

Image of Gender

Rights, Realities and Rhetorics

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Edited by
Aka Firowz Ahmad
Sharif As Saber
Masuda Kamal



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*Dedicated to the distressed
women in the world*

Preface

The book **‘Image of Gender–Rights, Realities and Rhetorics’** is the compilation of selected research papers presented in the INSEARCH 2015:International Inegrative Research Conference on Governance in Transition ,Perspectives and Practices held in Bangladesh Academy for Academy Rural Development (BARD) Comilla on 18-19 December, 2015. The conference was organized by Netinsearch International- Network for Integrative Research, GAIN International (Governance and Administration Innovation Network), Centre for Administrative Research and Innovation (CARI), University of Dhaka, Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) and the Stamford University Bangladesh.

Behind the publication of the book a team of dedicated young academics and researchers worked hard where Mohammad Mamunur Rashid played the central role. Without his efforts in editing and printing stages it would hardly be possible to publish the book within a very short time on urgent basis. We express our highest gratitude to him and wish for him a bright intellectual life.We are also thankful to Osder Publications for publishing, printing, and bringing the book to readers.

Finally, since we could not devote sufficient time to edit the book for time constraints there are obviously some mistakes as well as scope for corrections and development. We hope to do the same very soon in the next edition. However, we are responsible for the limitations and inconveniences caused thereby to readers. We solicit their sympathy and suggestions for necessary improvement.

Editors

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Introduction

Gender framework has already suppressed the other analytical frameworks in intellectual discourses especially in social science disciplines, in almost all development initiatives and human right issues. Disadvantaged position of women in the post agrarian societies, currently dominated by the forces and spirit of capitalism exposed through women's detachment from production process and power structure provides a strong foot of the framework both in academic and practical fields. Consequently, women empowerment issue has become a vital agenda for government and nongovernmental agencies all over the developing countries. Women were traditionally powerful when they had vital role in the agrarian mode of production and the contemporary social norms and values provided a respectable position of women in the families and societies. It was the product of long existing agrarian social system that spanned a period of thousands of years together presumably starting from 6000-8000 BC to the flourishing of industrial societies only three hundred years ago approximately. The wave of industrial revolution arrived in the developing countries much later but so rapidly that it destroyed all the traditional relationships, production and human, with the consequence of throwing women in most vulnerable position. They lost their access to subsistence earning in the changed situation and legged far behind the male members of the family and society to have formal education as well as enter into modern employment sectors outside homestead and locality. It created a situation of exploitation on women at all levels. They have emerged as the most vulnerable victims of class and gender discriminations. Almost all the intellectual discourses, enactments and program interventions by government and nongovernmental organizations are the products of this objective situation.

Empowerment of women has become a global agenda which is needed to ensure the rights of women who are encountering vulnerabilities in almost every walk of their life regardless of their position in the society. Various actors including government, Non Governmental Organizations(NGOs) and civil society organizations have been striving for bringing positive change in women's life. But realities engulfing women are different from the expected goals set in women empowerment agenda. From house to workplace women are not secured. With the changes in the society, direct and indirect forms of oppressions on women are also being changed at a rapid pace. Nine articles related to women education, movement, income, food and rights have been included in the book *'Image of Gender-Rights Realities, and Rhetorics'* that portray a partial picture of women's status in the transitional societies in Bangladesh and India.

Khasi Community is one of the tribes living in the Meghalaya state of North-East India. This community has drawn serious attention of the socialists because of its rarest matrilineal system. Article 1 entitled *'Empowerment of Women with Special Reference to Khasi Community in Meghalaya, India* endeavored to explore the status of women and man in the Khasi community in terms of social, economic, cultural and political dimensions. This research has been conducted using empirical Methodology. In this article it has been shown that though this community has been practicing matrilineal system, women have been losing their power in economy and politics due to social phenomenon, and female's reluctance to the politics and property related issues. However, after the data analysis, author concludes that, in the present age, neither male nor female has absolute authority in this community. Both the male and female enjoy their role despite having few limitations. Traditional matrilineal society has been transformed into the 'quasi male dominating'. This status has been explained by the author as the transitional phase. The author also projected that it is not right time to conclude that who has been fundamentally dominating in this society.

Article entitled *'Perception of Parents towards Their Daughter's Education: A Study Conducted in Sylhet'* is based on an empirical study that interviewed twelve parents using purposive sampling method in unstructured schedule. It endeavors to demonstrate the reasons behind daughter's low literacy rate. It identifies unwillingness of daughters and their families, among others, to play a vital role in deterring daughters from going to school. This article also highlights some positive initiatives of government in the forms of offering different stipend and tuition waiver for female students that have encouraging and positive role in this regard. These government initiatives have advanced a lot despite expected success has not been achieved yet. Author suggests for employment opportunity for women along with education to make them empowered and enabled to contribute to the economy. Parents' consciousness is a very significant factor for ensuring their higher education. The author recognizes the contribution of the Non-Government organizations to lessen child marriage and other superstition remaining in the society. Finally the article concludes thus, 'all of us should undertake collective and coordinated efforts to ensure the participation of all females and no one should be deprived of being taken education for any social obstacles and get them away from traditional outlook of females'.

The third article *'A Critical Examination of the Status of Freedom of Movement of Women in Bangladesh: Holistic Approach'* elucidates the reasons of the backwardness of the women. The author holds that the existence of the age-old stereotyping perception of the society regarding women finds them as the reproductive segment of the society who are

economically dependent on male members of the family. It curtails in many cases the freedom of movement of women and prevents them from participating in the governance and development activities. After analyzing the freedom of movement of the women using qualitative and quantitative methods, the author suggests that Bangladesh must withdraw 'reservation' of Article 2 of the CEDAW, and the Ministry of Women and Children affairs of Bangladesh should devise a plan for mobility of women in different programs. It recommends for the accountability of the Government as well as establishment of the gender-sensitized and rights-based education curriculum.

Bangladesh is densely populated country with its small land. More than three million people are unemployed here. In such a situation migration of human resources for overseas employment plays important role in reducing unemployment and poverty on the one hand and on the other in contributing to the national economy. Immigrants manpower encounter a lot of problems in general. In the case women migrants the problems have different dimensions including the common ones. They encounter insecurity at home, during transit and ultimately in abroad in different manner. Some NGOs given the circumstances have programs to ensure the safety in migration sector especially for women migrants. The article *entitled Role of NGO's in Ensuring Safe Migration for Bangladeshi Women Migrant Workers: A Case Study* explores and examines the types of services rendered by the BRAC Migration Program with a view to ensuring the women migrant workers. After analyzing the BRAC initiated programs, the author concludes that BRAC Migration Program is noteworthy in every stages of safe migration process. However, she suggested for the combined undertakings of the Government of Bangladesh, Non-Government Organization and Private Sector to facilitate the ease migration of female workers from Bangladesh. In this regard, these sectors should arrange the training, briefing, and awareness campaign to ensure migrant women's safety.

Article titled *'Older Women (User) Perspective towards Service Delivery System of Government Hospital: A Study on Some Upazila Health Complex of Bangladesh'* tries to find out the nature of medical services of the Government hospital rendered to the older people in Bangladesh. Analyzing the existing realities revealed from the study the author points out that older women receive only a few health services from Primary Health Care (PHC) program of government. He recommends for incorporating training courses on interpersonal and communication skills in medical education (medical or para-medical curriculum) and training sessions for practicing doctors. He also suggests the doctor to be simple and approaching towards the older with higher values which are culturally appropriate, behave with them gently, respectfully, and providing clear information about their condition.

Presence of maid servants has become an inevitable social reality especially in the urban society of Bangladesh. Article titled '*Rights of the Domestic Female Workers-Rhetoric or Reality*' aims at finding out the real scenario of the maid servants. These servants have no legal or social protection. They are often victim of abusive behavior, physical torture and sexual harassment by the employers and there are also cases of serious physical injuries and killing. The author raises the issue of human rights and claims that no remarkable initiative has been undertaken to protect their rights and to protect them from sexual harassment and violence except a draft policy on Domestic Workers Protection and Welfare Policy 2010 that has not been finalized yet. He suggests to develop a law for the proper protection of the domestic workers. He is also in favor of arranging different vocational training for domestic workers so that they professionally engage in congenial employment .

Increasing violence against women is a clear violation of women's rights and a barrier to women's enjoyment of other rights. The article '*Violence against Women in Bangladesh: A Critical Overview*' explores the dangers and threats exposed through the violence against women and recommends the prevention mechanisms from socio-legal perspective based on national and international human rights obligations of the state. The author suggests for ensuring greater economic opportunities for women, groups based credit program with men along with measures regarding the abuse of religion by the local people and religious leaders. In the conclusion she holds that violence against women is the violation of human rights and proposes coordinated effort to combat the diverse social curse, VAW, from the society from the root.

The objective of next article Violence against women in Bangladesh: a Critical Overview is to recognize the violence against women in and out of domestic sphere and concentrates on the socio-legal concerns of violence problems in Bangladesh and then finds out the violence prevention mechanisms through national law and international human rights obligations of the state. The prevalence and magnitude of violence against women is a continuous dreadful practice worldwide. It is increasingly seen as a violation of women's rights and a barrier to women's enjoyment of other rights. In Bangladesh the estimated prevalence rate of violence against women is extremely high which in turn is an obstacle to the achievement of equality, development and peace and that seriously inhibits women's ability to enjoy rights and freedoms on a basis of equality with men. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental and sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty. These sorts of violence impair or nullify the enjoyment by women of human rights and fundamental freedoms under Constitution of Bangladesh or general international law or under human rights conventions. The study finds that the traditional mindset and

perception of patriarchal society, weak legal enforcement system, want of strict concern on the part of the government and other responsible communities of the society are the causes that women treated disproportionately.

The Readymade garment industry is the top ambassador of Bangladesh as a country in global market. Although its export earning undoubtedly holds the significant position in the country's total export, some fundamental issues of workers like income level, education, health, and food are not satisfactory. Article entitled '*Income and Food Status of Female Garment workers in Gazipur Area, Bangladesh*' explores that some significant relationships between income and food items of workers. It finds that consumption frequency of eating items like egg, milk, meat, and vegetables per week does not differ statistically by income of different grades. There is a significant statistical relationship between consumption frequency of eating items like fish, fruit per week and income of different grades. Moreover this study also shows that consumption frequency of affinity (items include tea, pan, and cigarettes) among the garment workers differs significantly according to their income level. The research concludes that at present income and food status do not exhibit satisfactory level among the workers. The study recommends that the government as well BGMEA can take initiative to start a rationing service for food items for all garment workers. This initiative can be implemented through a formal contract between recognized government agency like TCB and BGMEA or MKMEA. Moreover garment workers might be provided low cost residence service so that more earnings can be spent for nutritious food items. Service of central canteen has also been suggested for ensuring healthy and nutritious food.

The image of women reflected in the forementioned articles is not fair and lovely. Most of the authors explore that women are not enjoying freedom yet even though constitution or different legal texts envisage sweet words for women and raising awareness among the people on gender sensitization. Authors blame social phenomenon, parents apathy to educate and train their daughters, and lack of proper implementation of prevalent laws and policies. They suggest for, *inter alia*, combined efforts of different private and public organizations, creating environment for the educating and training the women. They emphatically recommend for ensuring the implementation of existing laws and policies to improve the image of the women in society. Above all, women issue is not at all a women issue only. It is a social and human issue. The entire society with all its members, males and females need to be involved to change the existing faded image of women, because this image reflects the image of the over all society.

1 Empowerment of Women with Special Reference to Khasi community in Meghalaya, India

Bhola Nath Ghosh

Abstract

The Khasi is one of the tribes living in Meghalaya state of North-East India. This tribe draws much attention of the sociologists, because this tribe practices matrilineal system characterized in terms of marriage, inheritance of property and matrilocal post-marital residence and other social relations. This is rare in other society

The khasi society of Meghalaya is such a society, commonly known as matrilineal where authority, title, inheritance, residence after marriage and succession are traced through female line. So, it is presumed that they do not require any special effort to make them aware and get social, economic, political, psychological understanding and knowledge to establish their rights along with men in their society as they are automatically placed on an esteemed level. Matrilineal society has been a source of great pride to the state.

The paper examined the dynamic roles and status of rural tribal women living in Meghalaya, especially of the Khasi women. More precisely, we tried to examine, how much control a Khasi women has over resources within and outside the family. It is empirically observed that the Khasi communities in its traditional arrangement both, men and women enjoy their restricted roles. It can be concluded that empowerment of women is evident in all its glory in Meghalaya's unique women centric society.

It is observed from the survey that at present, the Khasi matriliney is in the transition phase and its future is still not properly defined.

Introduction

Most of the states in India are patrilineal but in Meghalaya it is matrilineal. The Khasi is one of the tribes living in Meghalaya State of North-east India. This tribe draws much attention of the Sociologists especially Social Scientists, because this tribe practices matrilineal system characterized in terms of marriage, inheritance and residential status after marriage. It is commonly believed that the status of women in matrilineal society is higher compared to that of patrilineal society. This can be seen in terms of empowerment and other roles played by the women. However, it may not imply that the women are more

empowered than men in Meghalaya. The Khasi society of Meghalaya is such a society, commonly known as matrilineal where female folks determine authority, title, inheritance, and residence after marriage and succession. So, it is presumed that the right of the society is already established and they do not require any special effort for their rights. But the question is whether they are aware about the social, economic and other issues as compared to the awareness of male.

Therefore, a question may arise whether in Khasi Tribe the status of empowerment of women is ascribed or prescribed by the society. In Meghalaya the female, normally inherit the property and holds the keys to social and economic activities.

If we ask a question: who is a Khasi? The answer is not easy, as in the present situation, it is a difficult task to identify in the true and pure Khasi traits of culture. Material culture seems to be rapidly changing and the institution; the homes and so on can rarely be identified as pure Khasi.

Any person can claim or identify himself as a Khasi if he or she fulfils any one of the following conditions:

1. That he or she believes that his or her forefathers were the Hynniewtrep Hynniiewskum (seven huts-seven clans), the first inhabitants of these hills, who resided in the house of God.
2. That he or she is born of Khasi parents.
3. That at least his or her mother is a Khasi.
4. That should a Khasi (man) marry a non-Khasi woman, his wife and their offspring become Khasis if she agrees to obey, follow and adopt all the traditional norms, religion, customs and rituals performed by the Khasi. As the Khasi is a matrilineal society, a non-Khasi mother has to become a Khasi by performing certain rights; religious sanctions have to be obtained for the new title of the clan through rituals.

Khasi society evolved with the adoption of the concept of *ka kheim-kur*, *khein-kha*, *tip-kur-tip-kha*.

The acceptance of the above kinship structures as the source gives the race its unique characteristic from time immemorial to the present day and endows the Khasi man and woman with distinct identities and well defined roles in their society.

There are certain principles, precepts and tenets which clearly define the duties and responsibilities expected of a Khasi man and a Khasi woman.

From among the numerous races which inhabit the North-Eastern corner of India we find the matriarchal system of society present only in two tribes, - the Khasis and the Garos. They live close to each other, the Garos at the extreme western end and the Khasis just east to them in the same range of hills which forms the southern boundary of the Brahmaputra valley. But the two tribes are distinct from one another. They do not speak the same language and differ in many of their laws and customs. The Khasis belong to the earliest bands of immigrants and it has been very difficult to tract their origin. Linguistically the Garos belong to the Bodo group and are closely related to the Kacharis, Rabhas, Mwech and other tribes with a patriarchal form of society, who settle in Assam Valley. It has been said that the Garos during the course of their wandering towards Gauhati were enslaved by the Assamese, but released by a Khasi Prince, who settled them in the neighbourhood of Boko. The place was infested with tigers and demons and the Garos being afraid of complete extinction moved away from this place and ultimately settled in the place where they now inhabit.

It might have been possible, therefore, that the Garos copied the matriarchal system from the Khasis. The institutional laws as we find is more potent and active amongst the Khasis profoundly influencing their social and political life.

Difference between Patriarchal and Matriarchal Societies

The distinction between the matriarchal and patriarchal societies starts from descent. We speak of the descent as patriarchal when a child belongs to the social group of his father and as matriarchal when he/she belongs to the social group of his/her mother. The Khasis say “Khein Jaid na ka Kynthei”. Descending from a common ancestress are said to belong to the same “Kur”, i.e., clan. All others who do not belong to the same clan are known as “Kha.” Indeed “Tip Kur Tip Kha”, i.e., to know those who belong to the same can and those who do not belong is the fundamental feature of Khasi life. It is the basis of their social structure, and governs every walk of life, their religion, belief and all social laws and customs.

Area of the study

The present study is conducted among the Khasi tribe of Meghalaya. The two villages wherein the research study has been conducted are Ringkesh and Kyton-u-mon situated under the Khasi Hill district of Nawlyngknang block.

The capital of Meghalaya, Shillong lies on the eastern part of the state. Between the two villages chosen, Ringkesh lies near to Shillong

and Kyton-u-mon is few kilometers away from the capital. Both the villages are poor in nature.

Methodology of the Study and Data

Process of matrilineity of the Khasi society here has been studied through primary survey in two villages from East Khasi Hills District of Meghalaya. These villages are Ringkseh and Kynton-u-mon under Mawlyngknang block. The villages are chosen purposively on consideration of conveniences, such as access and communication, security, expenditure involved in survey etc. However most of the features of the rural Meghalaya have much in common in the aforesaid selected villages.

There are 257 households (119+138) in all in those selected villages. The ratio of male and female-headed families in the selected villages was found to be 1.6: 1 in Meghalaya. Though the society of Meghalaya is commonly known as matrilineal, more than two third of the families are run by males and only around 1/3rd are headed by females. Then question naturally arises whether the society of Meghalaya is gradually approaching towards patrilineal or the dominance of female still has been prevailing in the same manner and the change has been just for the convenience without any major change in balance of gender distribution in any respect.

We have stratified the families according to the characteristics of sex of family head, caste, occupation, education etc. and finally chosen 95 households; 37 out of 175 male-headed households and 58 from 82 female headed households. Data have been collected, from the finally chosen households, on different aspects like family size, sex, education, caste, occupation, income and expenditure, mode of expenditure and also on their attitude/opinion towards social, political, cultural aspects i.e. on social, cultural, economical, political, religious and psychological aspects of the heads as well as other members of the families. From that information we tried to understand the process of empowerment by analysing the data. The study is mainly descriptive and exploratory.

Basic Characteristics of Sample Households

From the table-1 we observe that out of 37 male headed households about 68 per cent of the heads are in the below 50 age group and over 43 percent are in the below 40 age group. Whereas among the female headed households about 36 per cent of the heads are in the below 50 and around 20 per cent are in the age group of 20 to 40. On the other hand, around 22 per cent of male heads are in the above 50 age group and about 64 per cent of the female heads are in the similar age group.

Table-1: Age-wise Sex Composition of the Sample Households

Sex of Head	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	>70	Total
Male	4 (10.8)	12 (32.4)	9 (24.3)	6 (16.2)	4 (10.8)	2 (5.4)	37
Female	3 (5.2)	9 (15.5)	9 (15.5)	14 (24.1)	17 (29.3)	6 (10.3)	58
Total	7 (7.37)	21 (22.11)	18 (18.95)	20 (21.05)	21 (22.11)	8 (8.42)	95

Source: Field Survey. Significance level of the Chi-square test: 0.003¹.

Note: Figures in the parentheses represent percentage to total of the respective sex.

Table-2: Distribution of Families by Family Size across different Educational Categories of the Head of the Household

Sex of Head	Education	1-5	6-10	> 10	Total
Male Headed	Illiterate	1	6	0	7 (18.9)
	< M.P.	9	7	2	18 (48.7)
	≥ M.P.	7	5	0	12 (32.4)
	Sub-Total	17	18	2	37 (100)
Female Headed	Illiterate	12	6	0	18 (31.0)
	< M.P.	18	12	1	31 (53.5)
	≥ M.P.	5	4	0	9 (15.5)
	Sub-Total	35	22	1	58 (100)
Grand Total		52	40	2	95

Source: Field Survey,

Significance level of the Chi-square test taking '1-5' and '6 or more' as the categories of family size and '<MP' and '≥ MP' as the categories of education level: Sex of head Vs. Family size: 0.122, Sex of head Vs. Educational level: 0.047 and Family size Vs. Educational level: 0.501.

Table-2 reveals that among male headed households the percentage of families with family size 5 or less is almost same as that of family size more than 5, whereas among female headed households the

¹ Results of the Chi-square test to see if sex and age are independent: The sig. value is .003 (one sided). This was found after converting the table into a 2×2 contingency table as follows.

Sex of Head\Age	20-50	51 or more
Male	25	12
Female	21	37

Only the significance value of Fisher's exact (one sided) test is reported here. If the value is less than 0.05 then the two variables are not independent, i.e., they are related. The same procedure is taken in all other tables.

percentage of families with family size less than 6 (about 60 per cent) is much higher than the percentage of families having size 6 or more (around 40 per cent). Almost at every educational level especially in the illiterate category, female heads are having a tendency to keep family size lower than the male heads.

Table-3: Distribution of Households According to Marital Status of the Head

Sex of Head	Unmarried	Widow	Divorced/ Separated	Married once	Married more than once	Total
Male	3 (8.1)	2 (5.4)	0 (00)	27 (73.0)	5 (13.5)	37
Female	1 (1.7)	18 (31.3)	7+4 (19.0)	26 (44.8)	2 (3.4)	58

Source: Field Survey, Significance level of the Chi-square test: 0.006.

Note: Figures in the parentheses represent percentage to total of the respective sex

From table-3 it is observed that about 50 per cent of the female heads are due to automatic choice as they are either widow, divorced or separated and hence there is no chance of male to be head. Around 48 per cent of female heads are married and barely 2 per cent are unmarried. But in case of male heads, around 86 per cent are married (once or more than once) and about 8 per cent are unmarried.

Table-4: Distribution of Household by Earning Status of the Head of Families of Different Age-Group

	Age	Dependent	Earner
Male	20-40	1 (6.2)	15 (93.8)
	41-60	1 (66.7)	14 (93.3)
	> 60	1 (16.7)	5 (83.3)
	Sub-Total	3 (8.1)	34 (91.9)
Female	20-40	4 (33.3)	8 (66.7)
	41-60	2 (8.7)	21 (91.3)
	> 60	6 (26.0)	17 (74.0)
	Sub-Total	12 (20.7)	46 (79.3)
	Grand Total	15 (15.79)	80 (84.21)

Source: Field Survey, Note: Figures in the parentheses represent percentage to total of the respective sex. Significance level of the Chi-square test (Sex of Head Vs. Dependent/Earner): 0.085

If we look at the case of inheritance of property the traditional custom is to inherit ancestral assets primarily to the females especially the youngest daughter of the family. However the other daughters of the family also get the share of the ancestral property informally but not equal with that of youngest one and the settlement is done with the consent of the daughters' maternal uncle. The data reveals that about relatively very less male heads (about 35 per cent) have received share of ancestral property i.e., about 65 per cent of male heads do not inherit any property. The male heads who inherited property are either with no sisters or received through will from parents.

Table-5: Distribution of Heads According to the Inheritance of Ancestral Property

Sex	Property Inherited	Not Inherited
Male Head	13 (35.14)	24 (64.86)
Female Head	29 (50.00)	29 (50.00)

Source: Field survey, Significance level of the Chi-square test: 0.113.

Note: Figures in the parentheses represents percentage to total.

The table-6 shows that monthly average per capita family income in case of female headed household is much lower than that of male headed household. Also average per capita expenditure on food, education, travel and other purposes (entertainment, drink, dress etc) are comparatively higher in case of male headed household than that of female headed household. Only in case of health care and electricity female headed household spends more than a male headed household. But the coefficient of variation in income and expenditures across families are much higher in case female headed household than that of male headed household. This is because many of female heads are either widow, deserted or separated with small children and hence have very poor income to spend. This indicates the disadvantageous condition of the rural females in spite of being known as matrilineal society.

The youngest daughter known as the "Khadduh" inherits the ancestral house and property and the other sisters especially after marriage are given only a share sufficient to maintain themselves. The youngest daughter is not, however, the full heir but in most cases she is only the custodian of the family property. The actual management is in the hands of her eldest maternal uncle or brothers and ancestral property cannot be sold without the knowledge and consent of the uncles and brothers.

Table-6: Percentage of Family under Below Poverty Line across the Sex of Heads

Sex of the Head	BPL	APL
Male	3 (8.1)	34 (91.9)
Female	14 (24.1)	44 (75.9)
Total	17 (17.9)	78 (82.1)

Source: Field survey, Significance level of the Chi-square test: 0.040.

Note: Figures in the parentheses represents percentage to total.

From table-6 we observe that incidence of poverty is relatively more in case female headed household than that of male headed household. Also the occupational status of the heads, which yields people some position in the family and society, is shown in the table-7.

Table-7: Occupational Pattern of the Heads across Sexes and Education

Sex	Educational Qualification	Cultivator	Agri-Labourer	Govt. Service	Pvt. Service	Business	House wife	Old Age	Other
Male	Illiterate	0	4	0	2	0	0	1	0
	< Madhyamic	4	7	1	3	2	0	0	1
	> Madhyamic	0	2	6	1	2	0	0	1
	Sub-total	4 (10.8)	13 (35.1)	7 (18.9)	6 (16.2)	4 (10.8)	0 (00)	1 (2.7)	2 (5.4)
Female	Illiterate	1	7	0	0	2	2	4	2
	< Madhyamic	2	6	1	2	8	3	4	5
	> Madhyamic	0	0	4	1	3	0	0	1
	Sub-total	3 (5.2)	13 (22.4)	5 (8.6)	3 (5.2)	13 (22.4)	5 (8.6)	8 (13.8)	7 (12.1)

Source: Same as Table-1, Significance level of the Chi-square test of Sex of Head Vs. Occupation (with categories 'Cultivator or Agri. Labourer' and 'Others'): 0.054.

From the table-7 it is clear that because of lower educational background female heads are comparatively less in government and private services but they are more in business (here actually petty businesses). Earlier women were also predominant in agriculture. But now-a-days men are increasingly participating in agriculture as cultivator or agricultural labourer. On the whole, females are relatively in lower level occupation than their counterpart men in our study area.

In the society if women can work and participate in different social and entertaining activities freely their position improves than if they cannot. In the backward traditional societies, normally women do not become even member of any such social organisation. In rural areas of Meghalaya also we find very few women especially the well educated one are member of similar organisation compared to men as shown in table-8.

Table-8: Sex-wise Distribution of Head According to Membership of Club, Community Centre, Social Organisation or NGO

Sex	Member	Non-Member	Total
Male	12 (32.43)	25 (67.57)	37 (100)
Female	2 (3.45)	56 (96.55)	58 (100)

Source: Same as Table-1, Significance level of the Chi-square test: 0.000.

Table-9: Education-wise Distribution of Female Heads according to Participation in Meeting/Function/Fete etc. outside the Village

Education	Participation in Social Meeting, Social Gathering, Function etc			Total
	Alone	With men/women of the same or other family	Others	
Illiterate	17 (94.4)	1 (5.6)	0 (0.0)	18 (100)
< Madhyamic	23 (74.2)	6 (19.4)	2 (6.5)	31 (100)
> Madhyamic	9 (100)	0	0	9 (100)
Total	49 (84.5)	7 (12.1)	3 (3.4)	58 (100)

Source: Same as Table-1, Significance level of the Chi-square test Education Vs. Participation (Alone and not alone): 0.193.

Though most of the females are not the member of different social organisations or clubs, they can move alone freely and join any party, function or ceremony and mostly without the permission of senior or male members. The tendency is more for the more and more educated females and also with the increase in age (table-9 and 10). Therefore education makes the female to think independently and act without any fear even in the villages of Meghalaya.

Table-10: Age-wise Distribution of Female Heads Visit nearest Town With/Without the Permission of Men

Age	Yes	No	Total
20-40	15 (83.3)	3 (16.7)	18
41-60	28 (90.3)	3 (9.7)	31
> 60	8 (89.0)	1 (11.0)	9

Source: Same as Table-1, Significance level of the Chi-square test: 0.373.

Political Status

Though females in Meghalaya are much aware about their rights and position in the society, but there are hardly any women actively participating in politics. Even the society does not allow women to participate in political decision making. Till now any woman Headman of a *Dorbar* is hardly found. Also they do not participate much into political discourses. Only recently women are allowed on a very limited scale to participate in *Dorbar* meeting. Though women in Khasi society are relatively free, still there are discriminations (social and psychological) as explained above, yet the women do not seem to be much interested in politics. Actually most of the rural women think even reservation of seat for the females in the local bodies or *Dorbar* is not beneficial to them. The opinion of both male and female heads in this regard is presented in table-11. Even some of the females do not bother about whether their name is in the electoral role or not. Of course most of the females exercise their franchise in the election and that percentage increases with the rise in educational level of the rural females as is observed from the following Tables.

Table-11: Sex-wise Distribution of Heads according to the Opinion about Reservation of Seats for Members in the Local Bodies (Gram Panchayat/ Dorbar)

Sex	Very Bad	Bad	Not so Bad	Good	Very Good	No Idea	Total
Male	22 (59.5)	4 (10.8)	5 (13.5)	1 (2.7)	0 (0)	5 (13.5)	37
Female	35 (60.3)	11 (19.0)	2 (3.4)	2 (3.4)	0 (0)	8 (13.8)	58

Source: Field survey,

Note: Figures in the parentheses represents percentage to total. Significance level of the Chi-square test of Sex of Head Vs. Opinion (Bad or not bad): 0.223.

Table-12: Education and Sex-wise Distribution of Households According to Inclusion and Exclusion of Head in the Voting List and Exercising Voting Right

Sex of Head	Educational Qualification	Name included in the Voting List		Exercise Voting Power	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Male	Illiterate	5	2	5	2
	< Madhyamic	16	2	16	2
	> Madhyamic	11	1	11	1
	Sub-total	32	5	32	5
Female	Illiterate	14	4	14	4
	< Madhyamic	29	2	29	2
	> Madhyamic	8	1	8	1
	Sub-total	51	7	51	7

Source: Field survey, Significance level of the Chi-square test of Sex of head Vs. Vote: 0.536.

Observation

Development of the law on property

The fundamental precepts have largely influenced the customary laws of the Khasis on the use, application, transfer and alienation of property and wealth among Khasis.

Analysing from both angles of ascription vis-à-vis achievement of women in Khasi matriliney we found that

- i. The rule of matrilineal descent is intact without any structural change
- ii. domestic decision of women is restrictive, male members have an upper hand (iii) Religious authority within indigenous faith or having changed to other religion, women enjoys no authority
- iv. Inheritance and management of ancestral property is restrictive to women. While self acquired property is subjected to the earner's authority
- v. Traditionally Political belief does not permit women as active participants while they are in position of authority in rational legal institutions, and
- vi. Matriliney and gender (both male and female) restricts the role and authority of both. The restrictive structure to build within the

matrilineal framework is gearing towards a gender debate in the society at large.

In the Political and Administrative sphere, women do not have any right. Disputes are settled primarily in the villages by the village councils composed of a Sirdar and four or five headmen elected by only the male members of the village. If there is dissatisfaction the dispute is then tried by a council of a 'Raid', an area comprising of different villages. The members of the council are elected from certain clans. Ultimately the dispute is tried by the Siem and his Myntris. The Siem is the head of the State. It may be noted that women are not only debarred from being members of these councils but do not even have the right to elect the members. The office of the Siem cannot also be held by a woman, but descent is always through the female line. And yet, when it comes to giving women a role in politics, Meghalaya seems to be reluctant.

Although Khasis are religiously following the matrilineal society, in the upper of civil administration as well as in the 60- member Meghalaya assembly, participation of women is very less. At the time of data collection there were only three women legislators -- Debora C Marak, Maysalin War and RosanWarjri. None of the stalwarts of Meghalaya politics have an answer to this.

Conclusion

This contentious issue has come into the public domain when a section of Khasi intellectuals, led by Mr Michael Syiem, Convener of Maitshaprang Movement, asserted that Khasi men were not engaging themselves much in economic activities because of the matrilineal nature of the society.

More than fifty per cent of the women surveyed said that they were not interested in electoral politics. Almost all villagers said "Basically, women think that politics is not their cup of tea". Although society in Meghalaya is theoretically matriarchal, in practice men have all the economic power and therefore men have the ability to control politics. Since women do not have economic power, they lack confidence to step into politics. Even now, the village councils or *dorbars* do not have women in decision-making positions. Another factor that prevents women from coming forward and demanding political space is that they are not groomed to take part in public discourses as a matter of tradition. It is observed that no bank provides any financial assistance to any male Khasi entrepreneur because they cannot pledge any

immovable property. This is a major practical problem which our society wants to gloss over.

Only a few Khasi people are interested to change the laws in terms of property inheritance. But change of inheritance law means change of social structure, which majority of Khasis do not like. A similar attempt to change the law was made by the Khasi Students Union (KSU) in the eighties but it was given up as the traditional Khasi society did not show enthusiastic response. The society is divided on the issue as those seeking change had been finding it difficult to come out of the shadow of tradition.

The results of household survey made during 2009-2010 reveal that the women still enjoy the accession to inheritance, and control over the resources. However the situation is changing very fast. Though the role of Khasi women seems to have been prescribed, but most of the activities of women are becoming ascribed. Though Meghalaya is known as the matrilineal society, now many of the families are headed by the males. The tendency is increasing with the increasing involvement of male in the socio-economic activities, expansion of education, emergence of nuclear families etc.

However in the family there is no discrimination among the male and female child. This is partly because of the economic independence of the females and their customary laws, which is still dominant in the rural areas.

Though traditionally the women (especially the youngest one) are supposed to inherit ancestral property, men also inherit property under different circumstances.

Though earlier females used to dominate in the field of various economic activities now-a-days males also are involved in different activities. Relatively more females are illiterate than males. Data reveal that, now the high collar jobs are mostly occupied by the males and the income of the female headed households are relatively less and associated with significant inter-family variation. Also incidence of poverty is more in case of female headed household. Yet the female better manage the family and give more emphasis on the human development indicators like education, health etc.

We apparently observe that some changes among the people of this community and now the women are no longer the sole inheritor of their ancestral property. Now men are also controlling the property. To

some extent through the major economic and non-economic activities are guided by the decision of their counter-parts.

At present, however private ownership of property has acquired greater importance over the old ideas of joint ownership and the desire to live in harmony amongst all members of the clan seems to have yielded slowly to the notion of economic domination through the ownership of private property. It is therefore likely that the law especially with regard to property will gradually change.

It is observed empirically that the Khasi community in its traditional arrangement, neither male nor female has absolute authority. Both enjoy their restricted roles. Therefore at present, the Khasi matriliney is in the transition phase and its future is still not properly defined.

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2. Perception of Parents towards their Daughter's Education: A Study Conducted in Sylhet

Neaz Ahmed

Abstract

This paper focuses on perception of female education among parents whose daughter's are studying at standard one to twelve classes. As our statistics shows that literacy rate of Sylhet division is lower comparing with other division. Among the rate, female literacy is less than male literacy. With the objective of exploring the perception of parents about their daughter's education, a study was carried out at Tukerbazar Union of Sylhet Sadar Upazila. Using purposive sampling method and unstructured interview schedule, twelve parents were interviewed for collecting data. Thematic interpretation was done in order to analyzing data. It is revealed that the level of the parent's education is relatively poor so that they do not want their daughter to get more education. Societal norms and religious values build up a strong bondage of family relationship. Because of that some of them do not want to continue their daughter's education. It is not only a strong reason that poverty and low socio-economic status play a crucial role for not to continue their daughter's education but willingness of daughter and their family also plays a vital role. Though there is a stipend provision for girls' students but private coaching with excessive cost and faulty teaching capacity of teachers encourage the parents to depart their daughter's education. Eve-teasing is also plays an important factor for not continuing education. Good academic environments and more education motivation may help to continue and complete female education in our country.

Keywords: Education, Perspective, Parents, Female, and Universal.

Introduction

The government of Bangladesh and its people understand the value of an educated population. As such, over the last decade, many projects have undertaken to educate the people of the nation. Yet, there still is a large gender gap in Bangladesh, when it comes to education. Similar too many developing countries, female education of Bangladesh lags far behind compared to that of man. The fact that females are less educated than man is largely due to ancient tradition and common

mentality. Ideas about the appropriate roles for females in the labor market or the society about the biological unsuitability of female for science and about gender-based division of work in the household and on the farm influence decisions about schooling. The low level of literacy was even lower among females than males in Bangladesh, basically patriarchal society, with a strong Muslims influence; women have been traditionally passive and largely excluded from the schools and colleges in Bangladesh. The gender gap in education was even wide in the villages in the vastly rural populations; these gaps have been shrinking gradually due to the impact of mass media (radio, newspaper, computer, television etc.) Since the liberation war in 1971, Bangladesh, as an independent and secular state, has been allowing many forms of educational institution, various models of instructions and different languages, as medium of construction to coexist. Students are free to choose from three types of school-english medium, Bengali medium and religious schools. (Tina, 2009)

The International declaration and the education strategies usually seek include female's issue. The declaration made clear why female education is so important and further showed some guidelines as to make the programs of female education successful within a stipulated time-frame. Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) urges about empowerment and emancipation of women. It also calls for an end of early marriage of women, compulsory birth registration, widening of job opportunities for women and proper attention to the women and development programs and for achieving these goals education for women has been emphasized. The government of Bangladesh has taken some programs to realize PRSP goals. Scholarship in S.S.C and H.S.C levels, transport and free hostels is some of them. Moreover, those who are interested in technical and vocational education and supposed to have special scholarship. There are also commitment of allocation of government funds for cultural activities for female students. (Goutam, 2009)

Bangladeshi policymakers have identified gender empowerment through education as an essential element of overall development. At present, the national literacy rate among people age fifteen and over is forty eight percent, with male literacy rates significantly higher than female (fifty four percent versus forty one percent). Even though these numbers are quite low in comparison with those of the developed world, they are encouraging, as they represent steady growth. Education in Bangladesh is predominantly conducted in Bengali, the national language, and follows secular principles. Primary education

requires five years of schooling, while secondary education consists of seven years with three sublevels: Junior secondary education (grades six to eight), secondary education (grades nine to ten), and higher secondary education (grades eleven to twelve). Islamic education (Madrassah system) includes religious studies in addition to the content typically covered in secular education. Non-formal education conducted by different nongovernmental organizations is another important part of the Bangladeshi system. After completing their secondary education in one of those three systems, students can enroll in various universities to study engineering, arts, science, commerce, and social sciences; pursue advanced degrees in Islamic education; or enroll in a technical, vocational, or professional program. Immediately following independence from Pakistan in 1971, Bangladesh's literacy rate was eighteen percent, with female literacy at only 11 percent. With the help of local and International development agencies, the government of Bangladesh (GoB) formulated a long term plan to eradicate illiteracy and to ensure gender parity in education. The principal thrust was on improving the primary education sector, to be followed by development in the secondary, tertiary, and higher levels. In seeking reforms, the GoB nationalized most primary school, enacted new education policies, and involved NGOs in the education sector (BANBEIS, 2010).

NGOs have played a vital role in achieving gender parity in primary and secondary education. More than four hundred NGOs are involved in the country's education sector, and NGO schools, located mainly at the primary level, are approximately nine percent of the total Bangladesh school system. These NGO school (seventy six percent of which are managed by BRAC) are widely popular due to their innovative approach to non-formal education (NFE) (Hussain et al, 2005). NGO schools are well resourced, with a network that extends to the remotest parts of the country. These schools facilitate the integration of students from economically and socially vulnerable communities, operate at times that are suitable for students (many of whom work during the day or at specific times of the year), offer small class size (with teachers student ratios of one to thirty), and ensure an interactive learning environment. Female involvement in NFE sector is very high. In BRAC schools (which follow 'One teacher, One school policy), ninety eight percent of teachers are women, and most of these are only grade twelve graduates-meaning they are not qualified to work in the GoB-managed primary education system, which requires the teachers to have university diploma. In Addition to having extensive

preserves training, they complete in-service training on a regular basis. These support have helped NGO schools outperform traditional public schools in many areas.

Schumann (2009) had studied on " Bangladesh Secondary School Stipend Project, Using a Social exclusion framework " in which he referred that traditional exclusion from education is a large pattern of female education, where girls are married young, kept from the formal job sector and denied expenditure for health. Early marriage is a common practice in Bangladesh, with girls traditionally being considered eligible for marriage from menarche. While the legal age of marriage for girls are eighteen years, inconsistent birth registration and a lack of enforcement means compliance is negligible. Low level of education is not just a negative indicator of women low of resources and participation in the public and private sector. Low education attainment also correlates with high rates of child marriage, early pregnancies, high fertility etc. For an example education was the most important determinant of adult female mortality in Bangladesh. Women who had attended any formal education had significantly lower levels of mortality than those no education.

Naumi and Hossian (2010) had studied on "Female Education in Bangladesh: Promising Present, Challenging Future" where they exemplified primary school attendance among children increased significantly due to compulsory primary education and Bangladesh's participation in Education for All, a global initiative to eradicate illiteracy. As part of these initiatives, the GoB provided free primary education and supplies (including books and informs) and began developing basic infrastructure (such as school buildings and wells) to create better learning environment. The GoB also focused on increasing female representation among primary teachers as an indirect way of increasing the female student population. The Female Stipend Program, which offered scholarships for female secondary student up to grade 10, supplemented the GoB's free education for the primary school student and slowly but steadily helped increase female participation in education. They also elaborated the key challenges that include infallibility, an insufficient number of school and of skilled teachers, and poverty. In addition to these challenges, females face challenges of equity, access, and education quality. The adverse impacts of these issues appear in tertiary, technical or vocational, and professional education as well. A significant portion of the female population marries between the age of sixteen and nineteen, just as they would be finishing secondary school and entering higher education. This normative behavior hinders the aspirations of millions

of girls in both rural and urban settings. And young women who do manage to enter higher education face social expectations that often lead them (and sometimes their male peers as well) to follow tracks other than the career paths would prefer.

Bangladesh still bears the legacy of the colonial education system, where a student's goal is to get good grades and land a secure job. The exciting process of learning through interactive and participatory teaching where anyone regardless of color, race, or gender can participate is absent. At primary and secondary levels, NGO initiatives have shown that the Bangladesh people can achieve success through education. But the GoB has yet to eschew traditional mindsets about pedagogy and educational management, which have created a workforce that lacks proper knowledge, skills, and training. Birdsall and Levine (2006) had studied on "Toward Universal primary Education: Un Millennium project Report on education and Gender Equality " stated that higher levels of enrollment and longer retention in school can be stimulated in three ways: focusing on specific interventions to reach out-of-school children, increasing the educational opportunities (formal and non-formal) for girls and women, and increasing access to post- primary education. All of these approaches take into account the powerful demand-side influences that affect the propensity of parents to send their children to school.

Reaching out-of-school children will take special efforts, beyond what is typically through of as scaling up. Expanding access to and completion of primary schooling implies reaching children from households at society's margins. Most of the roughly 104 million school-age children who are not attending school are poor and have parents who are uneducated and illiterate. In all countries poor children are less likely to start school, more likely to drop out, and more likely to engage in child labor or domestic chores that keep them from schooling. In most countries, girls are less likely to be in school than boys. Universalizing primary schooling cannot be achieved without addressing the specific reasons that poor children and girls do not attend school, repeat grades, and drop out. Some interventions target getting poor children and girls into school and keeping them there by making schools affordable, reducing the direct costs for all children, and compensating for some of the added opportunity costs for girls. Other measures do so by increasing demand for schooling, through such measures as conditional cash transfers and school feeding and health programs.

We know that after the liberation war in 1971, there had been increasingly significant advancement of social and economic structure of development across the territory of this land. At first, male was the prominent actor of this rapid advancement, day by day, female had also to be involved in various sector of work, along with the household chores and the current emancipation of women involvement in various sector of work. This base was rooted from the increasing participation of female of primary, secondary and tertiary level of education. Although, many projects have been adopted by government of Bangladesh to rise up the rate of female education, they are somehow oppressed and deprived from basic necessities, including education. Fail in continuing education led to the enforcement of an early marriage system. Following each of the circumstances the study was carried out conducted to know present situation of female education and how these facilities would intend to influence the people, especially to the parents who have both sons and daughters.

Methodology

With the objective of in-depth understanding about perception of parents towards daughter's education in sylhet, the study designed descriptive method and qualitative approach. Primary data were collected from the parents at Kurramkhola village of Takerbazar Union of Sadar Upazila. The parents whose daughter's studying at one standard to twelve standards were the population and respondents of the study. Among the population twelve (12) were selected for the study. They were selected purposively. In order to make a clear understanding about female education unstructured interview schedule was used for the study. While collecting data from the parents, assurances were given to the respondents that their identity will be kept in confidential manner. The thematic analysis was done as part of data analysis.

Results and Discussion

Socio-economic Profile of Respondents

Majority of the parents had an extreme and poor condition of their family when they are aged of pre schoolers (one to three years of age). In every family of parents, there was only a husband who was an earning member of the family and his financial assistance contributed to the survival of other family members. No other member of family contributed to their family economically. Fathers were always forced their sons to involve with them in outside works for generating the income level. They always discouraged them to continue their

education because of carrying out huge amount of cost for educational equipments. Girls were deprived from education because they are living in a poor family and always heard from their parents that marriage was your ultimate destiny to survive and to care your husband, children and other members of family was prominent welfare works in accordance with the rules of Islam than to be highly educated. Because of poor income level in the family, they were living in a small house where members of family resided in a room to cover all members and cooking, washing clothes bedding etc, were conducted in this room. Population during this time was high so as to adjust in small place. As most of the members were illiterate, they did not know how to make a good sanitation facilities and maintaining hygiene because of lack of education. Parents, especially the women who did not get inspiration from their parents about continuing their education reported that they had an eagerness to study, but their study wanted them to study something like only primary level of education so they can utilize this knowledge in outside works when necessary and then told them that you should marry. Most of the parents told that they had accepted this traditional family rules because they believed that parents are always trust worthy and do not wish their daughters and sons to get away from these long lasting traditional rules as they trained them to a good socialization process. Most of the parents reported that their parents were also illiterate so they wanted their son and daughter will exactly follow the same rules.

Most of the people of the village believed that social and religious norms build up a strong bondage of family relationships. When they are well known about the division of the works, then the family will be smoothly running into the society. If they disallow this, they will depart from the effectiveness of family relationships. Because of practicing some religious and societal norms, many males and females had been deprived of continuing their education in the school. They said that whenever they were in their family, if anyone tries to continue their study, people of society will overlook him/her as against the rules of these norms and many in turn, lead them to go away from the usefulness of family functioning. Most of the respondents said that *Pardah* was the strong social safety net for women and children to alive from ant terrible circumstances which will destroy their familiar and marital relationship. Most of the respondents were bound to follow this structure of religious and social norms and thereby stop their education before and after completing the primary level of education

As most of the respondents said that some of their parents wanted to continue the education of their daughter at least upto primary level, but

during their childhood period, there were no availability of primary and high schools so far. Although some primary schools were situated but too far away from the residing place. Most of the respondents said that because of too distance from of school from the village, they could not carry out huge transportation cost as they were not in a position to continue their study. Also poor public streets and unavailable vehicles especially boats because most of the village were situated near the river and on public streets were available so they had to go to school using boats and it needed huge cost of money. In above all the problems, parents discouraged her daughter to continue their education and they also agreed to this compromise due to the various impediments. Most of the respondents said that when their were in there family, their family was consisted with many members, usually seven to eight members on average and there was only a father who earn money and maintain the whole family. Because of large family size, parents were intended to involve in household works to control over the excessive cost of education. They were always given priority to the necessity of male education as the society is always in male dominant.

Social and Economic aspects of Female Education

Due to the earlier sufferings of parents of not continuing their education at school, society has taken to have an important part of life to survive in a competitive world. Parents who did not get opportunities of continuing their education during their childhood and adolescent period because of blocking of many impediments, they are now trying to fill up their dreams by continuing of education of their daughter to be well settled into the society. During the past, woman or girls were in a vulnerable position to express their opinion, where in the parents they are gradually aware of getting proper education because of changing behavioral patterns of family members as well as changing the social aspects of family life. These changes can sometimes be termed as positive and sometimes it terms as negative view because some parents still want to practice their old established social and religious norms. These changing patterns are described in the following:

With the significant advancement of educational facilities for female education such as free text book, scholarship, quota system for females whose father was a freedom fighter etc. are greatly influencing the parents to further continuing their daughters study and society has accepted it to be a natural part human life.

Although the parents are aware of continuing their daughter's study but to have a certain range such as continuing at least from nursery to secondary level and then force them to marry with someone or involving in creative works for generation income.

I want to continue the study of my son and daughter as much as possible through the financial support of my elder son and relatives.... I want to continue the study my daughter as much as she needs, particularly the secondary level of education which is enough for her and then she can take training in tailoring at any vocational institution by which she can succeed easily and also it will be the dream of mine to make my daughter effective in practical work. She can also teach small boys and girls who are reading at schools by which she can help me to maintain my family.

Impediments of Continuing Education

To continue the education of female in a family has to confront with the emerging problems that are unexpected but occurs as the most vulnerable position in a society. Sometimes parents are seen as the responsible for continuing the female education as they lack the bondage in family and poor social structure. In a family, parents want to continue their daughter's study but the limited income of her husband as well as elder sons do not persist in any usual efforts. If daughter tell her parents to continue her study further, then the parents have to depend on financial help of other like relative and neighbors which in turn, make their status very lower in a society. It is not only a strong reason that poverty and lower socio-economic condition is the root the cause of discontinuing of female education, they are born in a poor family where they are coped with to the sufferings of family survival and agreed to the practicing old family norm such as maintaining her family as well as raring children in her husband's family. Sometime some internal brain problem is also hampered to continue their study because of brains incapacity restore the information to continue in some females are somewhat very short term and what she learned before has forgotten. Due to this problem female are depart from having the quality of education. One respondent opines,

She did not continue her study because she though one day she will marry with someone. She has to go in her husband's house. She has to look after her husband and other family members. And thereby could not attend her concentration to study. She has some headache in her head so she wishes to stop her study and will busy with her daily chores".

Sometime the freedom of continuing education ensures their right to be developed in a competitive world. But someone makes this freedom in excessive way as they cannot tolerate their parents when they force them not to do anything that she wants. This cause a serious conflict among the family members where both of them are confined to their decision without making any negotiation and understanding between them. Due to this extent of problem, parents are always anxious about their daughters that to practice, particularly religious and social norms. That's why they tend to stop their daughter's education at a primary level. One female respondent express her views in this way,

When I stayed outside for some important works of mine, I saw a boy and girl sit beside each other and gossiping with each other. I cannot tolerate it when I saw such unsocial acts of them. When I asked them why you do such unusual acts, they said we are digital Bangladesh and we have right to mingle with anyone and law permits it to make a life partner through using pre-marital affairs.

Although some parents are intended to continue their daughter's study in spite of having all these obstacles, they are not able to sustain this wish as their daughter wants it so. Some daughter in a family is very meritorious in school performance and their parents of Bangladesh has been providing scholarship facilities for poor meritorious students like an amount of three hundred taka, but school authority has cut down half of fees making some excuses which are not inherent to their academic curriculum. Sometime some teachers in school takes this amount for coaching fees as they said if you get good result then you have to give me this amount monthly and doing private coaching in my home. Because of non-cooperating attitudes of teachers and deprive of having scholarship fees, parents stops their daughter's education at a certain level, usually after ending the primary level or secondary level. After that, it was difficult for them to carry out the excessive cost of higher education so they force them to marry someone. Most of the respondents said that those who come from a real poor family they don't get the scholarship. So they sacrifice their wish and get involved in marriage with someone as most of the parents have eagerness to think that marriage is the ultimate goal. Also the dependence of private coaching with an excessive cost and faulty teaching capacity of teachers like only to emphasize the brilliant students and discourage the weak students through punishing them or willingly given fail in exam to them will encourage the parents to depart from her daughter's education. Because of incapacity to carry out extra cost of education, formed by the irresponsible teachers and if her daughter fails, then it

will feel them shy to tell the people of society and society will also discourage her parents to stop her education because of poor school achievement.

In spite of having all the problem, general people in the village is now gradually realizing the importance of female education and could not enforce any parents to stop their education. If they face any troubles in the street like eve-teasing or sexual harassment, they protect the girls through punishing the offender and making consciousness to protect the girls for all the time. But for those unwanted problems that occurs suddenly they do not cause it for the continuance of female education. They did exactly what they told me in a school where they identified the eve-teaser and punished them through the help of law-enforcement agency. Many families thought that if they continue the education of their daughter and so, it will need much more cost of carry out and also it will increase the level of poverty line then the normal level. So the parents during this period did not take any risk to fall down their family in extreme poverty line. But they did not realize that because of lack of education cannot ensure the welfare of family. Welfare means standard of living condition by participating income generating activities while getting educated, ensure good and safe drinking water, good sanitation facilities and hygiene in the environment where they live are completely inherent to the educational requirements that they can achieve through continuing study in the school. Because of departing from the effectiveness of education, they did not improve their living condition as their status are always in a same position in comparison to those who are well educated and thereby improving their living condition. Few of parents were actually wanted to continue their daughter's study but due to the large family size like eight to ten members, parents had continued the education of only two or three daughters and sons. The perception of the family structures as well as social structures within the society has been changed and people who are living in the society keep realizing the importance of continuing education of male and female with an equal manner.

Although they support it but to have a certain level like below primary level and above the secondary level of education. Because when they started to support it, some unwanted social problems have been occurred due to the breaking long established social and religious norms. People did not stop the education of daughters for these

unwanted reasons like teasing in the street, sexual harassment and other anti-social activities, but they have come forward to tackle these problems with collective efforts of the people through raising awareness. Parents of families were also well known about these matters but they have ascent the world norms and values that their sons and daughters should practices. If they practice the order and traditional norms of female, this social problems or obstacles will not arise. Some of the parents have shared some impediments of their daughter's education which was not adhered to the social problems but highly personal problems like illness, problems of headache in the head which can be considered in the departure of female education. Because of these unseen problems of females, that usually agreed to maintain the old female norms and cultural as most of the parents were intended to see that their sons and daughters will struggle with the same way as they faced before. Some parents are also very much optimistic. Especially where they have only daughters in the family and want to educate their daughters as much as possible if the government of Bangladesh should undertake any project to continue the female education at higher levels, particularly for those who are living in the poor family and who have want of the survival of food and other basic necessities

Conclusion

Bangladesh is now keeping forwarding the significant advancement of female education although many females are still going backward from their necessary education. But Government is now thinking how the mass participation of females would be ensured in working sector for increasing GDP growth and currency of the country and how will they make effective manpower to send abroad the qualified and skilled women workers for producing foreign currency. To make this extent possible, Government must have to increase the rate of female education in higher level. Also the consciousness of parents is also a big issue to step forward in their daughters' education at the higher level. Many non-government organizations have been working on education sector to increase participation of females in schools so as to reduce child marriage. All of us should undertake collective and coordinated efforts to ensure the participation of all females and no one should deprived of being taken education for any social obstacles and get them away from traditional outlook of females.

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3. A Critical Examination of the Status of Freedom of Movement of Women in Bangladesh: Holistic Approach

Mirza Farzana Iqbal Chowdhury

Abstract

In this era of 21st Century, the world is growing fast. Bangladesh is not out of this trend of globalization and modernization. The development of the notion of human rights across the world and ratifying human rights instruments by State Parties obviously are the reflection of the commitments of the State Parties. Likewise Bangladesh has ratified many international human rights instruments wherein freedom of movement is recognized. In that backdrop, the present status of the freedom of movement of women in Bangladesh has been reviewed in light of existing law, policy and case studies. It was found that despite the increase of rate of education, employment, life-expectancy etc, women are far more lagged behind than men in realization of their rights. Recognising equality of women with men as a paper-work which is not supported by de-facto equality has no ability to genuinely contribute in the development of women rights. It was further portrayed that the age-old stereo-typing of women as the reproductive segment of the society and portraying them as economically dependent on male factors of the family still continues and creates impediments. In view of those findings, this paper attempts to analyse 'Freedom of Movement' of women in the broader sense interlinking good governance, development, economic-politico-legal system, recognized international and national commitments and so on. The obstacles of implementing this right of women to movement are attempted to be clearly identified. To this end, primary and secondary data have been collected from various sources like books, journals, newspapers, articles, case studies, internet etc and processed under qualitative and quantitative approaches. Finally, recommendations have been put to ameliorate the overall situations of women with regard to the right to freedom of movement and thereby to improve the existing jurisprudence of women rights as 'Human Rights' in this region.

Keywords: Freedom of Movement, Women Rights, Good Governance, Equality, Human Rights.

Introduction

Aftermath of the Millennium Summit Session held in 2000, Bangladesh expressed her commitment for the attainment of Millennium Development Goals (MDG) which included women empowerment under goal 3 in its agenda.¹ Women rights got a moderate progress in Bangladesh but still there is a long way to go. Despite increased rate of education, employment, life-expectancy and so on, women are far more lagged behind than men in the society. Recognising equality of women with men as a paper-work which is not supported by de-facto equality has no ability to genuinely contribute in the development of women rights. The age-old stereo-typing of women as the reproductive segment of the society and portraying them as economically dependent on male factors of the family still continues despite apparent increase of participation of women in the employment sector. The patterns of social, religious and cultural institutions are among all institutional barriers in recognising better norms and institutions accelerating more respect and respect-led positive practices in the field of women rights. Under the concept of women empowerment, 'Freedom of Movement' is very crucial to ensure different rights of women for full development of their potentialities and to ensure social justice towards them.

The objectives of this paper are as follows:

1. To identify the recognition of 'Freedom of Movement' of women in Bangladesh.
2. To relate 'Freedom of Movement' of women as a necessary segment of the 'Right to Development' under national and international instruments.
3. To identify the regressive factors with regard to freedom of movement of women.
4. To suggest recommendations to ameliorate the status of freedom of movement of women in Bangladesh.

Methodology

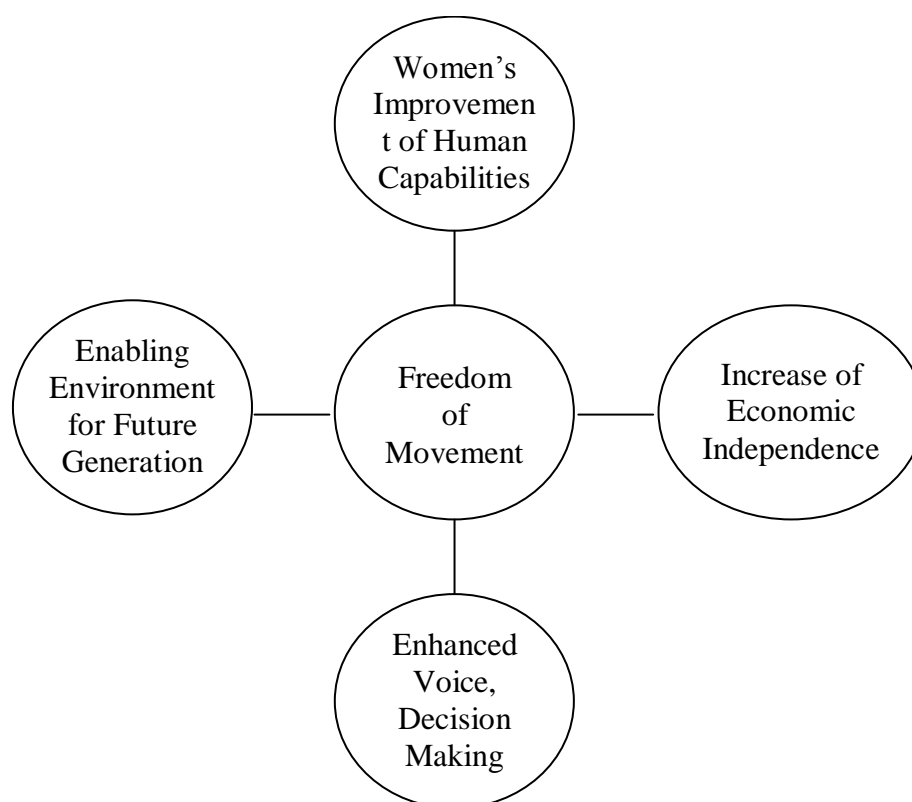
In this paper, both qualitative and quantitative approaches have been adopted. Qualitative approach has been adopted to critically analyse

¹ Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (2011), National Women Development Policy 2011, p.7, retrieved from: <http://mowca.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/mowca.portal.gov.bd/policies/64238d39_0ecd_4a56_b00c_b834cc54f88d/National-Women-Policy-2011English.pdf>, accessed on 05 November, 2015

the existing literature or data which have been collected from books, journals, newspaper articles, institutional proceedings, and internet and processed. Quantitative approach in the way of questionnaire survey and case studies has also been adopted and processed.

Defining ‘Freedom of Movement’

Freedom of movement is the inalienable human right and recognized as a fundamental right in almost all countries. Freedom of movement implies freedom to move throughout public places, educational institutions, employment sector, participation in social, economical and political life, to leave any country including own country, to enter in any country subject to immigration rules etc. Proper exercise of freedom of movement ensures improving human capabilities, increasing of economic independence, enhancing voice, gaining decision making power, enabling environment for future generation etc. Under the concept of women empowerment, this freedom is crucial to ensure different rights of women for full development of their potentialities.



Picture 1: Outcomes of Ensuring Freedom of Movement

International Commitments towards Freedom of Movement (Direct and Analogous)

Bangladesh is a member State of the United Nations (UN) and signatory to various human rights instruments where freedom of

movement is recognised either directly or analogously, i.e., Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 (directly in article 13), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966 (directly in article 12), Convention on All Forms of Discrimination against Women 1979 (not directly but reflected in article 2 [Bangladesh kept reservation on article 2] and article 3), Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action 1993 (not directly but reflected in part I, para 10, para 11, para 18) etc. Bangladesh signed the optional protocol on CEDAW also.² Besides, in its General Comment on the Freedom of Movement, No. 27 (1999), the Human Rights Committee noted that the right to movement is ‘incompatible’ with laws that subject free movement to “the decision of another person, including a relative.”³

National Commitments of Bangladesh towards ‘Freedom of Movement’

Constitutional Guarantees

Freedom of movement of citizens is guaranteed under article 36 of the Constitution of Bangladesh, *subject to reasonable restrictions imposed by law in the public interest*.⁴ These reasonable restrictions infer imposition of restrictions on legal basis and as required for public interest only and must be reasonable in both substantive and procedural aspects⁵. The reasonableness must be determined in an objective manner with consideration of the change of time and circumstances.

Freedom of movement is recognized as one of the fundamental rights and enforceable under article 102 of the Constitution. To support the aforementioned article, the articles 9, 10, 19 (1), 27, 28, 29, 44 of the Constitution may be resorted to.

Laws and Policies Adopted by Bangladesh towards Freedom of Movement

Legislation

Freedom of movement requires ensuring an enabling environment where this freedom can be fully achieved. Bangladesh has enacted various laws to combat various anti-movement factors and to create an

² Ibid at p.5

³ UN General Assembly [UNGA] (1967) Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Article 9 and 15, A/RES/2263, retrieved from: <<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/-cedaw/text/econvention.htm>>, accessed on 15 November, 2015

⁴ Government of Bangladesh (1972) Constitution of Bangladesh, Article 36

⁵ Chowdhury, M.F.I (2015) Law of Human Rights, Dhaka: Hira Publications

enabling environment for women⁶ i.e., The Penal Code, 1860, The Anti-Dowry Prohibition Act (1980), The Cruelty to Women Ordinance (1983), The Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act (1993), The Prevention of Repression against Women and Children Act (2000), Mobile Court Act (2009), Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act (2010), Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking (PSHT) Act 2012, The Domestic Violence Prevention and Protection Rules (2013), Overseas Employment and Migration Act (2013), The Pornography Control Act (2012), The Labour Code, 2006 and its revision in 2013.⁷

Policies

Government formulated the following policies on gendered needs:⁸

- National Women Development Policy, 2011
- The National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (NSAPR-II)

One of the five strategies of this Strategy Paper is ‘Participatory Empowerment in Development Activity’, an initiative towards increasing mobility of women.

- Vision 2021 (2010-2021) and 6th 5-Year Plan (2010-2015) in consistence with the strategy paper (NSAPR-II).⁹ 7th 5-Year Plan is in progress.
- National Action Plan on Violence Against Women (VAW)

Two of the six main areas focused in this plan for action are the advancement of women’s socio-economic status and community involvement¹⁰, with which freedom of movement of women can relate.

All these plans and policies are dependent on ensuring freedom of movement of women and *vice versa*.

Institutional Support for Protection of Women

The following institutional supports have been developed by Government for the protection of women:

⁶ Government of Bangladesh (n.d.), Laws of Bangladesh, retrieved from: <<http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/>> accessed on 25 October, 2015

⁷ Ibid

⁸ General Economics Division, Bangladesh Planning Commission, Government of Bangladesh (2014) ‘Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Suggested Strategies for the 7th Five Year Plan’, p.7, Dhaka, Bangladesh

⁹ Supra note 1, p.7-8

¹⁰ Supra note 8, p.18

- Ministry of Women and Children Affairs in 1994
- National Council for Women and Child Development (NCWCD) has been formed for review of the socioeconomic development of women.
- The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Development of Women in Bangladesh shall advise the government to adopt specific measures for betterment of the women.¹¹

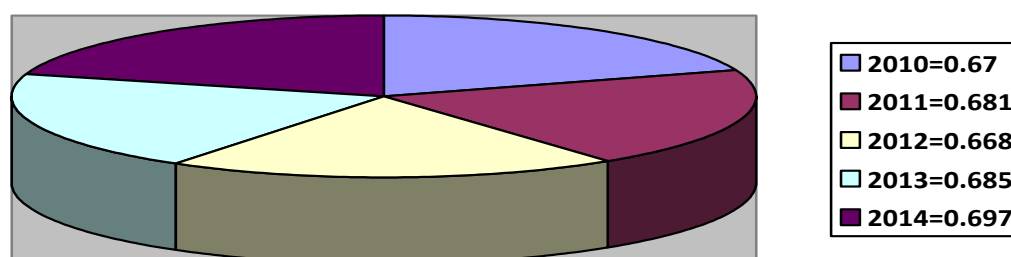
An integrated initiative has been adopted aiming at women development at both public and private sector levels. Bangladesh government is earnestly accelerating cooperation to NGOs in this respect.¹²

Situation of Freedom of Movement of Women in Bangladesh

Secondary Data Review

Freedom of movement is a cross-cutting issue and involves many issues along with it. There is no straightforward statistics on the status of 'Freedom of Movement' of Women in Bangladesh. However, there are some secondary researches on various issues of women rights from where we can get a glimpse of participation of women in all spheres of the country.

Chart-1: Global Gender Gap Index¹³



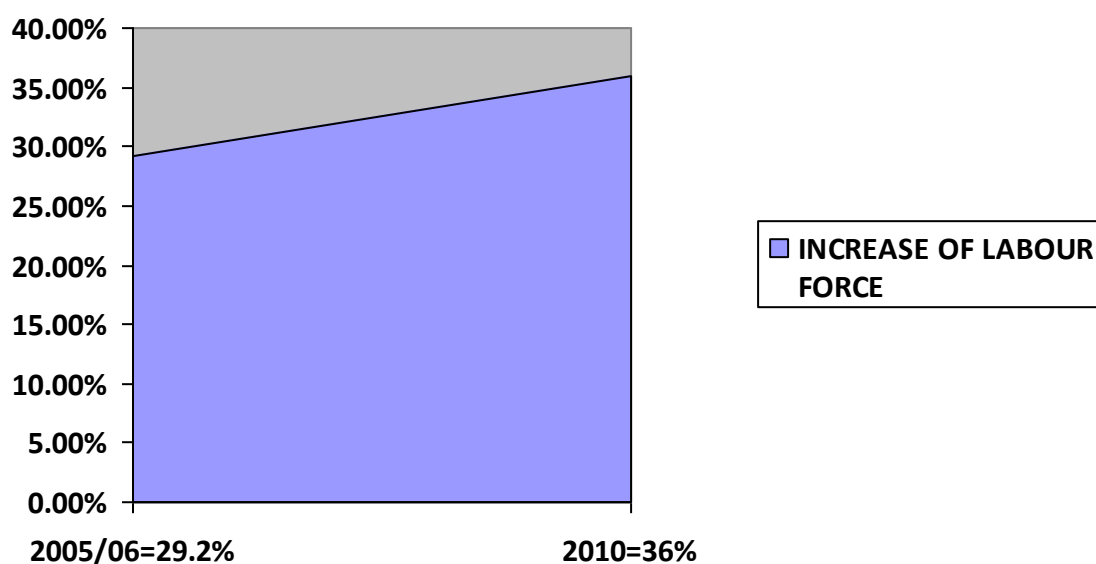
Examining the scores of Bangladesh in 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 in the Global Gender Gap Index, it has been found that Bangladesh has steadily improved in educational attainment, health and survival, economic participation, political empowerment. However, this is not a sex segregated data and failed to clearly focus on women's actual scenario in attaining the score. Likewise, in the

¹¹ Supra note 1, p.25

¹² Ibid at p. 11, 12

¹³ Supra note 8, p.2

Human Development Index, 2014, Bangladesh ranked 142 among 188 countries, placed under ‘Medium Human Development Country’ and scored 0.558 (higher than 2013 by 0.004).¹⁴ As per recent 2015 Human Development Index report, score of Bangladesh is 0.570, higher than that of 2014 by 0.012 point.¹⁵ In another research, Social Progress Index, 2014, Bangladesh scored 52.04 which is higher compared to Pakistan, India and Nepal.¹⁶ In case of personal rights including freedom of movement, Bangladesh scored 51.40¹⁷, but it is not a sex-segregated data. In the Social Progress Index Report of 2015, Bangladesh ranked 100 and scored 53.39 which is higher than that of 2014.¹⁸ It has been claimed that there has been steady improvement in the social and political empowerment scenario of women in Bangladesh.¹⁹ But due to absence of sex segregated data, the claim cannot be scientifically proved; consequently future plans of progressive realization towards increasing mobility of women may be hampered. Another dimension of mobility of women is the engagement of women as labour force.



¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ United Nations Development Program (2015) Human Development Reports: Table 1: Human Development Index and its Components: Bangladesh, retrieved from: <<http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/HDI>> accessed on 19 December, 2015.

¹⁶ Supra note 13

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ The Social Progress Imperative (2015) Social Progress Index: Findings: Low Social Progress Countries, retrieved from: <<http://www.socialprogressimperative.org/data/spi/findings>> accessed on 19 December, 2015.

¹⁹ Supra note 8, p.4

Chart-2: The Labour Force Survey (LFS)²⁰

Here also, labour force of Bangladesh has been increased to 36% in 2010 from 29.2% in 2005/06²¹, but there is no separate statistics on increase of women labour force. However, in 2013, according to Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET), about 13% of international migrants were women, and they mainly work as housemaids, cleaners, care givers etc²². Overall, it can be rightly put that government and non-government stakeholders did not put as much effort to bring out sex-segregated data, a key-factor for understanding the real status of freedom of movement enjoyed by women in Bangladesh as required to formulate an effective policy for them.

Field Survey (Primary Data Collection and Processing)

A structured questionnaire survey was conducted in the month of November, 2015. Total thirty-five women were randomly selected for the study. Twelve questions were asked and on the basis of their answers, data were collected and processed.

Chart 3: Age of the Respondents (Years)

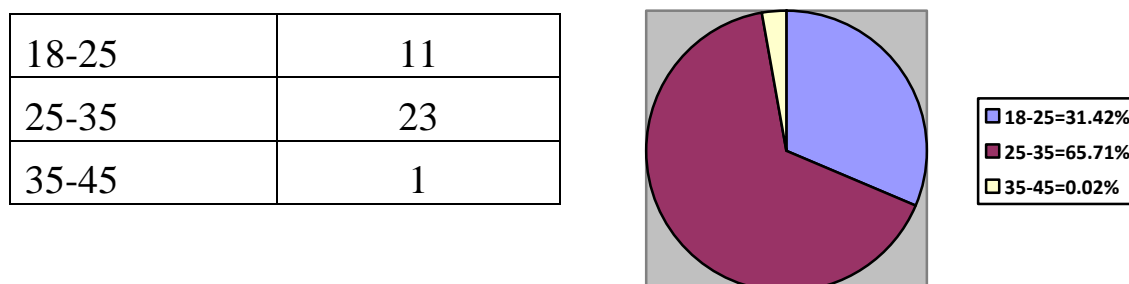
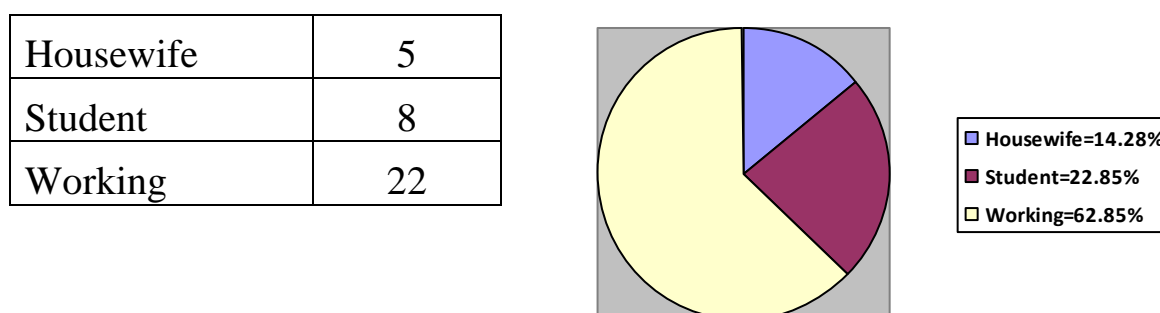


Chart 4: Profession of the Respondents (Number)



²⁰ Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), (2011) 'Labour Force Survey 2010', Dhaka.

²¹ Ibid

²² Ibid

Chart 5: Educational Qualification

Master's	25
Honours	6
Higher Secondary School	4

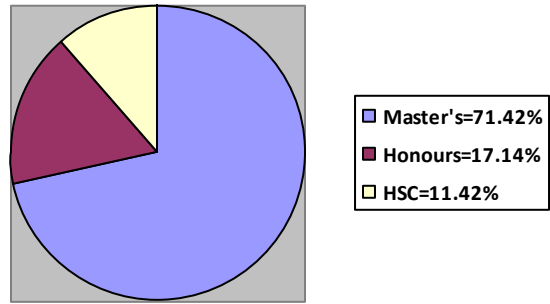


Chart 6: Marital Status

Married	21
Unmarried	14

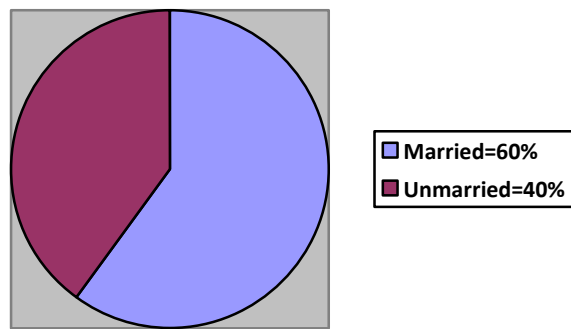


Chart 7: Awareness of Right to Movement

Aware	20
Unaware	15

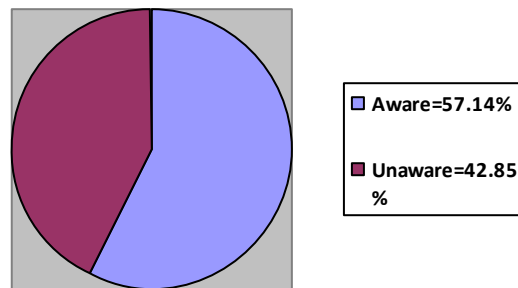


Chart 8: Requirement of Permission before Movement

Permission required	30
Not required	05

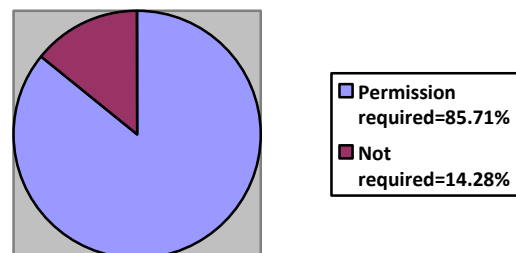


Chart 9: Who is in Charge of Granting Permission

Parents, preferably father and/or Elder Siblings, preferably brother	13
In-laws (After marriage)	19
Not applicable	05

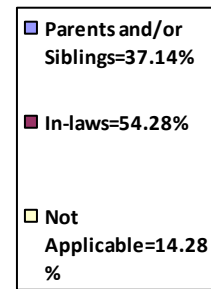
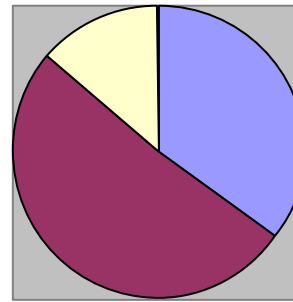


Chart 10: Facing Obstacle in Movement

Yes	35
No	0

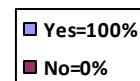
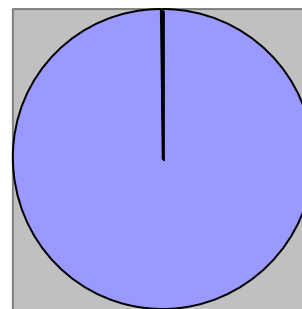


Chart 11: Nature of Obstacle

Eve-teasing	23
Side-comments	35
Physical assault	18

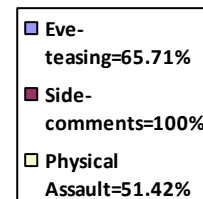
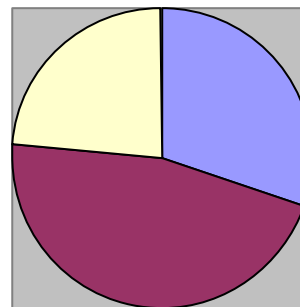


Chart 12: Reaction of Obstacle

Restriction by Guardian in Movement	19
Always Accompanying Another	18
Ignoring Obstacles	24
Taking Help of Local Authority	03

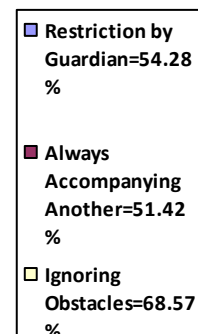
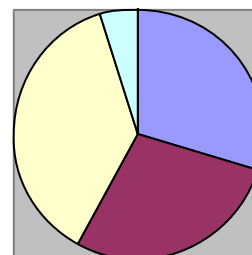


Chart 13: Restriction after Marriage

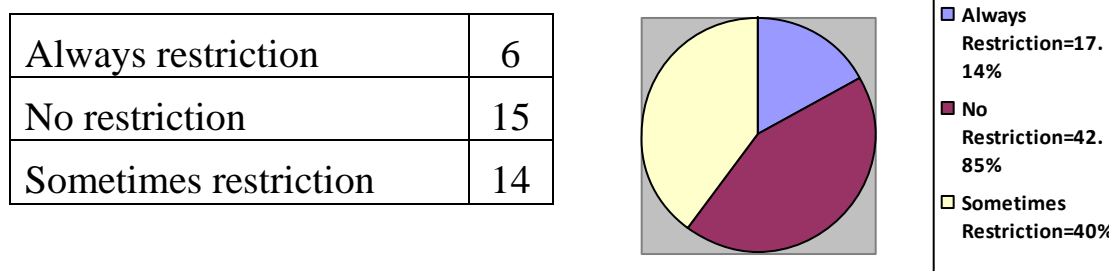


Table 1: Hierarchy of Problems to be addressed (Most to least Scale)

1. Lack of Social Security	34=97.14%
2. Lack of Enforcement of Law	33=94.28%
3. Social Position as Woman	32=91.42%
4. Lack of Self-Dependency	28=80%
5. Lack of Proper Education	17=48.57%
6. Lack of Proper Law	11=31.42%
7. Ignorance of Rights	10=28.57%
8. Misinterpretation of Religious Texts	4=11.42%
9. Early Marriage	2=5.71%

Findings of the Field Survey

From the field survey, the following findings have been figured out:

1. Despite being educated, only 57.14% [chart 7] women are aware of their right to freedom of movement, which implies that only education is not the touch-stone to change the existing jurisprudence. A right-based education and awareness must be disseminated among women. There are a huge number of educated women who are not educated on the Constitution of the country, a barrier to the self-awareness of the guaranteed rights.
2. Though the Constitution of Bangladesh does not require women to take permission from others in exercising their right to freedom of movement, but actually they need to take permission. Out of 35 women, 30 women replied that they need permission [chart 8], which is a gross violation of constitutional guarantee as well as recognised international instruments. The authority to grant permission depends on marital status of women in most of the cases [chart 9]. Before marriage, 37.14% women need to take permission from parents or siblings or other family members [chart 9] and after marriage, sometimes women need to take permission from the previous permission holders as well as new permission holders i.e. spouse and other in-laws [54.28%].

3. It has been found that 100% researched women admitted that they faced obstacle in exercising their freedom of movement [chart 10], though the natures of obstacles vary from person to person. 65.71% women faced eve-teasing, 100% women faced side-comments and 51.42% faced physical assaults while exercising freedom of movement [chart11].
4. It has been found that as reaction of obstacles faced by women in case of 54.28% women, guardians restricted their movement, 51.42% women started to accompany another while exercising right to movement, 68.57% women dared to ignore obstacles and only 8.57% women took help from local authority [chart 12]. This is not very positive finding and requires the more engagement of community and law enforcement authority to support women's right to freedom of movement.
5. It has been found that 97.14% women [table 1] identified 'Lack of Social Security' as the gravest issue need to be most addressed, which is not a gendered issue; rather it is an overall issue irrespective of gender. 94.28% women identified 'Lack of Enforcement of Law' as the second most important issue which is also a burning issue of the country irrespective of gender [table 1]. 91.42% women [table 1] placed 'Social Position as Women' in third position under issue-to-be-addressed, which is a gendered issue and represents the conflict between women rights and patriarchal hegemony. Other issues are also there including 'Lack of Self-dependency', 'Lack of Proper Education', 'Lack of Proper Law', 'Ignorance of Rights', 'Misinterpretation of Religious Texts', 'Early Marriage' etc.

Case Studies

For the study, 5 (five) women have been interviewed and notable 3 (three) of them have been described here:

1. Mrs. Tasnim is 27 years old woman and married. She is a banker in profession and loves travelling. Whenever she travels alone, she is often questioned by others that why she is travelling alone or is there any personal problem that she is travelling alone. She complains that such social stigma is compelling her now not to share her story with others but at the same time, she feels stronger to pursue her passion to break the barriers.
2. Ms. Taslima is 22 years old and Jagannath University student. She is from Chandpur and currently studying in Dhaka. When she got the chance for higher education, her cousins did not want her to go to Dhaka for study implying that she is a woman, she should study in a local college etc. Anyway, she got herself admitted. But she

needed a job for supporting her family and she got a part-time job in Comilla. She used to frequently travel from Dhaka to Comilla whenever needed. She complains that her fellow mates used to tease her indicating her movements as illegal and immoral. She said that despite her frustration and sadness, she had no way to leave the job, but she isolated herself from people as far as possible out of social phobia.

3. Ms. Tania is 25 years old and unmarried. She is a photographer. She goes to attend the call for photo shoots and sometimes she gets late in returning home. Her mother complains that neighbours gossip and stigmatize about her character and she should leave works after sunset. Tania expresses her frustration.

Findings of the Case Studies

Case studies revealed the existing stereotyping of women by family and society. After careful examination of the case studies, it can be found that despite all the social stigmas and obstacles, women are getting stronger to reach to their aim and passion. Sometimes they are getting support from their family though not always, more often society people are non-cooperative and try to stigmatize their movements.

Regressive Factors to Freedom of Movement of Women in Bangladesh

Various factors have been identified through critical analysis of existing literatures, questionnaire survey and case studies, which impede freedom of movement of women in Bangladesh and have been discussed as follows:

Stereotyped Role of Women

By both patriarchal hegemony and religious hegemony, role of women in the family and society has been stereo-typed. Exercise of right to movement is also stereotyped and dependant on the permission of male family members as they are perceived as fragile and unable to take decisions. This is the clear violation of the constitutional right to freedom of movement of women in Bangladesh. Moreover, this is violation of the General Comment No. 27 of 1999. Restrictions on women's ability to travel including requirements concerning the approval of third parties like father or husband or brother, violate women's rights to freedom of movement under the ICCPR, held by the Human Rights Committee. Furthermore, the Committee outlines concerns with the activities of private interferences in restricting women's freedom of movement.²³ These barriers impact a person's

²³ The World Bank (2014) Gender Equality and Development: Women's Voice and Agency: The Role of Legal Institutions and Women's Movements. retrieved from:

capacity to develop, to work, to access education, and to participate in the social, political and economical life.

Education and Its Impact

The adult literacy rate of women has upgraded. As per Sample Vital Registration system (SVRS) 2011, adult literacy rate reached 62.5% for males and 55.1% for females at the national level in 2011, an overall improvement from 2005 (SVRS 2011).²⁴ Despite such statistical growth with regard to literacy, the present education system has been failed to provide a gender-sensitized and rights-based education upholding the equal status of men and women. Education is still perceived as a means of getting employment, having better status, good marriage etc.

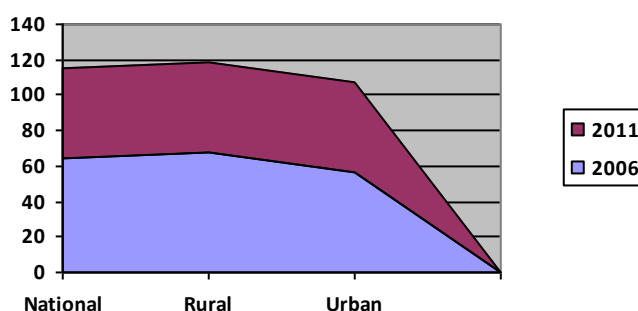
Lack of Education and Motivation of Parents

The lack of proper parental education and motivation represents itself as a great barrier to the freedom of movement of women.

Child Marriage

Bangladesh has one of the highest rates of child-marriage in the world. Nearly two-thirds of adolescent girls are married (10-19 years)²⁵. Child marriage is another barrier to the freedom of movement of women. Marrying minor girls off seems advantageous to many of the bridegrooms as they assume to get easy control over brides at their young age and thus, to manipulate their rights including freedom of movement.

Chart 14: Proportion of women 20-24 years old who are married before



age 18

*Source: Gender Statistics Bangladesh 2012*²⁶

<<http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/Gender/de%20Silva%20de%20Alwis%202014.%20Women's%20voice%20and%20agency.%20The%20role%20of%20lgeal%20institutions%20and%20women's%20movements.pdf>>accessed on 15 November, 2015

²⁴ Supra note 13, p.12

²⁵ UNICEF (2008) The Bangladesh Context: The Situation of Women and Children, p.5

²⁶ Supra note 8, p.68

As per Gender Statistics Bangladesh 2012, in 2006 the number of women aged 20-24 and married before 18 years of age was 64.1% in national sphere, 67.4% in rural sphere and 56.2% in urban sphere²⁷. This number has been reduced to 51.1%, 51.6% and 50.6% in respective fields in 2011²⁸, which means that the rate of child marriage is decreasing, but still around half of the women are married off before 18 which is alarming indeed to materialize more rights for the women.

Discrimination at Workplace

At workplace—wage gap gender discrimination, lack of gender responsive working environment, inadequate child care facilities, transport, accommodation, occupational health and safety, lack of legal protection against abuse, discrimination, irregular employment, long work hours, non-compliance of maternity leave benefits, non-access to institutional financing by women entrepreneurs etc are the reasons discouraging women to exercise their freedom of movement in exercising their right to work and joining in other mobility increasing and career accelerating programs.

Increase of Violence

In Bangladesh, violence against women (VAW) has been increased over the years.²⁹ Despite some specific specialized legislation and due to non-compliance of them, the instances of rape, kidnapping, acid throwing, domestic violence, eve-teasing, physical assault, murder, intimidation on women are rampant which grossly limits freedom of movement of them. The successful implementation of laws, policies and initiatives is expected to curb violence against women in the society and environment which will foster their freedom of movement.

Objectification of Women

Objectification of women in print media, television media and internet poses a great risk and profound negative impact in actualization of the right of movement of women as an individual in the same footing with men. In media, their beauty, physical appeal, glamour precedes over their physical and mental strength and tendency to view women as 'entertainment item' grows, the inevitable result is increase of violence on women in various forms at home and/or outside. This objectification and resulting violence hinder freedom of movement of women to a great extent.

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ ODHIKAR (2012) Human Rights Monitoring Report, November 1-30, Dhaka: Bangladesh

Therefore, a National Broadcasting Policy 2013 was drafted with the objectives of ensuring prevention of projecting women as objects in commercial media³⁰. The Pornography Control Act, 2012 also aims to prevent projection of women and declares such projection as a Criminal offence.³¹

Disablement of Women

In Bangladesh, at least 10% population is physically handicapped and this number is 8.77% amongst women³². Women's disability put them in a complex discriminatory situation and they become more prone to gender-based violence due to two-fold issues--disability and womanhood. Presently, Bangladesh Government runs several projects for the disable persons under the social safety net programmes³³. Bangladesh Government has enacted Protibondhi Bektir Odhikar o Surokkha Ain 2013 and amongst the rights under section 32, provisions have been kept for reserving seats in public transports for disabled persons to ensure their freedom of movement³⁴.

Ethnicity of Women

Bangladesh ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) 1969 and signed the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord, 1997 to recognize and protect of rights of ethnic minority people.³⁵ Women's empowerment amongst ethnic minority groups is relatively lower than that of general women. In the CHT area violence, killing and kidnapping of women are reported, mostly as part of local conflicts over land and forest resources existing between hill people and settlers³⁶. Women fall victim of the overall insecure situation and cannot exercise their freedom of movement due to ongoing socio-economic-politico-legal issues.

Other Factors

Gap between Constitutional Guarantee and Reality

Constitution of Bangladesh does not condition freedom of movement of women with taking permission of others, but it has been found that

³⁰ Supra note 8, p. 22

³¹ Ibid

³² Supra note 1

³³ Supra note 8, p.23

³⁴ Government of Bangladesh (2013) Protibondhi Bektir Odhikar o Surokkha Ain 2013, available at: <http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/bangla_sections_detail.php?id=1126§ions_id=43015> accessed on 30 September, 2015.

³⁵ Supra note 8, p.21

³⁶ Ibid, p.22

in reality, in most of the cases women require permission from others of the family (field survey).

Weakness of Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOWCA)

Basically resource restraint and lack of technical capacity of Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOWCA) to pursue various programs to ensure gender parity are the key problems.³⁷

Non-Availability of Sex-segregated Data

Non-availability of sex segregated data renders reporting on progress of gender equality aspects difficult. The existing practice of assigning a guessed percentage is inaccurate although based on the best information available.³⁸

Spatial Variation in Gender Equality Results

Women are not a homogenous group and research results vary based on their class, ethnicity, religion, profession, physical ability and geographic differentiation. Like, in case of geographic differentiation, performance is different in urban areas from rural areas due to increased rate of education and necessity of mobility out of globalization. In the same way, in religious dimension, lack of uniformity in the provisions of family laws for different religion causes variation in the enjoyment of rights by women in different scales³⁹. Again, due to legal ambiguities regarding profession of sex workers, approach concerning freedom of movement of sex workers and women of other professions may be varied on the ground of public interest provided that variations must be brought reasonably and objectively.

Recommendations

To ensure freedom of movement for women in the context of Bangladesh, the following recommendations have been put forth:

1. On the very beginning, Bangladesh must withdraw 'reservation' on article 2 in the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women 1979 which imposes limitation on formulation of policy in favour of women.
2. The Ministry of Women and Children affairs of Bangladesh should devise a plan of action to increase mobility of women by various projects and programs, as without mobility women empowerment is not quite possible.

³⁷ Ibid, p.20

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Ibid at p.8

3. The education system should include a gender-sensitized and rights-based education curriculum in its each stage from the beginning stage.
4. Violence against women prevailing in the society must be eradicated to foster freedom of movement of women in Bangladesh. Government should strictly enforce the existing laws and must prevent the societal notions, ideas and practices in contradiction with the spirit of equality of freedom of movement and increase overall social security by ensuring a strong law and order situation.
5. Government must be more accountable to its role in upholding rights of people irrespective of gender by getting a grip over the patriarchy hegemony and religious hegemony.
7. The societal notions regarding moral knowledge must shift from 'victim's fault' to 'oppressor's oppression'.
8. Human rights organizations along with media can arrange awareness programs on the importance of increased mobility of women.
9. Gender perspectives integrated in media policy must be properly implemented in order to stop objectification of women in media.⁴⁰
10. Proper parental education must be ensured towards human rights including right to freedom of movement.
11. Revenue and development budget allocation of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs should be increased. The implementation and monitoring framework shall be strengthened to ensure best and proper use of budget money.⁴¹
12. Stakeholders i.e., academicians, law enforcement agencies, media channels, newspapers—online and print, mass people should be trained on adoption of gender-sensitive approaches and behaviours in their fields. Cooperation and interlinks must be established and strengthened among GO, NGO, International organizations working towards women development.

Conclusion

The status of freedom of movement in Bangladesh is not yet satisfactory; rather women are far more behind than full actualization of this right. Various factors i.e., stereotyping women by patriarchal system as well as religious demagogues and failure to play proper role by law enforcement agencies invest in various violations and discriminations. As a result of which, right to freedom of movement is

⁴⁰ Supra note 1, p.24

⁴¹ Ibid at p.28, 29

thwarted without which full development of women is not possible. Bangladesh must respect and ensure the freedom of movement of women and should eradicate all the obstacles hindering this freedom. All stakeholders including government, NGOs, civil societies, mass people, law enforcement agencies, religious leaders etc should work hand in hand under a detailed devised plan of action to ensure more mobility and greater participation of women in all corners of life, thus transforming them into greater manpower for the benefit of the country.

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4. Role of NGO's in Ensuring Safe Migration for Bangladeshi Women Migrant Workers: A case study

Tania Afrin Tonny

Abstract

Bangladesh is a densely populated country with its small land. Currently there are more than three million people who are fully unemployed and about twenty million people are partly employed in Bangladesh. Migration Sector has now been highly considered as a way to reduce unemployment from the country. Migration is contributing to our economy in two ways, by decreasing the rate of unemployment and by supplying remittances which contribute to our GDP growth. Therefore, ensuring Safe Migration for the Bangladeshi Migrant workers is now a time demand. Not only men but also women migrant workers are contributing toward migration sector by sending remittances on a regular basis. It is very unfortunate that in many cases migrant workers face various problems at home, transit and abroad. At present, NGOs in Bangladesh are playing a very crucial role to ensure safe migration for Bangladeshi migrant workers. BRAC is notable amongst them. The general aim of the paper is to identify the type of services that are being provided by BRAC Migration Programme to women migrant workers and to know the strategy of BRAC Migration Programme as it is contributing in ensuring safe migration for migrant workers in Bangladesh. Safe Migration refers to the successful migration which gives a sustainable base of livelihood for a migrant worker. Generally there are three basic steps in safe migration process. These are pre-departure, post-arrival, return and re-integration. The specific objective of the paper is to explore the role of BRAC Migration Programme in all these three stages of safe migration for Bangladeshi women migrant workers. This paper follows case oriented qualitative research approach and the data relevant to the study has been collected from both the primary and secondary sources.

Keywords: NGO, Safe Migration, Women Migrant.

Introduction

Migration¹ sector is one of the largest income sources of Bangladesh. Near about eight million people from Bangladesh are working in

¹ Overseas migration in which people from Bangladesh goes abroad for employment

different countries of the world (GoB, 2013). The present government of Bangladesh has already planned to achieve middle income country by 2021² where Migration sector has now been highly considered as a way to do so. According to BMET³, a total of 343,824 migrant workers have migrated abroad for jobs in the first seven months of 2015 where 56,389 were women migrant workers. At present migrant workers are now being provoked and paying attention to go abroad as an alternative livelihood options and the number of migrant workers is increasing each year though they are facing a lot of problems at home and abroad in every stages of Safe Migration⁴. Most of the cases they suffered a lot both physically and mentally but get little legal support abroad. They become vulnerable due to less understanding of their job they ought to do at the destination country. They usually bound to sign unknowingly with the fraud recruiting agent and get little support after arrival. It is evident that women migrant workers suffered more due to unknowingness to attend the employer in the post-arrival stage. Ensuring safe migration for these workers is now a big challenge of Bangladesh. Most of the cases women migrants have been migrated to KSA⁵, UAE⁶, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Lebanon, Jordan, Oman, Hong Kong and Singapore (BMET, 2015). In the last twenty years Government of Bangladesh (hereafter GoB) is promoting safe migration where NGO intervention is also important. As charitable and voluntary organization a number of NGOs are now playing an important role in ensuring safe migration for Bangladeshi migrant workers whereas BRAC⁷ is one of them. BRAC started its Migration Programme in 2006 and working for ensuring Safe Migration for Bangladeshi Migrant workers. Now question may raise that, how and to what extent BRAC is contributing towards ensuring Safe Migration for women migrant workers in Bangladesh? The present study aims to explore the role of BRAC Migration Programme in pre-departure, post-arrival and reintegration all these three stages of Safe Migration to answer the stated question. Related literature was reviewed by the researcher for finding research gap. There are a few literature found on

² vision of GoB to be achieved by the year 2021

³ Bangladesh Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training

⁴ Safe Migration refers to the successful migration which gives a sustainable base of livelihood for a migrant worker. Generally there are three basic steps in safe migration process. These are pre-departure, post-arrival, return and reintegration stage.

⁵ Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

⁶ United Arab Emirates

⁷ Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, is the world largest and number one notable NGO of Bangladesh

the roles of NGO's on safe migration issue. Though there are several study has been done regarding the problems faced by women migrant workers in every stages of migration cycle, there is still a lack on NGO's role to alleviate those problems. The current study is a little endeavor for doing so hoping that future study will be provoked in this line. Jolly and Reeves's study found that historically migration was a major development opportunity and it is also true at present time (World Commission, 2004). They also revealed that NGOs and voluntary associations are engaged in supporting and alleviating problems faced by migrant workers in general and women migrant workers in specific (Piper and Yamanaka, 2003). The positive outcome of their study included that NGOs are able to make networks of migrant workers within the destination countries with other social organizations and can make force on government to adopt policy change.

Objectives of the Research

The main aim of the paper is to identify the type of services that are being provided by BRAC Migration Programme to women migrant workers and to know the strategy of BRAC as it is working for ensuring safe migration for Bangladeshi migrant workers in Bangladesh. The specific objectives of the paper are as follows:

- To explore the role of BRAC Migration Programme in Pre-departure stage of Safe Migration for women migrant workers
- To explore the role of BRAC Migration Programme in Post Arrival stage of Safe Migration for women migrant workers
- To explore the role of BRAC Migration Programme in Reintegration stage of Safe Migration for women migrant workers

Methodology of the Study

Research methodology is a combination of method used in a study, types of data, tools and techniques of data collection, sampling method and data processing and analyzing. The present study uses case study method. "Case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context" (Yin, 1994:1) The cause of using Case study is "case studies involve measuring and studying what is there and how it got there" (Aminuzzaman, 1991:43). The study uses both the primary and secondary data. The data uses in the study were qualitative and for collecting primary data BRAC Migration Programme's beneficiaries were contacted directly as respondents. For this purpose interview

technique was used by the researcher because “it is a verbal technique for obtaining data from the primary source” and “Interview is a very systematic method by which a person enters deeply into the life of even a stranger and can bring out needed information and data for the research purpose” (Aminuzzaman, 1991:82). Observation technique was also used by the researcher. The study uses purposive sampling technique as in this technique, definite units are selected purposively by the researcher. Faridpur⁸ district was selected as it is a migrants’ prone district of Bangladesh. A total of 30 samples were interviewed. For fulfilling the research objectives, both the potential and returnee women migrant workers were selected to be interviewed based on researcher’s judgment. The data relevant to the study have been also collected from secondary sources like books, journals, daily newspapers, online newspapers, documents, published reports and website of BRAC Migration Programme.

Safe Migration and NGOs: A Theoretical note

Generally the word ‘migration’ denotes a movement of people from one place to another. Migration can be of two kinds. When people move within countries it is called internal migration and when people migrate from their country of origin to another country is called overseas or international migration. The present study is about the second type of migration. People may migrate for social, economic, political or environmental cause. There are some factors behind migration namely push factors and pull factors. Push factors encourages people to leave the place where they live as such poverty, unemployment, natural disaster etc. On the other hand pull factors attract people to move another place such as better living standard, employment opportunity etc. When a migrant worker migrates to another country safely, works there for certain time period and come back to his/her country of origin by ensuring a better and sustainable livelihood is called Safe Migration. Safe migration is a step by step process including taking decision to migrate, migration preparation, journey to destination country, during migration, return to country of origin and reintegration. All these steps can be categorized into three phase’s namely a) pre-departure stage which includes taking decision to migrate and migration preparation b) post-arrival stage which includes journey to destination country, during migration and c)

⁸ Faridpur is a central district of Bangladesh under Dhaka division. In 2015, a total of 14,188 people were migrated abroad from Faridpur.

reintegration stage includes return to country of origin and reintegration as depicted the figure below:



Figure 1: Safe Migration Process

(Source: <http://migration.brac.net/programme-approach>)

Migration sector is regarded as the most important revenue source of Bangladesh. Every year more than 500,000 people depart abroad for work from Bangladesh and more than eight million people have been already migrated to abroad from Bangladesh. Migrant workers are not only contributing to their families rather they are contributing for national economy of Bangladesh. “Though they are contributing a lot, this is very unfortunate that these migrant workers are facing lots of problems in pre-departure, post-arrival, return and re-integration stages of safe migration. In case of women migration these problems are equally true or in fact that time those will be twice” (Jolly & Reeves, 2005). “Migration can provide a vital source of income for migrant women and their families, and earn them greater autonomy, self-confidence and social status. Before departure, women can be faced with gender-biased procedures and corrupt agents. In fact, gender discrimination, poverty and violence, can provide the impetus for women to migrate or enable women to be trafficked in the first place. During transit and at their destination women can be faced with verbal, physical and sexual abuse, poor housing and encampments, sex-segregated labour markets, low wages, long working hours, insecure contracts and precarious legal status. And upon return to the source country they may be faced with broken families, illness and poverty” (Jolly & Reeves, 2005:1) Ghosh’s study (cited in Piper 2005)

mentioned that as a welfare and social professional women migrant workers are frequently obliged to admit the job as subordinate and low paid employment. Though migration is a multidimensional phenomenon with both the positive impacts on women migrant workers like it expands the opportunity of doing productive work at the same time it may create opportunity of harassment negatively. “The most widespread problems with domestic work are the low pay and long working hours, the inferior positions of domestic workers and highly personalized relationships with employers which make it difficult for workers to receive their agreed pay or get time off. The health and safety situation in the home is not satisfactory, and if they are ill they do not get paid and may even lose their jobs. Psychological, physical and sexual abuses are common” (Piper, 2005). In the pre-departure period gender discriminatory practices and attitudes in the country of origin plays a significant role. “Women’s employment opportunities, educational levels, health care and other services in their home communities are often less well advanced or provided for than in the case of men. In addition, there is often no, or only insufficient, safety nets for women who are single beyond an age at which it is expected of them to get married; for single mothers; and women who are divorced, separated or widowed”(Piper, 2005). In case of sending and receiving remittances gender discrimination is also prevailing. Piper (cited in UN, 2004) also argued that in case of remittance women are sending more than men whereas women migrant’s age, marital status are the considerable issues. Ghosh (2009:29) argued that, ‘these various difficulties faced by women migrants may be compounded by institutional constraints. Local trade unions typically do not concern themselves with migrant workers’. She also argued that, ‘usually the only substitute for such union protection is through the NGOs that are focused on providing services and protection to migrants’. Ghosh (2009:43) mentioned that, ‘in rural Bangladesh, some NGOs have monitored the return to the villages of women who got work in the garment factories and domestic service sectors in Dhaka’. She also argued that in ensuring safe migration for women workers, government should initiate appropriate programme in consultation with concerned NGOs regarding migration issue.

BRAC’s Programme: A brief note on the BRAC Migration programme:

In 2006 BRAC started its Safe Migration Facilitation Center established at the district level of Bangladesh for providing migration related support to the migrant workers and their family members. They

mainly used to provide information on safe migration process. At the present time, they also provide legal aid support to deceived migrants. They used to provide counseling support to returnee migrant workers and also provide rescue support to the vulnerable migrant works at destination countries. Now BRAC migration Programme has expanded its operation to 124 Upazilas of the 33 district of Bangladesh with a view to ensuring safe migration for Bangladeshi migrant workers and coverage population is about 1.8 million. BRAC Migration Programme has more than five projects based on internal and overseas migration and is working also as a leading organization for migration and the chairperson of NAMR, B⁹ and internationally BRAC Migration Programme is involved with CARAM Asia¹⁰. The overall goal of the programme is to ensure improved livelihood of Bangladeshi migrant workers and their family members through human rights promotion and protection whereas the main objective of the programme is to ensure safe migration of Bangladeshi migrant workers through awareness building and education. Since its inception BRAC Migration Programme has expanded its operation by developing Migration volunteer¹¹ resource pool at local level and building partnership with 80 CBOs¹² in Bangladesh and establishing reintegration and referral services for returnee migrant workers

(<http://migration.brac.net/>). BRAC practices a three tiered intervention model to ensure safe migration as depicted below:

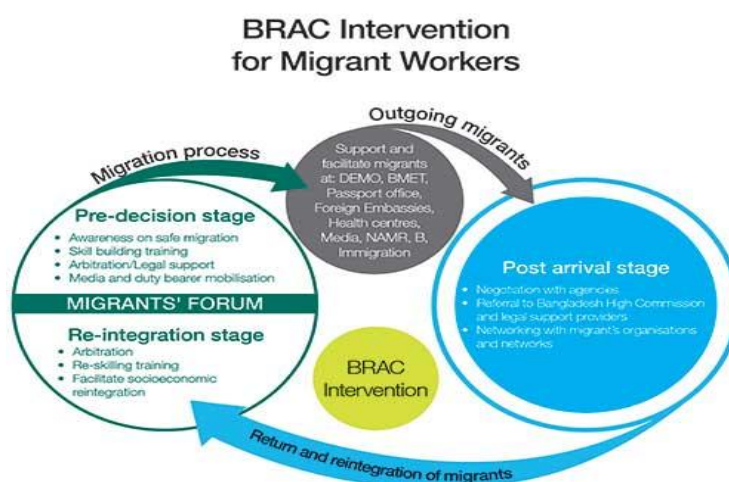


Figure 2: BRAC's Intervention for Migrant workers

(Source: <http://migration.brac.net/programme-approach>)

⁹ National Alliance for Migrant Rights, Bangladesh

¹⁰ Coordination of Action Research on AIDS and Mobility in Asia

¹¹ Community people works voluntarily for migrant workers of their locality

¹² Community Based Organizations

Role of BRAC in ensuring safe migration

a. Role of BRAC Migration Programme in Pre-departure stage of Safe Migration:

It has been observed that in the pre-departure stage, potential migrant workers face many problems such as lack of awareness and knowledge on safe migration issue. Due to lack of knowledge on migration, they are trapped by the middlemen in the community. Middlemen push the potential migrant workers spending more money to be migrated abroad for work. Some of the respondents said that insufficient financial support by GoB for migrant workers at grass roots level makes potential migrant workers de-motivated to go abroad for work. Potential women migrants said that most of the time they can't arrange money to go abroad for work and remain silent. On the other hand family does not motivate to go abroad to a woman rather than man comparatively because of the patriarchy is prevailing in all over Bangladesh. For addressing these problems, BRAC Migration Programme has two types of activities as such; awareness building services and another is social participatory activities. It arranges *Gana natak* or IPT¹³ shows, *pala gan*¹⁴, video show, and court yard meeting, pre-decision orientation workshop and quiz competition for college students on safe migration issue at local level. Basically these have been done by Communication Workers¹⁵ and Volunteers of BRAC Migration Programme. The activities at this level are contributing for building awareness and education on safe migration process and motivating potential workers to go abroad for work. Asia Khatun (22), a returnee women migrant worker as case focuses:

“I was interested to go Saudi Arabia but I was confused and did not know what I should do for going there. Someday I took part in a pre-decision orientation workshop arranged by BRAC Migration Programme where I learned the process of collecting passport and visa, process of opening bank account and the registration process at District Employment and Manpower Office and finally I knew all the procedure of going abroad by attending there and then I had decided to go Saudi Arabia”

In the pre-departure stage of migration, BRAC Migration Programme is providing many services to the potential migrant workers.

¹³ Interactive Popular theater

¹⁴ Musical show arranged by local artist for increasing awareness on safe migration process

¹⁵ Field level staffs of BRAC Migration Programme

Community meeting is one of the best examples for creating awareness and giving information on safe migration to the migrant workers specifically for potential migrant workers. BRAC Migration Programme arranges awareness campaign which is also a major intervention area. BRAC Migration Programme realizes that, all intervention will be wasted without making the migrant workers aware. Not only the migrant workers but their family members also needed to be informed about safe migration process. For this reason BRAC Migration Programme arranges awareness campaign for women migrant workers and their family members. BRAC Migration Programme is providing pre-departure orientation to the potential migrant workers. Ayesha Begum (26), another returnee women migrant worker as case focuses:

“I was very much interested to go abroad and my family members were interested too that is why I searched someone who could be helpful for me in this regard. Someday, a man from my village said that he know the way and he can easily send me Malaysia and cost will be 50,000 taka only. I was delighted and within few days my family gave him total money he required without any evidence. It had been many years the man was out of contact. Several times we tried to contact him but failed. One day I watched a ‘gana natak’ at our village arranged by BRAC migration programme and understood that, the man was actually a middleman and I was cheated by him. Then I was determined that I will go abroad by maintaining all legal procedure. Actually I was not aware before”.

In the court yard meeting, not only the potential migrant workers but their family members also invited to attend the meeting. Communication workers of BRAC Migration Programme carry out the meeting with some specific agenda on migration for about one to two hours. BRAC Migration Programme also conducts meeting on safe migration related information especially on migrant's rights and migrant health issues viz. HIV/AIDS. In the pre-departure stage, BRAC Migration Programme is not supporting only in taking decision to go abroad but also support for visa-checking, opening bank account and to collect migrants' loan from BRAC itself and from other sources, viz. Expatriate Welfare Bank. BRAC Migration Programme also disseminates IEC¹⁶ and BCC¹⁷ materials such as poster, leaflet,

¹⁶ Information Education and Communication

¹⁷ Behavioral Change Communication

brochure, sticker etc. on safe migration issue for building awareness and knowledge on safe migration.

The study found that, in the pre-departure stage of safe migration, women's participation in pre-departure orientation session is not satisfactory due to women's engagement in reproductive household activities in our society. The study also found that, the probability of getting information on safe migration for women is lower than man. Most of the cases, women are not allowed to participate by their family in the awareness campaign arranged by NGOs for potential women migrant workers. The study interestingly found that, religious superstition and social stigma facing by returnee women migrant workers sometime discourage potential women to go abroad for work. The study also found that, potential women migrants do not know the proper channel of getting financial support from Government and NGOs indeed.

b. Role of BRAC Migration Programme in Post-arrival stage of Safe Migration:

Some returnee migrant workers said that without learning the language of the destination country they faced problems abroad. They couldn't communicate with their employer properly due to language barrier. They also said that, due to lack of orientation of the destination country migrant workers can't adjust with the food habit and culture of the country that's why they suffer a lot in the post arrival stage of migration. Most of the returnee migrants said that, when migrant workers arrived at the destination country without taking life skills training they can't enjoy their work properly. Sometimes they don't get the security of their work and residence abroad. It has been informed by the returnee women migrants that they do not get right based support at right time. As domestic worker they usually worked for long time with low qualitative accommodation facilities and did not get proper support from Bangladeshi missions abroad. Before departure migrant workers should know how to use advanced machineries otherwise they fail to stay at abroad because they will have to handle advanced technology for their day to day work in abroad. It has been found that, due to the absence of strong legal agreement between Bangladesh and the destination country, migrant workers do not get proper rights based treatment when necessary. Providing services to the migrant workers in this stage is very crucial rather than pre-departure stage. It is merely not possible to contact with the migrant workers directly during their staying at destination country. Rubina Akter (30), a returnee migrant worker as case focuses:

“After passing one year in Singapore I was bound to come back home because of some problems I was facing there. When I back, I was so frustrated about my future. Actually it is not all in all to go abroad for work only; we will have to stay there to be a successful migrant worker. One day I participated in a ‘court yard’ meeting arranged by BRAC migration Programme at my village where I informed about safe migration process. First time I had no orientation on post arrival stage of safe migration. I did not adjust with a new environment and culture of the destination country. I had no information about job contract and legal way to go abroad. That is why I was forced to back. Now, I know how to go abroad and I have decided to go Singapore again. A brother of my village is a volunteer of BRAC migration Programme is helping me in every step”.

For this stage of safe migration BRAC extended its support to migrant workers facing problems at the destination countries. It supports migrant workers in communicating with their family members and with the Bangladeshi mission abroad. When a migrant worker contacted with the staff of BRAC Migration Programme from abroad, they tries to provide necessary support over phone and refer to government agencies if necessary. It has been providing support for receiving dead body transportation cost from GoB if migrant worker dies in abroad and provides support for claiming death benefits for the family of deceased migrant workers in abroad. The present study found that, in case of sending remittance to their country of origin, Bangladeshi women migrant workers sometimes fails to maintain proper channel due to the remittance sending system which is not well known to them. Sometimes Bangladeshi missions are being failed to trace the vulnerable migrant workers, especially women due to irregular migration.

c. Role of BRAC Migration Programme in Re-integration stage of Safe Migration:

In the reintegration stage migrant workers face problems too. In some cases, especially returnee women migrant workers have been boycotted even from their family and society as well. They are being stigmatized socially after coming back home. When a returnee woman migrant worker fails to earn better monetary return she faces humiliation and when she back home successfully, people treat her as a bad woman supposing that she might earn by an evil way. Returnee migrants also

claim that in case of economic reintegration migrant workers don't get proper financial support by which they can make a business plan after coming from abroad. Establishment of reintegration and referral services for returnee migrant workers is a major concern of BRAC Migration programme. It has been working for promoting and protecting rights of returnee migrant workers, particularly women and vulnerable men. Well and good reintegration is called the pre-condition for empowering women migrant workers. After coming back they want to be established in society as independent women by doing business. For this reason they need fund and technical support. Due to lack of proper support, their condition becomes deteriorated rather than before going abroad. BRAC Migration Programme gives support and suggestions to start again to the returnee migrant workers. BRAC Migration Programme believes and works for policy advocacy with government officials, recruiting agencies and local elites in this regard. In case of remittance management and reintegration, BRAC Migration Programme support migrant workers by giving information and training. In ensuring safe and sustainable migration, reintegration stage is most important for a migrant worker. BRAC Migration Programme is working for developing networks and building capacity of government, NGOs and private sector groups in order to provide an effective and efficient socioeconomic reintegration support to returnee migrant workers. For the returnee migrant workers BRAC Migration Programme is going to start its operation by providing entrepreneurship training, SME¹⁸ training and remittance management orientation etc. for socioeconomic reintegration of the returnee migrant workers in Bangladesh. Reintegration part is still very crucial for migrant workers in our country. In this case, combination of GoB and NGO's intervention is a must need. In case of professional training for potential migrants, there are some endeavors for giving language and professional training from government side to the potential migrant workers whereas BRAC intervention is also important. Though TTCs¹⁹ arranges professional training for potential migrant workers, it is BRAC Migration Programme refers and motivates migrants to take part in the training of TTCs. BRAC Migration Programme emphasizes proactive policy making and implementation for ensuring safe migration for Bangladeshi women migrant workers. The major finding of the study is, BRAC Migration Programme is playing a pivotal role and in partnership with Government can provide better services to reduce the vulnerability of women migrant workers in Bangladesh. The

¹⁸ Small and Medium Enterprises

¹⁹ Technical Training Centre

study also found that, BRAC Migration Programme is playing significant role in pre-departure stage and does a few in reintegration stage of safe migration rather than post arrival stage. It has been observed that, social reintegration support is not enough yet for returnee women migrant workers in Bangladesh. There may be a lack of national planning of the rehabilitation for the returnee migrant workers.

Conclusion and recommendations

At the present time, migrant workers are contributing a lot to the economy of Bangladesh. Therefore, it is high time we provided better services to migrant workers from every sector viz. GoB, NGOs and private sector as well. It can be undoubtedly said that, role of BRAC Migration Programme is noteworthy in every stages of safe migration process. Now it is the time to have a good coordination among the mentioned three sectors for ensuring safe migration for Bangladeshi migrant workers. NGOs should take initiatives regarding appropriate participation of women in training, briefing and awareness campaign organized for them. NGOs should provide information on safe migration from an easily accessible location for both men and women. GoB, NGOs and other organizations should support returnee women migrant workers to readjust with their families as well as society and facilitate returnee migrant workers both socially and financially for ensuring safe migration for Bangladeshi women migrant workers.

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5. Older women (User) perspective toward service delivery system of Government Hospital: a study on some Upazila Health Complex of Bangladesh

Md. Abul Hossen

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to provide an indepth understanding of the challenges faced by older women in relation to their health in health care settings and to understand their special needs from their own perspectives. The primary objective of the study is to explore how rural women as a health care user viewed service delivery provided by government hospitals. In depth interviews and focus group discussion were used to collect data from twenty five older women who were admitted in the government hospital from five Upazila Health Complex taking one from five divisions of Bangladesh. The findings reveal that health care utilization of older women is impeded by three main factors: perceived discrimination based on age and class; structural aspects of the health care delivery system and quality of care. Structural aspects included inconvenient hours of operation, long waits for service, distance to the health facility, and cost of services and medications. Subthemes within quality of care were listening skills of staff, greed for money, unavailability of medications, and lack of specialized training, lack of technology and lack of female staff. Recommendations for change in the delivery of health care in the upazila health complex of Bangladesh are made based on the insights provided by this marginalized group of health care service users. . The findings of this study will enable policy makers and decision makers to understand, from their perspective, the barriers that older women from a rural region in Bangladesh encounter when trying to access health services. The insights provided by the study will enable policy makers to strengthen the coverage and quality of local health services and to modify services so that they can respond to the particular needs of this marginalized population.

Intoduction

Croft and Beresford (2008) argues that service users have the right to quality and choice, that taxpayers have the right to value for money

and that professional need to be accountable. Ensuring that the views of service users are a component of the policy-making and program-development process has come to be recognized as an essential component in meeting these objectives (Boote, Telford, & Cooper, 2002; Chui, 2001). The World Health Organization (WHO) identifies the responsiveness of health systems as a crucial component of their overall performance, defining responsiveness as “how the system performs relative to non-health aspects, meeting or not meeting a population’s expectations of how it should be treated by providers...” (WHO, 2000:31). Being responsive to the needs of users is understood to be a prerequisite for delivering appropriate and effective services, with countries like the UK now requiring consumer involvement in health research (Boote et al., 2002).

In spite of the recognition that consumer input is essential to develop good health policy and services, documentation of sensitivity to the needs of older women remains uncommon in health policy and program development (Andaleeb, 2001). The health care needs of women are defined almost exclusively in relation to their reproductive roles by male health care providers, administrators, and researchers. This may be particularly true in rural areas of Bangladesh where the importance of the health of older women has largely been ignored in both the traditional and biomedical health care systems (Osmani & Sen, 2003). As a result, services continue to be underutilized by older women in rural areas of Bangladesh (Hosain & Begum, 2003; Lundborg, Wahlin, Ahmed & Kabir, 2008). To minimize these barriers and increase access to health services, it is important to understand the experiences and preferences of older women (Schuler & Hossain, 1998).

Since its independence in 1971, the Government of Bangladesh has undertaken various programs in its five year plans to achieve the goal of Health for All (HFA). One of the major programs was the development of physical infrastructures like the Upazila Health Complex (UHC), district hospitals, medical college hospitals and other specialized institutes and hospitals throughout the country. Bangladesh has four levels of service delivery: the community, the union, the upzila (thana), and the district (zila).

At the community level, the Essential Service Package (ESP) is delivered through a one-stop outlet called the Community Clinic (CC). There are 4,062 Union Health and Family Welfare Centers (UHFWC) now functioning in the country.

In each rural Upazila Health Complex there are both residential and outdoor health service which is a permanent facility offering daily health and family welfare services for in and outpatients as well as supervision of other health services within the upazila. Sixty of the 64 districts have now constructed a hospital. Each of these hospitals has a bed capacity of 50-200, with a few already upgraded to 250-bed hospitals (BMOHFW, 2005).

In the public sector, performance evaluation is the primary tool for assessing the quality and accessibility of health care delivery system. In this respect, clients' opinions on aspects of care have gained prominence over the past few decades in the west, and only recently in the context of developing countries. Clients' perspectives in assessment of services quality are critical not only to empower clients to assess the services received, but also for the purpose of monitoring and improving the quality of services. In this paper, an attempt is made to assess the quality and coverage of primary health care services delivered at government services facilities on the basis of clients' perception on quality of care. The findings of this study will enable policy makers and decision makers to understand, from their perspective, the barriers that older women from a rural region in Bangladesh encounter when trying to access health services. The insights provided by the study will enable policy makers to strengthen the coverage and quality of local health services and to modify services so that they can respond to the particular needs of this marginalized population.

The Conceptual Framework

The social-determinants-of-health (SDOH) perspective used in this study is based on a synthesis of a diverse public health and social scientific literature which suggests that the most important antecedents of human health status are not influenced by medical care rather by socioeconomic factors. The World Health Organization (n.d.) describes the social determinants of health as "the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, including the health system". The SDOH perspective draws attention to the importance of material disadvantage and inequality and emphasizes the social structures within which people live their lives, describing how these structures determine the choices that people can make (Kirby, 2002; Wilkinson & Marmot, 1998).

Objectives of the study

The purpose of this study is to provide an indepth understanding of the challenges faced by older women in relation to their health in health

care settings and to understand their special needs from their own perspectives. The primary objective of the study is to explore how rural women as a health care user viewed service delivery provided by of government hospitals. The questions to be explored in this research are: What are the barriers older women of village experience when seeking health care from publicly-funded health services? Explore the level of satisfaction and perceived quality of services (with respect to availability of doctors, their attitude/empathy, availability of medicine, cleanliness, privacy and confidentiality, etc). What are their recommendations about how to make publicly-funded health services better meet their needs?

Methodology

Design of the Study

With the objectives of an in-depth exploration on older women's perspective on health care system, the research project used a qualitative design. The goal of the qualitative design is to represent the participants' reality as faithfully as possible from their points of view (Morgan and Kunkel, 2001).

Selection of Area and Sample

Five administrative divisions were chosen and from them one district and from that district one UHC were selected by using multistage sampling method. From each UHC we have selected five women (60+) who were admitted in the hospital during the data collection periods. This way we got twenty five participants. In order to get a total picture of a Upazila Health Complex one UHC were selected (from the above five) purposively and conduct extensive fieldwork that include observation, interview and focus group discussion with five participants.

Data Collection

Data were collected using unstructured interview guides and tape recordings. All interviews were conducted in Bangla and the typical length was 2 to 3 hours. A semi-structured interview established a general direction for the interview while offering opportunities for participants to direct the conversation to areas of concern to them. The interview guide focused on the following general topics such as types of health problem experienced; types of treatment used; types of barriers experienced; suggestions for addressing the barriers.

A Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) was conducted with elderly patient. Extensive field notes were collected through observation and

informal discussion. The successful collection of qualitative data depends largely on the mutual understanding between the researchers and the participants. The researchers and the research assistant spend a fair amount of time at the research sites to develop rapport with the participants so that information can be gathered in a free, friendly, and trustworthy manner.

Data Analysis

The approach used to analyze the data was a phenomenological thematic analysis (Ezzy, 2002; van Manen, 1997). The approach was inductive, with transcripts first being read through then reviewed again, line by line, to develop initial codes that conceptualized the meaning in the data. Transcripts were coded openly (Charmaz, 2006), that is, they were read through and coded according to the concepts that were discussed at any point in the interview and without a predefined code book.

Findings

The purpose of this study is to provide an in-depth understanding of the health system related factors that are identified as barriers to utilization of health services among older women in rural Bangladesh by the women themselves. In depth interviews and focus group discussion were used to collect data from twenty five older women who were admitted in the government hospital from five Upazila Health Complexes taking one from five divisions of Bangladesh. The findings reveal that health care utilization of older women is impeded by three main factors: perceived discrimination based on age and class; structural aspects of the health care delivery system and quality of care. Structural aspects included inconvenient hours of operation, long waits for service, distance to the health facility, and cost of services and medications. Subthemes within quality of care were listening skills of staff, greed for money, unavailability of medications, and lack of specialized training, lack of technology and lack of female staff. Recommendations for change in the delivery of health care in the upazila health complex of Bangladesh are made based on the insights provided by this marginalized group of health care service users.

Perceived Discrimination by Health Care Providers

Ageism

Interviews with participants revealed that many government health care providers were perceived to have a negative attitude toward older adult women. This affected the care provided and the interaction between the

person seeking care and the caregiver. One participant explained, “Other day I went to hospital. I was hesitant to explain my health problems (she has a problem with vaginal infection) to a male doctor. The doctor became angry at me and told me to go for a female doctor in a private clinic. Another participant found that doctors behavior are disrespectful and that limits her access to government health care centre. She mentioned that, “They (doctors, nurse, and guard) treated us (women) like stupid. But they forget they come from a woman”.

Classism

The current health systems are frequently ineffective in reaching the poor, generate less benefit for the poor than the rich, and impose regressive cost burdens on poor households. Participants said that service providers would not dare to “misbehave” by overcharging those who are economically influential and that the better off and more educated “know how to talk” to health care providers. The comparatively wealthy were also more likely to be personally acquainted with doctors or to have a kinship tie to them, which increased access to services and led to more respectful treatment.

Preferential treatment goes to those who are well dressed, or have influence or money, while those without money are penalized. One participant said, “In order to get treatment in the hospital, you have to be staff relatives, or have to spend money. If you don’t have power you cannot expect anything from there.” These comments illustrate a perception of a hierarchical social order of relations in which the rich or more powerful received preferential treatment in the health care system.

Structural Aspects of the Health Care Delivery System

Inconvenient hours of operation

Hospital hours of operation were often mentioned as a factor that influenced participant’s ability to seek health care. The participants disclosed that they found it difficult to make time to seek health care services in spite of the fact that many of them were in need of the care. In some cases the participant lacked the time to make the required follow-up visits while in other cases they could not make even the first visit to a health care facility. One participant said: “We begin our day’s right after *Fozorer Azan* call for first prayer of the day before the sunrise and work until evening. In the evening we get *obsoshor* leisure time for a while. Unfortunately the hospital remains closed in the evening.”

Long Waits for Service

As their daily activities leave them with no spare time the women felt they could not afford to spend long hours in hospital waiting lines to see a doctor. One participant explained:

You go to the hospital, buy a ticket and wait for several hours to see the doctor. If you are lucky you may be able to talk with a doctor for two minutes. After seeing doctors when you return it is already evening. Who is going to do your household chores?

Another echoed "I find it difficult to have time for myself. I don't want to wait for seven hours in the hospital and be absent from housework."

Distance to Health Facility

Distance plays a major role in when and how participants seek care for their health problems. Not only is the actual distance from the home to the practitioner or facility is often a deterrent to the use of health care, the poor quality of the roads in the area and the lack of transportation worsen the situation. Illustrating this theme, one participant said:

The people in towncan go in the afternoon. We in the village get up at 6 a.m. to take the bus. We arrive. We go to the doctor at the hospital. You arrive at 10 a.m. You are stuck there until the afternoon, without eating, without being able to drink water....you spend hours and hours and get hungry. You have to go back before the doctor has seen you. You miss the bus. You have to go however you can...so you can get home, even walking.

Although participants understood that the specialized hospital provided high quality services, they were reluctant to go there, mainly because of the long traveling times to the hospital. For participants, good quality meant more inconvenience. As one participant explained, "The medical college hospital has modern equipment, efficient doctors and a good reputation. The problem is, we need to spend more than one day and a lot of money to get the services."

Cost of Services and Medication

Lack of money also made it difficult for participant to obtain medical care when they were ill. I asked many participants who were seriously ill why they did not seek medical help. The most frequent answer given was their lack of money. Health care has become more expensive for people since the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP), there is the likelihood that many more women like this participant will go on with their lives with little or no medical

attention. Hospital fees are a major deterrent to participants seeking medical care. Another participant explained, “I have been suffering from eye problems for the last five years...I would really like to go to hospital but due to my son’s financial condition I cannot. If I needed to go for an operation it would be impossible to bear the cost.”

Quality of Care

Dissatisfaction with the quality of health care was widespread among participants, particularly in reference to listening skills of staff, greed for money, availability of medications, lack of specialized training, lack of technology and lack of privacy.

Listening Skills of Staff

Participants expressed dissatisfaction with the way they were treated by health care providers, especially physicians. Several felt that their concerns received little attention within the health care system; some complained about physicians who would not answer their questions, and to whom the senior’s personal identity seemed to be invisible. One participant elaborated:

Whenever you go, doctors will ask, *ki shomoshaya* ‘what’s wrong with you?’ Well, I have been suffering from lower abdominal pain. ‘Well you will take these pills and that’s that.’ They don’t let you to talk with them. You may have other concerns to talk about but they become rude. You can never be satisfied with this kind of service.”

She continued to talk about the pain she experienced and her frustration with her doctor:

I am now seventy. I cannot see well and one of my hand got *obosh* numb. I cannot pull anything with this hand. My book chest *dhorphor* palpitating and I have *shashkoster beram* breathing problems. Whenever I go to the doctor and try to *shobkisho khole bholte* explain everything in detail, he stopped me in the middle and only laughs at me, so I have stopped going to him because I felt he has not been taking me seriously enough.

Greed for Money

Others distrusted the motives of certain physicians whom they had visited. One participant said “Some doctors don’t want you to ask. They don’t give you time.” She said maybe some don’t want you to ask so they can treat you again in the private clinic where they will be paid more for their services. Another complained, “In the government hospital doctors don’t want to talk. Last time the doctor gave me an address to go where he has a private practice.”

Demands for money for the services by the staff discourage participants from seeking medical care from the government hospital. One participant added, “Staff demands money for medicine which should be free. I am not going there again” This was confirmed by another participant who stated: “To visit a hospital is a hassle, the guards, nurses, everybody is greedy for money. No money, no service”

Availability of Medications

Participants reported that medications were unavailable at government facilities or that all illnesses were being treated with the same medications irrespective of their severity. Some participants believed health care providers sold their pharmaceutical stock to local drug distributors who re-sold the medication at a higher price. The perceived poor quality or complete lack of medicines available through the sub-center discouraged participants from seeking help.

One participant reported, “They give the same medicines to all patients...I was given six capsules and they did not work for me...the building is the only change...the mentality and the services have not improved.” Another participant stated, “Last year I went to hospital to see a doctor. After two visits, I stopped because I did not get better... They give the same medicines for different problems.

Understaffing

Participants also complained about the lack of medical staff. One participant mentioned, “if you go to hospitals sometimes you don’t find anybody. If you ask what happened? Where are the doctors? They may answer he got transferred to other places for now we can not do anything.” Or sometime they say “doctor has a meeting and he can not see anybody today.”

Even when staff is present, the participants said, they give rushed, misleading and conflicting information. According to one woman, “You go to the hospital, wait for two-three hours, the nurses are chatting, ‘Is the doctor here?’ ‘No, the doctor isn’t here, he is in a meeting.’ They lie.”

Lack of Geriatric Training

The services that are most needed by the older women like those interviewed, such as laboratory testing, gynecological, menopause, and breast cancer services, are difficult to access because they are concentrated in big hospitals and clinics in urban areas. As one participant mentioned, “In the hospital you will not get anything for the senior people. The hospitals are only dealing with children and family

planning issues. Another explained, “You will find nothing in the hospital...there are no medicines...no specialized doctors, it is a disaster.”

Lack of Female Staff

The participant mentioned they prefer a female provider because “she is my kind” and because it would be easier to share problems with a woman. One participant explained, “*Mohila dactar shobjane* A female doctor knows everything we have, and I can *khole bholbo* (freely tell her) everything without being embarrassment.”

Another problem is lack of geriatric specialist in the hospital that makes the older patient unhappy and they also expressed their dissatisfaction about it. As one participant mentioned, “The hospital is for children and young women. They cannot treat elderly. They give same tablet for everybody.” Another participant explained the problem, “Here we are nobody. For older patient only Allah is for us. Hospital is not for us. They are not ready to treat frail body.”

Discussion

The findings reveal that three main themes describe the impediments to utilization of health services by older women in rural Bangladesh. The findings from this study are consistent with earlier studies which observed that women are generally not satisfied with the health care services, citing understaffing and absence of some of the most required services such as medicines and laboratory-testing facilities (White, Small, Frederic, Joseph, Bateau & Kershaw, 2006; Needham & Bowman, 2003). Finally, findings reveal that women prefer female providers because of religious prescription, cultural tradition and greater comfort talking to them compared to male doctors. The government needs to ensure that the primary health care centers have the necessary medical equipment and that it is in proper working order. The centers should also have qualified technicians to operate the medical equipment. The center also needs to be open longer hours and have provision for emergency care at night. This will require a strong and sustained commitment from all levels of government.

Studies in other developing countries have shown that physical proximity of health care plays an important role in utilization of these services (Needham & Bowman, 2003). This distance is of particular concern for observant Muslim women, since in a strict Muslim society like Bangladesh cultural guidelines restrict the mobility of females (WHO, 2000). In Bangladesh, one in every five people has mobile phone. Telehealth may be one option to address the distance problem, the use of mobile in health sector may make an important contribution.

This may also help to disseminate public health messages to individuals, families and communities (Sandberg, 2005).

Poverty clearly influences the likelihood of accessing health care. The most salient factor was cost of medications and services, which has been found to be a barrier to health care in other areas in Bangladesh as well (Ahmed, Adams, Chowdhury & Bhuiya, 2003). These findings are consistent with other studies which showed that when people in rural areas of developing countries decided to seek health care, they had to resort to less educated providers who charged lower prices (Rana, Lundborg, Wahlin, Ahmed & Kabir, 2008).

The study found that poor quality of care; disrespectful treatment and hierarchical modes of interaction by the providers constitute a strong disincentive for older adult women to use available services. Women's higher sensitivity to negative attitudes and behavior of staff and other deficiencies in the health facilities have also been reported by other authors (Shaikh, Haran & Hatcher, 2008; Rana, Lundborg, Wahlin, Ahmed & Kabir, 2008).

Conclusion

Development and expansion of health care facilities has been an integral part of government policy to improve the health status of the Bangladeshi population. However, experience shows that existing health care practices limits the health care opportunities and choices of older women because of its inherent limitations. The women, especially the older adult women, continue to receive fewer health services have been widely recognized, and confirmed in national data as well as in many local studies

The voices and views of clients are considered indispensable in efforts to improve the quality of care in health care setting. Health professionals in several countries have reported the importance of client participation in health care, emphasizing the need for receptivity to and respect for clients' perspectives in the planning of health interventions (Hansen, Hatling, Lidal & Ruud, 2002). In Bangladesh, older health has received little attention from Primary Health Care (PHC) services. Knowledge and skills about treating older adult is not covered within the medical or para-professional curriculum. In order to serve the older adult it is important to incorporate training courses on interpersonal and communication skills into medical education, and to arrange training sessions for practising doctors. Providers should be encouraged to adopt simple actions that are highly valued by older, such as addressing women in the culturally appropriate way; reassuring them; treating them gently and respectfully; providing clear information about their condition.

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6. Rights of the Female Domestic Workers- Rhetoric or Reality

Md. Rakibul Hasan Buiyan

Abstract

Having no other alternative livelihood option to the rural poor women, they are employed as housemaid to the employers. They played a vital role in household chores of the Employers. A number of domestic workers do not find jobs according to their skills. They are often victim of abusive behavior, physical torture and sexual harassment by the employers even to some extent they are wounded or murdered. FDWs have no scope to make complain against this injustice. Beside this, no remarkable initiative has under taken to protect their rights and to protect them from sexual harassment and violence except a draft policy on Domestic Workers Protection and Welfare policy 2010 yet not finalized. The FDWs are also excluded from the Labor laws of the Country. The main aim of this project to establish community based sustainable mechanism for promoting and protecting the rights of the Female Domestic Workers & better access to the service. This project also focuses on actively engaged of FDWS in rights claiming initiatives and reduction of violence of all forms against FDWs. The study starts with discussion of present situation of FDWS of Dhaka city. After that review of existing literature has been mentioned. Data has been collected by using survey, case study and focus group discussion. Finally some discussions have been made to ensure building a suitable platform for domestic workers.

Keyword: Right, Female Domestic worker, Reality, Dhaka City.

Introduction

Every day millions of women and men clean other people's homes, cook their meals and look after their children. They are the invisible labour that makes it possible for people to go about their work and life. Invisibility marks the work and status of a domestic worker. Hired domestic workers ease the burden of individual households by undertaking household chores in return for remuneration. The tasks include the care of children and the elderly, cooking, cleaning, grocery shopping, running errands and taking care of household pets, particularly in urban areas. Despite the benefits their services bring, domestic workers lack recognition as real labour and tasks performed

by them are not recognized as 'work'. They constitute one of the most vulnerable categories of workers. The vast majority are women. Like other sectors of the society women's contribution in this sector is valued low. It is mostly women of low education and low qualification moving from rural parts of the country to cities as a result of domestic migration who work for wages in domestic work mainly for not having any chance of being employed elsewhere. Domestic work is essentially performed under an informal employment relationship between women from low and remains largely outside the domain of legal arrangements and protection. Domestic workers include full- or part-time employees. Some live in their employers' residence, others in their own homes.

More than 2 million (Asraf, 2015) poor women and children are employed as domestic workers in Bangladesh. Female Domestic Workers (FDW's) are deprived by wage, working hour, weekly/yearly leave, medical facilities, and recreation, security and safety and education facilities. They are also in threat of unemployment. A number of domestic workers do not find jobs according to their skills. On the other hand there are some skilled domestic workers who are continuing their profession as a domestic worker with unsatisfactory wages. They are often victim of abusive behavior, physical torture and sexual harassment by the employers even to some extent they are wounded or murdered. FDWs have no scope to make complain against this injustice. Beside this, no remarkable initiative has under taken to protect their rights and to protect them from sexual harassment and violence except a draft policy on Domestic Workers Protection and Welfare policy 2010 yet it is not finalized. It is a harsh reality that they operate in a legal and policy vacuum, a result of the national labour laws of 2006 and 2013, both of which exclude domestic workers from legal coverage. A code of Conduct has developed under this draft policy, which is not properly followed by the employers and monitored by the authority. As a result, rights of the FDWs are violating, so the benefit of democracy is not still enjoying equally by everyone.

It is unknown when the domestic works first started in our society. But it is a matter of regret that this profession has been neglected for so long. A huge number of domestic workers have not yet been recognized as workers. The term "Domestic worker" is very recent trend to recognize them as worker. Formally the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (Convention No. 189 of ILO) first recognizes domestic work as "work" and persons engaged in this sort of work as worker and also introduces a set rights for these workers.

As they have been kept outside the purview of the Labour Law 2006, they have been deprived of enjoying different rights and they

faced different tortures on different excuses. They are not safe even staying at home environment, both their physical and mental growths are being hampered. Unlike other forms of labour market activity, domestic work takes place in an unconventional place of work, i.e. the household. Gaining public acceptance of a household as a place of work is a challenge. Implementations of labour laws such as minimum wages and regularized work hours, which are essential elements of any kind of work, also remain a challenge. Such regulation is complex because the nature of domestic work is unique compared to other forms of work. The sector lacks effective means to regulate working conditions, for example, through streamlined job descriptions which could be offered through standard contracts (Mehrotra, 2010). In Bangladesh there is no comprehensive law in favor of women who are working in the informal sector that include the women engaged in domestic work. Only the Domestic Servant Registration Ordinance of 1961 requires self – registration of the domestic servants with the local police station within fifteen days from employment. This law neither contains any rights for the domestic workers nor defines the obligation of the employers. It is necessary to establish community based sustainable mechanism for promoting and protecting the rights of the Female Domestic Workers & better access to the services.

The objective of the study are

- i. To find out the socio-economic condition of female domestic workers of Dhaka city.
- ii. To know the reason of being a domestic worker.
- iii To explore the access of the indigenous people to their rights.
- iv. To develop a sustainable mechanism for promoting and protecting the rights of the Female Domestic Workers.

Literature Review

There are some literatures on the domestic workers of Bangladesh. These literatures can provide some insights into the socio-cultural and economic condition of female domestic workers.

Rosul (2014) conducted a study titled “The Violation of the rights of domestic workers in Bangladesh: Islamic and Conventional law perspectives”. This study aims to analyze the existing domestic workers rights policy and rights of domestic workers in Islam.. This study uses interviews and other primary sources to examine the current domestic workers’ rights in Bangladesh from the perspectives of legal institutionalization and its practice. The study reveals that recruiting domestic workers for the daily housekeeping is a common household

economic feature in Bangladesh. It has yet to get proper institutional recognition and legal protection. As a result violation of domestic worker's rights has become a common phenomenon in the country. Both Islam, which is the religion of the majority in Bangladesh, and many international conventions recognize certain rights of the domestic workers. Bangladesh being a signatory to all these conventions and being a Muslim majority state is expected to treat the sector as an important labor and economic sector. While the international conventions and national statutory laws can provide clear legal prescriptions, the Islamic religious values, morals and incentives can provide ethical prescriptions for upholding domestic workers' rights.

Ahmed (2009) in his study, "*Safeguarding the rights of domestic workers: Existing laws and ways to move forward*" tries to identify the existing legal regime with respect to the domestic workers. It discusses definition domestic workers, their constitutional and legal rights, violation of rights, policy to protect their rights. The outcome of the study shows that Domestic workers are one of the marginalized and highly vulnerable groups in Bangladesh. They do not know about their rights and suffer in silence when these rights are violated. They work very long hours without any specified working conditions. In most cases, they do not have ways to ventilate their grievances. A special legislation for the domestic workers is the best solution in this regard. There is yet wide scope to conduct further legal research in the field of laws on domestic workers. Disparate works from social, economic or medical perspective in the field should be brought together, along with experts who are dealing with these matters, to work with the lawyers.

Islam (2014) in his writing "*Domestic Worker's need better representation to have legal protection*" tries to describe condition of domestic workers in Dhaka city. The study finds out that domestic workers had been aiding in different domestic works since long. As they are kept outside the purview of the Labour Law 2006, they are being deprived of enjoying different rights and facing different tortures on different excuses. They are not safe even staying at home environment and both their physical and mental growths are being hampered. Recently, torture on domestic workers and killing reached an alarming proportion. Most of victims don't get justice in the court. The accused in the cases force the victim's guardians to withdraw the cases. No effective initiative has been taken so far to address their problems. Being poor, illiterate and helpless, the domestic workers failed to organize themselves to highlight their issue. It is not possible to change the situation without strong supervision of the state especially registration for domestic workers, bringing them under

Labour Law and giving exemplary punishment to those who tortured the workers.

Ashraf (2015) provide a variety of information in his article, “Domestic workers need the law on their side.” The finds out that more than 2 million poor women and children are employed as domestic workers in Bangladesh. It is a harsh reality that they operate in a legal and policy vacuum, a result of the national labour laws of 2006 and 2013, both of which exclude domestic workers from legal coverage. The article also reveals that there are at least two possible ways to extend legal coverage to domestic workers in Bangladesh: The first is relying on existing penal codes, human rights laws, and international conventions. The second would be getting the domestic workers policy process on right track. The second deserves more attention. The labour ministry needs to provide strategic leadership to convert the “draft” to an “official” policy. There is a need to draw policy lessons from other countries which have not only enacted national laws on domestic workers, but also ratified the ILO Domestic Workers Convention 2011. Academics need to come forward to generate such policy lessons.

“No legal protection for domestic workers, unnatural death high” a article by Islam (2014) shows that Lack of legal protection has left domestic workers in the country vulnerable to abuse by their employers, most of which remain undocumented and, in many cases, result in their untimely death. The process to protect said rights started when the Ministry of Labour and Employment prepared the draft of Domestic Workers’ Protection and Welfare Policy 2010, but little has been done since then. The number of domestic workers is rising, but no effective steps have been taken to protect their rights. An act is necessary by which it can be possible to establish domestic workers as professionals and enable them to get justice in court. The article also descried rate of violence against female and child domestic workers from secondary source. According to a survey by the Domestic Workers’ Rights Network, at least 567 domestic workers died from unnatural causes between 2001 and 2013 in Dhaka city alone. In most cases, the abusing employers escape justice. In the cases that the victims file cases with police, they are forced to withdraw the cases by the accused in exchange of money.

“Women domestic workers in Bangladesh: An ignored community” a work by Jahan (2014) reveals that domestic workers work relentlessly; cooking, cleaning, doing laundry, and in some cases providing care for children or elderly dependents. Yet, they are not

recognized as formal sector workers. They are excluded from the formal workforce, and are thus denied labour rights. This exclusion is in fact a breach of their human rights. Most of them have no established working hours – there is no account of the overtime they work. They are not entitled to a minimum wage or even a decent working condition. , there are policies and laws to protect women’s and children’s rights like the Prevention of Repression against Women and Children Act 2000 and the Bangladesh National Children Policy 2011. But the existing laws do not adequately extend to migrant domestic workers. They are ignored by the Bangladesh Labour Act 2006. There are international conventions, ie ILO 189, that protect the rights of domestic workers, but it has not been ratified by the government of Bangladesh yet. A draft law has been finalized by the Ministry for Labour and Employment based on the advocacy of the Domestic Workers’ Rights Network, but there is no sign of progress of the draft law.

Data and Methods

The study follows quantitative and qualitative analysis. Quantitative data has been collected through survey using interview schedule. The study has been conducted at Mirpur, Shamoli, Kallyanpur, Mohammadpur & Hazaribag of Dhaka City. Simple random sampling is the process of drawing samples. A simple random sample is a subset of individuals (a sample) chosen from a larger set (a population). Each individual is chosen randomly and entirely by chance, such that each individual has the same probability of being chosen at any stage during the sampling process, and each subset of individuals has the same probability of being chosen for the sample as any other subset of individuals. The sample size of the study is Four Hundred. The fieldwork was conducted during June to September 2015. The quantitative data has been done in Microsoft office Excel 2007 and the findings are presented through tables and figure where required. Qualitative data has been analyzed manually.

Data analysis and Presentation

Analysis of data is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modeling data with the goal of highlighting useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision making. Data analysis has multiple facets and approaches, encompassing diverse techniques under a variety of names, in different business, science, and social science domains. Microsoft office Excel 2007 has been used in this study to analyze data. The findings are presented below –

Table -1: Percentage distribution of the respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-30	212	53
31-40	139	34.75
41-50	41	10.25
50 & Above	8	2
Total	400	100

Source: Field Work, 2015

n=400

It is evident from the table-1 that majority the respondents are between 18-30 ages (53%). Employers want young female domestic worker because they think people of this age range are energetic and can be taught as required. These FDWs can do more work in much lesser time.

Table -2: Percentage distribution of the respondents by Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	330	82.5
Unmarried	16	4
Separated	43	10.75
Widow	11	2.75
Total	400	100

Source: Field Work, 2015

n=400

Table-2 exhibits that 82.5% of the respondent are married, 4% of the respondents are unmarried and 10.75% of the respondents are separated. Early marriage is a common scenario in Bangladesh, especially in poor family. They think girls are burden of family that's why rate of early marriage is high.

Table -3: Percentage distribution of the respondents by Educational Status

Educational Status	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	32	8
Can Sign Name	359	89.75
Class:1-Class-5	7	1.75
Class-5 & Above	2	0.5
Total	400	100

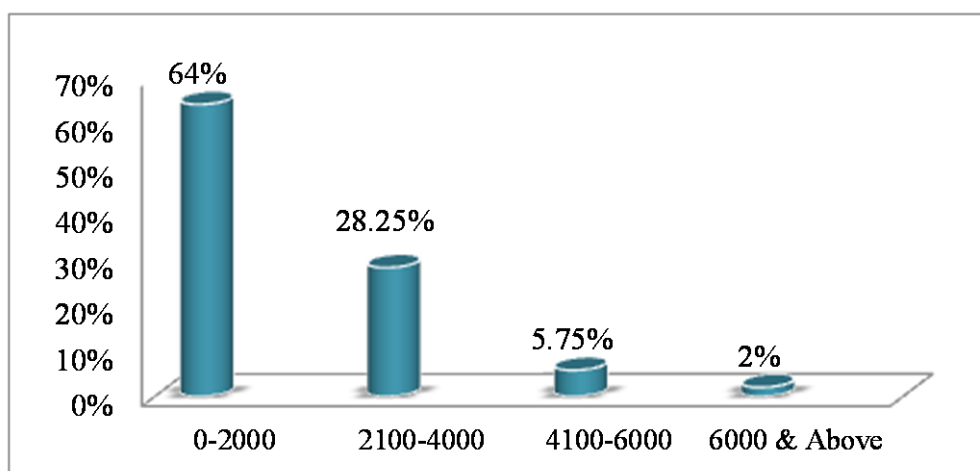
Source: Field Work, 2015

n=400

It is clearly revealed from the table-3 that a significant number of the respondents only can sign name (89.75%). These FDWs actually have no education. Their family thinks its waste of money and time to

educate a girl. FDWs are trying to learn sign their name because it requires in various aspects of life such as opening a bank account, get allowance from different organization etc.

Figure -1: Percentage distribution of the respondents by *Monthly Income (BDT)*



Source: Field Work, 2015

n=400

Figure-1 portrays that 64% of the respondents earn between 0-2000 BDT, 28.25% of the respondents earn between 2100-4000. Only 2% of the respondents earn more than 6000. The reason of low income is there is no fixed rate for work of domestic workers in Bangladesh. Most of the time they get paid by work basis which varies from area to area between 400-600 BDT. Some FDWs work in household of luxurious areas that's why they can earn more then 6000 BDT in a month.

Table-4: Percentage distribution of the respondents by *Reason of being engaged in Domestic work*

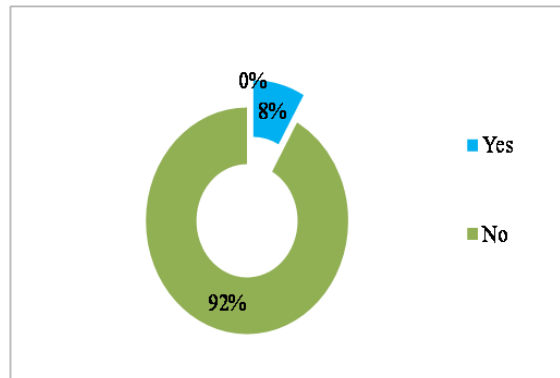
Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Finding no other job	273	68.25
Can give family much time	64	16
Easy to get employed	38	9.5
Don't need skill	25	6.25
Total	400	100

Source: Field Work, 2015

n=400

According to table-4, 68.25% of the respondents chose to become domestic workers because they could find any other job to do. Besides there is no fixed working hour for domestic workers, so they can take care of their children and their own work for the family (16%). Some FDWs think that every family need assistant from domestic workers so there are availability of this work (9.5). 6.25 FDWs argued that other works need special skill while domestic workers don't need so as these are their regular work.

Figure-2: Percentage distribution of the respondents by *Influence of being engaged in Domestic work*



Source: Field Work, 2015

n=400

Figure-2 digs out that most of the FDWs (45%) were influenced by their neighbor to being engaged in domestic work. They saw their neighbor contributes in family income through domestic work which made them interested in this works. Beside some of the FDWs were influenced by relatives (30%) & professional middleman (15%).

Table -5: Percentage distribution of the respondents by *regular payment*

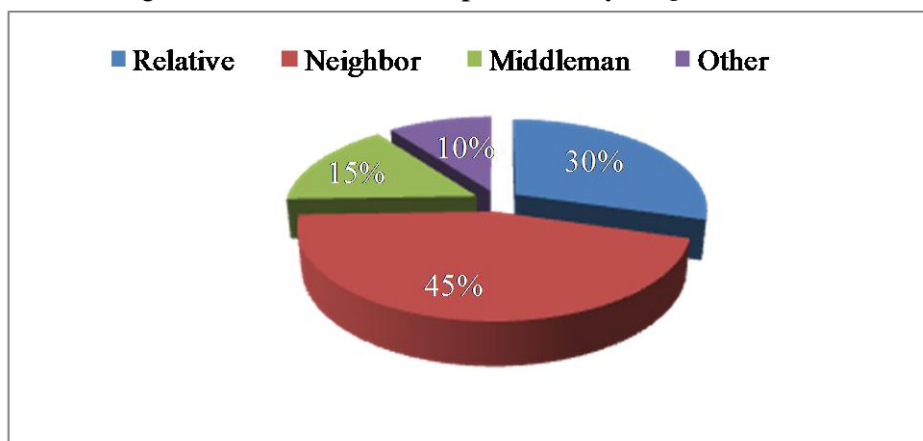
Date	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 of the month	2	0.5
6-10 of the month	107	26.75
10-15 of the month	287	71.75
16 & above of the month	4	1
Total	400	100

Source: Field Work, 2015

n=400

Table-5 indicates that 71.75% of the respondents get their monthly salary between 10-15 days of the month while 26.75% get between 6-10. According to FDWs employers are not eager to pay them early of the month because employers think that if they pay early FDWs may leave the work.

Figure-3: Percentage distribution of the respondents by *wage increase within 2 years*



Source: Field Work, 2015

n=400

Figure-3 shows that wage of most of the FDWs (92%) didn't increase in last two years. A days going on more people are migrating from rural area to city in order to find a better livelihood. The number of this type of people is increasing day by day. Finding no other way they become domestic workers. As employer think they will get another FDW if one resign. Besides FDWS don't have a platform to say anything about increasing wage.

Table -6: Percentage distribution of the respondents by *leave facility*

Type of leave	Frequency	Percentage
None	12	3
With payment	51	12.75
Without payment	332	83
With replacement	5	1.25
Total	400	100

Source: Field Work, 2015

$n=400$

From table-6 we can see that 83% of the FDWs don't get payment when they are on leave. Only 12.75% get paid for vacation days. It's hard for 3% get a leave and 1.25% can manage leave but they have to give a replacement for those days.

Table -7: Percentage distribution of the respondents by *type of abuse*

Type of abuse	Frequency	Percentage
None	64	16
Mental	319	79.75
Physical	6	1.5
Sexual	11	2.75
Total	400	100

Source: Field Work, 2015

$n=400$

Table-12 exhibits that 79.75% FDWs faced mental abuse, 2.75% faced sexual violence and 1.5% faced physical abuse while 16% FDWs don't face any kind of violence. The rate of physical abuse is low because the respondents are adults. Few FDWs faced sexual violence who worked in mess where young boys live. Mental abuse include calling in bad names, threatening, humiliating, giving extra pressure of work, not paying in time and regularly.

Findings & Discussion

Majority the respondents are between 18-30 ages (53%) on the other hand 10.25% are between 31-40. 82.5% of the respondent are married, 4% of the respondents are unmarried and 10.75% of the respondents are separated. A significant number of the respondents only can sign

name (89.75%). These FDWs actually have no education. 64% of the respondents earn between 0-2000 BDT, 28.25% of the respondents earn between 2100-4000. Only 2% of the respondents earn more than 6000. The reason of low income is there is no fixed rate for work of domestic workers in Bangladesh. This finding reveals that socio-economic condition of FDWs in Bangladesh is very poor. They got married in an early age, so they get little chance of education. Rate of separation is high because they are not concern about marriage registration. That's why husband can leave them easily.

68.25% of the respondents chose to become domestic workers because they could find any other job to do. Most FDWs (45%) were influenced by their neighbor to work as domestic worker while 30% influenced by relatives & 15% professional middleman. Wage of most of the FDWs (92%) didn't increase in last two years. 71.75% of the respondents get their monthly salary after 10th of the month. Poor women of rural area think that they can earn a lot in Dhaka city, their neighbors also told so. But reality is different. They get very low payment which is also not in time.

83% of the FDWs don't get payment when they are on leave. Only 12.75% get paid for vacation days. It's hard for 3% get a leave and 1.25% can manage leave but they have to give a replacement for those days. 79.75% FDWs faced mental abuse, 2.75% faced sexual violence and 1.5% faced physical abuse while 16% FDWs don't face any kind of violence. The rate of physical abuse is low because the respondents are adults. Most of the time incidents of violence remain hidden. FDWs silently tolerate torture because they don't want to lose their job. Beside legal service providers are not concern to take initiative rapidly because these are poor & neglected people.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Benefiting from the labour of domestic workers in the domestic arena is a common scenario throughout Bangladesh. Every year a large number of women migrate from rural to urban areas in Bangladesh. They have different reasons to migrate – poverty, natural disaster, climate change, political and social struggle – but they all seek a better life. Often, the women migrants end up either as regular domestic workers or as part-time helps. However, even though the practice is more like a contract selling of labour, it still remains as a social contract. Till now, no effective step has been taken to fix their wages and protect their rights. Their contribution was not evaluated in the national income. The issue of workers' rights was mentioned in the declaration of universal human rights and matter of rights has been recognized in our constitution.

They do not have any practical and effective legal process to enforce their rights or to ensure their benefits and privileges. So it can be said that rights of the female domestic workers is rhetoric.

Initiatives to change their plight are not strong enough to get any immediate result. It is necessary to promote awareness among the general population, and revisit some of the provisions that alert the employers' representatives. There is no doubt that country's gross domestic product (GDP) and income would be increased if the domestic labour is brought under legal structure. There is no alternative to their legal protection to ensure the life and livelihood and human rights of the domestic workers, who form a large part of population. Therefore, the country needs to institutionalize the sector so that implementation of the laws becomes easier. In order to develop a sustainable mechanism for promoting and protecting the rights of the female domestic workers following recommendation can be followed-

- Increased access to different Govt and Non Govt. services of FDWs such as- Vocational training, linked with different service provider agencies like, health, legal aid and MFI's (Micro Finance Institute) etc.
- Including the domestic workers under Labour Law.
- Introduction inspection and monitoring system.
- Finalization of draft Domestic Workers protection and welfare policy 2010 and ratification of the ILO Convention No. 189 concerning decent work for domestic workers and bringing domestic legislation in alignment with its provisions.
- Employers followed the code of conduct of domestic workers protection and welfare policies like providing appointment letter, maintaining salary book etc.
- Develop FDW's registration mechanism at local police station.
- Advocacy Platform for FDWs has established for claiming their Right.
- Implementation of existing laws such as e 'The Prevention of Repression against Women and Children (Amendment) Act, 2003', 'The National Human Rights Commission Act, 2009', The Domestic Violence (Prevention & Protection) Act, 2010'.
- Develop special institution for education of Female domestic workers
- Awareness raising in community:
- Local govt. should raise mass awareness on unsafe rural-urban migration at the community level and create jobs in their own area.
- Fixed salary and working hour

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7. Violence against women in Bangladesh: A Critical Overview

Sangita Das

Abstract

The prevalence and magnitude of violence against women is a continuous dreadful practice worldwide. It is increasingly seen as a violation of women's rights and a barrier to women's enjoyment of other rights. In Bangladesh the estimated prevalence rate of violence against women is extremely high which in turn is an obstacle to the achievement of equality, development and peace and that seriously inhibits women's ability to enjoy rights and freedoms on a basis of equality with men. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental and sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty. These sorts of violence impair or nullify the enjoyment by women of human rights and fundamental freedoms under Constitution of Bangladesh or general international law or under human rights conventions.

Methodology: *The article mainly depends on the available information based on different secondary sources i.e, Published Articles, Journals, Newspapers and websites. From the collected data the consistent situation of VAW in Bangladesh is highlighted on two aspects. for instance domestic violence, violence followed by eve-teasing.*

Objective: *The objective of this article is to recognize the violence against women in and out of domestic sphere and concentrates on the socio-legal concerns of violence problems in Bangladesh and then finds out the violence prevention mechanisms through national law and international human rights obligations of the state.*

Major Findings: *The traditional mindset and perception of patriarchal society, weak legal enforcement system, want of strict concern on the part of the government and other responsible communities of the society are the causes that women treated disproportionately.*

Keywords: Violence, Human Rights, Discrimination, Equality, Patriarchal Structure, State Responsibility.

Introduction

Although a unique position in the society is occupied by women due to the importance in the procreation of the human race, it is a historical truth that in different ages women were deprived of their privileges due to rigid perceptions of patriarchy and traditional patterns of life. In Bangladesh, the patriarchal capitalism puts women in such a position within their communities that always remain subordinate under male domination. Materialization of a historic unequal power relation between sexes is a form of discrimination and mistreatment of women which denies women's equal opportunity, security, self-esteem and dignity in the family and in the society as a whole. M. T. Khatun, K. F. Rahman, (2012) Thus, women suffer this discrimination in silence at all stages of her life. As a result, in many cases this is reflected through violence. The estimated prevalence rate of violence against women (DVAW) is extremely high, which, in turn, is an obstacle to the achievement of equality, development and peace. Johnson, H., Ollus, N., and Nevala, S. (2008) Despite the enactment of plethora of laws and recognition of international laws as to women's human rights in Bangladesh, the status of women has not yet improved. So, domestic violence against women is still a continuing issue that requires continuous redressing to guarantee women's full enjoyment of their rights and to promote equal status for women and to ensure development of the country.

What is VAW?

The United Nations defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."

UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women States that: VAW is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women and that violence against women is of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men.

Forms of violence in Bangladesh

Violence against women is a common occurrence in most societies whether the violence is physical or mental. As a result the South Asian women are suffering multiple forms of violence including domestic violence, rape, dowry related violence and dowry death, sexual harassment, suicide, forced marriage, trafficking and other

psychological and financial oppression. The scenario of Domestic violence and eve-teasing are more prevalent in Bangladesh.

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is defined as a pattern of behavior in a relationship by which the batterer attempts to control his victim through a variety of tactics. These tactics may include fear and intimidation, any kind of abuse, isolation and ignorance, economic abuse. Johnson Margeret.E. (2008) and even murder by torture. Domestic violence includes child abuse, parent abuse and in-law abuse committed by male aggressors on female victims. Available information from research indicated that the “most common type of violence in Bangladesh against women is domestic violence perpetrated by intimate partners or ex partners. L. Heise, H. Pitanguy, A. Germain, (1994) The reasons for verbal and physical abuse are trivial and include questioning of the husband, failure to perform household work and care of children, economic problems, stealing, refusal to bring dowry, the age of women, age of husband, past exposure to familial violence, and lack of spousal communication, as well as nonpayment or partial payment of dowry. Being in a patriarchal society, powerlessness and vulnerability is associated with women’s lives where they are dominated and subjugated by the men Mst Katun Taslima et al. (2012) Women are subject to violation even if she is incapable of giving birth to a child or a son. In this stage, she usually faces humiliation, verbal abuse, mental or physical torture, force to conceive again and again until a male child is born, or husband divorces her or marries again. A survey conducted by The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund addresses that about 87 percent of women are abused by their husband this according to a nation-wide study conducted by government in 2011 that involved a sample of 12,600 women in this study. The survey found that 77 percent admitted that they had been abused and of these 50 percent had sustained serious injuries but one in three women refused to go to hospital for fear of retaliation by the husband. In a study of Centre For Policy Dialogue (CPD) in 2009 addressed that mainly four types of domestic violence are prevalent throughout Bangladesh i.e. physical, psychological, economic and sexual abuse and violence. Almost 93% reported in the study that they had experienced physical violence; only 13 per cent reported of having experience of sexual violence, 91 per cent victims reported economic violence and 84 per cent reported psychological violence committed by their husbands. Centre for Policy Dialogue (2009). It is observed in the study of January to December 2015 that

373 incidents of domestic violence took place all over the country among which 212 women murdered by their husbands and 54 women commit suicide out of humiliation or intolerable physical, psychological torture by husband and husband's family. There is a graph given below to show the statistic of domestic violence.

January-December 2015

Domestic Violence

Table: Incidents of Abuse, Torture and Murder of Women

Age	7-18	19-24	25-30	30+	Not mentioned	Total	No. of cases
Name of the violence							
Tortured by husband	4	6	11	4	15	40	11
Tortured by husband's family		2			4	6	3
Murdered by husband	5	53	56	47	51	212	92
Murdered by husband's family member	5	14	8	5	8	40	18
Murdered by own relative	1			17	3	21	9
Suicide	1	22	17	10	4	54	13
Total	16	97	92	83	85	373	146

Source: Prothom Alo, Ittefaq, Samakal, Sangbad, Noyadiganto, Daily Star, New Age, Dhaka Tribune and Ain O Shalish Kendra (ASK)

Violence followed by Eve-teasing

Eve teasing means disturbance or harassment of girls in social atmospheres. Eve teasing includes bad comments, showing obscene symbol, ugly physical movement of body, obstruction on the way, giving whistle, nasty behavior like pulling lady's gauze scarf, etc. Eve teasing is considered as a public nuisance all over the world, in our country it has gradually become brutal form of sexual harassment often resulting in grievous hurt, abduction, acid throwing, rape murder and forced suicide Eve teasing. A report published recently says as many as 67% teenage girls were killed in Bangladesh during the last decade due to the refusal of love or marriage proposal. In the socio phenomena of Bangladesh where chastity in a women is of utmost importance, victims of eve-teasing suffer in silence rather than protest against such practice which only invites unwarranted attention that would be socially demeaning. In Bangladesh almost 90% of girls aged 10-18 are victims of public sexual harassment, according to the Bangladesh National Women Lawyer's Association. Most cases of sexual harassment are unreported and unpunished due to the young girls' fear

of further physical and sexual harm, being socially rebuked, or becoming the subject of local “social gossip.” The situation has become so alarming that, in general, it can be argued that at present no girl has been spared from being a victim of eve-teasing in one form or another.” Eve teasing taking place in various forms for instance verbal teasing, non-verbal-teasing, physical teasing. Nehaa G, (2010) Eve-teasing is spread over through both in lower to most sophisticated and educated classes. The reasons of Eve-teasing mostly found for faulty training at home, eve-teaser’s psychological problem, socio-economical factors, lack of social value and moral value, male dominated society, conservative mindset of people, electronic media. weak laws, lack of law enforcement, political involvement and abuse of power, blame and stigma. It is also seen that the Eve teasers in notable number enjoy political shelter. The awful rise of Eve teasing may be an indicator of the stressed law and order situation as a whole. Our legal enforcement system has been so sloppy on the law breakers that we seldom see the criminals getting punished. The severe impact of eve-teasing is taking away the lives of young girls as Bangladesh has witnessed recently. Moreover the silence of women for eve-teasing is another vital cause which strengthening the power of eve-teasers towards women. Bangladesh National Lawyer association has given another statistic that in 2006 there are 24 stories of eve-teasing in various newspapers, 20 in 2007, 39 in 2008, 54 in 2009. Najnin Akhter, Daily Janakontha, (2010). Odhiker has reported in there were 129 incidents in 2010 and 672 incidents in 2011 of eve-teasing. Odhikar, (2011) According to January to September 2015 there are 191 incidents has reported among which 9 commit suicide.

Nature of Violence	Female	Male	Total
Suicide	9		9
Attempt to suicide			0
Murdered due to suicide	2	1	3
Harassment	191	6	197
Injured by the attack of stalkers		75	75
Not able to attending school for the fear of stalkers	3		3
Total	205	82	287

Source: Prothom Alo, Ittefaq, Samakal, Sangbad, Noyadiganto, Daily Star, New Age, Dhaka Tribune and Ain O Shalish Kendra (ASK)

The graph shows that despite of number of legal frameworks in the country the offence relating to eve-teasing are increasing year by year.

Protection against Violence against Women under International and National Law

International Perspective

There are numerous international human rights commitments ratified by Bangladesh by which it is obliged to respect, protect, and fulfill in relations to violence against women. International human rights frameworks provide several provisions to protect women from any kind of violation and exploitation derived within and beyond personal life. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 followed by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) in the first instance provide the initial basis for equal right to men and women. Next to these, the Convention to Eliminate Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) ultimately holds ratifying states accountable for insuring that women's rights are protected under the ICCPR and the ICESCR. Additionally, this convention provides a framework in which ratifying states are held accountable to change cultural norms that oppress women and to enact women-sensitive policies. M. A. Freeman (1993)

In 1992, General Recommendation No. 19 was added to CEDAW, which more explicitly addresses the issue of violence against women by stating that gender-based violence is discriminatory. The recommendation also notes that previous state reports to the committee did not "adequately reflect the close connection between discrimination against women, gender-based violence, and violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms". As a result of this deficit, the committee proposed General Recommendation No. 19 to provide a more specific linking of violence against women and discrimination so that state parties would address the issue of VAW in their reviews and report to the committee. Subsequently, a new addition was developed, 'the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women 1993' at World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna. This convention defines violence against women as physical, sexual, and/or psychological violence within the family, the community, and/or any violence that is condoned by the state. Hossain K.T. (2007). Some examples included in the definition are marital rape and spousal abuse, sexual harassment, and so on. Although non-binding, the declaration has been viewed as a significant step in the attempt to universalize concern about violence against women.

National Law perspective

As the Bangladesh Government is committed to prevent violence against women (according to the CEDAW and DEVAW), it has taken multiple steps to ensure that the human rights of women are respected and protected. That's why; legislation has been enacted to prevent violence and discrimination against women 'with a special emphasis to break away from the tradition of treating women as property'. Thereafter, The Constitution of Bangladesh protects women's rights to life and safety by including provision in article 27, 28, 31 and 32

Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act of 2010.

The Dissolution of Muslim Marriage Act 1939.

The Muslim Marriages and Divorces registration Act 1974.

The Sexual Offence Act 1976.

The Dowry Prohibition Act 1980.

The Cruelty to Women (Deterrent Punishment) Ordinance 1983.

The Family Court Ordinance 1985.

The Suppression of Violence against Women and Children Act 2000 (Amendment 2003)

The Penal Code 1860,

The Code of Criminal Procedure 1898,

The Acid Control Act 2000, The Acid Crime Prevention Act 2002,

The Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929

National Human Rights Act 2009,

Nari O Shishu Nirjatan Daman (Amendment) Ain, 2003

All contain provisions punishing those who are dare to commit any sort of violence/crime against women. Here it becomes pertinent to mention that the main focus of these Acts is the enhancement of punishment, rather than prevention strategies.

Problems in Reducing Violence in Bangladesh

Despite constitutional guarantees of gender equality and legislative and affirmative interventions, the status of Bangladeshi women is on the whole dismal due to violence. So, it becomes relevant to find out existing problems which are hindrance on the way of reducing violence against women. These barriers are as follows:

- Although Bangladesh has enacted numerous laws to diminish women's vulnerability to violence, due to inadequate formulation and implementation of law, the actual impact has been very

marginal. In many cases full enforcement and implementation of existing laws have not been achieved due to various factors, including the lack of awareness of women's rights among law enforcement agents. The scarcity of effective agencies offering supportive intervention and the excessive expenses and the time-consuming process involved in litigation also prevent many women, especially the poor and uneducated ones (who are the worst sufferers), from seeking redress through criminal proceedings.

- Legal loopholes deprive women of justice, especially where the aggressors are in a dominant socio-economic position. Existence of variations in definition and recognition of violence against women among the various agencies engaged in actions designed to resist/reduce violence against women prevails. For instance, marital rape is not recognized in law and culture. Incest is a taboo topic. There are laws regarding rape and acid attacks but there are no clear law defining domestic violence. In Bangladesh, deprivation and denial of basic rights, especially among married couples, is not given serious consideration either by family or police and therefore remains unreported. Wife-abuse (battering) is widely condoned and tolerated. These particular problems due to variations in definition and recognition make it extremely difficult to motivate people to contest violence against women and to formulate appropriate strategies.
- Effective implementation of legislation is constantly impaired by the lack of support from dominant interests in the community who legitimize violence as normal. Despite punitive legislation most women have to abide by the rules of a patriarchal social system, which reinforces gender inequalities. Health providers are typically reluctant to ask women about experiences of abuse in fear of either offending the victims or getting involved into issues deeper than what they can handle. They lack knowledge of national legislation as well as available services to which women may be referred. Poor co-ordination among and across agencies and institutions makes the process of negotiation complex, inefficient and confusing.
- The accessibility of legal services to women, especially to poor, rural women is limited. Legal services are city based and involve costs that may pose as an insurmountable hurdle for many.
- For the judicial measures to be effective the process of lodging complaints, legal battles and judgment should be transparent, fair,

extremely well organized and uncomplicated. At present, the existing legal process is far from the idealistic condition.

- Government statistics are on the conservative side. The statistics rely on victims reporting their crimes to the police and lodging complaints. Police stations and courts are not properly equipped to maintain computer-based data and therefore there is a significant doubt about the quality and accuracy of this data. More importantly, considering the numerous obstacles to registering complaints, particularly if they are sexual in nature, it is likely that this data represent a very small number of incidents of violence against women. In addition women are fearful of being stigmatized or blamed for the incident, and this act as a tremendous pressure not to report incidents. They are also extremely wary of the police and fearful of possible retaliation by the accused in the absence of a government run victim protection mechanism and this inhibits them from reporting the incident.
- It is estimated that two thirds of the disputes never enter the formal court process and are either settled at the local level through informal settlement of the local leaders or a village court or remain unsettled. Thus, this huge numbers of complaints and settled cases remain undocumented.
- Reports of maternal mortality or suicide get less attention.
- Domestic violence and torture for dowry or dowry deaths generally occur in the privacy of the husband's home and with collusion of his family members. Often police reports record cases of dowry deaths or forced suicide as unnatural deaths. In most cases, due to lack of proper investigation, the facts of these cases remain unexplored. Often the murder of a wife for dowry is disguised as suicide and some are even called .accidents as if they are natural deaths in some epidemic. In rural areas most of the suicide or accidental deaths are predominantly female. Suicide is looked upon with much prejudice in Bangladesh as Islam prohibits this action. As such many suicidal cases are falsely reported as accidents.
- In case of wife beating or domestic violence wives do not usually report the abuse to the police. This is one of the main reasons for not having any official statistics on offences like domestic violence.

Recommendations for combating VAW in Bangladesh

The following recommendations can be suggested as away out to overcome the existing limitations as well as to ensure congenial

environment of women's full participation in the socio-economic development of any nation like Bangladesh:

Recommendations for Domestic violence

1. Establishment of Domestic Violence Court can be one of the best results in the country for successful prosecutions.
2. Greater economic opportunities for women, ensured through access to credit, awareness increasing activities and skill training, would enhance the self-esteem and status of women within households, improve spousal relationships and therefore reduce domestic violence.
3. Group based credit programs could reduce men's violence against women. These programs could reduce women's vulnerability to violence by strengthening their economic roles and making their lives more public.
4. A review of successful methods of prevention and elimination of violence and effective legislative and policy intervention is absolutely necessary.
5. Collusion between local elites and religious leaders who abuse the traditional local arbitration procedure is one of the main factors that makes redress of abuse difficult. So there should be effective measures and supervision to make the arbitration procedure easy and successful and free from all types of exploitations.
6. One of the ways may be to increase awareness of basic human rights amongst women and the society. Increasing awareness about the forms of violence and its consequences on the immediate family and future generations may be the approach that can help to prevent violence. Schools are an ideal place where awareness of violence in relationships can be built and healthy ways of forming intimate relationships can be taught to address and challenge violence against women.
7. Changing the norms and custom about relationships and providing the future generation with the skills needed to foster healthy relationships is a viable way to shift from a society where violence against women is widely condoned. However, simply setting up services for victims of domestic violence will not improve the situation as only a small proportion of abused women get access to formal services for abuse. Public awareness campaigns such as

public service announcements and advertisements are common approaches to primary prevention providing information regarding the warning signs of violence and community resources for victims and perpetrators. Developing community-based networks for coordinating services and programs is important in raising awareness of violence and providing support to victims. Community-based educational activities may improve knowledge about women's legal and social rights and empower them to seek help for abuse.

8. The prevailing social norms and ideologies that permit and encourage male violence must be directly and creatively addressed. The effort should involve careful research to identify messages and interventions that can change these attitudes. Educations in the classroom and at community level as well as use of mass media are probable means that are essential for diffusion of these messages.
9. One of the ways can be to raise awareness among community members/family members that VAW is an extreme violation of women's human rights, is a criminal offense under the law, and also has serious psychological consequences for both women and children.
10. The primary responsibility to conduct a study of violence against women should rest on government at least once every year.
11. Accurate and systematic reporting of incidents of violence against women, by various governmental (e.g. police, courts, or local government and nongovernmental organizations should be maintained to address this serious social problem. Data on violence against women should be freely available to organizations and individuals who wish to access this information. Access to this type of accurate data, which is collected on a routine basis, would have significant implications for policy development in Bangladesh and would enable appropriate and targeted interventions to be devised. Accurate data regarding the extent of this problem would contribute enormously to lobbying for budgetary allocation.
12. The role of state inaction in the perpetuation of the violence combined with the gender-specific nature of domestic violence require that domestic violence be classified and treated as a human rights concern rather than merely as a domestic criminal justice concern.

13. State must exercise due diligence to ensure enforcement of laws if they wish to avoid such complicity. Like India, provisions should be made in the Bangladeshi Evidence Act which provides for the presumption of dowry death when a married woman dies within seven years of her marriage under suspicious circumstances on account of cruelty or harassment by the husband and in-laws in connection with demand for dowry. The onus of proof is also shifted on the accused in such cases to show that the death was due to natural reasons. Moreover, a legal provision should be made to confiscate the property of the husband in every case of dowry death
14. A gender sensitization module should be incorporated in all the training programmes for the police, the prosecutors, the magistrates, and the legal personnel and the judiciary.
15. The role of the courts in case of domestic violence assumes a great importance. The courts are expected to deal with such cases in a realistic manner so as to further the objects of social legislation, that is to say, a lot more attitudinal changes on the part of the judges is essential to make gender justice a reality, for example, judges should not be confined to the literal interpretation of laws in ensuring justice.

Recommendations for fighting against eve teasing

1. Education system must be deliberate in a way as to promote positive relationship between girls and boys, especially at a younger age. Co-education encourages competition, but the curriculum must target at building a healthy environment of learning rather than encouraging male-female contact unnecessarily. Boys from conservative backgrounds tend to follow girls more often than boys from rather liberal back ground.
2. Parents' role is very significant. They should keep their children from bad influences. Parents must educate their children 'what to' or 'what not to' watch. It is the responsibly of the parents to teach their sons to respect girls and their rights. They should adopt friendly relations with their children rather than being harsh with them. The parents should put utmost trust in their daughters, for this trust will give them the confidence to face the eve teasers bravely and not to be frightened by them.
3. Teachers must play their role to repeat moral teachings in the young minds in a more rational and modern way.

4. The boys should respect the opposite sex, as morality demands it, adding that they should not be unaware to the fact that they have families too.
5. The government should plan to introduce strict laws against eve teasing.
6. Policemen must be deployed and conscious. They should not create a kind of deterrence against such offensive acts and to punish such vagabonds where necessary.
7. As a conscious citizen, it is our moral duty, social obligation and legal right to fight against Eve Teasing.

Conclusion

Today 'Violence Against Women' is considered as a violation of human rights which reflects and reinforces the inequality between men and women. In Bangladesh, 'violence against women' is still one of the sensitive topics to be discussed publicly. Despite constitutional assurances of gender equality and legislative and other confirmatory interventions, the condition of Bangladeshi women is on the whole desolate. In the result VAW takes place not only in private sphere but in workplaces and all public spheres. VAW seriously undermines women's rights to freely develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitation set by social perception and prejudices about gender roles and characteristics of men and women. In Bangladesh it is a major concern of development interventions as well as in human rights perspectives. VAW impediments women's well being and over all development, i.e. it has direct consequences for women's health-physical, mental, sexual and reproductive as well as economic costs, and afterwards adverse effects on psychological development of children. A coordinated effort for practical and efficient interventions needs to be made to eliminate this problem where men's supremacy over women needs to be challenged. To eradicate violence against women and help women to achieve lives of equality and dignity, it is necessary to provide them adequate redress and support from the stakeholders. In this regard this socio-legal analysis suggests a comprehensive intervention where protective and preventive measures would be devised to address the problem which will help in changing the patriarchal mindset and behaviour against wife or women.

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8. Violence against Women: Policies, Practices and Challenges in Bangladesh

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Introduction

Sex differentiates between male and female biologically while gender is socially constructed Giddens (2006). The construction of gender assigned the role of male and female and polarized the gender relations in society. To understand the gender relations, traditional and cultural construction of femininity and masculinity are the key factors in determining the perceived differences between the male and the female in a developing country like Bangladesh (Khair, 1999). The social organizations of Bangladesh are highly deterministic in terms of the dominance of the social force, patriarchy. The patriarchal system distinct between male and female through the conception of public and private sphere respectively. Plus, the behavioral difference such as how the female should act and what would be male's behavior against his counterpart are normalized by patriarchy. For the traditional society like Bangladesh, the male holds the authority of the family, consequently possess power to implement his decision upon his family. On the contrary, female are in a subjugated position compared to the male member of the family as well as society.

The patriarchal norms legalized violence against women and the male are benefitted due to the subordinate position of the women structured by the conventional beliefs of the society. Violence against women (VAW) or the gender based violence can be termed as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life” (UN General Assembly Resolution 48/104 *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*, 1993). Female are perpetuated by the male and also by the female and in each case the female are the oppressed one. Among all types of violence in Bangladesh, the prevalence of intimate partner violence (IPV) is huge that manifests itself as physical, emotional, sexual and economic. The VAW (Violence Against Women) report 2011, indicates that about 87 percent married women of Bangladesh suffer from physical, psychological, sexual violence and

economic deprivation perpetuated by their spouses. The consequences of violence against women have pitiable impacts upon the survivor, her family, community and society, which in turns transmit into the national level. The severe consequences of violence against women and its impact upon individual and society encourage the researchers to find out the causes and the costs of the consequences experienced at individual and community level. Due to pervasive violence, women may experience the consequences like fractures, hemorrhaging, depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, homicide, suicide, pregnancy related problems, lower income and productivity, expenditure by the family, marginalization and social isolation due to stigma etc. (Heise, et.al 1999, Garcia-Moreno, 2002; UN General Assembly, 2006).

To combat violence against women and reduce the sufferings of the victim, different policies has been implemented at national and international level. Now, the burning issue is how far the policies and plans are possible to enact in eliminating all forms of violence against women. There are gender policy and the national women development policy 2011 to ensure social justice for the Bangladeshi women. In spite of these gender polices, violence is not possible to reduce at tremendous volume. This piece of research tried to found out the strength and loopholes of the exiting polices through focusing on the possible solution against violence. At different stage of life –cycle such as pre-birth, infancy, childhood, adolescence and at the stage of elderly, women and girls are at risk of psychological and sexual violence (Ellsberg and Heise, 2005). Extreme gender inequality and discrimination are the root causes behind violence against women (Ending Violence against Women and Girls Programming Essentials, June 2013). This study shed light on the causes of the gender inequality with a focus of an empathic understanding of the women's situation in Bangladesh. In this regard, the post-modern feminist stand point has been incorporated to sketch out the victim's sufferings empathically and proper implication of policies for the safeguard of social justice.

Methodology

Violence against women is a global phenomenon. Women are the victim of partner and non-partner violence categorized into physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence. This study was conducted using post-modern feminist standpoint to understand different types of violence against Bangladeshi women and also their sufferings. In this regard, the study had maintained quantitative tactic of data analysis using the data of the Violence Against Women (VAW)

Survey 2011 conducted by BBS. The VAW Survey data had been collected from 12,600 eligible women over 15 year old, using two staged cluster sampling design. The sample had been selected randomly from seven divisions of Bangladesh such as Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barishal, Rangpur, Sylhet and Chittagong and the data had been carried out during 18 to 29 December, 2011. Plus, the qualitative section had been analyzed thorough reviewing violence against women research, reports and other documents as well as thereby recommends possible measures to combat violence against women in Bangladesh. The major policy guidelines especially Women Development Policy 2011 had been thoroughly reviewed to combat violence against women and guarantee equality, social justice and sustainability in Bangladesh.

Results of the Study

Violence against Women in Bangladesh: An Overview

World Health Organization (WHO, 2013) recognizes Bangladesh as one of the countries in the South Asian region where intimate partner violence prevalence pose an inconceivable threat to women and their development in the social sphere. In Bangladesh, Violence Against Women (VAW) Survey 2011 is considered to be the first nationally representative survey, which sheds light on discriminatory dispossession of liberty for women. It also acknowledges and enlightens society by highlighting the nature, various developments and dimensions of violence experienced by women in Bangladesh.

Psychological violence

Subordination and oppression of females is deeply embedded into the formation of a patriarchal society such as Bangladesh. Home to the fourth largest Muslim population in the world, the society at large is no exception to embracing customs and values which are to a large extent male-dominated. Reilly (2009) states that in a patriarchal society, combined factors such as the low status of women in the economic, social, cultural and political spheres are responsible for the violation of basic rights of females in a society like Bangladesh. The VAW survey has broadly classified psychological violence in to two broad spectrums naming, (i) psychological tortures; and (ii) controlled behavior. Results derived from the VAW survey indicates that the highest percentage of any type of violence experienced by women in Bangladesh can be primarily contributed to psychological violence. Prevalence of psychological violence is reported to be higher in rural than urban areas, where over 80% respondents reported being victim to

it in their lifetime. Insulting (27%) was the most commonly reported act followed by humiliation (16%) in front of others and verbal threatening were reported by women to be means of experiencing psychological violence in contemporary Bangladeshi society.

Physical violence

The VAW report indicates that women belonging to the age group of 20-39 were found to be the most vulnerable target group and were also among the highest in terms of being exposed to spousal physical violence over the last year in Bangladesh.

Breiding, et.al (2015) defines intimate partner violence as “physical violence, sexual violence, stalking and psychological aggression (including coercive acts) by a current or former intimate partner.” Over half (65%) of married women reported their current husbands to be the offender for them to have had experienced physical violence. Frequency of such incidence is high as about half of married women reported experiencing such violence during the course of the previous year. The report also found that more than half (50%) of the women surveyed received medical treatment as a result of inflicting such violence by their partners. However, an alarming one third of the women did not seek medical attention in fear of their husbands and in the fear of social stigma. Almost 9% women reported ‘social prestige’ as the key determinant for not seeking medical treatment.

Economic violence

The Survey states that in Bangladesh, unabated practise of dowry, especially in rural areas of Bangladesh is a key factor, which contributes to women becoming victims of economic violence. At present, one third of women (33.7%) in Bangladesh have paid dowry for their current marriage. Hossain, K. and Suman, M. (2013) note that in lower socio-economic classes inability to meet dowry demands due to poverty contributes to different types of violence against women which in worst case scenarios can lead to women committing suicide and become targets of mental and physical torture. Pervasiveness of such economic violence is noted to be marginally higher in rural areas compared to urban. About half of ever married women have been victim to economic violence while one third reported being exposed to it in the past one year. The trend of such violence seems to be higher amongst younger women in comparison to their counterpart older women in contemporary Bangladesh.

Sexual Violence

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2012) define sexual violence as sexual activity where consent is not obtained or freely given where the person responsible for the violence is typically male. The VAW survey found married women between the age group of 20-34 to be most susceptible to spousal sexual violence compared to other age groups in Bangladesh. Incidence of women experiencing such violence is higher in rural areas in comparison to urban areas. It is estimated that more than one-third (36.5%) of women experienced sexual violence perpetrated by their current husband in their lifetime. Over the last twelve months, one-fourth of married women reported being victims of such violence. Sexual intimidation as a result of physical force alongside fear of consequence is reported to be most common sexual violence perpetrated by current husbands. The survey found 26% of women were ever forced to fornicate with their husbands while over 10% of women found themselves helpless victims to such sexual violence in the past twelve months. Fear of adverse reaction from husbands as a result of refusing to perform sexual intercourse were reported by 30% of women to have sex despite wanting to. In terms of quantifying the pervasiveness of sexual violence that women experience by non-partners, which leaves a detrimental effect on self-identity as well as physical and psychological wellbeing half of the women surveyed (50%) indicated that they were forced into having sex while they were fourteen years old and below. The VAW survey also revealed that three quarter of the respondents (77.8%) were forced into having sex while they were below the age of 19 and below, which further epitomizes the ever despicable value of women in Bangladesh's society.

Policies Regarding Violence against Women

In a country where estimated prevalence of acts of violence against women is high and is considered as an un-avowed Human Rights violation, it is of utmost importance that law, policy and service delivery are molded in order to be responsive to the diverse needs of women to safeguard women from any form of physical, sexual and psychological oppression they may come in contact with. Upon gaining independence in 1971, the Government of Bangladesh has recognized the importance of safeguarding the rights of women, as they possess the same potential for contributing to the overall development of the country alongside their male counterparts. Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh guarantees equal

rights for both men and women in all spheres of the state and public life. Notable article(s), which patronizes the sentiment to uphold women's right in society, include:

The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth-Article 28 (1)

Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making special provision in favor of women or children or for the advancement of any backward section of citizens- Article 28 (4)

In addition to that Ministry of Women and Children Affairs has also formulated the National Women Development Policy (2011) which aims to establish equal rights of men and women in areas of state and public life, ensure safety and security of women in all areas of state, ensure socio-economic, political, administrative and legal empowerment, remove existing male-female disparities, give recognition to women's contribution, establish gender equality in politics, administration, education, innovate and import technology favoring the interest of women, ensure priority of women in provision for proper shelter, reflect gender perspectives in the mass media including positive image of women and ensure active role of women and their equal rights in all the National economic activity among other pro-women fundamentals to ensure achievement of women's rights in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh has also signed its commitments to the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1984 as well as endorsing Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) in 1995 without any reservations and committed to ensuring its implementation at national level. Hossen (2014, p.1) state "Bangladesh Government has been proactively adopting in adaption of preemptive policies, legislations, strategies and taking national affirmative action plans and program for accelerating the implementation process in achieving the goal of holistic empowerment of women in Bangladesh." In order to protect women's legal rights and elevate social status the following laws and policies has also been formulated by the Government of Bangladesh:

The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1980 which forbids anyone from giving or receiving dowry

The Nari-O-Shishu Nirjatan Daman Ain, 2000 (Law on the Suppression of Violence against Women and Children, 2000) expanding the definition of rape and sexual assaults

Acid Crime Prevention Act, 2000 and Acid control Act, 2000 as a primitive measure to protect from the acid violence

Family Violence Prevention and Protection Act, 2010 and National Women policy, 2011 was adopted for the empowerment of women

Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2010 established to ensure protection of women and children from family violence which is also a guarantor to the United Nation (UN) charter on prevention on all forms of discrimination to women

Mobile Court Act (2009) which empowers the executive magistrate power to take steps by linking Section 509 of the Bangladesh Penal Code to prevent eve teasing and sexual harassment of women.

Implication of gender policies and It's Challenges in Bangladesh

Women in Bangladesh are the victim of different types of violence and the reasons behind violence against women is structural that cannot be resolved by making technical adjustment to intervention. Radical change can only be achieved through focusing on the gender inequality and subordination in political mobilization and lobbying (Baden et.al, 1994). Economic liberalization, industry, employment, human resource development etc. should be given top most priority than creating special program for women (Jahan, 1989).

The national women's policy incorporates issues like equal rights, equal opportunity for employments and equal distribution of resources for women. Some success stories regarding equality like equal opportunity for women particularly for the primary school education for girls has been ensured at a larger scale. On the contrary, the equal distribution of resources are yet neglected both at household and national level; about 80.9% men and 19.1% women have ownership of land at national level (VAW Report, 2011). Policies has been failed to eradicate violence against women. The outcome is the VAW Survey 2011 where 87 percent women are the victim of domestic violence. VAW Survey 2011 also indicates that at national level, 7.09% women attempted for suicide due to the physical torture of their current husband while the rate is larger 12.86 perpetrated by the previous husband. These occurrences are clear indications that the acts on violence against women are not implementing in proper way.

The major challenges in policy implications are there no effective policies to ensure women's security at home, educational institutions, road, organizations and the like. Increasing violence against women is now a grave concern. First of all, the security issues needed to be addressed so that women and girls can enjoy equal opportunities like

the male; Secondly, massive campaign and awareness against community violence is a crying need and last but not the least is the understanding women's position from a liberal point of view.

The postmodern feminist standpoints can be incorporated to understand women's sufferings. If the male member of the society are failed to understand women's importance and their contribution in society then the situation will never be improved and the incidence of violence will occur at every home on a regular basis.

Conclusion

In spite of the existence of current legislation and pro-women policies women are still the most disadvantaged group in Bangladesh. Results derived from the data gathered from Violence against Women (VAW) Survey 2011, conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund has made it evident that existing policies need to be re-analysed and an alternative action plan should be devised in co-operation with government, NGOs and activists in society to promote gender equity through the empowerment of women. Involvement of men and youth is essential in policy development in a patriarchal society like Bangladesh as they hold the key in deconstructing the dominant and subordinate order and allow females to participate in all areas of the social spheres on equal terms alongside men. Awareness and capacity building among women are also equally as important to ensure active participation of women in all types of development activities to make violence against women an issue of the past and move women forward to brighter days ahead in the future for women in Bangladesh.

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9. Income and Food Status of Female Garment Workers in Gazipur Area, Bangladesh

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Abstract

The readymade garment industry is the top ambassador of Bangladesh as a country in the global market. Although its export earnings undoubtedly holds the significant position in the country's total export, some fundamental issues of workers like income level, education, health, and food are not in satisfactory. The study seeks to find out the variability of income and food habit among readymade garment workers and develop statistical relationship between income and food items. The present study is based on quantitative technique; a structured questionnaire survey was used to collect data on female garment workers from thirty 100% export oriented garment factories in Gazipur. A total of 385 female garment workers were selected based on simple random sampling. The study segregates the workers category ranging wage grade structure from 3 to 7 according to the "Gazette on Minimum Wages 2013". The findings have showed the sources of income for all graded workers that comprises monthly salary package, overtime, attendance bonus, festival Bonus, and other sources of income such as farming, and part time household chores etc. It is noteworthy that our study inferences entire worker's average working hour per week including overtime, overtime rate, festival bonus, and total income per month for grade 3 to 6 and 7 respectively, and reveals that workers grade 3 to 6 dominated in all parameters than grade 7. Further, we find the food habit of workers within our sample. We have found some significant relationships between income and food items of workers. Consumption frequency of eating items like egg, milk, meat, and vegetables per week does not differ statistically by income of different grades. On the other hand, there is a significant statistical relationship between consumption frequency of eating items like fish, fruit per week and income of different grades. Moreover, this study also reveals that consumption frequency of affinity (items include tea, pan, and cigarettes) among the garment workers differs significantly according to their income level. The research concluded that at present income and food status do not exhibit satisfactory level among the workers.

Keywords: Income, Food Status and Ready Made Garment Workers.

Introduction

Bangladesh is an expanding economy in the world, small country in Southeast Asia with high population density. Export earnings of Bangladesh are heavily contributed by the RMG sector from early 90's (Faruque, 2014). It also has a positive impact on the socioeconomic development by employing large section of women as its main labor force that was previously considered to be underprivileged. But the full utilization and productivity out of this force were not achieved because of the lack of education and awareness about health and nutrition (Paul- Majumder, 1998). Lower level of income positively contributed to this ignorance. Usually, female garment workers prefer to work in the RMG sector because of their poor economic condition. They are living below the poverty line due to their low wage rate. They also cannot uphold their essential expenditure of living so as to try increasing their wages by doing overtime (Absar, 2001). They have to work hard for a long period of time in hazardous situation (Kendra, 2014). Sometimes female workers need to work till 3 o'clock in the morning for completing their delivery deadlines (Jamaly and Wickramnanyam, 1996). Normally, daily working hour is 8.28 hours without overtime in most of the RMG factories (Rahman et al., 2008).

In fact, women face discriminations at work in terms of their wage differentials on the basis of grading system for workers (Hossain et al., 1990). Wage structure for RMG worker according to "Gazette on Minimum Wages 2013" is BDT 3,000 (basic) for grade 7 that is the lowest rate and for grade 6 to 3 is 3270-4075 (basic) per month (Workers' Voice Report, 2014). Still garment workers are living below poverty line (Clark and Kanter, 2011). Most of the cases, female workers are the major contributor for their family maintenance, are particularly vulnerable to poverty and food anxiety (Rahman et al., 2009). But food is one of the most important elements of human being and its scarcity indicates the level of poverty. The food situation in the country could be analyzed by looking at the status of food security. Bangladeshi garment workers have considerably abridged their cost on food (AMRF Bangladesh and CCC The Netherlands, 2009). For garment workers, most of the spending goes to food and shelter. Only cheap rate item like rice, eggs, pulse, and vegetables easily can consume for their daily habitual need and without the occasional or festival purpose the workers exclude every rich food item from their daily shopping list. Sometimes they can't buy pulse, vegetables, eggs, or many other essential food items, due to high price. Normally,

excluding for house rental fee they avoid most of the non-food items because of low wage (AMRF Bangladesh and CCC The Netherlands, 2009). Households are classified on the basis of food expenditure. A household classified as food insecure if the income is not sufficient to meet the cost of the required food. The household is classified as food secures if the income is adequate, (Noman, 2013). *The main objective of the study* aimed to investigate the dietary pattern along with working hour, overtime rate, and monthly income level of female garment workers.

Literature Review

Literature review reveals that a number of factors are attached with the income and food status of the readymade garment workers of Bangladesh. Saha (2014) identified that almost 90% garment worker had just three meals with no snacks in last seven days for long hours and they were consumed meals of fish (55%), pulse (52%) and fruits/vegetables (63%) respectively for over 6 times in a week. Nearly 60% and 57% respondents from workers did not consume milk and meat in last seven days. Although, meat and fish were consumed less frequently, the consumption of fruits and vegetables were satisfactory. Ahmed (1998) relatively 67.2% participants ate fruits at least 7 times in a week. Sultana (2014) found a considerable percentage of the female worker did not take (88.8%) milk, (64.3%) meat, (34.2%) eggs and 47.4% vegetables at least 4 times in the week. Kabir et al. (2010) addressed big percentage of the participants consumed meat (62.5%), fish (53.8%), and eggs (58.4%) for 3 to 4 times or less in a week and almost 46.1% and 27.7% of the female worker did not take milk and vegetables, on the other hand, 72.2% took vegetables for 3 to 4 times or more in the week. 93.5% of the female workers consumed fruits at least 3 times in the week like mango, banana, lemon, guava, jackfruit and pineapple. Khan et al. (2005) identified 46% and 29% female did not take milk and meat respectively, on the other hand 70% of the female RMG worker had fish at least 4 times a week and 40% did not eat sweet pumpkin at all. Islam (2015) stated that most of the garment workers took frequently fish 89.5%, egg 66.7%, meat 72.9%, rice 100%, milk 52.8%, vegetable 78.1%, fruits 79.5%, and dal 75.7% for weekly. Absar (2001) stated that female garment workers work by low wage rate for long working hour, they claim to work for eight hour in one day and shift six days in a week. But in the Factory Act-1965 permits women to work overtime up until 8 o'clock at night. Jamaly and Wickramanayake (1996) found that for the delivery deadlines of

the products women are nearly obligated to work after 8 o'clock and on occasion they work until 3 o'clock in the morning and also need to again back the factory to start work after five hours. Sometimes they have to work entire months at a time without a single day break but alarming issue is for Factory Act that reveals no employee should work more than ten days repeatedly without a break. Noman (2013) found only Tk 3,000 is fixed as the new minimum wage for RMG workers in Bangladesh, lowest paid in the world. AMRF Bangladesh and CCC The Netherlands (2009) identified 70-80% of the garment workers earn Tk.2,000-3,500 approximately that cannot properly against the recent price hike and 67% of the workers get less than Tk 4,000 as a wage, 39% get less than Tk 3,000. AMRF Bangladesh and CCC The Netherlands (2009) found that majority of the factory begins to work at 8:00 am. 55% finished their work at 8-10 pm. 30% of the workers could finish their work by 7:00 pm. Only 42.8 percent of workers work equal or less than 10 hours. However, generally 39.5% of the workers work 13 hours a day or more. The average working hours for all workers was found to be 11.46 hours a day and there was no actual difference found between male (11.45 hours) and female workers (11.46 hours).70% of garment workers work for more than 70 hours per week while only 53% of male workers work for the same hours. Nine percent of the workers keep on working more than 100 hours in a week. The overtime is compulsory management pressure. Only twenty five percent of workers enjoy the opportunity of going back to home working less than 12 hours and 70%-80% of female workers on an average have 30 hours of overtime when legally permissible overtime is only 12 hours per week. However, only 20% percent of females, on an average, work less than 12 hours a day while 44% of male were engaged for the same period. More than 40% of female garment workers work overtime for a period of 49 hours while only 20% work less than 12 hours extra in a week. 26% of female workers do overtime for 70 hours while 47.5 percent male works overtime for the same period of time. In some factories, the workers work overtime for more than 100 hours monthly. Only 4% of workers work overtime below 60 hours a month. Another great concerning issue is that almost 43% of the workers are engaged in work for 10 hours while 39% are extended up to 13 hours. Both the male and female (39%) share 13 hours of working time. 63% of female workers work seven days a week while only 37% of male workers are compelled to work without any weekend.

Methodology

Survey Instrument

The most important aspect to survey research is designing a survey tool that asks clear and relevant questions. To determine the actual conditions relevant to food and income status of female garment workers, we conducted a survey by preparing a structured questionnaire from July 2015 to August 2015; since our present study based on quantitative method that mainly followed the interview sample survey method on collecting data. Besides, certainly this study is both of explanatory and analytical in nature.

Sample Size and Site

The study is comprised a total sample size of 385. We used the following formula (Daniel, 1999) to determine the sample size calculation.

$$n = \frac{Z^2 P(1 - P)}{d^2}$$

Where, n = sample size, Z = Z statistics for a level of confidence (here, the study sets confidence intervals at 95%), d= precision (the study sets precision for estimates as 5 %), P = expected prevalence or proportion (finally, this study also sets proportion value of 50%; Macfarlane (1997) suggests that if there was doubt about the value of P, it is best to err towards 50% as it would lead to a larger sample size.

Our study population was restricted only some garment factories located in Gazipur area. We have randomly chosen 385 female garment workers from randomly selected 30 different garment factories. There are 7 grades structure (Grade 1 to Grade 7) of garment worker as per “Gazette on Minimum Wages 2013” (Workers’ Voice Report, 2014). Grades are made according to designation where grade 3 to 6 includes junior, senior, and general machine operators and grade 7 is assigned only for assistant machine operator of different section in the garment factory as helper. For the study convenience, we made two categories of the female garment workers; all the sewing operators were included in grade 3 to grade 6 and grade 7 resembled helper. We explore food and income status in depth, asking nearly 29 questions to 251 female sewing garment operators and 134 female helpers respectively.

Data Collection

Questionnaires were developed to collect information on socio-demographic characteristics (religion, age, color, height, weight, home

district, marital status, family status etc.), regular dietary habit, dietary intake (food item, intake pattern and frequency), usual working hour, overload hour, overtime, overtime rate, and monthly income. Before finalization of questionnaire, we reviewed it by an expert and took some adjustments where necessary. For obtaining information respondents were requested to recall their food intake in last seven days and for income in last month as well. Food intake pattern was recorded in terms of frequency of consumption of food items namely egg, milk, fish (small/large), meat (chicken/beef/others), fruits, and vegetables. Similarly, the frequencies of eating those items were recorded 'Never', '1 - 3 times' a week, '4 - 5' times a week, '6 - 7' times a week. On the other hand, monthly income package including overtime and others was recorded by our own created income scale that starts from 4,500 tk and ends with 13,000 tk.

Hypotheses

To establish relationship between consumption frequency of food item and income level as well as to find out the variability of total working hour, overtime rate, total monthly income between female sewing operator and female helper the following hypotheses has been considered.

Hypotheses 1.

The consumption frequency of affinity among the female garment workers differ according to the level of income.

Hypotheses 2

The consumption frequency of eating food items among the female garment workers does not differ according to position that they belongs to.

Hypotheses 3

The female sewing operators have more variability of total working hours per week in including overtime than female helper.

Hypotheses 4

The variability of overtime rate per hour of female sewing operators is more than that of female helper.

Hypotheses 5

The female sewing operators have more variability in their total earned monthly income including overtime, attendance bonus, and others than female helper.

Data Analysis Tools

After obtaining the data from our respondents descriptive analysis was performed to summarize the data; however data processing and analysis was performed using Microsoft Excel 2007. In order to find association between some variables chi square test was used. Analysis of variance and inferential statistics were also performed where appropriate.

Results

Characteristics of the Respondents

A total of 385 respondents were incorporated in our study sample. Out of 385 respondents 251 were female sewing operators and 134 were female helpers respectively.

The most dominant age range was 18-23 and 24-28 years for 55% and 30% of sewing operators respectively. The majority (43%) height of sewing operator's was in between 5.1-5.3 inch and almost 36% sewing operators' height was fallen 4.8 - 5.00 inch. Only 14% sewing operators were found whose height was in between 4.5 - 4.7 inch. The major portion of sewing operators (199, 79.28%) weight was fallen between 46 - 60 kg.

On the other hand, the majority (55%) of the helper age was in between 18-23 years and 30% was fallen into 24-28 years. Only 2% helpers were found whose age was 41 to 45 years. The most common height (48%) of helper was 5.1 to 5.3 inch and subsequent common height range were 4.8 - 5.00 inch and 4.5 - 4.7 inch for 25.37% and 18.66% of helper respectively. However, only 2% of helpers were found whose height was fallen in the range of 3.11 - 4.4 inch. The majority of helper (97, 72.39 %) weight was fallen between 40 - 50 years old.

The majority of our respondents were married (sewing operator - 64.14% and helper - 50.74%). Unmarried percentage of sewing operator and helper were 33.07% and 47.01% respectively. Nevertheless, it is our interesting findings that we had found 7 sewing operators and 3 helpers who were divorced.

Dietary Consumption Pattern

Based on the respondents' response that they recall of food intake in the last seven days, all respondents took three meals in a day with or without no snacks in between meals. All respondents finished three meals - breakfast, lunch, and dinner through a combination of rice,

fish, meat, egg, pulse, and bread. Study finds that only a few respondents did not take egg and fish once in a week; however, milk consumption we have observed different scenario, the majority percentage of sewing operator and helper had no milk choice once in a week in their food item; 68.12 % of sewing operator and 66.42 % of helper respectively. Almost same scenario had been observed for the consumption of meat, where 61.35% of sewing operator and 52.24 % of helper never took meat item once in a week. The majority proportion took 1-3 times fruit per week and it is applicable both for sewing operator and helper. They tried to consume all types of seasonal fruits like mango, apple, banana, jackfruit, pineapple, orange, guava, and others, while taking fruits. Finally, a good number of respondents nearly 61.75% of sewing operator and 59.70% of helper had their choice to take vegetables every day in a week. Study also reveals that all our respondents took special food like fried rice, fried chicken and meat, noodles, sweets and other rich food items in festive occasion according to their affordability.

Respondent's consumption of dietary pattern is summarized below. The next consecutive table is the list of consumption frequency of food items - egg, milk, fish, meat, fruits, and vegetables intake pattern.

Table 1: Pattern of intake food item (egg) by the female garment workers

Worker's Position	Frequency of weekly consumption (Egg)				
	Never	1 - 3 Times	4 - 5 Times	6 -7 Times	
Sewing Operator	8 (3.19%)	167 (66.53%)	65 (25.90%)	11 (4.38%)	251
Helper	4 (2.99%)	89 (66.42%)	38 (28.36%)	3 (2.24%)	134
Total	12	256	103	14	385

Table 2: Pattern of intake food item (milk) by the female garment workers

Worker's Position	Frequency of weekly consumption (Milk)				
	Never	1 - 3 Times	4 - 5 Times	6 -7 Times	
Sewing Operator	171 (68.12%)	64 (25.50%)	14 (5.58%)	2 (0.80%)	251
Helper	89 (66.42%)	41 (30.60%)	3 (2.24%)	1 (0.75%)	134
Total	260	105	17	3	385

Table 3: Pattern of intake food item (fish) by the female garment workers

Worker's Position	Frequency of weekly consumption (Fish)				
	Never	1 - 3 Times	4 - 5 Times	6 -7 Times	
Sewing Operator	7 (2.79%)	98 (39.04%)	117 (46.61%)	29 (11.55%)	251
Helper	5 (3.73%)	78 (58.21%)	43 (32.09%)	8 (5.97%)	134
Total	12	176	160	37	385

Table 4: Pattern of intake food item (meat) by the female garment workers

Worker's Position	Frequency of weekly consumption (Meat)				
	Never	1 - 3 Times	4 - 5 Times	6 -7 Times	
Sewing Operator	154 (61.35 %)	87 (34.66%)	9 (3.59%)	1 (0.40%)	251
Helper	70 (52.24 %)	50 (37.31%)	9 (6.72%)	5 (3.73%)	134
Total	224	137	18	5	385

Table 5: Pattern of intake food item (fruits) by the female garment workers

Worker's Position	Frequency of weekly consumption (Fruits)				
	Never	1 - 3 Times	4 - 5 Times	6 -7 Times	
Sewing Operator	36 (14.34%)	182 (72.51%)	25 (9.96%)	8 (3.19%)	251
Helper	34 (25.37%)	80 (59.70%)	17 (12.69%)	3 (2.24%)	134
Total	70	262	42	11	385

Table 6: Pattern of intake food item (vegetables) by the female garment workers

Worker's Position	Frequency of weekly consumption (Vegetables)				
	Never	1 - 3 Times	4 - 5 Times	6 -7 Times	
Sewing Operator	1 (0.40%)	24 (9.56%)	63 (25.10%)	163 (64.94%)	251
Helper	1 (0.75%)	23 (17.16%)	38 (28.36%)	72 (53.73 %)	134
Total	2	47	101	235	385

Working Hour, Overtime Rate, and Income Pattern

Most of the respondents both sewing operator and helper usually work 8-9 hours per day except overtime. After that, they got the opportunity to do overtime which ranges 1-5 hours per day. The majority of the respondents do usually overtime 2 hours per day, but sometimes they had to do more overtime when the factory is overloaded or received special order or before going long vacation for festive occasion such as Eid day, Durga puja or Christmas day. Not all the respondents get overtime opportunity since some factories are under loaded with work order. However, sometimes factory forced the workers to do overtime because of more work load, insufficient skilled labor and money saving tendency as per opinion from respondents. Nearly, 90 % of both types of respondents had enjoyed only one weekend, but some factories allow workers to work at the weekend with special overtime rate.

Overtime rate nearly is the same for both respondents, sometimes vary from factory to factory, or by position. Certainly, workers also enjoy festival bonus of their basic salary. Monthly income is calculated by accumulating received monthly salary package with overtime, attendance bonus and others. Table - 7, 8, 9 and 10 depicts at glance of working hour, overtime rate and monthly income pattern including overtime, attendance bonus and others in favor of both types of respondents.

Table 7: Total working hour/week including overtime

Worker's Position	Working Hour/Week in Hour				Inference about the Variance of Working Hour/Week of All the Female Garment Workers in Gazipur
	Average Working Hour	Minimum Working Hour	Maximum Working Hour	Mean \pm SD	
Sewing Operator	70.91	50	98	70.91 \pm 11.16	10.26 - 12.24 (at 95% confidence interval)
Helper	78.43	60	96	78.43 \pm 8.51	7.60 - 9.68 (at 95% confidence interval)

Table 8: Overtime rate/hour enjoyed by the female garment workers

Worker's Position	Overtime rate/hour in BDT				Inference about the Variance of Overtime Rate / Hour of All the Female Garment Workers in Gazipur
	Average Rate	Minimum Rate	Maximum Rate	Mean \pm SD	
Sewing Operator	24.55	15	35	24.55 \pm 4.94	4.55 - 5.42 (at 95% confidence interval)
Helper	19.74	10	25	19.74 \pm 3.95	3.52 - 4.48 (at 95% confidence interval)

Table 9: Festival bonus earned by the female garment workers

Worker's Position	Bonus Amount in BDT				
	Average Amount	Lowest Amount Level	Highest Amount Level	Mean \pm SD	Inference about the Festival Bonus Variance of all the Female Garment Workers in Gazipur
Sewing Operator	2,767	1,800	3,700	2,767 \pm 468	430 - 513 (at 95% confidence interval)
Helper	2,153	1,700	3,400	2,153 \pm 355	316 - 406 (at 95% confidence interval)

Table 10: Monthly income earned by the female garment workers that includes per month salary, overtime and others)

Worker's Position	Income in BDT				
	Average Income	Lowest Income Level	Highest Income Level	Mean \pm SD	Inference about the Monthly Income Variance of all the Female Garment Workers in Gazipur
Sewing Operator	9,470	5,300	12,966	9,470 \pm 1,630	1,499 - 1,787 (at 95% confidence interval)
Helper	6,858	4,770	10,660	6,858 \pm 1,227	1,096 - 1,395 (at 95% confidence interval)

Test of Hypothesis

Our study findings end with testing of hypothesis. Table - 11 presents the results of income level and frequency of affinity for both types of respondents. Here, affinity includes frequency of consumption for tea, pan or both tea and pan.

Hypothesis 1

Does the frequency of affinity among the female workers differ according to the level of income?

Here, is the table - 11 that is used for testing of hypothesis 1.

Table 11: Total monthly income level and frequency of affinity

Consumption Frequency of Affinity	Monthly Total Income Level in BDT								
	Below 5,000	5,000 - 6,000	6,001- 7,000	7,001- 8,000	8,001- 9,000	9,001 - 10,000	10,001 - 11,000	Above 11,001	
Never	8	9	9	22	7	5	11	22	93
Sometimes	5	12	29	24	18	17	25	33	163
Strongly Addicted	9	6	15	13	13	33	28	12	129
Total	22	27	53	59	38	55	64	67	385

We find the value of the chi - square statistic to the right, 29.14 that contains 0.01 of the area under the curve with 14 degree of freedom. However, the sample chi - square value of 46.06 that we calculated in

Table - 11 falls in rejected region and reject the null hypothesis. So, we conclude that there is association between income level and consumption frequency of affinity i.e. consumption frequency of affinity depends on per month total income level.

Hypothesis 2

Does the frequency of eating food items - egg, milk, fish, meat, fruits and vegetables among the female workers differ according to position that they belongs to?

Here, we used Table-1 to Table-6 for testing of hypothesis 2. The value of chi - square statistic to the right, 7.81 that contains 0.05 of the area under the curve with 3 degree of freedom, is same for all the food items. However, the sample chi - square value of individual food items differ and these values are 1.31, 3.08, 3.71, and 3.92 for the food items egg, milk, meat, and vegetables respectively, derived in Table - 1, Table - 2, Table - 4, and Table - 6 accordingly, fall in accepted region. On the other hand, the sample chi - square values of fish and fruits are of 14.54, 8.82 respectively, derived in Table - 3, Table - 5 accordingly, fall in rejected region. Hence, we conclude that frequency of eating items do not depends on workers position, here female sewing operator and helper, in the garment factory except two food items - fish and fruits.

Hypothesis 3

Is the variability of total working hour including overtime per week same both for female sewing operator and helper?

With 250 degrees of freedom in the numerator, 133 degrees of freedom in the denominator, and $\alpha = 0.01$, the critical value of F for F distribution in the right tail is 1.44 but our calculated F ratio value of 1.72 falls in rejected region. So, we reject the null hypothesis because of $1.72 > 1.44$, and conclude that the variability of total working hour including overtime per week is not same; thus female sewing operator had shown more variability of total working hour per week than female helper.

Hypothesis 4

Is the variability of overtime rate per hour same for both female sewing operator and helper?

Similarly, the value of F for F distribution with 250 degrees of freedom in the numerator, 133 degrees of freedom in the denominator, and 0.01 of the area in the right tail is 1.44 but our calculated F ratio

value of 1.57 falls in rejected region. So, we reject the null hypothesis because of $1.57 > 1.44$, and conclude that the variability of overtime rate per hour of female sewing operator is more than that of female helper.

Hypothesis 5

Is the variability of total monthly income including overtime, attendance bonus and others same for both female sewing operator and helper?

With 250 degrees of freedom in the numerator, 133 degrees of freedom in the denominator and $\alpha = 0.01$, the critical value of F for F distribution in the right tail is 1.44 but our calculated F ratio value of 1.76 falls in rejected region. So, reject the null hypothesis because of $1.76 > 1.44$, and conclude that female sewing operator had shown more variability in their total earned monthly income including overtime, attendance bonus and others than female helper.

Discussion

Food intake data revealed that most of the respondents had three meals in a day. Substantial proportion of respondents did not consume milk and meat, similar findings was reported on adolescent garment worker in Bangladesh (Khan, 2005). Although egg, fish, and fruit were consumed less frequently '1 - 3' times in a week, the consumption of vegetables is extremely good thus can contribute significant amounts of vitamins, minerals, and irons.

Average total working hour including overtime per week with standard deviation of sewing operator and helper is 70.91 ± 11.16 , 78.43 ± 8.51 . Similarly, overtime rate per hour with standard deviation of sewing operator and helper is 24.55 ± 4.94 and 19.74 ± 3.95 respectively. Study also revealed that average monthly income including overtime with standard deviation of sewing operator and helper is $9,470 \pm 1,630$ and $6,858 \pm 1,227$ respectively.

The study provides new information by testing of hypotheses that consumption frequency of affinity and level of income of all respondents are not independent that means level of income affects female workers to consume tea, pan, or similar items. Besides, consumption frequency of eating food items does not depend on workers position except two food items - fish and fruits. However, from testing of variability, study also reveal that total working hours including overtime per week, overtime rate per hour, and total monthly income including overtime, attendance bonus, and others are not the

same; female sewing operator, all above mentioned parameters, has more variability than that of helper.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Our study findings shows the overall food status as well as income level of female RMG workers is not satisfactory level; still now our female workers are struggling much and could not ensure nutritious food security that was also study findings of the previous researchers. The data also shows the existing salary package is neither commensurate nor adjusted with the prevailing inflation rate with economy. Although they work hard from morning till evening, they are not satisfied on hard earned money to maintain basic needs. The present study suggests that the government as well as BGMEA can take initiative to start a rationing service for food items for all garments workers. The initiative can be implemented through a formal contract between recognized government agency like TCB and BGMEA or BKMEA. Moreover, garment owners can provide low cost shelter facility to the workers so that more earnings can be spent for nutritious food items. In addition to that central canteen facilities can be provided for the workers, by doing so consumption of healthy and nutritious food can be ensured. The study ends up by opening the area of further research to examine the health status and justify whether garment worker can quench health issue with the existing salary package.

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