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Note from the Editor

Let me begin with an apology. Due to a matter of personal dislocation coupled with a slight technical glitch, the January 2013 issue of the e-Journal got delayed. Probably such delays would not have mattered much a few years ago, but it does today. The reason being, and I am happy to report, that the number of people taking interest in the e-Journal has increased phenomenally. I have been inundated by enquiries from general readers and the authors since the very first week of January. My apologies to all and to compensate I am offering a very rich collection of articles in this issue.

The most notable of these are a set of six papers on violence and deprived children put at the end of the issue. These open with three papers on violence, the first of which by Kazi Tobarak Hossain and Md. Saidur Rashid Sumon lists the various types of violence perpetrated on the women in Bangladesh. They collate data from various sources and present a comprehensive picture of violence and attempt to explain their nature and causes.

The second of these deals with domestic violence. We have dealt extensively with this subject in our previous issues but they concerned mostly Bangladesh. This time we have a paper on Nigeria by Peter Ezeah with a difference as the nature of marriage and marital life differ considerably from those in Bangladesh. As Ezeah notes “females are frequently married in childhood to older men who may be unknown to them. At the time of marriage, young women know little about marriage and sexuality, which can be a traumatic experience. (But) it is permissible among the people for young married women to desert their husbands to ‘attain maturity’. In this sense she is free to engage in prostitution at the end of which she is expected by her husband to return to him with some material gifts which can be regarded as ‘bride wealth’”, so that the nature of domestic violence takes on a whole new meaning in these contexts.

The third of these by Asima Hassan and Aneesa Shafi portray the impact of violence on the mental make up of the people in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. This Indian state has been at the centre of conflict between India and Pakistan since 1947 and they have fought as many as three all out wars on it and today a part of the state is occupied by Pakistan and the rest remains with India under strict military presence and, as the authors note, often the military out number civilian population. An active “militancy”, as a force of resistance, has also risen to become a part of the daily life of the people in the state. The authors report, how under these conditions, the people, particularly the women, who have lost their husband, son or a brother, cope with the day to day reality and failing which suffer tremendous mental agonies, yet refuse to take proper measures fearing stigma.

These are followed by three papers on the deprived children in Bangladesh. In the first of these, Md. Nazmul Alam and Rizwana Hussain look at the plight of the children of the “Street Based Sex Workers” in Dhaka. The stigma of their mothers’ occupation coupled with the ensuing poverty and isolation put these children in a very precarious situation. Their future is laden with uncertainty and perhaps for the girl child an inheritance of the mother’s profession and for the boys a life of drudgery and drug addiction.

Children of broken families all over the world suffer from a set of problems unique to them. These become doubly difficult to deal with when their lives are set in poverty. Shirin Akhter follows the lives of a few such children from the city of Khulna, living mostly in the slums. The curse of poverty for some is combined with the dreaded “step mother” while for others a life with poorer single mothers. The harshness and the frustrations of the lives of these children are best portrayed by their refusal to see their parents reunited or in their denial to even interact with the other parent.

Perhaps the greatest challenge a child faces is when he has to leave home to earn a living, often for the whole family. His/her trials and tribulations are multiplied many folds when the legal system fails to support him/her or is absent. He is literally thrown to the beasts. But that is a reality millions of children world over have to face every day. These include about 8 million children in Bangladesh alone, working mostly in the informal sector that has little or no respect for the legal system in any case. Sharmin Akhter and Abu Syead Muhammad Abdullah noting the plight of some of these children focus on the lack of legal protection for these children workers. They not only lament the lack
of proper laws but make valuable suggestions to change the fate of these children. Fortunately, as I write this introduction, the Bangladesh Government has just passed a bill covering much of what the authors have suggested, attesting to the timing and the need of such research.

Rest of this issue covers a rich collection of articles from all over the world. As of before, Nigeria again features very prominently. Besides the article on domestic violence noted above, there are two more papers, the first one by C.I. Ezeh, C.O. Anyiro, L. K. Ogbonnaya and N. Q. Obioma dealing with the advantages accrued to the women contract farmers as opposed to the non contract farmers in the Anambra State. In the process, the article paints a picture of poverty among these women farmers and shows how the contract farmers have more to benefit from the Agricultural Development Programme.

The third paper on Nigeria deals with the stark reality of organizational politics, this time in a university setting. A. S. Adebusuyi, M. O. Olasupo and E. E. Idehen show that the non-academic staff in the Obafemi Awolowo University perceive politics “three times more” than the academic staff. “This may be due to the less clear cut rules and policies for promotion in the non teaching section of the university as compared to the academic staff”. In any case the junior employees feel that they have to obey whatever is dished out to them by the seniors.

In South Africa the Batho Pele principles were launched in 1997 “to promote quality and efficient service to all citizens”. This unique attempt was set to improve consultation, service standards, access, courtesy, information, openness and transparency etc. of the government servants. Its aim was to progressively raise the standards of service. The findings of a research conducted by T.L. Ngidi and N. Dorasamy and presented here show that, “while initiatives are in place to ensure the application of the Batho Pele principles, challenges still exist”.

Zimbabwe has been undergoing tremendous economic upheavals in recent times and different classes of people try to mitigate sufferings in various innovative ways. Bernard Chazovachii, Leonard Chitongo and Jenias Ndava in their paper demonstrate how through as simple a step as selling of fuel wood, people in the city of Masvingo have built up a whole network of successful business enterprises to avert poverty. They however, caution that the success should be tempered by keeping in mind that too much and unregulated exploitation of the woods may become counterproductive.

We have in the past published a number of papers covering various facets of education. This issue also presents another paper on education, this time on the quality of education in the Indian state of Assam. Shahidul Ahmed using the achievement scores in maths and sciences try to estimate the quality of education imparted to the students in the primary schools of the state. His findings show that Muslim students have a much lower level of achievement. He also argues that it is the quality of education and not the quantity, meaning increasing the number of students and schools, which the education system should try to attain.

And the last, though definitely not the least in importance (the paper is the first one of this issue), is the concern over the world economic crisis expressed by Mustafa Murshed and Mosammat Mustari Khanam. The authors go into a detailed discussion of the nature of this crisis as it unfolded since 2008. The issue they focus on is the extent of government control over the economy, to what extent the market should be allowed a free hand. It is an age old question and has divided the world since the birth of capitalism. The authors take on a challenging position that if in the event of a crisis the government is expected to intervene, and it does, to protect the citizens, the government should then, legitimately and for the same reason, intervene at all times.

Thus, in all we present a dozen papers in this issue. The issue was supposed to be a landmark issue commemorating the 10th anniversary of the publication of the e-Journal. Unfortunately, due to some unavoidable reasons we could not hold the celebrations. We, therefore, launch this issue with the hope of a future celebration of our success.
Regulation or Deregulation of an Economic Entity:
A Normative Analysis

Mustafa Murshed* and Mosammat Mustari Khanaum**

Abstract: Government intervention in the market economy is a controversial issue due to the philosophical differences in the political ideologies of the decision-makers. There are some areas which are mainly controlled by the government because of its superiority and the structure; these are: ensuring social safety and security, providing basic needs and compensating negative externalities, etc. There are two broad swings of the pendulum regarding the practice of government intervention. Some believe that market failure requires government interference while others disagree. This is an ongoing debate whether government is eligible to intervene in the economy and if so then to what extent. The existing research findings do not come up with a decisive solution in this regard. This study is a critical appreciation based on the arguments of different thinkers in favour and against government intervention. It has been argued that government intervention is a must for any economic entity because only government is answerable to the people and if we allow government to interfere in the crisis situation then it is better to allow government to handle the economy forever.

Introduction

State versus market constitutes the evolutionary paradigm of economic doctrine. Classical model is at one extreme, neo-classical synthesis is at the intermediate stage and market economy with its derivatives such as executive agency (as in U.K.), privatization of public utilities such as telephone, railway etc. are at the other extreme. The heyday of classical economics culminated in the onslaught of depression of 1930s. The success of Keynesian economics in weathering the recession is a testament of active state intervention which advocated that, “Government intervention through expansionary fiscal policy is needed” (Sullivan & Steven, 2003, p.395). During that time US President Roosevelt enacted the Glass-Steagall Act, 1933. But Clinton Administration repealed that act in 1999 and from then on the financial crisis began and turned into economic crisis (Rudd, 2009). Governments across the globe have been aggressively battling the current financial crisis using fiscal stimulus, monetary easing, as well as structural intervention. There is now a controversy as to the proper role of government in economic activity (Zerbe, Jr. and McCurdy, 2000). Some economists argue that government should play the role of a catalytic agent, as in the chemical process, accelerating the pace of development through ensuring congenial environment for development while others believe in Laissez-faire. So there is a dichotomy regarding the operating system of an economy between non-interventionist and interventionist (Lipsy, 1989, pp.747-75).

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On the basis of a practical situation let us consider an example, if your internet service provider is delaying without any definite reason then the government may be the sole competent authority to provide a way out the situation. But government has limitations, even sometimes not competent enough to resolve the problem (Weil, 2005, pp.348-60). So there are two things to consider, firstly, whether government will intervene and secondly, if we allow intervention then what is the optimum level? Is it only in the crisis situation, or only in regard to social welfare or to regulate the business, the discussion is huge in terms of the issues.

The role of the state is a historical event. The reestablishment of American capitalism after the Great Depression in 1930s, the engineering of Marshal Plan after World War II, Asian contagion in 1997-99 and the recent bailout package for USA capital market in 2007-08 are the lucid examples of government interventions (Allen and Gale, 2007, pp.1-6). Therefore the role of the state is a non-ending process since the history of the civilization. The recent financial crisis explores the role of the state once again as a fundamental issue (Rudd, 2009).

In a mixed economy the appropriate role of the government is not resolved rather it encourages disputes between the normative views in favour of and against the government role (Nelson, 1987). This paper makes an attempt to explore the ongoing debate on government intervention. The recent crisis in the US sub-prime loan for housing sector fuels the dispute between regulation and deregulation of the economy. The debate has been raging among economists for much of this century: should governments intervene during times of economic crisis? To a greater extent the analysis refers to US economy, the world’s economic giant but this study is a general observation. The dominance of US financial system in the world economy is the major reason for the above justification.

This is a literature review and for that reason no separate literature review is given here. This article first briefly discussed whether the government should support the troubled corporation or not. Then it examines the scholarly arguments and comments of different researchers with respect to the dichotomy of two different thoughts in favour of and against the government practice. Secondary evidences have been used to serve the purpose. We paid attention particularly on some technical terminologies, arguments of different thinking, and the historical views of economic intellectuals. This work is expected to provide valuable information for the researchers to conduct further research and help the policy makers to set the strategies in terms of improving the socio-economic development and prosperity of the globe.

One of the limitations of the study is that it doesn’t observe any trends of any particular economic entity on the basis of empirical evidences. More importantly, this analysis is not country specific so it may create ambiguity if someone plans to relate with any particular economic unit. The excuse of those limitations is that this study is not a quantitative analysis rather a general discussion of the role of the government.
The paper proceeds as follows: in Section-1 there is an introductory discussion while Section-2 develops the methodology of the study. A separate section (Section-3) is added here to provide a comprehensive idea about the global financial crisis because it has been the landmark of the ‘regulation or deregulation debate’. Section-3 articulates the cause of the recent global financial crisis and global responses to fight against the crisis and role of the government as well for that particular period of time. Section-4 critically examines the potential areas where the government can intervene. The succeeding section (Section-5) describes the writings as well the findings of scholarly comments in favour of and against the government intervention. Section-5 has the paramount importance because it is the core section of this study. The next section contains the concluding remarks of this paper.

Methodology

This paper is completely based on theoretical arguments of different books, journals, websites and intellectual writings (published & unpublished) of different authors. Here we tried to analyze the findings and comments of scholars. In this paper no data are used and no testing of hypothesis is considered. So this is just a theoretical elaboration of the arguments in favour of and in against the government intervention. The recent global financial crisis is the starting point of our discussion. The whole discussion is based on the secondary evidences.

Cause of the Recent Economic Crisis

The causes of the recent global financial crisis are already reasonably clear. It could be argued that the crisis is a result of deregulated financial markets or the raw functioning of capitalism, based on the idea of ‘free markets’. It originated in a series of interconnected developments within the American financial sector.

George Soros (2008) said,

"The salient feature of the current financial crisis is that it was not caused by some external shock... the crisis was generated by the system itself".

Australian former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd (2009) added that the current crisis is the culmination of a 30-year domination of economic policy by a free-market ideology. The central thrust of this ideology has been that government activity should be constrained, and ultimately replaced, by market forces. A housing market bubble began in the late 1990s and accelerated in the early-mid 2000s. Banks and mortgage brokers pushed mortgage sales because they earned fees in proportion to the volume of mortgages they wrote (James, 2008, p.3).

Demand for high yield products based on mortgages was so great and bank fees so large that banks and brokers began to sell mortgages to those who could not afford them under terms that were bound
to trigger large defaults when the housing price bubble evaporated and/or interest rates rose. The whole process was driven by accelerating leverage (James, 2008, p.3).

In 1998, Brooksley Born, the head of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission argued for the regulation of this market. Without it, she argued, the American economy and the global economy were being placed at risk (Bloomberg, 2008). At the same time, as a consequence of a $300-million lobbying campaign by financial corporations, Congress also repealed President Roosevelt's Glass-Steagall Act, 1933. Its purpose had been to separate the commercial banks, which had become involved in the speculative frenzy of the ‘20s, from the activities of the investment banks. The repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act opened all the American major banks to massive involvement in the derivatives market (Rudd, 2009).

Global Responses to Fight the Crisis

The governments all over the world are intervening in the financial markets like never before. They have provided liquidity in hundreds of billions of dollars, lowered interest rates to revive the economy, pumped capital into financial institutions in trouble, forced mergers of weak institutions with stronger ones, brought an end to Investment Banking, etc. Monetary authorities have changed the cash reserve ratio (CRR), etc. Funds have been found when they have not been available for interventions in social sectors like, health or for employment, infrastructure maintenance, housing, etc. One wonders what will happen to the Fiscal deficits of the major OECD countries since they are offering huge sums to businesses (Kumar, 2009, p.3).

According to the International Herald Tribune, on September 16, 2008 China cut its interest rate for the first time since 2002. Indonesia reduced its overnight repo rate, at which commercial banks can borrow overnight funds from the central bank, by two percentage points to 10.25 percent. The Reserve Bank of Australia injected nearly $1.5 billion into the banking system, nearly three times as much as the market’s estimated requirement. The Reserve Bank of India added almost $1.32 billion, through a refinance operation.

In October 8, 2008 the British Government announced a bank rescue package of around £500 billion (Jamieson, 2008). The plan comprises three parts. First, £200 billion will be made available to the banks in the Bank of England’s Special Liquidity scheme. Second, the Government will increase the banks’ market capitalisation, through the Bank Recapitalisation Fund, with an initial £25 billion and another £25 billion to be provided if needed. Third, the Government will temporarily underwrite any eligible lending between British banks up to around £250 billion.

In November 9, 2008 the 2008 Chinese economic stimulus plan is a $586 billion stimulus package announced by the central government of the People’s Republic of China in its biggest move to stop the global financial crisis from hitting the world’s fourth largest economy. The stimulus package will be
invested in key areas such as housing, rural infrastructure, transportation, health and education, environment, industry, disaster rebuilding, income-building, tax cuts, and finance. Japan Taro Aso announced $51 billion stimulus package (International Herald Tribune, 2008).

In the US, the epicentre of the financial crisis, the new Obama administration passed the largest fiscal stimulus package in US history, with a price tag of $787 billion (Davies, et al., 2012). The package contains both direct spending on infrastructure, healthcare, and other projects with universal benefits. These steps have been complemented by monetary easing, with unprecedented reduction in interest rates -- to almost zero. The government has also been aggressive with structural intervention, most visibly in the banking sector, which is in meltdown mode with 14 banks already failed. Imam (2009) stated that,

"In 2008, the government engineered healthier banks to buy the weaker ones, and has set aside $700 billion under the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) legislation. Importantly, there is now discussion in the US about setting up a "Big Bad Bank" (BBB) to buy up the hundreds of billions of dollars worth of toxic assets sitting on the balance sheets of banks, and quarantine these assets."

Governmental Role: Possible Areas and How to Intervene

There is now a controversy as to the proper role of government in economic activity. The first point to consider is whether government should intervene and the next one is at what level? If we allow the government intervention in the crisis situation to save the troubled corporations with the tax-payers’ money then it may be ethically wrong. The profit seeking organizations enjoy their earnings in the good time without paying anything to the tax-payers then why the tax-payers would spend their money for the businessmen in bad time. So the rescue strategy is not at all acceptable in one sense.

Many economists argued that the government intervention is required mainly for market failure which is the outcome of negative externalities, provision of public goods, asymmetric or imperfect information as well as market imperfection (Ribaudo, et al., 2008 and Young, 2004, pp. 983-85). In this paper these areas are not scrutinized rather we focus on the wide areas of government intervention and we do not examine the causes of government intervention. It is a summary of general observation about the enduring debate about government interference in the economy.

A few economists argue that government should play role of a facilitator to accelerate the pace of development. Institutionalizations of development process through promulgation of rules, creation of physical and social infrastructure are some of the crucial aspects that need government active patronization.

Joseph Stiglitz (1998) elaborated on proper role of government and identified some important areas where intervention is required to expedite the development process. He argued that few areas where government should intervene:
a) Promoting technology- the government must patronize innovation and re-orientate the endogenous technology to augment productivity.

b) Supporting the financial sector- financial sector discipline and healthy norms help development of capital market and ensure capital accumulation for investment in the most efficient way. The safety and soundness of financial institutions ensure long term investment climate.

Government can offer two major types of stimulus package in an economy – fiscal stimulus and monetary stimulus (Imam, 2009).

**Fiscal Stimulus**

It involves public sector spending above normal levels in order to stimulate the economy. Keynesian economies strongly argued for fiscal policy because it is the only effective way for the market correction (Stiglitz, 2008a). There are typically two ways to provide fiscal stimulus:

**Direct spending:** The government can increase its budget above normal level and spend the excess on projects -- roads and bridges, mass transit, education, energy supply -- with the goal of creating new jobs and improving the long-term competitiveness of the economy.

**Tax cuts:** The government can lower the tax rate, or provide special tax incentives, to individuals and businesses. This action increases the amount of money available to the private sector to spend on the economy. However, tax cuts can be less effective than direct government spending to stimulate the economy; individuals and businesses can simply choose not to spend the tax breaks or not to take advantage of tax incentives. It has been found that in the period of household debt and high uncertainty tax cuts are unsuccessful as they were in Japan in 1990s (Stiglitz, 2008a).

Fiscal stimulus, while effective in short-term can be harmful in the longer-term. First, fiscal stimulus creates budget deficits (difference between what the government spends and what it earns), typically finances through borrowing. As the debt load becomes larger, the government has to impose higher and higher taxes to service the debt, eventually threatening the solvency and stability of the economy. Second, fiscal spending creates unintended distortions in the economy; government programs can end up directing capital to sectors that may not be the best use of resources.

**Monetary Stimulus**

In the recent times monetarism dominates the economy where the economy is mostly determined by the money supply (Machaj, 2007). It involves increasing the availability of money in the economy, typically through the banking system. The objective is to make it easier for retail and business customers to borrow from banks and spend it on the economy, thereby counteracting recessionary pressures. This can be achieved in one of several ways:
Interest rate cuts: By lowering the interest rates banks can charge on loans or offer for deposits, the government makes it less attractive to save money and cheaper for companies and individuals to borrow.

Quantitative easing: The government can inject funds into the banking system by lending to banks directly and/or by buying assets from banks (such as bonds). The goal is to "ease" pressure on bank assets, thereby allowing them to lend more to retail and business customers.

Reserve reductions: Monetary authorities require banks to hold a certain portion of their assets with the central bank. By reducing this requirement, the central bank can free up banks’ capital, which in turn is used by them to increase lending.

Monetary stimulus for too long a period is not good, for the very reason that monetary stimulus is useful in a downturn, it can be harmful in an upturn. Easy money tends to create "credit bubbles" or excessive expansion fueled by excessive levels of borrowing. In fact, availability of easy money in developed economies during the last two decades is one of the root causes of the current financial crisis. And given that economic policy is not precise, governments tend to wait too long to turn-off the excess money flow, thereby creating bubbles in the long term.

Whether Government to Intervene or not

In Favor of Intervention

Adam Smith, the pioneer in arguing against the governmental role advocated a free market where individuals will enjoy freedom. Smith in his book *The Wealth of the Nations* argued that,

“As every individual, therefore, endeavours as much as he can both to employ his capital in the support of domestic industry, and so to direct that industry that its produce may be of the greatest value; every individual necessarily labours to render the annual revenue of the society as great as he can. He generally, indeed, neither intends to promote the public interest, nor knows how much he is promoting it. By preferring the support of domestic to that of foreign industry, he intends only his own security; and by directing that industry in such a manner as its produce may be of the greatest value, he intends only his own gain, and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention. Nor is it always the worse for the society that it was no part of it.” (Smith, 1776, p. 477)

But if everyone is busy with his own interest there must be a lack of coordination. The crucial argument in favour of government intervention is the requirement of coordination. Government is the sole agency to coordinate the individuals, business firms as well as the private entrepreneurs. Let us begin this part with the global financial crisis in the recent time. The US Financial Market fails because there was less government involvement. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi indicated,

“Budgetary recklessness, on an anything- goes mentality, with no regulation, no supervision, and no discipline in the system.” (The Guardian, 2008)

President Obama also repeatedly blamed ‘deregulation’ for the crisis (Wallison, 2009). Therefore, it has been widely accepted that the crisis required government intervention. There is no doubt that
immediate action has to be taken in order to cope with the crisis of such magnitude. Otherwise, severe consequences for the financial system, as well as for the global economy would be inevitable. Dunlavy (2008) argued that *Laissez-faire* is a myth while America has a long established reputation of government in terms of taking initiatives and enhancing economic growth.

The general path of government intervention and fiscal policy is subject to ongoing debate. So the question is raised that are rescue packages appropriate? Governments worldwide have structured rescue packages to support financial institutions in distress. This raises an important question: should distressed/troubled financial co-operations/institutions be rescued by the government and consequently by tax payers? In one hand, rescue measures seem appropriate given that the bankruptcy costs for the economy would exceed the costs of the rescue. On the other hand, with a government as the lender of last resort, there is little incentive for financial institutions to pursue sophisticated risk management strategies. In contrast, the incentive would be to increase the overall risk profile of the institution in order to obtain a higher expected payoff for shareholders. With a lender of last resort, shareholders are equipped with a put option written by the government, generating an incentive to increase the risk profile of the firm at the cost of the government (Breitenfellner and Wagner, 2009, P.12).

In the words of legendary economist John Maynard Keynes, "Free markets are not always self correcting" (Riley, 2011). We need more severe and efficient regulation, higher capital requirements to underpin financial trades, more transparency and a global institution to independently oversee the stability of the international financial system (The Financial Times, 2008).

The crisis is one fold of analysis. The other areas where government should intervene are safety and security, social justice and equity, creating positive externality and compensate the negative externality. It has been a prerequisite for the government to ensure security for the citizens. Stiglitz (2008b) argued that well designed regulation not only guarantee the market efficiency but also ensure an equitable market outcome.

Given the issue that has developed over the year there is reason to be optimistic about the governmental intervention in term of cash or subsidy. Watkins (2008), who is the co-winner of the 1st John Kenneth Galbraith Prize in 2008 advocated in favor of the governmental intervention. The market mechanism alone cannot perform all economic functions; public policy is needed to guide, correct, and supplement it in certain respects. Government action should only occur where market fail, providing governments would do a better job in those particular circumstances.

**Against the Governmental Intervention**

In the recent history, the issue of government intervention becomes more popular due to the difference in the political ideologies. The capitalist society does encourage less government
involvement in the economic activities for more capital generation having fewer regulations. The argument against the government attachment in the economy can be articulated by a famous quote stated by Nobel Laureate Economist Freidrich Hayek,

"Government intervention usually makes a bad problem worse. The most efficient economy is one left to its own devices." (Scribd, (n. d.))

In this connection a similar proposition is delivered by W. Rogers (1993, p.93),

“We should never blame the government for not doing something. It is when they do something is when they become dangerous.”

One of the important justifications regarding government intervention is market failure which is a loaded and value-laden term (Rozeff, 2006). If market fails the government must intervene which is a common belief. But Rozeff (2006) argued that the government inference is not justified in intruding individual’s sovereign decision-making process. He also stated that those who are interested to focus on market failure never identify the market success.

The history of market failures allows us to make a dissection of the Great Depression in 1930s. No one disagree regarding the aftermath of Great Depression and the contribution of the government in depression period but in the recent days economists believe that inconsistent macroeconomic policies is the main reason for crisis or market failure (Allen and Gale, 2007, pp.1-6). So, government is the cause of crisis and market is the solution.

Hausman (2008) stated some problems, like administrative costs, lack of information, rent-seeking, corruption etc. are faced by the government when they are interested to address any issue. Considering all the potential problems associated with the governmental intervention let us make a summary of the list. Firstly, where does the government get its money from? Government spending comes from three sources: taxes, debt, or inflation (or a combination of these). These all boil down to one primary source: taxation. Government’s remedy is to increase public spending by raising more in current or future taxes. Taxes simply transfer (current or future) resources from consumers to government, displacing private spending and investment. Taxation comes with costs. Higher taxation encourages tax avoidance, which causes people to change their behavior. They may engage more in non-taxed activities, such as household production. Economists explain that these behavioral changes create a “deadweight loss,” i.e. resources that could have been created but aren’t—we are all impoverished as a result. Caccomo (2008) argued that any increase in the tax-burden will be accompanied with a series of negative externalities, like, tax evasion, corruption, the expansion of underground economy and black market, the peoples’ way of thinking as well as the crowding out effect.

Second, government cannot create wealth. When the government directs resources to government-identified uses, there is no guarantee that these funds are being put to their best possible uses (Eileen & Frederic, 2008, p.3). Government lacks the incentive to identify relevant, socially beneficial
investments. Unlike entrepreneurs, government officials are not guided by profits and they do not suffer losses if they misallocate resources. Only entrepreneurs, who risk their capital, are positioned to identify and exploit opportunities for wealth creation. At best, government spending displaces jobs and misallocates resources, producing a “negative multiplier effect,” zeroing out any positive effects created by new government spending.

Third, we don’t know what portion of income the newly government-employed individuals will consume. They may choose to spend now or later. As crisis brings greater uncertainty, many people may choose caution: spending less now is a safety mechanism. The multiplier effect, however, is predicated on consumption estimates that may not work in times of crisis.

Finally, government-generated job counts are taken as evidence of guaranteed economic activity. But for economic benefits to occur, it matters how jobs are created. Jobs created by the private sector result from entrepreneurial innovation and trade. This process leads to real productivity gains and higher standards of living. At the end of the day, the government cannot replicate what only private entrepreneurial activity can do.

De-emphasizing regulation and intervention, the proponents of the free market approach instead subscribe to a concept of economic Darwinism; only the fittest companies making rational economic choices should thrive, while those making bad choices must fail.

A logical, although unintuitive conclusion of this theoretical construct is that recessions are inevitable, and even necessary. When demand rises, a virtuous expansionary cycle sets in; companies increase production, creating new jobs and improving wages, and in the process generating new demand. However, the expansionary forces tend to drive companies to excess -- creating too much capacity, taking on too much debt -- factors that eventually lead to business failures. As the failures pile up, companies shed capacity, cut employment and wages, and drive down demand -- the economy enters a recession. Therefore, recessions are inevitable and necessary; they purge the excesses that accumulate in an economy during the good times. A free market proponent will then argue against intervention to prevent a recession.

Conclusion
Governmental intervention in general and its role in promoting economic development in particular has long been a debated issue. In the light of the above discussion it is detected that there exists a huge area of controversies regarding the governmental intervention in promoting economic development. Market failures are a consequence of non-competitive behaviours, externalities, lack of property rights and production of public goods (Broadway and Bruce, 1984, pp.103-04). Historically, government intervention due to market failure has been proved. In addition, the governmental role in terms of subsidy and cash injections into troubled corporations from public purse in the current
context of global financial crisis and economic uncertainties has been unanimously accepted. Not doing anything may be an option. But how can inaction in the face of an economic crisis be an option? So the rescue is inevitable. For the time being it is essential that all governments continue with their efforts to manage the crisis of the economic entity.

It has been found that in the crisis situation we allow government intervention to rescue the economy. History supports this approach but what’s wrong if government does it before it happens. It is better to have prevention rather than medication. Though the market economy is the sole guarantor of ensuring efficiency but when it fails it is the liability of the government to save it from the disaster. The government is accountable for the rescue operation because market failure involves employment, budgetary management, revenue collection and consequently the overall economic development and prosperity. So ultimately government is answerable for the destination of the economy. If we allow government to intervene in crisis period then ethically it is absolutely fine to allow the government to intervene before it happens. The government association with the economy will unlock the option to set a mechanism where check and balance can be ensured.

Though the management of government, particularly in poor countries, is not efficient to a greater extent (Méon and Weill, 2005) but we need to think of it as the solitary institution which has plenty of commitments to the people nationally and internationally. Therefore, in the modern phase of global integration the presence of government role is inevitable. Even to a greater extent non-interventionists are in favour of minimal direct involvement of the government in the economic system (Lipsy, 1989, pp. 757-58). Government intercession is required to guarantee social justice and equity, to create an environment where private sector can perform efficiently, to provide basic needs for the citizens as well as it gives room to reduce negative externalities. Thus, we strongly recommend government intervention in the economy where the market will operate in such a way that it can find its own path of long-term development. To conclude, it is high time to focus on the governmental efficiency rather than the role of the government to make sure that the economy is on the right track despite the possible ups and downs in the market mechanism.

References


Impact of Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) on Rural Women Contact Farmers’ Poverty Levels in Aguata Agricultural Zone of Anambra State, Nigeria


Abstract: This study determined the impact of agricultural development programmes (ADP) on rural women contact farmers’ poverty levels in Aguata, agricultural zone of Abia State, Nigeria. A multi-stage random sampling technique was used to select 180 rural women farmers (90 a piece for rural women contact and non contact farmers). Instrument for data collection was two sets of pre-tested and structured questionnaires. The poverty line was N5037.79 and N5027.91 per month for rural women contact and non contact farmers respectively. Poverty incidence was 0.444 and 0.5222 for rural women contact and non contact farmers respectively. The result of the paired t-test showed that the ADP impacted positively and significantly on rural women contact farmers’ farm income, farm size and fertilizer use levels at 5.0% risk level. The multiple regression analysis with double log as the lead equation showed that the critical determinants of gross expenditure of the rural women contact farmers include household size, farm size, labour use levels and farm incomes at given levels of significance. It was recommended the women farmers should be given increased access to agricultural lands to help boost agricultural output and reduce endemic poverty.

Introduction

Nigerian agriculture has been characterized by small scale production. This characteristic has led to low income hence, the farmers cannot afford yield increasing technologies and consequently experienced low output. Due to low incomes and output, the levels of investment in farms have been very low, forming a cycle called “vicious cycle of poverty” (Ezeh, 2007; Ajibefun and Aderinola, 2004).

In order to break this cycle and improve the performance of the agricultural sector, the Nigerian governments, over the years, introduced and implemented several policies and programmes aimed at revamping the sector. Prominent amongst these programmes is the Agricultural Development Programme (ADPs) previously funded via a tripartite arrangement of the World Bank, the Federal Government and the State governments.

The ADP is perhaps the boldest step taken by the Federal Government of Nigeria to develop the agricultural sector of the economy. Thus the ADP became a central motive force for direct investment by government on small holder agriculture (Igwe et al, 1997; Kalu, 2000; Ezeh et al, 2006) The ADP...
was designed to improve the traditional systems of production and raise productivity by transfer of relevant and proven production technologies to farmers, easing constraints on inputs supplies and provision of rural infrastructure (Obasi, 1995)

Strategies for achieving the ADP objectives in the crop sub-sector are usually the employment of On-farm Adaptive Research (OFAR) and Small Plot Adoption Technique (SPAT) (Ezeh, 2007). These are achieved under the umbrella of the Training and visit (T and V) system of extension with male and female contact farmers as the centre piece of all extension actions. A contact farmer (male or female) is a progressive and receptive farmer trained by the village Extension Agent (V. E. A) on the new practices and through whom information is communicated to other rural farmers within the rural Community (Dimelu, 2002; Oriaku, 2008)

Despite numerous policies and programmes geared towards improving the living standards of Nigerians, it has been difficult to stem the growth of rural poverty especially among the women (Adegeye, 1999; Ezeh, 2007). Despite the disproportionate agricultural roles played by the women contact farmers, they have remained seriously disadvantaged with respect to access to health, education, finance and credit, agricultural extension services, other productive resources and training opportunities. This, according to World Bank (1996), is as a result of the legal, regulatory, cultural and structural barriers that have made women contact farmers’ status to be generally lower than men.

These have interacted to make women contact farmers more dependent on men contact farmers and have led to the evolution of a rigid division of labour and labour market highly segregated by gender. Men generally own and manage family land, incomes and women’s labour thereby restricting women’s ability to acquire new ideas, skills, contacts and employment outside the home, making men the sole beneficiary of economic development (Ezeh, 2007). This unequal access to resources has made rural poverty to be synonymous with women. World Bank (1996) and Ayobatele and Amudipe (1999) confirmed that the depth and severity of rural poverty is highest in polygamous households affecting a large number of women in both rural and urban areas of Nigeria. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) rural poverty study revealed that the number of rural women living in absolute poverty in developing countries including Nigeria is on the increase (U.N. 1980). This makes it imperative to determine literally the impact of the ADP on rural women (women contact farmers and women non contact farmers) in Aguata Agricultural Zone of Anambra State, Nigeria.

This is anchored on the platform that the poor is not equally poor and hence, different levels of poverty alleviation measures will be needed to lift them out of poverty. In order to make the women (contact and non contact farmers) to continue to perform their essential roles in agriculture, their poverty levels must be reduced. This study therefore, is hinged on the following specific objectives: i) to determine the poverty line, incidence (head count ratio), poverty gap between the rural women contact and non contact farmers in Aguata agricultural zone of Anambra State Nigeria.
ii to determine the impact of extension packages on rural women contact and non contact farmers’ incomes, farm size, labour and fertilizer use levels in the study area.

iii to estimate the socio-economic factors that affect expenditures of rural women contact farmers in the study area.

This research is anchored on the following null hypotheses:

$H_{01}$: There is no significant difference in farm income, farm size, labour and fertilizer use levels, between rural women contact and non contact farmers in the study Area.

$H_{02}$: Rural women contact farmers’ socio-economic variables (age of women contact farmers, household size, farming experience, farm size, educational level, labour use levels, farm income) are positively related to farm expenditures.

Materials and Method:
The study was conducted in Aguata Agricultural Zone of Anambra State, Nigeria. The area lies between latitudes 6°13’ and 7° 9’ N of equator and longitudes 7°49’ and 7°57’E of Greenwich meridian. Aguata Agricultural zone is sandwiched between Akokwa in Orlu South local government area (LGA) of Imo State, Nigeria in the North, Ogbaru in Otuoacha LGA of Anambra State, Nigeria in the South, Aawlaw in Oji River LGA of Enugu State, Nigeria in the east and on the west by Umuaku in Umunneochi LGA of Abia State, Nigeria. Aguata agricultural zone, Anambra State, Nigeria is made up of six blocks, namely, Aguata I, Aguata ii, Orumba I, Orumba ii, Orumba iii and Nnewi.

Multi-stage random sampling technique was used in the selection process. First, three out of the six blocks were randomly selected. The selected blocks were Aguata ii, Orumba I and Nnewi. Second, one circle in each block was selected randomly, making it 3 circles. The selected circles were Umuchu in Aguata ii, Ogboji in Orumba I and Ukpor in Nneni block. Third, 30 rural women contact farmers were randomly selected from each circle bringing the sum to 90. To provide for the non ADP rural women contact farmers, an equal number of rural women non contact farmers were also selected in the areas where the rural women contact farmers were selected with the assistance of the rural Extension Agents. This therefore brought the grand sample size to 180. Two sets of questionnaires were used to elicit and collect information. A set was administered on the rural contact farmers while a second, on the rural women none contact farmers.

The data generated were mostly demographic and those related to input/output coefficients of the improved technologies as well as their prices. Data in respects of objective I was realized with poverty indicators, objective ii was analyzed with paired “t” test while objective iii was achieved with multiple regression analysis.
The model specification of the poverty indicators include:

$$H = \frac{q}{n}$$  \hspace{1cm} (1)  

Where $H$ = Head count ratio

$q$ = number of poor rural women (contact and Non contact farmers)

$n$ = total number of rural women (contact and non contact farmers)

$$I = \frac{(Z - Y)}{Z}$$  \hspace{1cm} (ii)

$I$ = Poverty gap (Depth of poverty)

$Z$ = Poverty line estimated

$Y$ = Mean income of the poor rural women farmers in each group.

Paired treatment test (paired 't' test) was used according to Nwachukwu and Ezeh (2007) and Ezeh and Nwachukwu (2010) as follows:

$$t = \frac{X_1 - X_2}{\sqrt{\frac{S_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{S_2^2}{n_2}}}$$ \hspace{1cm} (iii)

Where:

$t$ = paired $t$ statistic

$X_1$ = Mean parameters of rural women contact farmers

$X_2$ = Mean parameters of rural women non contact farmers

$S_1^2$ = Variance of rural women contact farmers

$S_2^2$ = Variance of rural women non contact farmers

$n_1$ = number of selected rural women contact farmers

$n_2$ = number of selected rural women non contact farmers.

The multiple regression model is implicitly stated as:

$$Y = f (X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4, X_5, X_6, X_7, e_i)$$  \hspace{1cm} (iv)

Where:

$Y$ = total monthly household expenditures of the rural women contact farmers (₦)

$X_1$ = age of the rural women contact farmers (years)

$X_2$ = Household size

$X_3$ = Farming experience (years)

$X_4$ = Farm size (ha)

$X_5$ = Number of years spend in school

$X_6$ = Casual labour use (man-day)

$X_7$ = Farm income (Naira)

$e_i$ = Stochastic or error term.
The four functional forms (linear, Exponential, Double log and semi log forms) were fitted to the data. The lead equation was selected based on statistical and econometric reasons such as number of significant coefficients, magnitude of the F-ratio and $R^2$, and the conformity of the variables to a priori expectation.

Results and Discussion

The mean values of some socio-economic variables are shown in Table 1. The table shows that the mean monthly income of the rural women contact farmers was ₦3167.58 ($21.11) while that of the rural women non contact farmers was ₦2890.08 ($19.26). This implies that both groups of women farmers were low income earners. This classification is based on the submission of Ezeh (2007 and 2009) that all mean monthly incomes below ₦50,000.00 ($333.33) as belonging to low income group.

The relatively low farm income status of both groups of rural women farmers has crippling implication on household welfare, farm production and productivity. Table 1 also shows that the mean monthly expenditure of the rural women was ₦5037.79 ($33.58) while the rural women non contact farmers expenditures was ₦5027.91 ($33.51). The result indicates that both groups of rural women farmers overshot their monthly farm incomes. However, both groups of farmers’ expenditures were low. The significantly low proportion of household expenditure suggests the vicious cycle of poverty often engulfing most rural households in Nigerians. Low expenditure and by extension, low investment in agriculture result in low output (Ezeh, 2007 and 2009).

Table 1 also shows that the mean farm size of the rural women contact farmers was 1.7382 ha while that of the rural women non contact farmers was 1.3335 ha. This result is obvious and expected as rural women are not allowed to own or inherent land as of custom in Nigeria.

More so, Ezeh and Nwachukwu (2010) posited that generally farmers’ in Nigeria are predominantly smallholders with average farm size of between 1 and 2 hectares. The result (Table 1) of the labour use level of the rural women contact and non contact farmers indicate that they made use of 6.9259 and 6.1728 of mandays of labour in the farms respectively. These were majorly supplied from their various families.

Table 1: Mean Values of some socio-economic Parameters of the Rural Women Contact and Non Contact farmers in Anambra State, Nigeria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Parameter</th>
<th>Women Contact Farmers</th>
<th>Women Non Contact Farmers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Income (₦)</td>
<td>3167.58</td>
<td>2890.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Expenditure (₦)</td>
<td>5037.79</td>
<td>5027.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Size (ha)</td>
<td>1.7382</td>
<td>1.3335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour use (Manday)</td>
<td>6.9259</td>
<td>6.1728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fertilizer use levels (50kg per bag)</td>
<td>4.2375</td>
<td>3.1542</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Field survey, 2010 (1 USD = ₦150)
Table 1 further shows that the fertilizer use levels for the rural contact and non contact farmers were 4.2375 and 3.1542 bags of 50kg respectively. The low income level of both groups of farmers may have affected the level of investment in improved inputs among the farmers.

The poverty indicators of the rural women Anambra ADP contact and non contact farmers are shown in Table 2. The table shows that the poverty line (mean monthly household expenditure) of the rural women contact farmers was N5037.79 per month ($33.58) or N60,453.48 ($403.02) per annum while that of the women non contact farmers was N5027.91 ($33.51) per month or N60,334.92 ($402.23) per annum.

The coefficient of incidence of poverty (Table 2) otherwise called the head count ratio (Ezeh, 2007 and 2009) was 0.444 for the rural women contact farmers and 0.5222 for the rural women noncontact farmers. This implies that 44.41% and 52.22% of the rural women contact and non contact farmers respectively in Anambra State were poor because their incomes fell short of the mean household expenditure used as poverty line. This result compared favourably with Ezeh (2007 and 2009) that obtained 65.5 percent for rural women in Umunneochi in Abia State Nigeria and 53.67% and 32.15% for Fadama II participants and non participants respectively in Imo State Nigeria.

The coefficient of poverty depth (gap) (Table 2) also known as the income shortfall was 0.3712 for the rural women contact farmers and 0.4252 for the rural women non contact farmers. This implies that the poor rural women contact farmers required 37.12% of the poverty line to get out of poverty while the poor rural women non-contact farmers required 42.52% of their poverty line to get out of poverty. This result corroborates with Ezeh (2009).

| Table 2: Poverty Indicators of the Rural Women Contact and Non contact farmers In Anambra State, Nigeria |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Poverty Line (₦)                                      | 5037.79                                               |
|                                                      | 5027.91                                               |
| Head Count ratio (poverty incidence)                  | 0.444                                                  |
|                                                      | 0.5222                                                 |
| Poverty gap (poverty depth)                           | 0.3712                                                 |
|                                                      | 0.4252                                                 |
| Source: Computations form field Survey data.          |                                                        |

The results of the paired t-test on some technological input parameters are shown in Table 3. The result shows that the mean farm income of the rural women contact farmers was ₦3167.58 ($21.11) while that of the rural women non contact farmers was ₦2890.08 ($19.26) and the mean difference was ₦277.5 ($1.85). The paired ‘t’ result showed that this is statistically significant at 5.0% risk level because the calculated ‘t’ = 2.157 > the tabulated to.025 = 2.0. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This result compared favourably with Ezeh (2009) who obtained similar result in Imo State between Fadama II and non Fadama II participants.
The mean farm size of the women contact farmers was 1.7382 ha while that of the non contact farmers was 1.3335 ha and the difference was 0.4047 ha. The paired ‘t’ result shows that this is statistically significant at 5.0% level because the empirical ‘t’ = 2.4277 > tabulated to.025 = 2.0. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This result compared favourably with Nwachukwu and Ezeh, (2007) who obtained similar result in Abia State.

The results (Table 3) of the women contact farmers was 4.2375 50kg bag while that of the rural women non contact farmers was 3.1542. The mean difference was 1.0833 50kg bags. This is statistically significant at 95.0% confidence level because the calculated ‘t’ = 2.415 > the tabulated to.025 = 2.0. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 3: Results of the Paired t-test of farm income, Farm size, Labour and Fertilizer use level of Rural Women ADP contact and Non ADP contact farmers in Aguata Agricultural zone of Anambra State, Nigeria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Categories</th>
<th>Mean Differences</th>
<th>Mean Standard Deviation</th>
<th>t –Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Z₁</td>
<td>3167.58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z₂</td>
<td>2890.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z₁-Z₂</td>
<td>277.5</td>
<td>2.10720</td>
<td>2.157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z₃</td>
<td>1.7382</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z₄</td>
<td>1.3335</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z₃-Z₄</td>
<td>0.40471</td>
<td>1.53767</td>
<td>2.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z₅</td>
<td>6.9259</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z₆</td>
<td>6.1728</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z₅-Z₆</td>
<td>0.75309</td>
<td>7.03124</td>
<td>0.964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z₇</td>
<td>4.2375</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z₈</td>
<td>3.1542</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z₇-Z₈</td>
<td>1.0833</td>
<td>3.47408</td>
<td>0.415</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Computation from field Survey data.

**: Indicates that variable is significant at 5.0% risk level.

Where,

\[ Z₁ = \text{Mean farm income of rural women contact farmers} \]
\[ Z₂ = \text{Mean farm income of rural women non contact farmers} \]
\[ Z₃ = \text{mean farm size of rural women contact farmers} \]
\[ Z₄ = \text{Mean farm size of rural women non contact farmers} \]
\[ Z₅ = \text{Mean labour we level of rural women contact farms} \]
\[ Z₆ = \text{Mean labour we level of rural women non contact farms} \]
\[ Z₇ = \text{Mean Fertilizer use level of women contact farmers} \]
\[ Z₈ = \text{Mean Fertilizer use level of women non contact farmers} \]
The multiple regression model results of the factors influencing the expenditures of rural women contact farmers in Aguata agricultural zone of Anambra State ADP is presented in Table 4. All the functional forms were significant at given levels implying that any of the functional forms can be used for predictive purposes. However, the expenditure of the rural women contact farmers was best estimated using the double log functional form, which explained 63.7% of the total variation in the expenditure level of the rural women contact farmers in Aguata agricultural zone of Anambra State.

Table 4: Multiple Regression Estimates of Factors that Influence the Expenditures of Women Contact Farmers in Aguata Agricultural zone of Anambra State, Nigeria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Functional Forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Linear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>3484.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5517.086)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (X1)</td>
<td>80.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(94.475)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household size (X2)</td>
<td>45.564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(396.833)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming Exp. (X3)</td>
<td>-166.205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(149.660)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm size (X4)</td>
<td>1563.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1422.894)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour use Level (X5)</td>
<td>-13.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.074)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edu. Level (X6)</td>
<td>-177.244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Income (X7)</td>
<td>0.318xxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.074)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-square</td>
<td>0.236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R-square</td>
<td>0.171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F – ratio</td>
<td>3.620**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Computations from Field Survey data.
***, **: Indicate those variables are statistically significant at .10% and 5.0% risk levels respectively.
Figures in parenthesis are standard errors.

Nigeria at 10% risk level. Also, the double log functional form was chosen as the lead equation based on econometric and statistical reasons such as the number of regression coefficients that are significant, the magnitude of the F – ratio as well as their conformity to a priori expectation.

Specifically, the result shows that the total expenditures of the rural women contact farmers were sensitive to the household size. Though this variable (-1.209) is statistically significant at 1.0%
probability level, it is negatively signed. The sign is not in conformity with a priori expectation. Perhaps, increase in household size may not stir up increased expenditure as the members of the household may be matured, economically active and independent.

The coefficient of farm size (1.055) is positive with a standard error of 0.192. This is statistically significant at 1.0% \( \alpha \) level \( (P< 0.01) \). This implies that as the farm increases in size, there is the increased need for the farm inputs (variable and fixed), hence increase in expenditure. This result agrees with Onwuka (2005), Akinola and Young (1991) and Oputa (2005) that the larger the farm, the more quantities of inputs that would be needed in the farm, hence greater investment expenditures.

The coefficient (0.640) of rural women’s farm income in the model is positive and statistically significant at 99.0% confidence levels. Expectedly, expenditure of the rural women contact farmers would increase as the resource holding (income) of the women increases and sustained hence, the rural women contact farmers in the study area were indeed displaying rational economic behaviours.

**Conclusion and Recommendations:**

The results of this study posted the poverty line of the rural women contact farmers as $\text{N} 5037.79 ($33.59) while that of the women none contact farmers as $\text{N} 5027.92 ($33.52). The head count ratio for the rural women contact farmers was 0.444 as against 0.5222 of the women non contact farmers while the poverty gap was 0.3712 for rural women contact farmers and 0.4252 for the women non contact farmers.

The result of the paired “t” test indicated that the farm income, farm size, and fertilizer use level of the rural women contact farmers were significantly higher than those of the rural women noncontact farmers \( (P< 0.05) \).

The result of the multiple regression analysis with the double log functional form as the lead equation showed that the critical determinants of rural women contact farmers expenditure level include household size, farm size, labour use level and farm incomes while the value of \( R^2 = 0.637 \).

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:
The scope of the Agricultural Development Programmes (ADP) in Aguata Agricultural Zone of Anambra State and Nigeria in general should be enlarged to accommodate more willing rural women farmers as evidence had shown that the ADP impacted positively and significantly on some economic indices of the women contact farmers.

Deliberate massive fund injection in the form of loan should be extended to the rural women farmers as evidence had shown that the level of poverty experienced even by the women contact farmers was high. Increased funding has the attendant effect of empowering the women to venture into new fields.
of agricultural investments such as processing and value addition that would increase their net returns and increase production and productivity.

The governments at all levels (Federal, State and local government) should as a matter of deliberate policy initiate the policy towards the removal of all institutional, customary, and traditional inhibitions to agricultural lands by women farmers. This calls for the full operationalization of the land use Act of 1978. Increased access to land by the rural women will boost agricultural production and reduce endemic poverty.

References


Challenges on Application of Batho Pele Principles: A case study of Department of Home Affairs, Durban Regional Office

T.L. Ngidi* and N. Dorasamy**

Abstract: This paper presents and discusses the findings of a case study research that was conducted at the Durban Home Affairs regional office. The Batho Pele principles were launched in 1997 to promote quality and efficient service to all citizens. Under colonialism and apartheid, quality service was reserved for whites only and for the great majority of the population, Home Affairs (Ndabazabantu) was an instrument of repression and control. Given this legacy, the transformation of the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) had to be underpinned by the following Batho Pele principles: consultation, service standards, access, courtesy, information, openness and transparency, redress and value for money. According to Skweyiya (South Africa, 1997:5), Batho Pele aims to progressively raise standards of service, especially for those whose access to public services have been limited in the past and whose needs are greatest. The findings of the research show that while initiatives are in place to ensure the application of the Batho Pele principles, challenges still exist. Recommendations focus on enhanced procedures and processes relating to Batho Pele to improve service delivery at the Department of Home Affairs.

Introduction

Since the advent of democracy in 1994, several policies relating to service delivery have been formulated and implemented. One such crucial policy is the Batho Pele White Paper gazetted in 1997. Batho Pele, “People first”, is an initiative that intends to transform the public service at all levels. Since a democratic South Africa inherited a public service that was not people-friendly and lacked the skills and attitudes to meet the developmental challenges facing the country. In the struggle to transform the public service, there was a need to ensure that citizens are served properly, that all employees work to their full capacity and to treat state resources with respect (South Africa, 1997). The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) is a core government department that produces enabling documents that give access to government services like government grants, housing and education. The department is needed by everybody who enters, lives and exits in South Africa through natural, social, economic and political processes. A crucial department like Home Affairs is not immune to challenges relating to the application of Batho Pele principles.

Fraud and Corruption

Corruption engenders perverse political dependencies, lost political opportunities to improve the general well being of the citizenry and fosters a climate of mistrust, particularly of public officials. The losses that accrue from a culture of permissiveness with respect to corruption include a loss of revenue, loss of trust, loss of values, loss of credibility and legitimacy and a loss of the democratic ethos and impulse within institutions and organisations. Corruption erodes the “common good” and

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the “People’s Contract”. The political cost of corruption is that it undermines democracy, weakens the developmental state and undermines responsibility, accountability and legitimacy. Therefore, the state needs to take a lead in combating, preventing, managing and eliminating corruption. In eroding the “People’s Contract”, corruption alienates citizens from the very officials they have elected and also alienates people from each other. Corruption destroys trust and erodes both the sense of global citizenship and the sense of shared responsibility as well as national citizenship and the sense of social cohesion (Fraser-Mokeleti, 2008:46).

Corruption distorts and undermines the value systems of all societies, their peoples, possessive individualism and overrides any sense of the common good. An anti-corruption strategy must be articulated by leaders in the political, economic and civil society spheres and must engage all sectors of society on the basis of a core set of leadership practices and values. Anti-corruption strategy must articulate an alternative ethos and value system (Fraser-Mokeleti, 2008:46).

Given that the Department of Home Affairs is a government department that is needed by everybody who enters, lives and exits South Africa through various processes, fraud and corruption are quite pervasive in this department. The Public Service Commission (PSC) Report as quoted by Mbanjwa (2011:1-4) concurs with the above statement, which reveals that fraud and corruption are rife in most government departments. Mbanjwa (2011: 1-4)) further reported that the DHA and Correctional Services departments are the most corrupt departments as per reports based on calls by anonymous whistleblowers to the National Anti-Corruption Hotline between 2004 and 2010. According to Mbanjwa (2011:1-4), the most common cases of alleged corruption relate to fraud and bribery, mismanagement of government funds, abuse of government resources and procurement irregularities. Mbanjwa (2011:1,4) states that the Public Service Commission reported that the majority of cases lodged against the DHA involved the bribing of officials to obtain fraudulent identity documents, passports, marriage certificates and the sale of identity documents to illegal immigrants. Of the 3 554 cases reported to the hotline since 2004, the largest number involved the DHA, with 781 reported but only 142 resolved (Mbanjwa, 2011:1-4).

The Public Service Commission expressed concern that the lack of action on reported cases of corruption by senior managers and directors-generals is a “trend” which compromises the integrity of the hotline and weakens the public’s confidence in government’s commitment toward fighting fraud and corruption (Mbanjwa, 2011: 1, 4).Given that fraud and corruption are rife in most government departments, it can be argued that those senior managers who are failing to take action on reported cases do benefit from those acts of corruption. The Public service commission (2007), as quoted by Dorasamy (2009:58), stated that concerns regarding service delivery can be attributed to the performance of public officials. Dorasamy (2009:58) argued that sustained efforts to improve standards while expanding services has failed in many of the government departments because of person-to-post mismatch, lack of skills and a lack of performance standards. She further argued that
these contributory factors can be linked to egoistic leaders who assumed positions without giving consideration to performance based on accountability and responsibility (Dorasamy 2009:59).

The then Minister of Public Service, Fraser-Moleketi (2008:46) argued that corruption reinforces the banality of evil and its conceit lies in its ability to implicate, its complicity and its ability to violate the laws of the country. She further stated that it flouts international conventions and treaties and undermines democratic values and ethos (Fraser-Moleketi, 2008:46). Chinua Achebe and many other writers, as quoted by Fraser-Moleketi (2008:46), pointed to the significance of fighting corruption because it erodes the social fabric of society like undermining communities, perpetuating poverty, inequality and underdevelopment. As a country, people must be resolute and steadfast in the fight against corruption in all spheres of society.

Fraser-Moleketi (2008:46) states the following important premises relating to corruption as outlined in the Africa Forum on Anti Corruption held in March 2007:

- Corruption, as a practice, is rooted in the operation of market forces, the pursuit of individual prosperity and gain as opposed to the common good. This possessive individualism has undermined the goals and objectives of national and community level development;
- Corruption is fundamentally undemocratic; it undermines the legitimacy and credibility of democratically elected governments and of responsible and accountable civil servants;
- Corruption is about the interface of political and economic elites at a global, national and regional scale;
- The intentional preoccupation in the global corruption discourse with bribe takers and bribe givers and particularly with bribe takers is disingenuous, ideologically loaded, and simplistic and certainly serves other agendas that are not linked to developmental goals. This discourse needs to be challenged precisely because it overlooks the complexity of the social forces, systems, processes and structures which underpin acts of corruption;
- Corruption is a direct impediment to Africa's development. Corruptions hurt the many and benefit the few. The many that end up being hurt are the vulnerable and the few that benefits are those that have money. As a result of this the “people first” premise is undermined. It inhibits the ability of government to respond to citizens’ needs and to utilise scarce resources in the most efficient and effective manner. It also hampers the continent’s efforts to instil sound political, socio-economic and corporate governance;

Unethical behaviour in the South African public service is characterised by the following (Mafunisa, 2008:5).

- Lack of responsiveness to the needs of clients.
- Tardiness in the discharge of duties.
- Manifestations of inefficiency and ineffectiveness, and
- Corruption.
According to Mafunisa (2008:9), unethical behaviour often starts at the top of public service leadership, where public service values are not personified and promoted. He attributes this largely to the lack of accountability for promoting quality public service. It can be argued that by placing greater accountability for adhering to rules and procedures instead of similar focus on quality public services, effectiveness and efficiency in the South African public service has been affected.

**Batho Pele principles**

The White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service (South Africa, 1997:9) highlights the transformation priorities of government, which includes transforming service delivery to meet the basic needs, while redressing past imbalances. Transformation has to ensure change in institutions or people. Furthermore, it is difficult to talk about transformative institutions without talking about transformative leaders as these are intertwined. Burns, 1978 as quoted by Bhengu, (2009:5), describes transformation as, “a process of influencing major changes in the attitudes of employees, so that the goals of the organisation and the vision of the leader are realised”

The White Paper (Batho Pele) states that putting the principles into practice describes what the three tier government as well as the wider public sector will be required to do when introducing their service delivery improvement programmes. Van der Waldt (2004:88) states that Batho Pele principles are simple but ambitious. They are also sufficiently flexible to allow the department to implement them according to local conditions and circumstances. Eight principles for transforming public service delivery- Batho Pele principles- have been identified and formalised in the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery of 1997. Batho Pele is in every sense part and parcel of the public sector human resource management (Erasmus et al. 2005:68).

According to Zuma (2009), by working together, we can ensure that South Africans obtain the services they are entitled to. He urged political parties and civil society to partner with the ruling party, with the common goal of improving service delivery to the public.

Glynn, Perkins and Stewarts (1996:246) stated that effectiveness refers to the extent to which an activity or programme achieves its intended objectives. The exclusive focus is outputs, outcomes and impacts. According to Epstein (1992:166), effectiveness is the degree to which goods and services meet the needs and desires of the community, client or consumers served. Members of society are not the only customers. National and provincial departments have various internal customers such as staff within their own organisations, as well as other departments and institutions to whom they provide a service (Du Toit, van der Waldt and Doyle, 2002:307). According to Nqakula, the former Minister of DHA, central to the vision of the government departments like DHA are its customers, their needs, preferences and, most importantly, the obligation is to serve customers in a convenient and efficient way. The twin objective for the improvement of the service systems is to ensure that
departments serve its customers efficiently, and to create an identification regime that is sanitised, credible and secured (South Africa, 2009:4).

Batho Pele principles have the major role in ensuring effective public service delivery, hence it illustrate how the actions of public officials could be regulated. These principles require that customers:

- Be consulted
- Have services that comply with set standards
- Access to services
- Be treated with courtesy
- Information
- Transparency
- Redress
- Receive value for money.

**Methodology**

For the purpose of this study, a case study using the mixed method was used. The study was qualitative and quantitative in nature, using questionnaires, interviews, journals and government publications. White (2000:39) defined a case study as an extensive study of a single situation such as an individual, family or organisation. He further states that a case study employs a variety of different techniques that includes questionnaires and interviews. According to Sekaran (2007:125), case studies are useful in applying solutions to current problems based on past problem-solving experiences. He further states that they are also useful in understanding certain phenomena and generating further theories for empirical testing (Sekaran, 2007:125).

The regional office of the DHA in Durban was used as a case study. Implementation of Batho Pele principles in government departments is bound to differ within each regional office. This means that the findings of a study of this nature may not necessarily apply to all regional offices in a generalised manner. Therefore, a case study approach is most appropriate as it strives to portray ‘what it is like’ to be in a particular situation, to catch the close up reality and ‘thick description’ of participants’ experiences of thoughts (Geertz, 1973)

The advantage of a case study approach is that it helps the researcher not to solely depend on already published work (White, 2000:39). It also reinforces the use of multiple sources of data which, in turn, facilitates the validation of data (Denscombe, 2003:38).

Quantitative research aims to determine how one thing affects another in a population, by quantifying the relationship between variables (Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008:75). The study used questionnaires
distributed to staff at the DHA Durban regional office to identify and analyse the various factors impacting on effective and efficient public service delivery.

According to Cooper and Schindler, (2008:162), qualitative research is designed to tell the researcher how (process) and why (meaning) things happen as they do. It aims to achieve an in-depth understanding of a situation. Penzhorn (2002:244) stated that the qualitative approach involves investigating individuals and phenomena in their natural settings to gain a better understanding of the area under research. White (2000:28) believed that qualitative research is a descriptive, non-numerical way to collect and interpret information. The study interviewed customers and some employees at the regional office to determine their perception of customer service.

**Data collection method**

The data collection methods in this study used questionnaires combined with interviews. These served as primary data collection methods. Leedy (1993:117) stated that primary data is the information closest to the source of the ultimate truth underlying the phenomenon. He further stated that primary data reflects truth more faithfully than any other approach to truth. The data collection methods in this study used questionnaires combined with interviews. These served as primary data collection methods. The main point here was that the data collected was unique to the researcher and confidentiality of the respondent was guaranteed. A covering letter assured respondents of their anonymity. A consent form was attached to the questionnaire.

Questionnaires are data collection instruments that enable the researcher to pose questions to participants in his or her research for answers to the research questions. The questionnaire gathered primary data. A field worker assisted in the distribution and collection of questionnaires to the regional office staff. Qualitative research for this study included interviews. As with any summary information, a pattern may be apparent. This can only be satisfactorily explored by some kind of interview technique (Gillham, 2005:166). Saunders et al. (2003:280) suggested that it is generally good practice not to rely solely on questionnaire data but to use the questionnaire in conjunction with at least one other data collection instrument.

Therefore, the interview was used as a technique for discourse or interaction between two or more people, in which verbal communication was used to achieve a certain purpose such as gathering or giving information or influencing behaviour (Ziel and Antoinette, 2003). In this study customers were interviewed. Open-ended interviews took the form of a conversation with the intention that the researcher explores with the participants his or her views, ideas, beliefs and attitudes about certain events or phenomena. Interviews were conducted with customers and some members of management at this office in order to establish their concerns regarding service delivery and to ascertain whether they are treated as the real customers in line with the Batho Pele principles or not.
Documentary analysis and informal observations were also used for triangulation purposes. Document analysis comprised looking at displayed charts, Annual Reports and newspaper articles. Informal observations were meant to assist in obtaining a sense of the pressure the employees and customers face in their daily interaction.

**Profiling the case study: Department of Home Affairs-Durban Regional Office**

There have been numerous reports of poor service delivery by the department, thus violating and defeating the sole purpose of the Batho Pele principles of treating citizens more like customers, hence, the “people first” approach. The study is drawn from a case study of the Durban Regional Office of the Department of Home Affairs. This is the office, where even foreigners get enabling documents to live and work in South Africa. It is imperative that quality service delivery is not compromised in the said office, since it services densely populated areas such as Durban Central, Durban North and Durban South, thereby making it the largest regional office in KwaZulu-Natal. This office is serving approximately 1500 customers per day. This office used to have 65 employees but now it is operating with about 50 employees because 10 employees are out on abscondment, suspension, expulsion and retirement. Furthermore, since the researcher is based in Durban, accessibility to the regional office was not compromised.

The DHA Durban Regional is at the heart of the city, close to the railway station and the Durban International Convention Centre and the central business district. The geographical location is an important consideration in terms of the extensive area that the regional office is servicing, since it is the only regional office in Durban. This has implications for human resource, material and physical capacity to provide effective and efficient services.

**Findings and discussions**

*Charting a new direction for the regional office*

Leadership literature maintain that effective organisational change begins with the adoption of and adherence to a new vision and mission (Calitz, 2002; Clarke, 2007 as quoted by Bhengu, 2009). Change process in Durban Home Affairs regional office started with the management inviting both external and internal customers to participate in decision making and to air their views on service provision in the office. The regional manager had a new vision for institutional change and this was based on five pillars, i.e. effective, efficient and economical, user friendly and quick service. All these pillars had to be responsive to all stakeholders in the regional office.

*The impact of effectiveness in an organisation*

According to Robbins and Coulter (2005:8), *effectiveness* means completing activities so that organisational goals are attained, i.e., doing the right things. The right things, in this case, refer to those work activities that will help the organisation reach its goals. It is concerned with the means of
getting things done; the attainment of organisational goals and can be judged in terms of output and impact. Organisational effectiveness is a measure of how appropriate organisational goals are and how well an organisation is achieving those goals (Robbins and Coulter, 2005:466).

The Durban regional office to be effective in its dealing with customers or stakeholders is now operating on certain weekends and they close later than other offices. This undertaking emanated from the outcry from both external customers and internal customers. The internal customers could not bear pressure of long queues from sunrise to sunset. This was aggravated by the fact that customers would rush to get services from this office before going to their work places, and late in the afternoon they would rush to the offices to get service before the regional office is closed. Another important factor that improved effectiveness in the regional office was separation of functions and sections. This meant that each section will have its own supervisor and its team. Further, the introduction of floor managers made service provision effective in the sense that customers are quickly directed to relevant section.

*The impact of efficiency in an organisation*

Efficiency refers to getting the most output from the least amount of inputs. An organisation is considered efficient when it is able to produce the most goods and services using the least amounts of inputs. It is also termed doing things right (Robbins and Coulter, 2005:7). It relates to the degree to which outputs are achieved in terms of productivity and input. The Durban regional office to be efficient despite being understaffed managed to provide efficient service through restructuring of functions and sections.

*Impact of being economic in an organisation*

Economical means using the minimum amount of time, effort, or language that is necessary (Collins, 2009). This pillar has been beneficial to both employees and customers. Availability of floor managers has impacted on service delivery because this has reduced loitering of customers in the office not knowing where to go.

*Impact of a user friendly system and quick service in an institution*

Collins (2009) describes a user friendly system as one that is well designed and easy to use. The Durban regional office is now user friendly and produces quick service to certain functions. This is evident by well displayed information charts, electronic queuing system, and ability to issue temporal identification document, ability to issue death certificate and birth certificate within a day off occurrence of entering and exiting natural processes in South Africa.

*Challenges on application of Batho Pele principles in the Durban regional office*

According to the White Paper on Transforming Public Service (WPTPS), (South Africa, 1997:15), the Batho Pele policy framework consists of eight service delivery principles which are:
• **Consultation:** Citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of the public services they receive and, where possible, should be given a choice about the services that are offered. Matoti (2011:1) argues that, on the contrary, like many other public policies, the desired outcome of Batho Pele principles has not been achieved. The first principle recommends that the public be consulted concerning all public service developments. Consultation interlinked with all eight principles. For example, the promotion of the principles of access requires that consultation takes place with citizens to better understand their needs and to ensure services can be accessible to them. Consultation is critical in the deepening of good governance and democracy but also as players in decision-making on service delivery. The implementation of consultative principle should, therefore, transcend mere technical compliance and become an integral part of service delivery in the Public Service. If departments want to put their customers first, they should listen and take account of their views (consultation).

• **Principle of consultation**

• Only 49.09% indicated that consultative mechanisms were used for staff, while 34.55% remained neutral. Majority of the respondents (65.45%) agreed that survey forms contributed to improved service delivery. It was also important to note that 52.73% of respondents indicated that the public do complete survey forms, which provided important feedback on standards of service at the DHA.

• Although 70.91% of the respondents believed that consultative mechanisms were effective in improving service delivery, only 52.73% indicated that it was used. 80% of the respondents indicated that a suggestion box was available. Responses to question on general comments relating to the medium of communication are indicated in Figure 1.
Barriers to consultation as cited by management include staff shortage, lack of appropriate monitoring, incapacity and budgetary constraints. Budgetary constraints ranked high as a barrier to consultation, language barrier and literacy featured second. Surprisingly, poor participation also came out as a barrier. Consultation has been described by the respondents as a time consuming principle. But they agreed that if correctly adhered to, it minimises conflicts among the employees and customers. Amongst the factors that make respondents to be perceived as being not sensitive to needs of public are delays in the processing of enabling documents of which some they do not have control over them as they are processed at Head Office. It can be argued that consultation causes unnecessary delays in implementing or taking action. This is seen in the eyes of the management. Management is quick to come up with solutions in any given challenge to promote efficient and effective service delivery, but this is always hindered by consultation which is time consuming and which might end up being rejected. The “us and them” attitude always makes any decision taken by management to be challenged. A typical example of such cases:

- The system that one government institution uses to issue reports failed, the management instead of writing an instructional circular, decided to go through consultation process only to discover that the decision they had taken was rejected outright, because the staff did not want to report manually and that consultation process delayed the issuing of reports by five solid weeks, the intended recipients of reports suffered, because they could not access services that they were going to
receive within three days. This would not have occurred if consultation principle was not observed.

- **Service Standards**: Citizens should be told what level and quality of public services they will receive so that they are aware of what to expect;

*Level and quality of service*

- On average, more than a third of the respondents were uncertain or neutral for this section. Apart from the first statement which showed a high level of disagreement, most of the other statements had low levels of disagreement.
- Employees responded quite differently to the principle regarding service standards compared to consultation. A higher percentage for each of the statements in this section (service standards) remained neutral compared to the section on consultation. Nicklaus (undated), as quoted by Michelli (2008:256), is correct when he says that achievement is largely the product of steadily raising one’s level of aspiration and expectation.
- With regard to the DHA having its own service standards, the same percentage (34.55%) agreed and disagreed. It can be argued that there is a lack of consensus on the existence of service standards, which is a cause for concern.
- With regard to the involvement of staff members in the development and review of service standards, about 49.09% of the respondents were uncertain regarding involvement and 5.45% disagreed. This reveals that information is shared by few and possibly not all staff members are involved in this activity. This shows lack of consultation and information sharing in this office.

![Figure 2: Level and Quality of Service](image)
• Regarding performance indicators being linked to service standards, about 60% of the respondents agreed, and about 30.91% were uncertain. This can have a negative bearing on service delivery in this office. Consistent staff development is an imperative so that all staff members are aware of the service standards and the linkage to performance indicators.

• With regard to service delivery / commitment charter, about 36.36% respondents were uncertain whether the office had a service delivery or a commitment charter. This possibly may not have been communicated. It can be suggested that gaps in staff awareness of such a charter did exist and this needs to be considered for attention.

**Implementation of service delivery standards**

While only 30% indicated that service delivery standards are working well (Figure 3). Twice the number of respondents 60% believed that service delivery is efficient. While the majority agreed that service delivery is efficient, the majority did not agree that service standards are working well. It can be argued that if service standards are working well, then service delivery ought to be efficient. However, the responses do not reflect this.

![Figure 3: Implementation of Service Delivery Standards](image)

In terms of the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997), the first step should be to consult customers so as to identify their needs, followed by the formulation of service standards based on the identified needs so that customers know what to expect from the departments (South Africa, 1997:15). An accepted standard of service is a necessity, so is equal access to services (Matoti, 2011:1). Matoti (2011:1) stated that the Department of Public Service (DPSA) vowed to be transparent in all its dealings. Matoti further argues that, previously, ethics were primarily guaranteed by section 32(a), 42(c & h) of ‘the highest law in the land’, the Constitution. Such provisions become mere words on paper when the promise is not delivered; and a policy gap elapses. Ahmad, Savage and Srivasta (2004), as quoted by Matoti (2011:1), stated that the success of service delivery
depends on whether institutions of service provisions are accountable to citizens. The public ought to exercise its lawful right, as endorsed by the constitution's section 41(c), 152(a b, e), and 195(e, f, g). Service standards also speak of service commitment charter, which is provided by the Head office as the guide of which it demands that each office designs its own. Service commitment charter is not a one man's document but it is a collective designed document that communicates who is in charge, how to deal with complaints and the response time.

- **Access:** All citizens should have access to the services to which they are entitled to; The location of the regional office provide adequate access to service, but due to corruption people who get quick access and receive favours over the rest of the customers are those who bribe officials to bypass inefficiency in this office. Corruption then becomes a barrier in applying this principle.

- **Courtesy:** Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration
  This principle is adequately practised in this office, where customers who are physically challenged, pregnant, and mothers of new born babies are given first priority. The challenge in applying this principle is when people begin to share wheel chairs and babies. This now makes employees to be perceived as inconsiderate when they happen to notice the habit of sharing items that makes them get preferential treatment.

*Provision of Information*

![Provision of Information Graph](image)

**Figure 4:** Provision of Information
• Information: Citizens should be given full, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive.

• There is a general pattern of agreement with the statements in this section regarding the cascading of information to staff and customers. On average, about two-thirds of the respondents agreed with the statements. The last statement relates to information dissemination to the public, resulting in shorter queues. Statements 1 and 4 relates to information sharing with staff and customers. Statements 2 and 3 relates to information sharing with staff only.

• The presence of floor managers in this office has improved service delivery, since they are directly accessible to customers as they walk to the regional office. Customers are given an opportunity to declare the purpose of their visits, and then they are directed to the relevant section.

• Regarding long queues, the queuing system has made processing easier for both customers and staff. When one enters the office, the floor manager asks the purpose of the visit, and one is then given a queuing ticket, with the number that will appear on the information screens which directs the customer to the next available teller.

• Information sharing and access to latest circulars has a positive bearing on service delivery in the DHA office. The long queues cited as amongst the problems, hindering service delivery, at DHA in the literature review has been addressed. This is confirmed by customers interviewed and the observations by the researcher. Accessibility to information is imperative for staff to execute their duties, while recognising that they need to be informed to address queries from customers. More so, well informed employees can contribute to processing applications and queries more effectively and efficiently, thereby reducing the waiting time in queues.

• Figure 5 relates to general comments regarding the information in the Department of Home Affairs. Figure 5 information provided by the DHA

![Figure 5: Information Provided by the DHA](image-url)
• Of the four comments, one was positive, which indicated that (18.2%) of respondents believed that information provided to the public is adequate (Figure 5). The other statements were perceptions and recommendations. The public has different mindsets about the DHA. The public perception will always differ. The reason for different perception emanates from bad past experiences, current positive experiences and wide negative media publications. Usefulness of the information system reflects that customers know about the services offered by the DHA in the case study. This has also been confirmed by customers interviewed, who stated that even the posters displayed at this office, often minimises the stay at the office. The introduction of cell phone enquiries, informs the customer of the stages in the processing of enabling documents, marital status hence inconvenience and fraudulent marriages have occurred in this office and whether one is still alive or not, since fraudulent death certificate have been issued in this office (Padayachee, 2009:4). The Introduction of different forms of media coverage promotes the principle of access and information. Information must be published in all languages, amongst the wall charts and posters there are English and isiZulu publications. About 36.4 % of respondents stated that there is lack of staff training and modern technology. For this office to be effective and deliver services efficiently, Human Resource and Development has to take a lead in empowering human resources.

About 20 % of respondents indicated that there is a big change in the offices. The offices are now clean, information on the walls in the form of charts and information brochures are displayed. Over-crowding in this office has been adequately addressed through the introduction of electronic queuing system. Time one spends in this office is now reduced because of visibility of floor managers and cell phone enquiries. One respondent said in her last visit, she spent almost 3 hours queuing to enquire about her identity book, but now she is being able to enquire about the stages of enabling document processing at the comfort of her home.

• One respondent from Africa highlighted that there are big changes, the manner the office of study is being managed, and he spoke of reduction of overcrowding and tighter controls in accessing enabling documents. This suggests that DHA in this office is now Batho Pele complaint. However, major intervention still needs to be considered to cater for the deaf and blind people, hence amongst the staff there is no one who interprets sign language and Braille forms are not available. As a result for these people to receive and access service through information principle they have to be accompanied by friends and family members.

• *Openness and transparency:* Citizens should be told how national and provincial departments are run, how much they cost, and who is in charge;
This is a very dicey principle; it protects the accounting officer from temptation and insults which may lead to expulsion due to theft or mismanagement of resources. It protects only if correctly adhered to it. If it is not adhered to it becomes a territory of fraud and corruption, therefore leading to poor service delivery. According to Maseko (2008:16), public servants have degenerated into think tanks for the vulnerable. Sometimes, they think that delivering a service is like a favour that they are doing for their communities. He suggested that extensive consultation should be done in ensuring that the management of public funds are effectively and efficiently utilised for the benefits of those who need government services. The White Paper on Transforming Service Delivery, (South Africa, 1997), stated that openness and transparency are the hallmarks of a democratic government and are fundamental to the public service transformation process. According to Crous (2004:582), transparency in the public service helps keep the public service clean, effective, and free from nepotism and corruption. Maseko (2008:16) believed that the gap between managers and foot soldiers creates a void which impacts negatively on service delivery.

- **Redress**: If the promised standard of service is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy; and when complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic, positive response; and apology.

- **Redress measures**

![Figure 6: Redress Measures](image-url)
• The average level of disagreement for this section was 14%. Agreement levels is slightly more than half, for all statements, except for the second statement regarding complaint mechanisms. The levels of uncertainty (neutrality) were about a third, excluding statement 2. It seemed that staff members’ uncertainty about whether the complaints mechanisms and procedures were effectively and efficiently implemented showed lack of information to staff regarding redress.

• Regarding DHA’s complaint management system, about a third of respondents were uncertain whether this office had a complaint management system. This indicates that information sharing in this office is inadequate. It also reveals that only a few employees knew of this system which is likely to be employees in management. About 57% of respondents were uncertain about effectiveness and efficiency of complaints and mechanisms, policies and procedures. This also highlight that “foot soldiers are not given information.” Maseko (2008:16) suggested that leadership and management should always strive to increase interactions with stakeholders. He further stated that staff members in government departments do not even know the vision, mission and strategic objectives of the department, but they are expected to deliver.

• **Suggestions to improve service delivery**

![Figure 7: Suggestions to Improve Service Delivery](image)

• Two thirds (66.7%) of the respondents indicated that employees’ concerns should be investigated. If employees’ concerns are not addressed, then it can negatively impact on their performance and can possibly hinder effective and efficient service delivery.

• The White Paper speaks of how customers should be treated and development of the redress mechanisms in cases where the actual delivery of services falls short of the promised
standard. Respondents stated that to follow up on redress cases take forever because calls are not answered in Head Office timeously and yet they are dealing with continuous queues of people eagerly waiting to be assisted. One respondent reported that technological challenges as indicated below impact negatively on effective and efficient service delivery.

“As I speak to you now, we are off-line and customers have been waiting for the past 20 minutes. Some are in the queues for temporarily identity documents, of which can be processed at this office if technology is giving us problems, how can we then be expected to deliver at our utmost best?”

The respondent suggested that the Head office must provide and devise strategies to deal with frequent off-line situations, bearing in mind that customers travel from far and wide to the DHA. Redress is a difficult principle to apply hence it involves all levels in the hierarchy in any given department or institution, as stated in the DHA where centralisation of functions makes it difficult to make prompt decisions with responses or in addressing challenges.

Respondents in management reported that they have undergone specialised training and some have been in the department for quite some time. In relation to Batho Pele principles, they do understand the concepts, but somehow it becomes difficult for them to adhere to it, due to centralisation of functions. With regard to the principle of redress, they stated that while they are able to apologise on behalf of the department, they are not able to quick fix the problem or errors in enabling documents, they are not even able to tell customers the turnaround time as these are referred to the Head Office in Pretoria.

- **Value for money**: Public services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best possible value for money.

Public servants never or hardly think why they are paid a salary or why they are given appointment letters when given the position that they occupy in government. Some think they are appointed to improve their lifestyles (Maseko, 2008:17).

According to Maseko (2008:17), public servants need to ensure that they strengthen the organisational culture specifically, and to uphold set standards by ensuring that budgets are spent as per strategic plan. He highlighted that the Public Finance Management Act is explicit in terms of expenditure patterns (do not spend a cent if you do not have a plan).

The foremost challenge that makes government department seems to be dysfunctional emanates from the fact that “people first” approach is the fact that employees tend to forget their core duties and focus on scrutinising each and every decision that the top management takes.
Recommendations

- The office of study is the only regional office in an urban area. Out of 65 employees, only 40 are on duty, due to the rest being unavailable as results of expulsion, abscondment and suspension. This impact on service delivery. To enhance an effective and efficient service delivery in this office, additional staff needs to be employed until staff problems have been resolved.

- The incorporation of the implementation of Batho Pele principles in the performance contract of all the employees of the Department. The job description of the employees should reflect the standards so that implementation is guaranteed as the job description informs the performance contract. Every employee of the Department should be assessed and evaluated on the implementation of the principles in their daily duties.

- There should be a greater awareness of the presence of service standards within the DHA, so that all employees are educated on its value and relevance for public service delivery. This can be achieved through displays, workshops and development programmes.

- A Service Charter should be developed to give details about the type, quality and quantity of services to be provided by the Department. The Charter will also give details regarding location of service access points and contact details of responsible staff. Information about the Complaint Management Systems utilised in the Department and responsible staff should also reflect on the Charter.

- Communication with staff regarding the important levels of service delivery is necessary to ensure that all staff and not just a few are aware of procedures and processes guiding effective and efficient service delivery.

- Feedback mechanisms should be regulated to inform staff on challenges facing service delivery, so that staff can be part of the process to improve services at the DHA and what specific initiatives are institutionalised to address this.

- Mechanisms to monitor levels of service, apart from survey forms need to be considered. A multi-dimensional approach to determine effective and efficient service delivery will provide vital information like whether people's needs are responded to within reasonable time. For example, an analysis of the number of customers that are attended to within a specific time, using the electronic queuing system, can provide important information to set targets to increase the rate of processing queries.

- There is a need for training and development of staff, which is important not only for career development, but also for motivation of staff in respect of service delivery initiatives.

- There is a need to consider staff complaints as this provides valuable input that be accessed to improve service delivery. Since staff are also customers and are often directly involved with the public, their complaints often constitutes primary data which should not be ignored for any service delivery improvement initiatives.
Management teams play a pivotal role in providing strategic leadership and leading by example. There should be greater monitoring in terms of management “walking the talk”. This will motivate staff to follow the principles underpinning the “people first” approach.

Awards or incentives should be provided to diligent and committed employees, this can be done through the introduction of “Employee of the Month”, where DHA Durban regional office customers will be given a chance to choose the best employee who is Batho Pele compliant.

Conclusion

Giese and Smith (2007:79) stated that the DHA has long been considered as one of the weakest arms of government. At the same time, its mandate makes it an essential component of a full service package for bonafide citizenry and international visitors. Based on tireless endeavours by various DHA Ministers, governed by Public Service Acts and various pieces of legislation since 1994, the DHA has made a tremendous progress regarding service delivery. The findings of this study reflect that while employees in the office of study do understand the concept of the Batho Pele principles while the benefits of its comprehensive application still needs to be realised if service delivery is to be enhanced. DHA Durban regional office has made an improvement on service delivery, but there are still factors that require consideration to eradicate the gaps in effective and efficient service provision.

Capacity building workshops around adherence to Batho Pele principles must be instilled to all stakeholders, more importantly the foot soldiers (implementers), the do’s and don’ts must also be instilled. This will minimise challenges on application of Batho Pele principles and enhance an effective and efficient public service driven by leadership which prioritises the needs of the public. Effective, efficient and economical service provision can also be improved if Batho Pele principles can be aligned to employment contract and employees be evaluated against it. Management should also be given powers to suspend and expel if the need arises, this will eradicate the attitude of lazy employees who regards government departments as “toothless dogs”.

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Analysis of the Perception of Organizational Politics by Employees of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

A. S. Adebusuyi*, M. O. Olasupo**, and E. E. Idehen***

Abstract: The study examined the nature of perception of organizational politics by workers in a Nigerian university. Three hundred and seventy two (academic and non-academic) staff of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife filled Perception of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS). Data were analysed to show the most commonly perceived organisational politics and the relationships among these dimensions of perceived organisational politics. The results identified seven dimensions of perception of organizational politics which were: General Political Behaviour (GPB), Go Along to get Ahead (GAA), Pay and Promotion Policies(PPP), General Political Behaviour and Go Along to get Ahead (GPB and GAA) General Political Behaviour and Pay and Promotion Policies (GPB and PPP) and all three (GPB, GAA and PPP). The results revealed that Go Along to Get Ahead (35.5%) was perceived most by workers of Obafemi Awolowo University. Furthermore, the study showed that non-academic staff significantly perceived organizational politics more than the academic staff.

Introduction

Researchers in the past decades have worked extensively in the area of politics in the organization. The reality of scarce resources and conflict of interest has made politics in the organization inevitable. While some researchers regard politics as being positive and necessary for managers (Buchanan, 1999; Butcher and Clarke 2002; Hartley and Branicki, 2006; Vigoda, 2000), others see it as being maladaptive and reflective of the presence of injustice, mistrust, threat and self-serving (Buchanan and Huczynski 2004; Cropanzano, Kacmar and Bozeman, 1995; Pfeffer 1981).

As ubiquitous as the concept is, defining it is not straight forward, several researchers have tried to define it (Cropanzano et al. 1995, Drory and Romm 1990, Ferris, Russ and Fandt, 1989). One reason for this according to Doldor (2007) is the increase in terminologies, such as: political climate, political behaviours, political tactics, political skills, influence tactics and political influence behaviour associated with workplace place that are used interchangeably. Thus, there is no generally acceptable definition. Careful examination of existing literature however has, according to Kacmar and Ferris (1991), generated three aspects of the concept that are common in the literature. These are: general political behaviour, which includes the behaviours of individuals who act in a self-serving manner to obtain valued outcomes; go along to get ahead, which consists of a lack of action by individuals (e.g., remain silent) in order to secure valued outcomes; and pay and promotion policies, which involves the organization behaving politically through the policies it enacts (Kacmar and Carlson 1997).

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Nigerian organizations have been commonly regarded as being political. People believe you cannot be employed, promoted or even progress in an organization without, perhaps belonging to a particular clique or have a god-father. Unemployment rate in Nigeria, according to the National Bureau of Statistics 2009 is about 19.7%. Even those employed are getting laid off to join the increasing numbers of the unemployed. Therefore, any individual who has a job with some level of security and opportunity for career growth may want to do anything to, keep the job. Thus, since politics got the individual the job in the first instance, sustaining, climbing higher and at record time, in the hierarchy of the organization, by extension would be through belongingness.

Obafemi Awolowo University is one of the first generation universities in Nigeria. The workforce, both the academic and non academic staff; is heterogeneous in nature. This consequently divides the workforce into social classes, where individuals from similar ethnic group or geographical location band together. Also, there is always a constant tension between the management and the workers, manifested in endless strike actions; primarily due to lack of trust – one of the potent determinants of organizational politics.

As common place as politics is in Nigeria’s organizations, there has been little or no empirical study in this regard. The purpose of this study, therefore, was based on Kacmar and Ferris (1991) classification of organizational politics, to assess the nature of organizational politics in a Nigerian university

**Methodology**

As mentioned above this is a survey to assess the nature of organizational politics among workers of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. In this wise, organizational politics was analysed according to its dimensions of General Political Behaviour (GPB), Go Along to Get Ahead (GAA) and Pay and Promotion Policies (PPP) and combination of these.

**Participants:** The study population comprised of 3,732. The non-teaching staff strength is 2,653 while that of the teaching staff is 1,079. The stratified random sampling technique was used to select 10% of this population for inclusion in the study. The final sample consisted of 372 (122 females and 250 males) workers of the University. Eighty (21.5%) were junior non-academic staff, while one hundred and eighty-five (49.7%) were senior non-academic staff. Fifty-three (14.2%) were junior academic staff, while fifty-four (14.5%) were senior academic staff. The age ranged from 24 to 62 years, with a mean age of 42.40 years and the standard deviation is 8.49 years. The years in service of the participants ranged from 1 to 38 years with a mean length of service of 13.66 years. The mean ‘years in service’ is 13.66, and the standard deviation is 9.97 years.

**Measure:** The instrument used for this study was the 15-item Perception of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS) developed by Kacmar and Carlson (1997). The internal consistency reliability estimate
(Cronbach alpha) was 0.88. The scale includes items such as “People in this organization attempt to build themselves up by tearing others down”; “Agreeing with powerful others is the best alternative in this organization.” and “When it comes to pay raise and promotion decisions, policies are irrelevant.” Respondents recorded their views on each statement on a 5-point Likert-type response format ranging from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), don’t know (3), agree (4) and strongly agree (5). These responses were scored by the numbers attached. The item scores were summed for the dimensions outlined above.

Procedure: The research instruments were administered to respondents in their work places. The consents of selected workers were sought, rapport established; thus making them friendly, cooperative and encouraged to fill in the questionnaire honestly. The number of workers selected in a particular unit determined the number of questionnaires that was administered in the unit/department.

Results
To achieve the study objective, scores on POPS were analysed according to the three dimensions of General Political Behaviour (GPB), Go Along to get Ahead (GAA) and Pay and Promotion Policies (PPP). To achieve this, a new set of norms was calculated for the three dimensions. These figures are presented in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>General Political Behaviour</th>
<th>Go Along to Get Ahead</th>
<th>Pay and Promotion Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>5.16</td>
<td>21.38</td>
<td>16.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>21.00</td>
<td>16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents scoring above the mean on any of the subscales were categorized into that dimension if he/she scored highest on that dimension also. In cases where respondents had equal scores in two or more of the subscales, it was decided to place such respondent into combined categories. Thus, four more combinations comprising of: General Political Behaviour and Go Along to get Ahead (GPB and GAA), General Political Behaviour and Pay and Promotion Policies (GPB and PPP), Go Along to get Ahead and Pay and Promotion Policies (GAA and PPP) and all three (GPB and GAA and PPP) were generated. These four additional categories were added to capture those scores that would ordinarily be lost due to their falling outside the norms of the original dimensions. Participants were put into these different categories depending on the extent at which their scores deviated from the mean on the particular dimension in question. With this categorization, a frequency count of participants falling with each of the seven categories was then calculated. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 2 and Figure 2.
The results indicate that of the original three dimensions Go Along to get Ahead is the most visible having been nominated by 132 (35.5%) of the participants. It was followed by Pay and Promotion Policies, nominated by 102 (27.4%) participants. The least visible of the three dimensions is General Political Behaviour, mentioned by 76 (20.4%). Of the remaining 62 participants, 21 (5.6%) mentioned a combination of General Political Behaviour and Pay and Promotion Policies, 16 (4.3%) nominated a combination of General Political Behaviour and Go Along to Get Ahead, 13 (3.5%) were aware of a combination General Political Behaviour and Go Along to get Ahead and 12 (3.2%) perceived a combination of all.

### Table 2: The Descriptive Analysis of the Dimensions of Perception of Organizational Politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Political Behaviour</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go Along to get Ahead</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay and Promotion policies</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Political Behaviour and Go Along to Get Ahead</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Political Behaviour and Pay Promotion Policies</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go Along to get Ahead and Pay Promotion Policies</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Three</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Relative Strengths of the Seven Dimensions of Organization Politics as Perceived by Obafemi Awolowo University Workers
Table 2 and Figure 1 only revealed the different dimensions of perception of organization politics as discussed above. It, however, did not reveal anything about how the two main groups (academic and non-academic staff) perceive organizational politics. A cross-tabulation of the number of respondents in each category of organizational politics and the four levels of job status was carried out to answer these questions.

The result presented in Table 3 and Figure 2 indicate wide differences in the nature of organizational politics perceived by non-academic and academic staff. Overall, the non-academic staff tend to perceive organizational politics significantly more than academic staff (71% non-academic versus 29% academic nominated one dimension of organizational politics or the other) as shown in the last column of Table 3. There also appeared to be differences in the perception according to whether the staff were of junior or senior cadre. Combination of Junior staff – academic and non-academic reported 35.7% (21.5% non-academic and 14.2% academic); as compared to the combination of Senior Staff – academic and non-academic reported 64.2% (49.7% non-academic and 14.5% academic). These results revealed that Senior staff perceive more organizational politics than the junior staff.

![Figure 2: Job Status Differences in the Perception of Organizational Politics with Position](image-url)
To ascertain whether these differences are statistically significant, cross-tabulation (involving only the three original dimensions) was subjected to a chi-square test of independence. The results indicate, using the Pearson Chi-square, that there is no significant association between the three dimensions of perception of organizational politics and the job status of the staff of Obafemi Awolowo University ($\chi^2 = 8.03, p > .05$). This finding suggests that workers did not perceive organizational politics differently because of their status.

### Discussion

From the seven dimensions of organizational politics, Go Along to Get Ahead (GAA) is the one perceived most by workers of Obafemi Awolowo University. It has 35.5% of the total population of the workers both academic and non-academic. This means that the participants believe that they have to accept and applaud whatever the superiors or influential people do. This is a culture of silence and complacency.

There may be a number of reasons why this is so. One, Obafemi Awolowo University is an example of a huge government owned organization with various opportunities for career advancement, if you know how to play the game. Playing the game is belonging to the right group. GAA is about conflicting interest in the organization. Drory and Romm, (1990) maintained that conflict is a very vital element in

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### Table 3: Frequency Distribution of Perception of Organizational Politics by Position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>GPB</th>
<th>GAA</th>
<th>PPP</th>
<th>GPB &amp; GAA</th>
<th>GPB &amp; PPP</th>
<th>GAA &amp; PPP</th>
<th>All Three</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Junior non academic staff</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>.5%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>.5%</td>
<td>.5%</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior nonacademic staff</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>49.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior academic staff</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>.8%</td>
<td>.5%</td>
<td>.3%</td>
<td>.8%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior academic staff</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>.8%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>.0%</td>
<td>.8%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
creating a political environment. There are always more than enough qualified people to occupy any position. Everybody’s interest is threatened and each person resort to subtle means to get what they want. The certainty of scarce resources and the inevitability of conflicts in the presence of competing interest provide the fertile environment for Go Along to Get Ahead (GAA).

Comparing the academic with the non-academic, it can be seen that the non-academic perceive more organizational politics than the academic staff. Drory and Romm, 1990; Russ and Fandt 1989; Kacmar and Ferris (1991) opined that political behaviour will thrive in an environment where there are no rules. Notice that the non academic staff perceive politics three times more than the academic. This may be due to the less clear cut rules and policies for promotion in the non teaching section of the university as compared to the academic staff.

The vast differences may show why the non-academic staff of the university engage in more strike actions and militancy than the academic staff. Another reason may be that, while academic staff do not feel despair, the non-academic staff have with regards to their job security. For example, if any academic staffs feel dissatisfied with the terms and condition of work he can easily leave for another university. This is not so easy with the non-academic staff. The non-academic staff therefore, has more to lose if he did not align himself with influential persons. While with the academic staff possession of higher degree means promotion, it does not necessarily mean so with the non-academic.

Comparing the job status with organization politics, the scanty literatures on job status and organization politics are divergent. While Drory and Romm, 1990; Madison, 1980 believe that job status and organizational politics might have a positive relationship; Mao (2006) points out that the organizational level and workplace friendship are negatively correlated. That is, employees of higher organizational level have weaker workplace friendship than employees of lower organizational level. Wen-Wei, Shih-Chin and Shih-I (2009) did not find any significant relationship between organizational level and perception of organizational politics. The research of Nasir and Zaki (2009) also showed the inconclusiveness between job status and job satisfaction. It would have seemed natural that those who are higher should fare better, but their results showed a mixed conclusion. While postgraduate teachers showed a greater degree of job satisfaction than their part time teacher counterparts, teachers holding postgraduate degree qualifications were significantly more satisfied than teachers holding PhDs. This showed that workers perception of organizational variables - organizational politics, for example; is essentially individual and their job status in the organization may have little or no influence.

References


[http://www.indexmundi.com/nigeria/unemployment_rate.html](http://www.indexmundi.com/nigeria/unemployment_rate.html)
Reducing Urban Poverty through Fuel Wood Business in Masvingo City, Zimbabwe: A Myth or Reality

Bernard Chazovachii*, Leonard Chitongo** and Jenias Ndava***

Abstract: This paper argues a case for reducing urban poverty through fuel wood business in view of the plight of load shading in Zimbabwe. Although the use of firewood is not a welcomed source of power in urban areas, it emerged to be wide spreading fuel for domestic use. Electricity shortages have made Zimbabweans opting for firewood for heating, cooking and other domestic chores to cushion the times when electricity is off. Since the start of this sell of firewood, the viability of the enterprise in poverty reduction has not been tested.

Firewood harvesting has caused untold environmental degradation in Masvingo urban and the surroundings. Although this affected the ecology, it has created sound opportunities for urban poor who are in transport business, hired to fetch firewood from the bush. The undeveloped commercial stands are being turned into firewood wholesales. This has created entrepreneurial activities for urbanites that had nothing to do. However, fuel wood trading would sustain urban livelihoods if it meets the strong sustainability criteria of enhancing all the five capitals. Livelihood sustenance is linked to the resilience or sensitivity of livelihood assets to change in socio-economic and political conditions rather than asset per se. For, some assets are more resilient or less sensitive than others. Therefore enhanced livelihood security should be assessed on the basis of the resilience of various livelihood assets and improvements therein.

Background of the Study

World Development Report 1990 defined poverty as the inability to attain a minimum standard of living. Urban poverty is a state of affairs in which urban families cannot meet basic human needs, (Municipal Development Partnership 1994, United Nations Habitat, 2006). Urban poverty can manifest itself in various ways which include sprawling slums, poor sanitation, confined living and working conditions, beggars and ubiquitous informal sector (Okune, 1994). In Zimbabwe, sprawling poverty is shown by street kids' inadequate shelter and poor housing conditions and beggars (Mubvami, 1996, United Nations Habitat, 2006). During the past decade, Zimbabwe has faced an ongoing complex emergency due to a collapsing economy, limited access to basic services, political instability and violence, disease, and poorly maintained infrastructure. The effects of hyperinflation and unemployment have exacerbated poverty, while large scale displacement in urban and peri-urban areas as a result of political violence has further jeopardized the livelihoods of vulnerable population.

The vulnerability of Masvingo residents has made some of them firewood vendors. Firewood business is vending, which is one of the economic activities in the informal sector. It is a dynamic process which includes many aspects of economic and social theory, including exchange, regulations and enforcement (Chiyaka, 1997). It is a way of making a living, which provides a moderate degree of security of income and employment, working for oneself, marginal, catch-all and characterized by people of low status. It is an act of selling goods for a living. It is against this background that the research seeks to assess the capacity of fuel wood business in reducing urban poverty.
Statement of the Problem

Since 2008 to date, there was persistent electricity block out which has forced residents adopting firewood as an alternative source of energy. The urbanites took this challenge as an opportunity to earn a living. But since the start of fuel wood business, nothing has been done to assess the viability or capacity of the enterprise in reducing poverty in Masvingo town. The viability of the fuel wood business by the residents of Masvingo has never been scrutinized to check its sustainability to urban poor’s livelihoods.

Aim

To assess the viability or capability of fuel wood business in reducing urban poverty.

Objectives

- To identify the age groups involved in fuel wood business
- To assess the marketing system used by urbanites in fuel wood business.
- To assess the utility of fuel wood business to fuel wood dealers in reducing urban poverty.
- To recommend the capacity of fuel wood business for sustainable urban development

Conceptual Framework

Urbanization, Urban Poverty and Development

In the past few decades, urbanization and urban growth have accelerated in many developing countries. In 1970, 37 percent of the world’s population lived in cities. In 1995 this figure was 45 percent and the proportion passed 50 percent by 2005 (UN 1995). Urban populations are growing quickly with 2.5 percent a year in Latin America and the Caribbean, 3.3 percent in Northern Africa, 4 percent for Asia and the Pacific and 5 percent in Africa (UN 1995). But, international comparisons are complicated by differing national definitions of urban areas. In Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, the overall ratio of women to men is higher in urban areas than in rural areas, and the inverse is true for Africa and Asia. Although in many third world cities natural population growth is the major contributor to urbanization, rural-urban migration is still an important factor (de Haan and Yaqub, 1996). Internal migration flows are diverse, complex and constantly changing (including rural to urban, urban to rural, urban to urban, and rural to rural). A key determinant of migration is the income differential between rural and urban regions (Gilbert and Gugler 1992).

Urban Poverty: Definitions, Concepts and Measurement

There is no consensus on a definition of urban poverty but two broad complementary approaches are prevalent: economic and anthropological interpretations. Conventional economic definitions use income or consumption complemented by a range of other social indicators such as life expectancy, infant mortality, nutrition, the proportion of the household budget spent on food, literacy, school enrolment rates, access to health clinics or drinking water, to classify poor groups against a common
index of material welfare. Alternative interpretations developed largely by rural anthropologists and social planners working with rural communities in the third world allow for local variation in the meaning of poverty, and expand the definition to encompass perceptions of non-material deprivation and social differentiation (Wratten 1995; Satterthwaite 1995a). Anthropological studies of poverty have shown that people’s own conceptions of disadvantage often differ from those of professional experts. Great value is attached to qualitative dimensions such as independence, security, self-respect, identity, close and non-exploitative social relationships, decision-making freedom and legal and political rights.

More generally, there has been a widening of the debates on poverty to include more subjective definitions such as vulnerability, entitlement and social exclusion. These concepts have been useful for analysing what increases the risk of poverty and the underlying reasons why people remain in poverty. Vulnerability is not synonymous with poverty, but refers to defencelessness, insecurity and exposure to risk, shocks and stress. Vulnerability is reduced by assets, such as: human investment in health and education; productive assets including houses and domestic equipment; access to community infrastructure; stores of money, jewellery and gold; and claims on other households, patrons, the government and international community for resources at times of need (Chambers 1995, cited by Wratten 1995). Entitlement refers to the complex ways in which individuals or households command resources which vary between people over time in response to shocks and long-term trends. Social exclusion is seen as a state of ill-being and disablement or disempowerment, inability which individuals and groups experience. It is manifest in ‘patterns of social relationships in which individuals and groups are denied access to goods, services, activities and resources which are associated with citizenship’ (ILO 1996).

Urban Development Policy
It is now widely recognized that the rapid growth of urban populations has led to a worsening in absolute and relative poverty in urban areas. Urban poverty has, until recently, been low on the agenda of development policy because of dominant perceptions of urban bias and the need to counter this with a focus on rural development policy. However, policy interest in urban issues is increasing as a result of two phenomena: projections of a large and increasing proportion of poor people living in urban areas, partly as a result of urbanization; and claims that structural adjustment programmes - which have removed some of the urban bias, by removing price distortions - have lead to a much faster increase in urban poverty than rural poverty.

There have been two broad traditions in policy approaches to urban poverty (Amis 1995; Moser 1995, 1996). The first set of approaches has focused on the physical infrastructure problems of housing, sanitation, water, land use and transportation. Recently there has been more emphasis on private investment and an increased focus on institutional and management aspects of urban development. The second set of broad approaches has focused on economic and social infrastructure issues such
as employment, education and community services. Recently such approaches have put a lot of emphasis on sustainability issues and community involvement/participation in projects and programming. More recently, concerns with the urban environment and violence and insecurity in urban areas have come to the fore as factors which undermine well-being and quality of life. There is some evidence of a strong relationship between poor health and poor environmental quality (Hardoy, Mitlin et al. 1992).

The externalities of urban production are disproportionately borne by the poor because of the spatial juxtaposition of industrial and residential functions, high living densities, overcrowded housing in hazardous and inadequate supply of clean water, sanitation and solid waste disposal services (Wratten 1995). Urban violence is estimated to have grown by between three and five percent a year over the last two decades, although there are large variations between nations and different cities within nations. Violent crimes are more visible in cities and there is growing understanding that violence should be considered a public health problem for which there are prevention strategies. Urban violence is the result of many factors, and there is considerable debate about the relative importance of different factors. Certain specialists stress the significance of inadequate incomes which are usually combined with very poor and overcrowded housing and living conditions, and often insecure tenure, as fertile ground for the development of violence. Other explanations emphasized more the contemporary urban environment in which attractive goods are continuously on display and create targets for potential criminals. Oppression in all its forms, including the destruction of original cultural identities, together with racism are also cited as causes (UNCHS 1995).

**The Urban Face of Poverty**

One billion people— one-third of the world’s urban population— currently live in slums (UN-HABITAT 2006). In cities across the globe, hundreds of millions of people exist in desperate poverty without access to adequate shelter, clean water, and basic sanitation. Overcrowding and environmental degradation make the urban poor particularly vulnerable to the spread of disease. Insecurity permeates all aspects of life for slum dwellers. Without land title or tenure, they face the constant threat of eviction. Crime and violence are concentrated in city slums, disproportionately affecting the urban poor. Most slum dwellers depend upon precarious employment in the informal sector, characterized by low pay and poor working conditions. Illegal settlements are often located on hazardous land in the urban periphery.

Perhaps most alienated in city slums are growing youth populations whose unmet needs for space, education, health, and jobs can lead to social problems, further undermining security in urban areas. Marginalized from life and opportunity in the formal city, the urban poor are in many ways invisible to their governments. They live in irregular settlements where there are no schools or health clinics, and transportation to jobs is inadequate and costly. They are forced to pay considerably more to private vendors for services and infrastructure that are not provided by the government. Statistics often mask
the severity of conditions for the urban poor. While demographic indicators for quality of life of urban dwellers can be higher than for their rural counterparts, disaggregated data reveals differences within levels of access to services and stark inequalities, for example in child malnutrition and mortality rates. Highly visible disparities, spatial segregation, and exclusion create the breeding grounds for social tensions, crime and violence.

Global poverty has become an urban phenomenon. In the year 2002, 746 million people in urban areas were living on less than $2.00 a day (Ravallion, 2007: 16). The absolute number of urban poor has increased in the last fifteen to twenty years at a rate faster than in rural areas. Rapid urban growth has made Asia home to the largest share of the world’s slum dwellers (Halfani, Mohamed, 2007). But nowhere is the threat of urbanizing poverty more grave than in Africa, which has the fastest rate of urban growth and the highest incidence of slums in the world. In her contribution to this volume, Vanessa Watson writes that rapid urbanization in Africa has been decoupled from economic development. In the last fifteen years the number of slum dwellers has almost doubled in sub-Saharan Africa, where 72% of the urban population lives in slums (UN-HABITAT 2006: 11).

**The Urban Challenge**

According to the United Nations, the global urban population will grow from 3.3 billion people in 2008 to almost 5 billion by the year 2030 (UNFPA 2007: 1). This urban expansion is not a phenomenon of wealthy countries but in developing nations. Almost all of the growth will occur in unplanned and underserved city slums in parts of the world that are least able to cope with added demands. The pace of urbanization far exceeds the rate at which basic infrastructure and services can be provided.

Urban poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon. The urban poor live with many deprivations. Their daily challenges may include: limited access to employment opportunities and income, inadequate and insecure housing and services, limited access to adequate health and education opportunities, violent and unhealthy environments, little or no social protection mechanisms. Urban poverty is not just a collection of characteristics; it is also a dynamic condition of vulnerability or susceptibility to risks. Over 90 percent of urban growth is occurring in the developing world, adding an estimated 70 million new residents to urban areas each year (UNFPA, 2007). During the next two decades, the urban population of the world’s two poorest regions—South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa—is expected to double.

The urban growth is attributed to both natural population growth, and rural to urban migration. Urbanization contributes to sustained economic growth which is critical to poverty reduction. The economies of scale and agglomeration in cities attract investors and entrepreneurs which is good for overall economic growth. Cities also provide opportunities for many, particularly the poor who are attracted by greater job prospects, the availability of services, and for some, an escape from constraining social and cultural traditions in rural villages. Yet city life can also present conditions of
overcrowded living, congestion, unemployment, lack of social and community networks, stark inequalities, and crippling social problems such as crime and violence.

Many of those who migrate will benefit from the opportunities in urban areas, while others, often those with low skill levels, may be left behind and find themselves struggling with the day to day challenges of city life. Many of the problems of urban poverty are rooted in a complexity of resource and capacity constraints, inadequate Government policies at both the central and local level, and a lack of planning for urban growth and management. Given the high growth projections for most cities in developing countries, the challenges of urban poverty and more broadly of city management will only worsen in many places if not addressed more aggressively.

This deep transformation of societies and their territory generally generate poverty and other perverse effects, named natural resource degradation. Among the problems faced by cities in developing countries and those with economies in transition is one of the first necessity product supplies. For the past 10 years, Zimbabweans have been facing persistent electricity blackouts in urban areas which culminated into incessant fetching of firewood as an alternative for domestic use as power is in short supply. This has resulted in rampant indiscriminate cutting down and collection of urban and peri-urban vegetation to make ends meet. Urban and peri-urban forestry and greening (UPFG) receives little attention on political agendas despite its importance for the social, economic, aesthetic and environmental benefits for society. Although this affected the ecology, it has created sound opportunities for poor urbanites in transport business hired to fetch firewood from the bush, with undeveloped commercial stands turned into firewood wholesales, derelict local authorities' recreational centres as storage /market centres for fuel wood and part-time income earning activities for those underemployed. This has created entrepreneurial activities for urbanites that had nothing to do. Hence it is against this background that the paper seeks to assess whether it is a myth or reality.

It is a recognized fact that forest and trees in urban and rural areas contribute to the improvement of livelihoods and the alleviation of poverty hence they should be guard jealously against overexploitation. Good tree and forest management in and around cities, associated with good governance, enabling policies, participatory approaches and capacity building of stakeholders should lead to convincing and promising results. An important result from poor dwellers is income generation from the production of service, wood, fuel wood, non-wood forest products and food stuffs. Little has been done in particular on the impact of fuel wood on urban livelihoods and poverty reduction.

Urban Poverty and Sustainable Development
Generally, the relationship between poverty, environment and development is perceived as a ‘vicious circle’. Poverty leads people to overutilization and overburdens their natural environment on which, in the end, all development depends. In this paper, therefore, both poverty and environmental problems are structurally defined in order to detect options for development that may simultaneously contribute
to alleviating poverty and prevent future environmental deterioration. A number of environmentalists have come up with different views on the relationship between poverty and environmental degradation. According to Eade (1995) the poor are caught in a downward spiral of cause and effect hence poverty can cause environmental degradation as poor people over exploit already strained resources, and environmental degradation causes further poverty as people are unable to find the resources to meet their daily needs. Moreso, in 1972 in Stockholm, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi of India declared that poverty is the greatest danger to the environment and three decades of research and international conference have shown proof of this statement. Chenje (2000) concurs with Eade’s view that poverty is both the cause and result of environmental degradation and he also add that once a community is subject to poverty, there is a vicious poverty environment circle which is difficult to break. However a close analysis on these different views by different environmentalists reviewed that there is a narrow gap which need to be taken into account and this gap entails issues of adequate education in terms of environmental protection as well as the proper enforcement of existing laws on the environment which is accompanied by some aid as a way of alleviating poverty. Finally, there is need for the locals to have a clear understanding of the importance of their surrounding environment so as to foster a sense of ownership within the locals.

Environmental Stress and the Urban Poor

Urbanization is a most dramatic social and material transformation that has been taking place in developing countries since mid-century, (World Commission on Environment and Development,1987:235-58). The urban poor are increasingly born in the urban areas, and urbanization has thus been accompanied by an increase in the number of the urban poor. Over 130 million of the developing countries’ poorest poor now live in urban areas. Large number of urban poor clusters in slums and squatters settlements around such centres or on the urban periphery, whether it’s due to absolute shortage of land or the high rents on serviced lands. These areas are prone to hazardous natural and man –made environmental conditions, such as flood plains, slopes, or land adjacent to industries using polluting technologies. Most of the urban poor live and work in hazardous exposure situations shunned by the more affluent. According to WHO, an estimated 600 million urban dwellers in the developing countries live in what are termed life and health threatening circumstances.

Wood fuel harvesting and Management of Common Property Resources Peri-Urban Areas

Fuel wood is generally vulnerable to action problems hence they usually face destruction in the long run unless harvesting or use limits are devised and enforced. The resources are threatened neglect, overexploitation, pollution, underinvestment, expropriation, general degradation, congestion and overuse because they are substructable, (Ostrom, 1994). A pasture for instance, subject to excessive grazing, may become more prone to erosion and eventually yield less benefit to its users.
Forest livelihoods
Bhargava (2006) observes that many of the world’s poor depend on forests for their livelihoods. Forests can therefore play a significant role in realizing the millennium development goals. However conservation and production must co-exist if the full potential of forests or poverty reduction is to be realized. Millions of households in the developing world depending on food from forests to supplement their diets especially as emergency food during droughts, famines and war periods. To add, moreover, a billion people depend on forest as a direct source of income or livelihood. Approximately the same number also depends largely on fuel wood for their cooking and heating.

Methodology
Both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were used in this research. Interviews were done with the Masvingo residents in Mucheke A, B, and C involved in the fuel wood business. Observation was done to randomly sampled market centres around the Mucheke A,B,C area, checking the quantity of chords on sale and in stock. Questionnaires were directed to transport owners, harvesters to assess the capacity of the enterprise in uplifting their standards of living. Content analysis was used on qualitative data while Statistical Package for Social Sciences was used on quantitative data.

Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age(years)</th>
<th>less 20</th>
<th>21-30</th>
<th>31-40</th>
<th>41-50</th>
<th>50+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of harvesters</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
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Table 1: Age range of fuel wood dealers
Source: Field Survey, 2009

Table 1 above reveals that most of the economically active group of the urbanites is into firewood trading which means broadening the income portfolios of the people in urban areas. With the economic stagnation Zimbabwe is in, people in Masvingo have opened an opportunity for their livelihood there by reducing the magnitude of poverty in urban areas. Firewood is obtained from all peri-urban corners of the Masvingo with the likes of Clipsharm, 41 Brigade Farm, Carshwell Meats Farm and the mountain range south of the town of Masvingo. In fire wood business, there are key players involved that is harvesters, buyers, transporters, marketers and stand owners. However, stand owners are now taking over all the activities after realizing the curativeness of the business. Harvesters may be owners of the farm and some people pay to harvest certain quantities of wood for sale. Transporters are there for hire, ferrying wood from the farms to the city. In the city there are market centres that are open spaces, shopping centres, display on their yard stand and some utilized the unfinished houses as a place to shelve their bundles. The business stands in Masvingo are now turned into wood selling stands for their living. The stands are subdivided into various sub-categories to accommodate more than five to ten firewood merchandisers.
Viability of firewood business in Masvingo

According to the legitimate-home-business.com, the firewood business is better than ever. The high cost of fuel oil and heating gas has created high demand for firewood. A firewood supply and delivery business is just what poor residents’ empty wallet needs. Home owners, commercial stands owners and even serfs on local authority open spaces are selling firewood as part-time business. These people have started small but now they have grown to big businesses to a point that they are looking for small crew to help them. However, these entrepreneurs are commenting the very nature of the business that it requires hard physical work. Logs and firewood are, after all, quite heavy and large operations require special log handling equipment.

Those with commercial stands and serfs using open local authority spaces said they harvest between 2-4 chords of firewood per month and use about one 25 gallon tank of fuel a month. Hence with 2-4 chords there is an average $1500 a month and the fuel cost is on average $30 a month. Therefore the firewood project seemed a viable enterprise that can generate income, employment and urban livelhoods diversity. Some have established wholesales in Mucheke A, B, C and Runyararo West where they would dry firewood for 2 weeks and preferably 4 weeks for hardwoods. According to the legitimate-home-business-com, chord is taken as the basic unit of measuring firewood. The majority of the of wholesales have an average cord of 1,2 metres, high x 1,2 meters wide x 2.4 metres long stack of firewood. Individuals in firewood business interviewed have trailers supplying door to door and others just stack deliveries for the customers and get payment from that. This means firewood business has a multiplier effect on people’s livelihoods.

Source: Field Survey, 2009

Figure 1: Benefits in firewood business
As revealed by the Figure 1 above, the majority 30% in urban Masvingo are getting access to social services, like hospital bills, school fees etc from firewood business. This is followed by purchase of food and household property. This goes with Mararike’s 1999 view that the effect of food shortages are mitigated by the acquisition of cash from off-farm activities (firewood business) used to purchase food and agricultural inputs.

Livelihood Activities in Masvingo city

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livelihood resilient strategy</th>
<th>Number of residents utilizing the strategy (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forex dealing</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of manure</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of second hand clothes</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel wood business</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of perishables</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2010

The Table 2 above suggests that the highest number (40%) is into firewood business as a strategy to reducing urban economic hardships. This is followed by the sale of perishable constituting 25% and lastly forex dealers and the sale of second hand clothes 10% respectively. This actually shows that fuel wood business is rampant in the city. The majority of the residents through interviews were citing accessibility and affordability as the major reasons entering into firewood business. The financial capital needed to enter into this business is said to minimal as compared to forex dealing, sale of perishables and second hand clothes. Also the risk is said to minimal as compared to other strategies given.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact on sampled locations</th>
<th>Impact on measure assets</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Finance:employment income</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Natural</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human: education health</td>
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<td>Social: gender equity</td>
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L=low M=medium H=high
Fuel wood trading and sustain urban livelihoods

As indicated in the framework, fuel wood trading would sustain urban livelihoods if it meets the strong sustainability criteria of enhancing all the five capitals. Livelihood sustenance is linked to the resilience or sensitivity of livelihood assets to change in socio-economic and political conditions rather than asset per se. For, some assets are more resilient or less sensitive than others. Therefore enhanced livelihood security should be assessed on the basis of the resilience of various livelihood assets and improvements therein. Resilience levels are ranked as high, medium and low and indicated against the impact indicators (Table 3). Here resilience is ranked in the context of impact (positive). For instance, improvements in land assets (even in value terms) provide high livelihood resilience to the households as it enhances the credit-worthiness of the household. Fuel wood trading affect the vegetation structure and urban greening resulting in land degradation hence low resilience. On employment and income it is high as indicated hence improve urban livelihood. Fuel wood trading raised school fees and make residents access to health facilities. The same applies to gender and economic equity is more resilient.

In order to realize the full potential of firewood business, the harvesters must be offered licenses and regulations be enforced. As such it can be concluded that wood fuel business, where implemented efficiently, will have a range of impacts upon the residents. The full potential of firewood business will only be realized if they are linked to other activities needed to support urban livelihoods development like establishment of fast growing fuel wood plantations to reduce pressure over the natural forest and market creation.

Conclusion

Due to the demand of firewood in Masvingo, this has forced the unemployed school going ages at weekends, school leavers and even those employed but their remuneration not sufficient to diversify their livelihoods through hoarding of firewood. However although the cost of firewood is affordable compared to electricity bills, urbanites are still worried with unaffordable and unrealistic charges by ZESA on month ends. The cost of electricity, when there is power, is almost the same with that during power cuts. However, it is this paper’s position that although firewood trading has proved to be an alternative and viable livelihood activity for the urbanites, sustainability of the harvested areas needs to be realized. EMA has enacted the issue of licenses. If one is found with firewood in a truck from the farm without a permit is liable to a fine. The regulations were imposed by EMA is in harvesting firewood to avoid desertification. Enforcement regulation from the EMA are not working, no incentives/sanctions has been made so far to reduce over harvesting. Need is there to improve wood stoves and even fuel wood substitution. Authorities need to establish fast-growing fuel wood plantations to reduce pressure on the natural forest. Without these ideas fuel wood business would remain a myth than reality.
References


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Quality of Education in India: A Case Study of Primary Schools of Assam

Sahidul Ahmed

Abstract: The global community is giving significant importance on educational expansion ignoring the quality aspect of education- what students are learning in school? Mere schooling is worst if students are not acquiring knowledge in school. Many studies have proved the importance of learning for the individual as well as for the economic development of the country. This study was conducted in Assam, a state of Indian union, with a special focus on primary education. The basic objective of primary education is to impart the knowledge of 3Rs to children irrespective of caste, sex, area and religion. The main objectives of this study are: (i) whether all the students, irrespective of their religion are learning in schools? And what are the socio-economic factors that are affecting children’s learning in school. The study was conducted on 500 students reading in class five.

Introduction

During the last 60 years, a notable progress has been achieved in primary education in the world, especially by the developing countries. But, is the world getting considerable quantitative expansion of education at the cost of quality? How much the students of a particular stage of education learn and why it is important, is a policy question, because it is related to several factors ranging from ensuring Human Right Protection, income of the individual, economic development and its effects on the society.

Education was recognized as a human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Right in 1948. In subsequent time many other international Acts were enacted to ensure ‘this’ right of the child. Reasserted in Jomtein and Dakar Declarations, this right has since been incorporated into most national constitutions.

Education is a process of development of physical, mental and spiritual aspects of human beings (Ghandhiji). Only admitting in a school is not ‘education’. A student must have to learn the specific contents of the curriculum at a particular point or level of education. Every child has a right to learning (acquiring knowledge), like the right to education (admission). So, there should be a guarantee that all students irrespective of their colour, caste, religion and area of living, are getting an equal opportunity to learn.

Education is inextricably related to individual labour markets. Most of the researches which are studying income and education, take average years of schooling of a person as independent variable for income (dependent variable). Such studies show that on average, an additional year of education (schooling) is associated with increase in wage (income) (Psacharopoulos and Patrinos: 2004). But, is it true? Schooling is an imperfect measure of the educational components of human capital (Lee and

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Barro: 2001). Measuring the education on the basis of average years of schooling, only measures the quantity of schooling, not quality. Everyone would acknowledge that a year of schooling does not produce the same cognitive skills everywhere.

In the field of education and economics, researchers now investigate different aspects which affect the income of the individual. They typically find that learning achievement of the students has a clear impact on earning after controlling for the other variables namely quantity of schooling and the experiences of the worker. A strong association between test score and wage was found (UNESCO: GMR: 2004). Murnane, Willett, Duhaldeborde and Tyler (2000) have found that cognitive skills are important determinants of subsequent earning. Educational quality, measured by what pupils know, has powerful effect on individual earning, on the distribution of income and economic growth (Hanushek and Woßmann: 2007). This impact is thought to increase with work experiences or further education attainment (Altonji and Pierret 2001). Hanushek and Woßmann (2007) show that the return of learning (achievement of the students) may be higher in developing countries than in developed countries.

International agencies have been conducting learning achievement in different subject matter since the early 1960s. Over the past 10 years growth research demonstrated that considering the quality of education, measured by the cognitive skilled, dramatically alters the assessment of the role of education in economic development (Hanushek and Woßmann 2007). Hanushek and Kimko (2000) using the international data on student achievement test of 1991 has found a statistically and economically significant positive effect of quality of education on economic growth that is far larger than the association between quantity of education and growth. Lee and Lee (1995) studied the association of human capital and economic growth on the basis of the test score of international standardized test of learning achievement. They used IEA 1970-71 data (only the science score, out of six subject scores available) and found a positive association between the science score and economic growth. E.A Hanushek and Woßmann (2007) used more recent data on the students’ learning achievement and measured its association with economic development. They found a statistically significant relation between test score and growth of real per capita income in 1960-2000. So, ignoring quality difference may significantly miss the true importance of education for economic growth.

**Objective of the study**

1. To compare the learning achievement of the students of different religions.
2. To identify the family factors (socio-economic) responsible for students’ academic performance.
Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference in learning achievement among the students of different religions.
2. Family income, father's education and mother's education have a positive impact on students learning achievement.

Methodology

The required data for this study has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. Statistical techniques like mean, standard deviation etc. including regression analysis were used. Statistical Package for Social Sciences 11.5 Windows has been used for regression and other calculations.

The proposed study has adopted non-probability sampling method for primary data instead of probability sampling method. Though the probability sampling method gives better accuracy in terms of confidence level of the inferences of the study, there are many practical difficulties in fully executing probability sampling methods. For example, while drawing a sample using probability sampling methods, say, random sampling technique, the frequency of occurrence of a particular category over others may frustrate the objective of the study. Keeping this issue in mind, the judgment sampling or non-probability sampling method was followed.

The study covered four districts of Assam namely Dhubri, Sibsagar, Karbi Anglong and Cachar. A total of 24 sample schools were selected from these four districts. Three categories of schools were selected namely government, private aided (venture) and private unaided schools. Out of the 6 schools that were surveyed in each district, 3 schools were chosen from urban areas and another 3 were chosen from rural areas. While the urban schools were chosen from district headquarters, where educational facilities are expected to be better, and the rural schools were chosen from a sub-division which is lagging behind in terms of educational facilities. In both cases, schools of different categories were identified for survey based on the enrolment size. That is, under each category, the school having the highest enrolment was chosen for the survey. All the students of class IV of the selected schools were considered as sample student.

Learning achievement tests were conducted in two subjects - Languages and Mathematics. Each test carries thirty questions and each question carry two marks. We formed two learning norms for students- one is minimum level of learning and another one is desirable level of learning. A student has to score a minimum 42 (out of 60) marks to reach the desirable level of learning achievement and minimum 36 (out of 60) to reach the minimum level of learning achievement.
In this study 500 students participated in both learning achievement tests. Moreover we surveyed 92 students’ home to collect their socio-economic data which helped us to identify the factors responsible for students' learning achievement. For this, from each school we chose four students on the basis of their score in the learning achievement test. The data of students’ socio-economic condition were collected by the researcher through well-defined schedule.

Results
Out of 500 students, 59.9 percent students are boys and 40.1 percent are girls, 16 percent are Schedule Caste, 7.4 percent are Schedule Tribe and 76.6 percent are General. Also 69.6 percent of participated student's religion is Hindu, 29.2 percent is Muslim and 1.2 percent having "Other" religion. Students who have participated in learning achievement test, 40.8 percent are from government schools, 38.2 percent are from private unaided schools and 21 percent are from private aided schools (venture). The percentages of students from the sample district are 22.8, 28.6, 22.6 and 26.0 respectively for Dhubri, Sibsagar, Karbi Anglong and Cachar.

Figure 1: Income of the Family

Figure 1 represents the family income of the sample students. About 48.91 percent students are from the family having an annual income of Rs 1000-100000. About 25 percent sample students are from having income between Rs. 100001-200000 and 15.22 percent sample student are between Rs. 200001-300000.

Regression Model
Simple linear regression analyses were used to test the second hypothesis.

\[ Y = a + b_1FI + b_2FE + b_3ME + U \]

Coefficients are \( b_1, b_2 \) and \( b_3 \). \( U \) represents the disturbance term of the model.

Exogenous (independent) variables
FI= student’s annual family income in rupees.
FE= Father’s Education in years of schooling.
ME= Mother’s Education in years of schooling.
Exogenous (dependent) variable
Y= Student’s learning achievement score

Expected relations with depended variables
1. Family income of the student is positively associated with student’s academic performance.
2. Father’s education is positively associated with the academic performance of the student.
3. Academic performance of the student is positively associated with student’s mother education.

Data Analysis
The learning achievement test results reveal the fact that overall students’ learning achievement is very poor irrespective of their religion. Table 1 shows the results of learning achievement test. Mean achievement in mathematics is 15.02 and mean achievement in language is 15.79. The overall mean achievement of the students in both the test is 30.55.

Table 1: Mean Achievement of the Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean achievement in Mathematics</th>
<th>15.02</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean achievement in Language</td>
<td>15.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean achievement in both subjects</td>
<td>30.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey

Table 2 shows the religion wise comparison of the students’ learning achievement. The mean learning achievement of Hindu students is 32.66 on the other hand the mean achievement of Muslim students is 25.38. Students belonging to “other” religion have a higher learning achievement than the Hindu and Muslim students. So the results of the field study reveals the fact that Muslim students learn less compared to students of other religions.

Table 2: Religion wise mean learning achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>32.6695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>25.3836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>33.1667</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Study

We have also compared the learning achievement of the students of different religion on the basis of our learning norms. It exhibits a very serious problem about the poor learning achievement of the Muslim students compared to other religions. About 32.47 percent of Hindu students have achieved
the desirable norms of learning achievement and about 17.81 percent reached minimum level of learning achievement (i.e. overall 50.28 percent reached minimum level of learning achievement) but only 14.38 percent of Muslim students have reached the desirable level of learning achievement and 9.58 percent achieved the minimum level of learning achievement (i.e. overall 23.96 percent reached the minimum level). We did not compare with “other” religion students as their numbers were very little in the sample.

So from the above discussion it is clear that there is a significant difference in learning achievement of the students of different religions. Muslim students performed significantly poorly compared to other religions.

To test the second hypothesis of our study, we used regression. The result of regression analysis is presented below:

*Summary output of regression analysis*

Regression statistics

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple R</td>
<td>.767(a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R square</td>
<td>.588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjust R Square</td>
<td>.574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Error</td>
<td>11.24257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F stat</td>
<td>41.854</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Intercept)</td>
<td>16.205</td>
<td>3.153</td>
<td>5.139</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINCOM</td>
<td>-2.268E-05</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.158</td>
<td>-1.402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FATEDUN</td>
<td>-.709</td>
<td>.459</td>
<td>-.196</td>
<td>-1.547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATEDUN</td>
<td>3.225</td>
<td>.379</td>
<td>1.015</td>
<td>8.517</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The r square value is .588. It means that 3 of the variables together can explain 59% of the model and rest 41% may be explained by the other factors not mentioned in our regression model.

It is believed that the relationship between students’ performance and students’ family income is positive as money can buy you all the comforts that you need to concentrate on your studies. But our
regression results could not prove this association, because our coefficient value is -.158 and negative non-significant t-value -1.402 shows that there is an inverse relation. It means that students belonging to more prosperous/affluent families do not give proper weight to studies. Affluence cannot make a student serious about his study or if a student wants to study then affluence is not a prerequisite.

It was expected that students’ learning achievement is positively related to student’s father’s education as an educated father can help his children in study. The result of this study shows that the coefficient value is -.196 and there is negative non-significant t value -1.547. It states that the relationship is negative. Fathers are generally busy with their occupation and their chief aim is to earn more money and make available all the comforts to their family. They are not able to give much time for their family and especially for the education of their children.

It was assumed that mother’s education is positively related to the academic performance of the student. An educated mother can take better care for her child and the result of the study also proves the association. Educated mothers help their children in study and their children perform well in school. This relation is accepted by the coefficient value 1.015 and positive highly significant t-value 8.517. Our study reveals the fact that there is a positive relation between student's academic performance and student’s mother’s education. Generally we ignore the importance of mother’s education. Educated mothers can give proper attention to their children’s activities (school copies, grade card and report card).

**Conclusion**

At the time of adopting the Constitution the Indian state had committed itself to provide elementary education under Article 45 of the Directive Principles of State policy. Article 45 stated that “The State shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years.” In 1993, in a landmark judgment, the Supreme Court ruled that the right to education is a fundamental right flowing from the Right to Life in Article 21 of the Constitution. Subsequently in 2002 education as a fundamental right was endorsed through the 86th amendment to the Constitution. The 86th Amendment also modified Article 45 which now reads as “The state shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of 6 years”. On 1st April 2010 the Right to Education Act has been implemented in the union of India. All those efforts were made to make quality education available for all the people of the society irrespective of their caste, religion and race, but still the quality of education in India is very poor.

India Government has to introduce some programmes and policies for the betterment of the marginalized group, especially for the Muslims. As we see that the learning achievements of the Muslim student is lower than the students of other religions. Lack of education among the Muslim
women may the reason for the low level of learning achievements of the Muslim students. Government should implement some programmes which will benefit the Muslim women. It has been found that the attendance rate among the Muslim students is very low. Government has to introduce some scholarship scheme for the Muslim students to attract them to the school.

References


Oliver, R., (1999), Fertility and Women’s Schooling in Ghana, “In the Economic of Schooling Quality Investments in Developing Countries (Ed) P. Glewwe”, page-327-344, New York, St. Martin’s.


Violence against Women:
Nature, Causes and Dimensions in Contemporary Bangladesh

Kazi Tobarak Hossain* and Md. Saidur Rashid Sumon**

Abstract: This article is an attempt to discuss some of the major dimensions of violence against women in Bangladesh. Different types of violence against women take place quite frequently in Bangladesh such as domestic violence, acid violence, rape, gang rape, murder, forced prostitution, “Eve-teasing”. The present paper, using data from various secondary sources, examines the nature, causes, magnitude and trend of violence against women in Bangladesh.

Introduction

Violence against women is no new phenomenon in Bangladesh. But today, its magnitude tends to be alarming, particularly in rural areas - generally among the poorer section. It inevitably involves particular social meaning and occurs in particular social hierarchies. Different types of violence against women take place in Bangladesh, such as domestic violence, dowry-related violence, acid violence, death, rape, rape followed by death, forced or induced abortion, forced prostitution, sexual harassment, violence at work place and trafficking. Also ‘eve-teasing’ has gained tremendous importance as an alarming violent phenomenon in recent times.

Bangladesh is a patriarchal society. Oppression and subordination by males over females is the common feature in this society. As a patriarchal Muslim society, the customs and values are largely male-dominated. It is also observed that sometimes seclusion put the women in vulnerable situation. In a patriarchal society like Bangladesh, women’s position, prestige, power etc., are generally determined and dominated by males. Accordingly, males’ attitude towards females is important and it does not generally give equal and due treatment to the female counterparts. Violence against women is largely embedded in gender norms. Generally the low status of women – economically, socially, culturally and politically tend to be responsible for the violation of basic rights of females by males in a society like Bangladesh (Reilly 2009; McMillan 2007). The nature of strong patriarchy is responsible for this.

Violence against women is largely the result of perceived differences (such as wealth, power, status, prestige) between men and women as ascribed by norms of patriarchy (Hossain, Imam and Khair 2001). Sociological perspectives on violence such as resource theory and exchange theory have shown that power is based on resources and that violence is the ultimate resource for securing compliance. In this model, domestic violence by males over females tends to be a natural phenomenon (Gottfried 1998; Gelles and Loseke 1993). In this article, we shall, however, deal

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particularly with the nature, causes and dimensions of some important forms of violence, especially domestic violence in Bangladesh.

Methodology

This article is written primarily by taking help of the secondary sources such as news, features, reports published in different national and local daily newspapers. We also used data compiled by national NGOs such as Ain-O-Salish Kendra (ASK). However, these data in tabular form are redrawn by present authors. Additionally, available published research reports and articles are taken into consideration while developing arguments and analysis of different dimensions of violence against women. Authors’ own observations are also incorporated while analyzing the nature and causes of the problem.

Violence against Women: Types and Trends

It is important to get a general idea of the nature, trends and dimensions of violence against women in Bangladesh. Following table lists the types and trends of violence in Bangladesh. This table is redrawn taking data from Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) and Odhikar covering a 7 year period from 2004 to 2010. It may be mentioned that ASK has collected and compiled data from a number of national dailies (both Bengali and English).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Types of Violence</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Domestic Violence</td>
<td>Dowry Related Violence</td>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>Gang Rape</td>
<td>Acid Attack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Redrawn from Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) Documentation Unit, 2011 and Odhikar, 2011

Table-1 shows different dimensions of violence against women that took place during the period of 2004 to 2010 in Bangladesh. It may be noted that in this table, data on eve-teasing is available only for the year 2010 and the occurrence of eve-teasing in that year was 216. We see that the figure for domestic violence was 264 in 2004 while 397 in the year of 2010, which shows increasing trend. The Table shows similar trend in case of dowry related violence and single rape. However, if we look at the figures of acid attacks, we observe a decreasing trend from 2004 to 2009.

It may be noted that ASK data are also available for the six months from January to June, 2012. The
data show that due to sexual harassment/violence 10 females committed suicide. During the same period 31 females became victims of acid violence, 457 females were raped out of which 59 were murdered after rape. In the same period, 300 females became victims of dowry related violence. In addition, it is also reported that 54 domestic help faced different types of violence (The Daily Prothom Alo, July 2, 2012, P-7).

It is important to mention that in a traditional value dependent society like Bangladesh, many incidents of violence against women are not reported to the police or in the media. Those women who are experiencing or have experienced domestic violence in the past are likely to be fearful or embarrassed to talk about their experiences. Often victims or victims’ families do not want to make such incidents public because of social stigma (Begum 2000). Some researchers analyzed violence against women from legal perspective. Their opinion highlighted the limitation of legal definition of violence. They discussed two different types of violence as domestic violence i.e. dowry demands and polygamy. They also discussed the issue of religious decree and violence in the guise of religion which describes the extent, nature and frequency of violence against women in rural Bangladesh (BNWLA 2004; Rahman 1997).

In the absence of dependable national data it is really difficult to talk much on the basis of inadequate quantitative information regarding violence against women in Bangladesh. However, when we go through daily newspapers, we generally find more than one incident of violence against women every day in the country. Such news covers a wide range of different forms of violence against women in our society. These are discussed below.

**Domestic Violence**

In Bangladesh, most of the people know what is meant by domestic violence such as dowry related violence, child marriage, marital rape or violence, verbal abuse, harassment, humiliation and physical torture (Begum 2005; Hossain, Imam and Khair 2001). Due to patriarchy and in the absence of adequate empowerment situation of women, domestic violence by men against women is a common phenomenon in Bangladesh – both in rural and urban areas. It is more pronounced among the poorer and relatively less educated class. Generally these types of violence against women are done by the males. Power and control over resources were most frequently at the core of events leading to the use of violence in domestic situations (Barrier 1998; Gelles and Connell 1988). Patriarchy subordinates women through existing social norms and values. This system allows men to dominate women within their families and also allows men control over the productive resources (Schuler, Hashemi and Badal 1998). As a result, traditional value under strong patriarchy tends to trigger, dictate and provoke different forms of violence, including domestic violence against women in Bangladesh (Hossain 2002).

**Table-2: Domestic violence (2008-2010 year)**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature</th>
<th>Age (in years)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Case filed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18 and below</td>
<td>19-24</td>
<td>25 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical and mental torture by husband</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical and mental torture by husband’s family</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical and mental torture by own family members</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder by husband</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder by husband’s family</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder by own family members</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unbearable torture resulting in suicide</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>374</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Redrawn from Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) Documentation Unit, 2011

Table-2 depicts different types of domestic violence that generally take place in Bangladesh. Table shows that 626 cases were victims of murder by husband while 82 became victims of physical and mental torture by husband. Due to unbearable physical and mental torture, 62 committed suicide. A significant number of the victims of different types of domestic violence as shown in this table belong to the age category of 25 years and above (374 cases). It is also important to note that out of 626 victims who were murdered by husband, only 309 cases are filed against the offenders.

Domestic violence is a very pervasive, serious social malady in both developed and developing countries. Severe domestic violence has been documented in almost every country in the past decade. In some Western countries, 21-28 per cent of adult women are battered in marital relationships. Foshee, V.A., K.E. Bauman, et al. (1999) in their study showed how family violence and adolescent dating violence take place. It was found in Hindin’s (2003) study that husbands’ attitudes toward wife beating are generally found in five major situations: a) if a wife goes out without telling her husband, b) neglects the children, c) argues with him, d) refuses to have sex with him, and e) burns the food.

Women who are victims of domestic violence do not only suffer from health related complications, they also suffer from low self-esteem, feeling of isolation and powerlessness, and often suffer from a sense of guilt (Islam and Rahman 2006). As a result females, who are victims of domestic violence, are 12 times more likely to attempt suicide than those who do not experience such violence (WHO 2002).


Dowry related domestic violence

Dowry (though legally prohibited) is being practiced unabated, particularly in rural areas of Bangladesh. It is observed that dowry related domestic violence (often death) against women is increasing in an alarming rate.

Table-3: Dowry related violence (2008-2010 year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of violence</th>
<th>Age (in years)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Case filed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18 and below</td>
<td>25 and above</td>
<td>Age not reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical torture</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acid throwing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide after experiencing physical and mental torture</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>467</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Redrawn from Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) Documentation Unit, 2011

Table-3 demonstrates that in order to realize dowry, different types of violence are resorted to by the husband/husband's family. During the period of 2008 to 2010, there were 958 females who became victims of physical torture and 590 became victims of murder. It may be noted that most of the victims of physical torture (366) and murder (244) belong to the age category of 19-24 years. Out of total 590 who became victims of murder, 353 cases were filed against the outlaws.

In this connection we would like to mention one news report from a Bengali national daily newspaper. The Daily Janakontha of September 5, 2006 (quoted from the survey report done in 2006, by Bangladesh Human Rights Commission), reveals that from January 2006 to August 31, 2006 (approximately 8 month period) there were 136 dowry related deaths. Same source discloses that 254 were raped where 68 were raped followed by murder. During this 8 month period 78 became victims of acid violence.

It is observed that taking money is the most common form of dowry practiced in the lower socio-economic classes. Inability to pay the dowry demand causes different types of violence against women. Sometimes, some women even commit suicide due to unbearable mental and physical torture.
Verbal abuse, mental torture, humiliation, physical torture, death, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and violence on house maids etc., are perceived as common practices of domestic violence against women by men. Such incidents are reported in national dailies almost every day.

Who are the offenders/perpetrators of domestic violence on women? Answer is – generally males and more particularly husbands. Fulfilment of the dowry demand often fails due to poverty and other reasons in bride’s family. Husband at this stage keeps on repeating the demand to the wife to recover the dowry. When she fails to convince her father/family members to realize the dowry demand or her father/family members cannot meet the demand for different reasons (e.g. poverty), torture begins at home – generally from verbal abuse, mental torture to slapping, beating, hitting, kicking, dragging etc., by husband or husband’s family members. Since in rural areas of Bangladesh, practice of dowry is very common, domestic violence relating to dowry demand is equally very common. Apart from verbal abuse, mental and physical torture, deaths also take place as a result of dowry demand (Mannan 2003; Martin et al., 2002; UNICEF 2000).

**Social stigma and violence on wives**
Married women who are found incapable (generally confirmed without medical test) of giving birth to a child, usually face humiliation, verbal abuse, mental or physical torture by husband or husband’s family members. At this stage socially she becomes stigmatized. Often husband divorces her or marries another wife.

Son preference is another important aspect in this male dominated society. If a wife does not give birth to a male child, husband tends to convince or force his wife to conceive again and again until a male child is born. Even if she gives birth to a male child, but husband desires to have more than one male child, she has to conceive again in order to agree with husband’s decision. This is very common in rural areas. This situation of wife's subsequent pregnancies generally causes pregnancy related complications, physical injury, malnutrition, ill health and other related diseases (Akhter 2005).

**Violence against domestic help**
Domestic help often comes across different types of abuse, humiliation and violence by male or female members of the household. Making some mistakes in the domestic work, working slow, breaking crockery and other utensils etc., are the common causes of such abuse and violence against female house maids. Additionally, male members (e.g. husband, adult son) sometimes resort to sexual harassment and violence against female domestic help. Such violence ranges from touching female organs, cuddling and molestation, to forced sexual coitus (rape) on house maids. Due to severe poverty, need for survival becomes primary consideration for the victims. As a result, victims usually cannot protest such offences. These kinds of violence against house maids remain usually concealed. Sometimes, however, some of them leave the house and take jobs in a different house.
But in some cases, they fall victims of similar sexual violence in the new work place as well. At this point, they get disgusted and frustrated. Carrying this awkward and sad mental state of mind, some of them even get involved in commercial sex work. Such cases were found in a recent study on Female Sex Workers (Hossain, Habib and Imam 2004).

Table-4: Violence against female domestic help (2008-2010 year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature</th>
<th>Age (in years)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Case filed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18 and below</td>
<td>19-24</td>
<td>25 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical torture</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape/attempt to rape</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death after physical torture</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape followed by murder</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical and mental torture resulting in suicide</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical and mental torture followed by murder</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Redrawn from Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) Documentation Unit, 2011

Table-4 illustrates that most of the victims (163 out of the 243) belong to the age category of 18 years and below. Also we see that in the same age category, out of total 163, 61 female domestic help became victims of physical torture where 47 faced physical and mental torture followed by murder.

Female child marriage and violence

In rural areas, we see a sizeable number of female children between 13-15 years of age get married because of the family’s desires and decisions. Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS) conducting a representative national survey in 2004 reveals that of all the married respondents, approximately 8.0% were found in the age category of 10-14 years (Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey 2005:92). Even if the law prohibits, such marriages take place unabated in rural areas of Bangladesh. However, existing law prohibits marriage for females less than 18 years of age and for males less than 21 years of age (Hossian 2006).

It is very difficult for a tender age girl of 13 or 14 years of age to understand and adjust with the new situation of husband’s family – family’s desires, expectations, socio-cultural demands. Inability to meet
the demands and desires of the husband/husband’s family members results in verbal abuse, humiliation and sometimes physical torture on the newly married girl by her husband or husband’s family members (both males and females).

Apart from this familial adjustment problem, the girl also faces emotional, sexual, social and practical adjustment problem with her husband whose age is generally 18 years or above. Also the question of establishing mutually agreed sexual relation becomes nearly impossible in such unequal marital relation. Husband’s desire to have sex with his wife generally turns out to be undesirable for her. In such situations, when husband forcibly has sex with his wife, it turns out to be a sexual violence. Wife, instead of sexual gratification, often sustains injury, pain etc., in her female organs. This may be termed as marital rape (Akhter 2005). Early age pregnancy is also an important feature resulting from early marriage. When subsequent pregnancies take place at early age without proper spacing, a female faces malnutrition and ill health (Krug, E.G. et al. 2002).

Rape

Rape is a type of physical assault involving sexual intercourse by the perpetrator(s). Generally this kind of crime takes place when one or more males initiate such an act against another person (generally female) without consent of the victim. It may be noted that such an act may be carried out by physical force, coercion, abuse of authority etc. Rape is one of the most brutal forms of violence against women in Bangladesh. In a culture that holds a woman's chastity sacred, rape is particularly injurious to a woman's self-identity and social future as well as her physical and psychological wellbeing. The ever-increasing rate of rape is an alarming phenomenon and it depicts the diminishing value of women in society. It may be mentioned that sometimes rape is followed by murder, particularly when gang rape takes place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature</th>
<th>Age (in years)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Case filed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18 and below</td>
<td>19-24</td>
<td>25 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempt to rape</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single rape</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gang rape</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>499</strong></td>
<td><strong>91</strong></td>
<td><strong>86</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape followed by murder</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide due to rape</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Redrawn from Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) Documentation Unit, 2011
Table 5 shows that out of total 1461, a large number of single rape cases (847) occurred while a significant number of gang rapes (504) were also committed during the period of 2008 to 2010. We also observe that out of total number of victims (1461), 217 cases were rape followed by murder and 20 cases committed suicide. It is also important to mention that only 92 cases were filed where there were 217 victims of rape followed by murder.

**Marital Violence**

Marital violence is not a new phenomenon in the Bangladesh society, it has been existing in our society since the patriarchal values had taken over to rule over the social norms and functioning. It is a weapon used to maintain the unequal power dynamics between men and women. In this context 'marital rape', coerced sexual intercourse, between husband and wife, is not recognized as a criminal offense in Bangladesh. The predominant cultural context supports the notion that any sexual intercourse between husband and wife is lawful and a private matter and interference by outside parties is unacceptable. In many empirical research, almost half of the respondents stated that their opinion is ignored during sexual intercourse by their husbands. But the current cultural context suggests that while women are socially and religiously bound to have sexual intercourse with their husbands, men do not feel the same pressure to fulfil their wives’ sexual desires and women in most cases remain sexually unsatisfied. With no alternative, women realize that they have no choice but to tolerate domestic violence and make the best of their tragic situation. Some argued that marriage exhibits unequal gender position especially the socio-cultural and legal sanction of husbands' propriety rights over a wife (Begum 2000; Jahan 1994; Gells and Cornell 1988).

**Acid Violence**

Acid violence involves throwing acid at a person’s body to harm/disfigure and scare the person. Acid violence is a crime that has been quite alarming in recent Bangladesh. Acid attacks generally occur when men want to take revenge for the refusal of proposals for sex or marriage, or when demands for dowry are not met or when there is a political or land related dispute. Additionally, a few other causes of acid attack may be mentioned here such as family dispute, protest against husband’s second marriage, infertility, getting divorce from wife.

The severity of impact of acid violence does not only mean physical harm and pain, the victims also may suffer from prolonged/lifetime social isolation or stigmatization, resulting in loss of self-esteem and inability to study or work, living in shame, hiding the disfigurement with a veil etc. Usually acid is thrown on the face of a girl or a woman in order to damage her appearance. Generally, it is used as a weapon to attack females. However, males also sometimes become victims of acid attacks. Among other organizations, Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF) in Bangladesh has taken noteworthy steps for victims’ treatment as well as rehabilitation.
Table-6: Acid Violence (2008-2010 year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Age of the victims (in years)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Case filed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18 and below</td>
<td>19-24</td>
<td>25 and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Disputes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dowry</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enmity</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land related disputes and conflict</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusal against bad proposal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refused to marry</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusal against love</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resist husband’s extra-marital relationship</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure in love</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because of divorce notice</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because of case not withdrawn</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After rape</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons not reported</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
<td><strong>107</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Redrawn from Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) Documentation Unit, 2011

Table-6 shows primary causes behind acid attacks in Bangladesh from 2008 to 2010. This table demonstrates that as a result of land related disputes (43) and family disputes (30), there were 73 victims of acid attacks out of total 224. It is also found that in the age category of 25 years and above, 107 out of total 224 became victims of acid attack.

**Eve-teasing**
Eve-teasing is a great concern today in the discussion of violence against women in Bangladesh. Eve-teasing is not a new problem in Bangladesh. However, recently its magnitude has increased and it has become a big social crisis for the country. This emerging phenomenon, nowadays, is dealt with seriously by different types of professionals, especially social activists and academics. The term ‘Eve-teasing’ is an activity where the girls are teased by the boys. More specifically, it means when a boy or a group of boys try to disturb a girl or girls by yelling, showing sexual gesture and instruments,
obstructing, offering bad proposal etc., while she is walking on the street, staying somewhere, or riding on any vehicle and other places. It causes vulnerability and insecurity for the girls.

A recent study carried out by the Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) showed that almost 90 percent of the girls aged between 10 to 18 years have undergone the experience of this problem. The harassment can take a variety of forms and the perpetrators come from multiple walks of life (BNWLA 2004). Generally speaking, almost every day one or more girls become victim of eve-teasing. However, some of these incidents are reported and some are not. It may be mentioned as reported in the newspaper, ‘The Daily Prothom Alo’ in 2011 (from June 15 to August 15); that 25 females became victims of eve teasing in different places such as while coming back home, bus stands and in educational institutions such as schools, colleges.

It may be mentioned that eve-teasing has now become a serious social disease in Bangladesh. It is also observed that this undesirable phenomenon is increasing (as reported in print and electronic media) day by day. However, government, NGOs, Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and other social organizations are trying their best to combat the situation by enforcing existing laws and implementing motivational/awareness raising activities.

It is important to mention that some sensational incidents of intolerable eve-teasing resulting in suicide were committed by Trisha, Pinky, Elora, Simi Banu and others in recent years. Till November 14, 2010, almost 20 girls committed suicide due to eve-teasing (Ethirajan 2010). It may be significant to state that some including parents, teachers and local people who protested against eve-teasing, became victims (ranging from physical assault to death) by the teasers and their associates.

**Conclusion**

The above discussion on violence against women in Bangladesh, particularly domestic violence, gives us a brief understanding of the problem. It is found that different types of violence against women are increasing. Recently eve-teasing has become a serious social problem in the country. In order to arrest this increasing trend of violence against women, proper intervention strategies need to be undertaken. Existing laws regarding protection of women’s rights should be enforced effectively. Law enforcing agencies need to handle the situation with sincerity, honesty and with strong commitment without any hesitation and bias. Awareness and capacity building among the women are also important. Under the existing social values and norms, males’ attitude and behaviour towards females need to be changed as well. In this regard relevant agencies of the Government, NGOs, researchers, lawyers, activists and media need to come forward and work together for advocacy and campaign against violence on women in Bangladesh.
References


**Newspapers**
Socio-economic and Cultural Processes Associated with Domestic Violence in Rural Nigeria: A Study of Uzo Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State

Peter Ezeah*

Abstract: Although the pervasiveness of domestic violence against women in Nigeria is well documented, specific risk factors, particularly among rural dwellers, are not well understood. This study was based on cross-sectional survey design. Both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques were used. In depth interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with married women from four rural villages in Uzo-Uwani Local government of Enugu state, Nigeria. The study examined domestic violence, and explored the pathways through which socioeconomic and cultural processes may influence women's vulnerability to violence in marriage among rural dwellers.

The sample size for the study was 490 respondents. Questionnaire and in-depth interview were the instruments for data collection. The questionnaire was administered to 450 married women of reproductive age while 40 women who were not part of the survey were interviewed. The findings show that 56% of the 450 women surveyed had experienced domestic violence, while 42% did not in the past one year. According to the qualitative data, women with more education and income are less vulnerable to domestic violence. The findings further show that early marriage and low income made women less vulnerable to violence in marriage. Only education was associated with significantly reduced odds of violence. The odds were greater for women who contributed more money to the household.

Introduction

Domestic violence is common in rural Nigeria. Among rural married women in Enugu State surveyed in 1996, eighty six percent reported having experienced physical violence at the hands of their husbands. These women reported having experienced major violence such as, slapping, kicking, burns and use of weapons etc. (Ezeah, 1996). According to Ezeah (1996) domestic violence appears to be an important cause of maternal mortality in Nigeria.

In Uzo-Uwani Local government area, violence against women is closely linked to the institution of marriage. Marriage related norms and practices reinforce women’s relative powerlessness, often exposing them to domestic violence. Early marriage is generally prevalent in Enugu state. In fact Okeibunor (1995) reported a median age at marriage of 15 years in the state. This is lower in Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area. In the Local Government area, females are frequently married in childhood to older men who may be unknown to them. At the time of marriage, young women know little about marriage and sexuality, which can be a traumatic experience. It is permissible among the people for young married women to desert their husbands to "attain maturity". In this sense she is free to engage in prostitution at the end of which she is expected by her husband to return to him with some material gifts which can be regarded as "bride wealth". A woman’s inability to produce...

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substantial materials at the end of the “maturation” can trigger violence and an unending ridicule in the family.

Again, domestic violence is often used to establish and reinforce gender roles early in marriage, and very young women may be particularly vulnerable and unable to resist. Studies show that there are connections between violence and gender inequality in Nigeria (Ezeah, 1996). Men often use violence to enforce their dominance and non-egalitarian gender norms, particularly in the initial year of marriage. Studies also show ambiguous relationship between women's economic empowerment and domestic violence. On the one hand, economic empowerment reduces a woman's risk of domestic violence by making her life more visible and by increasing her perceived value in the family; and conversely, if women's economic empowerment results in her acting more assertively, her husband may respond with violence.

The present study is based on survey data collected from four rural villages in Uzo-Uwani local government area of Enugu State in 2004 to document the types and severity of violence against women in marriage; and to explore the potential social determinants of domestic violence in the rural area and the pathways through which social economic and cultural processes might influence women's vulnerability in marriage. Key assumptions guiding this work are that marriage is an important site for the negotiation and expression of gender roles and relations and that the prevailing marriage system and practice in Nigeria need to be understood in the context of strategies developed by individual and families for economic survival.

Girls' education has been promoted extensively by the Nigerian government and by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Yet, the proportion of girls enrolled in formal and informal schooling has not appreciated dramatically in Uzo-Uwani local government area. Again, women have increasingly become economically active, many participating in income generating schemes or seeking paid employment outside the house in many parts of Nigeria, which entails a departure from traditional gender norms mandating women's seduction. This scenario is largely the case in Uzo-Uwani local government area. This study is thus situated in Uzo-Uwani local Government area to examine the interplay of socio-economic and cultural variables on domestic violence.

The Problem
Intimate partner violence is the most prevalent form of gender-based violence worldwide (Heise and Gotle, 2002). Domestic violence has been directly linked to numerous kinds of immediate and long-term physical and psychological injury to women (Daiz-Olavarriteta, et al., 2002; Ezeah, 1996). Such violence may contribute to unwanted pregnancies and may increase the risk of sexually transmitted infections among victims by compromising their ability to dictate the terms of their sexual relationships. Moreover, domestic violence is a common problem during pregnancy and has been associated with increased risk of miscarriage, premature labour and low birth weight (Valadares; et al: 2001).
In the light of mounting evidence of its varied and harmful immediate and secondary effects, domestic violence is increasingly being recognized not only as an issue of human rights but also as a serious public health concern (World Health Organization [WHO], 2002). Numerous studies have identified possible determinants that trigger intimate partner violence. Most of these studies are, however, salient across diverse cultural and social contexts. There is no single theory that explains domestic violence. For example, the feminist approach contends that society is structured in patriarchy. Within a patriarchal social order, men maintain a privileged position through their domination of women, and their monopoly of social institutions. Women are relatively disadvantageous in a social system that ensures and perpetuates their subordination by men and predominately male institutions (Renzetti, 1994). On the other hand, the systems approach sees the family as a dynamic organization made up of interdependent components, the behaviour of one member and the probability of a reoccurrence are affected by the responses and feedback of other members. This lack of a single theoretical perspective may limit efforts to better understand intimate partner violence and how to effectively prevent the phenomenon.

In an attempt to address the theoretical limitations, Heise (2002) proposed an ecological framework which suggests that intimate partner violence arises from the interplay of some social and economic factors. The framework draws on cross-cultural literature to identify specific factors associated with spouse abuse at each level of the social ecology. There is the need for empirical information to properly understand how the various factors are interrelated and how they may interact with one another to influence women’s risk of violence particularly in rural areas. This is the focus of the current study.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions are put forward to guide the study:

1. What is the nature of violence against women in Uzo-Uwani L.G.A?
2. What are the social factors influencing violence against women in Uzo-Uwani L.G.A.?
3. What are the cultural factors influencing violence against women in Uzo-Uwani L.G.A.?

**Literature Review**

Violence against women is a manifestation of historical unequal power relations between men and women in public and private lives. A woman’s experience of violence is shaped by many factors, such as economic status, race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, age, religion, and culture (U.N, 2007). Various studies from diverse perspectives of violence against women show that it occurs within the broad context of unequal power relations between men and women. Patriarchy and men’s control over women is indicated as one of the factors influencing violence against women. Men use violence on women when their authority is threatened.
Culture is also used to justify violence against women through claims that such practices are part of “culture”. Yet, culture is not static or homogeneous, it evolves and can change. Women not only suffer from negative aspect of culture, but also benefit from positive values and practices (U.N, 2007). Again, lack of economic independence reduces women’s capacity to act and increase their vulnerability. Restriction on women’s control over resources can constitute a form of family violence (Heise, 2002).

**Methodology**

**Area of Study:** The data were drawn from four villages in Uao-Uwani local government area of Enugu State, Nigeria. These villages are, Nrobo, Abbi, Ugbene-Ajima and Nimbo. The reason for selecting theses villages is because they are typically rural in nature. It can be observed that the villages have very low mean educational level for women. Also, early marriage is highly practiced in the area. In addition the villagers are poor but not unusual for rural Nigeria.

**Instruments:** two types of instruments were used to gather data for this study, qualitative and quantitative components.

**Qualitative Components:** The qualitative data come from semi-structured in-depth interview of 40 women, and from four focus group discussions conducted among married female villagers in the study area. Participants were selected to represent different groups of interest such as poor women, women, or mothers of women, who married at a relatively young or old age and women considered relatively and economically empowered or poor. All participants were briefed in advance on the nature of the interview and they provided oral consent to participate in the study.

The qualitative instrument examined the social, economic and cultural processes underlying early marriage, gender inequality and violence within marriage. To explore the range of potential social and economic factors shaping women’s experiences of marriage including violence, the respondents were asked open-ended questions about the processes of marriage formation and about their perceptions of what influenced it, women’s status within marriage, especially whether and how they perceived women’s circumstances in marriage and changes over time in marriage.

**Quantitative component:** The quantitative data come from a survey administrated through a questionnaire to 450 women of reproductive age (15-49 years) in the four villages. The survey covered a range of topics related to women’s social, economic, and physical well-being, including their capacities and access to resources, empowerment, marriage characteristics, experiences of domestic violence and health outcomes. The questionnaire was pretested in areas comparable but not adjacent to the study sites.
Results:

Qualitative Findings

Many women recognized and were dismayed by the increasing practice of early marriage in Uzo-Uwani Local government area. The women are usually married very early to desert their husbands and attain majority. In this process of “maturity” they practice prostitution. It is expected that on return to their husbands the women should bring in material gifts such as cash, household equipment, building materials, buy cell phones, clothes etc. According to many respondents, women are highly ridiculed and vulnerable to maltreatment if the economic resources they bring back are perceived as meagre. On one hand, the respondents tacitly accepted the practice of prostitution but on the other hand they condemned the maltreatment meted to women who fail to return enough material recourse at the end of the voluntary absence from their marriage. As a 42 year old women explained: “If a woman fails to return enough material gift, a husband may beat her or usually say that he will marry another girl who will be capable of providing meaningful gifts.

Despite their condemnation of this practice most women seemed resigned to it, as they believed it affords young women the opportunity for “adequate socialization” and experience before settling down in marriage. As a 33 year old woman with no education or income explained, “If a girl brings in gifts, then she has a stronger position before her husband and in in-laws home. Her mother in-law cannot psychologically torture her, nor can her husband beat her. If they do, then she can say, “Did I come here empty-handed?” This means that the gifts can raise a woman’s stay and improve her security in her husband’s home. The practice is therefore perpetuated reluctantly, and often with considerable shame, by families to help ensure that their daughters live well in their marital homes.

Many women mentioned increasing education level as a major change in recent years, and an important determinant of her experiences. The participants suggested that education can improve the circumstances in which women enter into marriage, for instance by allowing them legitimate reasons to postpone marriage; by improving their marriage potential and, therefore, their prospects for marrying a “good” man. Although many women expressed strong desire to educate their daughters, the apparent social and, increasingly economic imperative to marry daughters early is likely to compromise girls’ educational attainment and undermine the potentials for her increased education to translate into delayed marriage.

Many of the respondents perceived education as also improving women’s status and opportunities in the households, thereby affording them more freedom and less dependence. This is in agreement with Ezeah (1996) that education has both direct effects on women’s status and indirect effects that operate through increased earning potentials.

The participants further argued that education can also help a woman speak on her own behalf and defend herself, regardless of personal earning or family wealth. As one uneducated 30-year-old
woman said, "not only daughters of wealthy father can speak for themselves. Those girls with education who are aware can protest when their situation is bad".

One employed woman with a secondary education believed that educated women’s assertiveness can be contagious. She said, “The act of protesting has ... due to ... education. But not all who are protesting are highly educated. When I, am educated woman, protest against my husband’s misbehavior, then my neighbor..., who has studied only up to elementary, think... she will... protest against her husband’s as I protest. (She will think) why should I tolerate such oppression?”

Again, some women maintained that education could translate into at least the potential for employment or earnings; the earnings would then afford women greater status and rights in the home and protection from abuse. A 38-year-old woman with a source of personal income noted, if a woman earns, income, then she has to be treated as an equal to her husband, because both are earning members of the family. In that case, the husband cannot beat her”.

Only very few women suggested that with education women have opportunities for independence from marriage. If they cannot change the nature of the marriage, they can leave it. As one educated respondent explained: “if women are educated, they can get jobs and the will be happy... because they themselves are independent. They do not need to tolerate the torture and oppression of their husbands. If a woman thinks she can get on, she can leave her husband”

Survey Findings

The quantitative findings are presented and analyzed in this section with frequency counts and simple percentages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Demographic characteristics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>Age at Marriage:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Below 14 years</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>66.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15-30 years</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30 years and above</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Level of Education Attained:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No formal school</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completed Primary education</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completed Secondary education</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completed Higher education</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td><strong>Religion:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>African Traditional religion</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 shows that 300 (66.6%) of the respondents married below 14 years, while 315(70%) received no formal education. Only 117 (26%) that contributed nominal income to household activities reported violence.

Table 2: Nature of Violence by rural married women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Nature of Violence</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Violent ever?</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Any</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Major</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Violence in the past year?</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Any</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Major</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Violence during pregnancy?</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Any</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Violence worse during pregnancy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: shows that 56% (252) of the respondents reported ever having experienced domestic violence; and 18% of the women reported having experienced major violence such as kicks, burns, or use of weapons. Forty two percent of the women had experienced violence in the past year. Twenty two percent of the respondents said that they had experienced some episodes of major violence in the past year. Six percent of the respondents had experienced violence during pregnancy, and 3% of the respondents said that violence they experienced during pregnancy seemed worse than usual. The proportion of women who reported experiencing domestic violence in the past year was significantly higher among women married very early than among other women who were not married early.

Discussion
The findings in this study show that there is a high rate of early marriage and low level of educational attainment by rural women in Uzo- Uwani Local Government area. Again, there is general poverty,
low status of women in the area. It was found that women who have substantial income have the risk of violence more than those that contribute minimally to the household income. In essence, women's economic resources increase the risk of violence when men perceive their authority and gender roles threatened. Again, lack of financial resources in the family can precipitate violence. This is in line with U.N.2007; Hoffman, Demo and Edwards, 1994 studies. Furthermore, the observed negative association between level of education and domestic violence seem less ambiguous, but its implication is limited. The odds for domestic violence are only for women who have at least some level of education suggesting that modest increase in educational attainment substantially reduces their risk of marital violence (Heise, 2002). This study, has several important implications. First, although the villages in the study are typically rural, they were not selected randomly. The generalizability of the results is limited. Also because the study is based on a cross sectional design, cause and effect relationships could not be established. By integrating qualitative and quantitative data, we tried to demonstrate the interplay of complex socio-economic and cultural factors that influence women's risk of violence in rural Nigeria. Despite the observed limitations, the study tried to contribute to the understanding of the prevalence of the phenomenon of domestic violence in Uzo-Uwani Local Government area, Nigeria.

Despite the limitations, we believe this study contributes to our understanding of the prevalence of the phenomenon of domestic violence in Uzo-Uwani local government area of Enugu state. The data investigated the prevalence and severity of physical abuse in this study can be compared with findings from other parts of Nigeria. By integrating qualitative and quantitative data, we can begin to understand the interplay of complex socio-economic and cultural factors that influence women's risk of violence in Nigeria.

Women whose income is substantial enough make them more than marginal contributions to the household budget may be at increased risk of violence. The observed positive association between women's financial contribution to the household and the odds of domestic violence may, again reflect in the balance of power between husband and wife that leads to violence. However, it may also reflect a degree household socio-economic status in this study. This study, like other previous research, indicates an association between poverty and domestic violence. This study shows that women who earned money and contributed meaningfully to the household budget typically were in the most economically deprived families. In the context of deprivation, women's economic contribution may increase the risk of violence by undermining male authority and established gender role. This is supported by the qualitative data suggesting that men’s inability to provide economically for their families may place women at increased risk of maltreatment. Some of the respondents in this study derived conflict over scarcity as precipitating violence, a findings supported by Hoffman (Demo and Edwards 1994).

The observation of a negative association between women education and domestic violence seems
less ambiguous, but its implication is limited. The odds for domestic violence were reduced only for women who had at least some level of education suggesting that the modest increases in educational attainment available to the majority of female in rural Nigeria will not substantially alter their risk. The expectation expressed in the qualitative data that women’s education would lead to higher status and security through increased economic participation appears les realistic in the light of the quantitative results. Furthermore, the findings indicate that education cannot be assumed to improve the terms under which women enter marriage.

References


Impact of Conflict Situation on Mental Health in Srinagar, Kashmir

Asima Hassan* and Aneesa Shafi**

Abstract: The Conflict in Kashmir has a wider and deeper impact on all sections of Kashmiri society. The impact of conflict is experienced by people of all ages who suffer displacement, loss of home and property, loss or involuntary disappearances of close relatives, poverty and family separation and disintegration. This is compounded by the lifelong social, economic and psychologically traumatic consequences of armed conflict. The Paper highlights as to what extent the conflict has affected the Mental Health of Kashmiri people and the extent of help rendered by government/NGOs towards them.

Introduction
Concept of Conflict

Conflict is a serious disagreement, struggle, and fight arising out of differences of opinions, wishes, needs, values, and interests between and among individuals or groups. (Hornby, A.S.1995). It is a struggle between and among individuals or groups over values and claims to scarce resources, status symbols, and power bases. The objective of the individuals or groups engaged in conflict is to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals so that they can enjoy the scarce resources, the status symbols, and power bases (Coser, L 1956). Conflict is conceived as a purposeful struggle between collective actors who use social power to defeat or remove opponents in order to gain status, resources and push their values over other social groupings (Himes, J.S 1980).

Conflict, clash of interests, is universal in nature. It occurs in all times and places. It is present in almost all societies. There has never been a time or society in which some individuals or groups did not come into conflict. In some societies conflict may be very acute and vigorous while in some others it may be very mild. Conflict is experienced at all levels of human activity from the intra-personal to the international. Sociologist like Karl Marx, Frederich Engels, Saint-Simon and others have emphasized the role of conflict as a fundamental factor in the social life of man. Karl Marx, the architect of communism has said the history of hitherto existing human society is nothing but the history of class struggle (George Ritzer 1996). Conflict is prevalent within and between social relations such as families, ethnic groups, social institutions and organizations, political parties and states. Further, it is prevalent in situations where the goals, aspirations, interests, and needs of the social groups cannot be achieved simultaneously and the value systems of such groups are at variance. Invariably, the social parties purposely employ their power bases to fight for their position with a view to defeat, neutralize or eliminate one another (Klingebiel, G. 2002).

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Most writers on the issue of conflict seem to agree that the causes of conflict include, among others, competition for scarce resources; differences in terms of goals, value systems, and interests; and structural imbalances and ambiguity in coordinating social structures. It emanates from socio-economic inequalities, ethnicity, absence of opportunities for political participation, differences in religious inclinations, fragile government structures, inadequate civic structures, differences in political ideologies, and competition over scarce resources (Anstey M. 1991). Conflict expresses itself in numerous ways and in various degrees, and over every range of human contact its modes are always changing with social conditions (MacIver MR, & Charles H. Page, 1950)

Understanding mental health
Mental, physical and social health, are vital strands of life that are closely interwoven and deeply interdependent. Defining health as physical, mental and social well being, A.V. Shah has expressed that mental health is the most essential and inseparable component of health (A.V Shah 1982). There are a number of dimensions, which contribute to positive health like, spiritual, emotional, vocational, philosophical, cultural, socio-economic, environmental, educational and nutritional besides the physical, mental and social dimension. Thus, health is multidimensional. Although these dimensions function and interact with one another, each has its own nature.

Perhaps the easiest dimension of health to understand is the ‘physical’, which is nothing but biomedical definition of health. WHO defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity. Thus mental well being is an essential component of health of all individuals (Waheeda khan 2002). Good mental health is the ability to respond to many varied experiences of life with flexibility and a sense of purpose. More recently mental health has been defined as a state of balance between the individual and the surrounding world, a state of harmony between oneself and others, coexistence between the realities of the self and that of other people and that of the environment. On the other hand, social well being implies harmony and integration within the individual, between each individual and other members of the society and between individuals and the world in which they live (Park 1995). It also indicates optimal ability to maintain relationship with individuals and groups in accordance with existing cultural patterns (Waheeda khan 2002). The social dimension of health includes the levels of social skills one possesses, social functioning and the ability to see oneself as a member of a larger society. Social health is rooted in "positive material environment" (focusing on financial and residential matters), and "positive human environment" which is concerned with the social network of the individual (Fillenbaum, G.G., 1984).

Mental illness is a disorder of the cognition (thinking) and/or the emotions (mood) as defined by standard diagnostic systems such as the International Classification of Disorders, or the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (see below for reference to the website). Psychosocial disorders relate to an interrelationship of psychological and social problems, which together constitute the disorder. Psychological symptoms are those that have to do with thinking and
emotions, while social symptoms relate to the relationship of the individual with the family and society. Save the Children and UNICEF define psychosocial well being as involving people’s relationships, feelings, behavior and development. Advances in neurosciences and behavioral medicine have also shown that, like any physiological illnesses, mental and behavioral disorders are the result of a complex interaction between biological, psychological and social factors (Syed Amin Tabish, 2005).

Mental and Psychosocial Disorders and conflict

Although conflict created by human beings is as old as the human civilization, any organized effort to study and quantify the impact of conflict and violence on public health particularly mental health of the population, started only in 1970s by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in the context of the humanitarian crisis in Biafra, Nigeria. Thereafter many studies and researches were conducted in this regard and today it is an area of concern for everybody. As per assessment of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) after the physical health part of a human being, mental well being the most stressed area in conflict situations, violent emotional reactions are manifest, mainly in the children and women. They are very badly affected by psycho-trauma and posttraumatic stress disorder. Simply proximity to the situations also can affect even those who are not directly involved in conflicts.

Impact of conflict on mental health of individuals, who go through it or even witness it, is influenced by several factors. Those who are victims of violent situations suffer psychological stress. Such stress may traumatize individuals. Trauma could be the result of living through violence or witnessing acts of violence or being directly inflicted by torture, rape, etc. The acts of conflict in terms of death of a close family member may be the most difficult bereavement to bear and the sudden death in the family might have long lasting physical and emotional repercussions on the survivors. Like individuals, the society and the community may also get traumatized if it happens to pass through violent situations on a sustained basis. Conditions prevailing presently or in the recent past in countries/regions like Rwanda, Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, Gaza Strip and Chechnya may serve as good examples of situations where communities are suffering trauma as aftermath of continued violence (http://www.tripurainfo.com/opinion/exp-op/skroy.htm).

Psychological trauma may become evident in disturbed and antisocial behavior, such as family conflict and aggression towards others. This situation is often exacerbated by the availability of weapons and by people becoming habituated to violence after long exposure to conflict. The impact of conflicts on mental health is, however, extremely complex and unpredictable. It is influenced by a host of factors such as the nature of the conflict, the kind of trauma and distress experienced, the cultural context, and the resources that individuals and communities bring to bear on their situation (Summerfield D, 1991).
From mental health point of view, population affected by conflict can be divided into three groups (i) those with disabling psychiatric illness (ii) those with severe psychological reactions to trauma and (iii) those, forming the majority, who are able to adapt once peace and order is restored.

Among the General Population Under normal circumstances, 1-3 percent of the population has some form of psychiatric disorder. The psychiatric literature shows that conflict situations increase disorder prevalence (Hoge, 2004). Violent acts such as targeted killings, amputations, gender-based violence, and physical maiming often have long-term psychological effects on those who have experienced or witnessed them. Other forms of conflict-related violence can include forced displacement, restricted movement, forced recruitment, harassment and intimidation, and the dangers posed by landmines and unexploded ordnance. Widespread insecurity and increased poverty, coupled with a lack of basic services such as healthcare, education, housing, water and sanitation, exacerbate mental problems. Conflict and relocation can have a profound effect on the mental health of affected populations. The transition entails coming to grips with what has occurred and adjusting to life in new environments that may feel foreign and inhospitable. It may also mean impoverishment due to loss of assets and livelihoods, uncertainty regarding the status of loved ones, unemployment and a lack of professional skills suitable for the new location and circumstances (Carballo, 2004).

Mental disorders and psychosocial consequences associated with conflicts include sleeplessness, fear, nervousness, anger, aggressiveness, depression, flashbacks, alcohol and substance abuse, suicide, and domestic and sexual violence. Following a traumatic event, a large proportion of the population may experience nightmares, anxiety, and other stress-related symptoms, although these effects usually decrease in intensity over time. For some, the hopelessness and helplessness associated with persistent insecurity, statelessness and poverty will trigger ephemeral reactions such as those mentioned above. For others, conflict experiences may lead to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and chronic depression. These conditions, in turn, can lead to suicide ideation and attempts, chronic alcohol and drug abuse, interpersonal violence, and other signs of social dysfunction. Studies indicate that populations affected by conflict are not only affected by mental health problems but have associated dysfunction, which can last up to five years after the conflict. This persistent dysfunction is linked to decreased productivity, Poor nutritional, health and educational outcomes and decreased ability to participate in development efforts. The effects of mental health and psychosocial disorders in conflict-affected populations can be an important constraint in reconstruction and development efforts (Baingana, F.2005).

In conflict affected households the mental health conditions can lead to low levels of social capital, which in turn exacerbate mental health problems. Within families, males may experience depression, anxiety, and psychosomatic illnesses from their war-experiences due to memories of atrocities they witnessed or performed, guilt over not being able to protect their families adequately, or because of sudden unemployment and a lost sense of purpose. These effects, in turn, may be manifested as
hostility toward family members. During and after conflicts, women often find themselves having to deal with violence from or loss of men in their families, while taking on the new and stressful role of sole provider, often in new and insecure environments. The resulting deterioration of household social capital increases women’s chances of suffering from mental disorders.

The Global Burden of Disease study estimated that the burden of disease from mental and behavioral disorders such as depression, bipolar disorder, psychosis, schizophrenia, and substance abuse would increase from 12 percent in 1990, to close to 15 percent by 2020. This estimate was based in part on the projection that violent conflicts would shift from the 16th to the 8th leading cause of disease by 2020, and violence would move from 28th to 12th. Psychoses and mood disorders are widespread in conflict-affected societies (Mollica, 2000). Currently, five mental disorders are among the top ten leading causes of disability, and include alcohol abuse, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, obsessive compulsive disorder and major depression. At present, major depression is the principal cause of disability adjusted life years (DALYS) among working age populations and the greatest overall source of disability in the world, although conflict is associated with an increase in the prevalence of mental disorders. Recent epidemiological studies of mental health in communities affected by the war in Afghanistan found high prevalence of symptoms of depression, anxiety and PTSD (Mollica, R.F 2001).

**Mental and Psychosocial Disorders and Conflict in Kashmir**

For the last two decades, Kashmir Valley has been the scene of conflict between Government forces and militants. Bomb attacks, shoot-outs, pressure from both sides have affected the daily lives of ordinary Kashmiris. Human rights abuses from both the militants and government forces are reported in the form of arrests, extra-judicial killings, house to house searches, abductions and torture. Violent incidents could happen everywhere at any time and the risk of getting caught in the crossfire is always present. The ongoing violence, the constant threat and poor future perspective put a heavy strain on the natural coping mechanisms of the people in Kashmir. A lot of people suffer from stress (normal or related to traumatic event), high amounts of psychosocial problems (substance abuse, distrust) are registered and disorders like anxiety, mood and post-traumatic disorders are mounting. Most of the mental pain is presented as physical (somatization). Mental health experts in the state’s summer capital, Srinagar, said that there has been a staggering increase in the number of stress and trauma related cases in the Kashmir valley and these psychological problems have also given rise to general health problems like diabetes, cardiac problems and hypertension (The News, August 18, 2005).

Medecins San Frontiers (MSF), one of only two foreign aid agencies in Srinagar, is focused on managing this overwhelming problem. According to MSF representative Paul van Haperen, There is barely a family that has not been affected. There’s been a tenfold rise in the past decade in the number of cases of trauma (Izzat Jarundi, 2002). Considering the daily traumas these people endure,
it is not surprising that the state of Jammu and Kashmir, where the rebellion is raging, has one of the highest rates of suicide in India (Agence France Presse, April 8, 2001). Mental disorders in both men and women have shown an alarming increase when compared to pre-conflict days in 1989.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of patients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>1,700</td>
</tr>
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<td>1994</td>
<td>18,000</td>
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<td>1999</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>45,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>82,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: valley’s lone psychiatric hospital.

Records from the outpatient department of Srinagar’s Hospital for psychiatric Diseases show that in the 1980s about 100 people were reporting for treatment in a week; today, between 200 and 300 people arrive every day.

Before the onset of militancy certain mental disorders, which were unknown to Kashmir, have shown a phenomenal presence after the conflict. One such disorder, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), is a disorder in which the victim relieves the trauma time and again. No case of this kind was reported before 1990, this kind of disorder was completely unrecognized in Kashmiri society as the situation was peaceful but now 15 to 20 percent patients in outpatient department (OPD) are suffering from this mental disorder, followed by Major Depressive Disorder and the cases pouring in are just the tip of iceberg. The cure for this mental condition is difficult in a situation like Kashmir. Patients need a peaceful environment, which Kashmir still cannot afford.

There are other mental diseases which have shown fourfold increase like bipolar disorder, panic, phobia, generalized anxiety and sleep disorders. Many women in Kashmir who have experienced violent incidents also complain of nightmares and dreams full of blood and violence. Inability to cope with the distributing dreams full of violence and horrible experiences have become a common phenomenon among the masses in this trouble torn state. There has been a sharp rise in number of
patients complaining of anxiety-provoking dreams. There is a manifold increase in cases where people experience dreadful dreams. “Every day I treat a good number of patients complaining of sleep disorders. These nightmares are due to underlying distress,” said Dr. Mushaq Margoob, a leading psychiatrist of valley.

“A day in Kashmir that starts with the disheartening news of killing, rape, arson etc. recycles itself in the dreams. A dream is a psychological and physiological phenomena, during night brain starts to retain, retrieve and wipe-out images of the day’s happenings and experiences. Thus, these nightmares are directly related to the current situation. The nightmares are not only experienced by people directly involved in any violent incident but many people who have not witnessed any incident suffer from sleeping disorders. Many patients who complain of scary dreams do not have the background where they have witnessed any violent incident. It may be the media reports or discussion at home about such incidents which leave impression on the psyche of a person,”

opined Dr. Margoob.

Now what worries medicos here is the aftermath of sleeping disorders. Many medicos warn of long-term effect of such dreams, as they believe it has transgeneration effect. It might lead to various ailments and even degeneration of brain cells in patients suffering from PTSD. And if trauma and stress is neglected it can become a genetic disorder and transmit due to structural change and degeneration in special areas in brain. Thereafter it can transfer from one generation to another. According to psychiatric hospital sources, more than seven patients have been treated in psychiatric hospital in a day who complained of anxiety provoking dreams. Some community surveys reveal that 25 percent of the people in Kashmir Valley suffer from lifetime depressive disorders. They are often sad, don’t sleep well, and do not enjoy life. But, the psychiatrists are not surprised by these figures - after all Kashmiris are a people living on the edge (The News, April 7, 2004). According to the valley’s leading psychiatrists the insecurity among the inhabitants has made unsure of whether they will come back home alive or not whenever they venture out. Even inside their houses, the civilians are not secure. Many times, whole localities were set on fire. In this perpetual danger, people go to family practitioners complaining of stomachaches, headache, heart palpitations, dizziness, and loss of appetite and other ailments that have roots in trauma.

A clinical psychologist in the Jhelum Valley Medical College in Srinagar believes that intensity of mental disorders is directly proportional to the presence of the huge number of military personnel in Kashmir. She adds, in a situation where military at times out-numbers the civilian population, the fear, threat and insecurity among people is quite natural. The record of third degree torture and indiscriminate firing by the forces has made every one vulnerable.” (Counter Insurgency in Kashmir, 1996). Around twenty percent of the patients suffering from depression have suicidal tendency. The people suffered from anxiety due to fear, which later on turned into depression. Besides behavioral symptoms like sad mood and displeasure, the loss or even an increase in weight, chest pain, indigestion, giddiness and nausea could also be symptoms of depression (Majid Hyderi, Greater Kashmir 2004).
Stigma

Doctors believe that no more than 10 percent of those in need of psychiatric care are actually approaching the hospital. The families prefer to take such patients to physicians rather than psychiatrists. This was further corroborated by the study of ECHO, a non-government organization which said the visits to any neurologist or cardiologist in the state confirms that a large number of psychiatric patients visit there on a regular basis (Peerzada Ashiq, Greater Kashmir 2004). Due to the lack of knowledge, and the stigma attached with a visit to a psychiatrist, most of the patients shy away from treatment. It is a common notion here that anybody visiting a psychiatrist is insane. Even in a country like America where people are educated, only fifty percent of the patients come for treatment. Therefore the exact number in this conservative society can only be imagined (Greater Kashmir, October 12, 2004).

No one is immune to psychiatric disorders these days whatever their age. Experiencing stressful events in their immediate environment puts a degree of emotional pressure on the individual. The only long-term treatment for this condition is long-term psychotherapy. Not everyone can afford the long-term treatment so quick remedies in the form of antidepressants, tranquilizers and sedatives have shown a rise in urban Kashmir. A chemist outside the psychiatric Hospital in Srinagar said that consumption of such medicine has shown an all time high. Many people have become addicts and cannot sleep without a dose of pills (Muzamil Jameel, The Indian Express: June 28).

Though psychological disorders have shot up ten times during these years, faith in God and deep-rooted Sufi traditions have kept the population going. Even Kashmir’s leading psychiatrist, Dr. Mushtaq Margoob, calls himself more a faith healer than a psychiatrist. “The people have absolute faith that whatever tragedy strikes them is the Will of God, so they don’t give up,” he said. Their faith is a support system and it helps me treat them too. Without it, psychiatric disorders in Kashmir would have turned into an unmanageable problem. Even though belief in faith healers may be considered superstition, it can help people attain emotional relief. “Where medicine cannot work, these traditions do,” he said. At a subconscious level, he explained, a person’s belief in spiritual healing can be much more powerful than scientific cures.

Missing persons, disturbed survivors

Official statistics say 13,184 people have gone missing in Kashmir since 1990, most of whom, state officials say, have joined militant outfits, a claim disputed by many families. Out of this total, 135 (about one percent) have been declared dead by the government (Fayaz Bukhari, November 2002). Most families with missing members have, despite repeated efforts, failed to find satisfactory explanations for the disappearances. In 1994, a group of these relatives formed the Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP). They have since visited security officials, police stations, politicians, courts and prisons throughout India with photographs of sons, brothers, fathers, and husbands, trying to settle the uncertainty surrounding the disappearances.
The disappearance of thousands of young men has had a measurable economic impact since it is usually the earning member of the family who goes missing, leaving behind “half-widows”, a phenomenon new to Kashmir viz. "half widows" during the last 15 years have surfaced engulfing a large number of Kashmiri women. There is no accurate number of half widows available. According to media reports and local sources, their number ranges between 1000 and 1500. Persons are picked up on suspicion by some agency and their whereabouts are not revealed leading to mental trauma for the whole family. It is not known whether that person is alive or dead and this practice has led to emergence of new section of society called "half widows", applying to women who do not know whether their husbands are alive or dead. These women go through an identity crisis owing to the disappearances of their husbands, which has led them to be designated as "half widows". Women whose husbands have died in conflict and they have seen the body are better placed than "half widows". At least they reconcile to the fact that their husbands are no more. Usually in depression patient is left with no desire to live but these women amazingly have expressed a strong will to live. They exhibit strength unknown in depressive patients perhaps the reason, and the irony of the "half widows", is that they hope their husbands might be alive and may return one day. This hope could be false, yet in the absence of some proof of death they continue to live in hope. Many women whose husbands have disappeared prefer to wait for them and do not remarry for fear of social ostracism but there are others who defy the norms and remarry.

Families without fathers

In the last 13 years, the political unrest in Jammu and Kashmir is thought to have produced about 18,000 widows and 40,000 orphans in the state. This growing population of indigents has become one of the biggest challenges facing Kashmiri society, and yet it is an escalating tragedy that has not received due attention. Widows are not typically acceptable brides, as Kashmiri society places a taboo on remarriage unlike Muslim societies in many other parts of the world. About 80 percent of widows are aged 25 to 32 with children below the age of 10. Even when remarriage is possible, many women prefer to remain single out of apprehensions for their children’s welfare. A University of Kashmir study showed that 91 percent of widows surveyed had not considered remarriage.

Doctors at the government psychiatry hospital say that women comprise more than the sixty- percent of the patients they examine. Truly speaking women always bear the brunt of conflict, women often finds themselves unexpectedly as the sole manager of household, sole parent and care taker of elderly relatives. They are not able to accept this responsibility and are finding it very difficult to cope with this situation leading to stress related disorders. Women in rural areas often suffer more than anybody as incidents of violence go unreported there and also ignorance and illiteracy being high there. Women are said to be emotionally stronger than men are, but the impact of violence of conflict has rendered their emotional strength into weakness engulfing them in a constant state of depression. Their injuries are more than physical and unlike men they do not share their tragedy with anybody and
that makes them all the more ill. Women form majority of patients of Major Depressive Disorders followed by PTSD, almost 50 percent of female patients coming to this hospital suffer from this syndrome. The victims of rape or molestation who are undergoing psychological trauma do not visit the hospital. Also the suicidal cases don’t come to the psychiatric hospital, they are treated in other hospitals, but they never reach the psychiatric hospital owing to social ostracism. Women have become increasingly suicidal and resorting to drugs via sleeping pills, injections, and inhalations. Initially women suffering from other forms of mental sickness had certain inhibitions to visit a psychiatric hospital but now the number of female patients visiting hospital has shown a considerable increase. A clinical psychologist at the Psychiatric Diseases Hospital considers low tolerance levels a significant factor in this context. The reason: stress due to increasing violence in Kashmir. “Continuing violence has also resulted in the loss of self-control, people overreact to any kind of situation.” Women are more sensitive, and therefore the incidence of suicides among them is much higher than among men.

It is not surprising that the youth are vulnerable to depression, already they are coping with the growing complexities of adolescence, and when faced with additional conflict related problems, the going is tough. But this is an expected outcome, as the Kashmiri people are living under stressful conditions exemplified by a state of learned helplessness with a sense of constant insecurity and uncertainty, watching helplessly their dear ones being killed, injured, themselves fearing the same. Such circumstances carry every potential of rendering the masses vulnerable to mental health problems. Poverty and unemployment, the other outcomes of the violence, are also causes of depression and suicide.

Suicides
On a daily basis, local dailies carry briefs about suicide deaths or attempted suicide which rarely used to find space earlier but now reports emanating from valley alleys are alarming. Regardless of whom they affect, suicides are a tragic and puzzling phenomenon and to ascertain the reasons why individuals so callously end their own lives is difficult. Suicides which were a rarity in Kashmiri society two decades back, have assumed proportion of an “epidemic” now, statistics reveal that during last 17 years suicides have become the second common mode of unnatural death besides death caused by gunfire and blast injury in Kashmir in armed conflict.

Depression and suicidal tendencies affect male and female grown-ups. On an average day, two to three cases of attempted suicide are admitted into Srinagar’s two main hospitals, known simply as SMHS and SKIMS. A large number of people, mostly from the villages, do not even make it to the city hospitals – they die on the way or in local health centers. For a hospital that rarely had to address psychiatric problems till before the troubles (Zulfikar Majid, Greater Kashmir, June 28, 2007).
Table 2: Number of suicide deaths registered in SMHS Hospital.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of suicide deaths</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>92 (61 %)</td>
<td>75 (39% )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>144 (69 %)</td>
<td>64 (31 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>377(66.5%)</td>
<td>190 (33.5 %)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source, SMHS Hospital, Srinagar.

In SKIMS, one of the city hospitals, over 200 people reported with mostly organ phosphorus poisoning. The male-female ratio here is the same as in SMHS. According to a survey conducted by Dr G M Malik, Professor in the Department of Medicine, SMHS hospital, a random sample of 164 Para-suicide cases showed that 114 were females (69.51 per cent) and 50 (30.49 per cent) males. The fear, stress, tension, and uncertainty prevailing in the state are the main reasons behind the rise in suicides. (Fayaz Bukhari 2002)

Doctors and sociologists say the number of people committing suicide has soared since the start of the revolt, but data is sketchy as the violence has made it difficult to do extensive and long-term surveys. One study done in 1999 found that almost 2,000 Kashmiris attempted to kill themselves that year alone - and about ten percent of them were successful. The number of such cases is rising although Kashmir is overwhelmingly Muslim and Islam expressly forbids suicide. The trend comes against a backdrop of more than 50,000 deaths since 1989 during the turmoil. Hospitals estimate around 40 percent of cases are not reported in Kashmir as many people who live in remote and mountainous rural villages choose not to tell the authorities (GQ Khan 1996-2004). At least three to five new-suicide cases are registered each week in the hospital's Accident and Emergency Department which attributes the growing occurrence of depression to the turmoil in Kashmir. “This is very high compared to one or two cases a day, two decades ago - before the turmoil. Suicide cases accounted for only around 1percent of admissions. But then figures changed dramatically. Suicide cases accounted for almost 11percent of total admissions at the hospital in 2001-2002”, said G.Q Khan, the head of medicine there. The fear, stress, tension, and uncertainty prevailing in the state are the main reasons behind the rise in suicides. Most of the cases brought to the hospital are what he calls 'Para suicides' where the patient takes the extreme step in a momentary fit of depression but does not want to die. Official figures show that 95 percent of patients attempting suicide are saved by doctors. However, cases where someone is dead on arrival at hospital are not usually registered.

A total of 368 suicides attempt cases have been reported only at SMHS hospital from April 1 2002 to march 31, 2003. The number rose to an alarming 729 in the following year which is an average of two cases of suicide every day. The trend is higher in females’ attempted suicide from April, 2003 to March 31, 2004.(Zulfikar Majid,2007) The ‘phenomenal increase’ in the number of suicides in Kashmir
reflects a disintegration of society. “There is an accepted principle in sociology that the higher the integration of society, the less the number of suicides,” Dr. Dabla says. Initially the armed conflict brought greater integration in Kashmir society and in those days, suicides were rare. But now the numbers are increasing revealed Sociologist Dr. Dabla. Women and youths are more prone to attempt suicide. While women have suffered emotional trauma due to the conflict, youths have become targets of violence both by the Indian troops and by the militants.

Psychiatrists and sociologists agree that religious faith has been an important influence in checking the incidence of suicides. Dr. Dabla discovered that this was especially the case during the month of Ramadan - the Muslim month of fasting. "During this time there is a greater commitment to religion and greater integration. Many of the patients who have suicidal tendencies do not attempt it as suicide is strictly prohibited in Islam. People would have ended their lives but for the fear of spoiling their life hereafter, they restrain themselves”, said a psychiatrist. Health experts and sociologists warn that if the violence does not ease, suicides will climb still further in the area. “The entire situation has become so charged, so full of tension; sometimes one just cannot tolerate it. A small quarrel with a father can lead to suicide. Behind all this is the wider context of militancy”, said Bashir Ahmad Dabla.

Suicides among newly married men are also on the rise because of impotency, which doctors attribute to mental trauma from shock. One result is a thriving market for the anti-impotency drug Viagra among depressed, stressed-out young Kashmiri men who are seeking out medical help for sexual dysfunction. Doctors in the state's summer capital Srinagar say Kashmir’s insurgency has spawned a generation of youngsters suffering from depression and stress, which in turn has led to "psycho-sexual malfunction." Other doctors said some of their young Kashmiri patients who come with sexual dysfunction problems are victims of torture by the security forces who may suspect them of involvement in militancy activity. Some, they say, are interrogated brutally with electric current passed through their genitals. "Often the victim is rendered impotent, not by the electric shock but by the psychological fallout of the torture" (Health-INDIA, August 2,2002).

Objectives and Methodology of the study

1. To analyze the extent of impact of conflict on mental health of people in Srinagar city.
2. To analyze the impact of mental illness on their general health.
3. To analyze the extent of help, rendered by govt. / Ngo’s towards them.

Sample of the study

Though whole Kashmiri society has got affected psychologically by the turmoil but it is presumed that a greater percent is of those people who are affected directly by the turmoil (victims
themselves) or the close relatives of the victims (family members). The victims themselves (if alive) or close relative (family members) of victims comprised the sample. For the purpose of present study a sample of 200 respondents were randomly selected from various areas of the Srinagar city. For collecting primary data, interview schedule prepared for the purpose was processed through sociological pre-testing before the actual fieldwork was taken up. The investigator surveyed the various areas of Srinagar City and tried to gather information about victims of conflict. The information about such victims was gathered from different people like community heads, shopkeepers, and psychiatrists through snow ball sampling.

**Background of the respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<td>Male</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>79.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
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</table>

Table 3: Sex distribution of the respondents

As revealed from the above table (Table 3), the dominant majority of the respondents i.e. (79.5 percent) were females while only 20.5 percent were male respondents. Females comprised the greater percent because most of the casualties in Kashmir conflict have been men rather than women. Since women have lost their male members in the form of their husbands, sons, fathers or brothers and this is probably due to the fact the disintegration of families has left women vulnerable to stress related disorders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>25-35</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>35-45</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>45-above</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>40.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Age distribution of respondents

Table 2 reveals the greater percent i.e. 40 percent respondents belong to the age of 45 and above. This is because, among them most of the respondents were mothers, widows, wives, fathers, 26 percent respondents belonged to age group of 35-45 while 23 percent belong to age group between 25-35, and only 10.5 percent respondents belonged to the age- group between 18-25.

Table 5: Educational status
The table above reveals, majority (37 percent) of the respondents were illiterate, it is because these respondents belong to the higher generation, like mothers, wives, widows, and fathers and it is presumed that in the past the people of our society didn’t attain the education of higher level. While 31 percent respondents had qualified the matriculation, 16.5 percent were graduates and only 15.5 percent respondents were under-matric.

Table 6: Income status of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Family income per month</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Upto-2000</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2000-4000</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4000-6000</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6000-8000</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>8000-above</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above indicates, majority of the respondents’ i.e. 26 percent belonged to the families having total family income per month between 4000-6000 while as 22.5 percent belonged to the families having the total family income between 2000-4000. Another 22 percent respondents were having the total family income per month between 6000-8000. Almost 18 percent respondents were having a family income of 8000 and above and 11.5 percent respondents were having family income up to 2000.

Table 7: Marital status of the respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>50.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Widows</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above table, it is noted that 50.5 percent respondents were married, 26 percent were widows, while 23.5 percent were unmarried.
Findings of the Study

On enquiring from our respondents about the impact on their mental health produced by the incidents occurred to them the answer is tabulated as follows.

Table 8: Incident occurred in family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Incident</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Killed</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Arrested</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Physically disabled</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Injured</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Molested</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Physical torture</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear from the table that majority i.e. 54.5 percent, of respondents have witnessed the incidence of killings in their family. The killings have occurred during crossfire, grenade and IED (improvised explosive devices) blasts, encounters, custodial killings and other forms of torture. About 13.5 percent respondents have their dear ones missing during conflict. The law enforcement agencies had arrested people during raids, routine patrolling and search operations, when the family approached the security officials they usually received assurances that their relatives would be released shortly, which never happened. After a few visits the relatives were told that the people they were looking for were not even arrested. A total of 8.5 percent respondents have their relatives detained in the custody. Many people appear to be arbitrarily detained during crackdowns, without any discernible reason. Some were arrested as the only male members found in their homes during raids, and others appear to be arrested as being involved in an armed opposition group. Eight percent respondents have faced physical torture due to interrogation, beating on the roads by security personnel.

Youth were the main targets of physical torture. About 5.5 percent respondents have faced injuries, they got injured during cross-firing, and grenade and IED blasts. Nearly 6.5 percent women respondents were molested. They became the target of molestation when some attacks like gunfire a blast took place, the outraged security personnel barged into the houses started beating, abusing and molesting the women, and especially those women have faced the mental and physical assault who were the sister, mother or wife of a militant. They were interrogated without any concrete proof on the suspicion of either giving shelter or food to suspected militant or were asked the whereabouts of the
suspected militants and they were dragged out of their homes, molested, tortured, threatened and abused. The only fault of those women was that they were related to militants’. Also, 3.5 percent respondents were physically disabled in the ongoing turmoil. They have lost the limbs and other body parts during grenade or IED blasts, cross firing and also during interrogation.

Thus it can be inferred that killings and murder of innocent people in conflict situation seem to be the most brutal and wild behavior, affecting all sections of society. The loss of life is an irreparable damage and families of the deceased persons undergoing bereavement are more prone to psychological stress. Killing of a person in a family created a sense of insecurity and fear in their daily life. The mode of death specifically due to violent act, which was unexpected and sudden, has led to all kind of psychological problems (including mental health) in the survived family members of the victims. This fact is confirmed by the results of the present study.

As in our study major portion of the respondents are women and in this context we tried to find out the relation of the respondent with victim. Table 9 portrays the results. A look at the above table clearly shows that majority of the respondents i.e. 41 percent were mothers who suffered from mental health problems. They have their sons either killed or missing during conflict due to which their mental health has been affected. Twenty six percent respondents are those who themselves have become the victims during the conflict. As per the statement of these respondents, some had been arrested and physically tortured, some injured, some physically disabled and others had been molested in the ongoing turmoil.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Relation</th>
<th>No. of Respondent s</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Respondent (self)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sister</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

About 19.5 percent of respondents who have undergone through psychological trauma were wives; they have their husbands either missing or have been killed. Eight percent were sisters while 5.5 percent respondents were fathers. Since studies have indicated that in the conflict situation mostly women have developed psychological problems, further it is a well established fact that mothers are more attached to their sons and hence they suffered psychologically more.
Table 10 below depicts that the respondents have faced multiple psychological problems in which majority i.e. 90.5 percent of the respondents have become fearful, 87 percent respondents were having sleeping disorders. This was followed by 86 percent respondents who were experiencing stress, depression and psychological stress, 66 percent respondents have lost interest in their life, 59.5 percent respondents were feeling the re-experience of the incidence, 31.5 percent respondents experienced nightmares, 38.5 percent respondents have become aggressive in behavior while 27 percent respondents were vulnerable to suicide.

As many as 90.5 percent respondents who became fearful, were experiencing insecurity in a sense that has made them unsure whether they will come back home alive or not whenever they venture out. Also there is a fear of re-occurrence of the same incident with them or with other members of their family. About 87 percent were having sleeping disorders, they didn’t sleep well after the incident, the re-experiencing episodes of the incident and fearing to get victimized again have developed sleeping orders among the respondents. They find it difficult to get sleep. Either they got no sleep or they woke up in the middle of night and failed to get sleep again. Again, 86 percent respondents were having stress,

Table 10: Psychological problems experienced after the incident

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Psychological Problems</th>
<th>Frequency of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Stress, depression and psychological stress</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Nightmares</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Sleep disorders</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Aggressive behaviour</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Fearful</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>90.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Loss of interest in life</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Re-experiencing the incidence</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>59.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Vulnerable to suicide</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total number of respondents</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
depression and psychological stress, they were often sad, they always remain disturbed and occasionally became too excited due to the experienced stressful events. They preferred to remain alone, they didn’t like to talk with anyone and remained depressed. Most of the respondents pointed out that, the heart breaking accounts, which is either due to the death or disappearance of their loved ones or personal experience of torture and interrogation, have suffered mental agony which has rendered their whole family sick.

A total of 66 percent respondents said they have lost interest in life; they didn’t enjoy their life after experiencing the violent incident. With death and destruction everywhere no one could expect an interesting life opined most of the respondents. About 59.5 percent respondents were re-experiencing the incident, they relive the trauma time and again. The respondents who have witnessed the dead bodies of their close ones were unable to forget those tragic scenes and those shocking thoughts kept haunting them.

Also, 38.5 percent respondents who have become aggressive in their behavior said that they have lost their patience, the incidents happened to them had made them less resistant, consequently they had become aggressive in their behavior. Most of the respondents pointed out that sometimes they behave peculiarly and in a bizarre way. They irritate their family members and others or put them into awkward situation.

About 31.5 percent respondents who witnessed nightmares were having dreams full of violence and horror. They were witnessing the anxiety provoking and scary dreams as they have the background where they witnessed the violent incident. Almost 27 percent respondents were vulnerable to suicide. They didn’t find their life worth living, they many times thought of suicide but afraid it is a sin, they stopped themselves and some respondents said it was only for the sake of their small children they were still alive, their children’s future would be ruined without them, otherwise they would have ended their lives.

When we enquired about the impact of their mental illness on the respondents’ general health, we got the following response (Table 11):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Impact on General health</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All (100 percent) respondents admitted that they were also suffering from general health problems and they believed that the underlying cause of their deteriorated physical health had been the emotional trauma.

Table 12 clearly depicts that the respondents were having multiple general health problems due to their mental trauma where hypertension rated highest (71 percent) followed by gastroenterological problems (57.5 percent), cardiac problems (51.5 percent), eating disorder (35.5 percent), headache (24.5 percent) and general weakness (18.5 percent).

Table 12: General health problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.no</th>
<th>General health problems</th>
<th>Frequency of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hypertension</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cardiac problems</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>51.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Headache</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Gastroentrogical problems</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>57.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>General weakness</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Eating disorder</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total number of respondents</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13 indicates that majority of the respondents i.e. 29 percent suffered from mental illness for more than 8 to 12 years after the incident, followed by 27 percent respondents who faced the problem for 4 to 8 years after the incident and 18 percent respondents suffered illness for 1 to 4 years, followed by 17.5 percent, respondents who suffered illness for more than 12 years and only 8.5 percent faced the problem up to one year.
On being asked about the persistence of mental illness, they gave the following response.

Table 13: Persistence of the mental illness after the incident

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Duration of mental illness</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>percent of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Less than one year</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 to 4 years</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4 to 8 years</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>8 to 12 years</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Above 12 years</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the statistical figures it was revealed that majority of the respondents had suffered mental illness for a very long period i.e. 8 to 12 years. They hadn’t recovered yet as the tragic scenes of the experienced incidents and fear of getting victimized again didn’t let them recover. Further it has been seen that those whose family members were missing were having longer duration of mental ailment. It is because the situation didn’t allow them to come out of this trauma. They believed that their dear ones are alive and their heart refused to accept the reality that they might not be alive. They believed that their dear ones would come back and longed to live for that day. This constant agony perhaps has developed into long duration of mental ailment.

We asked our respondents whether they undergo some treatment, their response is given below in Table 14

Table 14: Undertaking treatment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.NO</th>
<th>Do you undergo treatment</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table indicates that 100 percent i.e. all the respondents undergo treatment.

Table 15 shows the type of treatment our respondents were undergoing in which Majority i.e. (36 percent) respondents consulted general practitioners or physicians for treatment. They said they didn’t feel the need to consult a psychiatrist. They took anti-depressants and tranquilizers by general practitioner or physicians. Further, with in-depth interview and observation it came to light that the respondents didn’t want to categorize themselves as mentally ill most probably due to the fear of stigma attached to it.

About 31.5 percent respondents consulted both peers (spiritual leaders) and took medical treatment through psychiatrists or physicians. They consulted the peers because of having a spiritual belief. Thus both types of treatment have been taken. Also, 18.5 percent respondents preferred to visit private psychiatric clinics. Further, it was observed that there is a trend of visiting private clinics and they preferred to take their patients to these clinics rather than the hospital.

Table 15: Type of treatment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Type of Treatment</th>
<th>No.of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Psychiatric treatment through hospital</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Through private clinic</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Consulted general practitioner or physician</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Visit to peers (spiritual leaders)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Medical treatment as well as peers.</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>31.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some 8.5 percent respondents approached peers instead of seeking psychiatric help. They believe in their curative touch, faith-healers, handover sweets called shreen, and written talismans to hang
around the neck. They believed that by consulting the peers their mental illness had been somehow cured.

### Table 16: Reasons for not taking psychiatric treatment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Because of social stigma</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Loss of interest in life</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Unable to recognise it as a mental health problem</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>64.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>131</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 5.5 percent respondents consulted psychiatric hospitals for treatment, among them most of the respondents were those whose mental health was severely affected. On the other hand, those respondents who didn’t undergo any psychiatric treatment gave the reasons stated in Table 16.

Majority (64.12 percent) of the respondents (Table 16) admitted that they were suffering from mental illness and they were having stress related symptoms like depression, sleeping disorders, vulnerable to suicide and other problems and also due to these problems they were having physical health problems too, like hypertension, indigestion, etc, but they were unable to recognize it as psychological problem and hence didn’t take any psychiatric treatment.

Another 23.66 percent respondents didn’t take any psychiatric treatment because of the stigma attached to it. From the in-depth discussion with the respondents it was revealed that they hesitated to seek psychiatric treatment because of fear of being labeled as “imbalanced, crazy”. It was further observed that because of their poor self-perception they felt shy to seek such kind of treatment.

The rest (12.21 percent) of the respondents said they had lost interest in life, they said that they didn’t want to live their life without their dear ones. “What will we do by taking treatment when we don’t have someone with whom we can live,” said most of the respondents.

At last when our respondents were asked, if they have availed any kind of help from any rehabilitation centre launched by the government or any Ngo, we got the following response.
Table 17: Knowing any rehabilitation programme/centre launched by the Govt. or NGO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the respondents reported that they are unaware of any rehabilitation centres launched by the government or any other NGO, and about their availing services which has further contributed to the problem. They all showed apathy towards government. They suffered quantitatively as well as qualitatively but nobody paid heed to their miseries, added the respondents.

Conclusion

The impacts of conflict are complex and wide-ranging. They are not confined to countries at war—they ripple outward from the initial violence, spreading from individuals and communities to countries and regions. At the core of every conflict is insecurity. This insecurity fractures social ties, breaks up families and communities, and displaces populations. In every conflict, loss and trauma directly affects many people. In addition there are many other individuals who are emotionally impacted simply by being part of the affected community. Impact of conflict on mental health of individuals, who go through it or even witness it, is influenced by several factors. Those who are victims of violent situations suffer psychological stress. Such stress may traumatize individuals. Trauma could be the result of living through violence or witnessing acts of violence or being directly inflicted by killings, torture, rape, etc. The acts of conflict in terms of death of a close family member may be the most difficult bereavement to bear and the sudden death in the family might have long lasting physical and emotional repercussions on the survivors.

The violence and cruelty of conflict are associated with range of psychological and behavioral problems including depression, anxiety, and suicidal behavior, post traumatic stress, nightmares etc. Further more psychological trauma may become evident in disturbed and antisocial behavior, such as family conflict and aggression towards others. This situation is often exacerbated by the availability of weapons and by people becoming habituated to violence after long exposure to conflict. The impact of conflicts on mental health is, however, extremely complex and unpredictable. It is influenced by a host of factors such as the nature of the conflict, the kind of trauma and distress experienced, the cultural context, and the resources that individuals and communities bring to bear on their situation.
The violence in the trouble torn valley of Kashmir has taken a heavy toll by influencing each and every individual of the society and has ruined everything, including psychological health. Apart from resulting in the death of thousands, Conflict has resulted in emotional distortion of people, mental imbalance, feelings of insecurity, uncertainty, and economic instability among Kashmiri people. Daily exposure to a variety of severe traumatic stresses has lead to an escalation in mental ailments.

The context of this study is the quest to discover the impact of conflict situation on mental health in Srinagar city. The study has begun with the most reliable technique of the empirical study, which enables us to quantify the impact of conflict on mental health and draw some logical conclusions. The findings of the study have divulged that the killings and murder of innocent people in conflict situation seem to be the most brutal and wild behaviour, affecting all sections of society. The loss of life is an irreparable damage and families of the deceased persons undergoing bereavement are more prone to psychological stress. Killing of a person in a family creates a sense of insecurity and fear in their daily life. The mode of death specifically due to violent act, which is unexpected and sudden, has led to all kind of psychological problems (including mental health) in the survived family members of the victims. The incidence of mental illness in this study was found more in females than in males. From our study it appears that women were found mentally ill due to the various incidents which occurred to them during the turmoil. It is generally conceded that men are being increasingly targeted in these episodes of contemporary violence in Kashmir due which women have borne the brunt of every tragedy. They have lost their husband, father or son or brother and this is probably due to this fact that they have now assumed the status of the head of the family and they are finding it difficult to cope with this situation which has led them to stress related disorders. During our study we also found that majority of respondents were mothers who have their sons either killed or missing during conflict due to which their mental health has been affected.

The statistical figures while assessing the psychological problems experienced by respondents, displayed a clear and evident picture of tremendous effect. The respondents were having multiple psychological problems in which majority of the respondents have become fearful, they were feeling insecure which has made them unsure whether they will come back home alive or not whenever they venture out and there is a fear of re-occurrence of the same incident, which has happened to them or their family member. The respondents were having sleeping disorders, they didn’t sleep well, because of fearful thoughts and the re-experiencing episodes of the incident and fearing to get victimized again. They find it difficult to get sleep. Either they got no sleep or they woke up in the middle of night and failed to go to sleep again. They don’t enjoy the life after experiencing the violent incident. They have lost interest in life after losing their dear ones. With death and destruction everywhere, no-one in the present study expected an interesting life, we also found other problems like Stress, depression and, re-experiencing of events, aggressive behavior, nightmares etc. at greater percentages.
Further, the study revealed that those whose family members were missing were having long duration of mental ailment. It is because the situation didn’t allow them to come out of this trauma. The respondents, whose sons, husbands or relatives have disappeared, are not able to perform their last rituals, which would lessen their grief. Time doesn’t seem to heal their wounds because they believe that dear ones are alive and their heart refuses to accept the reality that they might not be alive. They believe that they will come back and longs to live for the day. This constant agony perhaps develops into long duration of mental ailment.

While assessing the impact of mental illness on their physical or general health, it was perceived that mental illness has also resulted in the deterioration of their physical health. In the present study All the respondents were found to have multiple physical health problems where hypertension rated highest followed by gastroenterological problems and the underlying cause is emotional trauma. Besides other physical health problems like cardiac problems, headache, general weakness etc were also found in the present study.

The study reveals high percentage of the respondents took treatment either through general practitioners or physicians and peers. Firstly, they believe in the curative touch of peers and second, they didn’t want to categorize themselves as mentally ill most probably due to the fear of social stigma attached to it, they took anti-depressants and tranquilizers prescribed by general practitioner or physicians. They were reluctant to take psychiatric treatment from hospital or any other psychiatric clinic.

Further, the study highlights the unawareness of people about any rehabilitation centers or any other NGO and showed grievances towards the government. The absence of community centers where the people with stress related disorders could be rehabilitated, has further contributed to their problems.

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Silent Cry of Dying Childhood and Children of Street Based Sex Workers in Dhaka City, Bangladesh

Md. Nazmul Alam* and Rizwana Hussain**

Abstract: Many female sex workers in Bangladesh get pregnant willingly or even unknowingly but face dire situation raising the child. Children of the female sex workers in Bangladesh are at risk of many significant threats to their health and wellbeing. While some of these problems are shared with other children of similar social and economic circumstances in Bangladesh, children of sex workers experience a range of problems due to the social stigma and threats associated with their mother’s sex work and the resulting discrimination. Very limited studies have been undertaken to bring to light the life of these children. The current study tries to depict the life of the street based sex workers’ children in Bangladesh.

Introduction

Parents have to go through various issues that hinder parenting, among those, poverty, lack of social support, substance abuse, homelessness, poor health, income insecurity and inadequate social support (Drake and Pandey, 1996; Tracy, 1994; Sloss and Harper, 2004). Being a parent and street based sex worker, individuals who exchange sex for money or drugs on the street, has to go through all the stress issues as well (El-Bassul et al., 1997). Their hazardous and stigmatized occupational involvement also generates stress that can only be understood by them (Shedlin and Oliver, 1993; Sloss, 2004). These daily stressors include victimization, difficult clients, and police harassment (Dalla, 2000; Farley and Barkan, 1998; Miller and Schwartz, 1994; Sloss and Harper, 2004; Valera, Sawyer, and Schiraldi, 2001). Beside the uninsured job their life is hindered due to continuous accommodation instability and financial difficulties. With these difficult moments is added another, that of bearing and rising up children of their own (Dalla, 2000; Sloss and Harper, 2004). Studies conducted by Patriott (1994) and Dalla (2002) show that more than 50 percent female sex workers carry out the baby in full term if they get pregnant.

The children of sex workers can face unique risks, stigma and discrimination, as a result of their parents’ profession. A study conducted by Save the Children in 2010, depicted various situations of the children of the sex workers as they are denied safe home, child care, health care facilities and education thus suffering numerous health problems, live a life of malnutrition, unwanted pregnancy and various mental health problems. Also, gender based violence, abuse and trafficking is very common for the children of sex workers. Children of the sex workers face serious threats of abuses

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and exploitation (Willis, 2007; Beard et al., 2010), as many face ill treatments such as getting sold when infant, forced into sex trade and drug business. Various factors directly contribute to their vulnerability and marginalization. These are the lack of education, inaccessibility of basic needs, proper safe housing etc.

In spite of such odds most sex workers tend to have a sizable number of children. In a Chicago study 91% of the women involved in sex trading had children, averaging 3.4 children each (Sloss, 2002). In a large sample of 1,963 street sex traders in New York, 69.4% had children, averaging 2.25 children each (Weiner, 1996). According to Dalla (2000), 88% of the street based sex workers had children, averaging 2.4 children each, with some having as many as seven. Researchers in Mexico City led focus groups with 133 female commercial sex workers and found that many of these women had children and found managing their “double-lives” as mothers and sex workers difficult (Castaneda, Ortiz, Allen, Garcia, and Hernandez-Avila, 1996)

There is limited data on children of sex workers generally, and specifically in Bangladesh, because they are a “hidden” population and conducting a census is difficult (Beard, 2010). Their situations in Bangladesh have been described in two anthropological studies, one using data collected in 1993-1994 (Blanchet, 2006) and the other with data collected during 2005-2006 (Arefeen, 2006). Much of the literature and programme implementation focus on the vulnerability of the sex workers towards AIDS and STIs. Their private life is never revealed to the world let alone the deep sadness and strife over parenting responsibility and social stigma that lead to a life of desolation for many. In this paper we try to focus on a few case studies of their plight.

Method
To bring out the life stories and provide numerical support the study was conducted using mixed methodology. In consonance with the conceptual framework, an in-depth interview schedule was constructed to collect data from the primary sources. In acquiring the accurate story of the relevant cases a checklist was also made as a part of data collection technique. Data were collected from a field study carried out during October –December 2008, using mixed instruments i.e. survey questionnaire, semi structured in depth interview, Key Informant Interview and FGD.

The study was conducted in various areas of Dhaka city, wherever existence of street based sex trade occur. The primary data source locations were Ramna Park, Osmani Uddyan, Parliament area, Farmgate Park, Gulshan Lake, Gabtoli bus stand, Saydabad bus stand and Sadarghat terminal. From these locations a total of 85 sex worker mothers were surveyed, 12 in depth interviews (7 with Sex Worker mothers, 2 with NGO workers, 3 with children of sex workers), 4 KII and 3 FGD were conducted (1 with Sex Worker mother, 1 with NGO worker, 1 with children of sex worker).

Sampling of target population for this study was chosen purposively and for qualitative part snowball sampling was utilized. The main focuses of this study were the condition of the children of the street
based sex workers and their life and living condition. Targeted participants for the study were chosen who met the criteria of the study objectives;

- Street based sex workers who have children
- Street based sex workers who have children living with them
- Street based sex workers who have children living with relatives
- Children of the sex workers over 12 years old.

**Ethics and consent**

All the activities of this study were consistent with recognized codes of research ethics, rooted in the Declaration of Helsinki (WMA, 2008). Potential participants were provided with information sheet in Bengali, which was read to them and conformation were taken that participants fully understood the nature of the study. Sufficient time was allowed for considering participation, and then a consent form was provided to the women and children who agreed to participate in the study. Due to its sensitive nature acknowledgement was made that there would be no opportunity to blame the participating sex workers, nor there would be any threats or risks towards the children. The conduct of the data collection was framed around sensitivity, tact, empathy, and ensuring that the participants’ needs were met (Dickson-Swift, 2008).

**Findings**

The study findings are divided in two parts, first we go through some numeric data and later a few qualitative, phenomenological stories in support of our quantitative findings.

**Socio Demographic and Economic situation of Street based Sex worker**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Age group of the Respondents</th>
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<td>Age group</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt; 18 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>19-23</td>
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<tr>
<td>24-28</td>
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<tr>
<td>29-34</td>
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<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
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<tr>
<td>40+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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Age is considered the most important factor in this trade. The younger you are the more attractive your clients find you. Among the study respondents 34 percent are young sex workers aged from 19
to 23 years. We have found 6 percent underage sex workers roaming the street. This number is quite large, but we fail to recognize it just because they lack age documentations. Among our respondents 8 percent are seniors in this trade who age over or near 40 years. However, when they grow old they tend to move away towards the top of the business chain and try to take control over younger sex workers and grab business spots. As they age, they tend to change their trade settings, although at young age they prefer to roam the streets, with time they are more interested in hotel trade.

Out of 85 respondents, 29 percent turned out to be living a conjugal life, although unspoken whether their spouses know about their double life. A majority reported they have either divorced (22%) or separated (14%) from their life partners. Only 29 percent were single.

According to our respondents they enter in the business at very early age, some started in the various brothels then either they fled or started independent business as free agent. Getting away from the powerful hand or madam/mashi is not an easy task.

![Graph 1: Number of years in sex trade](image)

It takes years of savings to pay the hierarchy a compensation to leave or start trade at a new locality. Among our study respondents, 48 percent were in this trade for 6-10 years while 31 percent are in this business near about 15 years. The data trend shows a declining rate of involvement at street level trade as one gains in age as the trade is extremely demanding. Most of our study respondents are going through their peak time.

Income from the trade is erratic with no guaranty of a standard daily income. Thus, poverty remains a constant companion. Situation and context plays the most important factor with an average income of Tk. 25-100 depending on the economic level of the client, while 34 percent respondents earned between
TK. 1550-2500 in the last month. Only 5 percent reported of income level over Tk. 5000 thousand. In total 29 percent had income ranging between Tk. 2550-4500 in the previous month.

Graph 2: Last month’s income (in Taka)

With income level such sporadic and uncertain, each respondent mentioned that they have to calculate every step while doing the expenditure for living. House rent is always a big concern and thus 44 percent reported they live alone to save money in this area. Also living alone is helpful for business. Another 31 percent reported living with children as they have no one in Dhaka city to look after their children. Living with partners or fellow sex worker has been reported by 9 percent for both cases. Only 7 percent reported of living with parent or relatives. But whatever the living arrangement, they maintain a life of hardship and yet send money for their family and support them financially.

Graph 3: Living arrangement of the respondents

According to our respondents, 62 percent do not live with their children and they have justified their reason with many aspects. About 45 percent reported that mother’s occupation plays a bad effect on children’s mind when s/he gets the idea. Another 16 Percent feels ashamed due to their profession.
According to the 72 percent respondents, their children live with their grandparents or any close relatives at village home or any other district. They go to visit their children every two or three months, and nobody suspects anything. They rather have an image of empowered working women making their way towards economic solvency. When asked, majority of the respondents mentioned that relatives and neighbours think that they either work in garment factories or as house maid in some posh areas of the capital.

Table 2: Reason for not living with children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feel shameful</td>
<td>14 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child ask too many questions</td>
<td>7 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad effect for children</td>
<td>38 (45%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bad for business</td>
<td>21 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>5 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>85 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to most of our respondents, they do not want their children to follow their foot step. Among 85 respondents 33 have female child and they fear their daughters might get dragged into this profession. Of these 25 of the mothers having a female child mentioned that they have seen or had received complains that their client’s/neighbor’s have touched their daughter or verbally abused them.

At times the female child of the sex workers receives verbal/symbolic signs of sexual invitation regardless their age. For the male child sexual assault, verbal assault, getting involved in drug business or to become a drug user at an early stage of life is very common. The graph below show results of answers about potential harm faced by their children.
Much of the information collected from qualitative part of the study has similarity with findings in other limited studies on children of sex workers in Bangladesh and in other countries. Stigma, one of the root causes of the problems of children of sex workers, is closely associated with sex work. This stigma is manifested as discrimination that creates barriers for securing shelter, health care, and education for the children of the sex workers.

Discrimination and harassment against mothers automatically results in discrimination against the children. There are indirect consequences of this discrimination; for example, when mothers are evicted from their apartments and their children experience the impact of this discrimination because they also lose their housing. At some level, however, there is also direct discrimination against the children of sex workers because of who they are, not just because of what their mothers do.

...I don’t like to go outside my slum’s boundary, people point finger....call me names...sometimes kids of my age swears bad statements against my mother....(Razu*,13)

Because sex workers are acutely aware of the stigma and discrimination against them they make significant efforts to hide their work from their families, children, landlords, neighbors, schools, parents of other children, and health care professionals. These mothers described the pressure on hiding their work and how it also makes them miserable. This pressure and misery would seem to have an

* Pseudonym has been used in all cases
impact on the mothers and, over the long-term, may result in depression, further compromising the ability of the mothers to care for their children.

…I have two more siblings….I am the elder one. Mom sometimes stays out of home….days…even for weeks….I take care of my siblings, when she is not here. (Ershad,16)

Although many stated that when they stay out of home it’s not that they don’t care for their children. Rather their intentional separation occurs as they predict potential harm to their children and feel relieved that their children are safe and no longer at risk of being abused or neglected by locals.

I miss my baby girl…but for sure I know she is safe with my mother…I visit her every week…her safety and wellbeing is what keeps me alive. (Reena, 26)

Most street based sex worker mothers who keep their children with them or do not have the option of care by family in the village and providing safe child care is a constant challenge. When family support is not available, sex workers rely on neighbours, other sex workers and madams to watch over their children while working. When left in the care of madams, participants stated that the children are subjected to verbal and physical abuse by the madams and forced to have sex with other clients.

I used to work in Narayanganj terminal….sometimes I left my 10 year old girl with another sex worker…..that day I came home early night….and found one man was banging my house door, my girl was screaming for help…..she (the other sex workers) send her client to have sex with my daughter. (Meena, 36)

The respondents have mentioned that both the male and female child run the risk of getting abused due to their mother’s work nature. For the girls symbolic/verbal invitation for sex is very common from the age of 10 and boys have the life of drug dealers awaiting them. Their existence is taken for granted as depicted;

Me and my brother want to die daily…… I cannot tolerate people’s lust and signs towards me….they think “magir baccha to magi hoybo (child of a sex worker will become a sex worker)”…. The mastans at slum trade drugs with the help of my 6 year old brother….If I or my mother ask them to stop, they threaten me (Masuda,14)

Threats/vulnerabilities particular to children born to sex workers are very common, abuse and exploitation, discrimination and violence, and factors that increase their likelihood of also engaging in exploitive or commercial sex, including stigma and marginalization, are some issues they cross path daily. Due to the stigma associated with their bold line most are denied any rights and standard living,
From the study data we have managed to identify several areas where the children of sex workers are being discriminated. Trafficking and kidnapping are other aspects for the children of sex workers. Lack of safe housing/shelter is a common problem faced by sex workers and their children. Due to the low income and identity exposure possibility force a sex worker to look for rentals in slums and in most cases children are either left unattended or someone takes the responsibility in return for a favor. This opens doors for opportunistic people who are eager to take advantage. According to our data, Mothers’ inability to secure housing also meant that children were sometimes left in the care of madams/neighbors where they were subjected to physical and sexual abuse (Khan et al. 2008).

For girls, sexual exploitation was common while boys were more likely to engage in criminal activities. Marriage is one of the important social institutions in any society, but this remains a painful experience for the daughter and mother. As their identity disclosed none want to marry the daughter and if the secrets are kept well hidden, at later dates when revealed the daughter of the sex worker is abandoned by her husband and in laws. For the boys, no one wants to have any relation with a child of sex worker thus no employment opportunity which drift him further into criminal activities.

Participants reported that children suffer emotionally when people make unpleasant comments about their mothers. Participants also reported that children get very upset when they witness abuse of their mothers by the police or clients.

Rights of education are also denied to the children of the sex workers. If the mother’s identity is known, the school authority will not take his application and if others know the secret they will keep humiliating the child so much so that s/he will decides to leave school on own accord. Also the amount of education expenditure is another barrier for the poor sex worker mother. Another area of discrimination is securing birth registration since birth registration requires the name of the father, which often is not known, many sex workers cannot register the birth of their children. Lack of birth registration impairs the ability of these children to access education and social services as well as the legal protection it provides.

Conclusion

The data of the study reveal that to address the needs of children of sex workers we need to focus on the provision of shelter, education, and decrease stigma and discrimination. Their mother’s occupation drives them to social isolation and exclusion. Children of sex workers face significant threats of abuse and exploitation. Many are at risk of being traded as infants, forced into sex work as young adolescents and face trafficking. In addition, poverty accompanied by stigma and discrimination, creates intense effects on safe housing and access to basic services. Lack of education and other opportunities of accessing reproductive and sexual health information increase the likelihood that these children might become victims of sexual exploitation and/or forced into sex work. All of these factors contribute to a greatly elevated risk of immediate and long-term physical
and mental health problems as well as other serious social handicaps that affect the life prospects of children of sex workers in many settings. These mothers and their children face extreme circumstances and risk; without effective intervention and support, their future is austere.

The interventions that are adapted from the recommendations of the respondents suggest the need for multifaceted assistance to mothers and children across several categories, such as educational facilities for children and a safe place to play, study, or sleep when their mothers are working, peer support, nutrition, housing and healthcare. Also, we should tend to introduce programmes that will provide vocational training and alternative income generation opportunities to mothers who want to leave sex work and with this option we need to think seriously about providing them with new identities in the society. If the old identity gets disclosed then no matter how hard we try or how much intervention we establish every effort will go in vain.

Our approach to the situation of children of sex workers in Bangladesh provides a new dimension separated from HIV and AIDS or marginalization and social exclusion rather it is built on the new perspective of the rights of children. Birth registration, education, and being protected from sexual exploitation, among others, are the rights that are largely unfulfilled. Solutions to the problems of children of sex workers must include a rights-based approach. Only then we will be able to say we have managed a better future for all children.

Reference


Effects of Family Breakup on Children: A Study in Khulna City

Shirina Aktar*

Abstract: When a family breaks up, it is usually difficult for everyone in the family to cope with the situation; however, children are often the worst victims of family breakup. There are powerful reasons to be alarmed about the impacts of family breakup on children. They feel insecure, depressed and helpless when they see their family break apart. The present study aims at identifying the effects of family breakup on children. The purposively chosen research site was the city of Khulna in Bangladesh. Using a survey method, data were collected from seventy children. After analyzing the data collected from the field survey, this report concludes that children of the broken families are particularly vulnerable and they need special care for their mental, psychological and physical development. After presenting the main findings in a descriptive fashion, the article provides a set of recommendations that will support children in the broken families.

Introduction

Background of the Study
Family is the smallest, most sensitive and important social system which is furnished and facilitated by a society as a larger social system. Marriage is also another small social system which is the foundation of a family. The dissolution of marriage contracted between men and women by the judgment of a court or by an act of the legislature is called divorce. In other words, it is the legal termination of marriage. Through marriage two individuals start to live together to continue their conjugal life as well as for the creation of new generation. But divorce has severe impact on the family and ultimately on the society. It fractures a family unit, interrupts child rearing as well as children's and women's socioeconomic security in the society. Though divorce has become more acceptable over time, an inverse relationship exists between socioeconomic status and divorce rate. It has been found that to establish a peaceful conjugal life some factors should be considered such as age at marriage, age gap, accepting couple’s opinion before arranging marriage, physical fitness, social and mental consistency between couples, economic solvency, equal social status etc.

Rationale of the Study
The stability of family creates a building block for children to progress throughout life. When parents separate, the children are left with no stability causing them to lose basic concepts of childhood that may carry with them throughout life. Children of divorced or separated parents have less success and happiness. Watching parents take a home from a traditional family lifestyle to a “broken” home by getting separated is very devastating for a child's mental well-being. Recent reviews of literature summarize evidence that children are emotionally distressed by parents’ separation. Young children, especially, are depressed and anxious, and they feel torn by loyalties to both parents. Family breakup

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has become a more acceptable and common in families. However, family breakup has not become a positive thing yet; it still remains negative. One of the dangerous effects is emotional and financial disruption of children’s lives. Considering the above mentioned issues, I decided to conduct a comprehensive study in order to understand the effects of family breakup on children.

**Literature Review**

Parents’ divorce has both short- and long-term effects on children. Some short-term effects include (1) children might feel guilty or responsible for the divorce, (2) they may become increasingly aggressive, violent and/or uncooperative, lashing out at both parents, (3) may become emotionally needy out of fear of being abandoned, (4) may lose the ability to concentrate which could then affect academic performance, and (5) may develop intense feelings of grief and loss. Although many of the effects of divorce on children are short term after which they fade once the child has time to adjust to the new family situation and all the changes that have occurred, there are many cases where the effects may be long term. The children of divorced parents may be more likely to: (1) be less educated, (2) experience poverty and/or socio-economic disadvantage, (3) exhibit anti-social behaviour as well as other behavioural problems, (4) suffer from drug and/or alcohol addictions, and (5) experience separation and/or divorce themselves.

Burton (2012) reports that a recent study by University of Notre Dame and the University of Rochester revealed that parents’ marital problems can leave a lasting impact on their young children. Researchers found that when young children witnessed conflict between their parents, this eventually leads to issues in their teenage years, including depression and anxiety. “The results further highlight the possibility that there will be persistent negative effects of children's early experiences when there is conflict between their parents, at least when their emotional insecurity increases as a result of the conflict,” according to Mark Cummings, Notre Dame Endowed Chair in Psychology, who led the research.

Moon (2011) finds that the self-interests and personal experiences associated with marital status influence perceptions of the effects of divorce on children. Regardless of gender, parents’ marital or divorce influences their ratings of the impact of divorce on children. Specifically, married fathers and mothers evaluated the impact of divorce on their children more negatively than did divorced fathers and mothers. These findings are consistent with the social psychology literature, and the need individuals have to reduce their cognitive dissonance is extended to the divorce literature. Mothers and fathers whose parents had remained married also reported the impact of divorce more negatively than those whose parents had divorced. Parents who initiated divorce reported the effects of divorce less negatively than those that did not initiate the divorce.

Children’s survival is also related to parents’ divorce. For example, Bhuiya and Chowdhury (1997) conducted a study in Matlab, a rural area of Bangladesh, where a continuous registration of
demographic events has been maintained by the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh since 1966. A total of 11,951 first marriages of Muslims that took place in the area between 1975 and 1987 were followed until the end of 1989, to examine the relationship between parental marriage breakdown and survival of first live-born children. The impact of divorce on survival of children during infancy and childhood was examined, using hazard analysis. Other independent variables included age of mother at birth, and mother’s education, year of birth, sex of children, and residence at the time of childbirth. It is found that the net odds of death among children of divorced mothers in infancy and childhood were respectively 3.2 and 1.4 times higher than those of mothers whose marriages continued.

Parents’ divorce has also implications for children’s abuse. Hadi (2000) explores the prevalence and determinants of child abuse in rural Bangladesh. Data from the 1995 sample survey of 4643 children aged 10–15 years in 150 villages were used. The study finds that 21% of the children were in the labour force although the Bangladeshi laws prohibited child labour. The prevalence of child abuse and exploitation was widespread in Bangladeshi villages as 2.3% of all children were physically abused, 2% were financially exploited, 1.7% were forced to involve in inappropriate activities, and 3% were forced to work for long hours. The prevalence of physical assault was much higher among younger children although the probability of other types of abuse was higher among older children. Boys were more exposed than girls to abuse of any kind. Poverty was also significantly associated with child abuse. Multivariate analysis suggested that the out-of-school children and the children of illiterate, landless and unskilled labourers were more likely to be abused than others when age and sex of children were controlled. Hadi (2000) concludes that raising public awareness against child abuse and promoting preventive measures should be adopted to reduce child abuse in Bangladesh.

**Objectives of the Study:**
The broad objective of this study was to identify the overall consequences of the family break up on the children. To fulfil this broad objective, the following specific objectives were identified:

a) To know the socio-economic background of the children of breakup family;
b) To explore the consequence of family break up on achieving education;
c) To reveal the health care facilities of the respondents;
d) To explore the pattern of relationship with the family members;
e) To know the pattern of psychological alienation faced by the respondents; and
f) To reveal the future plan of the respondents.

**Operational Definition of the Concepts:**
*Family:* Family is a universal institution which includes husband and wife with or without children.
*Marriage:* Marriage is the approved social pattern whereby two people establish a family. In another point of view, marriage is a legally and socially sanctioned union between a man and a woman that is regulated by laws, rules, customs, beliefs and attitude that prescribe the rights and duties of the
parents.

**Family Breakup:** It is the legal termination of marriage. It is also the dissolution of marriage that is contracted between husband and wife by the judgment of a court of competent jurisdiction or by an act of the legislature.

**Children:** Individuals who are under the age of 18 are here treated as children.

**Methodology**

**Research Design:** The study was conducted through the use of survey method. Data were collected from the children of broken families. In this study data were collected through questionnaires and are analyzed and interpreted by using descriptive techniques.

**Unit of Analysis:** Children of broken families (age 6-18)

**Study Area:** Khulna City Corporation area.

**Population:** All the children of broken families of Khulna City Corporation area

**Sampling:** Purposive sampling was used to collect data from the field. Total sample size was 70.

**Sources of data:** The data were collected from two sources

**Primary sources:** Data were collected from the field by using sample survey.

**Secondary Source:** Various articles, research papers, related books, official documents and the Internet.

**Techniques of Data Collection:** A questionnaire was developed and finalized through pre-test and used for data collection.

**Methods of Data Collection:** Data were collected through survey method.

**Data Collection from the Field:** Seven interviewers were selected to collect data from field.

**Data Processing and Analysis:** Data were computerized, analyzed and interpreted by using frequency distribution, percentage, etc.

**Limitations of the Study**

The major limitations of the study are as follows:

- Some children were reluctant to talk about their personal information. So, we had to convince them in many different ways to speak up.
- Limited time for data collection was another barrier for this study.

**Data Presentation and Analysis**

This section presents the main findings of the study in a descriptive manner. Examples of major findings include children’s socio-economic, educational, psychological status, health care facilities, pattern of relationship between family members and other groups, and future plan of the children whose parents are separated.
Identity of the Respondents:

Age of the respondents
Age is an important factor among the children of broken families because it is related to their various involving activities. Findings show that majority of the age group in the study population was 13-15 that constituted 47 percent while 17 percent respondents were found between the ages of 6-9 years and 20 percent respondents were found between the ages of 10-12 years. Respondents aged 16-18 years constituted about 16 percent.

Religion of the Respondents
Based on the religious backgrounds of the respondents, it can be understood that family break-up is taking place regardless of religious traditions. The study finds that among the respondents, the overwhelming majority were Muslim which accounted about 93 percent of total, while it was just over 7 percent in case of Hindu.

Marital Status
According to the findings, about 93 percent respondents were unmarried.

Age at Marriage of the Respondents
During the study, 60 percent of the married respondents were at age of 12 when they were married and 40 percent respondents were married at age 15 years. It indicates that the children of separated parents are totally victim of child marriage and as children they had no say in the marriage.

Role in Marriage of the Respondents
The study finds that fathers played the major role to marry off their children that constituted 60 percent. It was also found that mothers played role to marry off their children that constituted 40 percent.

Number of Members in Household
Number of family members is a significant finding because it indicates a trend in population growth. In the past, especially the working class families used to have more children with a hope that the children will work to alleviate the family’s poverty. However, in the last couple of decades, we have noticed a reverse trend in population growth. Nowadays, people are becoming more aware of the negative consequences of having more children. According to the findings, 31 percent respondents said that there are only 3 members in their household. On the other hand, only 34 percent respondents have reported to have 5 members in their household.

Accommodation of Respondents
The study shows that 77 percent respondents lived in slums. Since many crimes occur in slum areas, these children who are already affected by broken families are in a vulnerable situation. They can be
easily manipulated by adults who are involved with various crimes such as drug abuses, child trafficking, hijacking, stealing, robbery, and so on. The slums also lack an environment conducive to such basic facilities as education and health care. Therefore, we can claim that living in slums has added an extra burden to the children who are already affected by family break-ups.

**Background Information of the Respondents**

**Living with Parents**

It was found that 50 percent of the respondents lived with their mothers. In addition, if the children live with their fathers, they are often severely ill-treated by their step-mothers. Moreover, because a strong natural love between mother and child, mothers usually want to keep their children when they get separated from their husbands. But what is noteworthy here is that in our society women make far less money than men. Most of the divorced/separated women face great difficulty to make enough money for survival. So it becomes tremendously difficult for those separated mothers to raise their children properly and provide them with good education and health care.

**Mothers’ Educational Status**

According to the field survey, almost 53 percent mothers in the broken families have no schooling. In all 50 percent children live with their mothers. As a result, most of the children in broken families live with their mothers who are not educated. So, the possibility is very high that those uneducated mothers will not be able to raise their children properly and provide them with good education. In fact, in most cases, those mothers want their children to work at a very early age and earn money for their survival.

**Fathers’ Educational Status**

In the broken families, fathers’ educational status is also very poor. Almost 43 percent fathers do not have schooling. As is the case with mothers’ education, fathers’ educational level is very vital for children’s future development. It has been observed that fathers who are uneducated do not appreciate the need of their children’s education. They believe that education is a luxury which they cannot afford to have. Having failed to realize the importance of education, the fathers bring their children with them to work. As a consequence, those children fail to build a bright future.

**Mothers’ Occupation**

The findings show that most of the mothers in the broken families are either house maids or day labourers. Due to a wage discrimination based on gender, those women earn a very little amount of money. Oftentimes they have to work extra hours to earn enough money just to survive. They cannot manage enough time to take care of their children. As a result, most of the time, mothers are not aware of what their children are doing and with whom they are spending time. Therefore, mothers’ occupations have a detrimental effect on the children in broken families.
Fathers’ Occupation
Fathers’ occupation is also very important for the children in broken families. Since they live with only one parent, they need to spend time with her/him. Like mothers, fathers also have very low-paid jobs. Findings show, most fathers are either day-labourers or transport workers. As a result, they have to be outside their home for most of the time. Moreover, in our society, men tend to spend extra time outside their home before and after their work. So what happens as a consequence is that they end up spending very little or no time with their children. Fathers’ lack of time spent with their children has negative effect on the children because they are already away from their mother. Without parental contact, children’s psychological development is also affected.

Siblings Staying Together
Among the children affected by family break-up, 57 percent live with other sibling(s). On the other hand, about 43 percent of them have no siblings. Since their parent has to be outside for work, these children have no other option than staying home lonely or mixing with other children from the neighbourhood. We can assume that children who live with their siblings are less lonely and can have lower chance to be spoilt due to bad company.

Age at Parents’ Separation
It was found that children aged between 0-3 years are the worst victims of family breakups. In this period of age, children need good parental care in order to develop mentally and physically. In many cases, the separated parents cannot afford to buy healthy food for their children due to poverty. So, many children suffer from malnutrition. Although children of any age are negatively affected by their parents’ breakup, the younger children suffer more. The older children can adapt to a changed situation more quickly than the younger ones. Therefore, we can conclude that the younger children are severely affected by their parents’ separation.

Reasons of Separation
Analyzing the data collected from the field survey, we have learned that family break-up occurs for a number of reasons. In most cases, when husbands marry a second wife, his relationship with his first wife breaks up. More break-ups happen because of this reason. In some cases, wives do not want to continue their relationship with their husbands. They get into relationships with other men. For this reason, they break up with their husbands. In 24 per cent of the breakups, husbands demanded dowry from their wives’ parents. This demand caused a drift in their relationship which eventually resulted in a divorce or separation.

Educational Facilities for the Respondents
Current Educational Status
Children’s education is severely affected by their parents’ separation. In most cases, they have to start working at an early age to financially support their parent. Due to poverty, many parents cannot
afford to send their children to school. Moreover, since children cannot spend much time with their parents, they are easily attracted to the bad people in their neighbourhood. Schools can no longer attract those children. The study shows that almost 56 percent of the respondents are not getting any education.

**Type of Educational Institution**
Children who go to school attend both government and non-government institutions. Findings show that about 29 percent children attend government schools and almost 16 percent children attend non-government schools. Non-government schools include non-formal primary schools run by BRAC and other NGOs.

**Access of Private Tutors**
Access to private tutor is an important indicator of economic condition of the respondents or consciousness of their parents. The report draws that most of the respondents did not have access to private tutor which constituted about 68 percent and only 32 percent respondents had access to private tutor.

**Sufficiency of Educational Expenditure**
Sufficiency of educational expenditure is very important that indicates the caring attitude towards children after their parents’ separation which is very essential to mental and physical development of the children. The field survey presents that most of the respondents did not have sufficiency of educational expenditure which constituted about 68 percent and only 32 percent respondents had this sufficiency.

**Reasons for not going to School**
There were various reasons for not going to school. Most of the respondents (49 percent) did not go to school due to economic hardship. The findings also show that 7 percent respondents did not go to school for lack of willingness to attend school, about 22 percent respondents did not go to school due to early involvement in work, 17 percent did not go to school for lack of family support and often 5 percent respondents did not go to school because of others reason.

**Involvement in Employment**
As discussed earlier, many children are forced to work at an early age because their parents want them to earn money. Since most of the families are poor, their main goal is to earn enough money to survive. This is also a major reason for not going to school. The study shows that about 59 percent of the respondents are involved in some kind of work though which they earn money.

**Types of Employment**
It was found that of those who worked about 37 percent worked in others' house, 12 percent worked
in tea stall, almost 37 percent were rickshaw/van puller, about 5 percent worked in fish factory, 5 percent were often day labourers and about 5 percent worked in other jobs. So it indicates that most of respondents work in various sectors.

**Expenditure of Income**
The findings show that most of the respondents who earn use their income for family expenditure which constituted almost 76 percent. About 20 percent respondents spend their income for own purpose and about 5 percent respondents use their income to save for the future.

**Health Care Facilities of the Respondents**

**Health Problems**
In addition to education, health care is another major challenge for the children in the broken families. Children are often tortured by their step-parent. They also lack a balanced diet, and as a result they often suffer from malnutrition. Some of them are involved in physical labour and the environment in which they work is not suitable for good health. For all these reasons, this study finds that 77.1 percent respondents reported some kind of health problems. These health problems at an early age can be a negative effect on their future.

**Types of Health Problems**
Most of the respondents who face various health problems suffer from fever that constituted about 69 percent. It was also found that 7 percent suffer from cold, 3 percent suffer from seasonal disease, almost 13 percent suffer from headache, and 7 percent from other problems.

**Inadequate Healthcare Facility**
There were reasons for not getting health facility. Most of the respondents did not get health facility due to economic insolvency which constituted 58 percent. It was also found that 36 percent respondents did not get health facility for lack of family support and about 6 percent respondents did not get this facility due to other reasons.

**Property Rights**

**Property Ownership of Parents**
The study finds that just over 71 percent respondent’s parents have property ownership whereas about 29 percent did not have property ownership.

**Owner of the Property**
Most of the respondents’ fathers were the owner of property that constituted 84 percent. Findings indicate 16 percent respondents’ mothers were the owner of the property that is very low.
Supports from Parents
Most of the children affected by family break-ups do not receive supports from their parents. Those who live with their parents are often ignored or tortured by their step-parent. And their parents are sometimes so busy for wage-earning that they cannot take care of their children. The children who do not live with their parents are also deprived of parental supports. The study finds that over 61 percent respondents have said that they do not receive supports from their parents.

Types of Support They Get
Obtaining various supports from parents is very essential for children to develop their physical and mental condition. Data collected in this study indicates that 59 percent respondents did obtain maintenance cost, about 19 percent did obtain education cost, almost 15 percent did obtain health care support and just over 7 percent did obtain others supports.

Reasons of not Getting Support
The study delineates that various reasons were responsible for not getting support of the respondents where most of the respondents did not get parent support due to unwillingness to provide support that constituted over 31 percent. Data shows that 17 percent respondents did not get support because of second marriage of father/mother, 10 percent respondents did not get support due to unwillingness to take support and about 3 percent did not get support for others reasons.

Desire for Getting Property Right
The study shows that most of the respondents desire to get property right which constituted 77 percent. This study also presents about 23 percent respondents did not desire for getting support that is very little.

Relationships between Family Members and Community Members
Interaction Opportunity with Family Members
Interaction with family members is very important for children’s overall development. It is often observed that when a child’s parent break-up, s/he suffers from emotional and psychological trauma. In this time of mental and emotional crisis, the child needs supports from other family members. Unfortunately, just over 31 percent children, according to this study, lost the opportunity to interact with other family members due to their parents’ separation. This loss of opportunity to interact with other near and dear ones has a detrimental effect on the children’s emotional and psychological condition.

Reasons for the Lack of Interaction
It was found that there were some reasons behind this lack of interaction, where 50 percent respondents did not interact due to separation of parents. The data also indicates that just over 28 percent respondents did not interact due to other reasons and about 23 percent respondents did not want to interact.
Violent Behaviors
Children in broken families often encounter violent behaviours from others. These behaviours come both inside and outside of their family. According to the study, just over 61 percent respondents have reported that they face violent behaviours such as physical and mental torture. Specially, the young children are the worst victim of these violent behaviours. These behaviours negatively impact their mental, physical, and psychological well-being.

Types of Violent Behaviors
The data shows that most of the respondents suffer from mental torture which constituted 58.14 percent. It was also found that 37.21 percent respondents suffer from physical torture and only 4.65 percent respondents suffer from other violent behaviour. All these violent behaviours result in juvenile delinquency or other forms of delinquency in our society.

Interaction with Relatives
The study shows that about 56 percent children who are affected by their parents' separation have interaction with their relatives. This interaction with relatives helps those children by providing them an opportunity for social and emotional relationships. However, 44 percent of the respondents who have no interaction with their relatives may have difficulty in making social relationships. If they interact neither with the family nor with relatives, there is a possibility that they will be affected by other people who may have bad intentions such as trafficking, drug abuse, and so on.

Interaction with Neighbors
Good neighbours can play important roles in the development of young children. However, in the slum areas, it is difficult to know who is good and who is bad. The study finds that almost 63 percent children interact with their neighbours. This means that if they fail to identify good neighbours, then they may face negative consequence. Young people are easily deceived by their neighbours. Therefore, parents and family members should be careful of with whom the children are interacting.

Interaction with Peer-Group Members
Interaction with peer group members is a characteristic feature of human beings. This is particularly important for the young people. Children feel comfortable with other children of their same age group. They learn many things from each other. A child’s future depends to some extent on other children s/he interacts with. Oftentimes children learn things such as smoking, sexual practices, and so on from their peer groups. Therefore, parents should be aware of their children’s selection of friends. The study shows that 40 percent respondents did not interact with peer groups.

Reunion with Parents
Almost 43 percent of the respondents want a reunion of their parents. Surprisingly however, other 57
percent children do not want a reunion of their parents. It indicates that their parents’ separation had made a scar on their mind. Sometimes due to a lack of parental love and affection, young children can be emotionally resentful. This may cause a long-term emotional problem for the children.

Possibility of Reunion
The study shows that 50 percent respondents believe that reunion of their parents will be possible through mutual understanding, 30 percent believe through legal process, just over 13 percent believe through shalish and about 7 percent believe through other process.

Reasons for not wanting Reunion
The findings show that respondents did not want reunion of their parents due to various reasons, where most of the respondents did not want reunion of their parents due to conflicting relationship between parents which constituted about 48 percent. It was also found that almost 33 percent respondents were pleased in present situation, 5 percent respondents were tortured by step mother/father physically and mentally, and 15 percent respondents were affected by other reasons, so they do not want their parents’ reunion.

Socio-Psychological Alienation of the Respondents
Frustration
Because of their parents’ separation, a majority of the children go through different phases of frustration. As the study finds, 87 percent children said that they feel frustrated. This frustration can cause long-term emotional disorder. Childhood frustration may also make people commit various crimes when they grow up. It can also be a major cause of juvenile crimes. So, we can say that frustration among children is one of the major negative consequences of the family breakups.

Types of Frustration
The findings show that respondents face various frustrations due to their parents’ separation, among them most of the respondents had anger towards parents that constituted about 44 percent. The data also indicate that almost 42 percent respondents were in self dissatisfaction, and about 15 percent respondents were in isolation and withdrawal. These types of frustration hinder overall development for the children.

Drug Abuse
A lack of parental love, violent behaviours from family members, frustration, depression, and bad company influence children to be attracted to drugs. Many children in slum areas are now victims of drug abuse. The study shows that almost 19 percent of the respondents have reported that they take some kind of drugs. Smoking is also a common practice among the children.
Identity Crisis
When parents are separated, children are usually tormented by two parents and often suffer from an identity crisis. The study shows that almost 69 percent of the respondents have this crisis in their identity formation. This identity crisis may cause a feeling of meaninglessness among young children. They are also teased and insulted by other people because of their parents’ separation.

Future Plans of the Respondents
Even though the children suffer from various problems due to their parents’ separation, many of them have a clear vision of their future. As the study finds, their future plans range from becoming a businessman to becoming a nurse. Their dreams are not too unrealistic. If they are given a proper environment to explore their talents, many of them will probably be able to fulfil their dreams. But unfortunately, the environment in which they are growing up is not conducive to the fulfilment of their future dreams. If their parents become sincere and take good care of their children, then these children can grow up to become valuable citizens of the country. Our government and NGOs also have many roles to play in developing the lives of these young people who have potential to contribute to the socio-economic development of the country.

Conclusion
Family breakup is a common feature in contemporary society. In our country, after their parents’ separation, children face various problems due to economic insolvency. Because of severe poverty, most of them do not get educational facilities, health facilities and so on. They also go through an identity crisis. Besides, they cannot interact with their neighbours, peers, relative, and classmates. Most of them are always in frustration that leads to various deviant behaviours. They commit various crimes. Most of them are involved in drug addiction and smoking. Therefore, it is very essential to minimize family breakup rate. If family breakup occurs after child birth, then both father and mother should be more conscious about their children’s overall development.

Family is the important social system in which the adults assume responsibility for the care and upbringing of their children. However, family breakup impacts negatively on children. It creates various social problems. In broken families, the children do not get sufficient facilities that are very essential for their physical and mental development. Number of family members is a significant finding of this study because it indicates a trend in population growth. In the past, especially the working class families used to have more children with a hope that the children will work to alleviate the family’s poverty. However, in the last couple of decades, we have noticed a reverse trend in population growth. Nowadays, people are becoming more aware of the negative consequences of having more children. Data show that just over 31 percent respondents said that there are only 3 members in their household. On the other hand, over 34 percent respondents have reported to have 5 members in their household. Data show that 77 percent respondents live in slums. Since many crimes occur in slum areas, these children who are already affected by broken families are in a vulnerable
situation. They can be easily manipulated by adults who are involved with various crimes such as drug abuses, child trafficking, hijacking, stealing, robbery, and so on. The slums also lack an environment conducive to such basic facilities as education and health care. Therefore, we can claim that living in slums has added an extra burden to the children who are already affected by their parents’ divorce or separation.

Mothers’ occupation is an important factor for the children in broken families. Data show that most of the mothers in the broken families are either house maid or day labourer. Due to a wage discrimination based on gender, those women earn very little amount of money. Oftentimes they have to work extra hours to earn enough money just to survive. They cannot manage enough time to take care of their children. As a result, most of the time, mothers are not aware of what their children are doing and with whom they are spending time. Therefore, mothers’ occupations have a detrimental effect on the children in broken families. Fathers’ occupation is also very important factor for the children in broken families. Since they live with only one parent, they need to spend time with her/him. Like mothers, fathers also have very low-paid jobs. Findings show, most fathers are either day-laborers or transport workers. As a result, they have to be outside their home for most of the time. Fathers’ lack of time to spend with their children has negative effects on the children because they are already away from their mother. Without parental contact, children psychological development is also affected.

Health care is another major challenge for the children in the broken families. Data show that 77 percent respondents are reported to have some kind of health problems. These health problems at an early age can be a negative effect on their future. Children are often tortured by their step-parent. They also lack a balanced diet, and as a result they often suffer from malnutrition. Some of them are involved in physical labor and the environment in which they work is not suitable for good health. About 59 percent children do not get health facility due to economic insolvency. After family break-up, getting support from parents is very important. The children who do not live with their parents are also deprived of parental supports. About 62 per cent respondents have said that they do not receive support from their parents. Interaction with family members is very important for children’s overall development. It is often observed that when a child’s parents break-up, s/he suffers from emotional and psychological traumas. In this time of mental and emotional crisis, the child needs supports from other family members. Unfortunately, just over 31 percent children, lose the opportunity to interact with other family members due to their parents’ separation. Good neighbours can play important roles in the development of young children. However, in the slum areas, it is difficult to know who is good and who is bad. Almost 63 percent children interact with their neighbours. This means that if they fail to identify good neighbours, then they may face negative consequence. Young people are easily deceived by their neighbours. Oftentimes children learn bad things such as smoking, sexual practices, and so on from their peer groups. Therefore, parents should be aware of their children’s selection of friends.
Because of their parents’ separation, a majority of the children go through different phases of frustration. About 87 percent children said that they feel frustrated. This frustration can cause long-term emotional disorder. A lack of parental love, violent behaviour from family members, frustration, depression, and bad company influence children to be attracted to drugs. Almost 19 percent of the respondents have reported that they take some kind of drugs. Smoking is also a common practice among the children. When parents are separated, children usually face an identity crisis. Almost 69 percent of the respondents have this crisis in identity formation. This identity crisis can cause a feeling of meaninglessness among young children. They are also teased by other people because of their parents’ separation. Even though the children suffer from various problems due to their parents’ separation, many of them have a clear vision of their future. As data show in the findings section, their future plans range from becoming a businessman to becoming a nurse. Their dreams are not too unrealistic. If they are given a proper environment to explore their talent, many of them may be able to fulfil their dreams. But unfortunately, the environment in which they are growing up is not conducive to the fulfilment of their future dreams. If their parents become sincere and take good care of their children, then these children can grow up to become valuable citizens of the country. Our government and NGOs also have many roles to play in developing the lives of these young people who have potential to contribute to the socio-economic development of the country.

References


Protecting Child Labour in Bangladesh: Domestic Laws versus International Instruments

Sharmin Aktar* and Abu Syead Muhammed Abdullah**

Abstract: This study tries to present the socio-economic scenario of child labour in Bangladesh which has in recent times attracted concerted attention not only in Bangladesh but also all over the globe. Indeed, child labour is recognised as a considerable part of the existing labour market and by the present write-up this statement has been upheld through a number of case studies. There is no question as regards the indispensability of elimination of child labour from the society but question arises whether it would bring good for any particular society (such as Bangladesh). Child labour problem is a socio-economic reality in the country which can’t be ignored. Hence steps have to be taken at first to decrease child labour gradually rather removing it diametrically from the society. It should be remembered that if child labour is driven out just now from the country, then that would jeopardize the child labourers who earn their own bread or for the families who depend on the child workers. This article attempts to search out the ways how child labour can be decreased gradually and at the end of the paper these ways have been presented as suggestions or recommendations.

Introduction:

Child labour is now a global concern and as such attracted attention of people in various sectors. In fact, it is the product of an unequal society. As Vittachi observes, child labour shows up, in exaggerated form, a labour problem deeply woven into the fabric of an unequal society (Vittachi, 1989). Following the observation it can be said that poverty emerges from unequal distribution of wealth and this virtually leads children to go to work and while discussing the causes of child labour, this article considers poverty as one of its principal reasons. However, child labour is work which impairs health, physical development and education of children. Children’s participation in economic activity that does not negatively affect their health and development or interfere with education can be positive. Indeed, light work that does not interfere with education is permitted from the age of 12 years under the International Labour Organization (ILO) convention no.138.

Bangladesh is the home to more than five percent of world’s working child population (The New Nation, 2004). Besides, South Asia, which includes Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Srilanka, remains a child labour hotspot (World Bank, 2004). Further, the majority of child domestics tend to be 12 to 17 years old (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), 2002-2003). But children as young as 5 or 6 years old can also be found working and a survey of child domestic workers found that 38 percent were 11 to 13 years old and nearly 24 percent were 5 to 10 years old (BBS 2002-2003). Child domestics work long hours, getting up well before their employers and going to bed long after them and 50% domestic workers work 12 to 14 hours a day (Rahman, 1994). Furthermore, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics estimated in 2004 that the total number of children of age group 5-17 years in January, 2003 was at 42.4 million of which 35.1 million were in the age group 5-14 and 7.3 million were in 15-17 years age group. Out of the total estimated child population aged 5-17 years about 22.7 million were boys and 19.7 million girls (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2002-2003).

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The above data show an enormous number of child workers who are working in the existing labour market and this clearly forces the society to pay attention to the child labour problem. Honestly speaking, when it is time to go to school with books in the hand, the ill-fated children of the country are being forced to work inhumanly only for the survival and income generation of the family. In the working places they are exploited more than the adult workers. It is for these reasons that child labour has been given some importance in Bangladesh and a great deal in the world.

**Objectives of the study**

This study focuses on the trend, impact and legislation of child labour in Bangladesh, taking into consideration the international instruments and suggests some policy measures. The major objectives of this study are as follows:

a) To examine the current scenario and the trends of child labour in Bangladesh.

b) To explore the causes of it around the country.

c) To identify legislation governing child labour and to assess positive and negative impacts of it.

d) To find out as to whether the domestic legislations concerning child labour inside the country is in consonance with the international instruments.

e) To make policy recommendations.

**Definition of ‘child’ and ‘child labour’**

The 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the 1999 International Labour Organization Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour define a child as an individual under the age of 18 years, unless under the law applicable to the child majority is attained at an earlier age. Historically speaking, Bangladeshi laws have proven to be inconsistent in their determination of an age regime as some Acts were promulgated during the British period, others during the Pakistan period and a handful have been promulgated since the independence of Bangladesh in 1971. For example, the Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929 imposes a gender distinction by setting the age of majority in order to contract a valid marriage at 21 years for men and 18 for women. However, the Children (Pledging of Labour) Act 1933 and the Employment of Children Act 1938 determine that the minimum age for children is 15 and 12, respectively. To further complicate things, the Factories Act 1965 states that individuals under 14 years of age are children whereas the Children Act 1974 states that a child is an individual under 16 years of age. In addition, under contract law, a minor cannot enter into agreement until attaining the age of 18. Muslim personal laws on marriage, however, determine that a child becomes an adult on attaining the age of puberty. In response to these varying laws and the lack of a uniform age regime, the highly-anticipated 2006 Bangladesh Labour Act both consolidates and
abrogates all of the existing labour laws and determines that a child is an individual under the age of 14. The Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006 defines an adolescent as an individual between the ages of 14 and 18. An adolescent can work in a factory if a certificate of fitness is granted to him or her, if he or she carries a token while at work which gives reference to the certificate. An exception is provided for, as per section 44, a child who is 12 years of age may be employed if the work does not endanger his or her health or interfere with his or her education.

On the other hand, child labour is defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and dignity and that is harmful to physical and mental development. UNICEF, the United Nations Children’s Fund, defines child labour as work that exceeds a minimum number of hours, depending on the age of a child and on the type of work. For children aged 5 to 11, this would include at least one hour of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week. For the 12 to 14 age group, this would include at least 14 hours of economic work or 28 hours of domestic work per week and for children aged 15 to 17, child labour occurs when a child works at least 43 hours of economic or domestic work per week. Besides, the International Labour Organization (ILO) asserts that the term child labour refers to work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children and interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school, obliging them to leave school prematurely or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

**Fundamental aspects of child labour in contemporary Bangladesh**

In Bangladesh child labour as a problem did not grow directly with the growth of factories engaged in the business of surplus production. Rather it seems to be related with on the one hand, the economic hardship caused by a too large population and meagre means of subsistence and, on the other, the growth of modern urban centres drawing in a large number of rural families (Mia, 1989). The various distressing facets of child labour pointed out by Watkins (2012), nevertheless, apply to all patterns of child labour. The employment of children is a phase of general problem of child welfare, involving far reaching physical, moral, mental and economic effects (Watkins 2012).

Many children in their workplace face multi-dimensional forms of violence that cause long lasting harm to their natural development. Children consistently expressed their concerns about the absence of a safe environment, which leads to violence, abuse and exploitation within the family, community, street, work place, and school, in state and non-state institutions and also in the justice system. The current governance deficit in Bangladesh has further aggravated the situation because the duty bearers such as lawmakers, executives, police, probation officers, and even judges remain insensitive to children’s rights and fail to provide protection, special care and treatment.

In recent years, however, child rights have featured increasingly in policy debates and discussions amongst government officials and NGOs. News reports on violence and torture against children in the print media and in the private TV channels has increased. Many organizations are also working to sensitize the public so that
there is increased awareness of child rights. It is necessary to mention here that the government is committed to protect the child but it lacks depth of understanding and consistent planning. For example, the Children Act, 1974 is a broad-ranging and progressive instrument dealing with the State’s role in providing protection to children. Its focus is on juvenile justice, with much less clear provision for the treatment of children experiencing violence. This is not widely known or understood by duty-bearers (available at http://www.askbd.org/Hr06/child.htm, last visited on 13.3.2011). Undoubtedly, the Children Act, 1974 is a masterpiece of legislation, well advanced for its time, enacted to cater for the rights of children, incorporating the multifarious beneficent Declarations, Conventions and other international treaties, for the betterment of the children-kind (available at http://www.crin.org, last visited on 12.3.2011).

However, it will be easier to understand the violence rate of child domestic workers if some statistics presented by the Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF) are examined. Under help line service BSAF has addressed almost 135 (till December 2008) cases who are victims of different violence. It seems that comparatively girls are more victims of domestic violence.

Table 1: Child Referred through Help Line Service in 2007 and 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number (Female)</th>
<th>Number (Male)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above reflects the total number referrals made through Help Line Service of BSAF for 2007 and 2008 at 135. The year wise figures in 2007 have been 41 female and 37 male totalling 78. In 2008 the corresponding figures were 40 and 17 respectively or 57 in total. Between the two years the number of cases referred in 2008 shows a lower trend, the decline has been 21 in a year (BSAF 2008).

However, with a view to giving access to labour law, the Ministry of Labour and Employment has recently adopted a National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010, which provides a framework to eradicate all forms of child labour by 2015. A Child Labour Unit has been established as part of this policy, which will have responsibilities including collecting and disseminating data relating to child labour. According to this policy, the criteria for defining hazardous work for children includes: working more than five hours a day; work that creates undue pressure on physical and psychological wellbeing and development; work without pay; work where the child becomes the victim of torture or exploitation or has no opportunity for leisure. However, the process to harmonize the Children Act 1974 with international legal standards is ongoing. The 1974 law as well as the new draft provides penalties for engaging children in child labour.
It is necessary to point out here that UNICEF has now been advocating for the creation of a Children’s Code, in order to harmonize domestic legislation with the Convention on the Rights of the Child including Art. 32 on child labour. UNICEF has also been working with the Ministry of Social Welfare and other ministries and NGOs to undertake mapping and assessment of Bangladesh’s child protection system. Based on this, a Child Protection Policy will be developed, including child labour aspects. For the proper assessment of the age of the child, the government adopted the new Births and Deaths Registration Act in 2004, which makes birth registration compulsory for everyone in Bangladesh. It has also adopted a Universal Birth Registration Strategy which aims to register everyone by the end of 2010. Birth registration rates have increased significantly: from 10% in 2004 to 54% in 2009. The Birth Registration Information System continues to be developed (available at http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files, last visited on 3.3.2011).

Furthermore, Bangladesh has adopted the United Nation’s Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1990. Bangladesh has a number of laws for the protection of children. Under articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution, a child has the right to social security. Article 28 gives the state power to impose special ordinance for serving the child’s interest whereas Article 34 prohibits the coercion of children into doing hard labour. The Children Act (1974) has banned the use of vulnerable child labour yet we still see children working in the ship breaking yards in Bangladesh (available at http://www.shipbreakingbd.info/Rights_violation.html, last visited on 10.3.2011).

Save the Children conducted a study to understand the situation relating to live-in child domestics in urban households of Dhaka city and to identify the key issues related to the relationship of employers with the domestics, tasks performed by children, work environment and the nature of exploitation. In the study certain strategies have been offered for the protection and gradual elimination of child domestics. Therefore, certain non-governmental organisations can have programme interventions aiming at:

- the improvement of the conditions of work, especially in respect to hours of night work, rest and recreation, the regulation and methods of remuneration and the protection of wages
- the promotion of occupational safety and health facilities
- the introduction of non-formal education and skill training by which the children who are obliged or compelled to work as domestics can combine work with education or training
- the provision of welfare schemes and services for child domestics in those areas where it is more prevalent and near the domestics workplaces
- the dissemination of information about child rights through mass media to create greater awareness both among the employers and the child domestics on this issue.

In addition, the government can undertake the following:

- the adoption and strict enforcement of laws and regulations prohibiting the abuse and exploitation of children in domestic work, if not its total elimination
The expansion of educational facilities in urban areas for effective implementation of compulsory primary education of the government

- the introduction of area wise identity cards for the child domestics so that they can be traced easily when educational and training programmes will be introduced in those areas.

It was also suggested that for the success of these programme interventions, there should be strong co-ordination between the government and the non-governmental organisations as well as firm commitments on the part of both of these sectors. In the study it was also shown as to how much employers are satisfied keeping the child domestics (Save the Children 1995).

The welfare of child workers must be the highest priority in any action on child labour. Firing children without consultation and without offering them and their families alternative sources of livelihood is a fundamental breach of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989. That is why actions were suggested to be taken by the companies, which include consult with suppliers and stakeholders; develop policy; establish monitoring and implementation systems; train buyers and quality–assurance staff; form a joint plan of action and agree time frames; budget to fund child labour interventions; encourage and support suppliers to act responsibly; ensure that reporting of progress and problems is transparent; review progress and spread best practice (Save the Children, 2000).

Child labour in various sectors

Child labour in Bangladesh is not a new issue as children remain here as one of the most vulnerable, exploited, underprivileged, dominated and subservient groups. Indeed, child labour in Bangladesh is alarming in various sectors which can be observed in a survey of 2002-2003 conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. At present, in Bangladesh 7.9 million children ages 5-17 work, children represent 16.6% of the total workforce., 62% of all working children are employed in agriculture, 149,000 children are engaged in the worst forms of child labour and 1.4 million children do hazardous work (available at www.concernusa.org, last visited on 06.11.2010). Besides, the highest proportion of working children, some 49.5 percent, was found involved with informal sector that means, unpaid economic activities in family farms or business (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2002-2003). It was also found that 28.6% were employed as paid day labourers, 14% were sales workers while transport sector engaged 25.4% of them (BBS, 2002-2003).

There is a clear-cut distinction between urban and rural working sectors. Rural working children are mainly engaged in agricultural activities and urban working children are mostly involved with formal working sector. The aforesaid survey found similar trend. According to the survey, 2.5 million urban working children are labouring in the formal working sector where they are always faced with dismal, deplorable and abject working conditions, unfixed wages, health hazards, lack of recreation and are exposed to mental, physical and sexual harassment. It is also mentionable that usually children working in the industrial sector have no contract of employment and this ultimately makes it difficult for them to stand up and fight for their rights. Practically,
working children are used and exploited for the benefit of the better off sector of society. This is not really deliberate exploitation of children by the wealthy rather reflects the attitude of the society. That means, employers prefer children as they are cheap, productive and obedient (The Daily Star, 2006).

In Bangladesh children are engaged in industries, workshops, tanneries, agricultural sector, transport sector, construction sector, beedi factories, ship-breaking yard, restaurants and tea-stalls. They also work as maids and domestic servants. They are also engaged in some of the hazardous jobs where the rate of child labour is high, working atmosphere unhygienic, ages abnormally low and wages unfixed (The New Nation, 2004). Apart from these, a large number of children predominantly girls, whether in the urban and rural areas, are employed as domestic helps. In total contrast, boys in the villages’ look after the domestic animals and in the cities are engaged in marketing, taking children of the householder from schools etc. Such works are not hazardous and may be good if they are provided adequate food, clothing, and place to sleep and treated politely and mercifully when they commit wrong.

It is to be pointed out that before the enactment of the Harkin Bill in 1993 a large number of children were engaged in garments factories. According to a statistics published in the Bhorer Kagoj on 12th January, 1992, in different garments factories of Bangladesh 30% of the workers were children. They did nonstop work, were not provided with transportation or food and had no scope to enjoy weekly holidays or medical leave. In reality, employers took advantage of their situation and employed underage boys and girls in their industries to have maximum services with minimum wages. Again, if a child was absent from work for a day, he would either have that day’s salary deducted or lose his job. Besides, in many factories child workers were appointed as ‘apprentices’ or ‘helpers’ for months and were not issued appointment letters even after completing the apprenticeship period. Further, girl workers under 15 were preferred in these factories, as they worked for less, were unmarried and caused no labour problem.

But the Harkin Bill of 1993 prohibited import of goods into USA produced by employing child labour. After that, in many of the garment factories child workers had been expelled as an immediate reaction to the bill. The strong reason behind this step was that as USA is the single largest importer of Bangladesh garments, so Bangladesh manufacturers or producers can’t overlook the provisions of the Harkin Bill. Now the “Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association” (BGMEA) is very cautious against any violations of the Harkin Bill. Even then violation, though little, is occurring all over the country.

Case study 1:

Md. Rahim*, aged 13, lives in a slum in Mirpur, Dhaka with his parents and works in a factory in Gabtali with almost 150 workers among whom about 100 are child workers. He has been working there for about 4 years

* Pseudonym has been used in all cases
daily from 8 am to 10/11 pm in lieu of Tk. 1000 per month. His educational level is only up to literacy. He is not provided with any festival bonuses, festival leave, weekly holiday or extra income for overtime works. If he is absent from work for a day, he will have that day’s salary (near to Tk.30) deducted. Behaviour of his employer is very cruel, sometimes abuses and sometimes beats him.

Causes of child labour

Causes of child labour can be discussed from different aspects and it is agreed and seen that the problem of child labour is substantially located in the developing countries. Accordingly in Bangladesh also child labour is very high and its causes are varied some of which are as follows:

A. Poverty

The principal cause behind child labour is poverty. The National Child Labour Elimination Policy, 2010 also identified it as the first and chief reason behind children involved in working. In this regard let’s first look at the definition of poverty, it is found that there are two dominant worldviews of poverty, namely, ‘absolute’ and ‘relative’ which have attained high attention in poverty literature. Absolute poverty means absolute deprivation or starvation. It illustrates a people or family who simply do not have enough to eat and sustain. Absolute poverty is common in the poorer third world countries. On the other hand, relative poverty means low standard of living compared to the average standard. In the industrial countries, relative poverty is essentially a measure of inequality (Islam, 2005). From this viewpoint it is said that in our country absolute poverty exists. Here around 55 million people are considered to live below the poverty line (The Daily Star, 2006). They have no surety of food and this compels many of the parents to send their children to work. Truly, for many, forcing their children to work is the only way to survive. In Bangladesh 67% children work due to financial hardship, either to contribute labour for wages to supplement household incomes or to work at home so that adults can work outside (The New Nation Online Edition, 2004).

Case study 2:

Md. Abdur Rahman, aged 12, worker in a Motor workshop in Mirpur, came from a village in Faridpur to Dhaka for livelihood. His father is dead and mother is a housewife. He has 5 brothers and sisters. He is the eldest in the family and that’s why he has come to Dhaka to work so that he would be able to maintain his mother and the younger brothers and sisters. He has studied up to class six and his mother up to class three. It is his mother who has encouraged him to come to work. In that garage there are about 20 workers among whom 10 are about his age. Rahman works daily from 10 am to evening and no weekly holiday is provided. As he is new, it has been agreed that he will now be provided only with food and shelter. His employer’s behaviour is good. He wants to be a good mechanic and has no will to study in future, even if he gets the opportunity.
Case study 3:

Md. Shahidul Islam, aged 13/14, acts as a helper of Dhaka’s local bus. He came from a village in Natore district. His father is a worker in a sugar mill and mother housewife. He has 2 brothers and has studied up to class three. His mother’s educational status is only up to literacy. In truth, his father is a seasonal employer, as such it was usual for Shahidul to maintain his family through economic hardship and this economic uncertainty motivates him to come to this job. He was also encouraged by his parents to adopt the profession. He has been working there for about 5/6 months daily from 5 am to 11/12 pm. His average income is Tk. 100/150 per day. After keeping some of his earnings (which is necessary) for himself, he sends the remainder to his home. His employer behaves well with him. He wants to be a driver and is not willing to study at a later period if chances come. Shahidul works like a day labourer, for if he misses one day, he loses earnings for that day. There is no scope to earn extra money or festival bonuses. A fixed amount of earnings by hard labour all day is to be given to the mahajan, afterwards the rest of it is to be divided between the conductor, helper and the driver.

Case study 4:

Md. Hossain, a vegetable huckster, lives in a slum with his parents who migrated from a village in Mymensingh district. His father, was also engaged in the same profession and his mother is a housewife. He has one brother and one sister. He is 12 years old and has been doing this job for about 5 years. His father can’t work due to old age which has forced Hossain to come to work and to leave school when he was in class four. He does not know his mother’s educational level. He gives all of his earnings to his family. Hossain works from 8 am to 12 noon, earns a daily average of Tk. 70, wants to work in a vegetable selling shop and has no intention to study in future, if opportunity arises.

Lack of awareness and embedded tradition

Lack of awareness and the firmly established tradition also play an important role to prolong child labour. Indeed, most of the parents are unaware about the notion of “child labour”. They know neither what is meant by child labour nor the harmful effects of it, or put any attention upon their children’s needs pertaining to education. They neither understand nor try to realize that if their children enter work force without acquiring education, the lack of basic schooling won’t give them any opportunity to find good jobs when they attain majority. Again because of the embedded tradition in our society majority of the parents think that their children will earn from early ages and will contribute to the family budget, though there may be no compelling necessity. This also happens due to the ignorance, unawareness of the parents who imagine that their children are learning a useful trade. Further, a considerable number of children enter into jobs by observing their friends who are devoting their labour in the labour market, whatever the nature of work.

Case study 5:
Mahmud works in a motor workshop in Mirpur. He migrated from a village in Jamalpur with his parents. His father survives as a rickshaw puller in Dhaka city and mother works at home. He has 2 brothers and 5 sisters. There are in total 20 workers in the motor workshop among which 10 are child workers. He is now 19 years old and has been giving his service there for 7 years. His parents did not induce or force him to labour but his father always encouraged him to learn a satisfactory trade. He left school when he was in class six. His mother is the only literate one. He works in that workshop daily from 9 am to 6 pm. His monthly income is Tk.4000 of which he keeps something to himself and gives the rest to his parents. This is not his fixed salary that must be paid. If the mahajan (owner of the workshop) has no work in hand, in that month he is given leave and not provided any wages. But when the mahajan has so many businesses in hand, then no leave or even weekly holiday is offered. His employer’s behaviour is friendly and cordial.

Case study 6:

Md. Kamrul, aged 12, lives with his parents in Mirpur, Dhaka. He has 3 brothers and 2 sisters. He has been working in Dhaka’s local bus for almost 3 years. He had stopped his studies according to his own will when he was in class five. His mother is only literate. For the entry into the job he was motivated by his friends who work in different professions. His parents neither permitted nor prohibited his work. He works daily from 7 am to the next day’s 7 am, has to take food and sleep in the bus during working hours and earns almost Tk.250 per day. He wants to be a driver and has no intention to get into a satisfactory position through studying.

Parents’ feeling of insecurity about their children

Many parents in our society fear that if their children spend their time idly, they may get involved in anti-social activities. For this reason they try to find an occupation for their children and keep them away from idleness and vagrancy.

Case study 7:

Md. Mobin Rahman, aged 13, workers in a motor workshop in Mirpur. He came from a village in Singhair to Dhaka with the expectation of learning a good trade. His father is a peasant and mother a housewife. There is no want in his family. Even then his parents has sent him to work afraid he may be spoiled if remains home idly. He studied up to class two and his mother up to class three. He works daily from 8 am to 6 pm, earns Tk.1200-1300 per month (he is provided with food and shelter by the mahajan), not eager to study at a later period and only wishes to go abroad after learning this trade.

Lack of education of the parents, especially of mothers
Because of lack of education the parents neither understand what child labour is nor what are its effects, as such they very often encourage children and in some cases put pressure on them to work instead of going to school, though they are not in need of work. In this regard if we keep in mind the above 7 cases, we note that all the child labourers obtained support of their mothers whose educational level is only up to literacy or basic schooling. A UNICEF survey of selected countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa finds that on average children with uneducated mothers are at least twice as likely to be out of primary school than children whose mothers attended primary school (UNICEF, 2010).

Miscellaneous factors

Besides the above reasons, many children engage in work in order to supplement the family income and the parents do not even restrict them. They see nothing abnormal in working at an early age. Further, due to the internal migration that takes place from one place to another within the country, many parents fall into hard financial crisis which also lead children to go to work for survival. Inadequate recreational infrastructure also engages many children in work. Furthermore, insufficiency of schools, poor curriculum, absence of proper nursing and care of pupils by the teachers, lack of usefulness of education for their survival and profession and the long time needed for education also lead some children to begin work at an early age. Usually child labour is high in the poor developing countries but several industries of rich countries also pay for the products made with child labour. If the owners of these industries of rich countries would boycott the products made with child labour, then the owners of the industries of poor countries like ours would be aware of not using the child labour. Both foreign and our owners know about the harmful effects of child labour but they use them for their own interest. So this lack of child friendly values keeps child labour alive in our society. Another point is that many people in our country employ children violating the labour laws, but there is no punishment for such violation. Government has so many laws but implementation is missing. Though this is not a cause of child labour, but this non-implementation is encouraging the employers to use child labour in making their products or in performing their businesses.

At the end it can be said that though poverty is the principal cause behind child labour, child labour is also caused by a variety of other reasons.

National and international instruments regarding child labour

In recent times the problem of child labour is widely discussed in the country but effective initiatives to eliminate or decrease child labour is hardly seen. Though there is a lacking in adopting measures to solve the problem, our constitution covers the issue perfectly. Since the very inception of the Republic, protection of the child has been declared to be one of the fundamentals of the state policy of Bangladesh. Articles-14 and 15 of the constitution protect the rights of children and the right of social security. Article-17 imposes an obligation upon the state to take effective measures for free and compulsory education for all children to such stage as may be
determined by law and under Article-18, the state is empowered to make special provisions for the benefit of children. Besides, by Arts. 27, 28, 29, 31, 34, 37, 38, 39, 40 and 41 fundamental rights of all citizens are ensured. Specially, all forms of forced labour are declared as forbidden and in case of violation of such rights legal scopes to seek remedy are available. It is, however, necessary to mention here that the constitution of Bangladesh does not prohibit child labour. It only contains certain articles affecting children. The existing laws of the country regarding child labour also does so. These do not prohibit child labour rather provide certain standards for the employment of children. Again the present domestic laws do not cover children who are engaged in household services, such as, in agricultural sector, or domestic help. As a result, it is hard to count the actual rate of child labour and almost impossible to protect them from exploitation through legal procedures.

However, the following are the domestic laws which are working for the protection of the rights of the child.

a) National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010:
Different laws of the country have given the definition of child differently but till now a clear definition of the terms ‘child labour’ or ‘child labourers’ is not found anywhere. In these circumstances, the age based definitions of child and adolescents as given in the Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006 are followed in every discussion relating to child labour. According to the definition, work performed by a child will be considered as child labour but the term ‘child labourer’ should not be used here rather he may be termed as a child engaged in labour. The policy advocates a friendly world for the children engaged in work and provides a standard framework concerning education, health, working environment, specific working conditions, recreation, treatment, and security, social awareness building for managing and reducing risks of child abuse by employers. Besides, to supervise the child labour related issues a definite ministry is required. Child concerned matters are regulated by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and labour related issues are by the Ministry of Labour and Employment. But no ministry is wholly authorised to administer the child labour issues. That is why the policy articulates recommendation for giving the entire responsibility of supervising every issues concerning child labour to the Ministry of Labour and Employment as a focal Ministry. A Child Labour Unit is also suggested to be made for co-ordinating all the activities that are mentioned in the Policy of 2010. Furthermore, the policy points out that a National Child Labour Welfare Council can also be created by the experts in child labour studies whose duty will be to observe the circumstances of child labour at national and international level with a view of suggesting to the government.

b) Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006:
The most remarkable legislation in the country for regulating child labour is the Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006, which includes a chapter on child labour. In the earlier laws, the term “child” was used to mean a person who had not completed 16 years of age and the term “young person” was used to mean and include both the child and adolescent. Under the earlier law, even a child could have obtained a fitness certificate to get a job in a factory. But in the new law, child means a person who has completed his or her fourteen years of age and
adolescent means the person who has completed sixteen years and has not completed eighteen years of age. The present law specifically prohibits employment of children and makes a provision for fitness certificates for the adolescent only. But a child, who has completed twelve years of age, may be employed in such light work as not to endanger his health and development or interfere with his education. Provided that the hours of work of such child, where he is school going, shall be so arranged that they do not interfere with his school attendance (as per section 44). However, the Act of 2006 does not provide a strong enforcement mechanism for the child labour provisions. Additionally, the vast majority of children work in the informal sector which makes enforcement of the relevant legislation challenging.

c) The Children (Pledging of Labour) Act, 1933:
Under this Act, a person under the age of 15 years is treated as a child. This Act prohibits the making of an agreement to pledge the labour of children in return of consideration and if the conditions under which the agreement is made are such as to be detrimental to the child, the Act makes the agreement void. But this Act is ambiguous with regard to children who are employed without such agreements. In fact, this Act forbids parents or any person from compelling children to work.

d) The Employment of Children Act, 1938:
This Act applies only to those occupations that relate to transport of passengers, handling of goods and processing work. A child is defined in this Act as a person under the age of 15 years and this Act prevents them from working in the transport of passengers and handling of goods by road, railway or any sea port. This Act makes concessions with regard to children up to the age of 17 years employing in the aforesaid activities but in this case one condition is that the periods of work have to be fixed in such a way as to allow intervals for rest of at least 12 consecutive hours including at least seven consecutive hours between 7 pm and 7 am. Again this Act astonishingly permits children below the age of 12 years to engage in processing activities and for this purpose identifies the workshops where children of this age group may work. Furthermore, children over the age of 15 years and under the age of 18 years are allowed to work under the fixed working hours which the Act specifies.

e) The Tea Plantation Ordinance, 1962:
The Act does not define a child but provides that children under the age of 12 years are not allowed to work in any tea plantation. Moreover, children above the age of 12 years and adolescents between the ages of 15 and 17 years may be permitted to work in tea plantations provided that they are granted a certificate attesting to their physical fitness. But children are not allowed to work other than between 6 am and 7 pm. This Act also contains provisions for violation of the Act.

f) The Children Act, 1974:
This Act principally applies to children who commit anti-social activities but various aspects of child exploitation ranging from begging, exposure to drugs and liquor, brothels and seduction are dealt with in sections-34 to 43 of the Act. This Act also imposes penalties on those who exploit child employees. It provides that whosoever secures a child ostensibly for the purpose of menial employment or for labour in a factory or establishment, but exploits the child for his own ends, withholds his earnings or lives on it, shall be punishable with fine or imprisonment or with both. The Act further provides that whosoever secures a child ostensibly for any of the purposes mentioned above but exposes the child to the risk of seduction, sodomy, prostitution or other immoral purposes shall be similarly punishable with fine or imprisonment or with both.

g) The Mines Act, 1923:
The Act restricts the employment of children in a mine or any part thereof which is underground. A child is defined in this Act as a person who has not completed his fifteenth year. But a person of 17 years or above may be employed in a mine provided that they are granted a certificate attesting to their fitness. Besides, the hours of work for such persons must be so fixed as to allow an interval of rest of at least 12 consecutive hours including at least seven consecutive hours between 7 pm and 7 am.

Therefore, different statutes of the country have defined children differently according to the different labour sectors, though the National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010 has made the age of child labour specific. In fact, the above provisions of different Acts do not prohibit child labour rather inserts provisions for the employment of children. The reason behind this may be that if child labour is absolutely forbidden, that will severely affect children and their families who depend on the income of children and children may be involved with more exploitative informal activities (which do not come under the purview of the above Acts) than now. So child labour cannot be eliminated from the society totally just now. That’s why steps should be taken at first to decrease it gradually. In this case the laws regarding child labour should be more child-friendly.

Much have been discussed here up to now about the enactment of laws. At this stage the paper will refer to the enforcement of laws. Indeed, the existing laws of the country are not implemented fully. Though there is a provision of keeping a separate register for working children, most of the factories don’t observe that rule. Working conditions are not as per law; medical facilities are not provided and inspections are few and in places where inspectors appear, it is common for them to collude with employers and make out an excellent inspection report for a price without so much as actually observing. Similarly the implementation of the present domestic laws as regards child labour, the law enforcement agencies should be fair and free from politicization and corruption.

Legislative measures for the protection of children and the eradication of child labour have been adopted at the international level. Among the various international policies on child labour, the most extensive standards are those adopted by the following:

a) ILO Minimum Age Convention 138 (C138), 1973:
‘The Convention Concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment’ is a Convention adopted in 1973 by the International Labour Organization. It requires ratifying states to pursue a national policy designed to ensure the effective abolition of child labour and to raise progressively the minimum age for admission to employment
or work. This Convention replaces several similar ILO conventions in specific fields of labour. However, the minimum age for entry into work should not be less than 15 years and not less than the age of completing compulsory schooling under Article 2 (3) of the Convention or 14 under Article 2(4) for countries "whose economic and educational facilities are insufficiently developed". By Article 7(4) of the Convention "light work" is allowed for children from the age of 12 in a developing country. The minimum age for hazardous work that is likely to jeopardize the health, safety or morals of young person shall not be less than 18 years under Article 3 (1) of the Convention.

b) UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), September 1990:
This is the most valuable treaty in the armoury of human rights law with which to protect and defend the rights of children the world over. Notwithstanding the fact that the Convention is more comprehensive than any other human rights treaty, it has attracted the greatest number of ratifications. This Convention defines a child as below the age of 18 years. It calls states to respect and ensure the given rights to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind. By this Convention a child is to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development under Article 32. To achieve a child's right to education, states are to make in accordance with Article 28 primary education compulsory and freely available to all. Every child also has a right to play, rest and leisure under Article 31.

c) ILO Worst Forms Convention 182 (C182), 1999:
Under this Convention Child applies to all persons under the age of 18. The Convention Calls for immediate and effective measures to prohibit and eliminate the worst forms of child labour: 1.) All forms of slavery and slavery-like practices, such as child trafficking, debt bondage, and forced labour, including forced recruitment of children into armed conflict; 2.) using a child for prostitution or the production of pornography; 3.) using a child for illicit activities, in particular drug production and trafficking; and 4.) hazardous work.

International Program on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC):
IPEC was launched in 1992 to progressively eliminate child labour through strengthening national capacities to address child labour problems and promoting a worldwide movement to combat child labour. While IPEC's goal remains the prevention and elimination of all forms of child labour, the priority targets for IPEC's action are the worst forms of child labour, which are defined in Convention No. 182. IPEC also calls for the provision of alternatives for children and families to ensure that children truly benefit from child labour interventions.

Time Bound Program:
The Time-Bound Program is one of the means established by IPEC to help countries fulfil their obligations under ILO Convention No. 182 to take immediate and effective time-bound measures to prohibit and eliminate the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency, including: prevent the engagement of children in the worst forms of child labour; provide direct assistance for the removal of children from the worst forms of child labour and for their rehabilitation and social integration; ensure access to free basic education and appropriate
vocational training for all children removed from the worst forms of child labour; identify and reach out to children at special risk; and take account of the special situation of girls.

Bangladesh has ratified the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the 1999 International Labour Organization Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour but not ratified the Minimum Age Convention of 1973. Though Bangladesh has not ratified this Convention, her domestic legislation prohibits the employment of children in factories below a certain age. It has also begun the process of time-bound program.

**Suggestion for eliminating or decreasing child labour:**

Ways of curbing child labour is a challenging and worthy task and require financial, moral and political support from all the tiers of the society. In truth, child labour can’t be virtually removed from a country such as Bangladesh just now because the problem of child labour is indissolubly rooted in our society, so attempts have to be made in the first place to decrease it.

As mentioned earlier, poverty is the core reason behind child labour as it drives children to involve in employment in order to fight against starvation as well as to supplement the family income, so effective solutions to child labour must be based on the reduction of chronic poverty through broad based economic and social development, with a strong emphasis on human resource development. Nonetheless, child labour is not in all cases a consequence of poverty or even child labour won’t be driven out as soon as poverty disappears as there is a huge population of girls and also boys working in domestic labour that are not necessarily linked with economical facts but with patriarchal roles. As such, my contention is that with a view to eliminating or decreasing child labour, along with poverty eradication, child centred educative sensitivity and awareness at political, community and family level is essential.

Take the case of child-centred educative sensitivity at first. To create such kind of sensitivity educated parents, educated family members and an educated community has to be made and they will actually play an important role in the progressive elimination of child labour. In this regard existing schooling process should be borne in mind. Schooling process has to be changed and an upgraded curriculum to be introduced inclusive of basic idea regarding child labour. Besides that, to make education effective, arrangement should be made in the expected modified curriculum around vocational training that would enable students to achieve an employment quickly and easily after finishing their schooling period. In our country another problem is that despite acute willingness to educate children, poor parents send them to work in order to free them from starvation or send them to school but very soon they are dropped out due to the inability of their parents to fulfil other additional costs, like transportation cost, uniforms etc. for attending school. Another reason behind not sending children to school is their reluctance the long time frame of education.

For the effective solutions of the above mentioned problems, school education has to be free; school feeding programme to be initiated; school utensils such as pencils, rulers, textbooks to be offered; arrangement for
transportation to be made and for these a large portion of the budget to be provided. In our country primary education is free up to class five, school feeding services offered and textbooks given without any cost, although the illegal sale of books by school authorities is very common. Again budget provided for education are not wholly used for its designed purpose because of the corrupted leaders. In order to prevent that, national and popular democratic monitoring of financial investments in education must be enriched. Further, from the perspective of our country it is necessary to note here that though in the last 15 years, a huge number of schools have been established, still a large number of schools should be set up in some of the rural areas where there are no schools or there are schools of poor condition.

Then take the case of awareness raising. Education makes a person more conscious than in any other ways. Inclusion of knowledge about child labour in school curriculum may also be used as a method of awareness building. At the same time government and other non government organizations may make people aware through distributing leaflet among the common mass; showing advertisement, movie and short films on the television.

Income generation and employment creation for adults help to reduce poverty which leads to, besides poverty elimination, child-centred educative sensitivity and awareness raising, effective solution of child labour problem.

Imposition of sanctions on the products produced by child labour may help to drive out child labour from the labour market. The products may be boycotted either by consumers or governments and most known recent example is perhaps consumer boycotts of Nike sports gear produced with child labour. In this case the imposition of sanctions by the U.S. Government on the import of products made with child labour in our country may be referred to, which took place in 1993, after the passing of the “Child Labour Deterrence Act” widely known as the Harkin Bill after the name of its initiator, Tom Harkin. This Bill had considerable impact on the garment factory owners of Bangladesh as they employed a large number of underage children. Actually after the passing of the Act, the garment owners felt threatened to lose U.S.A. as the single largest importer of Bangladesh garments, consequently they dismissed a large number of underage children from employment.

It is to be noted that this boycotting procedure without making any arrangement for rehabilitation of children only conceal the employment of children, deprive them of their due wages and place them in more exploitative areas on the streets which are not covered by any law. Similar was and is the situation of the garment child workers after the enactment of the Bill.

So along with boycotting products the child workers have to be rehabilitated as well as child-friendly values have to be developed among some groups of society who very often try to get the benefit of cheap, productive and obedient child workers.

In rural areas employment opportunities in various sectors has to be created so that the villagers are not inclined to go to urban areas for seeking employment which virtually in many cases land them into insecurity, instability and poverty and actually this urbanization and migration lead migrated people to send their children to work in order to free themselves from the unavoidable circumstances of the urban life.
When legislation on child labour are discussed, some issues as regards child legislation are necessary to be pointed out. Policy and legal instruments dealing with other issues such as gender-based violence and child labour are often narrow in focus and do not address the best interests of children experiencing violence. Laws against child labour are applicable only to the formal economic sectors. But most children who work in the informal sector, such as small factories, workshops, motor garage, shops, agriculture or domestic work, are not regulated by law nor are these establishments monitored by any government agency. Again, legislation concerning child labour is proper from the context of prohibiting it but is improper for not implementing the concerned laws. For this reason enforcement procedures has to be strengthened and law enforcement agencies have to be free from any influence. The old archaic laws have to be excluded and according to the changing socio-economic circumstances new laws covering the informal sectors not embraced in the Act at the present time have to be passed. In case of changing the domestic laws government may follow the standards set by the international forum. Based on its constitutional obligation and its commitment to international standards on children (CRC and the Worst Forms of Child Labour ILO Convention No. 182), it is obvious that the government will need to take the lead in pursuing child labour elimination goals, in order to meets it long-term development needs. The most important recommendations are therefore those that relate to the adoption of the establishment of an inter-ministerial National Taskforce on Child Labour and Education, a review and effective implementation of the Labour Act (2006) and the urgent need to increase the capacity of the recently established Child Labour Unit and to ensure that the Unit can bear its responsibilities and function effectively.

Truly speaking, the causes of child labour are complex; the problem can’t be driven out through removing poverty or enacting new laws, as such all the above mentioned ways should be taken into account and has to be advanced accordingly. It is also necessary to bear in mind that only the government can play an effective role in the progressive elimination of child labour but in case of awareness raising education programmes, rehabilitation etc. the humanitarian and non government organizations (NGOs) and in terms of financial assistance the donor countries have to come forward as it is impossible on the part of government to tackle all the matters single handed. In a word, just as treatment depends on the proper identification of disease, similarly if the above measures have to be taken in accordance with the aforementioned causes, then only it will help to decrease child labour and ultimately pave the way for child labour elimination from the society totally in future.

Conclusion:

Children are the future hope of a nation. Therefore, if they are exploited at a very early age, they would not be able to contribute to the country and would hamper progress. Moreover, children consistently expressed their concerns about the absence of a safe environment, which leads to violence, abuse and exploitation within the family, community, street, work place, and school, in state and non-state institutions and also in the justice system. The current governance deficit in Bangladesh has further aggravated the situation because the duty bearers such as lawmakers, executives, police, probation officers, and even judges remain insensitive to children’s rights and fail to provide protection, special care and treatment. In recent years, however, child rights have featured increasingly in policy debates and discussions amongst government officials and NGOs. News reports on violence and torture against children in the print media and in the private TV channels have
increased. Many organizations are also working to sensitize the public so that there is increased awareness of child rights. It is necessary to mention here that the government is committed to protect the child but it lacks depth of understanding and consistent planning. That’s why action at the national level is needed now, as timely taken steps can only bring positive impact on decreasing or elimination of child labour from all tiers of the society. But in case of taking action in full conformity with reality, all the factors such as, economic, social, political, cultural have to be taken into consideration. Further, it is not proper in the context of existing social system to refrain children from work which only breeds poverty, rather initiatives have to be taken at first to keep them away from exploitative and dangerous works and to provide appointment letter, identity card to ensure the payment of their due wages and other rights as workers, which other adult workers enjoy, has to be ascertained. In this case we have to pay serious attention to the working children so that they could finish the basic schooling beside light work.

Moreover, child sensitivity approach has to be strong along with adopting multiplier measures. But the good news is that child labour problem has attracted a large concerted attention in recent times and the government, NGOs and some private organizations are, though less than needed, working with a view to solving the problem and consequently the rate of child labour has decreased in a little. Further, Bangladesh is a signatory to, and has ratified, most of the major international conventions related to children, except for the ILO Minimum Age Convention (No.138). Again, it has introduced a number of policies and plans over the years intended to reduce or eliminate child labour.

Bangladesh is obliged under both national and international law to protect and promote the rights and interests of children. The Constitution of Bangladesh and the Children’s Act 1974 guarantees basic and fundamental human rights and ensures affirmative action for children. These rights are the guiding principles for formulating policies and laws relating to child development. In conclusion we earnestly hope that as Bangladesh is one of the earliest signatories of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), therefore these initiatives will be widespread and the affluent, elite countries and international organizations will come forward to help our government and NGOs not only in case of financial assistance but also in the actual performance of the field-level work.

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