The Impacts Of Japanese Non-Conditional Aid Toward The Cambodia Student’s Dropout In Rural Area

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Abstract:

The proportion of student’s dropout in rural area causes a great burden on government to achieve education for all (EFA). With the aid from foreign countries especially Japan concentrating strongly on education and social development, government has brought a pragmatic strategies to increase the enrollment rate and to retain students in school for higher education. This research is going to analyze the impacts of Japanese aid in reducing the dropout rate of primary students in rural area from 2010 to 2015.

Key words: non-conditional aid, education, dropout, development
I. Introduction

Education is believed as an effective tool for people to make their living much happier and better in any society. Education is the important driver to boost the socio-economic growth and sustainable development in the country. According to Stringfield and Nunery (2010), education has made it possible for people who expect the better living standard and higher income comparing between high school level and college graduate. Moreover, the huge gap between dropout students’ and graduates’ income and living condition (No, 2012). For this reason, UN and international organization work actively and enthusiastically to bring alive of EFA and Universal Primary achievable education program supporting so far in the universal declaration of human right 1948 and the MDGs agreement from all the nations on education (UN, 2013).

Similarly, Cambodia has made a great effort to provide good education to achieve own MDGs for social and economic development. There are many remarkable increases in students’ enrollment and the rapidly improved in basic education. Since 2001, the abolishment of school expenditure made the net enrollment rate (NER) increase sharply 94.8% in 2009. However, the dropout rate is still quite high which is about 15% making it a big challenge for the government to achieve their MDGs and EFA by 2020 (MoEYs, 2013). It is also the reason why the gross enrollment rate (GER) is higher than 100% since the students reaching the age for school keep delaying and when they enroll for their education, their age is older for their grade. The same problem of higher GER also happens in other developing countries. According to No (2012), the later school enrollment is likely to dropout and the possibility of dropout is very high comparing to early school enrollment students (No, 2012).

It is really compulsory to keep students in school in order to make sure they have gone through expected level of education and experienced the needed knowledge they will use to pursue higher education or at least better lives. The means to achieve the basic education for everyone we must find the reasons why students are dropout so quick and what solutions can be taken to deal with student’s dropout in their early age.

A. The purpose of the research

The study is going to analyze on the aid granted by Japanese government for educational development in Cambodia specifying on the means to prevent student dropping out from their study. The researcher aims to seek the achievable programs run in the rural schools that bring positive impacts to students retaining longer at school for quality education. The research choose Primary and lower secondary level because the possibility of students’ dropout in those levels are significantly high especially students in rural areas. They dropped out after one or two years they had enrolled in the school (No, 2012).
The researcher is going to collect secondary data from previous researches, journal and reports and then the data are combined to see the influences before and after the programs are implemented in the area. Moreover, the role of donor and the government's participation are the crucial elements to be discussed and analyzed with the result. Longitudinal study is used in this research because data is collected from 2010 to 2015 in order to check the progress of the program. The researcher will analyze the statistic from the data collection using logistic regression analyses to seek the impact the Japanese aid influence on the student’s dropout problems in rural schools.

B. Significance of the research

It is very important to remain students in school in order to make sure they have received quality basic education. However, according to Cambodia MoEYS statistic in 2010, the dropout rate of students is still a big concern to government, donors and other participants to achieve EFA for basic education (Primary and lower Secondary level) (MoEYS, Education Strategic Plan 2009-2013, 2010). The dropout rate is quite high for Primary and lower secondary level in schooling so the research will focus significantly on the Primary and lower secondary students. This research paper is going to answer to the research questions: 1) Why did the students give up their study in the early schooling (Primary and lower secondary)? 2) What are the perspectives of parents whose students dropped out from the school? 3) What are the effects of the Japan’s aid on the education to retain students in school for higher education?

C. Research Problems

During the Civil war and Khmer Rouge Regime, most of Cambodia educators and scholars were killed and students were forced to work very hard in the field. There were no schools, books, teachers or even pagodas where were the education foundation for most Cambodian learners in that time. The Civil wars and Khmer Rouge Regime for about 3 decades ruined all educational resources in Cambodia. After Cambodia got independent in 1993, government has reformed the education starting from nothing so it was so hard and seemed no hope at all for the education reform. Government was lack of everything such as curricula, books, teachers, educators, capital and supporting resources to reform the education system. Luckily, the foreign aid and international institutions came to Cambodia and they joined hand consistently with the government to help Cambodia improve the field of education. The reform of education in 2010 and 2014 made a great impact and the government kept working profusely with the NGOs, traditional and nontraditional donors, businessmen and actors to make Cambodian education better aiming to achieve the government objective in EFA in 2020 (MoEYS, Education Strategic Plan 2014-2018, 2014). However, the government’s MDGs and educational plan cannot be achieved if the students’ dropout still remains in high rate and the percentage of dropout is increasing respectively in rural areas, causing a really big concern to the government and donors (MOEYS and ADB, 2012). It is believed that if the government,
educators and donors cannot find a way to solve dropout issue in early education, there is no hope that the EFA and quality basic education can be achieved in Cambodia. There will be no sustainable development in the country since the human resource is still limited and most people are still suffering of illiteracy (Cambodia Development Resource Institute, 2015; MOEYS and ADB, 2012).

D. Research Objective

This research is going to investigate the reasons students drop out so quick from their early education (Primary and lower secondary) and how Japanese aid helps Cambodian government improve educational system and quality basic education in the aim of increasing the enrollment and retaining students in school for higher education.

E. Research Question

1) Why did students give up their study in the early schooling (Primary and lower secondary)?

2) What are the effects of the Japan’s aid to retain students in school for higher education?

II. Literature Review

This chapter reviews and compiles the factors affecting the student’s dropout. Moreover, the intervention of government and traditional Japanese donors to the dropout rate in rural areas will be covered in this chapter as well. The literature review intends to summary the effects of the programs implemented by government and donors to bring quality education and effective intervention for longer students’ retention in school and better education in the rural areas.

A. Previous Researches

According to Chirtes (2010), the dropout rate is much higher in low standard families striving to live in poverty and marginalization situation (Chirtes, 2010). Children from poorer families are likely to drop out of school rather than families who live in middle and high status. Moreover, the researcher put the blame of poverty and family’s influence causing the children drop out of school. Parents’ lack of supervision and interest toward education affect children’s education and they are likely to abandon their school in early age. Family members play the crucial role in retain children in school since the low standards of living such as low income, family’s economy distribution, parents’ low educational ability, unavailable workplace, parents’ divorce or even excessive alcohol assumption in the family leading to the highest dropout rate. The participants, teachers and parents using inappropriate
means and method in the education may make students feel demotivated and dropout as well (Chirtes, 2010). For this reasons, the researcher suggested the involvement and implication of all actors and institutions (involved ministries in education and development, national authorities, city councils, educational institutions, health and social departments and NGOs) must participate profusely to create a pragmatic mechanism including related fields to put into practice so that there will be effective and dramatic changes taken place in the intervening time and field (Chirtes, 2010).

To promote human security, Japan takes education as the primary objective to promote better living and modernization in the area. According to Japan’s ODA (Official Development Assistance), Japan has put the education as the critical factors to promote living and modern life as the success in education can boost the growth in economic and living condition (JAPAN Official Development Assistance (ODA), 2010). Moreover, through the MDGs and Education for all (EFA) Japan gave $3.5 billion in the field of education for 5 years (2011-2015) which provide good and quality education for about 20 million children in developing and less developed countries (JAPAN Official Development Assistance (ODA), 2010). Japan follows his holistic vision of education to respond the need of partner countries in term of basic education, vocational development and higher education by providing training and scholarship to students coming to study in Japan in order to improve human resource and development. Human should get quality education because they can seek their potential and capability in dealing with the life problems and global crises letting them to live their lives with dignity and prosperity. As the result, they can be the owner of their lives and play an important role to modernize their living and country (JAPAN Official Development Assistance (ODA), 2010).

The abolishing of school fee in 2002 increase the enrollment rate up to 84% however there is only 48% primary completion rate in Cambodia which was so challenging for Cambodia MoEYS to establish quality education in Cambodia (JAPAN Official Development Assistance (ODA), 2010; MoEYS, Education Strategic Plan 2009-2013, 2010);. The major challenge for Cambodia is to make the students want to stay in school and learn skills as well as knowledge they need to survive in their society (Madhur, 2014).

B. School dropout in Cambodia

It is estimated that a Net Primary Enrolment (NPE) ratio of 95.6 percent, only 76.8 percent of those completing six years of primary schooling continue to lower secondary education (MoEYS, Education Strategic Plan 2014-2018, 2014). Primary dropout rate is about 10.5 percent and the challenges students face to progress the next level are:
1. Age of the Student

According Unicef Cambodia (2015), the late enrolment at the primary level is the cause of lack quality education and family poverty where about 20 percent of pupils are over-age (Unicef, 2015). The statistic of late enrollment intensifies to 30 percent of students in the lower secondary level leading to higher proportion in upper secondary (MoEYs, 2013). The Pheromone shows the increase of late age students who enroll in each level which can lead to high rates of repetition as a result they will give up their study in following year (No, 2012). For this reason, government should provide available education assessment in rural areas so students can access to early learning and development opportunities during young age which is important for their mental and physical development. Moreover, it will serve as the mean to get academic success in exposing learning environments in the early age when they pursue higher education (Unicef, 2015).

2. Repetition

Repetition rate should be kept in healthy minimum to address the student’s vital need to go higher level but the dropout rates are high and it increases as students move up the grades 22 percent in grade 7 (Unicef, 2015). The high early dropout rates in lower and upper secondary schools lead to approximately 150,000 youths to drop out of school every year. Educators must consider the change and need of nation and pave the way to modernize the economic and social development especially in education.

3. Education Expenditure

Expenditure on education is another factor affected students to retain in school for higher education. After students complete their primary level, they enroll in lower secondary where they have to pay extra on school supplies and food. They grow up so they need more nutrient and food to support their physical growth so majority of poor families cannot afford extra expense on their children after the primary level. Children in poor family need to distribute in the family expedition in the early age causing them to work in rice field or outside work to earn some money to support the family while they are still in the age to be at school for education. Ban (2015) claimed that government policy to provide scholarship directly to poor family assisting the poor children to avoid extra education expenditure and dropout. In addition, the intervention helping school and teachers improve their quality education is completely effective to promote the success of student learning outcome (Ban, 2015).
4. Family background

Kosal (2015) indicated that poverty and the contribution of family economic production is the factor making students dropout. Students have to decide if they have to enroll in school for sometimes and also work outside to earn money to help the family. The survey conducted by Fata and Hirakawa (2012) in rural area showed that family factors is the cause of primary and lower secondary schools dropout with the sampling on five primary and five lower secondary schools.

III. Research Methodology

Students and dropout students are chosen from the rural schools where the Japanese aid has been distributed. Longitudinal data collection and progress data analysis will be used to analyze the information.

Conceptual Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Japanese Aid 2010-2015</th>
<th>Programmes</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Education and Primary Education 2013-2015&lt;br&gt;• Social security and student’s learning need&lt;br&gt;• Education Sector Development Program III (ESDPIII)</td>
<td>• Training course and teacher’s skills improvement&lt;br&gt;• Providing food, school and learning facility&lt;br&gt;• The increase numbers of student achieve 9-years basic education&lt;br&gt;• Increase lower secondary enrollment</td>
<td>• Improving the assessment to lower secondary&lt;br&gt;• Teacher training and skills development&lt;br&gt;• School and learning facilities&lt;br&gt;• Primary &amp; Lower secondary school expansion (22 Primary &amp; 33 LSS expanded to rural areas)&lt;br&gt;• Water &amp; sanitation facilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. Analysis Data and Discussion

Enrolment and dropout rates are two of the most crucial indicators of the school performance in Cambodia. Fig. 1 table shows Cambodia’s net enrolment in secondary education is 55% in 2011. Comparing to Thailand, Vietnam and other countries in ASEAN, Cambodia is only better than Lao while it is far behind than the rest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brunei Darussalam</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>88.38</td>
<td>92.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>60.00</td>
<td>55.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>50.24</td>
<td>59.17</td>
<td>74.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laos</td>
<td>28.97</td>
<td>33.86</td>
<td>38.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>65.63</td>
<td>67.73</td>
<td>66.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>50.85</td>
<td>59.17</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>67.15</td>
<td>81.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2014

Fig.1-Source: Cambodia Education 2015 Employment and Empowerment

As we can see the enrolment of students in Secondary level is very low because of the high dropout rate in rural area. According to the graph in Fig. 2, It dedicated that the dropout rate of primary students in rural area is about 10% while secondary level the dropout rate increase profusely reach to the apex which is 22%. Government and donors has to take quick actions to tackle the dropout rate in rural areas.

The data shows that reducing the cost, providing information and increasing the students’ preparedness help student retain in school for quality education. The main factor of school dropout is affected by the family factors. The low family income (100%) and the parent’s low education (100%) is the main reason of student’s dropout. Another reason is parent’s lack of interest and ignorance on student’s education in school (100%) that associated with students’ low learning abilities (73.3%). The second factor is related to family poverty that parents make children contribute on family income which is not related to school like working outside or doing household work in rice field, farming or taking care of cows (53.3%). Parents’ neglect, divorce, hostile environment, and school factors (40%) and last but not least the conflict relationships
among students, parents and teachers making incorrect education (40%) led to early dropout as well (Ban, 2015; JAPAN Official Development Assistance (ODA), 2010).

![Percentage of Students Dropouts by Sex and Level of Education](https://www.jica.go.jp/project/cambodia)

Fig. 2-Source: [https://www.jica.go.jp/project/cambodia](https://www.jica.go.jp/project/cambodia)

Japanese aid has provide 12, 168 million yean which is about 3.2% of the total Japan grant aid in Southeast Asia in 2013. The aid has helped Cambodia’s economic growth and improve Cambodian people’s life and living condition especially people living in rural area. Japanese aid from 2010-2015 focused on social development, infrastructure, environment preservation and agriculture development.

V. Conclusion

The finding of the research paper shows that family factors, parent’s illiterate and demotivation, student’s poor academic achievement and low quality education are the factor of student’s dropout. For this reasons, government and donors should make a clear agenda to tackle those problems. Academic intervention need to be implemented in the rural schools to help student achieve good performance in school since the dropout happens among late enrollment students and low school performance. Japanese aid has help government to strengthen its policies for education development and EFA agenda. As we can see the high enrollment of primary students and the incensement of low secondary enrollment rate in 2010 to 2015. Moreover, JICA and ODA have implemented many programmes especially ESDP III. However, Japanese government still believes that government play a main role in eliminating the dropout rate and improve the students’ retainment in school for higher and quality education.
Cambodia government need to allocate sufficient budget to support education expenditure to poor family and schools. Poor students are likely to dropout since they encountered both financial obstacle and extra education expenditure. Providing scholarship can increase the enrollment and retain students in school because they don’t have to work to earn money for their families to pay on extra expense on education. Health, personal and social development also play an important role to retain student in school because when there is a strong connection between family, school, government and donors, the common interest can be established to promote better health, socialization and education in the community.
VI. References


Chirtes, G. (2010). A Case Study Into the Cause of school Drop Out. 3(4), 24-34.


