Normative Deprivation in Urban Bangladesh:
A Case Study of Uttara, Dhaka

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Abstract: The study focuses on the construction of social necessity by both adults and children in an affluent section of urban Bangladesh. The study has improvised on a British poverty study by Gordon et al. (2000). The data for this study come from a sample survey of 360 respondents (for adult poverty) and 265 respondents (for child poverty) from Uttara, Dhaka in 2008. The normative deprivation index for Uttara shows that 40 items out of 48 appear significant as more than 50 percent respondents consider them as necessary. More than 90 percent respondents agree on the importance of 9 items for adult poverty: three meals a day, fan, celebrating special occasions, television, mobile, good job, medicine prescribed by doctor, refrigerator and household furniture. It is found that more than 90 percent respondents agree on the importance of 10 items for child poverty: three meals a day, major requirements prescribed by school, sufficient baby milk, warm/properly fitted shoes, toys, meat, fish or vegetarian equivalent at least once a day, celebrating birth day, bi-cycle and home computer. It is also found that the extent of adult and child normative deprivation is 30 percent and 26 percent respectively. The chi-square test shows that the deprivation index is significantly related to selected demographic and socio-economic variables like gender, age, marital status, occupation, education and household size. It is argued that the item-wise difference between Bangladesh and British normative deprivation is due to the cultural differences of two societies.

1. Introduction

Poverty is usually defined and conceptualized as absolute poverty. At the core of this lies the notion of subsistence and destitution, which is traditionally measured by the poverty line estimated as a lack of minimum material provisions required for the continuation of physical existence. The requirement for food, shelter, clothing and sundries were converted into monetary units, weekly or monthly income (Booth, 1889; Rowntree, 1901, 1941). However, with the affluence of the western societies, especially Britain, the concept of absolute poverty was replaced by the notion of relative poverty (Townsend, 1954, 1979, 1993; Abel Smith and Townsend, 1965). While absolute poverty is claimed to be defined objectively, the relative poverty is defined subjectively as some element of judgment is involved in determining poverty levels and is viewed as the normative deprivation. It is constructed from a subjectively agreed upon construction of social necessity, which includes items like diet, social activities, and living conditions and amenities (Townsend, 1979).

The measurement of poverty in the United States and other European countries is done through an official poverty line based on income proxy measures. In the United States, the official poverty threshold

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for two-person families was computed by applying a multiplier of 1/0.27, or 3.7 derived from the 1955 Household Food Consumption Survey, where a food/total-after-tax-money-income ratio of 0.27 was used (Orshansky, 1965). In the 1980s, budget standards method was used following data published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (Viet-Wilson, 1986). The Watts Committee also used expenditure pattern for measuring the poverty threshold.[1] In most European countries, the poverty line is measured by the income proxy measures as income below 60 percent of the median income (Kangas and Ritakallio, 1998). The Leyden poverty line uses the income proxy measure for various European countries in order to construct an ordinal scale poverty threshold that ranges from very bad to very good consensual standard of living (Van Praag et al., 1982). Unlike the United States and other countries, in Britain there is no official definition of poverty and measurement of poverty line. Drawing on the absolutist tradition of Rowntree, which is based on a list of necessities, the poverty line was measured by the budget standards method (Rowntree, 1901, 1941; Rowntree and Lavers, 1951; Bradshaw et al, 1987). During 1960s Supplementary Benefit[2] was used as an indicator of poverty (Abel-Smith and Townsend, 1965; Bradshaw and Morgan, 1987; Bradshaw and Holmes, 1989; Bradshaw and Ernst, 1990; Piachaud, 1979; Yu, 1992).

Rather than relying on income for measuring poverty in the United Kingdom like income proxy measures or budget standard and supplementary benefit, Townsend (1979) relied on people's subjective understanding of poverty labeled as relative deprivation index. His measurement is criticized as behavioral and not a consensual as they involve the judgment of experts or researchers in determining acceptable indicators of deprivation (Desai, 1986). These deficiencies were taken into account in the work of Mack and Lansly (1985, 1992), who used a list of indicators and asked their respondents whether or not they thought (a) each potential indicator was necessary to avoid hardship; (b) whether the respondents lacked those indicators, and (c) whether this lack was due to the lack of resources to purchase them. Thus poverty was conceptualized as "consensual" if 50 percent and more respondents agreed that the lack of an item constituted poverty. Accordingly 26 items were listed to measure poverty of which 5 items were suggested by the respondents and 21 items were provided by the researchers. The survey classified poverty into two categories, poor--who lack three or more items, and severely poor--who lack seven or more items.[3] Drawing on this tradition, out of 54 items, Gordon et al. (2000) created a list of 35 poverty items that more than 50 per cent of the respondents considered necessary to avoid poverty. They extended Mack and Lansley's methodology by adding additional dimensions of poverty and including exclusion as well as child poverty along with adult poverty. Poor is defined by them as those who are unable to afford at least two socially defined necessities.

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[1] Watts Committee distinguished three levels of expenditure pattern: (i) prevailing family standard, which was fixed at a median income level, (ii) social minimum standard, which was fixed at 50 percent below median income, and (iii) social abundance standard, which was fixed at 50 percent above median income (Alcock, 1993:65).
[2] It is a means-tested cash benefit paid by the state to people whose income did not reach a level deemed appropriate by Parliament for subsistence
[3] Their methodology was applied in the study of consensual poverty in Sweden as well (Halleröd, 1994).

This methodology is adopted in other poverty studies as in Denmark (Mack and Lansley, 1985), Sweden (Halleröd, 1994, 1995a, 1995b, 1998), Ireland (Callan, Nolan and Whelan, 1993; Nolan and Whelan, 1996a), Belgium (Van den Bosch, 1998), Holland (Muffels et al., 1990; Muffels and Vries, 1991; Muffels, Berghman and Dirven, 1992), Finland (Kangas and Ritakillio, 1998), Germany (Andreß and Lipsmeir, 1995) and Vietnam (Davies and Smith, 1998).

However no study as such is conducted in the Third World countries. In Bangladesh, poverty is basically conceptualized from the perspective of destitution and subsistence rather than of deprivation. A recent study by Ahmed (2007) conceptualized poverty as normative deprivation and measured poverty in the earlier traditions of Townsend, Mack and Lansley, Halleröd and Gordon et al., especially of consensual approach. The study also compares poverty situation of Bangladesh with Britain and Sweden. The normative deprivation index for Bangladesh in 2000 is constructed by 17 items out of 69 items listed. Thus more than 50 percent of respondents perceive the absence of 17 items as constituting poverty. More than 70 percent respondents agreed on the importance of 7 items: (i) three meals a day for children, (ii) two meals a day for adults, (iii) quilt for every member of the household; (iv) milk for babies, (v) celebration of religious festivals, (vi) pillow for every member of the household, and (vii) one pair of all-weather shoes. The chi-square test showed that the deprivation index was significantly related to occupation, education and age followed by residence, income and gender.

However, the study did not include child poverty nor it included items like "items don't have," "items don't have because don't want" and "items don't have because can't afford." In order to fill this research gap and adopt the poverty approach of Gordon et al. (2000), the present is conceived at a micro level to include the northern part of Dhaka known as Uttara. It is a fast-growing model town under Dhaka City Corporation and is inhabited by cross-section of the population.

2. Objective of Study

The main objective of this study is to measure adult and child poverty in terms of relative deprivation as subjectively perceived and objectively experienced by the respondents in an affluent section of urban Bangladesh.

3. Definition and Measurement of Variables

Adult and child poverty are defined as the multiple forms of deprivation. Following the tradition of Townsend (1979), Mack and Lansley (1985, 1992) and Gordon et al. (2000), it is measured as a consensual poverty, where more than fifty per cent of the respondents agree that the lack of a particular item constitutes a poverty situation. This study adopts measurement of poverty in PSE Survey by Gordon et al. (2000) in the context of Bangladesh. However, while adopting the measurement of child poverty in the PSE Survey, which only asked parents about their children's relative deprivation, the present study

improvised the measurement by directly asking children as well as their parents. The 48 items selected for measuring relative deprivation are an adoption of Gordon et al. (2000) in the context of Bangladesh. Wherever possible, the items used for UK are retained and few items are tailored to the Bangladesh situation.

4. Methodology and Data Source

The data for this study come from a simple random survey (SRS) of 625 respondents from Uttara (sectors no. 4, 7 and 13), Dhaka. This sample size is divided into two sections i.e. adult poverty (360) and child poverty (265). For adult poverty, 189 females and 171 males have been surveyed whilst for child poverty; the number of female child and male child are respectively 126 and 139. The data were collected during January 2008 to July 2008. The survey followed multi-stage stratified sampling procedures. Firstly, Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has been purposively selected among urban areas of Bangladesh as the only mega city of the country. Secondly, Uttara Thana has been selected randomly through lottery from among its 22 constituent Thanas. Thirdly, from among 14 sectors of Uttara Thana, 3 sectors-- 4, 7 and 13--are randomly selected for this research. These 3 sectors have 5,585 households. From this universe of household a sample household of 360 is estimated by using statistical method of determination of sample size, where .05 errors are allowed. By using a systematic sampling technique, one each adult and child respondents were selected from among 360 households. Though 720 respondents are expected (360 adults and 360 children), due to absence of children in 95 households, 625 respondents, 360 adults, 265 children are selected for survey. It must be noted here that the Interview Schedule for the adult poverty comprises 48 items of which 37 are from PSE Survey and 11 items are constructed from a thorough pre-testing to adapt to the Bangladesh situation. Similarly, the interview schedule for the child poverty includes 23 items of which 18 items are from PSE survey and 5 items are from pre-testing.

5. Characteristics of the Respondents

A: Adult Poverty

The majority of the respondents (53%) are females, and an overwhelming number (85%) are married. They are mostly young adults, 22 percent of the respondents are in the age group of 35-39 and 31 percent come from nuclear family structure of a small household of four. The majority of the respondents are highly educated, about 72 percent have at least a Bachelor's degree. Most respondents (26%) are found to be housewives followed by businessmen (18%). The reported expenditure pattern shows that single majority, 46 percent of the respondents have expenditure above the national average, between Tk.20,000 and Tk.35,000.

B: Child Poverty

There are two types of respondents, children themselves, who are aged above ten (38%) and proxy parents (62%) for children less than 10 years of age. Therefore, the survey does not give the actual gender breakdown of the child respondents; instead it reports information from parents and children for about 52 percent male children and 48 percent female children. Among 265 children for which data have been collected from both types of respondents, 41 percent are in the age group of 5-10, 37 percent study in Grade I-V; 73 percent children study in English medium schools whereas 20 percent study in Bengali medium schools.

6. Findings

6.1 Adult Poverty

6.1.1 Social Construction of Necessity and Normative Deprivation

Table 1 which gives the normative deprivation index for adults in Uttara contains four columns representing four different poverty features--(a) items considered 'necessary', (b) items that respondents have, (c) items that respondents do not have because they do not want, and (d) items that respondents do not have because they can not afford.

The column 2 of the Table 1 which indicates items considered 'necessary' shows that

a. 50 percent and more respondents perceive 40 items out of 48 items as socially necessary, the lack of which constitutes poverty; [4]
b. More than 90 percent respondents consider 9 items as socially necessary. They are: (i) three meals a day, (ii) a fan at home, (iii) celebrating especial occasion, (iv) television, (v) mobile, (vi) a good job, (vii) medicine prescribed by doctor, (viii) refrigerator and (ix) household furniture.

The column 3 of Table 1 which shows items that respondents have, indicates that

a. All respondents have three items--three meals a day, fan at home and celebrating especial occasions;
b. 50 percent and more of the respondents have 43 items out of 48 items;

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[4] A peculiar feature of normative deprivation items in Bangladesh show seven items like (i) washing machine, (ii) dishwasher, (iii) CD player, (iv) cassette player, (v) ownership of motorbike, (vi) carpets in living room/bed room, (vii) new clothes in a month are viewed as necessary by less than 50 percent of the respondents because they have some alternative means for those items, for example, servant at home, computer, private car, well decorated tiles, and many new clothes in every 3 or 4 months. The item 'a meal in a restaurant once a weak' is found costly and replaced by arranging cooking of gourmet food at home.

c. Between 43 percent and 17 percent of the respondents have five items--motorbike (17%), dishwasher (23%), a meal in a restaurant once a weak (21 %), washing machine (44%) and new clothes in a month (26%).

The column 4 of the Table 1 which shows items that respondents do not have because they do not want, indicates that

a. More than 50 percent of the respondents do not have only two items--dish washer and motorbike--because they do not want them; and

b. Less than 50 percent of the respondents do not have 46 items because they do not want them.

The column 5 of Table 1 which shows items that respondents do not have because they can not afford it, indicates that between 30 percent and 37 percent respondents do not have 45 items because they cannot afford them, among them the most important items are air cooler (30%), own house (31%), washing machine (34%), IPS/generator (34%), car (35%), and a meal in a restaurant once a weak (37%).

Thus Table 1 shows that social construction of the necessities of life is more wide-ranging and multidimensional, which includes food items, clothing, communication, amenities, economic security and sociability.

a. As far as food items are concerned, all respondents think that 'three meals a day' is a necessary item but 51 percent and 21 percent respondents consider 'a meal in a restaurant once a month' and 'a meal in a restaurant once a weak' as necessary respectively. Similarly, 78 percent respondents think meat, fish, and fruits equivalent every other day as necessary.

b. Regarding clothing, 'trendy cloth' is followed by 'new clothes in a month' as necessary items by 58 percent and 26 percent respondents respectively. Likewise, 71 percent and 51 percent respondents consider owning a house and having three pair of shoes socially necessary respectively.

c. With respect to communication items, degree of necessity varies item-wise, for example, television (96%), mobile (95%), daily newspapers (90%), satellite television (80%), home computer (79%), telephone (77%), and internet (57%).

d. Regarding amenities, degree of necessity also varies item-wise, for example, a fan (100%), refrigerators (92%), replace or repair broken electrical goods (81%), camera (74%), charger light (67%), car (66%), IPS/generator (65%), air cooler (65%), microwave oven (63%) and wrist watch (62%).

Table 1: Social Construction of Necessity and Normative Deprivation Index (in percent)
N=360

Items for the Adults (18/+)	Considered Necessary	Items have	Don't have don't want	Don't have can't afford
Three meals a day	100	100	…	…
A fan at home	100	100	…	…
Celebrating especial occasions	100	100	…	…
Television	96.2	98.7	0.6	0.7
Mobile	94.9	96.8	1.3	1.9
Medicine prescribed by doctor	94.2	95.5	0.6	3.9
A good job	94.2	81.4	1.9	16.7
Refrigerators	92.3	97.4	0.6	2.0
Household furniture	91.7	96.2	1.3	2.5
Having a daily newspaper	89.7	87.2	7.1	5.7
Regular monthly savings	85.3	70.5	13.2	16.3
Visits to friends or relatives	83.3	84.6	2.6	12.8
Servant at home	80.8	85.3	9.6	5.1
Replace or repair broken electrical goods	80.8	89.7	0.6	9.7
A small amount of money to spend on self weekly	79.5	73.7	24.4	1.9
Satellite television	79.5	90.4	7.1	2.5
Home computer	78.8	67.9	12.8	19.3
Meat, Fish, fruits equivalent every other day	78.2	81.4	9.6	9.0
Telephone	76.6	78.8	3.8	17.4
Gifts to friends/ family once a year	75.6	85.9	6.4	7.7
Collect children from school	75.0	75.0	11.5	13.5
Camera	73.7	84.6	3.8	11.6
Attending weddings/funerals	73.1	87.8	6.4	5.8
Hobby or leisure activity	72.4	68.6	7.6	23.8
Own house	70.5	59.0	10.3	30.7
Charger light	66.7	78.8	11.5	9.7
Car	66.0	55.1	9.6	35.3
IPS/generator	65.4	51.9	14.1	34.0
Air Cooler (AC)	65.3	54.5	15.4	30.1
Holiday away from home once a year with	64.7	53.2	20.5	26.3

family				
Microwave oven	62.2	65.4	9.6	25.0
Having wrist watch	61.5	82.1	4.5	13.4
Having trendy cloth	57.7	76.3	13.5	10.2
Access to internet	57.1	51.3	27.3	21.4
Replace worn out furniture	53.8	78.6	6.4	15.0
Ornaments for special occasion	52.6	75.0	13.5	11.5
Three pair of shoes	51.3	83.3	10.3	6.4
Celebrating wedding day/birth/death anniversary	51.3	75.6	11.5	12.9
A meal in a restaurant once a month	51.3	63.5	14.1	22.4
Having an access to standard coaching center	50.0	51.9	19.2	28.9
Washing machine	43.6	35.3	31.2	33.5
CD player	40.4	61.5	32.9	5.6
Cassette player	35.9	59.0	34.2	6.8
Carpets in living room/ bed room	28.2	52.6	33.7	13.7
New clothes in a month	26.3	37.8	36.5	25.7
Dishwasher	23.0	17.9	58.8	23.3
A meal in a restaurant once a weak	21.2	28.2	35.3	36.5
Ownership of motorbike	16.7	10.9	75.9	13.2

e. The economic items considered socially necessary are: a good job (94%), cost of medicine (94%), monthly savings (85%), servant at home (81%), and a weekly amount of money to spend on self (80%).

f. Sociability also appears an important dimension of social necessity and the degree of necessity varies item-wise, for example, celebrating special occasions (100%), visits to friends or relatives (83%), gifts to friends/ family once a year (76%), collect children from school (75%), attending weddings/funerals (73 %), hobby or leisure activity (72%), holiday away from home once a year (65%), ornaments for special occasion (53%) and celebrating wedding/birth/death anniversary (51%).

6.1.2 Poverty Categories

The normative deprivation index gives us an indication of the poverty categories as well. On the basis of the number of items that the respondents actually lack, it is possible to construct two different categories of poor--poor and severely poor. Respondents are considered 'poor' if they lack at

least two socially defined necessities, whereas they are considered 'severely poor' if they lack at least seven necessary items. If they lack up to one item, they are classified as 'not poor'. It must be noted here that the survey findings showed three items--three meals a day, a fan at home and celebrating special occasions–were possessed by all respondents. Thus like Gordon et al. (2000), we dropped these three items in the construction of poverty threshold. As Table 2 below shows, on the basis of these thresholds 30 percent respondents are found as overall poor—17 percent poor and 13 percent severely poor.

Table 2: Poverty Classifications

Poverty Classifications	Number	Percent
Not poor	251	70
Poor	63	17
Severely poor	46	13
Total	**360**	**100**

6.1.3 Poverty Profile

Table 3 which gives profiles of the poor in terms of gender, household size, age, marital status, level of education, expenditure and ethnicity of the respondents, shows that female (54%), households having eight members (22%), young adults of 35-39 (24%), married (84%), Bachelor's and above degree holders (42%), families having monthly expenditure between Tk.15,000 and Tk.19,999 (24%) and Bangladeshis (99%) are more likely to be poor.

Table 3: Poverty Profile

Variable	Category	Percent
Gender	Female	54
Size of household	Eight	22
Age of respondent	35-39	24
Marital status	Married	84
Level of education	Bachelor's	42
Household expenditure	Tk.15,000-Tk.19,999	24
Ethnicity of the respondent	Bangladeshi	99

6.1.4 Correlates of Normative Deprivation Index

Table 4 which gives the summary of the significant association found at chi-value, shows factors that are significantly associated with the items of normative deprivation index. It is found that the deprivation index is significantly related to selected demographic and socio-economic variables like gender, age, marital status, occupation, education and household size.[5] It shows that occupation, education and household size are the key correlates of the normative deprivation in terms of number of items significantly related. Next in importance is monthly expenditure followed by age and marital status. Sex appears to be least influential in the construction of social necessity in Uttara.

Table 4: Summary of Chi- square Test on Deprivation Index by Sex by Age by Marital status by Household size by Occupation by Education by Expenditure

Items for Adults	Gender	Age	Marital status	Household size	Occupation	Education	Expenditure
Three meals a day	X^2=1.828 df=1;α=.001	X^2=4.064 df=11;α=.001	-	X^2=2.442 df=7;α=.001	X^2=3.247 df=35;α=.05	X^2=3.179 df=5;α=.001	X^2=8.266 df=13;α=.05
A fan at home	-	-	-	X^2=4.558 df=7;α=.01	-	-	X^2=5.661 df=13;α=.001
Television	-	-	X^2=1.191 df=3;α=.001	-		X^2=6.293 df=5;α=.001	-
Mobile	X^2=2.569 df=1;α=.001	X^2=6.437 df=11;α=.01	X^2=1.131 df=3;α=.001	X^2= 7.237 df=7;α=.05	X^2= 45.292 df=35;α=.001	-	-
A good job	-	-	-	-	-	X^2=7.077 df=5;α=.001	X^2=25.762 df=13;α=.001
Medicine cost	X^2=1.417 df=1;α=.001	X^2=14.555 df=11;α=.001	-	-	X^2=38.286 df=35;α=.001	-	X^2=5.727 df=7;α=.05
Refrigerators	-	-	X^2=1.744 df=3;α=.05	X^2=5.727 df=7;α=.001	-	-	-
Household furniture	-	X^2=11.821 df=11;α=.001	-	X^2= 7.405 df=7;α=.001	-	X^2= 7.924 df=5;α=.001	X^2=12.201 df=13;α=.001
Daily newspaper	-	X^2=7.589 df=11;α=.001	-	-	X^2=41.081 df=35;α=.05	-	-
Monthly savings	X^2=13.215 df=11;α=.001	-	-	X^2=3.942 df=1;α=.01	-	X^2=5.085 df=3;α=.001	-
Celebrating occasions	X^2=1.235 df=3;α=.001	X^2= 7.457 df=13;α=.001	-	X^2=2.010 df=3;α=.001	-	-	X^2=17.301 df=14;α=.001
Visits to friends	$X^2$2.889 df=1;α=.001	-	X^2=10.670 df=3;α=.001	-	X^2=34.463 df=35;α=.001	-	-
Replace broken goods	-	X^2=10.807 df=11;α=.001	-	X^2=15.767 df=7;α=.001	-	X^2=3.657 df=5;α=.05	- X^2=15.767 df=7;α=.05
Servant	X^2=5.509 df=1;α=.001	-	X^2=2.614 df=3;α=.001	-	X^2=45.807 df=35;α=.001	-	X^2=1.417 df=;1=.001
Satellite television	-	X^2=6.902 df=11;α=.001	-	X^2=11.150 df=7;α=.05	-	X^2=6.932 df=5;α=.001	-
Money to spend for self	X^2=15.709 df=11;α=.001	-	X^2=2.226 df=3;α=.001	X^2=2.676 df=7;α=.01	X^2=29.362 df=35;α=.01	X^2=16.952 df=11;α=.01	X^2=25.658 df=11;α=.001
Home computer	X^2= 1.726 df=1;α=.05	-	-	-	X^2= 46.462 df=35;α=.05	-	-
Meat/Fish	X^2=2.261	-	X^2=2.280	-	-	X^2=6.272	X^2=2.226

[5] Given the predominance of nominal level of measurement, the chi-square test is preferred for measuring the association. Many associations between independent variables and items of the deprivation index are found significant at α=.001, α=.01 and α=.05 levels of significance.

every day	df=1;α=.001		df=3;α=.001			df=5;α=.001	df=3;α=.5
Telephone	-	-	-	X^2=13.348 df=7;α=.001	-	-	-
Gifts to friends	X^2=10.807 df=11;α=.001	X^2=2.612 df=3;α=.001	-		X^2=3.657 df=5;α=.001	X^2=10.946 df=13;α=.05	X^2= 38.603 df=35;α=.001
Collect children	-	-	X^2=2.280 df=3;α=.001	-	-	-	-
Camera		X^2=13.823 df=11;α=.001	-	X^2=5.410 df=7;α=.001	-	X^2=2.922 df=5;α=.001	X^2=10.032 df=13;α=.001
Attending weddings	-	-	-	X^2=2.232 df=7;α=.001	X^2=40.024 df=35;α=.05	-	X^2=18.192 df=13;α=.05
Leisure activity	X^2=2.706 df=1;α=.001	-	X^2=2.226 df=3;α=.001	-	-	X^2=6.942 df=5;α=.01	-
Own house	- X^2=1.250 df=1;α=.001	-	-	X^2=14.283 df=7;α=.001	X^2=41.958 df=35;α=.001	X^2=4.130 df=5;α=.001	-
Charger light	-	-	X^2=1.254 df=3;α=.001	-	X^2=40.024 df=35;α=.05	-	X^2=13.192 df=13;α=.001
Car	X^2=2.706 df=1;α=.001	X^2=14.846 df=11;α=.001	-	-	-	X^2=6.952 df=5;α=.01	-
IPS/generator	-	-	-	-	X^2=38.623 df=35;α=.01	-	X^2=20.011 df=13;α=.001
Air cooler	-	X^2=12.798 df=11;α=.001	X^2=1.858 df=3;α=.001	X^2=6.465 df=7;α=.05	X^2=36.478 df=35;α=.001	X^2=16.424 df=5;α=.001	X^2=26.566 df=13;α=.001
Holiday away once a year	-	-	-	-	X^2= 2.015 df=3;α=.05	-	-
Microwave oven	-	X^2=10.554 df=11;α=.001	-	X^2=2.626 df=7;α=.05	-	X^2=10.536 df=5;α=.001	X^2=20.699 df=13;α=.001
Having wrist watch	X^2=2.010 df=2;α=.001	-	-	-	-	X^2=15.884 df=10;α=.01	-
Having trendy cloth	-	-	-	X^2= 2.492 df=7;α=.001	X^2= 35.044 df=35;α=.001	-	X^2=13.261 df=13;α=.001
Access to internet	-	X^2= 10.621 df=11;α=.001	X^2= 1.563 df=3;α=.05	-	-	-	-
Replace worn out furniture	X^2=1.785 df=1;α=.001	-	-	X^2=6.886 df=7;α=.05	X^2=39.987 df=35;α=.001	-	X^2=10.659 df=13;α=.001
Ornaments for occasion	-	-	X^2= 2.093 df=3;α=.001	-	-	X^2=2.327 df=5;α=.001	-
Three pair of shoes	X^2=1.004 df=1;α=.05	-	-	X^2= 17.671 df=7;α=.001	X^2=48.598 df=35;α=.001	-	X^2=15.569 df=13;α=.001
Restaurant once a month	X^2=1.604 df=1;α=.001	X^2=7.881 df=11;α=.05	-	-	-	X^2=6.272 df=5;α=.001	-
Celebrating birth day	-	-	-	-	X^2= 38.524 df=35;α=.001	-	X^2= 28.221 df=13;α=.001
Coaching center	X^2=1.645 df=1;α=.001	-	X^2= 6.820 df=3;α=.01	X^2= 2.492 df=3;α=.001	-	X^2=10.582 df=5;α=.05	X^2=13.261 df=11;α=.001

The Table 4 above shows that:

a. **Gender** is significantly related to 19 items: three meals a day, mobile, medicine prescribed by doctor, monthly savings, celebrating special occasion, visits to friends or relatives, servant, a small amount of money, home computer, meat/fish/fruits or vegetarian equivalent every other day, gifts to friends/family once a year, hobby or leisure activity, own house, car, wrist watch, replace worn out furniture, three pair of shoes, a meal in a restaurant once a month and having an access to standard coaching center.

b. **Age** is significantly related to 15 items: three meals a day, mobile, medicine prescribed by doctor, household furniture, newspaper, celebrating special occasion, repair broken electrical goods, satellite television, gifts to friends/family once a year, camera, car, air cooler, microwave oven, access to internet and a meal in a restaurant once a month.

c. **Marital Status** is significantly related to 14 items: television, mobile, refrigerator, visits to friends or relatives, servant, a small amount of money, meat/fish/fruits or vegetarian equivalent every other day, collect children from school, hobby or leisure activity, charger light, air cooler, access to internet, ornaments for special occasion, having an access to standard coaching center.

d. **Household size** is significantly related to 20 items: three meals a day, a fan at home, mobile, refrigerators, household furniture, monthly savings, celebrating special occasion, repair broken electrical goods, satellite television, a small amount of money, telephone, camera, attending weddings/funerals, own house, air cooler, microwave oven, having trendy cloth, replace worn out furniture, three pair of shoes, having an access to standard coaching center.

e. **Occupation** is significantly related to 20 items: three meals a day, mobile, medicine prescribed by doctor, newspaper, visits to friends or relatives, servant, a small amount of money, home computer, gifts to friends/family once a year, attending weddings/funerals, own house, charger light, IPS/generator, air cooler, holiday away from home, having trendy cloth, replace worn out furniture, three pair of shoes, celebrating wedding day/birth/death anniversary.

f. **Education** is significantly related to 20 items: three meals a day, television, good job, household furniture, monthly savings, repair broken electrical goods, satellite television, a small amount of money, meat, fish, fruits or vegetarian equivalent every other day, gifts to friends/family once a year, camera, hobby or leisure activity, own house, car, air cooler, microwave oven, having wrist watch, ornaments for special occasion, a meal in a restaurant once a month, having an access to standard coaching center.

g. **Expenditure** is significantly related to 18 items: three meals a day, a fan at home, good job, medicine prescribed by doctor, household furniture, celebrating especial occasions, repair broken electrical goods, servant, meat, fish, fruits or vegetarian equivalent every other day, gifts to friends/family once a year, camera, charger light, IPS/generator, microwave oven, having trendy cloth, three pair of shoes, celebrating wedding day/birth/death anniversary, having an access to standard coaching center.

6.2 Child Poverty

6.2.1 Social Construction of Necessity and Normative Deprivation

Table 5 which gives the normative deprivation index for children in Uttara contains four columns representing four different poverty features--(a) items considered 'necessary', (b) items that respondents have, (c) items that respondents do not have because they do not want, and (d) items that respondents do not have because they can not afford. The column 2 of the Table 5 which indicates items considered 'necessary' shows that 50 percent and more respondents perceive 16 items out of 23 items as socially necessary, the lack of which constitutes poverty. The sixteen items are as follows: three meals a day (100%), major requirements prescribed by school (100%), sufficient baby milk (100%), warm/properly fitted shoes (99%), toys (97%), meat, fish or vegetarian equivalent at least once a day (92%), celebrating birth day (92%), bi-cycle (91%), home computer (90%), at least 4 jumpers/cardigans or sweaters (83%), bedroom for every child of different sex over 11 years (79%), garden to play in (73%), play with peer group at least once a week (73%), visit or invitation to friends (64%), have an access to take music/dance/drawing lessons (60%).

The column 3 of Table 5 which shows items that respondents 'have', indicates that
   a. All respondents have three items--three meals a day, major requirement prescribed by school and sufficient baby milk.
   b. More than 50 percent of the respondents have 15 items out of 23 items.
   c. Less than 50 percent of the respondents have eight items--at least 7 pairs of new underpants (45%), house tutor (36%), new clothes in a month (34%), Mp3/Mp4 (33%), at least 4 pairs of trousers (33%), mobile phone (29%), a bed or bedding for self (28%), have an ipod/ ipod games/video games (23%).

The column 4 of the Table 5 which shows items that respondents do not have because they do not want, indicates that
   a. More than 50 percent of the respondents do not have 5 items because they do not want them. These items are: ipod/ipod games/video games (67%), Mp3/Mp4 (61%), house tutor (61%), mobile phone (60%), and new clothes in a month (57%).
   b. Less than 50 percent respondents do not have 15 items because they do not want them.

The column 5 of Table 5 which shows items that respondents do not have because they can not afford it, indicates that between 2 percent and 34 percent respondents do not have 21 items because they can not afford them, among them the most important items are: Garden to play in (34%), bedroom for every child of different sex over 11 years (34%), a bed or bedding for self (27%), home computer (20%), mobile phone (12%), meat, fish or vegetables equivalent at least once a day (11%).

Table 5: Social Construction of Necessity and Normative Deprivation Index (in percent)
N= 265

Items for Children (0-17 Years)	Necessary items	Items you Have	Don't have Don't want	Don't have can't afford
Three meals a day	100.0	100.0	…	…
Major requirements prescribed by school	100.0	100.0	…	…
Sufficient baby milk (0-10)	100.0	100.0	…	…
New/properly fitted shoes	98.6	97.2	0.6	2.2
Toys (0-10)	97.2	89.7	6.8	3.5
Meat, fish or vegetables equivalent at least once a day	92.3	84.6	4.2	11.2
Celebrating birth day	91.7	91.0	7.0	2.0
Bi-cycle	91.0	84.8	6.9	8.3
Home computer	90.0	64.4	15.9	19.7
At least 4 jumpers/ cardigans or sweaters	82.9	93.8	4.1	2.1
Bedroom for every child of different sex over 11 years	79.2	50.2	16.2	33.6
Garden to play in	73.1	62.8	3.2	34.0
Play with peer group at least once a week	73.1	70.3	21.4	8.3
Mobile phone (11-17)	67.3	28.6	59.8	11.6
Visits or invitations to friends (11-17)	63.5	70.2	23.2	6.6
Have an access to take Music/dance/drawing lessons	*60.0*	*53.8*	*42.8*	*3.4*
House tutor	47.0	36.0	60.6	3.4
Mp3/Mp4 (11-17)	40.9	33.5	61.0	5.5
At least 7 pairs of new underpants (0-10)	40.0	44.8	47.2	8.0
New clothes in a month	33.8	33.8	57.2	9.0
At least 4 pairs of trousers (11-17)	29.0	46.1	49.2	4.7
A bed or bedding for self (11-17)	28.3	27.6	45.9	26.5
Have an ipod/ ipod games/video games (11-17)	25.6	23.0	67.3	9.7

6.2.2 Poverty Categories

The normative deprivation index for child poverty gives us an indication of the poverty categories as well (see Table 6). On the basis of the number of items that the child/proxy respondents actually lack, it is possible to construct two different categories of poor—poor children and severely poor children. Respondents are considered 'poor' if they lack at least two socially defined necessities, whereas they are considered 'severely poor' if they lack at least five necessary items instead of seven items for adults. If they lack up to one item, they are classified as 'not poor'. It must be noted here that the survey findings showed three items—three meals a day, major requirements prescribed by school and sufficient baby milk–were possessed by all respondents. Thus like Gordon et al. (2000), we dropped these three items in the construction of child poverty threshold. As Table 6 below shows, on the basis of these thresholds 26 percent respondents are found as overall poor—18 percent poor and 8 percent severely poor.

Table 6: Poverty Classifications

Poverty Classifications	Number of Respondents	Percent

Not poor	197	74
Poor	47	18
Severely poor	21	8
Total	**265**	
		100

7. Discussion and Analysis

Table 7 compares adult normative deprivation between Bangladesh and Britain for ten most important deprivation items in each society. It shows that

a. Only three items--two/three meals a day, medicine prescribed by doctor and refrigerator-- are found to be common in both Bangladesh and Britain, though there are some differences in their degree of importance, for example, two/three meals a day is a number one item for Bangladesh, whereas it is a number five item for Britain. Similarly, refrigerator is number eight item for Bangladesh, whereas it is a number seven item for Britain. Interestingly enough, medicine prescribed by doctor has equal rank, six, in both societies.

b. Seven-set of items are found to be differently ranked in two different societies, for example, in Bangladesh seven items ranked from 2-5, 7, 9-10 in order, are: fan at home, celebrating special occasion, television, mobile, a good job, household furniture and daily newspaper. In Britain, seven items ranked from 1-4, 8-10 in order, are: beds and bedding for everyone, heating to warm living areas of the home, damp free home, visiting friends or family in hospital, fresh fruit and vegetables daily, warm/waterproof coat, replace or repair broken electrical goods.

Thus the influence of culture on the adult deprivation index is clearly demonstrated in the ranking and set of poverty items in Bangladesh and British societies. This is also evident in the case of child poverty. The British normative deprivation for child includes items like separate bed, warm coat, shoes, play, leisure activity, owning books, fresh meal and celebration of special occasions, whereas Bangladeshi child deprivation includes items like all kinds of food requirements, school requirements, winter clothes, shoes, toys, bicycle, celebrating birth day and computer. These items clearly reflect the notion of social necessity at a given time.

Table 7: Ten Most Important Adult Poverty Items in Britain and Bangladesh by Rank
(1=highest; 10=lowest)

Items	Bangladesh	Rank in Bangladesh	Britain	Rank in Britain
Two/three meals a day	X	1	X	5
A fan at home	X	2	-	
Celebrating special occasion	X	3	-	
Television	X	4	-	
Mobile	X	5	-	
Medicine prescribed by doctor	X	6	X	6
A good job	X	7	-	
Refrigerator	X	8	X	7
Household furniture	X	9	-	
Having a daily newspaper	X	10	-	
Beds and bedding for everyone	-		X	1
Heating to warm living areas of the home	-		X	2
Damp free home	-		X	3
Visiting friends or family in hospital	-		X	4
Fresh fruit and vegetables daily	-		X	8
Warm, waterproof coat	-		X	9
Replace or repair broken electrical goods	-		X	10

Table 8 compares child normative deprivation between Bangladesh and Britain for ten most important deprivation items in each society. It shows that

a. Only four items--two/three meals a day, major requirements prescribed by school, new/properly fitted shoes, meat-fish-fruits or vegetables equivalent once a day-- are found to be common in both Bangladesh and Britain, though there are some differences in their degree of importance, for example, three meals a day and 'major requirements prescribed by school' are number one and number two items respectively for Bangladesh, whereas they are number six and nine items respectively for Britain. Likewise, a new/properly fitted shoe is number 4 item for Bangladesh, whereas it is a number two item for Britain. Similarly, meat-fish-fruits or vegetables equivalent once a day is a number 6 item for Bangladesh, whereas it is a number four item for Britain.

b. Six-set of items are found to be differently ranked in two different societies, for example, in Bangladesh six items ranked from 3, 5, 7-10 in order, are: sufficient baby milk, toys, celebrating birth day, bi-cycle, home computer and at least 4 jumpers/cardigans or sweaters. In Britain, six items ranked from 1, 3, 5, 7-8, 10 in order, are: a bed or bedding for self, warm/water proof coat, celebrations on special occasions, meat/fish/fruits or vegetables equivalent once a day, books of own, play with peer group at least once a week and hobby or leisure activity.

It must be noted that child poverty indicates basically the adult poverty of their parents as they share the living standards of their parents. The item-wise difference is the reflection of the difference between

two cultures. Like mobile in the case of adult poverty, computer has become an important deprivation item of the child poverty under the influence of modernization.

Table 8: Ten Most Important Child Poverty Items in Britain and Bangladesh by Rank
(1=highest; 10=lowest)

Items	Bangladesh	Rank in Bangladesh	Britain	Rank in Britain
Three meals a day	X	1	X	6
Major requirements prescribed by school	X	2	X	9
Sufficient baby milk	X	3		
New/properly fitted shoes	X	4	X	2
Toys	X	5		
Meat-fish-fruits or vegetables equivalent once a day	X	6	X	4
Celebrating birth day	X	7		
Bi-cycle	X	8		
Home Computer	X	9		
At least 4 jumpers/ cardigans or sweaters	X	10		
A bed or bedding for self	-		X	1
Warm/water proof coat	-		X	3
Celebrations on special occasions	-		X	5
Books of own	-		X	7
Play with peer group at least once a week	-		X	8
Hobby or leisure activity	-		X	10

Furthermore, the extent of poverty in both societies show interesting pattern. The national adult poverty head count ratio for Bangladesh is 40 percent in 2005 ( ), whereas it is 26 percent for Britain in 1999. The present study reports 30 percent adult poverty for urban Bangladesh. This is pretty close to the findings of the British study. However, the child poverty shows more gap between two societies, 34 percent child poverty in Britain when one item poverty threshold is used, whereas for urban Bangladesh this study finds 26 percent when two items threshold is used. In fine, the normative deprivation for Bangladesh shows the influence of global culture as well as local culture in terms of item preference and the construction of social necessity.

8. Conclusion

Probably, the poverty of Bangladesh is the most researched and widely discussed topic in the world, though the issue of urban poverty is neglected (Ahmed, 2004d). The research gap is more glaring with respect to the study of consensual poverty, which was initiated by Ahmed (2007) and the present study is a continuation of such research tradition. Definitely, more research is required for other parts of Dhaka to present a comprehensive picture of the normative deprivation of urban Bangladesh. Despite the limitation of this research, it can be safely argued that the construction of social necessity in the 2000s is different from the earlier decades. The impact of globalization, especially the process of disembedding, has a serious consequence in continuously redefining and shifting the concept of necessity. As a result, the notion of poverty has become unstable in Bangladesh. This means that in the coming decades, the notion of poverty and the threshold of poverty would shift in Bangladesh along with the extent of poverty.

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