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Socio Cultural Economics Interlinked with the Differently Able in South Asia: From the Case Study of Inclusive Model of Creating Deaf Creative Sector Based Workers through Skill Based Training in Bangladesh [Working Paper]

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There are well-known and important debates about how inclusive policies 'involve', 'engage', 'consult', and (more recently) 'co-produce' policies, services and neighborhoods with local people especially who are out stream. In that case the disable are mostly under exclusion. These debates can help us to think about the nature of the power of creative arts and relationships at play in our work, and the extent to which taking different approaches can lead to different outcomes for communities and the medium that serve them. And of course whilst these debates are not new, they are constantly being revised and updated, taking place in new circumstances, led by new social actors with new priorities. So this study, leading towards South Asian Cities from the perspectives and case study of Bangladesh, should be seen as an innovative contribution, not only to how we create age and disable friendly places, but more generally to the relationship between researchers, creative media and local communities. Creative Media are facing challenging times, not least the large city authorities, who have faced significant budget reductions, often leading to hard-pressed departments finding it difficult to do what would appear instinctively right: to use a range of techniques to capture the views of different groups of differently able – people, when setting out on something as grand and ambitious as making arts differently able-friendly. This policy is against a background of consultation which has tended to focus on what services to withdraw or reduce for the greater benefits of differently able. However, despite these challenges the paper aims to see and overview the creative media sectors investing their time and energy in policy making and working alongside communities to mutual benefits for both the mainstream and out stream.

Keywords: *South Asia, exclusion, differently able, cultural economy, income generation.*

Background

The idea of community service where we found most effective in terms of South Asia to work with the people with disabilities and community solutions to be inclusive in terms of ensuring accessibility of the marginal and vulnerable youth in creative sectors must be regarded in terms of policy making. After started finding solution in terms of inclusion in Bangladesh, was looking for opportunities to make an impact on the lives of these challenged people and came up with a plan to empower them with IT (Information Technology) skills. We believe technology will give them a voice, help them connect with the world and become independent.

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Srity (24) is one of the physically challenged participants, who have developed fast computer operating skills. She was dreaming to be in a office job and finally she made it through her internship. Ryad (22), a student suffering from deafness attaints all objectives when given a task and is very responsive. Ratul 's (22) determination has never made them late for classes though he travels from outside Dhaka every single day. These people are the source of strength and inspiration now.

Literature Review

The existing literature (both Govt. and Non-govt. policy brief and action plan) for the "Differently Able People interlinked with Youth Employability Policy and Development" give view that:

(a). So far the research had been initiated only does discuss about mainstream people.

(b). The differently able people have not been included in any negotiations and policy level discussion.

(c). The gender based issues have been averted especially who are differently able.

Research Methodology

The methods being followed for the research are interviews, group facilitation, and field observations to observe the actual tool, activities, knowledge, and/or technology used to implement .The methods that have been followed:

1. Comparative sampling between the physically challenged and deaf youth.
2. Case study-23 sample sizes on already who are non –employed deaf students and 3 self-financed and employed physically challenged from both the categories of physically challenged and deaf youth and 3 on the future possible employable deaf youth and 1 being fully employee as a deaf youth, 1 Female deaf youth also.
3. Comparative study between the employed differently able community and future employability.

Why Skill based Income Generation Opportunities for Deaf Youth

The year 2013 was the time when the project was initiated entitled with "IT for Differently Able' with a grant from the US Department of State and turned dream into reality. The project aimed to pass on technological education and skills to people with disabilities. We do believe technology will give them a voice, help them connect with the world and become independent and our team was particularly concerned about that if we want to engage female in IT sector where they can work very easily being at home that can be one of the factors to motivate the parents as it will take time to engage them outwards and risk would be there not only being a woman but also as disable and we targeted at that point even though IT sector and ratio of Female engagement do have a vast and major gender gap in Bangladesh where female are not encouraged to be in technical sector in terms of study and employment whereas teaching and doctor is a common phenomenon.

The most severe problem we assessed that due to unfriendly transportation system and transportation most of the female are unable to join the classes and do continue their study being differently able as society itself imposed it on them in terms of disability and we could hardly manage the gender based equity and equality ratio in terms of training due to lack of this support as we could not provide any alternative transportation solution for them.

In most of the cases we did a campaign like phone to phone or you can say door to door as well as face to face by visiting the Institutions, talking to the parents and teachers and especially regarding female students we required to assure them the safety and security as we selected a mixed group.

Corporate social responsibility based organizations showed zero percent interest as we were struggling to manage a venue for training and the venue charge was high apart from the budget and most of the leading organizations who are working for the rights of disable community did not response when we did urge them to select participants for training and in most of the cases they would directly ask us about how much is the conveyance and money for food by showing the vulnerability causes of the differently able people and attendance which left us under uncertainty to initiate anything further.

The Initiative as Pilot Project

The project which BRIDGE inaugurated that was funded and supported by 'U.S State Department" under the entitled initiative of "AEIF" (Alumni Engagement Initiative Fund) in 2013.The project entered into the first phase which was started from 26 April 2014 and continued till December 2014. At present the BRIDGE team is consisted with 5 people for Friday and Saturday classes along with 5 advisors in the committee along with 4 trainers and 1 Interpreter. Internet Marketing, Word Press. , Graphics Design and English Speaking.

Objectives

- To empower the disable (Which we literally use) but in this era we do consider them differently able
- To follow the inclusive policy for promoting the sign language users and the people who are physically disable
- To enrich them through the IT , i. e-Graphics, Internet Marketing and Word Press
- To make them communicative in English
- To make them engage in self-employment
- To organize the social connectivity and networking

The classes started on 26 April, 2014. The class is mainly divided in to 2 groups, First group which is consisted with 23 students used to have their classes in Friday for entitled course of Graphics and English. Here both the sign language students and physically differently able are doing classes altogether. The afternoon shift is only for physically Immovable.

Table-1

The Class Structure for the Students

Days	Male	Female	Subjects	Remarks	Time
1.Friday	23 from 24 th May to up to-September 30th, now the presence is 12 - 15	6 are deaf and sign language users and 1 Physically immovable is drop out	Graphics, English	Courses are entitled for both sign language users and physically differently able	9.30-10.45 for Graphics and 11.00-12.20 for English
2.Friday	3 as 1 is drop out from August	1 (Drop out)	Internet Marketing and Word Press	Only for physically differently able	2.00-3.00 Internet Marketing and 3.00-5.30 for Internet Marketing Word press

What Were Some of the Strategies in Dealing with the Challenges?

To empower the disable (Which we literally use) but in this era we do consider them differently able by following the inclusive policy for promoting the sign language users who are mostly known as deaf and the most vulnerable one and the people who are physically disable as through the project "IT for Differently Able "which we tried to establish as a model while enriching them through the IT , i. e- Graphics, Internet Marketing and Word Press to make them communicative in English as well as to make them engage in self-employment by organizing the social connectivity and networking as we used to invite the iconic figure at the IT and Outsourcing based Industries in Bangladesh being motivational guest speakers. To motivate the participants and to make them more self confident, every last Friday of every month the guest lecturer used to come who are an icon as well successful and self made people and entrepreneur.

Our working team used to have discussions after each and every classes along with the faculties and guardian regarding need assessment and how can we be more inclusive in terms of providing more access to information on the basis of need assessment as we selected two common course components for both the deaf and physically immovable group as word press and internet marketing is more about being vocal while dealing with the clients through internet based communication and that was the limitation.

Internship and Job Opportunities and Negotiations with the Employers

After finishing the courses we just did not leave them just like that as we wanted them to be confident at the end so we tried to create strategic partnership with mid-level NGOs and newly emerged NGOs to promote the best 5students out of 23. Confirmation of Internship for 3students including IT sector, 2 got placement in a medical data entry sectors and 1in Democracywatch (a Leading National NGO for Democratic practice and Approaches based for Election Observation) and Center for Human Rights Studies, all of them are sign language users including 1 female and lastly 1 male deaf student got full time job in advertising media. The website concept of one The students had been employed through personal networking and advocacy wherever we could have the options to promote them and widely campaigned through social networking where our relatives and friends came forward to help us.

It is our first implementation based model and initiative for team BRIDGE which has inspired us a lot for our future endeavor.

Findings:

1. We did expect to have more female students but the concern is the guardian expected to have separate classes for female students which is not feasible.
2. The female participation from the physically differently able is low, out of 7 female students 6 are from sign language users. The reason behind this is their immovability and lack of support from the parents
3. Some of the students do have lack of access to the Internet due to their financial capability and lack of support, so they are less in contact through email and networking, now most of the communication do happens via mobile or through their concerned contact person
4. Some of the students have been dropped out due to their accommodation support during summer vacation as they do stay in hostel and mostly from outside of Dhaka.
5. Regarding English class there are two ways of conducting the classes, one for beginners and another for advanced level
6. More drop outs from the male students and female are continuing with 99% of ratio as there is only 1 drop out from Female students and she is from physically immovable group and currently pursuing

her study in Jahngirnagar University at the department of Geography which has become the factor for her to be irregular and finally to quit

7. Apparently physically challenged do have more access in education and jobs rather than deaf

Limitations and Recommendation:

1. The special cases of physically disable students who are less in number as we expected that we would also be able to accommodate the wheel chair users along with ramp but at the end they could not make it due to support from their parents and distance, where we found we would have special session along with the guardian and parents also.
2. Female Participation is required to be increased through consultation and motivation to find out their feasibility and access in future.

Our Primary Thoughts about the Challenges They Face? What are We Ignoring in Our Work towards Women?

We did expect to have more female students but the concern is the guardian expected to have separate classes for female students which was not feasible. The female participation ratio from the physically differently able is low, out of 7 female students 6 are from sign language users and deaf. The reason behind this was their immovability and lack of support from the parents .Some of the students do have lack of access to the Internet due to their lack of financial capability and lack of support, so they are less in contact through email and networking, now most of the communication do happens via mobile or through their concerned contact person. Some of the students have been dropped out due to their accommodation support during summer vacation as they do stay in hostel and mostly from outside of Dhaka.

Due to lack of logistical support we could not accommodate the blind students where finance does matter as well as it was our first time effort to address the exclusion policy but we could not be fully inclusive towards “Autistic Students” as well as along with the cases of “Down Syndrome” due to lack of support and expertise and time limitations.

The special cases of physically disable students who are less in number as we expected that we would also be able to accommodate the wheel chair users along with ramp but at the end they could not make it due to support from their parents and distance, where we found we would have special session along with the guardian and parents also. Female Participation is required to be increased through consultation and motivation to find out their feasibility and access in future.

We do believe they are “Differently Able” and this terminology brings the positive vibe and disability is at the end about our mind set and exclusion free society is important through more engagement and employment but still now we are struggling to be inclusive towards “Down Syndrome “and “Autism “based cases which we do hope would be part of our inclusiveness.

Last but not least we do urge to every activist and volunteer to support them being actively engaged as a volunteer through BRIDGE Foundation and work for the excluded group through sharing, teaching and capacity building being a facilitator for each and every differently able to be touched through voice, through your eyes, your touchy fingers, extended and helping hands and valuable time at the end. Mainstream has been done, has been doing and will be doing but what about excluded, scheduled and out stream people, if we don’t listen to voice of silence, to make the immovable a movable one through IT, technology and information which can lessen the gap of “Digital Divide’ and can ensure “Differently Able in Development “with a positive notion instead of “Disable in Development” the Sustainable and

inclusive development will be a myth only. At the end we do believe you are not disable until unless you do believe that and I am hopeful that the government initiated the strategies of inclusion for the "Differently Able" even though that are in the limited era but this is the beginning. One day there will be no separate school in the name of special education for them and both the parents and teachers would be cooperative to include them and mainstream institutions, organizations and corporations will come forward to engage them and believe in their potentiality. Our team and BRIDGE foundation is proud to be with those who are associated with our initiative being special in terms of endeavor from the mainstream a long and lonely journey to go before we reach towards the goal along with individual efforts.

As the society is reserved and safety at the working place for women is one of the crucial agendas and our team was particularly concerned about that if we want to engage female in IT sector where they can work very easily being at home that can be one of the factors to motivate the parents as it will take time to engage them outwards and risk would be there not only being a woman but also as disable and we targeted at that point even though IT sector and ratio of Female engagement do have a vast and major gender gap in Bangladesh where female are not encouraged to be in technical sector in terms of study and employment whereas teaching and doctor is a common phenomenon.

The parents are really not hopeful about their children in terms of disability as well as they are not conscious and in most of the cases the systematic exclusion by state and society is not motivating them. The teachers are not that much motivating and the hardest part is that regarding employing them none is ready to take the risk do believe in their potentiality that "Yes They Can Do".

The most severe problem we assessed that due to unfriendly transportation system and transportation most of the female are unable to join the classes and do continue their study being differently able as society itself imposed it on them in terms of disability and we could hardly manage the gender equity and equality ratio in terms of training due to lack of this support as we could not provide any alternative transportation solution for them.

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Figure-1
Circle of Poverty and Disability

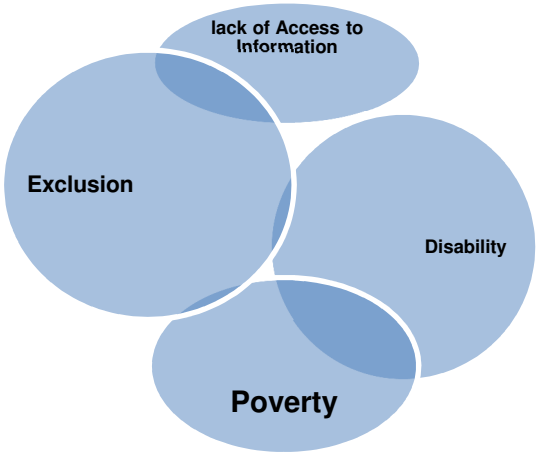

Figure 1 shows the interelated issues regarding the vicious circle of exluded people with disabilities and lack of information connects towards the lack of information for their accessibility.

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