CHAPTER VII
Factors Affecting On-going Activities of NGOs

This chapter would highlight the factors that are influencing the functioning of NGOs engaged in educational care of disadvantaged children. The factors are of different natures that are discussed under separate headings. At the beginning of each of the factors an overview of that issue, in the context of selected 80 NGOs, is presented with numeric values and which is supported with example of instances observed during the course of data collection.

1. Funding

The funding or finance is one of the prime factors which are influencing the majority of the NGOs. The funding affects the NGOs in areas like selection of staff, retention of staff, in addressing the need/immediate need of the community and so on. Further, in availing the fund also the NGOs, selected under study, encounter challenges as would be discussed in ensuing paragraphs.

Figure 7.A
NGOs Encountering Financial Constraints

Source: Information collected from 80 NGOs across four selected districts.

The study reveals that 88.75% of the visited/contacted NGOs have shared that the amount of fund/money they receive is not enough to run the programme, as reflected in
figure 7.A. On the contrary, 11.25% were of the view that finance is not main issue for them. They face the financial constraints at times but not always. It is especially during the withdrawal/termination phase of programme. The list of these kind of organization includes names like Pratham Education Foundation, Right Track, Sanlaap, Pratichi (India) Trust, Vikramshila Education Resource Society, Towards Future and Hope Kolkata Foundation. It is worthy to mention that all the NGOs excluding Pratichi (India) Trust are located in Kolkata and have donors like UNICEF, U. N. Women, World Bank, Save the Children, Action Aid India, CRY and the list goes on. In addition, they also receive funds from Government of West Bengal.

Table 7.1
District wise Fund Distribution on RTE by Five Major Donor Organizations in West Bengal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of the Donor Organization</th>
<th>No. of Programmes</th>
<th>Locations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Action Aid India</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>North 24 Parganas, Kolkata, Murshidabad and South 24 Parganas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Save the Children</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kolkata, Maldah and North 24 Parganas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Hope Foundation, Ireland</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kolkata and Birbhum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Terre Des Hommes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kolkata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>CRY</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Burdawan, Birbhum, Kolkata, North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas, Maldah, East and West Mednipur</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Information collected from the Donor Organizations
Under the present study, four donor organizations were also visited namely Action Aid India, Save the Children, Terre Des Hommes (Germany), and Child Rights and You (CRY) in order to understand their funding pattern for education of disadvantaged children. The finding reveals that CRY and Hope Foundation (Ireland) are extending financial support to Pratichi (India) Trust of Birbhum for a project ‘Building up New Initiative for Education for School Centric Development’ and Md. Bazar Backward Class Development Society.

**Table: 7.1**, depicts that majority of the programmes, related to education, funded by the five major donor organizations are concentrated majorly in and around Kolkata, which includes North 24 Parganas and South 24 Parganas, while one each in the districts of Burdawan, Murshidabad and East, West Mednipur and two in Birbhum.

Further, exploration for the source of funding reveals that 13 out of 80 NGOs receive both Public and Private fund of which six NGOs are located in Kolkata while three each in Birbhum and Howrah and one in Puruliya and similar instances were observed in the case of only private and only public fund, as mentioned in **table: 7.2**. Thus, a majority of NGOs in the district of Puruliya and Birbhum are depending on donation, general fund, membership fees, etc.

The private funders for the districts of Birbhum, Puruliya and Howrah were found as Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Comic Relief Fund, Wipro, Detol, USAIDS, Bill-Melinda Gates Foundation and so on while the Public fund majorly includes the fund/ financial assistance extended under the National Child Labour Project (NCLP). However, issue of delayed payment or disbursement of fund is associated with public/ government funded projects, as shared by the respondent NGOs like SEVAKS, Md. Bazar
Backward Class Development Society of Birbhum and Bhatbandh Mahila Samity of Puruliya.

### Table 7.2
**District-wise Source of Funding for Education related Programmes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Source of Funding</th>
<th>District</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Birbhum</td>
<td>Howrah</td>
<td>Kolkata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Both Public and Private</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Only Private</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Only Public</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Donation and other sources</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *Information collected from 80 NGOs across four selected districts.*

Thus, from above discussion it can be said that financial assistance of the donor organizations is majorly concentrated in and around the city of Kolkata and occasionally in the other districts like Birbhum, Puruliya, Maldah and Murshidabad. Again, the funding pattern shows that donor organizations are more interested in NGOs which are popular either by virtue of their founder or their area of operation. For example: Pratichi (India) Trust founded by Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen and receiving funds from agencies like UNICEF, CRY and the like. Again, the organizations like Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee and Sanlaap working in the infamous red-light areas like Sonagachi and Bow-Bazar with similar objectives and receiving funds from international and national donor organizations. Therefore, there is brand value associated either with implementing organization or with the population served by them.
2. Staff

Programme staff is found to be another important issue found to be affecting the functioning of NGOs. During the course of present study, it was found that 85% NGOs encounter problem in selection and retention of skilled staff/employee while a negligible percentage i.e. 6% of the NGOs said they do not face any problem, as highlighted in figure: 7.B.

Selection and retention of skilled is found be directly linked with salary, geographical location, marriage in case of women employee and also the theme of intervention in issue specific intervention. To understand the situation in a more comprehensive manner the example of Right Track (RT), Mandra Lions Club and SEVAKS could be highlighted here.

![Figure 7.B Lack of Skilled Staff](image)

Source: *ibid*

According to the respondents from Right Track, there were three programme coordinators within a span of two years. The position is suppose to be occupied by a person holding degree of Master of Social Work (MSW) or Post Graduate in any discipline with at least three years of experience in the developmental sector. As shared
by the respondents, people working with these project were further hired by international donor organizations like UNICEF, Action Aid and alike with better salary. Recruited staff used RT as a stepping stone. They got trained here and shifted to better organizations when got better opportunities. Thus, RT could not retain the staff with the economic resources they had. This kind of frequent changes, in the key positions like programme coordinators do hamper the target and goals set for the quarter as the new employee would consume some time like one month or so to understand the mechanism of the organization as well as the projects. Further, compatibility of the field level staff with the programme coordinator is another crucial aspect to push the success rate upward. Md. Israfil, respondent from Right Track, was of the view that mobility among the MSW degree holders are more comparing to individuals with Post Graduate degree from other disciplines.

Coming to Mandra Lions Club and CESR, the challenge is the remoteness of their operational areas with bad road condition, as they work in Bagmundi Block, nearly 60 kms away from the Puruliya town. According to Mr. Somnath Singha Roy, founder and secretary of Mandra Lions Club, the organization has witnessed presence of skilled staff but for a brief period and main reason was the connectivity of the field office as well as operational to the urban area. He also added that salary is an issue but in the context of his organization, it is the geographical remoteness and lack of connectivity. Similar, views were shared by Mr. Debasis Panda, founder and secretary of CESR. He holds a degree of MSW from Visva-Bharati University has shared that individuals with MSW or other professional degrees are likely to work in a grass-root level NGOs like CESR for one to three years to acquire experience and experience certificate which helps them to find a better job with better salary in urban area.
During course of present study, it was found that majority of the organizations opt for female staff in the education related programmes for three main reasons i.e. firstly, female staff is accepted by the community; secondly, during the day time most of the male members of the community remain outside the home and thus women, adolescent girls remain at home which necessitate selection of female staff at grass-root level and further, they (female) have the advantage to reach the kitchen of the households which proves effective in the success of any programme, and finally, the presence of female staff is likely to increase the participation of girls in a particular programme. However, some challenges are also associated with this, as the organizations like Tiljala SHED, Hope Kolkata Foundation, Towards Future and other organizations which have female staff for the post of educator in the supportive learning centres encounter attrition of staff on the event of their marriage.

However, the kind of challenge encountered by SEVAKS was a bit different from the rest. The organization is mainly focusing on education of children with disability and running a Special Education Centre in Bolpur sub-division of Birbhum district. According to Mr. Nirupam Sinha, founder member of SEVAKS, the availability of individual with expertise on the issue of disability is very less in the locality and on the other hand hiring people from outside is a costly affair. Thus, in spite of having goal to expand and enrich their services they could not do so.

Hence, there are many challenges associated with selection of desired employee. However, these challenges are of varied nature. Some NGOs finds it difficult to hire a person with desired expertise because of financial constraints while for others organization geographical remoteness of their area of operation becomes a barrier for the same. Again, political interference in selection of staff, unavailability skilled
individuals in the locality, and attrition of employees for better job are the other factors affecting the functioning of NGOs.

3. Lack of Participation on the part of Member of Local Self Government

Lack of participation on the part of members of local self government is found to be another important aspect found to be affecting the functioning of NGOs, working for the educational care of disadvantaged children. The members of local self government have a vital role to play in smooth running of the schools by participating in the Ward Education Committee/ Village Education Committee or School Management Committee (SMC). During the course of present study it was found that the kind of participation expected from the member of PRI is lacking as 54% of the NGO considered as a challenge affecting their functioning, as mentioned in figure: 7.C.

![Figure 7.C](image)

Lack of Participation on the Part of Panchayat Members

Source: *ibid*

Considering the situation, rights based organizations like Right Track and Tiljala SHED have focused on creating and strengthening the community based organizations in the area of their operation so that pressure could be created on the members of local self government and administration, details of which is mentioned in previous chapter on
‘Approaches and Programmes’. According to the NGOs, the issues like lack of infrastructural facilities and inadequate number of teachers where local elected leaders have an important role to play but their unavailability for the purpose is ultimately affecting the functioning of the schools as well as the NGOs.

4. Ignorance of the Government Duty Bearers

NGOs always need to pursue the government duty bearers for one or the other reasons such as getting birth certificate and age proof of children, BPL card, getting permission for rallies, seeking permission to work with government aided schools as some schools do not allow NGOs to work with the school without prior approval from appropriate authority, disbursement of fund for government funded programmes like NCLP and so on. The present study reveals that 41 NGOs out of 80 visited NGOs i.e. 51.25% were of the view that government duty bearers do not pay adequate attention to the NGOs working for the education of disadvantaged children, as highlighted in figure 7.D.

![Figure 7.D: Ignorance on the part of Government Duty Bearers](image)

Source: *ibid*

In this context, some experiences shared by the NGOs like Right Track and Dhagagia Social Welfare Society may be highlighted. Ms. Khairunnessa, field worker of Right
Track, shared that prior to the commencement of Right to Education Act, 2009, documents like birth certificate or age proof were mandatory to mainstream the children into formal schools but after the enactment of said act it has become easy to enrol the child but the importance of these documents remained same and thus obtaining the same from government official/ panchayat is a real challenge. She added that they had to make seven to nine visits in the office of concerned official to obtain it while these matters could be settled with two or three visits. However, she was of the view that all officials are not same and more repeated visit to concerned official helps to build the rapport but at the event of their transfer or retirement they had to start from the scratch. Similar views were shared by Mr. Hriday Ch. Ghosh, founder secretary of Dhagagia Social Welfare Society which runs schools under National Child Labour Project. According to him, the fund disbursement for the government funded programmes are usually delayed for which they often require to pursue the government official and which often calls for repeated visit to the concerned office. In addition, transfer of the concerned officer to other duty station affects the functioning of NGOs. As the new officer need some to get acquainted with functioning of his/ her new office and in addition, their personal likings and disliking, knowledge about NGOs and commitment and motivation towards the cause also tends to effect the functioning of the NGOs.

5. Political Interference

The present study reveal that political interference is also influencing the functioning of NGOs as 37 NGOs out of 80 visited NGOs agreed to the fact while 34 NGOs fall into the category of no response, as mentioned in figure 7.E. As per the sharing made by the selected NGOs, the political interference is found in selection of grass-root level or field level staff. It was found that all the NGOs prefer to select the people from the neighbouring community or from the area of operation for reasons like firstly, because
being from that community they would better inform about the community, power dynamics, culture, demography and other key elements which in turn would help the organization to chalk out the strategic plan in a more convincing manner. Secondly, they would have better acceptability in the community; thirdly, to facilitate communication the knowledge of local language is almost a must for the grass-root/field level worker, as found in the case of tribal dominated areas of Birbhum and Puruliya, and finally, it is assumed that locally selected staff would exhibit more interest and commitment towards the up-liftmen of their own people.

For the purpose of present study, the experience of Tiljala SHED may be highlighted here. In 2012, Tiljala SHED established a Children’s Home at Mouli Mukundupur of South 24 Parganas for the children engaged in rag-picking. During the selection of staff for the home, organization encountered political interference as one of the female staff
appointed for the home belonged to the family, affiliated to a political party other than the ruling party and which in turn lead to the crisis situation.

Right Track has also encountered similar experiences. In fact, it is the political interference that helped the club called Local Welfare Society to grow into an esteemed organization called Right Track, details of which is mentioned in chapter called ‘Profile of Selected NGOs’.

6. Poor Networking among the NGOs

Developing and maintaining network with the peer organizations is considered as one of the major components of strategic planning. In the case of West Bengal also organizations give immense importance on building network with peer organizations in their key documents like annual report, project proposal, and strategic planning report and so on. But during the present course of study the concept of networking with peer organization is found to be non-functional as 61 percent NGOs were of the view that poor networking among the NGOs is affecting the functioning of the NGOs, as depicted in figure 7.F.

![Figure 7.F Poor Networking among the Peer Organization]

Source: ibid
However, it would be worthy to mention here that it is not only the NGOs that suffer from poor networking among the peer NGOs but International Donor Organizations or INGOs also encounter poor networking.

The poor networking among the NGOs could be understood by the fact that there are more than one NGO working in the same geographical location with same target population. It is worthy to mention here that the particular phenomenon is observed in the slums and red-light areas of the city of Kolkata and which in turn affecting the functioning of NGOs. Three cases may be highlighted for the purpose.

**Case-I:** In Bow Bazar red-light area, Sanlaap is running a Drop-in Centre (DIC) for the children of commercial female sex-workers. The centre also acts as a supportive learning centre for the children of that area. The centre is running at the ground floor of two storied building provided by the 48- Pally Jana Kalyan Seva Sangha while the first floor of that building is occupied by another NGO namely ‘Hamari Muskan’ and running a supportive learning centre for the children of that locality. In the context of present study, it could be said that both the NGOs are working to fulfil the educational need of children, born to a mother engaged in infamous business of flesh trade. Again, the respondent from Sanlaap shared that there are many NGOs popping up in the locality and are engaged in similar activities.

**Case- II:** In the slum of Topsia, two NGOs namely ‘Tiljala SHED’ and ‘[Child In Need Institute](#)’ (CINI) are running supportive learning centres for the children of that locality. The distance between the centres is hardly 30 meters (approximately). According to the respondent from Tiljala SHED, there are many other NGOs like Development Action
Society (DAS), World Vision, Trinita Society for Social and Health Research-Education Centre and Vision Rescue operating in the same area.

Case- III: In Mathpukur Dhapa, Ward no: 58 of Kolkata Municipal Corporation, an NGO called ‘Jana Shiksha Prachar Kendra’ is running a free coaching centre/supportive learning centre for the children between the age group of 6 to 14 years. In the same locality Save the Children is running the a ‘Mobile Learning Centre’ for the children of same age group.

Now, in all the above three cases, it was found that children of those localities had number of options to choose to get educational support and accordingly as per their convenience they visited different centres which affects the continuity in terms of their learning along with functioning of NGOs. In Mathpukur Dhapa, it was observed that children attending supportive learning centre run by Jana Shiksha Prachar Kendra left the centre as soon as they saw the bus, run by Save the Children, used as Mobile Learning Centre entered their community as children find it more amusing and thus female educator from Jana Shiksha Prachar Kendra had to shut down her centre.

Again, poor networking and coordination is not only prevailing among the NGOs but it could be observed among the donor organizations as well. In the state of West Bengal, there are two state level associations of civil society bodies and individuals meant to work towards ensuring universalization of elementary education. The names of the associations are ‘State Education Chapter’ (SEC), supported by Action Aid and West Bengal Education Network (WBEN), supported by CRY.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Objectives of SEC</th>
<th>Objectives of WBEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>To form a network among the districts partners and other NGO’s to advocate on Right to Education and also make a liaison with the Govt for elimination of Child labour at the State Level.</td>
<td>To share views, resources, skills of the member organisations and interact with other organisations, govt., individuals working on education,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To interact with the govt. at the state level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Alliance building &amp; strengthening of this network to address broader issues pertaining to education like availability of school infrastructure, issues of abuse faced by children in school or on the way to school, issues of enrolment and retention etc.</td>
<td>To establish relationship with other educational networks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To involve the media on education issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To arrive at a common vision on basic education issues and to be sure of what is being advocated for and to oppose unhealthy anti-people issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>To engage in studies/research to understand the state situation and to build an informed campaign around education.</td>
<td>To do relevant research and documentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To build up an information resource centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>To evolve consequent Action Plans, Strategies etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>To develop community consciousness on Rights &amp; more proactive civil society.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
State Education Chapter was initiated as an unstructured platform during the year 2007 by Right Track and with support from Action Aid India with a vision “the vision of the campaign will be to ensure the 4 A’s of Education as part of the International and National Campaign on Education Rights. The campaign must be owned and executed by one and all that shares in the vision of the chapter through common goals and understanding of the same”. The 4 As mentioned in the vision statement includes Adaptable, Accessible, Available and Acceptable.

On the other hand, West Bengal Education Network (WBEN) was born in the year 1996 with a vision “to establish Child Right through a Progressive Social Structure where Education is based on Justice and Equity”. The comparison between the objectives of both the associations of civil society bodies reveals that more or less objectives are similar, as mentioned in table 7.3.

Thus, in spite of the similarities in their focal point both the associations are working separately and this situation indicates the poor networking and coordination persisting among the donor organizations.

7. Adverse Reaction of Beneficiary Group

There are many issues that are hindering the education of disadvantaged children such as early marriage of girls, practice of child labour, and gender based discrimination, as mentioned in previous chapter. NGOs conduct various campaigns, awareness generation activities, capacity building of community people, to address these issues in a more strategic manner. However, in spite of their strategic intervention, the practices of this malice are prevailing.
For the purpose of better understanding, the case of Mathpukur Dhapa may be highlighted. The name of the area appeared in one of the leading Bengali daily newspaper in connection with the practice of child marriage. However, this is not the only community which made the way to appear in a leading daily newspaper but there are areas like Ananda Palit, Entally and slum of Topsia also achieved the fate. In all those areas, more than two NGOs are working and many of them proclaim to be rights based organization but the ill practices are prevailing with lesser magnitude, as claimed by the NGOs.

The further exploration where observation was used as a tool revealed that NGOs happens to play a safe game when it comes to issues like child labour and child marriage. The practice of child labour and child marriage is kind of an inseparable aspect of urban poor families living in different slum pockets of Kolkata. The NGOs like Tiljala SHED which is exclusively working for the rehabilitation of child labour and children engaged in rag-picking do not conduct any meeting or any other workshop/training for the employer of these children. In other words, NGOs adopt a curative measure rather than a preventive action which is due to fear of losing the community support and participation. Similar experience was observed in the case of Mathpukur Dhapa, as mentioned previously, where international donor organization like Save the Children is directly intervening through ‘Mobile Learning Centre’ along with an NGO like Jana Kalyan Seva Sangha but the community is still witnessing the practice of child marriage. Again, it is fear of getting rejected by the community.

Thus, the fears of losing community support and in turn community participation in ongoing programmes, NGOs opt to keep a blind eye on these practices. It is worthy to mention here that both these ill practices are hindering the educational need of
disadvantaged children, as mentioned in detail in previous chapter, and accordingly ignoring such malice out fear is ultimately affecting the functioning of NGOs working for the educational care of disadvantaged children.

8. Migration of Children

The intra-state and inter-state migration of children is another important issue for the NGOs working for the educational care of disadvantaged children. The study found that all the NGOs working with the children in both rural and urban slums encounter the same challenge and the follow-up of the cases become difficult. In urban areas, slums are functioning as a hub for the relatives of the families staying there in. Relatives send their children to big cities like Kolkata in search of job or learn some trade so that they can maintain themselves as well as can extend some financial assistance to the family back at home. Again, at times the whole family migrates to urban slums in search of livelihood which is again dependent on the success or failure of the family to stay back in the city or to move out from the city to other city or to their respective villages, as observed in the slums of Topsia, Ananda Palit, Entally and Sholo Bigha. Further, challenges are also posed by the children of seasonal migrant families, especially working in the brick kiln industries in and around Kolkata.

For the better understanding the case Sholo Bigha Basti may be highlighted here. The majority of male child of the Basti are seasonal migrant in nature. Thses children migrate Southern and Western states of our country for a span of 4 to 6 months to work as assistant in construction site in. again, some of the children migrate to find jobs in bricklin industry, paddy field during harvesting time and so on. They (children) usually migrate in group or with their parents (mostly with father) or an elderly member from the extended family or from the community. In this context, the workers of RT find it
difficult to follow-up the children pertaining to their learning and attendance in the school.

Thus, migration of targeted population is affecting the functioning of NGOs, engaged in the educational care of disadvantaged children.

9. Parental Attitude and Social Environment

Parental attitude and social environment of the locality is further posing challenge for the NGOs to intervene with success. Parental attitude is majorly influenced by the motivation of parents in advancing opportunities towards their children for educational attainment. Lack of motivation on the part of parents causes educational deprivation of children and that is probably the most contentious and complex. The issues involved range from the purely economic to broader social and cultural considerations, such as those affecting female education and marriage (Bhatty, 1998). Economically challenged parents encourage their children to search for paid employment. Furthermore, girls in rural India are often engaged with household such as chores of looking after younger siblings when their mothers are at work, which affects their school attendance (Rao, Cheng, & Narain, 2003). Again, social environment of the locality also plays a pivotal role in framing the parental attitude.

The discussed situation could be better understood through following cases:

Case-I: Tiljala SHED is running an open shelter home for the children in need of protection and care under *Integrated Child Protection Scheme*. The shelter home is niche of 20 odd imates who are previously engaged in activities of economic nature which includes rag picking, performing on the street, small vendors and the like. According to the in-charge of the shelter home, parents often make request to allow their children to
visit their home at least twice in a week while some other parents are not willing to see
their children in those shelter homes so that they can be engaged in some or the other
activities to support the family income. The respondent also revealed that there is always
a tussel between the parents and the authorities of the NGOs and often help of Kolkata
police is sought to settle the issue.

Case-II: Right Track is operating in Sholo Bigha Basti of Maheshtala Municipality and is
facing similar issues. The girl child of the community is often subjected to underage
marriage. The organization is working in that community for a decade now but still finds
it difficult to address directly because of the fear of losing community support. However,
the Right Track organizes awareness generation campaign against the same. According to
the respondent from the organization, the number of child marriages has reduced
considerably but not stopped. The respondent while explaining reasons for the same said
that the Hindus and Muslim are staying together in that community and both the
communities have a fear that their daughters may end-up marrying a boy from different
religion or faith and accordingly, parents arrange marriage for their daughters as early as
possible. Further, there are underage girls who opt to elope with the men of their choice
so that their parents could fix their marriage as per their wish. Finally, parents also have a
fear that they may not find a suitable bride for their daughter if the marriage is delayed.

Case-III: In Bow Bazar red-light area, Sanlaap is facing similar challenges. Sanlaap is
working for the betterment of brothel based commercial sex worker and focusing to
stop the second generation prostitution. The organization runs a free coaching centre in
the area in the evening hours, which is the peak time for the brothel based sex workers
in order to protect the children from abuses. According to the respondent from Sanlaap
their effort has brought changes in that community but not as per their expectation. The
organization makes every possible effort to enrol the children into the formal school but as soon as they reached the puberty they become drop-out from the school. The reason for such withdrawal from the formal schooling is the bullying by their classmates in the schools as well as in the community. Further, with the growing age, they also understand the profession with which their mothers are involved and suffer from an emotional crisis. For boys, they often end-up with one or the other addiction which they observe in their locality while for girls there is high possibility to join the profession of their mothers. In addition, the respondent also highlighted the success stories of the brothel where both boys and girls have started their new life after going through vocational trainings where their mother and the ‘Babu’ played an instrumental role.

Thus, from above mentioned three cases it can be concluded that parental motivation and positive attitude are very important but it is a huge task for the NGOs to address the allied issues that are contributing to formation of their attitude.

10. Lack of Cooperation from School Teachers

Lack of cooperation from school teachers is also found to be a factor affecting the functioning of NGOs. According to the respondents from selected NGOs, several school teachers are reluctant to enrol the children introduced by the NGOs. The grass-root level workers from NGOs like Pratham Education Foundation, Right Track, LGWCDC, Sanlaap, and Path Welfare Society further mentioned that school teachers hardly allow them to do any education related activity. The reason for such non-cooperating got revealed when teachers were asked “Do they support the NGO’s intervention in the educational care of disadvantaged children?”
Figure 7.G depicts that majority of the teachers support the functioning of NGOs in educational care of disadvantaged children i.e. 46% while 35% of the teachers hold a negative opinion about the same. Teachers supporting NGOs intervention in educational care highlighted the lacunas prevailing in the present elementary education like inadequate number of teachers clubbed with administrative and other kinds of workload. On the contrary, the teachers voted against the functioning of NGOs are of the opinion that NGOs are receiving fund for work and accordingly they have limited function. According to teachers, NGOs mainly focus on the enrolment of the children and hardly do the follow-up of the same. Thus, majority of the children enrolled by the NGOs tend to be dropped-out from the school after few months. Responding teachers also added that in case of drop-out of children they are answerable to higher authorities while NGOs hold no liability to any of the authority for the same.

Thus, there are number of factors that influencing the functioning of NGOs. These factors are found to be interrelated and interdependent. The financial constraint is found

Source: *ibid*
to affecting the programme activities of the NGOs and the staffing. It is the financial constraints which restricts the NGOs to hire an employee with desired skill. Further, it is one of the major reason for which the programme implementing NGOs encounter high attrition rate among the staff holding key positions like programme coordinator, programme manager, and so on. Further, induction of new employee in those key position attacks the continuity of the programme and thus, expected out-come of the programmes become hard to reach. In this regard, it is worthy to mention that there is poor networking among the NGOs, as can be understand from the table 7.3, otherwise a well coordinated effort of the NGOs could have addressed many of these challenges with success.

NGOs are well known for their capability in ensuring mass participation in their endeavour towards a better society. But the present study revealed that NGOs are also reluctant to take direct action towards the practices like child labour, child marriage, gender based discrimination and so on in order to avoid the adverse reaction of the community. The parental attitude and social environment is a tricky challenge for the NGOs to combat. The efforts made by the NGOs to ensure quality education to all the children often becomes prey to this factor. Finally, the lack of participation on the part of the government duty bearer, school teachers and members of local self government also posing challenges for the NGOs to intervene.

Reference
