Does the Role Model Encourage Female Labor Force Participation? Field Experiment in Bangladesh

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Abstract

Enhancing female labor force participation is a key to economic growth, poverty alleviation, and women's empowerment. Despite its importance at the national and individual levels, the female labor force participation rate remains low in South Asian countries due to social and economic issues and childcare responsibilities. Can reducing social and economic barriers for unmarried women enhance female labor force participation? We investigate this question under a cluster randomized control trial by providing unmarried young women and their parents with information about manufacturing sector jobs and earning opportunities--through role models--along with financial support for skill training in rural Bangladesh.

Keywords: Female labor force participation, Parental decision, Information, Social norm, Randomized controlled trial, South Asia

JEL classification: D83, D91, J16, J29, O53, Z13

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1. Background and Objective of the Research

Enhancing female labor force participation (FLFP) is considered key to economic growth and poverty alleviation (World Bank 2011, 2012). FLFP and better income earning opportunities for women are also shown to be effective in enhancing women's empowerment, which can be measured by delaying in marriage (Baird, McIntosh, and Özler 2011, 2019; Jensen 2012; Heath and Mobarak 2015), higher education (Luke and Munshi 2011; Jensen 2012), and higher bargaining position within the household (Qian 2008; Anderson and Eswaran 2009; Majlesi 2016). Despite its importance both at the national and individual levels, the FLFP rate remains low in South Asian countries. It has been a great interest for researchers and policy makers how to enhance FLFP in these countries (Verick 2011; Fletcher, Pande, and Troyer 2017).

Association between girls' education and their participation in work is often observed in many developing countries (Heath and Jayachandran 2017), however, such association is absent in South Asian countries. The U-shaped relationship between women's education and FLFP is often pointed out in these countries, and except for the highest education level, the association is, in fact, negative (Figure 1). It remains a puzzle why enhanced education level does not encourage FLFP in these countries.

One possible explanation is the lack of role model women for adolescent girls in rural area, except for teaching jobs. Teaching is often considered the only acceptable and respectable job in rural area of developing countries including South Asian countries where strong social norm/stigma exists against women working outside the home. A reason why teaching job is accepted despite the social norm may be because villagers are familiar with role model women working as teachers. By contrast, they cannot usually find role model women as non-teachers in rural area. To explore whether introducing the role model women working as non-teachers to adolescent girls encourages their labor force participation, rural Bangladesh seems to have an ideal research setting. In urban Bangladesh, due to the growth of export-

oriented garment sector, there are many income earning opportunities for adolescent girls, and role model women who are originally from rural area and currently working in the garment sector. But in rural Bangladesh, they usually do not have an opportunity to get to know these role model women.

The objective of this study is to explore whether introducing adolescent girls to the role model women plus financial support for local skill training program encourages them to participate in labor force. We conduct the cluster randomized controlled trial (cRCT) to explore how communicating with female role model enhances adolescent girls' labor force participation with or without financial support. To understand the treatment spillover effect at the cluster (which is village community or neighborhood) we implemented a treatment saturation design where we varied the number of study participants receiving the financial support (voucher for attending a local skill-training institute for manufacturing sector jobs) at the cluster level which varied by 25% and 75% ratio (i.e. one-fourth or three-fourth of the eligible participants receiving the voucher) within a cluster of the treatment groups.

We hypothesized that introducing role model women encourages labor force participation of adolescent girls who do not have connection or network of role models except for teachers in their neighborhood where social norm exists against women working outside the home. Our role models are the women who originated from the study location and currently work in the manufacturing sector in urban areas. By taking the social norm and childcare responsibilities into account, we focus our study solely on unmarried girls. Among factors preventing FLFP, the social norm may be the biggest one discouraging unmarried girls from participating in the work force. By contrast, both social norm and primary responsibility for household chores and child care confoundingly prevent married women from participating in work force.

The impact of role model has been studied for years. For example, female teachers are found to positively affect girls' academic performance (Nixon and Robinson 1999; Carrell, Page, and West 2010; Paredes 2014). Recent study expands the impact of role models to the occupational, or occupation-

relevant choice (Bettinger et al. 2005; Lafortune, Riutort, and Tessada 2018; Porter and Serra 2020). The current study is more closely related to Kofoed and McGovney (Kofoed and McGovney 2019), which find that the role models encourage women to choose more male-dominated occupation in the US. In developing countries and, in particular, South Asian countries, gender segregation of occupational choice is more outstanding. For example, among middle-income households, teachers are more concentrated among women and factory workers are among men.

2. Experimental Design

2.1 Baseline survey

Institute of Developing Economies (IDE-JETRO)[1] contracts with MOMODa Foundation of Bangladesh to undertake an intervention research study. Prior to the cRCT, we conducted the baseline survey of eligible households in the survey area. The planned time schedule is August–December 2019. The eligible household is defined as one with at least unmarried girls aged 15–29 living with their parent(s). We focus on unmarried girls because they face limited barriers to FLFP, such as social norms/stigma, i.e., women should not work outside the home, while married women face additional universal barriers, such as responsibility for child and elderly care and household chores. In this sense, the household with divorced or widowed girl is also eligible as long as she has no children, lives with at least either parent, and does not have any primary responsibilities for household chores. The survey area is defined as those that are familiar with Gana Unnayan Kendra (GUK) in order to assure the credibility of the intervention as GUK provides occupational training opportunities to unmarried girls. Random sampling of 150 villages plus 20 replacement villages is conducted within the survey area. In each village, we make a preliminary list of all

[1] The research was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of IDE-JETRO on July 10, 2019 (IRB Approval Number RPA190710003) and its extension due to the COVID-19 outbreak was approved on August 5, 2020 (IRB Approval number RPA20080515).

eligible households. We randomly select 10 households from all eligible households in the village. Thus, the sample size is 1,500 (10 households times 150 villages). The sample size is calculated to assure the statistical power greater than 90% (see Appendix A).

The trained enumerators conduct face-to-face interviews with the sampled households using the structured questionnaire (see Appendix B). We provide the survey participant with a BDT 160 reward per household for their time, i.e., two to three hours, following the local standard. The questionnaire consists of eight sections which include general socioeconomic questions (Sections 1 to 6) as well as unique questions regarding gender awareness, decision making, attitudes toward daughter's labor force participation, social status and networks, and growth mindset. The unique questions of this study are asked in Section 7, of which the respondents are eligible girls and their parent(s). Section 8 also consists of unique questions of this study, though the respondent is the same as the general socioeconomic questions of Sections 1 to 6. The questions are to measure individual risk preference and time preference.

There are mainly two objectives in including the unique questions in Sections 7 and 8: to make complementary outcome variables other than main outcomes described in Section 2.3, and to conduct heterogeneity analysis. The questions include gender awareness questions such as women's rights, girls' education, and attitude toward FLFP (Questionnaire Sections 7-1.1, 7-2.1, and 7-3.1), and growth mindset questions (Questionnaire Sections 7-1.5, 7-2.3, and 7-3,3), which are asked to eligible girls and their parents; questions on decision-making within the households (Questionnaire Sections 7-1.2 and 7-2.2), which are asked to both parents, if present, with an aim at capturing any difference by gender of respondents; questions on parental attitude toward own daughters' labor force participation (Questionnaire Section 7-1.3), and on their social status and networks (Questionnaire Section 7-1.4), which are asked to a parent (either father or mother); questions on knowledge and own decision-making about marriage and FLFP to the eligible girls (Questionnaire Section 7-3.2). The questions regarding gender awareness, growth mindset, agency or decision-making, and attitude toward general women's and their

daughters' labor force participation can constitute complementary outcome variables, which may be affected by the intervention. The choice of specific questions to make these variables are described in Appendix Table A1.

Due to the number of outcomes including complementary outcomes, we address the issue of multiple hypothesis testing. We report the p-values adjusted for Romano-Wolf (Clarke, Romano, and Wolf 2020) stepdown multiple hypothesis testing.

We assume that the household social status and network and risk and time preference are time-invariant irrespective of the intervention, and they can be used to conduct heterogeneity analysis, say, by interacting with the treatment status. For example, the impact of the intervention may vary across different social status and also depending on the strength of social network. Generally, social capital including social network is considered favorably in the context of development and poverty alleviation, but in the South Asian context, the stronger social network may function negatively in the form of stronger social norms against FLFP. Strong social network is shown to prevent labor migration from rural to urban area in India (Munshi and Rosenzweig 2016), and a similar mechanism may prevent FLFP in the context of this current study. A possible hypothesis is that treatment effect is weaker for households with higher social status or strong social network. The choice of specific questions to make these variables are also described in Appendix Table A1.

2.2 Experiment

Our aim is to encourage young unmarried girls aged 15–29 to participate in labor force by introducing them to the role model women, who are the lecturers of an interactive motivational information session. The planned time schedule was originally March–August 2020, but due to the COVID-19 outbreak, we rescheduled most of the sessions to November 2020 onward. In September 2020, we originally rescheduled the sessions to November 2020–April 2021, but we had to reschedule the sessions again in

the middle of pandemic due to uncertainty of vaccine and virus variant. Not only does the schedule have to adjust to lockdown but to the GUK training program. The sessions were eventually completed in the dates presented in Appendix Table A2.

We have three arms in the cRCT: control (Arm C), information session with girls only (Arm T1), and information session with girls and their parent(s) (Arm T2). The assignment is randomized by computer at the village-level. The balance across treatment/control arms and sub-arms considers cluster(village)-level randomization and is checked following Heß (2017). We cannot reject the test that population in each arm (both treatment and control arms) are from different distribution (Appendix Table A3). As for balance across sub-arms, there are some imbalances concerning girls' ages and literacy at the 0.05 significance level (Appendix Table A4). However, only three out of 120 differences are significant at the 0.05 level, which is lower than that from what random chance alone would produce. Following Imbens and Rubin (2015), the normalized size of difference is calculated as the difference in means between two sub-arms divided by the square root of half the sum of two sub-arms' variances; and it is 0.27 for girls' ages, and 0.21 for girls' literacy, which is less than, or close to the suggested benchmark, i.e., 0.25. And thus, we could assume that the sub-arms are also balanced.

Note that we have to retest the balance at the time of intervention once the endline survey is completed. Due to substantial delay of the intervention from the baseline survey, we suspect that many girls got married and were no longer eligible before the intervention, and thus need to revise the eligibility at the time of intervention. Concretely, we will drop these married girls at the time of intervention, and check the balance on these observable characteristics.

The controlled (Arm C) are provided minimum information at the time of baseline survey by enumerators. The protocol and training concerning the content of information is given to each enumerator so that the minimum information given is identical across all the enumerators.

The treated (Arm T1 and Arm T2) are invited to attend the information session led by the female role model. We allocated role models that belong to the same community (e.g., the same socioeconomic background within the upazila) as the targeted eligible girls. We hire two role model women to attend each session: 1) one who is currently working in a garment factory, and 2) one who is currently self-employed in tailoring and earns income. The session framework is given in Appendix Table A5. The compensation to the role model women working in factories is transportation cost (a round-trip bus ticket, BDT 1,500 + compensation BDT 2,000 per day). That to the self-employed tailor women is BDT 2,000.

Basic information given in the motivational information session by a factory sewing operator is i) salary and benefits and how much she can remit to the household, ii) female friendly working environment, i.e., gender-segregated working environment as sewing operators are mostly females, iii) general facilities such as canteen, female washroom, etc., iv) housing condition, v) overview of the city life. Basic information given by a self-employed tailor is i) average monthly earnings, and ii) advantages such as flexible working time. The information about the required documents/conditions for enrolling at the local skill-training program is fully provided during the session (For the detailed requirement, see Appendix Table A6).

We provide the treated household (T1 and T2) with lunch (BDT 160) and transportation (BDT 200), conditional on attendance. For Arm T2, either a single parent or both parents can attend the motivational information session. The compensation for parent(s) is BDT 360 conditional on the session attendance of a single or both parents. Thus, the maximum amount that a T2 household is provided is BDT 720.

In addition, we randomly provide vouchers to support the enrollment fee to the local technical and vocational training center (BDT 2,460). The probability of winning the lottery is either 75% or 25% at the village level, which is common information shared at the time of the training session. To avoid selection issue, the lottery was not conditional on the role model session attendance. The lottery based voucher winning information was given privately by phone. These vouchers had an expiry date, which

depends on the timing of the local training program and intervention roll-out design. The structure of cRCT is summarized in Figure 2.

2.3 Endline survey

We conduct endline survey. The scheduled timeline is December 2022–February 2023. The endline questionnaire is basically the same as the baseline questionnaire, but adds some questions to construct outcome variables (for additional questions of the endline survey, see Appendix D).

The primary outcome variables are directly related with the contents provided in the motivational information sessions, namely, (1) knowledge on young women's working opportunities, and (2) attitude toward young women working outside the home. Note the attitude, i.e., question (2), is also included in the baseline survey questionnaire.

The secondary outcome variables measure behavioral change, namely, (3) motivational information session participation, (4) voucher take-up, (5) physical approach to GUK to enroll at the program, (6) qualification scores by GUK, (7) GUK take-up (enrollment), (8) the level of serious willingness to take up once the girl reaches the age 18 if she is interested in job placement (non-self-employed job),[2] (9) training program completion, discontinuation, and drop-out, (10) migration, and (11) employment. These secondary outcome variables are listed in order; each measures the different level of girls' labor force participation gradually from the easiest to the hardest. Because the secondary outcome measures are ordinal, we do not consider them as typical multiple outcomes that measure the same characteristics and thus, we do not incorporate them into a single variable, and instead conduct the multiple hypothesis testing. Our intention examining each variable in order is to investigate which level of FLFP is the bottleneck.

[2] This outcome is to measure the seriousness of the respondent to take up the formal training once they reach the minimum required age as training for job placement (non-self-employed) do not accept a trainee aged below 18.

The third downstream outcome variables measure longer-term effects. They include (12) age at first marriage, and (13) fertility or age at first birth.

Because we are interested in mechanisms leading to the outcomes above, we collect the information potentially measuring the mechanisms. One of the mechanisms can be measured by the question above, (1) knowledge on young women's working opportunities and (2) attitude toward young women working outside the home. Others include (14) a level of direct contact with a role model woman after the session, (15) decision-making, autonomy, and bargaining within the household, and (16) growth mindset. Note the questions (15) decision-making, autonomy, and bargaining within the household, and (16) growth mindset are also included in the baseline survey questionnaire.

We also plan to conduct the rapid phone-based survey following the endline survey to collect additional information (for the questions of the phone-based follow-up survey, see Appendix E). The main purpose of this follow-up survey is to measure girls' education and job aspirations. We assume that education and job aspirations are mechanism affecting the outcome variables (1)–(13) above. Specifically, we would like to measure (17) planned completing level of education, and (18) a desired job type.

3. Empirical Analysis

3.1 Main estimation equation

The basic treatment arms are separated at the first node into three, i.e., C, T1, and T2 in Figure 2. The hypothesis to be tested at the first node is that attending role model session encourages the daughter's labor force participation, which is measured by the outcome variables collected in endline survey and described in Section 2.3. The difference between C and T1 captures the effect of attending the role model session, and the difference between T1 and T2 captures the effect of attending the session by daughter alone, or with her parent(s). Because we balance the treatment/control arms prior to the experiment, the main estimation equation is given by the simple difference form:

$$Y_{i2} = \beta Treat_{ij} + \boldsymbol{x_{i1}'\gamma} + \boldsymbol{v_{k1}}'\boldsymbol{\theta} + \varepsilon_{ij} \quad (1),$$

where $Treat_{ij}$ takes value one if the girl i is in the treatment group j (either T1 or T2). $\boldsymbol{x_{i1}}$ is a set of girl i's and her households' socioeconomic characteristics at baseline such as girl's age, education status, parental education, and household's religion, and wealth. $\boldsymbol{v_{k1}}$ is a set of village-level characteristics measured by V1−V12 questions in the primary village questionnaire such as the number of women working, the number of households with labor migrants to the city, and school infrastructure (see Appendix C). Y_{i2} is the outcome variable of the girl i at endline. Standard errors are adjusted for clustering at the village level. We also report the p-value adjusted for multiple hypothesis testing. We will drop the variables with minimal variation from the analysis in order to limit noise caused by theses variables, which are constructed based on the questions for which 95 percent of observations have the same value within the relevant sample. Besides, for the variables that can take any values (by contrast, the examples of variables that can take limited values are binary, and Likert-scale), they will be top-coded at 99th percentile of baseline response to reduce influence of outliers.

The outcome variables are based on the information collected at endline survey: (1) an ordinal variable measuring the girl i's and her parent(s)' knowledge on young women's working opportunities, (2) an ordinal variable measuring the girl i's and her parent(s)' attitude toward young women working outside the home, (3) a binary variable taking value one if the girl i participated in the motivational information session, (4) a binary variable taking value one if the girl i took a voucher to enroll at vocational training if she won the lottery, (5) a binary variable taking value one if the girl i physically approached to GUK to enroll at the program, (6) qualification scores measuring seriousness of training applicant by GUK, (7) a binary variable taking value one if the girl i enrolled at GUK vocational training, (8) the level of serious

willingness to take up once the girl reaches the age 18 if she is interested in job placement (non-self-employed job), (9) a binary variable taking value one if the girl i completed the 3-month GUK training program, (10) a binary variable taking value one if the girl i migrated, (11) a binary variable taking value one if the girl i started working, (12) the girl i's age at first marriage, and (13) the girl i's fertility or age at first birth. The additional outcome variables are related with potential mechanisms leading to the outcome variables above (1)–(13). These characteristics include (14) the girl i's level of contact with a role model woman after the session, (15) the girl i's level of decision-making, autonomy, and bargaining within the household, and (16) the girl i's level of growth mindset. By the follow-up survey, we will also add the variables measuring the education and job aspirations, (17) and (18), respectively, which potentially affect the outcome variables (1)–(13) above.

3.2 Financial incentive and saturation

Next, we examine five arms separated at the second node into C, T1 with 75% saturation, T1 with 25% saturation, T2 with 75% saturation, T2 with 25% saturation. The saturation at the village level indicates the percentage of girls in the village who are offered financial incentives enrolling at vocational training as shown in Figure 2. The estimation equation is given by

$$Y_{i2} = \alpha Lot_i + \beta Treat_{ij} + \delta Lot_i \times Treat_{ij} + \boldsymbol{x_{i1}'\gamma} + \boldsymbol{v_{k1}'\theta} + \varepsilon_{ij} \quad (2),$$

where $Treat_{ij}$ takes value one if the girl i is in the treatment group j (either T1_25, T1_75, T2_25, or T2_75), and Lot_i takes value one if the girl i wins the lottery fully covering the enrollment fee. $\boldsymbol{x_{i1}}$, $\boldsymbol{v_{k1}}$, and Y_{i2} are defined as above concerning Eq. 1. We expect, based on the pilot survey, that financial incentive (i.e., full coverage of enrollment fee at the vocational training) does encourage girls' labor force

participation, which is captured by α. We hypothesize that girls are more willing to participate in work when they have more peers in the village who would like to participate in work force, which is captured by the difference in δ between T1_25 and T1_75, or T2_25 and T2_75 if she wins the lottery. The difference in β between T1_25 and T1_75, or T2_25 and T2_75 captures above peer effects even if she does not win the lottery. Note that if financial incentive does not effectively encourage daughters' work participation, there is no variation in δ or β between T1_25 and T1_75, or T2_25 and T2_75.

3.3 Difference-in-Differences and Analysis of Covariance

Because three outcome measures, namely (2) attitude toward young women working outside, (15) decision-making, autonomy, and bargaining within the household, and (16) growth mindset, described above and in Appendix Table A1 are collected both at baseline and endline, we can estimate the Difference-in-Differences (DID) model. Even in the case that there is no significant difference across treatment/control arms in observed characteristics at baseline in the setting of RCTs, there is an argument that it is better to estimate DID (Twisk et al. 2018). McKenzie (2012) suggests it better to use the Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) estimator than DID in a sense of increasing statistical power especially when autocorrelation of the outcome variables is low. Intuitively, autocorrelation of outcome variables (i.e., gender awareness, intrahousehold decision making, attitudes toward daughter's labor force participation, and growth mindset) may be high in the context of patriarchal society in South Asia, however, we ultimately consider it an empirical question whether autocorrelation of outcome variables is high or low. And thus, we estimate the impact of information session on these characteristics using both the DID with the individual fixed effects and the ANCOVA.

The DID estimation equation is given by,

$$Y_{it} = \beta_1 Time_{it} \times Treat_{ij} + \beta_2 Time_{it} + \eta_i + \epsilon_{ijt} \quad (3),$$

where $Time_{it}$ takes value one if girl i is interviewed at endline, and 0 at baseline. η_i is the individual girl's fixed effects. $Treat_{ij}$ is defined as above concerning Eq. 1. Y_{it} is a series of outcome variables described above and in Appendix Table A1. Similarly, the corresponding Triple Difference (TD) estimation equation incorporating financial incentive and saturation is given by,

$$Y_{it} = \beta_1 Time_{it} \times Treat_{ij} + \beta_2 Time_{it} + \delta_1 Lot_i \times Time_{it} \times Treat_{ij} + \delta_2 Lot_i \times Time_{it} + \eta_i + \epsilon_{ijt} \quad (4),$$

where all the variables are the same as described above in Eq. 2 and Eq. 3.

The ANCOVA estimation equation is given by,

$$Y_{i2} = \beta Treat_{ij} + \rho Y_{i1} + \boldsymbol{x_{i1}'\gamma} + \boldsymbol{v_{k1}}'\boldsymbol{\theta} + \varepsilon_{ij} \quad (5),$$

where Y_{i1} and Y_{i2} are a series of outcome variables described above and in Appendix Table A1 at baseline, and endline, respectively. $Treat_{ij}$, $\boldsymbol{x_{i1}}$, and $\boldsymbol{v_{k1}}$ are defined as above in Eq. 1. Similarly, the corresponding estimation equation incorporating financial incentive and saturation is given by,

$$Y_{i2} = \alpha Lot_i + \beta Treat_{ij} + \delta Lot_i \times Treat_{ij} + \rho Y_{i1} + \boldsymbol{x_{i1}'\gamma} + \boldsymbol{v_{k1}}'\boldsymbol{\theta} + \varepsilon_{ij} \quad (6),$$

where all the variables are the same as described above in Eq. 2 and Eq. 5.

3.4 Heterogeneity analysis

It is possible that the estimated effects are different across households with different social and individual background even within the village. As being described in Section 2.1, we conduct heterogeneity analysis, using social status, and social network (city and village) as well as individual risk and time preference (See Appendix Table A1). We assume these social and individual background characteristics are exogenous to the treatment status, and thus interact them with treatment status. Concretely, we incorporate the interaction term ($Treat_{ij}$ × background characteristics) and its base terms into the estimation equation above. We assume that in the village society of Bangladesh, higher social status and stronger social network in the village may negatively affect girls' labor force participation while stronger social network in the city may work positively.

4. Concerns and measures

4.1 Selection

Because we take the intention-to-treat (ITT) analysis, the selection problem will not be a concern as long as the balance between the control and treatment arms are assured by the measure described in Section 2.2. The key assumption is that the intrinsically motivated girls and households are equally assigned across control and treatment arms.

We can also calculate the treatment-on-treated (TOT) by making use of information concerning compliers among the treated. The percentage of compliers can be calculated based on the outcome measure, (3) motivational information session participation.

Because those who attend the role model information session are likely more intrinsically motivated than those who do not in the treatment arms, we do not randomize financial incentives by lottery conditional on the attendance of the information session. Instead, we randomize them based on all eligible households in the village.

4.2 Intervention take-up rate

Because the attendance to the information session is voluntary, the intervention take-up rate can be very low. If so, the ITT analysis cannot reveal the actual impact of the role model information session. The actual take-up rate is 70.5% for the pooled T1 and T2 treatment groups, and 69.2% and 71.9% for T1 and T2, respectively. These take-up rates do not seem to be low as compared with the similar interventions. At any rate, this is not necessarily a concern because the estimated impact by the ITT analysis can be interpreted as the lower-bound of the impact.

We could keep a modest take-up rate because we carefully examined the potential take-up rate by conducting the pilot survey in consultation with local staff. We found out a reasonable financial incentive to sufficiently encourage their participation in the information session to be around BDT 360 per daughter.

In the pilot, we also asked the reasons why they did not attend the information session. Around 50% is due to marriage, which may also be the main reason for attrition (Section 4.3). Other minor reasons include no interest in working, father's resistance against daughter's working, and responsibility for household chores.

4.3 Attrition and missing variables

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the endline survey was postponed, and thus, the attrition is a natural concern. The migration as an entire household is rare in the survey area, but the marriage migration of an unmarried daughter at baseline is possible. Because the pilot survey reveals that 5% of eligible daughters did not attend the information due to their marriage, the attrition rate of around 5% due to marriage was expected in the endline survey which was originally scheduled prior to the pandemic. In the postponed endline survey due to the pandemic, the attrition rate due to marriage migration will be higher than 5%.

Because the questions in the section 7-3 in the baseline questionnaire that were answered by the eligible daughters should be answered by the same daughters in the endline survey, the attrition of the individual daughters is a potential concern. To address this potential individual marriage migration of unmarried daughters, we will conduct phone-based surveys to these marriage migrated daughters concerning the questions included in the section 7-3.

The attrition due to marriage migration is still possible even after the remedial measure above, i.e., phone-based surveys. However, we assume that the probability of marriage is not correlated with treatment status, and thus, that the attrition rate is not significantly different across the arms, i.e., non-selective attrition. We test the assumption of non-selective attrition using the following estimation equation:

$$Attr_{i2} = \beta Treat_{ij} + \boldsymbol{x_{i1}'\gamma} + \boldsymbol{v_{k1}'\theta} + \varepsilon_{ij} \quad (7),$$

where all the variables are the same as described above in Eq. 1. We assume that β is not significantly different across control and treatment arms, i.e., non-selective attrition.

No imputation will be performed for missing data from item non-response in the endline survey. We will check whether item non-response is correlated with treatment status following the same procedures as for survey attrition in Eq. 7. If it is correlated, we construct bounds for the treatment estimates following the procedure developed by Lee (2009).

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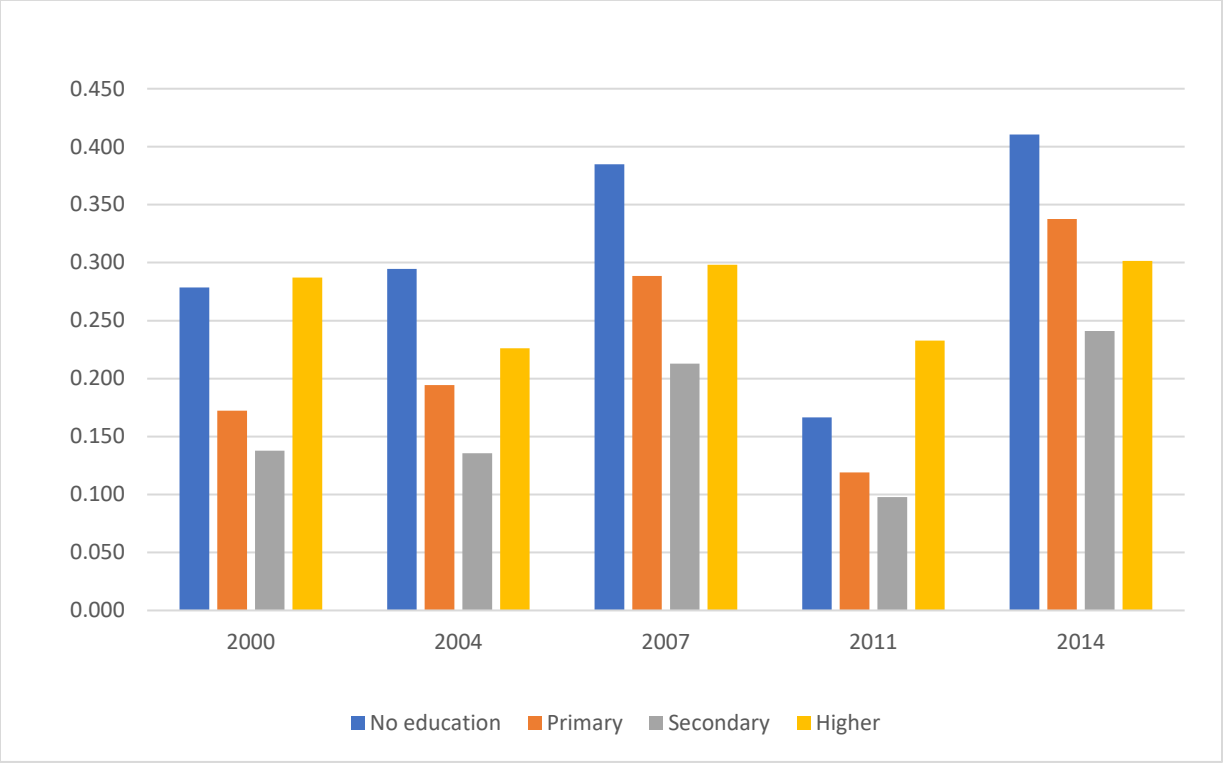

Figure 1. Women's current working status by highest education level.

Data source. Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data of 2000–2014.

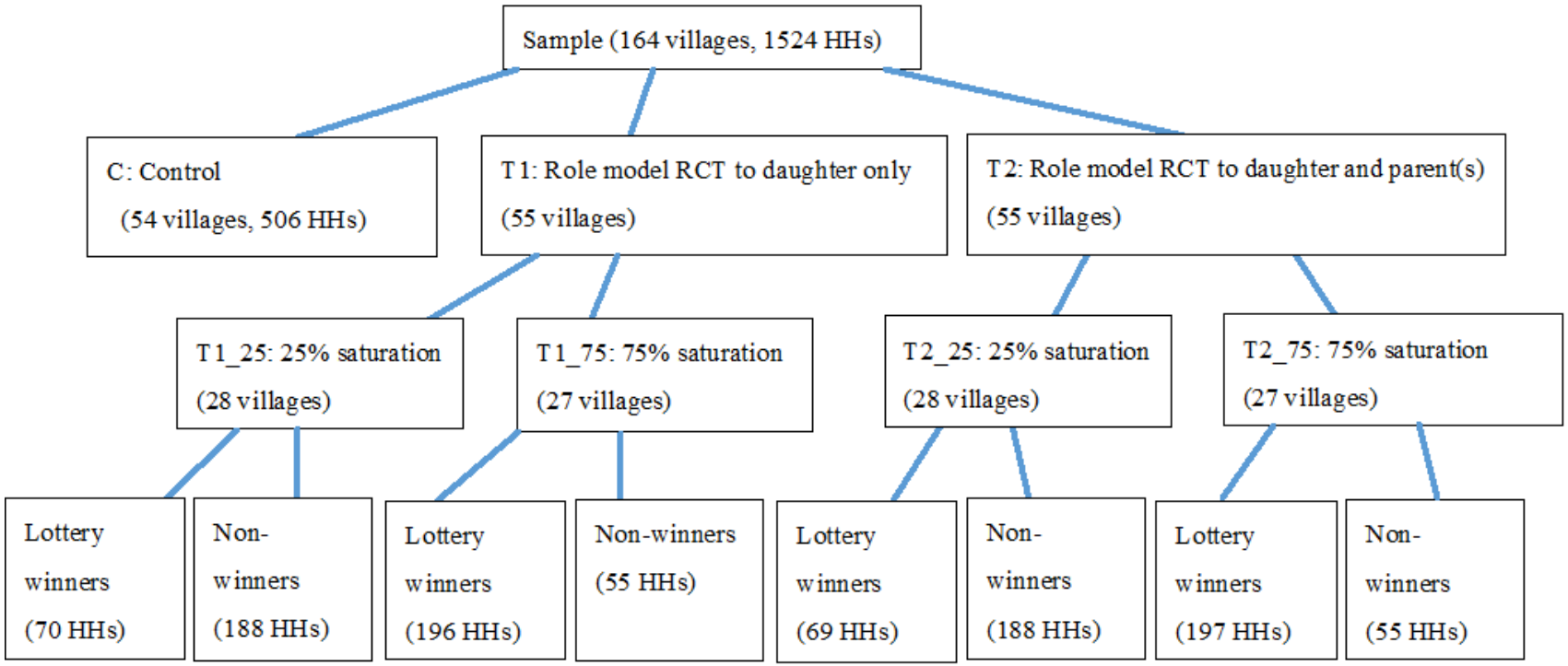

Figure 2. Structure of randomized controlled trial.

Note. Within T1 and T2, we have lottery randomization at the village level on the 100% voucher. To avoid the selection, we include all for randomization lottery, i.e., the session attendance is not a condition for the lottery. At the time of invitation to the workshop (T1 and T2), we notify that they have a 25% or 75% chance of getting 100% voucher to enroll at the GUK training. In order to avoid any social tension, we make a private phone call to the winners immediately after the workshop.

Appendix

A. Sample size calculation

We calculate the minimum sample size to assure 90% statistical power. Let us set the null hypothesis (H_0: $\mu = 0$) and the alternative hypothesis (H_A: $\mu < 0$).

$$Pr(reject\ \mu = 0 | H_A) \geq 0.9$$

Because there is no equivalent survey on unmarried girls aged 15–29, we take the following measures to calculate the minimum sample size. We expect that our intervention, i.e., providing motivational information session by role model women, lowers their reservation wage (i.e., the minimum wage at which the girl accepts to work in garment factory), we assume that the girl starts to work when the offered wage is greater than or equal to her reservation wage,

$$Pr(work) = 1 \Leftrightarrow w_o \geq \underline{w}$$
$$Pr(work) = 0 \Leftrightarrow w_o < \underline{w}$$

where w_o is the offered wage, and $\underline{w}$ is the reservation wage. We further assume that the distribution of offered wages is equal to the *t*-distribution of current wages. According to the pilot survey conducted November 2018–January 2019, the mean of current wages was BDT 5,250, and its standard deviation was 2,693 ($s^2 = 2{,}693^2$). Using the data obtained in this pilot survey, we calculate intracluster correlation,

$$\rho = \frac{s_b^2}{s_b^2 + s_w^2} = \frac{2693^2}{2693^2 + 2997^2} = 0.44$$

where s_b^2 is the variance between clusters, and s_w^2 is the variance within clusters. The sample size is determined at the point where 95% point of distribution of reservation wages is equal to the 10% point of the distribution of current wages.

$$P_A\left(\frac{\overline{X} - 0}{\sqrt{2693^2}/\sqrt{n}} > t_{0.05,t-1}\right) \geq 0.9$$

$$P_A\left(\frac{\overline{X} - 0}{\sqrt{2693^2}/\sqrt{n}} > t_{0.05,t-1} \simeq z_{0.05} = 1.65\right) \geq 0.9$$

$$P_A\left(\frac{\overline{X} - 943}{\sqrt{2693^2}/\sqrt{n}} > 1.65 - \frac{943}{\sqrt{2693^2}/\sqrt{n}}\right) \geq 0.9$$

$$1.65 - \frac{943}{\sqrt{2693^2}/\sqrt{n}} \leq -1.28$$

$$n \geq 263$$

Given that the number of households in each cluster (village) is 10, the effective sample size (ESS) is,

$$ESS \geq 263 * \big(1 + \rho(10 - 1)\big) = 1304$$

B. Household questionnaire

See attached.

C. Primary village questionnaire

See attached.

D. Additional questions for the endline survey

See attached.

E. Additional questions for the phone-based follow-up survey

See attached.

Table A1: List of complementary outcome variables and variables to be used in heterogeneity analysis

Variable	Indicators	Definition of indicators	Weight
Gender awareness	gender awareness 1 (women's rights)	Based on the principal component analysis on the questions GA1–GA5 (similarly for GB1–GB5 and GC1–GC5, as Questionnaire Sections 7-2.1 and 7-3.1 are the replication of Section 7-1.1), GA13 and GA14 (GB13 and GB14, and GC13 and GC14), allowing for correlations across factors, the variables will be the factors having an eigenvalue greater than one.	1/3
	gender awareness 2 (gender equality)	Based on the principal component analysis on the questions GA6–GA10 (GB6–GB10 and GC6–GC10), allowing for correlations across factors, the variables will be the factors having an eigenvalue greater than one.	1/6
	gender awareness 3 (gender equality)	The difference in answers to the questions GA7 and GA8 (GB7 and GB8, GC7 and GC8) can capture the respondent's attitude toward gender equality.	1/6
	gender awareness 4 (women's education)	The combination of GA19 and GA20 (GB19 and GB20, and GC19 and GC20) captures the respondent's assessment of returns to girls' education in the marriage market.	1/6
	gender awareness 5 (women's education)	GA7 (GB7 and GC7) measures the respondent's assessment about completion of secondary school for girls.	1/6
Decision making	agency 1 (wife, absolute)	The variable sums up the values of DMA_w over DMA1–DMA11 (similarly, summing up the values of DMB_w over DMB1–DMB11, as Section 7-2.2 is the replication of Section 7-1.2)	1/9
	agency 2 (wife, relative)	The difference between the sums of DMA_w and DMA_h (DMB_w and DMB_h) can capture wife's relative decision-making power vis-à-vis her husband's.	1/9
	agency 3 (wife, subjective)	The difference between the sums of DMA_w and DMB_w can capture wife's subjective decision-making power as compared with her husband's perception.	1/9
	agency 4 (daughter, absolute)	The variable sums up the values of DMA_d (DMB_d) over DMA1, DMA2, DMA7–DMA11 (DMB1, DMB2, DMB7–DMB11)	1/6
	agency 5 (daughter, relative)	The difference between the sums of DMA_d and DMA_h (DMB_d and DMB_h) over DMA1, DMA2, DMA7–DMA11 (DMB1, DMB2, DMB7–DMB11) can capture daughter's relative decision-making power vis-à-vis her father's.	1/6
	agency 6 (daughter, marriage)	DMC4 measures the daughter's decision-making power concerning her own marriage. DMC2 investigates it in detail, and the answer 5 implies the strongest agency, the answers 4 and 6 imply some agency.	1/12
	agency 7 (daughter, education)	DMC5 measures the daughter's decision-making power concerning her education.	1/12

	agency 8 (daughter, work)	DMC6 measures the daughter's decision-making power concerning her participation in work. DMC7 measures her decision-making power concerning the type of work.	1/12
	agency 9 (daughter, household chores)	DMC8 measures the daughter's decision-making power concerning household chores.	1/12
Attitude toward FLFP	FLFP 1 (general women's participation in work force)	Based on the principal component analysis on the questions GA11–GA20 (similarly for GB11–GB20 and GC11–GC20, as Sections 7-2.1 and 7-3.1 are the replication of Section 7-1.1), allowing for correlations across factors, the variables will be the factors having an eigenvalue greater than one.	1/9
	FLFP 2 (general women's participation in work force)	The difference in answers to the questions GA11 and GA12 (GB11 and GB12, and GC11 and GC12) can capture the bottleneck preventing women's labor force participation, i.e., if GA11 > GA12 (GB11 > GB12 and GC11 > GC12), then it is rather women's responsibility for household chores, if GA11 < GA12 (GB11 < GB12 and GC11 < GC12), it is rather social stigma against women working outside the home.	1/9
	FLFP 3 (general women's participation in work force)	The difference in answers to the questions GA15 and GA16 (GB15 and GB16, and GC15 and GC16), or GA17 and GA18 (GB17 and GB18, and GC17 and GC18) can capture how the respondent is against women's labor migration, i.e., if GA15 > GA16 (GB15 > GB16 and GC15 > GC16), or GA17 > GA18 (GB17 > GB18 and GC17 > GC18), the respondent is against women's labor migration.	1/9
	FLFP 4 (own daughter's participation in work force)	DW1 captures parental attitude toward their own daughter's labor force participation.	1/9
	FLFP 5 (own daughter's participation in work force)	DW3 captures the level of parental support of their own daughter's labor migration.	1/9
	FLFP 6 (own daughter's participation in work force)	DW4 captures parental attitude toward their own daughter-in-law's labor force participation. This is expected to capture parental assessment concerning whether their daughter's labor force participation increase or decrease her value as a bride in the marriage market.	1/9
	FLFP 7 (parent, effectiveness of role model sessions in disseminating knowledge)	Based on the principal component analysis on the questions DW6–DW12 allowing for correlations across factors, the variables will be the factors having an eigenvalue greater than one.	1/6
	FLFP 8 (daughter, effectiveness of role model sessions in disseminating knowledge)	Based on the principal component analysis on the questions DMC9–DMC15 allowing for correlations across factors, the variables will be the factors having an eigenvalue greater than one.	1/6

Growth mindset	Based on the principal component analysis on the questions AA1–AA7 (similarly for AB1–AB7 and AC1–AC7, as Sections 7-2.3 and 7-3.3 are the replication of Section 7-1.5), allowing for correlations across factors, the variables will be the factors having an eigenvalue greater than one.
Social status	Based on the principal component analysis on the questions SN1, SN2, and SN8, allowing for correlations across factors, the variables will be the factors having an eigenvalue greater than one.
Social network (village)	SN5 captures the strength of village networks.
Social network (city)	The combination of SN6 and SN7 captures the network after migrating.

Note. We will drop the indicators with minimal variation from the analysis in order to limit noise caused by theses variables, which are constructed based on the questions for which 95 percent of observations have the same value within the relevant sample. If some indicators are dropped, the weight is adjusted accordingly within each variable. Before being weighted, each indicator is normalized so that it is comparable to other indicators constructing the same variable.

Table A2: Survey timeline (as of February, 2022)

	Date	Status
Baseline survey	August–December, 2019	Completed
Role model session phase		
1st, 1-8	March 6–14, 2020	Completed
1st, 9-12	November 6–7, 2020	Completed
2nd	February 26–March 13, 2021	Completed
3rd	September 24–October 9, 2021	Completed
Endline survey	December 2022–February 2023	Expected

Table A3: Baseline summary statistics by treatment/control arms and balance test

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	T1	T2	C	Randomization inference test (p-value)		
	Mean	Mean	Mean	T1 vs. T2	T1 vs. C	T2 vs. C
Girl's age	18.30	18.48	18.66	0.478	0.202	0.533
	(2.76)	(2.84)	(3.04)			
Girl's literacy	0.997	0.987	0.988	0.123	0.157	0.817
	(0.051)	(0.114)	(0.107)			
Girl's education level	10.21	10.12	10.15	0.313	0.145	0.607
	(2.19)	(2.49)	(2.54)			
Girl's enrollment status	0.652	0.595	0.595	0.243	0.288	0.993
	(0.477)	(0.492)	(0.492)			
Father's age	47.90	47.75	48.07	0.855	0.817	0.71
	(8.07)	(7.69)	(7.52)			
Father's literacy	0.478	0.416	0.465	0.545	0.961	0.557
	(0.500)	(0.494)	(0.500)			
Father's education level	4.22	3.61	3.90	0.122	0.457	0.366
	(4.7)	(4.5)	(4.5)			
Mother's age	40.04	40.24	40.46	0.763	0.576	0.77
	(7.01)	(6.77)	(6.79)			
Mother's literacy	0.427	0.397	0.373	0.811	0.190	0.26
	(0.495)	(0.490)	(0.484)			
Mother's education level	3.11	3.09	2.81	0.407	0.312	0.816
	(3.79)	(3.90)	(3.77)			
Religion	0.916	0.961	0.960	0.238	0.290	0.96
	(0.278)	(0.195)	(0.197)			
Wealth index	0.113	0.096	0.144	0.725	0.518	0.814
	(0.759)	(0.709)	(0.687)			
Observations	379	380	346			

Standard deviations are in parentheses. The reported p-value considers cluster(village)-level randomization and is calculated following Heß (2017).

Table A4: Balance test across sub-arms

		(1) T1_75	(2) T2_25	(3) T2_75	(4) C
Girl's age	T1_25	0.031	0.063	0.144	0.033
	T1_75		0.79	0.573	0.932
	T2_25			0.725	0.741
	T2_75				0.493
Girl's literacy	T1_25	0.058	0.384	0.771	0.659
	T1_75		0.047	0.196	0.200
	T2_25			0.281	0.52
	T2_75				0.527
Girl's education	T1_25	0.228	0.229	0.575	0.731
	T1_75		0.936	0.097	0.468
	T2_25			0.066	0.456
	T2_75				0.359
Girl's enrollment status	T1_25	0.896	0.487	0.219	0.334
	T1_75		0.575	0.309	0.450
	T2_25			0.713	0.869
	T2_75				0.821
Father's age	T1_25	0.108	0.302	0.765	0.280
	T1_75		0.618	0.26	0.555
	T2_25			0.572	0.986
	T2_75				0.523
Father's literacy	T1_25	0.429	0.615	0.776	0.727
	T1_75		0.201	0.256	0.500
	T2_25			0.837	0.323
	T2_75				0.499
Father's education	T1_25	0.127	0.754	0.878	0.657
	T1_75		0.063	0.184	0.162
	T2_25			0.662	0.414
	T2_75				0.822
Mother's age	T1_25	0.122	0.284	0.436	0.221
	T1_75		0.78	0.522	0.822
	T2_25			0.761	0.968
	T2_75				0.669

Mather's literacy	T1_25	0.624	0.636	0.997	0.552
	T1_75		0.389	0.701	0.278
	T2_25			0.681	0.89
	T2_75				0.576
Mother's education	T1_25	0.513	1.000	0.558	0.768
	T1_75		0.558	0.964	0.333
	T2_25			0.553	0.79
	T2_75				0.41
Muslim	T1_25	0.392	0.922	0.453	0.764
	T1_75		0.384	0.095	0.173
	T2_25			0.887	0.873
	T2_75				0.851
Wealth index	T1_25	0.776	0.803	0.836	0.609
	T1_75		0.938	0.623	0.892
	T2_25			0.587	0.827
	T2_75				0.433

The reported p-value considers cluster(village)-level randomization and is calculated following Heß (2017). USD 1 = BDT 84.03 in 2019.

Table A5: Session framework

1. Women role model talk	**Time allocation (total 100 min)**
1.1 Sewing operator in factory	
1.1.1 History before joining training	5 min
1.1.2 Current situation (see section 4 for detail)	5 min
1.1.3 How she overcame her own struggle to join the training/work outside the home? (see section 4 in detail)	5 min
1.1.4 Experience in the training center	5 min
1.1.5 Q&A session	5 min
1.2 Tailor	
1.2.1 History before joining training	5 min
1.2.2 Current situation (see section 4 for detail)	5 min
1.2.3 How she overcame her own struggle to join the residential training? (see section 4 in detail)	5 min
1.2.4 Experience in the training center	5 min
1.2.5 Q&A	5 min
2. Audiovisual (laptop computer)	10 min
- How the city life in Dhaka looks like? Accommodation? Transportation? Working environment? - How the training looks like?	
3. GUK facilities (see section 5 for detail)	40 min for 3 and 4 combined
- Criteria/qualification - Required documents - On the first day to visit GUK, MOMODa staff accompanies to support the paperwork.	
4. Q&A	
- Provide MOMODa contact #, role model provides #	

Table A6: GUK requirement

Trade Name	Duration (Month)	Self (Self-employment)				Job (Job placement)			
		Education	Age	Marital status	Residential status	Education	Age	Marital status	Residential status
Graphic Design	3	HSC (10th)	15–35	M/U/D[a)]	Residential	HSC (10th)	18[b)]–35	M/U/D	Residential
Sewing Machine Operation	3	Fifth Grade	15–35	M/U/D	Residential	Eighth Grade	18–35	M/U/D	Residential
Mobile Phone Servicing	3	Fifth Grade	15–35	M/U/D	Residential				
Electrical Installation & Maintenance	3	Fifth Grade	15–35	M/U/D	Residential	Fifth Grade	18–35	M/U/D	Residential

Note. a) M= Married, U= Unmarried, D= Divorced. b) Age 17 is also accepted. By the time they complete training, i.e., when they join in working, they should be 18.

Important information for trainee regarding this intervention

- Every trainee must complete their training period of 90 days. If they do not complete it, they have to pay back its full cost (BDT 45,000). The trainee has a chance to change their decision before finishing first 13 days and then GUK can replace him/her with new trainee. After that period of time, trainee has no option without completing training period. Total leave of absence for emergency is 3 days.
- Admission Fee is BDT 2,460. The treated may be 100% compensated if they win the secret lottery. Lottery winners will be contacted by phone in a few days.
- Running student: not allowed. But if the applicant is repeating one or two failed courses of past high school certificate (HSC) exams then she will be allowed. Also, degree or pass course students as well as vocation/technical education enrolled students are allowed.
- Trainee with children: Not allowed
- No one can meet with trainee except parents during the training
- Mandatory job placement (both self and factory)

Admission Documents

- Single copy Passport size of recent photograph
- Birth Certificate (If age is below 19)
- National Identity Card (NID) (If age is 19+)
- Certificates of all academic qualification (It depends on different trade's requirement).
- Nationality certificate/ Chairman Certificate.