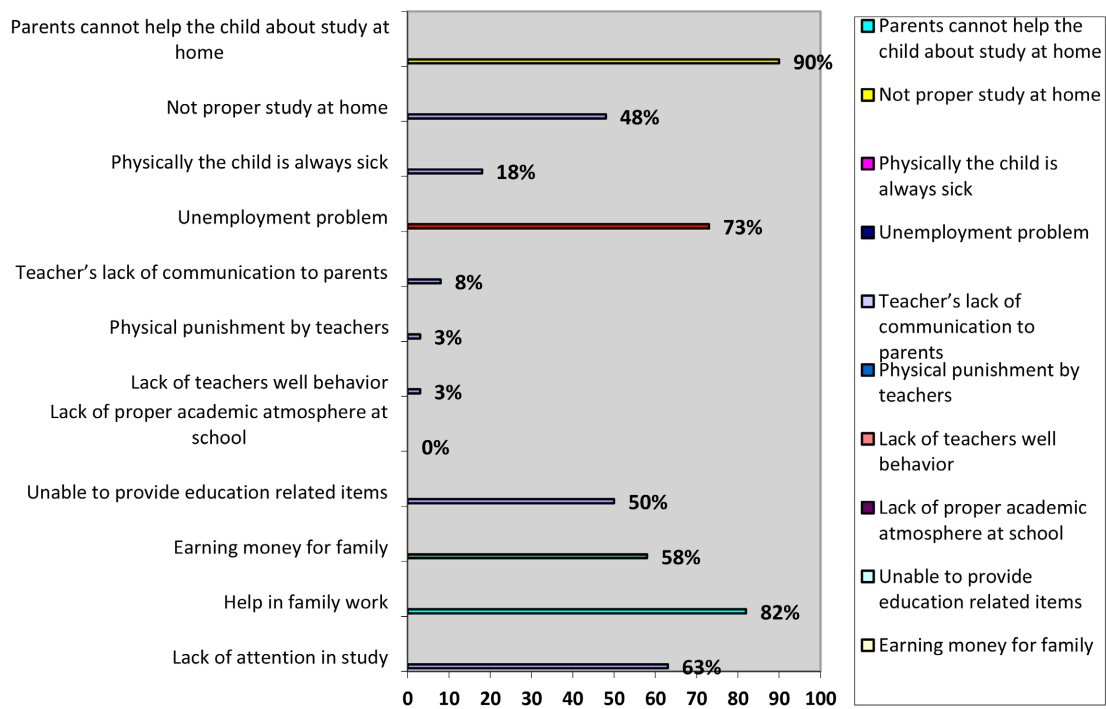
imately 82% of parents believe that their children should earn money for the family through domestic labor rather than attend school, and 73% believe that their children will be unable to find employment after completing their education. Additional primary factors identified by parents as contributing to their children’s dropping out of school were inattentiveness during class (as reported by 63% of parents) and inadequate study time at home (48% of parents).

**Table 4.** Dropout parents’ monthly income and expenses.

		Monthly household expenditure		
		≤5000	5000+	Total
Monthly household income	≤5000	48%	0	<b>48%</b>
	5000+	14%	38%	<b>52%</b>
	Total	62%	38%	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 6.** Parents of dropout students' home area ownership and family size.



**Figure 7.** Dropout causes perceived by the parents of dropout students. \*Multiple response.

## 8.4. Common Causes of Dropout

**Figure 8** presented that the Parents who possess limited educational attainment are incapable of providing assignment assistance to their children at home due to their inability to elucidate the subject matter. Parents with low income: In order to provide for their family, students are expected to assist their parents with household chores; this suggests that the parents have a very meager income and are therefore unable to provide educational materials for their children. Students are consequently less attentive in their studies, unable to retain the material, and ultimately receive low exam scores due to their lack of concentration. Employment uncertainty: Due to the belief held by parents that the nation's labor market is constrained, they exhibit reluctance in enrolling their children in educational institutions. They would rather have their offspring assist them with household duties. Physical punishment administered by teachers: Although it is commonly believed that physical punishment may deter some primary students from attending, this constitutes a negligible contributing factor to the overall attrition rate. Instructor misconduct significantly affects the character development and conduct of students, particularly in the elementary school setting. The extremely low proportion of students who drop out due to instructor misconduct suggests that instructor misconduct cannot be a contributing factor to student attrition.

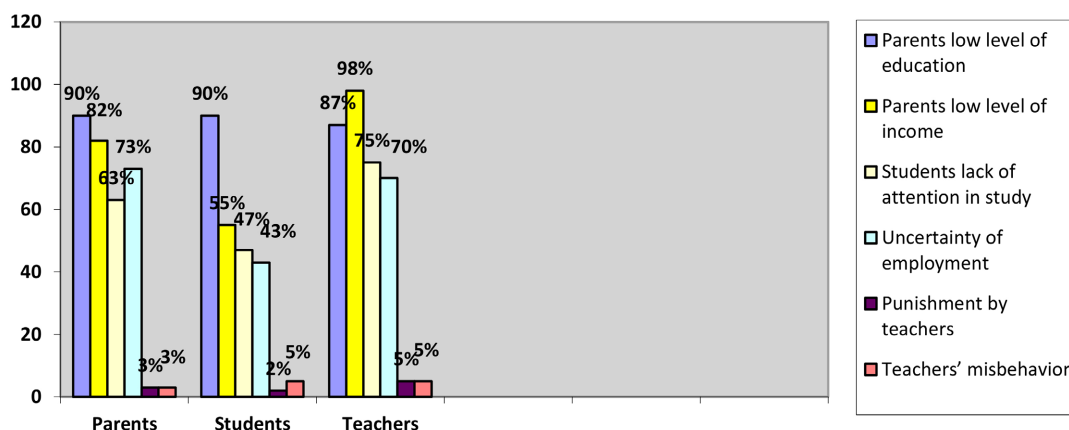
## 9. Discussion of the Findings

1) **Digital Divide:** Digital divide contributes to Bangladesh's dropout rate. Many students lack cell phones, tablets, PCs, and reliable internet for remote learning, according to numbers. This is especially true in rural areas with poor technology infrastructure. Disengagement and dropout result from students without digital tools being unable to participate in online courses or access educational resources (Subba & Subba, 2021).

2) **Economic Pressures on Families:** Pandemic-induced economic strains have driven dropout rates. Statistics show that many Bangladeshi families struggled to meet their basic demands. Many families had to choose between economic survival and schooling. As families struggled to manage job and education, more children dropped out of school (Mishra et al., 2020).

3) **Limited Access to Educational Resources:** Teaching resources vary in quality and availability even when students had technology. Numerical statistics indicate that some pupils have restricted access to high-quality digital learning resources and internet platforms. Access inequality hampered remote learning and caused disengagement and dropout (Tabassum et al., 2021).

4) **Mental Health Challenges:** Mental health issues caused by the epidemic have contributed to dropouts. Statistics show that many students suffered heightened anxiety, despair, and stress throughout the epidemic. The crisis' emotional toll hindered pupils' study and coping with uncertainty. Mental health issues worsened disengagement and led to student dropout (Pareek & Soni, 2020).



**Figure 8.** Common dropout factors according to students, parents, and teachers.

**5) Lack of Teacher-Student Interaction:** Student participation suffered without teacher-student interactions. Many pupils missed the personal connection with their professors, which motivates and improves learning, according to numerical statistics. Disconnection and disengagement resulted from remote learning's lack of personalized support (Rawal, 2021).

## 10. Factors Contributing to Dropout

**1) Access to Technology:** Technology greatly affected dropout rates. At least 45% of Bangladeshi elementary school kids lacked the gadgets and internet connectivity needed for remote learning. Rural and low-income kids were disproportionately affected by the digital divide. Students without technology were more likely to drop out because they couldn't take online classes or access instructional resources (Ane & Nepa, 2021).

**2) Socioeconomic Impact:** Data showed the pandemic's economic impact. Over 80% of families lost income or jobs during the epidemic. Due to economic hardship, some parents put their children's education on hold. Thus, many youngsters left school to help with household duties or care for younger siblings (Rahman, 2021).

**3) Mental Health:** Students and parents worried about mental health issues. Over 60% of students reported heightened anxiety, despair, and stress throughout the epidemic. Students' mental health concerns affected their study, resulting in disengagement and dropout (Madhukar, 2021).

**4) Government Initiatives:** The Bangladeshi government took many steps to address the dropout epidemic (Paul et al., 2022). These included funding needy families, disseminating educational materials, and creating digital learning platforms. Over 70% of eligible households received financial support and 80% received digital learning resources, according to numerical statistics (Gandhi, 2020).

## 11. Conclusion

In conclusion, the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the weaknesses of primary

education systems throughout the world, revealing a problem marked by a considerable increase in dropout rates among young learners. This problem, caused by a combination of causes, jeopardizes not just students' immediate educational chances, but also raises serious worries about the long-term social implications (Shuchi et al., 2021). The multidimensional nature of this issue, which includes socioeconomic inequities, the digital gap, mental health difficulties, changes in learning settings, and unequal resource distribution, need thorough and ongoing attention. As we complete our research study, it is evident that the urgency of resolving the dropout situation is only matched by the difficulty of the task (Annamalai, 2022). The stakes are huge, affecting individual students' lives and molding the future of entire communities and nations. Our mission is to continue the quest for knowledge, to fight for evidence-based policies and solutions, and to develop a shared resolve to protect the most vulnerable children's educational journeys (Tabassum et al., 2021). By doing so, we hope to guarantee that the COVID-19 pandemic's legacy in primary education is one of resilience, creativity, and equal access to high-quality education for everyone.

## 12. Recommendations for Future Research

The study of COVID-19 and the dropout situation in elementary education is still an important and growing area of research. To build on what we've learned so far, we need to learn more about the details of this complicated situation (Newbold, 2021). In the future, researchers should look into the long-term academic, psychological, and socioeconomic effects of dropping out of school. They should follow the paths of students who were touched by the pandemic into adults to get a full picture of the effects. Also, it's important to quickly look at how well the different intervention methods used during the pandemic worked, with the goal of finding the best ones that can be used in future school system emergencies or breakdowns. A lot of research needs to be done on the role of digital technology in distance learning, the durability of teacher training programs, and the significance of mental health support for students (Meinck et al., 2022). Future study should also look at things from a global viewpoint, comparing the experiences and outcomes of students from different countries in order to learn from each other's cultures and share what works on a global level (Tsolou et al., 2021). In the end, studying how COVID-19 affects the number of kids who drop out of primary school isn't just for fun; it's also a way to help make policies, interventions, and systemic changes that are based on facts and will protect the education futures of the most at-risk kids and make sure that everyone has equal access to good education.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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