



## *Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology*

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## *Bangladesh e-Journal of Sociology*

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## Note from the Editor

This issue comes in amidst grave political crisis in Bangladesh. The confrontational political culture with high-handed administration and corruption at all levels have led to the current impasse. And to add to the anguish and despair of the nation, the way out may neither be easy nor soon.

On our part, like the rest of the country, we lend a hand to understand the scenario within our limited capabilities. Towards this end we feature a couple of articles dealing with corruption in administration and the amassing of ill-gotten fortunes. Masudur Rahman in trying to make sense of the economic and political nexus focuses on the analysis of various social mechanisms in which functioning of both state institutions and market institutions are circumvented by elite networks of various kind – political, bureaucratic and business. He shows that various elite sub-groups have the capability of employing state institutions in enhancing their particularistic interests. Md. Rezaul Karim, on the other hand, takes on the Bangladesh Public Service Commission and demonstrates how much of the corruption in administration is rooted in the very process of the selection of the administrators.

The major contribution of the issue, however, is a new measurement of poverty worked out by A.I. Mahbub Uddin Ahmed. Not happy with the head-count or the money-in-pocket kind of assessment of poverty Ahmed picks up a few British and Swedish studies of self assessment of poverty and very skillfully applies these to the situation in Bangladesh. What he comes up with is an exiting new “deprivation index” the application of which is likely to offer a whole new perspective on the poverty in Bangladesh.

Dilara Zahid with her study set on the opposite pole looks at the “rich kids” in Dhaka city. Focusing on a small group of the upper class boys and girls in Dhaka city she ventures into some taboo areas in trying to assess how exposure to the global media has influenced the behaviour, including sex, and thought process of the youngsters. Though it is a sample study and one may not want to conclude much from it, it is undoubtedly a bold step into to the private lives of the young of this generation.

The other two studies are of Nigeria. Muhammad Sani Umar and Usman Ahmad Karofi look at the female labour turnover in the Kebbi State Civil Service. They argue that the higher the perception of prevalence of certain non-work related factors, the earlier the decision by female workers to disengage from the civil service. On a similar note Bunmi Omolayo, looks at the effect of leadership style on job-related tension and psychological sense of community in work organization in Lagos. He shows that workers under democratic leadership style do not experience higher job-related tension compared to the workers under autocratic leadership style.

Thus, this issue, in keeping with the past, also brings in young and first time authors like Dilara Zahid and Md. Rezaul karim. We hope that their works will be as appreciated as those of their senior colleagues.

# Market - State - Civil Society Relations and Development in Post-Independent Bangladesh: Some Theoretical Reflections

Masudur Rahman\*

## Abstract:

During its short history of 36 years, Bangladesh has experienced both state intervention (1972-1975) and liberal market economy (1975- ), however with limited success. This paper presents analyses of various social mechanisms in which functioning of both state institutions and market institutions are circumvented by elite networks of various kind; political, bureaucratic and business. Both state institutions and market institutions seemingly are embedded in the mentioned elite networks. Various elite sub-groups have the capability of employing state institutions in enhancing their particularistic interests. Those with their ownership and control over vast economic resources command a disproportionate influence on the rest of the society including institutional function. They also had conflicting interests, and they were bitterly divided into different cliques. Members of different cliques prevented their rivals from access to resources and power. They adopted measures that further undermined the rule of law, democratic values and developmental goals.

## 1. Introduction

David Booth has raised some doubts about development research:

*“Crucial real-world problems were not being addressed and the gulf between academic inquiry and the various spheres of development policy and practice had widened to the point where practitioners were raising doubts about the ‘relevance’ of academic development studies”.*<sup>1</sup>

Peter Evans attributed such doubts to narrowly focused theories that: “fail to incorporate the importance of the informal norms and networks that make people collectively productive”<sup>2</sup>

In congruence with both these statements, I contend that doubts about the relevance of development studies are compounded by existing disagreements on the notion of development within dominating approaches, such as the market oriented neoliberal approach and the state oriented institutional approach. Due to their exclusive attention either to economic variables and the role of the market or of the state, both approaches have ignored some real problems in developing societies. I think that development studies must show an interest in the substantive real world problems including choices of developmental goals and means to achieve the desired goals. There is diversity regarding choice of goals and means as seen by experience of developed and the developing societies. What relates the substantive problems to diversity in development is the interconnectedness of choice-action-development relations. The interconnectedness implies social constructions of reality involving interactions between macro-institutions and networks of different kinds Varied patterns of interaction express diversities in social organisation of the economy, which in turn influence choice and action (both of individual and collective), politics and policy implementation.

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<sup>1</sup> Booth, D. 1994:3. Many other authors also agree that development theories have reached an impasse. See for instance Corbridge 1986; Sklair 1988.

<sup>2</sup> Evans, P.1996:1033.

This paper aims at developing a theoretical framework to understand interacting relationships between networks and institutional function regarding development. The framework shall account for the pattern of development as seen in Bangladesh.

The aim calls for a review of the assumptions of the neo-liberal, the institutional and new institutional approaches to study development and state-market-civil society relationships. Far from discounting these approaches, I will point out some specific theoretical and conceptual issues (which, I think development researchers need pay attention to when addressing the important topic of the roots of state and market performances in developing societies). My emphasis is on inner connections between the 'economic' market and the 'political' state that circumvent both the market and the state.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. A short introduction to development trends in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is one of the most difficult countries to get development projects going which really promote developmental goals. In addition to minimum infrastructural development, Bangladesh is bogged down in a situation from which a means of attaining developmental goals is difficult.

Development strategies in post-independent Bangladesh have been influenced by macroeconomic policies.<sup>4</sup> During its short history of 35 years, Bangladesh has experienced both state intervention (1972-1975) and market economy (1975- ). Both the strategies were aimed at economic growth, however, with limited success. On the contrary, both state-owned and private enterprises show deficits and large debt in their balance sheets. Following are some major features of its present socio-economic conditions.

Poverty has been coupled with growing disparity in terms of income distribution. According to BBS<sup>5</sup> data for 1995-96, the top 5% of the population controlled 23.62% of income, compared to 18.30% in 1983-84 and 18.85% in 1991-92. The income of the top 10% was 34.68% during the same period.

There has been increased inequality in terms of access to resources. The poor masses live below poverty level<sup>6</sup> while resources are concentrated into the hands of small elite groups (political, bureaucratic and business elites).

Elite groups in Bangladesh constitute a fraction of the total population (less than 2% of a total population of 130 million)<sup>7</sup> who are again concentrated in Dhaka. Despite their small number, the elites with their ownership and control over vast economic resources command a disproportionate influence on the rest of the society including institutional function. They control almost all forms of internal resources as well as the inflow of external resources.<sup>8</sup>

A striking feature of the Bangladesh economy is that loan and credit became a major source of accumulation by elite of various kinds. They also show a strong tendency of not repaying the borrowed money. Yet they are given new loans. Thus volume of loan default is increasing. The first three months in the year 2006 shows a 29 percent increase in loan default (amounting 2,885 crore taka as bad debt) to nationalised commercial banks only.<sup>9</sup> The number of defaulters would be much higher (about 93%) if those who made partial payment are included. Total outstanding loan was 134,736 crore taka (19,240 million U.S.Dollar) as on 31 march 2006. Statistics show an increase both in outstanding loans and bad debt during last two decades. In

<sup>3</sup> Such connections were also recognised by Burnham 1993; Clarke 1977 etc.

<sup>4</sup> Griffin 1989, Khan and Hossain 1989, Islam 1993.

<sup>5</sup> BBS stands for Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

<sup>6</sup> Poverty is measured in terms of GDP per capita, calorie intake, and access to education, health services, clean water etc. GDP per capita in 1985-86 was US\$ 220 and in 1995-96 US\$ 260. The poor had a monthly income of 3500 BDT (71 U.S.Dollar). This was 2500 BDT (52 U.S Dollar) for the hardcore poor. Calorie intake (pr. person pr. day) was less than 1805 for urban poor in 1985-86. In 1995-96 it was less than 2122 for the 49% of the urban poor and 47.1% of the rural poor. Recent trends show increased poverty in the urban areas. According to BBS, 49.7% of urban households were below poverty level in 1995-96. A recent study of urban poverty shows 60.86% of the households as poor.

<sup>7</sup> This estimate is done according to residence in posh areas. Siddiqui (1990) also used this method. The exact number is hard to ascertain. The number of the elite is increasing, due to political patronisation. Every change in government opens up the possibility for new groups to be included in the dominating elite.

<sup>8</sup> Sobhan R. 1989, 1993; Kocahnek S. 1993; Humphrey 1992.

<sup>9</sup> Equivalent to 412. 14 millions U.S.Dollar, current exchange rate being 1U.S. Dollar=69.96 Taka.

the fiscal year 1985-86 41.38% failed to repay loans. On 31 December 1996, the outstanding loans in private hands amounted to BDT 15000 crore (US\$ 3,125 millions).

Tax evasion is another means of accumulating surpluses. There are only 280,000 taxpayers in a country of 120 million people.<sup>10</sup> Of these, only 1.5% pays more than BDT 10,000 (US\$ 200) in tax.<sup>11</sup> As on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2005, there were 7000 unresolved cases related to unrealised taxes amounting BDT 2,500 crore.<sup>12</sup>

In short, elite of various kinds control both the state and the market and they pursue their interests through different networks. The resources accumulate in the hands of the few elites who invest the accumulated surplus in luxury consumption.<sup>13</sup> On the issue of civic engagement, in Bangladesh, the role of civil society and its relations with the state are both encouraging as well as frustrating.

### 3. Development theories on state-market-and civil society relations

The conventional notion of development connotes a process of economic growth brought about by industrialisation. Various modernization theories and approaches (neo-liberal, the institutional etc.) regard the problem of capital accumulation as the major constraint to industrialisation in developing societies. Rostow, an economic historian, suggests that in developing countries, there must develop an entrepreneurial spirit among new elites who refrain from spending their surplus on luxury consumption, and rather invest in production.<sup>14</sup>

There is, however, a disagreement on the role of the state and the market in achieving developmental goals.<sup>15</sup> In the modernization paradigm, in economic growth model in particular, development is perceived in terms of economic growth, which could be achieved by market forces such as entrepreneurs. In the sociological, as well as anthropological and historical, perception of development involves societal changes of a qualitative nature. The institutional approach, which emphasises the state's role in development, has one of its intellectual roots in such a perception.

A recent development in the development debate is the new institutional approach, which also offers diverse views on institutions' role in development.<sup>16</sup>

First, a view that regards development as institutional changes furthering economic growth. In this regard, new institutional economics emphasises the importance of institutional factors on market development.<sup>17</sup> Understanding the emergence and the functioning of the market is the crucial issue; "non-market social devices may be more efficient than reliance on market forces".<sup>18</sup> Particularly in developing societies, the institutional factors are more important to market development.<sup>19</sup>

Second, like the institutionalists, the statist theorists (or the 'revisionists')<sup>20</sup> suggest a continued reliance on the state. However, the revisionists go further than the institutionalists. They regard specialised bureaucratic organisations, effective management of development planning and policy implementation by a coherent and autonomous state as crucial for development.

<sup>10</sup> Ittefaq, a daily newspaper in Dhaka.

<sup>11</sup> Note from the Royal Norwegian Embassy at Dhaka, November 1999.

<sup>12</sup> The national Board of Revenue, Bangladesh.

<sup>13</sup> Khan and Hossain 1989; Kochanek 1993; Rahman 1990, 1994; Sobhan 1989, 1993.

<sup>14</sup> Rostow 1991.

<sup>15</sup> The disagreement between market-oriented neo-liberal and the state-oriented institutional approach. See Evans 1996, 1995; Hettne 1990; Hulme & Turner 1990; Kiely 1995; McMichael 1996; Moore 1997; Senghaas 1988; Skocpol 1985.

<sup>16</sup> The differences among four schools within the new institutionalism.

<sup>17</sup> See for instance Harvey Liebenstein's in World Development, Vol.17, No.9.

<sup>18</sup> Tøye J. 1993: 49.

<sup>19</sup> Davis 1993.

<sup>20</sup> Such as Amsden 1992, Johnson 1987, Wade 1993.

Third, some theorists shift attention from the state and the market to civil society and interpersonal networks. It is due to its claim that macroinstitutional success depends on the micro institutional foundations. The state's relationship to civil society and its stock of social capital generate 'synergy' which is vital for achievement of developmental goals.<sup>21</sup> Synergy implies that "civil engagement strengthens state institutions and effective state institutions create an environment in which civic engagement is more likely to thrive."<sup>22</sup> Therefore, they suggest incorporating the norm of reciprocity and trust in networks with the operation of macro institutions.

The fourth view recognises a 'zero-sum' relationship, which arises due to the state's connections to informal networks that lead to diminishing social capital and makes the community worse off.<sup>23</sup>

The experiences and development strategies of the newly developed and the developing societies show diversities regarding developmental paths and strategies, which raise doubt about the role of the state as well as of the market.<sup>24</sup> The state involvement creates privileged state elites.<sup>25</sup> The market also shows little capacity to enhance developmental goals.

Perhaps the development theories have reached some kind of impasse.<sup>26</sup> Those theories avoid a core problem in most developing countries that particular interests are linked both with the state and the market.<sup>27</sup> They cannot capture the ways in which both the state and the market are employed to enhance the interests of the privileged.

### 3.1. *Networks circumventing the market.*

The neoliberal approach assumes that market is the only institution, which affects entrepreneurs or firms and market relations are autonomous, disembedded from societal pervasive relations. Emphasising on the role of relatively unconstrained markets in capital accumulation and in shaping the profit-oriented entrepreneurial activities, it advocates the free play of market forces in tackling the problem of lack of capital. Entrepreneurs are expected to bring growth through productive investments, while well functioning markets assure that capital and other resources are allocated efficiently. The state may have the role of 'autonomous night-watchman'. Its role "as a development agency is simply to provide the right framework for market forces to flourish".<sup>28</sup>

These assumptions and strategies are mainly based on empirical evidence in Western industrialised societies. The evidence of free market development in the West is however disputed. Be that as it may be, the problem is that developing countries, such as Bangladesh, hardly fit into such a model. In these societies, the market is not free from personal ties. In fact neither is the market completely free from personal ties in modern western market societies. In developing societies it is a norm rather than an exception that kinship, political affiliation and the like are required for one's rights of access to credit, loan etc. Those relations also influence people's decision regarding where to invest.<sup>29</sup> My observation indicates that, in Bangladesh, a market-based development strategy failed to transform the accumulated resources in the hands of the elite(s) into productive capital and to promote entrepreneurial spirit.

What appears to be a predominant phenomenon in developing societies is that elite networks of different types do not allow for the functioning of impersonal market norms.<sup>30</sup> The state also cannot provide the right framework for market forces to flourish. For further evidence, on elite networks blocking the working of market forces and effective state regulation, I refer to privatisation efforts and different other measures in Bangladesh since 1975 that turned out to be

<sup>21</sup> As is believed by Putnam 1993.

<sup>22</sup> Evans 1996:1034.

<sup>23</sup> Coleman 1990.

<sup>24</sup> Amsden 1992; Wade 1993 (successful state intervention). Evans 1996 ; Senghaas 1988 (doubts on state intervention).

<sup>25</sup> Elsenhans 1991; Sobhan 1983

<sup>26</sup> As is observed by Booth 1985, 1994; Corbridge 1990.

<sup>27</sup> See Evans (1995, 1996).

<sup>28</sup> Kiely 1995:125.

<sup>29</sup> See for instance Granovetter 1992, Moore 1996, Gambetta 1988.

<sup>30</sup> Platteau 1993. The studies of Medard 1996, Migdal 1988 etc. also can be referred.

a disappointment.<sup>31</sup> The underlying idea of privatisation was to improve industry performance and stimulate private entrepreneurship by increasing the role of market forces. There was also an attempt to promote market forces by restructuring the nationalised industries and creating successor companies.

The performance of private industries, the procedures for disbursing loans and credits and the rate of repayment<sup>32</sup> indicate that the market's function is far from the desired goal. Many economists attribute such failure to the persistently low rate of investment, which is again assumed to be due to the low rate of savings.<sup>33</sup> This may be true but it is not the whole truth. A crucial fact is that if a well-connected borrower fails to repay a debt, he will be given an even higher amount of loans. There is a significant link that exists between a high loan-asset ratio and default.<sup>34</sup>

Aspirant businessmen contribute to party funds and seek political patronage. They also extend financial support to political leaders and associate influential political figures or their relations, directly or clandestinely in their business enterprises. Doing so they may seek direct intervention of people in the upper echelons of the decision making process to see that a loan was approved or claims for default repayment not pressed too exigently. This means, the success of a businessman depends not upon his skill but on his capacity to use connections. Licences, contracts, tenders, positions, favourable treatments, absence of harassment, protection etc., depend on toeing the political party line in Bangladesh. There too often the only path to personal and professional advancement is fealty to one party or the other, and for many there is little choice to pay obeisance to one's political sponsors.<sup>35</sup>

The point is that in Bangladesh's backward economy, there are more powerful adverse forces and factors with greater influence in determining the market's fate than its own performance. Some of these forces and factors arise from the nature of the market in Bangladesh; some stem from the policies, programs and procedures of the government.

The application of the (formal) neoliberal approach in the developed market societies is, to some extent, defensible. Markets in these societies function relatively well, which is, in my view, due to the form of interaction in these societies.<sup>36</sup> Individuals' trust and rights are relatively more inherent in the market and in the state. Problems arise when one wants to apply this model in non-market societies. There, the market cannot guarantee individuals' access to jobs, loans etc. People put less trust in the market.

The neo-liberal approach, of mainstream development economics, has at least two major problems. Firstly, theorists within this tradition find that the same basic market principle exists in all societies; pre-industrial-industrial, or market and non-market. They ignore various forms of social arrangements, which are crucial for market's function. Particularly in developing societies, economic transactions are conducted over networks of pre-existing social ties. Secondly, assuming development as universal unilinear process the neoliberal approach overlooks that development may be an institutional process and an outcome of history as claimed by Polanyi. For Polanyi, development is a differential outcome of human interactions with their social environment leading to a changed social arrangement. Furthermore, diversity regarding the development paths of Western market societies,<sup>37</sup> the strategies of the newly industrialised countries,<sup>38</sup> and experience of unsuccessful developing countries raise doubts about the market.<sup>39</sup> The role of the state in economic transformation has become increasingly central in the debate on development.

<sup>31</sup> See Humphrey 1992; Kochanek 1993; Rahman 1996.

<sup>32</sup> The rate of repayment is presented in tables 6.1 in chapter 6.

<sup>33</sup> "Experiences with Economic Reform: A Review of Bangladesh's Development 1995", CPD.

<sup>34</sup> Interview with Sobhan R. 1997.

<sup>35</sup> The Daily Star, a national daily newspaper, 04.03.05.

<sup>36</sup> Human interaction with social environment includes the economy and society relationship, leaving implications for economic actions and social change.

<sup>37</sup> Polanyi showed how the emergence of the modern market societies was an institutionalized process. Polanyi 1957.

<sup>38</sup> Amsden 1989, Wade 1990.

<sup>39</sup> See Wade 1990, Platteau 1993.



### 3.2. *Networks circumventing the state.*

The institutionalists focus on an active state in correcting 'market failure' and argue that in those countries, which tried to 'catch up' with the Western industrialised countries, it was the structure and functioning of the state, which explain both the successes and the failures of these efforts.<sup>40</sup> They claim that development, through industrialisation, never proceeds independently of the concrete institutional and historical context. Particular industrial pathways are embedded in local socio-cultural and socio-political contexts. They study how market mechanisms operate, how particular processes of industrial development are embedded in the particular character of the state, how the prevailing internal organisation (of business firms, banks etc.,) affect the patterns of industrial development as it has impacts on choices and the implementation of policies.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, their policy prescription is to mobilise diverse social institutions including the market, community and the state in order to achieve developmental goals. The government must play a leading role in harmonising different strategies and in managing the process of development in ways that stimulate participation of communities and market forces.

There is however a disagreement among the institutionalists on whether it is the degree or the kind of state intervention that is decisive for development.

One school,<sup>42</sup> referring to the experience of the East Asian countries, maintains that the role played by state bureaucracy is crucial for development. The high-performing newly industrialised countries have achieved their high growth rates because the state governed the markets in critical ways. Rather than leaving price formation to the market, these states have deliberately distorted relative prices in order to alter the incentive structure with a further view to boosting strategically important industries.

Development theorists within new institutional economics claim that the market is only one aspect of society and it has limited influence on the economy. Particularly in developing economies, where the market is not perfect, other social institutions are more important in organising the economy<sup>43</sup> and have strong effects on the formation and functions of the market. On development, they suggest that development should be redefined as economic growth plus appropriate institutional changes, which facilitate further growth. They address the issues of how business firms and banks are organised, how to assess who should get loans and in what firms investments are made.

I agree with both these schools as regards their claims and emphasis on factors that need to be addressed. It requires addressing the questions of why and how institutions are brought into existence. In agreement with sociological perception I claim, institutions must be regarded as historical process, as the result of gradual social creation, as ways of doing things, which by a process of 'hardening' and 'thickening' become patterns of action.<sup>44</sup>

One variety of institutionalism is based upon Polanyi's notion of 'embeddedness'. Polanyi claimed that production, distribution and consumption of goods, trade and markets were embedded in wider social, religious and political institutions in pre-industrial societies. Elaborating on Polanyi, it can be argued that development study is about how different institutional arrangements brought about, or failed to bring about, industrialised market societies. For Polanyi, economic activities result from human interaction with the social environment on which their livelihood depends. Development of modern (market) societies is a changed form of such interactions characterised by exchange.<sup>45</sup> The emergence of a (disembedded) market economy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, took place by means of deliberate state policies. Economic growth was seen as the foundation of state strength. Market domination was a by-product of state building strategies. The dominant position of the market was possible only through commodification of

<sup>40</sup> There are many theorists within the institutional approach. In the present discussion I will refer mainly to Polanyi, and scholars within New Institutional Economics such as Arrow, Davis, Debreu, Plateu, North etc.

<sup>41</sup> Pattern refers to varieties in the configuration of leading industries, leading agents (state vs. Private, local vs. foreign etc.), leading orientation (e.g. export oriented vs. domestic market oriented, forward linkage and backward linkage) and leading pattern of distribution. See Senghaas (1988) for details on patterns of industrialisation.

<sup>42</sup> Theories on developmental state, the revisionists and the statist. The major proponents are Amsden and Wade.

<sup>43</sup> Jerome Davis (1993) makes an account of institutional factors in developing countries.

<sup>44</sup> As claimed by Berger and Luckmann 1966.

<sup>45</sup> Polanyi's notion of three modes of transaction is discussed in chapter 2, section 2.2.

land, labour and money. However, commodification appeared to be a weakness of market societies because of its destabilising effects. Hence, the effort to protect society from the devastating impacts of the market involved state intervention, for example through redistribution in the emerging welfare states. The market was institutionally arranged, both as it was (partly) disembedded from, and reembedded in non-market institutional arrangements.<sup>46</sup>

Polanyi explained how state was involved in the development of market societies in early industrialising Western Europe. Later studies suggest that state intervention frequently serves the purposes of particularistic interest groups by allowing them their privileged access to material resources and thus creates surplus-extracting state elites in most developing societies.<sup>47</sup> Unlike the process described by Polanyi, state power has been used to promote non-market forms of capital accumulation. There is clear evidence of how state intervention leads to 'rent-seeking' activities and unproductive income-earning economic activities result from monopolies created by state regulation.<sup>48</sup> The government is not an independent actor<sup>49</sup> rather it is used as a vehicle to secure the interests of the privileged classes. The state itself contributes to the process of differentiation.<sup>50</sup> Interest groups are allied with each other to shape public policies in many developing countries.<sup>51</sup> The fate of the state-owned industries in post-independent Bangladesh can be cited as good evidence.

Right after independence of Bangladesh in December 1971 all major industries and enterprises came under state ownership. The party in power used state industries to foster interest groups by supplying public sector goods and services to party members. Close associates of the political leaders and the state bureaucracy acquired supply contracts to the state owned industries. They offered supplies of machinery, spare parts and raw materials at much higher rates than the market price. The state owned enterprises sold their products to different distributors below cost. Such a situation naturally limited the capacity of the state owned industries.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, there were two major factors that contributed to the state's limited capacity.

First, the major state-owned industries were producing mass consumption goods. Due to shortage of state funds, the management personnel of the state owned enterprises were paid in kind instead of salary. They consumed what they needed and sold the excess products in the market. Furthermore, close associates of political leaders worked as distributors of the state-owned enterprises. Both the management and the distributors wanted to see prices raised.

Second, the state-owned enterprises were subsidised by the state. Loans and credits to these enterprises were diverted to the personal consumption of the management in alliance with political leaders.

In such circumstances, generation of surplus in the state-owned industries was adversely affected and resource utilisation could not be optimised.

The discussion in section 3.1 took the issue of how the market is enmeshed in the elite's personal ties. This section discussed the issue of the state's relation to the elites that limited its capacity in pursuing developmental goals. Apparently, to use Evans' word, the elites have their feet planted firmly in both the state and the market.<sup>53</sup> Thus the question of autonomy of the state<sup>54</sup> and the market comes to the fore, not the analytical dichotomy between state and market. Autonomy requires the functioning of these institutions and their capacity to regulate social forces including elites regarding the achievement of socially desired collective goals. The question is

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<sup>46</sup> Polanyi 1957:77-85.

<sup>47</sup> See Eisenhans 1991; Moon & Prasad 1994.

<sup>48</sup> Krueger 1974, Bauer 1984.

<sup>49</sup> Almond 1965:183-214, Almond & Coleman 1960, Easton, 1957: 383-400, Stepan 1973: 47-65.

<sup>50</sup> The case of Bangladesh, see f.eks. Sobhan 1992, Jansen 1992, and many African countries, see Medard J.F. 1996.

<sup>51</sup> Platteau, 1993.

<sup>52</sup> Ahmed, M. 1987:12

<sup>53</sup> Evans 1996.

<sup>54</sup> By autonomy of the state I mean that the state and state institutions should be allowed to function independent of interest groups or rent seeking groups.

what are the necessary conditions for the achievement of collective goals? New institutionalists address this question.

### 3.3. *Civil society: Networks and forms of social capital.*

The new institutionalists shifted their attention from the state as well as from the market to civil society.<sup>55</sup> They relate the notion of norms of reciprocity in civil society with the implementation of development strategies.

The approach was developed as an alternative both to the neo-liberal as well as to the institutional approaches. The basic idea is that informal norms and customs, conventions and standard of operating practices structure the relationships between individuals, groups and institutions. It contends that trust and norms of reciprocity in civil society are the crucial issues, both for development and for the analysis of roles of the state and the market.<sup>56</sup> A variety within this school came to be known as 'social capital' theory.<sup>57</sup> Norms of reciprocity in network relations and networks of repeated interactions that sustain trust are termed social capital. These norms operate interpersonally, within cliques or communities, and obey a logic that is different from that of the state or that of the market.<sup>58</sup>

Social capital theorists believe in 'synergy effects' of the state-civil society relations. Synergy implies making people collectively productive. It requires civic engagement or community actions that facilitate the forging of norms of trust by using these norms and networks for development and for the function both of the state and the market.<sup>59</sup>

Not all social capital theorists believe in 'synergy effects'. Ostrom thinks that effective state-civil society synergy cannot be taken for granted.<sup>60</sup> Some assume a 'zero-sum' relationship between the state and the civil society. They believe that the expansion of formal norms of the state and the market crowds out informal networks without generating synergy and new value of effective impersonal norms.<sup>61</sup>

The notion of synergy requires special attention because possible positive outcomes of civic engagement must be evaluated in terms of synergy. As I look at it, synergy depends on connectedness i.e. the state's relation with the civil society that provides an environment in which civic engagement is more likely to thrive.<sup>62</sup> Conversely, connectedness may preserve cronyism (due to privileges connected to elite network membership) without providing synergy. The image of Bangladesh is illustrative. It displays both optimism (micro-credit programmes) and malfunctioning elite-based of civil society (loan default etc).

Empowering women through rotating credit can be cited as example of synergy effect of joint efforts of actors in the civil society. Loans are given to small groups of women, who are also provided with know-how regarding how to make best use of loans. They invest loans in poultry farm, fishing ponds, vegetable production etc. The returns are distributed amongst the members of the groups, and the groups are responsible for paying back the loans. The interest rate is as much as 16%, yet, loan default is less than 5%.

These success stories can be contrasted with loan default (more than 80%) by different elite sub-groups. Network ties (particularly political connections) are used as major means to get loans, to evade tax etc. Instead of generating 'synergy' such a relationship contributes to the process of concentration of resources in a few hands. It perpetuates corruption and competition among the elites regarding control over state institutions. The pervasive outcomes of such competition are the use of force, struggle for inclusion into dominant networks and confrontation between the rival elites, which often take violent forms.

<sup>55</sup> For instance Amsden, Wade (state centred) and Evans, Putnam (civil society oriented).

<sup>56</sup> Putnam 1993, Moore 1996.

<sup>57</sup> See for instance Putnam 1993 and 1995.

<sup>58</sup> Evans 1996:1033.

<sup>59</sup> See for instance Evans 1996, Putnam 1993.

<sup>60</sup> Ostrom 1996.

<sup>61</sup> See for instance Coleman 1990: 321.

<sup>62</sup> This is congruent with Evans' argument. Evans 1996:1034.

The point I want to underline here is that the civil society is an arena where economic organisations take shape, however, in varied forms, and hence, there are varied effects of civic engagement and social capital. Civic engagement can disrupt the power of particularistic interest groups and make change possible. Social capital may have positive effects on development. Those societies, such as North Italy, Kerala etc., which have a good stock of social capital, achieved developmental goals. Conversely, political parties' alliance with particular networks may disrupt civic engagement aimed at developmental goals. My observation indicates a problem, which is ignored in some varieties of social capital theory, that social capital for one group is not necessarily social capital for other groups. One relevant question is: The stock of social capital for whom? Answering this question requires identifying different forms of social capital and recognising their causal conjuncture. We need to examine the contexts in which people use social resources as social capital.

Social capital theorists do recognise different forms of social capital. Putnam distinguishes two forms of networks: horizontal and vertical. Horizontal networks bring together individuals of equivalent status and vertical networks link individuals of unequal status in asymmetric relations of hierarchy and dependence.<sup>63</sup> For Putnam, civic engagement requires horizontal interactions, which have the most beneficial effects for the society as a whole. This kind of strong civil society is also likely to translate into a strong and accountable state. Vertical networks contribute to solving collective problems to a lesser extent; individuals depend on one another, through hierarchic, uneven, terms.

Coleman recognises obligations and expectations, informations potential, norms and effective sanctioning, authority relations, appropriable social organisation as social capital.<sup>64</sup> Coleman also finds a commonality in values, which can be used as resources to realise the interests of all.

Ostrom and Ahn identified three broad forms of social capital: 1. trust and norms of reciprocity, 2. networks, and 3. formal and informal rules.<sup>65</sup> Trust is the core concept that is affected by networks and formal and informal rules, as well as by contextual factors.<sup>66</sup>

All these distinctions are important. Now the question is how to explain under what social circumstances a particular form of social capital is generated that result in synergy effects. I also raise the question whether a form of social capital for a particular group is also social capital for others.

There are cross-sectional linkages among different forms of social capital.<sup>67</sup> What I mean by causal conjuncture is such linkages i.e. various forms of interaction between individuals and networks and between networks and macro-institutions. Causal conjuncture may take different forms in different social contexts and under shifting conditions. Contextual factors are important to understand why people put trust in networks or in institutions. I mentioned earlier, a critical phenomenon in many developing societies is that the elites have the capacity to employ the state to pursue particularistic interest, which underwrites the state's capacity as well as peoples' trust in the state.

Following Coleman and Putnam, a step further, one can say that a low level of trust in the state is due to undermined systematic or generalised trust. Putnam claimed that there was more social capital in Northern Italy than in Southern Italy; whereas the horizontal networks enhanced co-operation in Northern Italy, vertical networks of clans or Mafia constrained co-operation in the south. Now the question is whether such vertical networks are social capital for the people in Southern Italy?

I refer again to causal conjuncture and contextual factors. Those may explain why social capital for one may not be social capital for other(s). Those also determine the possibility of synergy. One form of social capital may enhance co-operation and another may set constraints to

<sup>63</sup> Putnam R. 1993:173.

<sup>64</sup> Coleman 1990:304-33.

<sup>65</sup> Ostrom and Ahn. 2001: 5

<sup>66</sup> Ostrom and Ahn. 2001.

<sup>67</sup> Harris J. and De Renzio P. 1997:932-33.

co-operation in attaining common goals on behalf of a large community. Weaker networks of horizontal relations are important in sustaining collective actions.<sup>68</sup> On the other hand, investments in networks generate horizontal connections among elites, as well as vertical relations between them and their clients. The positive role of civil society, and social capital, in development depends on internal dynamics of network structures.

#### 4. Concluding remarks

The discussion in this paper, on state-market-civil society relations and their impacts on development, directs our attention to interacting relationships between elite networks and the state. Modern developed societies have undermined the role of more damaging elite networks. The success story of the newly industrialised countries also manifests the capacity of the state in defying unproductive elites and channelling surplus to productive investment. The state in Bangladesh failed to perform these tasks. Predominant elite networks infiltrate the state and weaken its performance in its own right. This also explains the state's failure in providing the right framework for the market to function. The level of trust in the state and the market is the critical issue. It does not follow from this that trust in personal contacts must be wiped off. The point is rather to suggest that trust in personal contacts must complement trust in formal institutions.

The postulation of the 'zero-sum' state-civil society relation is controversial. Civic engagement may enhance development and social mobilization. The positive effects of the state-civil society relationships can be observed. The cases of Northern Italy<sup>69</sup>, and Kerala in India<sup>70</sup> could be pointed to as evidence. However, the term civil society may have a negative association if it is tied to vested interests. The more extended evidence at hand points to the contrasting images of Bangladesh, where the role of civil society is both positive and gloomy. Despite some achievements by civic engagements the stringer elite networks define policies and projects, which remain out of reach of those for whom development is meant to bring some positive outcome.

The conclusion of this paper is that it is fruitful to examine network structures and to connect these to politico-economic relationships between the state and elite networks, in order to unfold the problems regarding capital accumulation. Networks of individuals interact with one another creating institutions, which then take on a life of their own, as we understand from Berger and Luckmann. What is happening at the macro-level is connected to micro-level. Further understanding of networks shaping economic activities requires a discussion on economy-society relations. This is the subject matter of a forthcoming paper.

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<sup>68</sup>This is in agreement with Granovetter's notion of the strength of weak ties. Conversely, as in Bangladesh, strong ties of dense networks of relationship do not permit dissemination of information to the wider social arenas. There, limited networks of elites or cliques engage in mutual reciprocity at the expense of the larger social groups. This issue is taken into consideration by Ostrom and Ahn. Ostrom E., and Ahn. T.K.: 2001.

<sup>69</sup> Putnam 1993.

<sup>70</sup> Heller 1996.

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# Restoring the Credibility of Bangladesh Public Service Commission: Major Challenges and Policy Recommendations

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## Abstract

*This paper primarily focuses on exploring the root causes of the irregularities in BCS Examinations and loss of credibility of the Bangladesh Public Service Commission (herein after BPSC). In particular, it endeavours to underline the structural, institutional and operational loopholes of the BPSC, and finally it comes up with a set of specific and effective policy recommendations. Since 1972, the credibility of the Commission has been subject of much debates and controversies. Information obtained from both primary and secondary sources form the basis of this paper, which have been supplemented by a series of discussion with key informants and review of relevant documents.*

*The findings reveal that only 1.85% respondents have expressed their full trust over the role of the Commission. The major irregularities identified are the leakage of BCS question paper, taking bribe for ensuring BCS job, changing or replacing exam scripts, changing marks, inclusion of the failed candidates in the merit list with bribe, calling candidates to BPSC immediately after the viva voce, and partisan recruitment of BCS cadre as per list sent from the high command of the ruling party, etc. However, the recommendations of this paper may be invaluable for the policy makers and stakeholders for undertaking suitable and effective countermeasures, and thereby to restore the credibility of the Commission.*

## 1. Introduction

The Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) is one of the vital constitutional bodies in Bangladesh. It has a very substantial role in promoting excellence in future public administration and good governance by selecting the most competent persons for the public services of the republic. The degree, to which the country will have professional, equitable, credible and efficient public administration greatly, depends on the integrity, effectiveness and credibility of the Commission. It has got constitutional and legal mandate to recruit 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class officers for the civil service of the republic through competitive examinations (GOB 1977, 1979, 1980, 1981).

The core idea of a public service is based on the philosophy of recruitment of civil servants on the basis of merit. The initiative of merit-based recruitment of civil servants in place of political patronage was first introduced in the Ancient Imperial China during the Han dynasty (206 BC-220 AD), and was abolished by the Ch'ing dowager empress of the Qing Dynasty in 1905. The Chinese system was known to Europe in the mid-18th century, and it is believed to have influenced the creation of civil services in Europe (The Columbia *Electronic Encyclopaedia*, 2003). The first ever PSC of Indian sub-continent was established in British India on 1 October 1926 at central level and the Bengal PSC at provincial level on 1 April 1937 under the Government of India Acts of 1919 and 1935 respectively (Ahmed, 1990:28). The BPSC was established on 9 May 1972 under the President's Order No. 34 by merging the entire set-up of East Pakistan PSC and the Regional Office of Central BPSC (BPSC Annual Report, 2005:1). The BPSC, like its predecessors in British India (i.e., Federal Public Service Commission) and United

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Pakistan (i.e., Central Public Service Commission and East Pakistan Public Service Commission), is a constitutional body. The structure, status, scope and functions are firmly based on the articles 137-141 of the Constitution of Bangladesh. However, during 1972- March 2007, BPSC has selected a total number of 41,413 persons through 27 BCS examinations (i.e., 39,431 persons) or equivalent type of exams (1982) in 28 cadres.

The selection of 1st class gazetted officers held in 1972 (e.g., Special Superior Service Examination for the Freedom Fighters, 1972 and for non-freedom fighters, 1973) conducted by the BPSC are still criticised for recommending partisan candidates. The partisan recruitment of BCS examinees, leakage of BCS question papers over the years and taking bribe by few Members, officials and staff of the Commission are among the most frequently raised allegations against the Commission, which have contributed to a massive erosion of trust and credibility of this constitutional body (Khan, 2002; Observer, July 26, 2005; *New Age*, 19 November 2005; *News Today*, 20 November, 2005; *Daily Star*, 2 September 2003). The Commission is also seen, to a great extent, the gateway of the ruling party activists/supporters to the civil service of Bangladesh (*Daily Star*, 31 January 2006; *Financial Express*, January 2006).

Existing literature (Sikder, 2006; Zafarullah and Khan, 2005; Ali, 2004 & 2002; Khan, 1998, Ahmed, 1990 & 1986; Siddiqui, 1996) and official reports (PARC, 2000; World Bank, 1996; MLCOS, 1982; ASRC, 1973; CARC, 1972) on the Commission has not covered root the causes, nature and extent of irregularities in BPSC.

## 2. Methodology

The empirical information was collected through an opinion survey and key informant interviews. A semi-structured questionnaire was used in the opinion survey. Persons who already faced at least one BCS Viva Voce were the population for this survey. Due to lack of availability of official records of BCS examinees, it was not possible to prepare a sampling frame. Under this situation, a total of 434 BCS examinees were selected through non-probability sampling technique like snowball method<sup>71</sup>. During selection of sample it was endeavoured to address all possible variations of the population. Secondary sources of information include constitutional and legal documents, gazette notifications, books, journals and reports. The empirical and secondary information were used to complement each other.

## 3. Empirical Findings

### 3.1. Irregularities in BCS Examination

The BCS examination is the gateway for entry into the civil service of the republic. It is also one of the most competitive job exams in Bangladesh. The study has found that only 3% BCS examinees come out as successful at the end of the examination. The findings of the survey reveals that about 60% respondents has opined BCS job as the most attractive and prestigious first class job, followed by 54% as a job with high social status and security, 42% as secured job and 20% optioned as job with possibility of financial solvency. Further, 30% respondents viewed the civil servants have scope to serve the people and country directly.

The existing irregularities in the whole process of BCS examination have endangered the image of this constitutional body. The activities of the BPSC have been a matter of question since the beginning of its operations in 1972. The findings of the survey also demonstrate a very poor level of trust over BPSC. Accordingly, only 1.85% respondents expressed their full trust over the role of BPSC.

The irregularities and corruption identified in the BCS examinees and key informants together with the opinion on these issues are given below:

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<sup>71</sup> Snowball sampling is a special non-probability method used when the desired sample characteristic is rare. Snowball sampling relies on referrals from initial subjects to generate additional subjects. This sampling technique is often used in hidden populations, which are difficult for researchers to access.

### The Bangladesh Public Service Commission: An Overview

- Constitutional Mandate: Article 137-141 of the Constitution of Bangladesh
- Legal Mandates: President Order No. 34 (on May 9, 1972), PSC Ordinance No. LVII of 1977, BCS Recruitment Rules of 1981, PSC Officers & Employees Recruitment Rules, 1990
- Provision of Chairman : 1 No. of Members: 6-14
- Total No. Chairman till date (1972-23 June 2007): 11
- Total No. of Members (1972 - 23 June 2007): 81
- Human Resource in the PSC Secretariat : 344 (first class 62; 2<sup>nd</sup> class 52; 3<sup>rd</sup> class 134; 4<sup>th</sup> class 96)
- BCS equivalent exams held during 1972-1981 : 7 (Cadre Service)
- Recommended through BCS equivalent exams : 1,982
- BCS exams held during 1982-2006 : 27 (Cadre Service)
- Recommended for appointment through BCS examination : 39,431
- Recommended for appointment through interview only: 18,011 (1972 – 2005)
- Recommended for appointment through promotion : 22,911 (1972 – 2005)
- Recommended for through transfer and ad hoc position : 24, 230 (1973-2000)
- Average time spent for each BCS Examination : 21.8 months
- Female appointments : 6,164 (20.73% in 19 BCS Exams, out of total 29, 728)
- Non-Muslim appointments (Hindu, Buddha & Christian): 3197 (10.45% including 5% tribal quota)

#### 3.1.1. Leakage of BCS Question Papers

Allegations against the leakage of BCS question paper have become regular since the 24<sup>th</sup> BCS examination. Almost all the daily newspapers have covered news on the leakage of BCS question paper in the recent years.<sup>72</sup> Among the respondents of the survey, 97.67% informed that the incident of leakage of question papers is true. The PSC is yet to take effective measures to track down persons involved in the leakage of question papers of different examinations it conducted.

After a strong student movement, an inquiry committee<sup>73</sup> was formed for investigating the leakage of the 24<sup>th</sup> BCS examination but the report of the inquiry committee has not been made public till today. The preliminary test of the 24<sup>th</sup> BCS examination was taken twice as the question paper of the earlier preliminary test was leaked out. "The Chairman of the examination committee is solely responsible for all the activities of a BCS examination. The leak out of question paper totally depends on the will of the persons responsible for conducting the particular exam. However, if BPSC Chairman and the Chairman of the examination committee take cautionary measures, the leak out of question paper is beyond the question."- viewed, on condition of anonymity, by few Members, Directors, and former Members of the Commission. The survey revealed that the corrupt employees (35%) and officials (29%), Members and partisan officials in the BPSC (28%), question preserver/distributor/deliverer (24%), student leaders/activists of ruling party (23%), the Chairman and few Members of the exam committee (20%) are mainly involved in the leakage of BCS question papers.

<sup>72</sup> The Independent, November 19, 2005; The Financial Express, November 19, 2005; The New Nation, November 27, 2006; The News Today, November 20, 2005; The Daily Inqilab, November 20, 2005; The Ajker Kagoj, November 20, 2005; The Daily Jugantor, November 20, 2005; The Daily Janakantha, November 20, 2005 and December 25, 2006; The Daily Songbad, November 20, 2005; The Daily Bhorer Kagoj, November 20, 2005; The Daily Star, August 11, 2003; The Daily Bangla Bazar, November 20, 2006.

<sup>73</sup> The committee was formed with the then PSC Members Prof. Mohammed Mohabbat Khan as Chairman of the inquiry committee, Professor Hasanuzzaman Chowdhury and Professor Md. Mahfuzur Rahman.

### 3.1.2. Allocation of Seat in Groups with Bribe

As many as 91% respondents opined that they have seen or heard about managing the seating arrangement in groups with the help of the BPSPC 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> class employees. Such arrangement is done in exchange of bribes that varies between Tk500-1,000. Irregularity in allocation of seats for the BCS examinees in groups exists.

### 3.1.3. Ensuring Success in the Preliminary Test

According to 42% of the respondents, ensuring success in the preliminary test of BCS exam is done by changing the score of the preliminary test or exam script (i.e., OMR Sheet) once again. The candidates who are able to manage with bribe or the candidates on the list of the names sent from the high command of the ruling party can avail this opportunity.

### 3.1.4. Copying and Solving Questions Outside the Exam Hall

This is done by writing exam scripts with the support of books, guides and notes openly, copying from fellow examinees, collecting answers through mobile phone, giving proxy in place of the examinee, and collecting answers from the washrooms. About 43.5% respondents opined that they have either seen or heard of attending BCS exams by booking the exam hall with bribe or political influence. This is done by booking the rooms of exam centre either with bribe or political influence. A section of BPSC employees, vigilant and persons responsible for booking and arrangement of the exam hall are usually involved with this irregularity. The questions are solved by the persons who wait outside of the exam hall. It was also learnt that a section of the examinees usually hire person(s) to solve the questions.

### 3.1.5. Replacing Examination Scripts/Documents

From the key informants it is learnt that written scripts and OMR Sheet of the Preliminary Test can be changed with the help of some of the top level personnel, officers and employees of the BPSC. About 49% respondents mentioned about this sort of irregularity which costs Tk 3,000 - Tk 5,000 for each script. This is usually done on the exam day or immediately before the written script is sent to the examiner. Blank papers are also sent to the examinees from BPSC to solve the questions and submit again. Without changing the cover paper of the written scripts, the re-written papers are replaced by papers of the scripts except the cover page(s).

#### Seat Allocation in Group

“I have faced 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> BCS Viva voce, but I could not get job. I offered my friends to appear in the 27<sup>th</sup> BCS exam together with me. They responded positively and we managed a third class employee of PSC to serve our purpose. We gave him 500 taka each. We got our seats together in the 27<sup>th</sup> BCS preliminary examination. In the written test, we also did the same thing. But now we are planning about the viva and to get a channel to ensure our cadres.”

“Our team of 18 examinees attended at the 27<sup>th</sup> BCS Preliminary Test by managing our seats together... One of our friends had a relative, working as a 4th class employee at PSC (who helped)... We shared our answers jointly. It took taka 418 for each Member of our group.”

Source: Karim, 2007: 27

### 3.1.6. Failed Candidates on the Merit List

About 26.7% respondents also talked about this sort of irregularity. Usually, the examinees on the list sent from the high command of the ruling party are the beneficiaries. The amount of money either for getting general/good cadre<sup>74</sup> (i.e., BCS Administration, Police, Taxation, Customs etc.) or to get a position in the merit list (when he or she was unsuccessful in the exams) cadre varies between Tk.7-12 lac. But the amount depends on the negotiation capacity of the examinees. The partisan candidates have to pay bribe to the student leader(s)/leaders of the ruling party.

<sup>74</sup> The term 'Good Cadre' is often used mainly for the BCS cadres such as administration, police, foreign service, taxation, and customs and excise. These cadres are considered by common people as the most prestigious and powerful cadres in the civil service.

### 3.1.7. Corruption in Viva Voce

The partisan influence affects the whole viva voce. Roll number of the listed candidates is delivered to the Chairman/Member of the viva boards. The externals of the boards are also given instruction by the Chairman of the viva boards to avoid uncomfortable situation for the listed candidates. The listed candidates are usually asked easy questions while other candidates are asked critical questions. The findings demonstrate that about 31% of the respondents received non-cooperation and rude behaviour from the board members. It is also learnt that since the 24<sup>th</sup> BCS exam, non-Muslim candidates faced uncomfortable questions as well as rude behaviour from the board members.<sup>75</sup>

### 3.1.8. Extra-ordinary Marks

Almost 79% respondents informed about the extraordinary marks given to the partisan and candidates under package contract. In such cases, 80-90% marks are given to the target examinees.

### 3.1.9. Calling Candidates to Commission after Viva Voce

According to 27% respondents the targeted candidates are called in the BPSC over mobile phone to meet with a certain Member at BPSC at a given time. The candidates are also asked to wait and meet with the Member at a specific time on the day of BCS viva. Upon the meeting the candidate is asked to pay a certain amount of money in order to confirm the job. The drivers, personnel assistants/officers/agents help the concerned Member(s) in this regard.

#### Attitude towards Hindu BCS examinees

An external (a professor of Dhaka University) of BCS viva board, reputed for his close connection with a leading Islamist party in Bangladesh and for his strong moral courage, decided to boycott the BCS viva board. He noted that one of the female meritorious students of his department who got first class in both graduate and post-graduate levels and had excellent performance in the viva voce. When she left the viva board, the Chairman of that board said, "This candidate belongs to 'H Group' (i.e., Hindu). She will be settled in India whenever she gets an opportunity. The country will be looser if we recommend her for a BCS job. So, we cannot give her higher marks."

This external was surprised and began to bargain to give her at least eighty percent in the viva voce as her performance was the best amongst all the candidates that day. But the Chairman of that board refused to do so. He tried his best to offer proper justice to that candidate but failed, as another Member of the board was in favour of the Chairman. Finally, he came out of the viva board and decided to keep himself away from any involvement with PSC in the future.

Source: Karim, 2007: 27

### 3.1.10. Changing Marks

About 65% respondents opined that the incident of changing (increasing or decreasing) of marks in the BCS examination occurs. According to the key informant, the pro-ruling party leaders/activists and the examinees under contract usually get this opportunity. The marks of the candidates are increased to such an extent that the contracted examinees get the BCS job. The changing of marks is usually done immediately after the completion of the initial draft of the merit list.

### 3.1.11. Leakage of BCS Results

This sort of irregularity is seen as a very petty corruption. According to 66.8% respondents a BCS examinee can easily get BCS result (e.g., preliminary, written or final) in exchange of bribe before it is published. Few members, officers and a section of employees of the computer and controller section are involved in this sort of irregularity.

### 3.1.12. Contract for Whole BCS Exam

As many as 57.8% respondents opined about the existence of this sort of irregularity in which a few Members of the BPSC and its officials at various levels have been involved over the years. Such package costs from Tk 2-5 lac for professional cadre and Tk. 5-12 lac for general cadre/good cadre. But the actual amount depends on the type of cadre, reference and negotiation

<sup>75</sup> A Member who resigned from BPSC in June 2005 was known for his preference for Muslim candidates and negligence of non-Muslim candidates. It is widely known that this Member used to ask the Muslim candidates questions from the Holy Quran and *Hadith*. Those who failed to give satisfactory answers had to face misbehaviour from this Member.

capacity or partisan linkage of the candidates. It is also learnt that a segment of personnel from all level at the BPSC, and leaders and activists of the ruling party high command and the party in general are integral part of such packages.

**Table 1: Irregularities and Corruption in BCS Exam at a Glance: Respondents' View/Opinion**

Type of Irregularities and Corruption	Response	Total Percentage	Total Respondents	
	Yes	No		
▪ Interference of government in BPSC	97.25	2.75	100.00	433*
▪ Leakage of BCS question papers	98.2	1.8	100.00	433*
▪ Seat allocation in groups with bribe	91.2	8.8	100.00	434
▪ Delivering BCS question paper to the examinees	59.0	41.0	100.00	434
▪ Copying answers in BCS Exam	43.5	56.5%	100.00	434
▪ Solving exam question papers illegally	35.0	65.0	100.00	434
▪ Giving exam by booking exam hall room	43.5	56.5	100.00	434
▪ Submitting exam script without appearing at the exam hall	21.0	79.0	100.00	434
▪ Ensuring passing in the preliminary test	42.2	57.8	100.00	434
▪ Replacing exam scripts	49.3	50.7	100.00	434
▪ Changing marks	64.5	35.5	100.00	434
▪ Failed candidates in the merit list	24.5	75.5	100.00	434*
▪ Giving list to the viva board members	90.1	9.9	100.00	434
▪ Extraordinary marks in viva voce	78.5	21.5	100.00	433*
▪ Calling the candidate to the Commission after viva voce	37.6	62.4	100.00	434
▪ Contract for good cadre/whole BCS examination	57.4	42.6	100.00	434
▪ BCS job based on political connection with ruling party	90.1	9.9	100.00	434
▪ Leakage of BCS results	66.8	33.2	100.00	434
▪ Whether written scripts are properly evaluated or not	35.7	64.3	100.00	414*

▪ Re-evaluation of the test and exams conducted by BPSC	83.9	16.1	100.0 0	411*
▪ Trust in BPSC's arranged examinations and tests	51.58	48.42	100.0 0	434

\* Missing response

\* A total of 434 respondents participated in this opinion survey

[Source: Karim, 2007:28]

### 3.1.13. Partisan Recruitment of BCS Examinees

The recruitment of pro-ruling party supporters, student wing leaders and relatives of the ruling party leaders is nothing new in Bangladesh. This practice has become a matter of open secret from the 20<sup>th</sup> BCS and onwards.<sup>76</sup> The Chairman and Members of the Commission can not ignore or overlook the request of the high command of the ruling party, as all of them have been appointed in the Commission purely on political patronage and loyalty. Accordingly, 90% respondents informed that they are aware about such instances where a list of candidates is sent to the Members of the viva board.

## 3.2. Diagnosed Factors Behind the Loss of Credibility of the Commission

### A. Structural Loopholes/ Limitations

1. The PSC is not a truly independent and effective body. The ruling party has controlled the administrative, financial matters and its constitutional mandated functions since 1972.
2. The Constitution has not yet made any transparent procedure or legal mandate for appointments of Chairman and Members in the Public Service Commission. In fact, the whole process of selection of Chairman and Members has shown an absolute lack of transparency.
3. Under the Article 138(1) of the Constitution of Bangladesh, the appointments for the BPSC absolutely depend on the will of the Chief Executive of the country. As both the Chief Executive and Head of the Government in Bangladesh are from the ruling party, the Chairman and Members of the Commission usually also come from the same political affiliation.
4. The qualification and eligibility criteria are not sufficient for selection of competent persons as Chairmen and Members of the Commission. As a result, barring some exceptions Chairmen and Members have been appointed on partisan political consideration since 1972, making the Commission an outfit serving partisan political interests, and a recruitment agency of candidates aligned to the ruling party(ies).
5. There is no specific and effective accountability measure or legal provision for the Chairman, Members, and officials and staff of the BPSC.
6. Under the existing Warrant of Precedence (GOB, 1986i), the Chairman of BPSC is equivalent to the Secretaries of the Government (i.e., number "16"), and on the other hand, the rank of the Members of BPSC (i.e., number "20") is lower than that of the Additional Secretaries of the government (i.e., number "19") of Bangladesh. The undermined positions of BPSC Chairman and Members in the Warrant of Precedence have created opportunity for interference by the bureaucracy upon the BPSC in discharging its functions as mandated by the Constitution.

<sup>76</sup> Usually, the Office Secretary of the student wing of the ruling party of the Universities collect or receive photocopies of the admit cards/roll number of the candidates. He then makes a preliminary list and gives it to the President of University unit. The President then sends the list to the President and General Secretary of the central unit of the student's wing of the ruling party. The top two leaders of this central unit again verify the names in the list. After verifying, the list is sent to the high command or the ruling party office for recommendation. The ruling party high command receives similar kinds of lists from other protagonist professional bodies and party leaders. The list is then finalised and sent either to the PSC Chairman directly or to a Member of the Commission (Source: *The Daily Star*, 30 September, 2005).

7. The Commission has not yet determined its operating principles (i.e., vision, mission and core values). This deficiency has been considered as opportunities by the successive governments to sway from the core values of the public service of the republic.
8. The Parliamentary Standing Committee of the Ministry of Establishment (PSCME) has no specific scope, power and functions regarding the BPSC. Due to this gap, the PSCME cannot take any effective measure to combat irregularities in the Commission.
9. There is no provision for discussion on the annual report and budget of the BPSC in the National Parliament Session.
10. The corrupt Member(s) have never been brought under Supreme Judicial Council for their alleged involvement in irregularities. Under the existing legal provision, the Chairman and Members of BPSC can be removed from office like a judge of the Supreme Judicial Council<sup>77</sup>. The reality is that it very difficult to remove or terminate a corrupt Chairman or Member.

## **B. Institutional and Operational Problems**

11. The Commission has no capacity development programme for its staff. The Commission lacks manpower and technical skill while most of the huge task of recruitment related activities are still done manually.
12. The Commission suffers from inadequate human resources. The shortage of manpower is seen as one of the fundamental problems for carrying its mandated functions.
13. The BPSC gravely lacks modern technical support. Still the Commission has no comprehensive website of its own. There is also a serious lack of proper documentation. Thousands of applications of the examinees along with the documents in various exams conducted by the BPSC are kept in open space inside the BPSC building due to lack adequate office space and necessary materials. These documents are very often damaged by rain and insects, or get lost due to improper filing and unsafe preservation.
14. The library of the BPSC has not been modernised and the BPSC seems to have no plan to turn it into a modern library.
15. The Commission has to depend on the government of Bangladesh Press (or BG Press) to print question papers. There are risks of leakage of question paper in printing these outside BG Press.
16. Appointments, postings, rewards and punishments in the PSC usually take place on the basis of political consideration and with bribe. Pro-ruling party staff is usually transferred to the confidential and controller Section of the Commission immediately after taking over by a new government.
17. The internal recruitments, disciplinary and administrative issues of the BPSC are also influenced by the government.
18. The non-transferable nature of the job in the BPSC has in fact, created scope to form syndicates at different levels in the BPSC Secretariat. These syndicates are involved in earning unauthorised income by involving themselves in leakage of questions, contracting with the job seekers, helping ruling party supporters for getting job, etc for the last one decade.
19. Thousands of applications of the examinees along with the documents in various exams conducted by the BPSC are kept in open space inside the BPSC building due to lack adequate office space and necessary materials. These documents are very often damaged by rain and insects, or get lost due to improper filing and unsafe preservation.
20. The library of the BPSC is inaccessible to the common people.

<sup>77</sup> Under Article 139(2) of *The Constitution of Bangladesh* mandates that, "The chairman and other members of such a Commission shall be removed from office except in like manner and on he like grounds as a judge of the Supreme Court." Article 139(3) states that, "A chairman or other members of a Public Service Commission may resign his office by writing under his own hand addressed to the President."

### **C. Transparency and Credibility in the Examinations is Ignored**

21. The examination system is archaic and outdated lacking the scope of proper assessment of competency of the candidates.
22. The examinations and tests conducted by the Commission since the beginning of its operations in Bangladesh has lacked in transparency, accountability and credibility.
23. The existing generalised exam system followed by BPSC is not good enough to assess the merit and competency of the job seekers in an efficient, non-partisan, equitable and credible way.
24. Because of lack of transparent assessment criteria for examinations there is scope of irregularities and corruption in the recruitment process. There have been blatant examples of partisan recruitments in important cadres like administration and police.
25. Irregularities happen in the recruitment of non-cadre posts more than that of the cadre posts. But irregularities in the BCS exams only come to the print Media.
26. No transparent guideline or manual has been followed for conducting the viva voce. As a result irregularities and corruption occur in viva voce of all exams conducted by the Commission.
27. Under the existing provisions no examinee can challenge any decision related to BCS or any other exam conducted by the Commission. The existing restriction on re-evaluation or re-examination of BCS result declared by the BPSC has created a great deal of opportunities for irregularities.
28. The access to information for the service-recipients of the BPSC is almost absent. The existing Official Secrets Act (Evidence Act, 1872, Official Secrets Act, 1923; GOB, 1979, 1975) have not only restricted the freedom of information to the service recipients of the Commission but also served as a safeguard for protecting the persons involved in irregularities and corruption.

### **3.3. Impact of Irregularities and Corruption in PSC**

1. Politicization of public service of the republic.
2. Merit and skill have been sidelined by partisan political consideration as the basis of appointment to public service.
3. Public servants those who got through applying illegal process start their service life with corruption and have the logic and motivation to get involved in the same throughout.
4. Deterioration in the standard and quality of human resources in public service resulting in mediocrity or even lower level of efficiency.
5. Public Service is likely to remain, for many years to come, hostage to implications of low-standard and partisan officials appointed in a non-transparent and having imperatives and incentives to engage in corruption.

### **3.4. Policy Recommendations**

#### **A. Structural Reforms**

##### **Re-Constitution of the Commission**

1. The BPSC should be reconstituted composing of a Chairperson, Members with impeccable professional excellence, political neutrality and undisputed integrity, efficiency and credibility.



2. A Special Committee should be formed, with special emphasis on its independence and effectiveness, to accomplish the above and recommend measures for reforming the Commission.
3. The ACC may be called upon to investigate into irregularities and corruption in the Commission.
4. Investigations should include all recruitments conducted by the Commission since 1972.
5. The corrupt officials should be identified and should be brought under judgement.
6. The Commission should also ensure appointment of efficient and credible Secretary for its Secretariat.

#### **Independence and Accountability of PSC**

7. The PSC must be granted full independence befitting the challenges facing it. It must have full authority in terms of administrative and financial control.
8. The Commission must have internal self-regulatory and transparency mechanism in place, while it must be externally reportable to the Parliament through the Standing Committee on Public Service.
9. Statement of income, expenditure and assets of the Chairman of the Commission, all its Members and staff, and their immediate family members must be declared for public information and regularly updated through website.

#### **The Qualification and Eligibility Criteria for Chairman and Members**

10. Must be persons of proven high integrity, strong moral courage, personality and commitment.
11. Must have knowledge and experiences of public administration.
12. Must be prepared to disassociate from any other position of financial benefit.
13. Must be non-partisan and non-communal with proven track record of objectivity and impartiality in judgement.

#### **Transparent Selection Process of Chairman/Members**

14. Legal mandate mentioning the selection criteria and appointment procedure of the Chairman and Members of the Commission should be made transparent.
15. A Search Committee may be formed for appointment of persons in all Constitutional bodies of the Republic without controversy. The committee may be comprised of 5 -7 members such as the Prime Minister, Chief Justice, Leader of the Opposition in the Parliament, Chairman of the Anti-corruption Commission, an eminent retired Civil Servant of impeccable record and credibility, a non-partisan and professionally acclaimed educationist/civil society/media person with similar credibility.

#### **Rank and Status of Chairman/Members:**

16. The status and rank of the Chairmen of the BPSC should be made equivalent to a Minister, and Members should be equivalent to the Judges of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.
17. The Secretary of the BPSC should be equivalent to the Secretary of the government.

#### **Accountability of the Commission**

18. Specific, effective and transparent accountability measures and line management should be ensured for the BPSC Chairman and Members, and its officials and staff.

#### **Ombudsman for PSC and Public Administration**

19. An independent and effective Ombudsman is felt necessary for the Commission and the civil service in general for settling disputes, dissatisfaction and allegations raised against BPSC and the civil service of the Republic.

### **Integrity Statement**

20. Initiative should be taken to introduce Integrity Statement/Code of Ethics for the BPSC. The empirical experience from South Africa and other developed nations may be considered in this regard.

### **Citizen's Committee**

21. A Committee of Concerned Citizens composed of persons with proven integrity, efficiency and commitment may be constituted to keep watch on the activities and performance of the BPSC and to suggest measures to make the BPSC efficient and honest.

### **Anti-corruption Hotline**

22. A hotline (phone number or mail box) may be introduced in the office of the ACC of Bangladesh to receive all sorts of complaints related to irregularities and corruption of the BPSC. The Special Reform Committee on the BPSC and ACC may jointly explore the specific structure, and working procedure of this hotline.

### **Complain Box**

23. The Commission should have a Complain Box to receive complaints and suggestions from the service receivers. All complains should be duly addressed and results made public.

### **Citizen's Charter**

24. As per recommendation of the Public Administration Reform Commission (2000), a Citizen's Charter may be introduced for the BPSC. The Commission may undertake initiative in this regard. This sort of initiative will certainly contribute to restoring the credibility of the BPSC.

## **B. Reforms in the Examination and Recruitment System**

### **Review of the Examination System**

25. An Examination and Recruitment Reform Committee should be formed to modernise the examination and recruitment system meeting the challenges of the service for which recruitments are made.
26. The existing generalised exam system should be abolished and cadre-specific examination should be introduced to ensure efficiency and professionalism in service.

### **Measures for Credible Examination System**

27. Measures should be taken to ensure equitable, credible and merit-based recruitment; complete abolition of partisan political or any other influence in the recruitment; specific needs of the various cadres and completion of exams within a very short period of time.
28. Examination system followed by IBA of Dhaka University and internationally reputed exams like GRE, GMET, SAT etc. may be considered in this regard.
29. A set of transparent guidelines must be prepared and publicly available consisting of the examination rules and recruitment process.
30. It should ensure a transparent and effective Guideline/Manual for Viva Voce.
31. The Commission should make a transparent guideline or manual (including distribution of marks in the viva voce) for conducting the viva voce immediately.
32. The examination system should ensure evaluation of all exams and tests by relevant, skilled and credible examiners.

### **Review of the Quota System**

33. The existing quota system for freedom fighters and districts should be reviewed to conform to new realities.
34. At least 75% of places should be on purely merit basis, while the remaining may be distributed for affirmative action on the basis of gender, ethnic and religious identity.

### **Access to Information**

35. The mark sheet of the successful candidates should be given to the examinees on compulsory basis immediately after the result is published. The result sheet of all examinees must be published on the website.
36. Existing restrictions against challenging the result of examinations should be abolished.

### **C. Institutional Reforms**

37. A website for the BPSC should be set up containing all information that the citizens should know in order to restore the Commission's credibility and public trust.
38. Computerized data base and MIS should be established with all information of public interest publicly available through various means including website.
39. A Human Resource Unit should be established at BPSC, with special emphasis on training and capacity building of the staff.
40. Recruitment, postings and incentives – both negative and positive – of the PSC staff should be on the basis of academic qualification, professional skills and experience, political neutrality and integrity.
41. BPSC Staff should be recruited through independent and credible institution like IBA of Dhaka University.
42. The Commission itself may conduct a quick need assessment for identifying the required manpower, training programmes for strengthening the capacity of the staff.
43. Competent persons should be placed in the appropriate positions of the Commission. Necessary legal procedures should be made to ensure non-partisan appointments, postings, rewards and punishments in BPSC.
44. A network of corrupt officials has developed in the BPSC Secretariat. These syndicates are involved in earning unauthorized income by involving in leakage of questions, contracting with the job seekers, helping ruling party supporters for getting job, etc. The network is too strong for any internal disciplinary action. These syndicates corrupt staff should be identified immediately and necessary disciplinary actions be taken.
45. The Commission may take help from the ACC of Bangladesh in this regard.
46. Initiative should be taken to assess the assets and liabilities of the officers and employees of BPSC and their dependents through National Board of Revenue and regularly updated through the concerned body.

### **4. Concluding Remarks**

The Bangladesh Public Service Commission is a vital public service delivery institution. The existing loopholes/limitations of the constitutional and legal mandates and procedures of the operations of the Commission have contributed greatly to open the frontiers of irregularities and corruption in the BCS exams and other activities of the BPSC as well. As a result, since 1972 the Commission has been considerably used as a convenient tool for serving the interest of the ruling parity (ies) and corrupt people as well. The credibility of the Commission has become endangered to a great extent. Today, it is only the will of the government that can make the BPSC really independent, effective, transparent, accountable and credible constitutional body. A Special Reform Committee on the BPSC may be formed to accomplish the above and recommend measures for reforming the Commission with special emphasis on neutrality, independence and effectiveness of the BPSC. The policy recommendations mentioned in this paper may be considered by the concerned policy makers and stakeholders for making BPSC really independent and effective and thereby to restore its credibility.

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## Effect of Leadership Style on Job-Related Tension and Psychological Sense of Community in Work Organizations: A Case Study of Four Organizations in Lagos State, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** *This study focused on the effect of leadership style on job-related tension and psychological sense of community in work organizations. The study made use of two hundred selected workers from four manufacturing organizations in Lagos state of Nigeria. Three instruments were used to generate data for the study namely Supervisory Behavior Description Questionnaire (SBDQ), Job-related Tension (JT) and Psychological Sense of Community Questionnaire (PSCQ). Data collected was analyzed with t-test for independent groups and 2x2 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Five hypotheses were tested and results shows that workers under democratic leadership style do not experience higher job-related tension than workers under autocratic leadership style. Also, workers under autocratic style of leadership do not experience higher sense of community than workers under democratic style of leadership. Moreover, result revealed that female workers do not experience higher job-related tension than male workers under autocratic leadership style. Furthermore, no significant difference was found in the level of psychological sense of community of male and female workers under democratic style of leadership. Finally, sex status does not have any significant main effect on job-related tension. The results were discussed and recommendations were made based on the findings of this study.*

### Introduction

Leadership is a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organization goals (Omolayo, 2000), a process whereby one person exerts social influence over other members of the group (Bamigboye, 2000), a process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group of individuals in an effort towards goal achievement in given situations (Akanwa, 1997), and a relational concept involving both the influencing agent and the person being influenced (Eze, 1995). Effective leadership is the extent to which a leader continually and progressively leading and directing his/her followers to the agreed destination which is defined by the whole group (Omolayo, 2000).

Leadership style is the pattern of behaviors engaged in by the leader when dealing with employees. Lewin, Lippit and White (1939) identified three leadership styles which are autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire. Autocratic leadership style involve the leader making all the decisions, wielding absolute power, assigning tasks to members of the group and maintaining a master-servant relationship with members of the group. On the other hand, democratic leadership style involves the use of consultative approach, encourages group participation in decision making and maintaining a master-master relationship with group members. The laissez-faire leadership style involves non-interference policy, allows complete freedom to all workers and has no particular way of attaining goals. However, there is no one best style of leadership. The effectiveness of a particular style is dependent on the organizational situation (Omolayo, 2004).

Work stress is the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of a job do not match the capabilities, resources or needs of the work (United States National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 1999). Khan, Wolf, Quinn, Snoek, and Rosenthal (1964) defines it in relation to two aspects of organizational stress namely role conflict and role ambiguity. Role conflict occurs when members of the role set expect different things from the focal person, and when internalized values, ethics or personal standard collide with other expectations. Role ambiguity, on the other hand, occurs when members of the role set fail to communicate to the focal person, the expectation they have or information needed to perform the role. People experience role ambiguity when they do not know what is expected of

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them. According to them, work stress is the feeling of tension, discomfort, uncertainty, indecisiveness and distress that a worker experiences as a result of the social and physical circumstances of the work setting. Leaders can reduce these stressors by providing direction and support for their employees (Kreitner & Kinicki, 1998), and this makes style of leadership very important in organizations.

Community is a group of people who are usually interdependent, who participate in discussion and decision making, and who share certain practices that both defined the community and are nurtured by it (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler & Tipton, 1985). Psychological sense of community is a feeling of belongingness, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members needs will be met through their commitment to be together (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Thus, the element in a community includes mutual interdependence among members, sense of belonging, connectedness, we-spirit, trust interactivity, common expectations, shared values and goals, and overlapping historical background. Psychological sense of community in work organization refers to the workers' appraisal and identification with the work groups or work networks.

Organization is an entity which is set up for a purpose. This purpose determines what it sets out to do, but it actually does and how it does it will be influenced by a number of internal and external forces such as environment and history of the organization. Eze (1995) defined organization as the human co-ordination of a number of persons or individuals in the service of mutual help for the achievement of common goals through the division of labor and functions, and through hierarchy of authority.

Smith (1998) asserts that if the task is highly structured and the leader has good relationship with the employees, effectiveness will be high on the part of the employees. His findings further revealed that democratic leaders take great care to involve all members of the team in discussion, and can work with a small but highly motivated team. Schwartz (1987) found a high submissiveness among workers in democratic organizations, but those in autocratic organizations expressed frustration and anger. Bales (1970) found two different categories of specialist in work groups. These are task specialist and social-emotional specialist. The task specialist is concerned with the achievement of the group goals while the social-emotional specialist is concerned with maintaining positive social relationship within the group and motivating the group members to accept the goals of the group. However, a good leader can combine the two roles (Roger & Roger, 1994). The two categories actually distinguished two different style of leadership namely autocratic and democratic. Lewin et al (1939) concluded that democratic style of leadership is the most effective, but Smith and Peterson (1988) pointed that the effectiveness of group leaders is dependent on the criterion which was being used to assess leadership. Thus, if leadership is assessed in terms of productivity, then autocratic style is most efficient but if the role is seen as maintaining good morale and a steady level of work, democratic style is effective. Absence of leadership style brings about lack of direction from the leader resulting in low morale and lack of interest in the work. Hayers (2000) found that workers who fell under pressure reported autocratic supervision on the part of their leaders. The leaders rarely allowed them to participate in the decision making. It was also reported that workers who were under stress also reported harsh supervision and control on the part of their leaders (Hayers, 2000).

The availability of social support, both on and off the job, is a crucial determinant of organizational stress (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Apparently, the presence of social support helps reduce the outcome of stress by serving buffer against stressful event that occur at work (Landsbergis, Schnall, Deitz, Friedman & Pickering, 1992). Gender role also affects job tension. In a study conducted by Netemeyer and Johnson (1995), women reported more symptoms of stress (such as feelings of depression and feelings of overwhelmed) than men. They further found that women experience greater role conflict between work and family than men. This is because women perform the majority of the household duties and child care responsibilities. Doherenwend and Doherenwend (1997) reported that women had higher rate of nervousness while men had consistently higher rate of personality disorder caused by stressors. Kreitner & Kinicki (1998) summarized the factors that have been found to contribute to stress at work to include role ambiguity, unpleasant work environment, lack of participation in decision making, conflict with other employees, and lack of support from co-workers.

Strong feeling of community increases the flow of information among workers (Bruffee, 1993; and Dede, 1996). Workers benefit from community membership by experiencing a greater sense of well-being and support (Walker, Wassermann & Wellman, 1994; and Wellman & Gillia, 1999). Royal and Rossi (1996) opined that sense of community is related to engagement in work activities. There is need for workers to have sense of connectedness which affect the workers' ability to cope. Lack of connectedness breeds loneliness, low self esteem, isolation, low achievement, low motivation and low productivity (Gibbs, 1995). Sense of belonging and the feeling of connectedness indicate the presence of trust relationship and togetherness among the workers (Preece, 2000). The extent to which a job gives an employee opportunity to interact with other co-workers enhances the sense of community at work (Camman, Fischman, Jenkins & Wesh, 1983), but the organizational climate which will pave way for such interaction is determined by the leadership style (Buckner, 1988). The finding of Adebayo (2000) revealed that female residents significantly scored higher on psychological sense of community than male residents. However, Buckner (1988) and Davidson and Cotter (1993) reported lack of predictive power of gender on psychological sense of community. Kreitner & Kinicki (1998) observed that lack of support from co-workers goes a long way to contribute to stress in organization which could hinder sense of belonging. Likewise, members of dissimilar groups who experiences trauma cannot feel a sense of connectedness (Ottenberg, 1987). Young and Erickson (1988) noted that workers who experience isolation at work are prone to increased vulnerability to traumatic stress disorders.

### **Hypotheses**

1. Workers under autocratic leadership style will experience higher job-related tension than workers under democratic leadership style.
2. Workers under democratic style of leadership will experience higher sense of community than workers under autocratic style of leadership.
3. Female workers will experience higher job-related tension than male workers under autocratic style of leadership.
4. There will be a significant difference in the level of psychological sense of community between male and female workers under democratic leadership style.
5. There will be a significant main effect of sex status on job-related tension.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

### **Research Setting**

The study was carried out in four manufacturing organizations in Lagos State of Nigeria. The organizations are Patterson-Zochonis Industries Plc, Nigerian Bottling Plc, Nestle Nigeria Plc, and Cadbury Nigeria Plc.

### **Research Participants**

Participants were made up of two hundred randomly selected workers, comprising of one hundred male and one hundred female workers. They comprised of junior cadre workers such as clerical officers, machine operators, and the likes. Their age ranges between twenty and fifty-five years while their minimum educational qualification is the secondary school leaving certificate.

### **Research Variables**

Gender and leadership styles (autocratic and democratic) were the independent variables while the dependent variables were job-related tension and psychological sense of community.



## Research Instruments

Three instruments were used to collect data from the selected participants for this study. The instruments are:

1. Supervisory Behavior Description Questionnaire (SBDQ) developed by Fleishman (1953) measures two leadership style in work organizations namely Democratic/Consideration/Person or employee-centred and Autocratic/Initiating structure/Task or work-centred. Its reliability coefficient as reported by Fleishman (1953) are 0.98 (Spearman Brown), 0.87 (Test-Retest) for democratic leadership style; and 0.78 (Spearman Brown), 0.75 (Test-Retest) for autocratic leadership style. Omolayo (2004) obtained a test-retest reliability coefficient of 0.74 and 0.65 for democratic and autocratic leadership styles respectively. Concurrent validity coefficient of 0.142 for democratic style and 0.336 for autocratic style were obtained by Ejimofor (1987) while Omolayo (2004) reported a concurrent validity of 0.66 for the overall SBDQ instrument.
2. Job-related Tension (JT) developed by Khan et al (1964) assesses the nature, causes and consequences of two aspects of organizational stress namely role conflict and role ambiguity. Its coefficient of alpha reported by Sheridan and Vredenburg (1978) and Oseghare (1988) are 0.87 and 0.39 respectively. Concurrent validity coefficient of 0.51 and 0.46 were obtained by Sheridan and Vredenburg (1978) and Oseghare (1988) respectively.
3. Psychological Sense of Community Questionnaire (PSCQ) developed by Adesanya (2001) measures the workers' level of belongingness, level of identification and level of attraction. Its reliability coefficient are 0.91 (Test-Retest), 0.61 (Split-half), and 0.64 (Test-Retest) by Adesanya (2001), Amosu (2001) and Omolayo (2004) respectively. Adesanya (2001) obtained a construct validity coefficient of 0.72 while Omolayo (2004) reported a concurrent validity coefficient of 0.66 for the instrument.

## Statistical Methods

The t-test for independent groups and 2x2 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to analyze the data collected for this study.

## Results

The results of data analyses are presented below in table form.

**Hypothesis One:** Workers under autocratic leadership style will experience higher job-related tension than workers under democratic leadership style.

**Table 1: Summary table of t-test showing the level of job-related tension of workers under autocratic and democratic leadership styles**

Group	N	X	SD	DF	t-obtained	t-critical	P
Autocratic style	82	40.07	10.80	198	0.59	1.96	>0.05 NS
Democratic style	118	39.95	10.71				

$t(198) = 0.59, p > 0.05$

Source: Author's survey

Result shows that workers under autocratic leadership style do not experience higher job-related tension than workers under democratic leadership style. The first hypothesis is therefore rejected.

**Hypothesis Two:** Workers under democratic style of leadership will experience higher sense of community than workers under autocratic style of leadership.

**Table 2: Summary table of t-test showing the level of sense of community of workers under autocratic and democratic leadership styles**

Group	N	X	SD	DF	t-obtained	t-critical	P
Autocratic style	82	51.48	9.05	198	0.13	1.96	>0.05 NS
Democratic style	118	51.64	9.36				

$t(198) = 0.13, p > 0.05$

Source: Author's Survey

From the above table, result indicates that workers under democratic style do not experience higher sense of community than workers under autocratic style. Therefore, hypothesis two is not accepted.

**Hypothesis Three:** Female workers will experience higher job-related tension than male workers under autocratic style of leadership.

**Table 3: Summary table of t-test showing the level of job-related tension of male and female workers under autocratic leadership style**

Group	N	X	SD	DF	t-obtained	t-critical	P
Male workers	42	40.71	9.98	80	0.18	2.00	>0.05 NS
Female workers	40	40.65	11.72				

$t(80) = 0.18, p > 0.05$

Source: Author's Survey

Result as shown in Table 3 revealed that female workers do not experience higher job-related tension than male workers under autocratic leadership style. Hypothesis three is therefore not confirmed.

**Hypothesis Four:** There will be a significant difference in the level of psychological sense of community between male and female workers under democratic leadership style.

**Table 4: Summary table of t-test showing the level of psychological sense of community between male and female workers under democratic leadership style**

Group	N	X	SD	DF	t-obtained	t-critical	p
Male workers	58	52.72	9.62	116	1.23	2.00	>0.05 NS
Female workers	60	50.60	9.06				

$t(116) = 1.23, p > 0.05$

Source: Author's survey

Result above shows a no significant difference in the level of psychological sense of community between male and female workers under democratic style of leadership. The fourth hypothesis is therefore not accepted.

**Hypothesis Five:** There will be a significant main effect of sex status on job-related tension.

**Table 5: ANOVA summary table showing the effect of sex status on job-related tension**

Source of variation	SS	DF	MS	F-obtained	F-critical	<i>p</i>
Main effect	40.89	2	20.45	0.172	3.84	>0.05 NS
Sex	0.23	1	0.23	0.002		

F (1,196) = 0.002,  $p > 0.05$

Source: Author's survey

From Table 5 above, result shows that there is no main effect of sex on job-related tension. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected.

### Discussion

The result of this study revealed that workers under autocratic leadership style do not experience higher job-related tension than workers under democratic style. Style variation is associated with the degree of subordinate's participation in decision making process, delegation and consideration for their needs. Democratic leadership style is associated with sensitivity and caring while autocratic style is associated with callousness and lack of concern for subordinates' welfare. However, autocratic leaders differ on a single dimension, which is the degree to which they delegate decision making authority to their subordinates. However, it is the responsibility of the leaders to take great care of their subordinates, to involve them in discussion, to motivate them to build team performance, to make decision, and to guide and direct the workers. These responsibilities can be carried out by leaders irrespective of the style of leadership of the leader. It is to be noted that without direction and guidance, the subordinates can become ignorant of their work activities, and therefore go astray. This result supports the findings of Smith (1998).

Findings of this study showed that workers under democratic style of leadership do not experience higher sense of community than workers under autocratic style. This suggests that workers do have sense of belongingness, identification and attraction in their organizations irrespective of the leadership style in operation. The plausible explanation of this is that leaders are instructors who guides and directs the workers for optimum performance. Workers are aware that they can not perform in isolation; therefore they interact with one another for job efficiency, job effectiveness and improved performance.

Furthermore, result of this study revealed that female workers do not experience higher job-related tension than male workers under autocratic leadership style. The plausible explanation of this is that sex status is no longer a criterion for job positions. This is because job and work activities in work organizations are no longer gender specific. Therefore, job-related tension does not discriminate the sex status of the occupants of job positions. This result contradicts Netemeyer, et al (1995) and Doherenwend and Doherenwend (1997).

Moreover, no significant difference was found in the level of psychological sense of community between male and female workers under democratic style of leadership. This suggests that gender lacks predictive power on psychological sense of community. It also suggests that both male and female workers have a high sense of belongingness and sense of responsibility under the democratic style of leadership. This finding is in line with the previous findings of Buckner (1988) and Davidson and Cotter (1993), but contradicts that of Adebayo (2000).

No significant main effect of sex status was found on job-related tension. This suggests that sex status does not cause job-related tension, but other factors such as task confusion, delayed promotion, the use of favoritism instead of merit, dismissal and retrenchment, demotion, harsh discipline, undeserved transfer and redeployment, among others may be responsible.

## Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that workers under democratic leadership style do not experience higher job-related tension than workers under autocratic leadership style. Likewise, workers under autocratic style do not experience higher sense of community than workers under democratic style. Female workers do not experience higher job-related tension than male workers under autocratic style while no significant difference exist in the level of psychological sense of community of male and female workers under democratic style. Also, sex status does not have any significant main effect on job-related tension.

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## Non-Work Factors and Labour Turnover among Female Employees in Kebbi State Civil service

Muhammad Sani Umar\*, and Usman Ahmad Karofi\*\*

### ABSTRACT

*This study examines the impact of non-work factors on labour turnover among female employees in Kebbi State Civil Service. The hypothesis of the study states that the higher the perception of prevalence of certain non-work related factors, the earlier the decision by female workers to disengage from the civil service. A questionnaire was administered on 172 former female civil servants in Kebbi State.*

*The major findings of the study are that non-work factors identified in the study are statistically significant determinants of female labour turnover. Secondly, pressures from the matrimonial homes are very strong, standing out as the strongest of all the non-work factors responsible for female labour turnover.*

*The study recommends that high-quality public childcare should be provided at work places and that the government should also look at ways of making work–environment reflect the culture of the society.*

### Introduction

The study poses to examine the influence of individual and collective effect of the factors outside the workplace on female labour turnover. In contemporary societies, there is increasing concern about the status of women in the labour force. The concern is particularly in the areas of equal employment opportunity with men in all sectors of the economy. In Nigeria, all the three levels of government have responded to this concern by establishing special ministries and parastatals responsible for women affairs. This movement for the empowerment of women has tremendous impact world over. In Nigeria, there has been increasingly active and direct involvement of women in both public and private sectors. In particular, the Northern states have experienced increasingly active and direct involvement of women though in relatively lower rate than the Southern states.

Female employment in the Nigerian civil service has historically tended to be lower than male. The Federal Office of Statistics publications (1979-1997) show that even in the federal civil service, very few women relative to men secure jobs. Out of these few, a sizeable number of them are temporarily employed. For example, employments in the Federal civil service from 1979 to 1984 indicates that out of a total of 1,512,451 permanent staff, only 185,027 (12 %) were women. Also, over 84 per cent of the positions were occupied by men between 1987 and 1997. Basset (1996) observes that among female employees, those with higher levels of education have higher employment rates than those with lower levels. At the same time, pregnancy and care for the young children impede women's opportunities for employment. Childcare is often a heavy burden on women who work outside the home to support the family. For example, a survey in Japan found that married women with paying jobs spent an average of two hours and twenty six minutes daily on domestic work, while married men spent an average of only seven minutes (Interactive Population Center, 2003).

In Hausa societies of the Northern Nigeria, it is a different story. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Islam had become a part of the cultural identity of the Hausas and women seclusion (Purdah)

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became one of the most visible symbols of Islamic practice (Adamu, 1998). Purdah is an institution practiced by many Muslims. Muhammad (1993) submits that the thoughts of Sheikh Usmanu Danfodiyo (the founder of Sokoto Caliphate) guided the views of the people in the North-West zone of Nigeria comprising, among others, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara States. He explains that to Sheikh Usmanu Danfodiyo, any work situation in which women leave their houses to mingle with men is forbidden because of its negative consequences. A survey in the United States confirmed the view of Usmanu Danfodiyo. Adler (1996), reports that a positive correlation was found between women in the workplace and adultery. However, Sheikh Usmanu Danfodiyo in his *Ihya'us Sunnati* (n.d) gave some guidelines where conditions necessitate that a woman must go out and work.

The Hausa society, of which Kebbi State is a part, is patriarchal with a strong male influence on virtually every sphere of life. Women in seclusion are generally believed to be dependent, submissive and dominated by their husbands and their lives assumed to be restrictive and repressive. This is because of the nature of purdah system which places the responsibilities of wives and their children on husbands while the women are expected to remain secluded doing domestic work. It is the men, not the women, who by convention participate in public life, and who monopolize public affairs (Adamu, 1998; Khalid, 2002). According to Khalid (2002), the sole role of the woman in the North-Western part of Nigeria is perceived generally to be in the home, caring for the young and cooking for the family. It is the responsibility of the husband to provide for them and their children just as it is the women's responsibility to do domestic work. Adamu (1998) opines that many secluded women view this relationship in reciprocal and contractual way rather than dependency. Thus, marriage remains the central and important role of a woman. Khalid (2002) explains that the influence of traditional division of labour along gender seems to dictate the form and content of purdah in Hausa society. According to him, this could be observed in the socialisation of children. The most crucial feature of this socialisation for the girls is their training into different household management chores both productive and reproductive and many other activities connected with their future roles as wives and mothers. And unlike boys, girls are expected to assume adult responsibilities much earlier. Adamu (1998) emphasizes that the practice of seclusion in Hausa society restricts women to the private sphere and denies them access to the public.

This explains why in North-Western part of Nigeria and particularly in Muslim dominated areas, female employment rate is lower than the Southern parts. Females are generally not expected to participate as members of public employment due to these cultural and religious restrictions. But as Pindiga (1998) notes Islam is not antagonistic to women employment and participation in public life. Moreover, the widespread reluctance of Hausa men to give women a chance to partake in public life is neither rooted in the Islamic faith nor in the legacies of the founders and reformers of the religion (Khalid, 2002). The result of the reluctance of Hausa men to give women a chance to partake in public life is that female employment opportunities in the civil service are somewhat low.

### **Background and Statement of the Research Problem**

Although women have shown a continued interest in employment in the state civil service, men continue to outnumber them. By population, the potential female labour force in Nigeria is 50 per cent though the actual figure ranges between 31 and 36 per cent in both the public and private sectors of the economy (Salaam, 2003; Africa Action, 2003). At the higher administrative and managerial levels, the figure is even smaller. For example, of the 191, 329 federal civil servants in 1992, only 45,881 (24 %) were females (Nwaochei, 1998). In Kebbi State civil service, female employees constituted only 12% (1,396) of the total employment as at 1999 (Federal Character Commission, Kebbi State Office, 2004). Also, the pattern of labour force in 1991 Census data demonstrates that there are generally more males than females. This may be partly explained by the socio-cultural practices in the country, where the division of labour is unequal between men and women. Women are often responsible for both productive and reproductive roles in the

household. Their contributions are often unpaid for, and yet do not free them for other paid productive work especially in the formal sector.

It is unfortunate to observe, however, that the little opportunity women got in the civil service is, in recent times, being eroded by increasing labour turnover among them. In Eastern Europe, women's economic activity has traditionally been high but has recently dropped in some countries. In Estonia, the female labour force participation rate has decreased from 65% to 52% between 1980 and 2001, and Bulgaria, where it declined from 60% in 1980 to 46% in 2001 (ILO, 2003). The Nigerian data is almost similar with that of Eastern Europe. For example, in Nigeria, statistics show that there was a decrease of female labour force from 27% in 1998 to 24% in 2001 (Civil Service Commission, 2006). Also, in Northern Nigerian of Sokoto and Kebbi states, statistics show that there was a decrease of female labour force from 15% in 1995 to 14% in 1997 (Federal Office of Statistics, 2001).

Females lose a large proportion of their lifetime income by taking time out of the workplace to have children. Throughout the world, females continue to bear primary responsibilities of childcare and housework. Generally, when paid work and housework activities are physically separated, women must decide how much time and effort to allocate to formal job and to domestic responsibilities.

Although the problem of employee turnover has received much attention from researchers in organizational sciences, very few of these studies have focused on women employees in the public service and the state civil service in particular. Moreover, in Nigeria and in particular, in the North-West, female employment in the state service is relatively low compared to their counterparts in other parts of Nigeria.

Based on these considerations, this study examines the relationships that exist between factors outside the workplace on the one hand and female labour turnover on the other.

The study is designed to seek answers to the following question: What is the relationship between non-work factors (to get married, to join husband/parents on transfer, to concentrate on upbringing of children, domestic work, better prospect outside the civil service, other wives of my husband are not working, my husband did not like me working outside the home, my parents did not like me working outside the home, my religion is against women working outside the home etc.) and women labour turnover?

### **Study Hypotheses**

The hypothesis formulated to guide this study is that:

"The higher the perception of prevalence of certain non-work related factors, the earlier the decision by female workers to disengage from the civil service."

### **1.3 Research Methodology**

This is a survey research. It is a cross sectional study which examines the causes of voluntary labour turnover among female employees in Kebbi State civil service from 1992-2004 while excluding the involuntary ones. The data used for this study were from primary sources. Voluntary turnover means voluntary movement of an employee out of an organisation. It reflects employee's decision to terminate the employment relationship while the involuntary type of turnover reflects employer's decision to terminate the employee's employment. Since employees leaving voluntarily are those not dismissed by the employer, they are probably the ones that an employer would like to retain most.

The choice of 1992 is based on the fact that Kebbi State was carved out of former Sokoto State in the late 1991. Official data on the state civil service was not available until the year 1992. Again, the thirteen year period for a social phenomenon is enough for detailed analysis.



Also, only female employees on permanent appointment who had worked in the State Ministries/parastatals were studied. This is because permanent employees are usually considered to represent the workforce than non-permanent ones. The study also covers both the junior and senior staff from the rank and file to the highest executive in order to cover all the categories of female civil servants.

The questionnaire was administered to 172 former female civil servants in the sample. The questionnaire elicited information on two kinds of variables – dependent and independent variables. As a proxy for labour turnover, years of service at the point of resignation was considered to serve as the dependent variable for the study. Nine non-work factors were considered to serve as the independent variables. They include domestic responsibilities, to concentrate on upbringing of the children, religion, to join husband on transfer, husband's or parent's pressure to quit, other wives/wife of my husband are/is not working, better prospect outside the civil service and marriage.

The population of this study is the entire Kebbi State female employees in the state civil service who had left voluntarily through retirement, resignation or by absconding. In order to identify the population for this study, the register of all previous employees who resigned voluntarily from the Kebbi State civil service was obtained from the records of the Establishment Department of Kebbi State. From the register, all males were excluded and the list of females totaling 348 became the population for this study. As for the number of female employees who had left the civil service voluntarily, information from the Federal Character Commission in Kebbi State concurred with the records of the Establishment Department of Kebbi State which revealed that a total of 348 female staff had left the services of the State voluntarily between 1992 and 2004. Thus, this figure became the population for this study.

The sample of respondents was drawn from all the 58 ministries/parastatals/departments of the state civil service. The study initially chose all the elements in the population (all the 348 female ex-civil servants) because it is considered to be small and can be effectively covered. Adamu and Johnson, (1997) opine that it is always statistically better to analyze the whole population especially if it is small. However, on closer examination it became clear that owing to difficulties of reaching them through their respective addresses, this procedure could not be adopted. Instead, the sample used was determined not by any random procedure but by the availability of information. A good number of potential members of the sample could not be traced for a number of reasons – death, change in address resulting from marriage, migration, etc. For these reasons only a total of 172 of them could be contacted and were ready to participate in the study.

Since all members of the population for this study were previous employees, the study resorted to using the information contained in their files at the Establishment office to provide a guide to trace and administer the questionnaire to them. The file information was supplied to existing female staff or their associates, who assisted the research in tracing potential respondents. The resulting snowball method of data collection was all the more necessary owing to the cultural setting of the study area – access to married women is easier through female acquaintances or husbands of potential respondents. Thus, relationship was established with the respondents through either their husbands or their previous female colleagues or acquaintances.

Regression analysis method was adopted for data analysis. For the purpose of hypothesis testing, two test statistics were employed. The t-test was used to measure the individual significance of the parameters estimated. The F-test was used to measure the significance (or adequacy) of the model. The use of regression in the analysis had assisted in identifying the independent variables that best explain the dependent variable of the research.

The following model was used:

$$Y_1 = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{NONWFAC} + \mu$$

Where:

Y	Dependent variable, measured by the length of service, in years, put in by the respondent before her voluntary withdrawal.
NONWFAC	C21, C22, C23, C27, C28, C35, C36, C37, C38
$\beta_i$	Parameters of the model to be estimated, $i=0, 1..9$ .
$\mu$	Random disturbance (or error) term

Where:

C21= to get married

C22= to join husband/parents on transfer

C23= to concentrate on upbringing of my child

C27= Domestic work

C28= Better prospect outside the civil service

C35= other wives of my husband are not working

C36= My husband did not like me working outside the home

C37= My parents did not like me working outside the home

C38= My religion is against women working outside the home

Given the above model, the hypothesis was tested using the t-ratio of the relevant parameter estimate. The individual parameter estimates and their corresponding standard errors yielded estimates of t-ratios, which were used to determine whether or not to reject the hypothesis.

#### 1.4 The Results

A total of three hundred and forty eight (348) copies of the questionnaire were sent out to former female civil servants but only one hundred and seventy two (172), or about 49% were fully completed and returned. The figure is statistically significant because it constitutes over 20 per cent of the research population. Maitafsir (2002) is of the opinion that 20 per cent of a research population is reasonable for the conduct of survey research in the social sciences. Thus, the analysis that follows below is based on one hundred and seventy two (172) respondents.

#### Test of Hypotheses

The hypothesis, given is:

“The higher the perception of prevalence of certain non-work related factors, the longer it takes female civil servants to quit.”

**Table 1 Regression Results – Dependent Variable = Length of Service**

Independent Variables (non-work factors)	Parameter Estimate	T-ratio
C28	0.704411	4.186***
C35	0.502636	
C21	0.304139	3.127***
C36	0.464539	1.516

C37	-0.265876	2.953***
C23	-1.209603	-4.341***
C38	0.053480	-7.532***
C22	-0.168396	0.304
C27	0.124779	-0.748
		0.891
Constant term	0.795206	0.786
$R^2 = 0.73$ $F=49.19***$		

Significant at 5% (\*\*), 1% (\*\*\*)

In a number of ways, the results given in Table 1 present an ample demonstration of the effects of non-work factors on female labour turnover. The coefficient of determination,  $R^2$ , is high, at 73%, implying that non-work factors account for a significant proportion of female labour turnover. Moreover, given that the F-statistic is high and significant at the 1% level, it is clear that the model is adequate. Turning to the individual effects of the non-work factors, it is clear from the table that two of them have negative effect on turnover (parents' disapproval of work of their daughter (C37) and the wish of mothers to raise their children at home (C32), instead of engaging the service of an au pair.

### 1.5 Conclusions and Recommendations

In Nigeria and particularly in the North-West, female employment in the state civil service is relatively low compared to their counterparts in other parts of Nigeria. The impact of Islam on the Hausa people was deep and widespread, and it is difficult to separate culture and religion. The day-to-day operation of the civil service such as working period and office arrangements operate against females and adversely affects their ability to enter and to stay longer once they are there. Thus, the study recommends that high quality childcare centres can reduce turnover in state civil service. Lastly, the government should design work environments to reflect the culture of the society. The Nigerian Civil Service is designed in such a way male and female employees intermingle together. This is evident in the system of communication and sharing of office accommodation. This may explain why some husbands or parents feel unsecured for their wives or children who work in the civil service.

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## Impact of Cultural Globalization on the Upper Class Youth in Dhaka City: A Sample Study

Dilara Zahid\*

### Abstract:

*The most important effect of cultural globalization is the commercialization of culture. Production and consumption of cultural goods and services have become commodities, along with the essentials of social life (marriage and family life, religion work and leisure). What once was an element of the way of life becomes a product, rather than something unique men had made to suit their own needs and circumstances. In urban Bangladesh, technology of multi- channels TV began in 1991 and hence satellite broadcasting has been delivering 'lots of channels to viewers'. Cultural domination by electronic media within the society thus has eventually become a major concern of sociological inquiry. The present study is one of such effort to look at how the urban youth has accepted and responded to their access to global culture*

### Introduction

"We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the million whom we govern –a class of persons Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and intellect" (Macaulay, cited in, Ramgopal, 1963)

The process of globalization today is nothing but a new version of the speech of Macaulay in the nineteenth century. Starting in the sixteenth century, Western adventures made a conscious effort to undermine the cultural heritage of various people around the world. This was accomplished by imposing Western religion and cultural practices on those with a different way of life. While today the same is true of the march of globalization. According to Martin Albrow (1992), globalization is a process to bring all the human beings of the world in a comprehensive community. The process involves various types of efforts. There are, thus, various types of globalization, such as economic globalization, political globalization, cultural globalization, etc., although they are all interconnected and interrelated. However, it is cultural globalization that is our main field of interest here.

The most important far-reaching effect of cultural globalization is the commercialization of culture. Production and consumption of cultural goods and services have become commodities, along with the essentials of social life (marriage and family life, religion, work and leisure) that are the crucibles of cultural creations. Culture whether it is music, food, clothes, art, sports, images of age, youth, masculinity or femininity has become a product, sold in the market place. As the former chairman of Coca-Cola, Robert Goizueta said: "People around the world are today connected by brand name consumer products as much as by anything else." (Akande, 2002)

The commercialization of culture has a disturbing impact on people. What once was an element of their way of life becomes a product, rather than something unique they had made to suit their own specific needs and circumstances. At the same time people are continuously bombarded with new images, new music, new clothes and new values. Global media is increasingly in the hands of a few, large, powerful organizations as is the production of music and films. For example, by 1997 the MTV channel was available to 280 million households in over 70 countries and it is increasing day by day.

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The common characteristic of the globalized culture is that it pursues the same “one size fits all” idea: the archetypical middle class family according to the American model in which consumerism is the norm. The result of this cultural process of homogenization is that a large section of the world's population dreams of living like *Cosby & Co* or like the characters in any other stereotype American soap opera. Traditional values have been overtaken by Coca Cola culture. The Michael Jackson style of music and culture is taking over and we don't have the values to cope with it.

Bangladesh is no exception. She is also a member of this 'Electronic Media Society' where most of the urban people are accustomed to almost every form of media like the satellite television and Internet. In urban Bangladesh, technology of multi-channel TV began in 1991 and satellite broadcasting has been delivering 'lots of channels to viewers'. Cultural domination by electronic media whitening the society thus has eventually been a major concern of sociological inquiry. Young generation was the field of interest in this study, because the major responsibility of preserving the culture goes to the young generation as they are the representatives of the future.

### **Global Media and Youth in Dhaka**

This study was carried out in the metropolitan city of Dhaka and data were collected from three upper class residential areas - Gulshan, Uttara and Dhanmondi. These areas were initially selected to have respondents with an “upper class” social, educational and economic background. The data presented in this paper were collected during field work in June-September 2003.

#### **Method of data collection:**

The samples were selected purposively and in some cases by snowball sampling method. The individuals who could serve our purpose by providing required data were taken as sample; such as the boy or girl who watches cable TV regularly or uses internet. A standardized questionnaire was filled up through in-depth interview.

#### **Socio-economic Background of the Respondents**

This survey included 125 respondents; among them 52% were male and 48% female. All the respondents were selected from both Bangali and English medium schools, colleges and universities, like the North South University, Bangladesh Medical College, American International University - Bangladesh, East West University, Viqarunnisa Noon School And College and Scholastica. However, most of them were of English medium schooling (78.4%). The family income of the respondents clearly shows their upper class position in society. It has been observed that 73% of the respondents' families have a gross monthly income between Tk 50,000 to Tk 200,000 and the rest have higher than that (per capita income in Bangladesh is about Tk.2200 per month).

#### **Access to Electronic Media of the Respondents:**

As most of the respondents had come from well-off families, they were habituated with the modern electronic media like satellite television, internet and personal computer.

Exposure to foreign media programs happens mainly in two ways -

- 1) By watching the foreign programs on Bangladesh Television (BTV) or other domestic channels.

2) Through foreign satellite networks beaming foreign programs.

As BTV shows a very insignificant number of foreign programs the major exposure to foreign programs come through foreign satellite channels. The study has revealed that most of the respondents spend 20 to 40 hours per week in media consumption. Table- 1 shows the real figures:

**Table 1: Media Consumption per Week (in Hour) of the Respondents**

Time (in hour)	Number	Percent
1-5	4	3.2
6-10	7	5.6
11-15	9	7.2
16-20	23	18.4
21-25	26	20.8
26-30	19	15.2
31-35	13	10.4
36-40	24	19.2
Total	125	100.0

The study has found that the respondents allow too little time to use media for academic purposes compared to entertainment. Most respondents reported that they used to allocate less than 7 hours per week for this purpose (Table. 2). Therefore, it can be argued that most of the respondents use media as a means of entertainment rather than gathering knowledge.

**Table 2: Academic Use of Personal Computer of The Respondents.**

Per Week (hours)	Number	Percent
Less than 7 hour	76	60.8
7 hour	35	28.0
14 hours and above	14	11.2
Total	125	100.0

From the Table 3 we see that 27.2 percent young people use computer for 2 hours, 30.4 percent respondents use for 3 hours, 23.2 percent youth use for 4 hours and 11.2 percent youth use 7 hours and above. They use their personal computer only for playing game, chatting, listening to songs or mailing. Therefore, the young generation uses their computer mainly for recreation.

**Table 3: Computer Use as Recreation by the Respondents Like Playing, Chatting, Enjoy Song or Movie & Mailing.**

Daily ( in hour)	Number	Percent
Less than 1 hour	----	----
1 hour	---	----
2 hours	34	27.2
3 hours	38	30.4
4 hours	29	23.2
5 hours	7	5.6
6 hours	3	2.4
7 hours and above	14	11.2
Total	125	100.00

The study also reveals the types of program the respondents prefer to get for entertainment. It has been found that romance and sex are the most preferred programs (44.8%). Then come adventures, action, drama, and comedy, etc (Table 4).

**Table 4: The Preference for Programs**

Topic	Number	Percent
Romance and Sex	56	44.8
Adventure and Action	22	17.6
Family and Social drama	18	14.4
Comedy	14	11.2
Horror	11	8.8
Information and Knowledge	4	3.2
Total	125	100.0

### Personal tastes, preferences and habits of the respondents

The effect of satellite TV on the youth is first expressed through their tastes and likings. The influence of satellite programs on the respondents had been categorized under the general and broad headings of food habit, dress and style, linguistic ability, thinking, values, choosing role model etc. In terms of dress, immense consciousness towards its visual effect was highly affirmed and the respondents believed to have been influenced to dress attractively in up-to-date fashion trends and in numerous styles.

It has been observed that the respondents are habituated to taking 'fast food' like burger, sandwich, pizza, fried chicken, French fries, hotdog, pastries etc, which are not really Bangladeshi foods rather are Western foods.

Among the respondents, 69.6 percent are used to eating Western 'fast - food' when only 30.4 percent wanted to eat pure traditional food (Table 5).

**Table 5: Food Habit of the Respondents**

Type of Food	Number	Percent
Fast Food	87	69.6
Traditional meal	38	30.4
Total	125	100.0

Table 6 shows that 76.8 percent respondents reported that Western outfit such as trousers, shirts, or jeans to be comfortable in workplace and at home. On the other hand only 23.2 percent respondents thought that Western dresses were not suitable to our culture.

**Table 6: Preference for Western Dress**

Attitude	Number	Percent
Comfortable	96	76.8
Not Comfortable	29	23.2
Total	125	100.0

Table 7 indicates that the electronic media created fascination for beauty parlors. Among the women respondents 88.3 percent had the habit of going to beauty parlors regularly. About 6.7 percent female respondents went to the parlor occasionally and only 5.0 percent did not go to the parlor.



**Table 7: Habit of Going to Beauty Parlors among the Female Respondents**

Nature of Going	Number	Percent
Regularly	53	88.3
Occasionally	4	6.7
Never	3	5.0
Total	60	100.0

Table 8 shows that most of the respondents (72.8%) performed religious activities occasionally, meaning the males only offer *Jumma* prayer on Friday or said their prayer on *EID* Day, girls said their prayer on occasions like *Shab-e barat*. Only 6.4 percent respondents were regular in their prayers.

**Table 8: Performing Religious Activities of the Respondents**

Frequency of performance	Number	Percent
Always	8	6.4
Occasionally	91	72.8
Some times	26	20.8
Total	125	100.0

Table 9 shows that as the youth of this generation has become figure conscious. About 41.6 percent of the respondents regularly went to the swimming pool or gymnasium to maintain figure. Also, 36.8 percent respondents said that as they were too busy they went sometimes.

**Table-9: Habit of Going Swimming Pool or Gymnasium among the Respondents**

Frequency of visit	Number	Percent
Regularly	52	41.6
Some times	46	36.8
Never	27	21.6
Total	125	100.0

As satellite channels mostly broadcast in English, it has been found that 48.8 percent of the respondents were influenced to a great extent to use English (Table 10) in their conversation.

**Table10: Tendency of Talking in English among the Respondents**

Extent of influence	Number	Percent
To a great extent	61	48.8
To Some extent	48	38.4
Not influenced at all	16	12.8
Total	125	100.0

### Relationships with parents, siblings and peer groups of the respondents

As the youths tend to be busy with media entertainment, they pass less time with their families compared to the peers. However, the boys and girls are becoming more "easy" in their relations with parents as compared to the past. Table-11 shows that 44.8 percent respondents considered their relation with parents to be easy and 34.4 percent very close. Only 20.8 percent said that they were not at all easy with their parents.

**Table 11: Relationship with Parents of the Respondents**

Type of Relation	Number	Percent
Easy	56	44.8
Very Easy	43	34.4

Not so Easy	26	20.8
Total	125	100.0

It has been found that more than half of the respondents did not obey all the orders of their parents. Table 12 shows that only 17.6 percent of the respondents were always obedient to their parents whereas 25.6 percent respondents listened to their parents sometimes and 56.8 percent respondents were rarely obedient to their parents.

**Table 12: Obedience to Parents of the Respondents**

Type of Obedience	Number	Percent
Always Obedient	22	17.6
Sometimes Obedient	32	25.6
Rarely Obedient	71	56.8
Total	125	100.0

The youth are very close to their friends and peer groups compared to the family. When they face any crisis or problem, 60.8 percent of the respondents said that they consult their friends first. Only 24.8 percent shared with their parents and 14.4 percent with their siblings such as brother or sister (Table 13).

**Table-13: Mental Dependency on Family and Friends the Respondents**

Dependency	Number	Percent
Depends on parents	31	24.8
Depends on friends	76	60.8
Depends on siblings	18	14.4
Total	125	100.0

Table-14 indicates that having a love affair is the fashion of the day. 61.6 percent of the respondents confessed that they had love affair with someone and 38.4 percent said they didn't have.

**Table-14: Number of Respondents Having Love Affair**

	Number	Percent
Having Affair	77	61.6
Having No Affair	48	38.4
Total	125	100.0

Table 15 shows that media encourages free mixing between men and women very much. As many as 78.4 percent respondents said their family allowed free mixing while only 21.6 percent respondents thought that their family took it negatively.

**Table 15: Family Attitudes towards Free Mixing Of The Respondents**

Attitude	Number	Percent
Positive	98	78.4
Negative	27	21.6
Total	125	100.0

Table 16 reveals that in our society family ties are shrinking day by day. On occasions like birthday or 31s' night the main enjoyment partners of the respondents were friends in 73.6 percent cases and family in only 26.4 percent cases.

**Table 16: With Whom the Respondents Like to Enjoy Their Occasions**

Enjoyment	Number	Percent
Mostly with friends	92	73.6
Mostly with family	33	26.4
Total	125	100.0

### Views and life style preferences of the Respondents

The study has found a preference for nuclear family among the upper class youths. It is reported that 67.2 percent preferred nuclear family compared to 32.8 percent for extended family (Table 17). This means that most individuals of this generation are interested to form a nuclear family.

**Table-17: Preferred Family Structure of The Respondents**

Preferred Family Structure	Number	Percent
Extended family	41	32.8
Nuclear family	84	67.2
Total	125	100.0

It is also revealed that this generation mostly prefers "love affair" marriage to form their family (70.40), while the rest preferred arranged marriage (Table 18).

**Table-18: Preference for Marriage System of the Respondents**

Preferred Marriage system	Number	Percent
Affair marriage	88	70.4
Arranged marriage	37	29.6
Total	125	100.0

The study has found the respondents more liberal on the issue of divorce and remarriage. Among them, 74.40% was positive in their attitude and only 25.60% respondents expressed negative attitude (Table 19).

**Table 19: Attitudes of the Respondents towards Divorce and Remarriage**

Attitude	Number	Percent
Always wrong	32	25.6
If required, not wrong	93	74.4
Total	125	100.0

Table 20 reveals that 43.2 percent of the respondents were of the opinion that extramarital relationship (live-together) was acceptable while 56.8 percent did not approve it.

**Table20: Attitude towards Live-Together**

Attitude	Number	Percent
Positive	54	43.2
Negative	71	56.8
Total	125	100.0

The respondents were found to be more serious about observing Western festive occasions like the "Valentine's Day" than "Pohela Falgun" (spring festival), which is our traditional festival (Table 21).

**Table-21: Choice of Cultural Festival of The Respondents**

Preferences	Number	Percent
Pohela Falgun	51	40.8
Valentine Day	74	59.2
Total	125	100.0

The study reveals that most respondents are interested to settle down in the West in the future (Table 22).

**Table-22: Future Planning of the Respondents.**

Future Destination	Number	Percent
To settle in West	81	64.8
To settled in own country	44	35.2
Total	125	100.0

### **Sexual Behavior and Attitudes of the Respondents**

One of the major concerns regarding foreign programs shown on satellite TV is that, today's teenagers are becoming immoral and their notion of purity and pollution have been changed. They are getting involved in socially designated immoral activities. Therefore it is very important to understand the permissiveness among the younger generation.

The study reveals that the respondents gathered sexual knowledge from various sources including Western movies and music videos, gossiping with friends, internet pornography, female magazines, collecting adult C.D. or X - rated sex video, etc.

It is observed that the youths enjoy sex under the pretext of love. About 24.0 percent of the respondents said that "Love is a policy to fulfill sexual requirement" and they "always" engaged in sexual contacts while 35.2 percent said that it happened sometimes. (table 23).

**Table-23: Opinion of the Respondents on "Love is a Policy to Fulfill Sexual Requirement"**

Opinion	Number	Percent
Always	30	24.0
Sometimes	44	35.2
Never	51	40.8
Total	125	100.0

Table 24 reveals the current picture of sexual behavior of the youth of in the sample. The Table shows that extramarital relations are highly acceptable among them. Therefore, after an

oral commitment or without any commitment, they engage in a physical relationship within a very short time. More than half of the respondents reported to engage in physical relationship with someone of the opposite sex within a week. Others also expected to enter into such relations within a very short time (Table 24).

**Table24: The Tendency of Getting Sexual Experience.**

Period	Number	Percent
Within a Day	31	24.8
Within a Week	32	25.6
Within a Month	24	19.2
Within 3 Months	16	12.8
Within 6 Months	13	10.4
Within 1 Year	9	7.2
Total	125	100.0

The study also reveals that the usual places of making physical contact are own home, friend's home, at campus, restaurant, park, coaching center or any solitary place far from the city, etc. Table 25 shows that in spite of being the citizen of a highly traditional country like Bangladesh the youth are creating access for premarital sex easily.

**Table 25: Creating Access for Premarital Relationship:**

Place	Some times ( % )	Never ( % )	Total ( % )
At own home	68.8	31.2	100
At friend's home	68.0	32.0	100
At Campus	59.2	40.8	100
At Restaurants	55.2	44.8	100
At Hotel	36.8	63.2	100
Park or any solitary place	78.4	21.6	100
At Coaching centre	58.4	41.4	100

It had been reported (Table-26) that the respondents gathered sexual knowledge from various sources. As many as 84.0 percent respondents knew about sex from Western movies and music videos, because it was the easiest source reached and which reached every home. As many as 91.2 percent respondents said that they learnt about sex from friends. About 71.2 percent respondents confessed that time-to-time they visited internet pornography section and by thus they came to know about sex. And 68.0 percent respondents said they read female magazines out of curiosity and learnt about sex. Collecting adult C.D. or X - Rated sex video was very popular among the respondents and 74.4 percent respondents confessed to gather knowledge about sex from this source.

**Table-26: Sources of Sexual Knowledge of the Respondents.**

Source of knowledge	Sometimes (%)	Never	Total (%)
Western Movie & Music Video	84	16	100
From Friends	91	09	100
Porn Websites through Internet	71	29	100
Books & Magazines	68	32	100
C.D. & X-rated Video Movies	74.4	25.6	100

## Conclusions

The study, thus, reveals that most of the respondents are more used to having Western 'Fast Food' compared traditional foods. The respondents prefer trendy clothes, Western movies and music. Watching TV is mostly the way in which the respondents pass their leisure time. A large number of respondents said that they are very close to their school and college friends, compared to their family members, and they discuss mostly about sex, fashion and show-biz world.

Again, almost half of the respondents wish to practice events shown in the foreign programs in their real lives. They want to be as romantic towards their beloved ones as the lovers are in films or drama; they sometimes want to revolt against their parents' restrictions as they see in films or serials. In the report we have seen that 43.2% young people support "live-together", around 70% like Western food, music or dress, 67.2% support nuclear family and 64.8% are highly interested to settle down in the West in the future. These are all signs of the influence Western culture.

Hillary Rodham Clinton says in her autobiography, "Living History", that the status of the 1<sup>st</sup> Lady of the United States of America had provided her chance to visit 78 countries which opened her eyes and mind. She always thought that America is anxious for the whole world. But her travels suggested that actually the whole world is anxious of America on the question of global peace and security. Cultural domination through the concept of globalization is a prime way of that.

Sociology says that, cultural change is a reality. Nevertheless it should be kept under surveillance. Due to the introduction of cable TV and Internet the young generation of our country has become reckless.

Globalization has resulted in the extinction of 22,000 indigenous cultures in the past decade and optimistic estimates suggests that as many as 90% of the world's languages will disappear in the next century (Akande, 2002). So we should resist Westernization in the name of globalization because it is easy to loose our culture but would be difficult to regain it.

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## Consensual Poverty in Britain, Sweden and Bangladesh: A Comparative Study

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### Abstract

*The study focuses on the construction of a normative deprivation index for Bangladesh, which in the traditions of Townsend (1979), Mack and Lansley (1985, 1992), Halleröd (1994) and Gordon et al. (2000), underscores items the lack of which would constitute poverty. However, unlike these studies, the present study does not measure the head count ratio but explores the dynamics of this normative construction of deprivation in terms of demographic and socio-economic variables. The data for this study come from a sample survey of 1,914 respondents, 1,207 males and 707 females, from all over Bangladesh in 2000. The normative deprivation index for Bangladesh in 2000 shows that 17 items out of 69 appear significant at the level of  $\alpha=0.1$  in inter-item total correlation and more than 50 percent of respondents perceive their absence as constituting poverty. More than 70 percent respondents agree 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 British society during 1960s was more concerned with cooked breakfast, children's birthday party and a week's holiday, whereas during 1980s and 1990s, it was more preoccupied with heating, toilet, bath, beds and damp free home. However, during late 1990s, there was a shift of trend towards hospital visit and two meals a day. The Swedish society had more medical priorities than others and viewed glasses, vacuum cleaner and telephone as more necessary than bed, heating, toilet and bath as perceived by the British. In terms of correlates, the Bangladesh deprivation index is found significantly related to occupation, education and age followed by residence, income and gender. Thus the experience of poverty is specific to time and space; it is society-subjective and normative.*

### Introduction

Most research on poverty focus on the measurement of poverty and the construction of income poverty line for the purpose of determining the extent of poverty. This is evident in the early studies of poverty in England (Mayhew, 1861; Booth, 1889, 1902; Rowntree, 1901).<sup>i</sup> Based on subsistence, the poverty line for a 'moderate family' of man and wife and 3 children in 1898-99 was constructed as less than 21s. per week in London (Booth, 1902-3) and 17s. 8d. per week at York (Rowntree, 1901).<sup>ii</sup> This subsistence model has influenced nearly all subsequent studies in England (Bell, 1912, Davies, 1909, Reeves, 1914, Bowley and Burneet-Hurst, 1915, Bowley and Hogg, 1925, Soutar, Wilkins and Florence, 1942).<sup>iii</sup> An adaptation of the Rowntree method was used by the US Department of Agriculture in its Social Security Administration Poverty Index in 1959 (Orshansky, 1965, 1967).<sup>iv</sup> The 1964 report of the Council of Economic Advisers set out the \$3000 poverty level for the United States, and was subsequently refined to form the official poverty line.<sup>v</sup> Such an official poverty line, however, is non-existent in Britain. This resulted in the researchers' dependence on other statistical indicators like benefit provisions and income benefit. Thus a poor was defined as anyone having an income at or below the level of supplementary benefit<sup>vi</sup> or below 60 per cent of median income.<sup>vii</sup> Nonetheless, surveys by Townsend (1979), Mack and Lansley (1985, 1992) and Gordon et al. (2000) initiated a new trend in poverty discourse in Britain. This was labeled as consensual poverty in which respondents were asked to name items the lack of which would constitute poverty according to them.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2005) interrelates human poverty with human development, and uses three composite indexes<sup>viii</sup> to define and measure poverty, Human Development Index (HDI), Human Poverty Index (HPI-1) and Gender-Related Development Index (GDI). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) views poverty as multidimensional deprivation (OECD, 2001:37) and moves away from the notion of absolute

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poverty to capacity poverty.<sup>ix</sup> The World Bank defines poverty as unacceptable human deprivation in terms of economic opportunity, education, health and nutrition, as well as lack of empowerment and security. <sup>x</sup> In the Western and the Third World poverty discourses, there are five broad indicators of poverty definition and measurement (Gordon et al., 2000:72-75). They are summarized in Figure-1 below:

<b>Poverty measurement</b>	<b>Major representative work</b>
1. Consensual indicators:	Townsend (1979); Mack and Lansley (1985); Gordon and Pantazis (1997)
2. Social exclusion:	Levitas (1999); Silver (1994); Gore and Figueiredo (1996); Room (1995)
3. Subjective measures:	
a. Income proxy:	Viet-Wilson (1987)
b. Consensual poverty lines	Walker (1987), Halleröd (1995a)
c. Socio-vital Minimum Income Level	Callan et al. (1989); Townsend and Gordon (1991); Townsend et al. (1996, 1997); Saunders and Matheson (1992); Brodbury (1989); Callan and Nolan (1991)
4. Income thresholds:	Abel-Smith and Townsend (1965)
5. Budget standards:	Rowntree (1901, 1941, 1951); Beveridge (1942); Bradshaw (1993); Orshansky (1965)

Source: Gordon et al. (2000:72-75).

**Figure-1 Poverty Discourses in the Western and the Third World**

In Bangladesh, poverty studies follow budget standards approach and mainly concentrate on the measurement of poverty and the estimation of its magnitude. The other approaches of poverty measurement have been neglected. Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) has monopolized this type of research on poverty and due to its academic background, it only produced poverty monologue, construction of income poverty line. For this purpose, two official methods-- (a) direct caloric intake (DCI) and (b) cost-of basic needs (CBN)-- are used to estimate poverty line in *Household Expenditure Survey, 1995-96* (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 1998) and *Household Income and Expenditure Survey, 2000* (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2001:55).<sup>xi</sup> Whereas other surveys like the *Poverty Monitoring Survey of 1994*, *Poverty Monitoring Survey of 1999* and *Poverty Monitoring Survey of 2004* have used Food Energy Intake (FEI) method. In 2004, this measure yields two separate income poverty lines for urban and rural areas of Tk.906 and Tk.595 respectively (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2004:10).<sup>xii</sup>

Such mainstream poverty research has been recently criticized by Sen and Hulme (2004) in their measurement of chronic poverty. Ahmed's (2004a) analysis of UNDP survey on Tanore and Gaibandha was a departure from the economic tradition, and was probably the only empirical survey on different types of poverty in rural Bangladesh. In the urban context, Ahmed (2004d) also used non-economic notion of poverty.<sup>xiii</sup> Though most recently some studies have introduced few questions to capture people's perception regarding poverty status, these are not explored rigorously.

The context of poverty studies clearly demonstrates that the concept of poverty is a political one (Alcock, 1993:3). Since the concept is politically charged, its measurements are also tailored to suit the political agenda (Ahmed, 2004b). The controversy between Rowntree and Townsend as mentioned earlier is a clear proof. In addition to that, each measure of poverty has developed in a given spime or space and time (Rahnema, 1993). This results in difficulties and frustrations for cross-cultural poverty researchers. The different poverty assumptions are called "discourses of poverty" (Veit-Wilson, 2000: 141-164).<sup>xiv</sup> It is argued that in the U.S., the economic and behavioral discourses are dominant while the structural discourse is dominant among the British social scientists (Veit-Wilson, 1998 a: 41-48 and 92-100).

The need for a sociological conceptualization of poverty is felt in the academic arena of Bangladesh. Led by Bangladesh Sociological Society, a 2004 seminar on Exploring the Sociological Perspective of Poverty, underscored the need for challenging the concept of income poverty (Islam, 2004; Khan, 2004). It also emphasized the importance of empirical survey on Bangladesh poverty and alternate subjective measurement of poverty (Ahmed, 2004c). Except for

that study by Ahmed (2004c), there is no attempt in Bangladesh to construct consensual poverty or poverty based on the people's perception of the normative deprivation.

### **Objective of the Present Research**

At the backdrop of such intellectual climate in Bangladesh, the present study focuses on the construction of a normative deprivation index, which in the traditions of Townsend (1979), Mack and Lansley (1985, 1992), Halleröd (1994) and Gordon et al. (2000), underscores items the lack of which would constitute poverty in Bangladesh. However, unlike these studies, the present study does not measure the head count ratio but explores the dynamics of this normative construction of deprivation in terms of demographic and socio-economic variables.

### **Data Source and Methodology:**

The data for this study come from a sample survey in 2000 of 1,914 respondents, 1,207 males and 707 females, from all over Bangladesh. Originally, the study was designed to be exclusively urban. However for the sake of bare comparison, a small number of rural respondents, to the extent of 78, are included in the survey. All 6 divisional cities were sampled. The division-wise breakdown of sample is: Barisal=200 (10.4%), Dhaka=1,000 (52.2%), Chittagong=300 (15.7%), Khulna=150 (7.8%), Rajshahi=200 (10.4%), Sylhet=64 (3.3%). A national sample frame of 10,000 developed for the UNESCO's need assessment for non-formal education (Ahmed et al., 1988) was used to select respondents. Like Townsend (1979), a list of 69 deprivation indicators of the style of living of the Bangladeshi population is made. This covers diet, clothing, fuel and light, home amenities, housing and housing facilities and childcare. A close-ended interview schedule with an option of being open-ended is directly administered to the respondents by the interviewers. The respondents are asked to indicate which of the items they consider important without which they would feel socially deprived and poor. But unlike Townsend (1979), Mack and Lansley (1985, 1992) and Gordon et al., (2000), respondents could add new items if their choices were not found in the list provided. This is what Halleröd (1994) did in his consensual poverty. Like them, a normative deprivation index is constructed by retaining those items from the list that more than 50 percent of respondents consider important and the absence of which would make them poor.

### **Characteristics of the Respondents:**

Most respondents are in the age group of 30-39, and together with the age group of 20-29, they constitute nearly 66 percent of the respondents. Moreover, they are well-educated as more than half of them have Bachelor's and higher degrees. Only 10 per cent respondents reported to be unemployed. The occupational structure shows that most of them are service holders (28%) and professionals (13%). A chunk of them are housewives (12%), small business (10%), manual workers (8%), medium business (5%) and students (4%). Commensurate with their occupation, most respondents have low income; the average monthly income is Tk.1,538. Their average income is higher than the 2004 poverty lines of Tk.906 and Tk.595 monthly for urban and rural Bangladesh respectively (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2004:10). Around 62 percent have monthly income of up to Tk.1,000, whereas 18 per cent have monthly income ranging between Tk.1,667 and Tk.8,333.

### **Consensual Poverty in Bangladesh in 2000**

Table-1 below gives the normative deprivation index for Bangladesh in 2000 and shows that 17 items out of 69 appear significant as more than 50 percent of respondents perceive their absence constituting poverty. More than 70 percent respondents agree 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. Table-1 further shows that in the urban areas, in addition to shoes, charger light, fan, cable TV, even umbrella have become part of the necessity, without which one is perceived as a poor. It is worthwhile to note that 52 items, which were dropped off from the index included items like wrist watch, wardrobe, ornaments, bicycle and toys for children, refrigerator, cigarette, music lesson, telephone and computer. In the rural

areas tube-well, cow, shallow machine and power tiller were common items. Such a perception is culturally derived as the social norm of particular time and space determines the notion of deprivation. A decade ago, it was impossible to think that the absence of a cable TV or mobile phone would constitute an agenda for poverty definition of Bangladesh. Even now, it may appear shocking to many. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that a status item like celebration of religious festivals is ranked fifth in the deprivation index. The Table clearly demonstrates the change that has taken place in the standard of Bangladesh urban life.<sup>xv</sup>

**Table-1 Normative Deprivation Index in Bangladesh, 2000 (in per cent)**  
(n=1,914)

No.	Items	Yes	N
1	Three meals a day for children	91.1	1,914
2	Two meal a day for adults	85.7	1,914
3	Having quilt for every member of the household	79.1	1,914
4	Milk for babies	78.0	1,914
5	Celebration of religious festivals	77.5	1,914
6	Have pillow for every member of the household	76.1	1,914
7	One pair of all-weather shoes	73.0	1,914
8	Having charger or hurricane lamp	69.9	1,914
9	Regular monthly savings	69.2	1,914
10	A fan for home	63.7	1,914
11	Warm clothes and Blankets	62.7	1,914
12	Fresh fruits or vegetables every day	60.2	1,914
13	Separate bed for every children 10+	56.9	1,914
14	Having an umbrella	56.4	1,914
15	Having a radio or TV with cable connection	54.9	1,914
16	Meat or fish or vegetables equivalent every other day	52.9	1,914
17	Best outfit for special occasions	52.1	1,914

Source: Field Survey, 2000

In addition, Table-2 below gives the item total correlation of deprivation scale and shows that all 17 items are significant at the level of  $\alpha=.01$ . However, 7 items found most important in terms of percentage, lose their relative significance and some of them disappear. Thus most correlated items in the scale are: pillow, all weather shoes, quilt, warm clothes, a cable television, meat or fish equivalent every other day and an umbrella.

**Table-2 Item Total Correlation of Deprivation Scale in Bangladesh, 2000 (N=1,914)**

	Item	Item correlation	Mean of item	Significance level
1	Pillow for every member of the household	0.605	0.76	0.01
2	One pair of all weather shoes	0.590	0.73	0.01
3	Quilt for every member of the household	0.577	0.79	0.01
4	Warm clothes	0.572	0.63	0.01
5	A cable television	0.569	0.55	0.01
6	Meat or fish equivalent every other day	0.563	0.53	0.01
7	An umbrella	0.555	0.56	0.01
8	Charger	0.554	0.70	0.01
9	Separate bed for every children 10+	0.544	0.57	0.01
10	Celebration of religious festivals	0.543	0.78	0.01
11	Fresh fruits or vegetables everyday	0.542	0.60	0.01
12	Regular monthly savings	0.535	0.69	0.01
13	Two meals a day for adults	0.485	0.86	0.01
14	A fan at home	0.480	0.64	0.01
15	Three meals a day for children	0.465	0.91	0.01
16	Baby milk	0.444	0.78	0.01
17	Best outfit for special occasions	0.433	0.52	0.01

Source: Field Survey, 2000

## Comparison Between United Kingdom, Sweden and Bangladesh

### (a) Consensual Poverty in the United Kingdom, 1968-1999

The survey on normative deprivation during 1968-69 by Townsend (1979) can be regarded as one of the earliest research that paved the way for studies on consensual poverty. As a reaction against Rowntree's conceptualization of poverty as absolute, he used the deprivation indicator method of poverty definition.<sup>xvi</sup> He asserted that need/deprivation was relative and could be objectively determined and measured by drawing up a list of key indicators of standard of living, the lack of which would constitute deprivation. He also restated his conceptual definition later (Townsend, 1993:36).<sup>xvii</sup> In his survey, Townsend turned to people's subjective understandings of poverty and used three measures of poverty: (a) the state's standard, (b) the relative income standard and (c) the deprivation standard. A list of 60 deprivation indicators, expressed as yes/no questions, of the style of living of the population was built up. This covered diet, clothing, fuel and light, home amenities, housing and housing facilities, the immediate environment of the home, the characteristics, security, general conditions and welfare benefits of work, family support, recreation, education, health and social relations (Townsend, 1979: 249, 251). This was presented to 2,050 households. Around 40 of these elicited yes/no answer patterns highly correlated with income. For illustrative purposes, a summary "deprivation index" consisting of 12 items was compiled to cover major aspects of dietary, household, familial, recreational and social deprivation (Table-3). All the items were found significant with low levels of net disposable income when a Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was computed. The level of significance varied between  $\alpha=0.05$  and  $\alpha=0.001$  (Townsend, 1979:250:T-6.3).<sup>xviii</sup>

**Table-3 Townsend's Deprivation Index for UK, 1968-69 (n=10,048)**

	Poverty Item	Per cent of population	Pearson Correlation coefficient	Level of significance
01	Has not had a cooked breakfast most days of the week	67.3	0.0559	0.001
02	Children: Did not have party on last birthday	56.6	0.0660	0.016
03	Has not had a week's holiday away from home in last 12 months	53.6	0.1892	0.001
04	Has not had an afternoon or evening out for entertainment in the last two weeks	47.0	0.1088	0.001
05	Adults: Has not been out in the last 4 weeks to the relative or friend for a meal or snack	45.1	0.0515	0.001
06	Household does not have a refrigerator	45.1	0.2419	0.001
07	Children (<15): Has not had a friend to play or to tea in the last 4 week	36.3	0.0643	0.020
08	Adults: Has not had a relative or friend to the home for a meal or snack in the last 4 weeks	33.4	0.0493	0.001
09	Household does not usually have a Sunday joint (3 in 4 times)	25.9	0.1734	0.001
10	Household does not have sole use of four amenities indoors	21.4	0.1671	0.001
11	Does not have fresh meat (including meals out) as many as four days a week	19.3	0.1821	0.001
12	Has gone through one or more days in the past fortnight without a cooked meal	07.0	0.0684	0.001

(Source: Townsend, 1979:250-T-6.3)

The deprivation scores for different households was constructed on the basis of this index and summarized as the modal value for households in each income range. They were then compared with the incomes of households expressed as proportions of the supplementary benefit entitlement for those households. A modal deprivation by logarithm of income as a percentage of supplementary benefit scale rates was plotted onto a graph falling into two clear lines (Townsend, 1979: Figure-6.4: 261). One line represented the changing position on the deprivation index of the bottom five income groups as income rose, whereas the other line indicated the variability of the top seven. The bottom five income groups were those with a household income below 140 per cent of supplementary benefit entitlement. Townsend claimed that the point where the lines met

constituted a “threshold of deprivation.”<sup>xxix</sup> This could be treated as an objective definition of relative poverty, the poverty line being 140 per cent of supplementary benefit entitlement. Thus he found approximately 23 per cent household as poor (Townsend, 1979: 271).

Table-3 above gives a list of items the lack of which constituted poverty for the United Kingdom in 1960. Only three items-- no cooked breakfast most days of the week, no birthday party for children in last year and no week's holiday away from home in last 12 months— constituted poverty items, which were agreed by more than 50 per cent of the population. However, all twelve items listed in the Table were found to be statistically significant and together, constituted the deprivation index.<sup>xx</sup>

Using the deprivation indicator method of Townsend to define poverty and poverty line, two studies in 1983 and 1990 were conducted in Britain by Mack and Lansley (1985; 1992). In 1983 an opinion poll for a television program called ‘Breadline Britain’ was conducted to determine people’s perception of the normative deprivation. They defined poverty as “an enforced lack of socially perceived necessities. This means that the ‘necessities’ of life are identified by public opinion and not by, on the one hand, the views of experts or, on the other hand, the norms of behaviour per se.” (Mack and Lansley, 1985:39). Thus, similar to Townsend, they included both personal consumption items and social activities in their definition of necessities.<sup>xxi</sup> On the basis of their findings, they created a list of 21 basic necessities that more than 50 per cent of respondents considered important for a normal life. More than 90 per cent of respondents agreed on the importance of a further 5 necessities: heating, an indoor toilet and bath, a bed for each member of the household, and a home free from damp. The respondents were also asked whether or not they thought each potential indicator was necessary to avoid hardship. Then they were asked whether they lacked those indicators and whether this lack was due to the lack of resources to purchase them.<sup>xxii</sup> Poverty was thus defined as a lack of 3 or more of the 26 necessities, and severe poverty was defined as a lack of 7 or more necessities. Thus, according to these 26 necessities and their presence or absence among British households, they measured poverty levels in 1983 (Mack and Lansley, 1985) and in 1990 (Mack and Lansley, 1992). In terms of poverty threshold-- a lack of 3 or more items-- they found around 21 per cent of the UK population as poor in 1990 (Mack and Lansley, 1992) as against around 14 per cent in 1983 (Mack and Lansley, 1985:89), a rise of 7 per cent in 7 years or a percent each year. As their approach is grounded in socially defined need,<sup>xxiii</sup> it is labeled as “consensual deprivation indicator” (Fisher, 2001).<sup>xxiv</sup>

Drawing from the pioneer works of Townsend and *Breadline Britain* survey of Mack and Lansley, Gordon and his colleagues carried out a similar survey in 1999 called *Poverty and Social Exclusion in Britain* (Gordon et al., 2000).<sup>xxv</sup> They arrived at a socially constructed necessities through a questionnaire administered to 1,534 households and created a list of 35 items out of 54 items that more than 50 per cent population considered important for a normal life. The items ranged from bedding, heating, damp-free home to holiday away from home, dictionary and outfit for social occasions. Out of these 35 items, six items like a TV, a fridge, beds and bedding for everyone, a washing machine, medicines prescribed by a doctor and a deep freezer were dropped from the analysis.<sup>xxvi</sup> Gordon et al. set a threshold for deprivation, based on an enforced lack of two or more necessities amalgamated with a low income. On the basis of possession of necessities, the survey found that around 72 per cent of people, including 10 per cent vulnerable to poverty, lacked just one or none of the items as they could not afford them. This is followed by 28 per cent surveyed population who lacked two or more necessities. This also included 2 per cent who had risen out of poverty. Thus 35.9 per cent of the population could be classified as overall poor – 25.6 per cent poor and 10.3 per cent vulnerable to poverty (Gordon et al., 2000: 18). As mentioned earlier, Breadline Britain survey set lack of three or more socially perceived necessities as the poverty threshold, which was directly comparable to the Poverty and Social Exclusion survey (Gordon et al., 2000). The surveys indicated the trend of poverty in Britain: the number of poor households increased substantially over time from 14 per cent in 1983 to 21 per cent by 1990 and 26 per cent by 1999. The situation is more akin to Booth’s 30.7 per cent poor in 1888 and Rowntree’s 28.0 per cent in 1899. Though the British society became much more

affluent since the early 1980s, in terms of enforced lack of necessities, there has been a dramatic rise of poverty by 2000 for the low income group.

**Table-4 Deprivation Index for Britain, 1999 (in Per Cent)**  
(n=1,534)

	Items	Considered Necessary	Don't have, Don't want	Don't have, Can't afford	Variation
1	Beds and bedding for everyone	95	0.2	1.0	-80.0
2	Heating to warm living areas of the home	94	0.4	1.0	-60.0
3	Damp-free home	93	3.0	6.0	-50.0
4	Visiting friends or family in hospital	92	8.0	3.0	166.7
5	Two meals a day	91	3.0	1.0	200.0
6	Medicines prescribed by doctor	90	5.0	1.0	400.0
7	Refrigerator	89	1.0	0.1	900.0
8	Fresh fruit and vegetables daily	86	7.0	4.0	75.0
9	Warm, waterproof coat	85	2.0	4.0	-50.0
10	Replace or repair broken electrical goods	85	6.0	12.0	-50.0
11	Visits to friends or family	84	3.0	2.0	50.0
12	Celebrations on special occasions such as Christmas	83	2.0	2.0	0.0
13	Money to keep home in a decent state of decoration	82	2.0	14.0	-85.7
14	Visit to school, e.g. sports day	81	33.0	2.0	1550.0
15	Attending weddings, funerals	80	3.0	3.0	0.0
16	Meat, fish or vegetarian equivalent every other day	79	4.0	3.0	33.3
17	Insurance of contents of dwelling	79	5.0	8.0	-37.5
18	Hobby or leisure activity	78	12.0	7.0	71.4
19	Washing machine	76	3.0	1.0	200.0
20	Collect children from school	75	36.0	2.0	1700.0
21	Telephone	71	1.0	1.0	0.0
22	Appropriate clothes for job interviews	69	13.0	4.0	225.0
23	Deep freezer/fridge freezer	68	3.0	2.0	50.0
24	Carpets in living rooms and bedrooms	67	2.0	3.0	-33.3
25	Regular savings ( of £10 per month) for rainy days or retirement	66	7.0	25.0	-72.0
26	Two pairs of all-weather shoes	64	4.0	5.0	-20.0
27	Friends or family round for a meal	64	10.0	6.0	66.7
28	A small amount of money to spend on self weekly not on family	59	3.0	13.0	-76.9
29	Television	56	1.0	1.0	0.0
30	Roast joint/vegetarian equivalent once a week	56	11.0	3.0	266.7
31	Presents for friends/ family once a year	56	1.0	3.0	-66.7
32	A holiday away from home once a year not with relatives	55	14.0	18.0	-22.2
33	Replace worn-out furniture	54	6.0	12.0	-50.0
34	Dictionary	53	6.0	5.0	20.0
35	An outfit for social occasions	51	4.0	4.0	0.0

(Source: Gordon et al, 2000: 14-15 T-1)

#### **(b) Consensual Poverty in Sweden, 1992**

In response to the British survey by Mack and Lansley (1985,1992), Björn Halleröd (1994a, 1994b) developed the Proportional Deprivation Index (PDI), a modified version of Mack and Lansley's approach, using 1992 Swedish data set. Instead of including only items from the preliminary list which more than 50 percent of the population identified as necessities, the PDI

includes all items from the preliminary list, but gives each item a weight which is the proportion of the population identifying it as a necessity. However his proportional deprivation score found age as one of the determinants in the construction of necessity. Table-5, which gives the deprivation index for Sweden 1992, shows that the five most important deprivation items are: medical treatment and medicine, access to dentist, vacuum cleaner, glasses and telephone. These clearly show the difference between the British and the Swedish as well as the Bangladeshi social structures.

**Table-5 Deprivation Index for Sweden, 1992 (n=793)**

	Consumption item	Necessary, should be able to afford	Would like to have but cannot afford
01	Medical treatment and medicine if necessary	99.2	0.5
02	Examination by dental surgeon once a year	96.5	1.6
03	Vacuum cleaner	96.1	0.6
04	Glasses, change of glasses if necessary	96.0	2.2
05	Telephone	95.6	0.3
06	Householders' comprehensive insurance	95.6	0.9
07	A hot meal each day	95.2	0.9
08	Washing machine	92.1	2.6
09	Freezer	90.2	2.0
10	Public transport for one's needs	87.9	3.7
11	Modern dwelling (bath/shower, WC, central heating, stove and refrigerator)	84.4	1.4
12	Self-contained accommodation	81.5	1.6
13	Not more than two persons in each bedroom	76.7	3.2
14	A hobby or leisure activity	73.6	5.6
15	New, not second-hand clothes	73.5	6.5
16	TV	70.2	0.8
17	Presents for friends and family at least once a year	69.5	1.3
18	Daily paper	65.2	5.7
19	A hair cut every third month	63.2	3.7
20	A holiday away from home for once week a year, not with relatives or friends	54.5	15.1

(Source: Halleröd, 1994:11-T-2)

Table-6 below, which gives a comparative bird's eye view, further shows the significance of spime (Rahnema, 1993) in the construction of normative deprivation. There is not only the difference of space but also the difference of time in a given society. The British society during 1960s was more concerned with cooked breakfast, children's birthday party and a week's holiday, whereas during 1980s and 1990s, it was more preoccupied with heating, toilet, bath, beds and damp free home. However, during late 1990s, there was a shift of trend towards hospital visit and two meals a day. As mentioned earlier, the Swedish society had more medical priorities than others. Even in terms of amenities, there was a difference, the Swedish viewed glasses, vacuum cleaner and telephone as more necessary than bed, heating, toilet and bath as perceived by the British.

Bangladesh society of 2000 showed similarity with the British society of 1999 regarding two meals a day. If quilt is loosely interpreted as part of bed and bedding, then another shared item could be added to its score. But the Bangladeshi society differed from the western societies regarding other culturally constructed necessities, for examples, heating, toilet, bath, telephone, vacuum cleaner and glasses. It is interesting to note that baby milk is regarded as a necessary item in the Bangladeshi society.

**Table-6 Five Most Important Poverty Items in UK, Sweden and Bangladesh**

	United Kingdom			Sweden	Bangladesh
	Townsend, 1968-69	Mack and Lansley, 1983, 1990	Gordon et al., 1999	Halleröd, 1994	Ahmed, 2000
Has not had a cooked breakfast most days of the week	X				
Children: Did not have party on last birthday	X				
Has not had a week's holiday away from home in last 12 months	X				
Has not had an afternoon or evening out for entertainment in the last two weeks	X				
Adults: Has not been out in the last 4 weeks to the relative or friend for a meal or snack	X				
Heating to warm living areas of the home		X	X		
Toilet		X			
Bath		X			
Beds and bedding for everyone		X	X		
Damp free home		X	X		
Visiting friends or family in hospital			X		
For adults, two meals a day			X		X
Medical treatment and medicine if necessary				X	
Examination by dental surgeon once a year				X	
Vacuum cleaner				X	
Glasses, change of glasses if necessary				X	
Telephone				X	
For children, three meals a day					X
Quilt for every member of the HH					X
Baby milk					X
Celebration of religious festivals					X

**Correlates of Consensual poverty in Bangladesh**

Once the deprivation index is constructed, it is pertinent to ask which factors are associated with the index. The deprivation index is found significantly related to selected demographic and socio-economic variables. The key variables – gender, age, education, occupation, income and residence – are tested against all 17 items that comprise the deprivation index. Given the predominance of nominal level of measurement, the chi-square test is preferred for measuring the association between variables. Many associations between independent variables and items of the deprivation index are found significant at  $\alpha=.001$ ,  $\alpha=.01$  and  $\alpha=.05$  levels of significance. Table-7 gives the summary of the significant association found at chi-value and shows that occupation, education and age are the key determinants of the consensual poverty in terms of number of items in the deprivation index they are significantly related to. Next in importance are residence and income. Gender appears to be least influential in the construction of social necessity.



**Table-7 Summary of Chi-Square Test on Deprivation Index by Gender by Age by Education by Occupation by Income and by Residence (N=1,914)**

Items	Gender	Age	Education	Occupation	Income	Residence
For children, three meals a day	X <sup>2</sup> =11.209 df=1; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =25.799 df=5; α=.001	-	-	-	-
For adults, two meals a day	-	X <sup>2</sup> =18.046 df=5; α=.01	-	-	X <sup>2</sup> =12.674 df=3; α=.01	-
Quilt for every member of the HH	-	X <sup>2</sup> =13.146 df=5; α=.05	-	-	-	X <sup>2</sup> =16.535 df=1; α=.001
Baby milk	X <sup>2</sup> =49.971 df=1; α=.001	-	X <sup>2</sup> =30.646 df=6; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =94.445 df=10; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =35.634 df=3; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =47.837 df=1; α=.001
Celebration of religious festivals	X <sup>2</sup> =23.626 df=1; α=.001	-	X <sup>2</sup> =25.893 df=6; α=.001	-	-	-
Pillow for every member of the HH	-	X <sup>2</sup> =20.996 df=5; α=.001	-	X <sup>2</sup> =26.595 df=10; α=.01	X <sup>2</sup> =24.473 df=3; α=.001	-
One pair of all weather shoes	-	-	X <sup>2</sup> =26.526 df=6; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =42.945 df=10; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =18.683 df=3; α=.001	-
Charger	-	-	X <sup>2</sup> =32.079 df=6; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =40.274 df=10; α=.001	-	X <sup>2</sup> =17.309 df=1; α=.001
Regular monthly savings	X <sup>2</sup> =8.209 df=1; α=.01	X <sup>2</sup> =12.792 df=5; α=.05	-	X <sup>2</sup> =22.962 df=10; α=.05	-	X <sup>2</sup> =8.960 df=1; α=.01
A fan at home	X <sup>2</sup> =9.154 df=1; α=.01	-	X <sup>2</sup> =31.713 df=6; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =53.280 df=10; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =18.667 df=3; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =14.204 df=1; α=.001
New clothes/warm clothes	-	X <sup>2</sup> =19.798 df=5; α=.001	-	X <sup>2</sup> =24.324 df=10; α=.01	-	X <sup>2</sup> =9.747 df=1; α=.01
Fresh fruits/vegetables everyday	-	X <sup>2</sup> =18.776 df=5; α=.01	X <sup>2</sup> =38.854 df=6; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =38.941 df=10; α=.001	-	-
Separate beds for every children 10+	-	X <sup>2</sup> =24.793 df=5; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =54.055 df=6; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =43.121 df=10; α=.001	-	X <sup>2</sup> =11.268 df=1; α=.001
An umbrella	-	X <sup>2</sup> =15.657 df=5; α=.01	X <sup>2</sup> =33.071 df=6; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =54.685 df=10; α=.001	-	X <sup>2</sup> =42.579 df=1; α=.001
A cable television	-	-	X <sup>2</sup> =52.231 df=6; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =58.691 df=10; α=.001	-	-
Meat/fish equivalent every other day	-	X <sup>2</sup> =23.351 df=5; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =21.803 df=6; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =27.631 df=10; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =20.319 df=3; α=.001	-
Best outfit for special occasions	X <sup>2</sup> =63.000 df=1; α=.001	-	X <sup>2</sup> =46.481 df=6; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =135.231 df=10; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =59.959 df=3; α=.001	X <sup>2</sup> =50.245 df=1; α=.001

The Table-7 above and Figure-2 below show that out of 17 items constituting deprivation scale,

- **occupation** is significantly related to 13 items – baby milk, pillow, all-weather shoes, charger light, regular monthly savings, fan, new/warm clothes, fresh fruits/vegetables, separate beds for grown up children, umbrella, cable TV, meat/fish equivalent and best outfit for special occasions;
- **education** is significantly related to 11 items of the deprivation index-- baby milk, celebration of religious festivals, all-weather shoes, charger light, fan, fresh fruits/vegetables, separate beds for grown up children, umbrella, cable TV, meat/fish equivalent and best outfit for special occasions;
- **age** is significantly related to 10 items of the deprivation index-- three meals a day for children, two meals a day for adults, quilt for every member, pillow for every member, regular monthly savings, new/warm clothes, fresh fruits/vegetables, separate beds for grown up children, umbrella and meat/fish equivalent;
- **residence** is significantly related to 9 items of the deprivation Index: quilt for every member, baby milk, charger light, regular monthly savings, fan, new/warm clothes, separate beds for grown up children, umbrella and best outfit for special occasions;

- **income** is significantly related to 7 items of the deprivation Index-- two meals a day for adults, baby milk, pillow for every member, all-weather shoes, fan, meat/fish equivalent and best outfit for special occasions; and
- **gender** is significantly related to 6 items of the deprivation index-- three meals a day for children, baby milk, and celebration of religious festivals, regular monthly savings, fan and best outfit for special occasions.

Deprivation Item	Correlates					
	Occupation	Education	Age	Residence	Income	Gender
01 Milk	X	X	-	X	X	X
02 Pillow	X	-	X	-	X	-
03 Shoes	X	X	-	-	X	-
04 Charger	X	X	-	X	-	-
05 Savings	X	-	X	X	-	X
06 Fan	X	X	-	X	X	X
07 Clothes	X	-	X	X	-	-
08 Fruits	X	X	X	-	-	-
09 Bed	X	X	X	X	-	-
10 Umbrella	X	X	X	X	-	-
11 TV	X	X	-	-	-	-
12 Meat	X	X	X	-	X	-
13 Outfit	X	X	-	X	X	X
14 Festivals	-	X	-	-	-	X
15 3-meal	-	-	X	-	-	X
16 2-meal	-	-	X	-	X	-
17 Quilt	-	-	X	X	-	-
Total:	13	11	10	9	7	6

**Figure-2 Significant Correlates of Deprivation Index**

### (1) Occupation and Deprivation Index

Table-8 which gives the cross-tabulation of 13 items of the deprivation index by occupation, shows that there is no clear pattern of the relationship between variables. Broadly, it can be said that:

- Milk is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of housewives (91%) followed by medium business (83%), unemployed (82%), small business (81%) and professionals (80%).
- Pillow is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of farmers (89%) followed by housewives (81%) and professionals (80%).
- A pair of shoe is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of low occupational status groups—students (86%), farmers (83%) and housewives (82%).
- Charger light is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of low occupational status groups-- farmers (87%), students (82%) and manual workers (76%).
- Savings is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of low occupational status groups-- students (76%), manual workers (73%) and housewives (73%).
- Fan is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of low occupational status groups-- students (83%), housewives (73%) and unemployed (72%).
- Clothes are considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of low occupational status groups-- farmers (77%), petty business (77%) and students (73%).
- Fruit is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of students (78%).
- Bed is considered as a necessary item by the good majority of medium business (65%), retired persons (64%), professionals (62%) and students (62%).
- Umbrella is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of low occupational status groups-- farmers (89%) and petty business (71%).
- TV is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of students (82%).

- Meat is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of students (72%).
- Outfit is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of housewives (75%).

**Table-8 Deprivation Index by Occupation (N=1,914)**  
(in percentage\*)

Occupation	Deprivation Index												
	Milk	Pillow	shoes	charger	savings	Fan	Clothes	Fruits	Bed	umbrella	TV	Meat	outfit
Unemployed	81.9	64.8	78.9	68.8	67.8	71.9	60.8	57.8	55.3	47.2	55.8	54.8	66.8
Retired	72.7	77.3	63.6	63.6	54.5	63.6	54.5	59.1	63.6	59.1	40.9	45.5	31.8
Housewife	90.8	80.8	82.1	76.0	72.5	73.4	63.8	67.2	55.9	60.3	62.9	62.0	74.7
Student	77.5	78.9	85.9	81.7	76.1	83.1	73.2	77.5	62.0	66.2	81.7	71.8	64.8
Farmer	49.1	88.7	83.0	86.8	45.3	43.4	77.4	58.5	39.6	88.7	64.2	47.2	17.0
Manual Workers	67.1	75.5	75.5	76.1	72.9	61.9	60.0	61.9	36.1	61.3	53.5	47.7	39.4
Petty business	58.2	79.9	76.9	74.6	67.2	63.4	76.9	66.4	57.5	70.9	69.4	47.0	39.6
Small business	80.7	73.5	69.1	67.4	71.3	64.6	61.9	66.9	59.1	53.6	52.5	50.8	55.8
Service	79.4	75.2	65.1	66.8	67.4	60.6	59.7	52.2	59.8	51.8	51.0	49.3	43.9
Medium business	82.6	72.8	72.8	75.0	70.7	68.5	60.9	50.0	65.2	47.8	42.4	59.8	60.9
Professional	80.4	80.4	71.4	58.4	72.2	52.2	60.0	62.9	62.4	54.7	46.1	52.2	51.4

\* Each cell represents the row percentage of each occupational category along "yes" response to each item of index.

## (2) Education and Deprivation Index

Table-9 which gives the cross-tabulation of 11 items of the deprivation index by education that appeared significant, also shows that there is no clear pattern of the relationship between them. Broadly, it can be said that:

- Milk is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of high level of education— Bachelor's (82%), Master's (81%) and higher secondary educated (80%).
- Celebration of religious festivals is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of low level of education— some secondary (86%), primary (84%) and illiterate (81%).
- A pair of shoes is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of medium level of education— some secondary (84%), and low level of education--illiterate (79%) and primary (78%).
- Charger is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of medium level of education— secondary (77%) and some secondary (76%), and low level of education--illiterate (83%) and primary (78%).
- Fan is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of medium level of education— secondary (73%).
- Fruit is considered as a necessary item by the good majority of all educational levels except that of Master's.
- Bed is considered as a necessary item by the good majority of high level of education— Master's (64%) and Bachelor's (62%), and medium level of education—secondary (62%).
- Umbrella is considered as a necessary item by the majority of all educational levels except that of higher secondary.
- TV is considered as a necessary item by the overwhelming majority of secondary level of education (71%).
- Meat is considered as a necessary item by the good majority of Bachelor's (58%).
- Outfit is considered as a necessary item by the majority of medium and high educational levels except Master's.

**Table-9 Deprivation Index by Level of Education (N=1,914)**  
(in percentage\*)

Level of education	Deprivation Index										
	Milk	Festivals	Shoes	Charger	Fan	Fruits	Bed	Umbrella	TV	Meat	Outfit
Illiterate	69.2	81.2	78.6	82.9	50.4	65.8	32.5	64.1	46.2	52.1	35.9
Primary	66.5	83.5	78.0	78.0	64.0	59.1	49.4	57.9	56.7	48.2	43.9
Some Secondary	71.8	85.5	83.8	76.1	50.4	63.2	49.6	65.0	59.8	45.3	42.7
SSC	74.1	77.8	75.1	77.3	73.0	61.6	61.6	69.2	71.4	55.7	55.7
HSC/Diploma	80.3	80.0	73.6	63.5	65.2	63.2	51.9	48.7	53.3	44.6	59.4
Bachelor's	82.0	77.5	73.1	67.0	67.5	65.1	62.3	57.2	58.7	58.2	58.4
Master's & above	80.9	68.9	64.1	67.0	59.6	46.5	63.6	50.3	42.6	55.1	44.9

\* Each cell represent the row percentage of each educational category along "yes" response to each item of index.

### (3) Age and Deprivation Index

Table-10 below shows that there is a rudimentary pattern of the relationship between age and 10 items of deprivation index.

- Among the middle aged (40-49), the majority, between 93 per cent and 60 per cent, agree on all ten items.
- In contrast, the old (60 and above) have more agreement on pillow, clothes, bed, umbrella and meat
- Whereas the young (up to 39 years) agree more on 3-meal, 2-meal and fruits.

**Table-10 Deprivation Index by Age (N=1,914)**

(in percentage\*)

Age Group	Deprivation Index									
	3 meals	2 meals	Quilt	Pillow	Savings	Clothes	Fruits	Bed	Umbrella	Meat
<20	80.7	80.7	78.9	64.9	57.9	64.9	70.2	56.1	63.2	64.4
20-29	87.4	81.2	74.5	71.8	64.8	56.3	53.1	51.4	52.9	47.5
30-39	93.9	86.8	80.9	78.2	71.6	62.7	62.4	54.5	53.7	50.5
40-49	93.1	90.6	83.6	81.7	70.8	70.3	64.2	63.6	63.1	59.2
50-59	91.0	86.8	77.8	70.7	74.3	65.9	63.5	67.1	58.7	59.9
60 & above	89.9	85.5	76.8	81.2	68.1	66.7	58.0	66.7	66.7	58.0

\* Each cell represents the row percentage of each age group along "yes" response to each item of index.

### (4) Residence and Deprivation Index

Table-11 shows that there is a clear pattern of the relationship between residence and 9 items of deprivation index. The rural residents agree more on quilt (97%), charger light (91%), new/warm clothes (79%) and umbrella (92%), whereas urban residents agree more on baby milk (79%); monthly savings (70%), fan (65%), separate bed (58%), and outfits for especial occasions (54%). Thus the perception of deprivation is influenced by their specific living experience and the normative standard. In this sense, urban-rural difference clearly institutes the notion of normative deprivation in Bangladesh.

**Table- 11 Deprivation Index by Residence (N=1,914)**

(in percentage\*)

Residence	Deprivation Index								
	Quilt	Milk	Charger	Savings	Fan	Clothes	Bed	Umbrella	Outfit
Rural	97.4	46.2	91.0	53.8	43.6	79.5	38.5	92.3	12.8
Urban	78.3	79.3	69.0	69.8	64.5	62.0	57.7	54.9	53.8

\* Each cell represents the row percentage of each residential category along "yes" response to each item of index

### (5) Income and Deprivation Index

Table-12 shows that there is no clear pattern of the relationship between yearly income and deprivation index, all income groups, especially the high income group (Tk.20,000-Tk.100,000) agree more on 2 meals for adults (91%), baby milk (87%), pillow (82%), and shoes (81%), whereas “no income group” agree more on fan (72%) and outfits for special occasions (67%). Since many retired persons and housewives reported no income, most probably their family background influenced their responses. Therefore their present income status has little influence over their identification of index items.

**Table- 12 Deprivation Index by Annual Income (N=1,914)**  
(in percentage\*)

Annual income	Deprivation Index						
	2 meals	Milk	Pillow	Shoes	Fan	Meat	Outfit
Nothing	82.4	81.9	64.8	78.9	71.9	54.8	66.8
Up to Tk.11,999	84.3	73.6	75.3	70.6	60.1	49.1	45.3
Tk.12,000-Tk.19,999	88.4	85.2	82.0	68.8	66.7	62.4	59.3
Tk.20,000-Tk.100,000	91.0	86.6	82.0	80.5	69.8	59.6	63.1

\* Each cell represents the row percentage of each income bracket along “yes” response to each item of index

### (6) Gender and Deprivation Index

Table-13 shows that there is a consistent pattern of relationship between gender and deprivation index: the females agree more than males on all six items— 3-meal, baby milk, celebration of festivals, savings, fan and outfit. In fact, except fan, all these six items have some gender tint. Since females are more concerned about baby milk, food, festivities, outfit etc., they appear to have a clear gender bias. This shows that perception of deprivation has distinct gender grounding.

**Table-13 Deprivation Index by Gender (N=1,914)**  
(in percentage\*)

Gender	Deprivation Index					
	3 meals	Milk	Festivals	Savings	Fan	Outfit
Female	93.9	86.7	83.6	73.1	68.0	63.9
Male	89.4	72.8	74.0	66.9	61.1	45.2

\* Each cell represents the row percentage of each occupational category along “yes” response to each item of index

### Conclusion:

From the above study, it is found that Bangladesh’s definition of poverty emphasizes incorporation of 7 items – three meals a day for children, two meals a day for adults, quilt for every member of the household, milk for babies, celebration of religious festivals, pillow for every member of the household, and one pair of all-weather shoes. Given the dearth of studies in this area, it is extremely difficult to draw any comparative conclusion. Further studies in this field are required. What is evident in the midst of statistical maze is the fact that perception of poverty is linked to certain socio-economic and demographic variables though the trend is not consistent and clear at times. This was also evident in the case of proportional deprivation score as found by Halleröd (1994). From this study, it can be concluded that the wholesale importation of economic definition and measurement of poverty has cast a disastrous spell in the sociological research of poverty. To anchor poverty in the given spimes (Rahnema,1993), it is absolutely necessary to abandon economic notion as well as the so-called objective definition. The experience of poverty

is specific to time and space, therefore it is society-subjective and in this sense, normative. A proper sociological definition of poverty and its measurement should begin with normative deprivation, preferably consensual one rather than with universalistic ideal-type.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>i</sup> In England, the interest on the estimate of the household ratio or extent of poverty is linked with political agenda. This is why King and other investigators were interested in the number of paupers. Thus the scientific study of poverty dates from the investigations of Booth (1889) and Rowntree (1901) at the end of the 19th century. It was Booth's *Life and Labour* (1892-7) survey of London, started in the East End in the 1880s, that combined the elements of first-hand observation with a systematic attempt to measure the extent of poverty. He drew up a map of poverty in London based on the street as his unit of analysis. The early account of Eden, *The State of the Poor* published in 3 volumes in 1797 contained data from over 100 parishes and details of family budgets. In the style of the time, the full title of the book is a catalogue of its contents: "*The State of the Poor: or a history of the labouring classes in England, from the Conquest to the present period; in which are particularly considered, their domestic economy, with respect to diet, dress, fuel, and habitation; and the various plans which, from time to time, have been proposed and adopted for the relief of the poor: together with parochial reports relative to the administration of work-houses, and houses of industry; the state of the Friendly Societies, and other public institutions; in several agricultural, commercial and manufacturing, districts. With a large appendix; containing a comparative and chronological table of the prices of labour, of provisions, and of other commodities; an account of the poor in Scotland; and many original documents on subjects of national importance.*" Engels (1892) and Mayhew (1861) provided insight into the condition of the poor in urban England. Recently, the social effects of early industrialization is well documented in *From Artisans to Paupers: Economic Change and Poverty in London, 1790-1870* by Green (1995) and in *Poverty, Inequality and Health in Britain, 1800-2000: A Reader* edited by Smith, Darling and Shaw (2001).

<sup>ii</sup> Rowntree (1901) intended to compare the situation in York as a typical provincial town with that found by Booth (1889) in London. His method represented a significant departure in that it was concerned with individual family incomes. He also developed a poverty standard based on estimates of nutritional and other requirements, rent and sundries.

<sup>iii</sup> Bowley pioneered the development of sample survey methods in his survey of the working-class households in Reading during 1912-13 (Bowley, 1913) and Five Towns survey in 1915 (Bowley and Burnett-Hurst, 1915). Following these, a many local studies were subsequently conducted. Rowntree himself repeated his survey of York in 1936 (Rowntree, 1942) and 1950 (Rowntree and Lavers, 1951), which demonstrated the effectiveness of the post-1948 British welfare state on the elimination of poverty by the combination of full employment and the new social benefits. Doubt was cast to such survey findings and using secondary analysis of a national survey, Townsend and Abel-Smith (1965) showed that in 1960 about two million people fell below the social security safety net level. This led Townsend (1979) to undertake his massive survey of UK during 1960s and conceptualize poverty as the relative deprivation and asserted that poverty in Britain did not decline as claimed by Rowntree and other subsequent surveys.

<sup>iv</sup> Townsend (1979:46-49) criticizes the U.S. notion of poverty as static and proposes a concept of relative poverty grounded in the idea of deprivation, which are of three kinds: (a) objective, (b) normative and (c) subjective.

<sup>v</sup> In the United States, poverty line developed by Hunter in 1904 was used in a series of studies to produce 'minimum comfort' and other budgets for New York City. In 1949 the Joint Committee on the Economic Report published on low income families. During the 1960s the problem of poverty received systematic study,. However previous work of Galbraith (1958), Lampman (1959) and Harnngton (1962) aroused the attention of the public, politicians and academics.

<sup>vi</sup> Supplementary benefit 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.

<sup>vii</sup> In 1988 supplementary benefit was replaced by income support. This is also commonly practiced in most European countries. This measure has dramatically increased the head count ratio of poverty throughout 1980s before falling from the mid-1990s onwards and reached its peak in 2004 to 16 per cent compared to 6.5 per cent in 1979 (Flaherty et al., 2004:43).

<sup>viii</sup> The three composite indexes are measured as follows:

**(i) Human Development Index (HDI):** The HDI is a summary measure of human development in three basic dimensions, (a) a long and healthy life, (b) knowledge as measured by the adult literacy rate (with  $\frac{1}{3}$  weight) and combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio (with  $\frac{1}{3}$  weight) and (c) a decent standard of living, as measured by GDP per capita PPP US\$1 for low-income countries like Bangladesh. Once the dimension indices have been calculated, HDI is estimated as a simple average of the three dimension indices (Anand and Sen, 1994):  

$$\text{HDI} = \frac{1}{3} (\text{life expectancy index}) + \frac{1}{3} (\text{education index}) + \frac{1}{3} (\text{GDP index})$$

**(ii) Human Poverty Index (HPI-1) for the low income countries:** HPI-1 measures deprivation in the three basic dimensions of human development captured in the HDI, (a) a long and healthy life as measured by the probability at birth

of not surviving to age 40, (b) knowledge as measured by the adult literacy rate and (c) a decent standard of living as measured by the percentage of the population not using improved water sources and the percentage of children under five who are underweight (Anand and Sen, 1997).

$$\text{HPI-1} = \left[ \frac{1}{3} (\text{probability at birth of not surviving to age 40} \times 100^3 + \text{adult literacy rate}^3 + \text{unweighted average of population not using improved water sources and underweight children under age five}^3) \right]^{\frac{1}{3}}$$

**(iii) Gender-Related Development Index (GDI):** GDI is an adjusted HDI to reflect the inequalities between men and women. It is calculated from the unweighted average of three component indices, (a) equally distributed life expectancy index, (b) equally distributed education index and (c) equally distributed income index (Anand and Sen, 1995).  $\text{GDI} = \frac{1}{3} (\text{life expectancy index}) + \frac{1}{3} (\text{education index}) + \frac{1}{3} (\text{income index})$

<sup>ix</sup> “An adequate concept of poverty should include all the most important areas in which people of either gender are deprived and perceived as incapacitated in different societies and local contexts” (OECD, 2001:38). Thus it includes five dimensional capability deprivations as an index of poverty. They are: 1. **Economic capabilities:** ability to earn an income, to consume and to have assets, which are all key to food security, material well-being and social status. 2. **Human capabilities:** health, education, nutrition, cleans water and shelter. These are crucial means to improving livelihoods. 3. **Political capabilities:** human rights, a voice and some influence over public policies and political priorities. Deprivation of basic political freedoms is a major aspect of poverty. 4. **Socio-cultural capabilities:** participation as a valued member of a community. They refer to social status, dignity and other cultural conditions for belonging to a society. 5. **Protective capabilities:** ability to withstand economic and external shocks. They are important for preventing poverty. Insecurity and vulnerability are crucial dimensions of poverty with strong links to all other dimensions.

<sup>x</sup> World Bank's Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) Sourcebook sets out 5 interrelated dimensions of poverty, (a) income/consumption, (b) health, (c) education, (d) security and (e) empowerment. Generally speaking, urban poverty and vulnerability can be related to three distinctive characteristics of urban life: (i) commoditization or reliance on the cash economy, (ii) environmental hazard stemming from density and hazardous location of settlements, and exposure to multiple pollutants, and (iii) social fragmentation or lack of community and inter-household mechanisms for social security, relative to those in rural areas. Lack of tenure security is considered as a specific dimension of urban poverty and vulnerability (Moser, Gatehouse and Garcia, 1996).

<sup>xi</sup> Under DCI method, two types of poor are distinguished, (i) hardcore poor and (ii) absolute poor. Hardcore poor refers to having less than 1,805 k.cal per person per day, whereas absolute poor means having less than 2,122 k.cal per person per day (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2004: 9). The CBN method constructs poverty line, which represent the level of per capita expenditure at which the members of households can be expected to meet their basic needs, food and non-food. The functional form of the model is:

$$1ny = a + bx + e$$

Where  $y$ =per capita monthly expenditure, food and non-food  
 $x$ =per capita per day calorie intake  
 $e$ =disturbance term

Using a price index, cost of living is estimated for a base year (1991-92), and then updated for 1995-96 and 2000. Making comparisons of poverty rates over time requires that the basic-needs bundles used to estimate poverty lines in different years are of constant value in real terms. The allowance for non-food consumption yields two poverty lines, (i) lower: which incorporates a minimal allowance for non-food good for those who could just afford the food requirement, and (ii) upper: which makes a generous allowance for non-food spending for those who just attained the food requirement (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2001:55-56).

<sup>xii</sup> In the study by the Asian Development Bank (1997), urban absolute and hardcore income poverty lines are determined at Tk. 3500 (US \$88 equivalent) and Tk. 2500 (US \$63 equivalent) per household per month respectively. Thus the concept of poverty and its measurement has remained heavily economic, and all poverty measurement ultimately boils down to income poverty. Even Human Development Index (HDI) and Gender-Related Development Index (GDI) have an income component.

<sup>xiii</sup> To capture the dynamic of urban property, both slum and non-slum poor have been studied by Ahmed (2004d) using AV Framework of Moser et. al. (1996). In addition, the notion of capacity poor by Sen (1983) has also been used to locate the poverty gap and to construct a scenario of the heterogeneity of urban poor.

<sup>xiv</sup> A discourse of poverty is a package of assumptions—often unspoken or taken for granted—about the nature of poverty, the nature of the people whose poverty is being discussed, and the nature of the knowledge that is relevant to dealing with poverty.

<sup>xv</sup> The construction of poverty definition can become meaningful only when it is anchored in the *spimes* or socio-cultural space-times (Rahnema, 1993:159).

<sup>xvi</sup> Rowntree's third study of poverty in York (Rowntree and Lavers, 1951) showed much lower levels of poverty than his earlier studies. It confirmed the impact of welfare state in reducing poverty. Townsend's approach is drawn from the relativist critiques of the postwar complacency based on Rowntree's work mentioned above. His definition of consensual poverty follows: "Poverty can be defined objectively and applied consistently only in terms of the concept of relative deprivation. ... The term is understood objectively rather than subjectively. Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or are at least widely encouraged or approved, in the societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities ... I have suggested that an alternative, and more objective, conception [of poverty] might be founded on 'relative deprivation' -- by which I mean the absence or inadequacy of those diets, amenities, standards, services and activities which are common or customary in society. People are deprived of the conditions of life which ordinarily define membership of society. If they lack or are denied resources to obtain access to these conditions of life and so fulfil membership of society, they are in poverty" (Townsend, 1979: 31, 915).a

<sup>xvii</sup> "People are relatively deprived if they cannot obtain, at all or sufficiently, the conditions of life - that is, the diets, amenities, standards and services - which allow them to play the roles, participate in the relationships and follow the customary behaviour which is expected of them by virtue of their membership of society. If they lack or are denied resources to obtain access to these conditions of life and so fulfill membership of society they may be said to be in poverty" (Townsend, 1993:36).

<sup>xviii</sup> Townsend selected 12 items which were relevant to the whole population rather than to particular groups. He gave each household a score on a deprivation index. The higher score meant more deprivation. He compared the deprivation score to their total income. However, he did not find any single item by itself or pair of items by themselves, to be "symptomatic of general deprivation" (Townsend, 1979: 252). Thus he concludes: "People are idiosyncratic and will indulge in certain luxuries and apply certain prohibitions, for religious, moral, educational and other reasons, whether they are rich or poor. Families in certain situations are not necessarily deprived if they do not have a week's holiday; or if they do not have an afternoon or evening outside the home; or if they do not have a Sunday joint, because they may have other compensating activities or customs" (Townsend, 1979: 252).

<sup>xix</sup> He defines it as "a point in descending the income scale below which deprivation increased disproportionately to the fall in income" (Townsend, 1979: 271). Townsend described these households as suffering from poverty. They constituted nearly 23 per cent of the population. According to him the government rates for means-tested benefits were more than 50 per cent too low, falling short of the minimum need. As income falls, families withdrew from ordinary family-type things resulting in social exclusion.

<sup>xx</sup> Townsend's formulation is considered as "ground-breaking" step in the pursuit of a relative definition of poverty (Alcock, 1993:71). However, his list of deprivation indicators was criticized as it did not take into account of taste as an explanation of the lack of particular indicators (Piachaud, 1981; 1987) and the statistical technique which produced the threshold by the use of modal value (Piachaud, 1981; Desai, 1986). A reanalysis of Townsend's data by Desai (1986) produced the same threshold confirming the validity of Townsend's overall approach. It is argued that Townsend's approach and the threshold are a behavioral and not a consensual definition of poverty line as they involve the judgment of experts in the determination of acceptable indicators of deprivation (Alcock, 1993:71). These deficiencies were taken into account in later studies.

<sup>xxi</sup> But Mack and Lansley (1985:41-43, 45, and 47) differed from Townsend in two important ways. First, they chose indicators of deprivation from series of items classified as necessities or non-necessities by respondents of a national survey. Second, those reporting lack of a specific item, a further question was asked whether this was because they did not want it, or it was something they wanted, but could not afford (Fisher, 2001). If the respondents answered that it was a matter of choice, then they were not classified as being deprived of that item. Thus they avoided the criticism that Piachaud and others had directed against Townsend.

<sup>xxii</sup> Mack and Lansley did not confine themselves to one segment of human needs. They viewed potential human needs "not only in terms of personal 'consumption' but also...in terms of *social* activities" (Mack and Lansley, 1985: 44). In their instructions to Market and Opinion Research International (MORI) for designing the Breadline Britain survey, they noted that the socially acceptable minimum standard of living that they wanted to explore "may cover not only the basic essentials for survival (such as food) but also access, or otherwise, to participating in society and being able to play a social role" (Mack and Lansley, 1985:50). Their work is referred to as "the whole enterprise" which consists of the television series, a booklet, and the book. It is praised as "a fine model for social investigation in the eighties" (MacGregor, 1985:575).

<sup>xxiii</sup> This approach has subsequently been used in surveys conducted in other European countries. For example, using indicators drawn from Mack and Lansley's, the work of Irish researchers examines households that experience basic deprivation (Callahan, Nolan, and Whelan, 1993). This approach was subsequently used by Joanna Mack, Stewart Lansley, David Gordon, Christina Pantazis, and colleagues in the 1990 Breadline Britain survey, conducted by MORI for the LWT series *Breadline Britain in the 1990s*, with additional funding from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation for analysis of the data (Gordon and Pantazis, 1997b). Moreover, the tradition was also further carried by Gordon, Pantazis, Townsend, and colleagues in the 1999 *Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey of Britain*, funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and conducted by the Office for National Statistics (Gordon et al., 2000).

<sup>xxiv</sup> Veit-Wilson (1987:200) argues that it is a majoritarian rather than a consensual approach to poverty as it ignores important cultural differences in living standards within the British society. However, it initiated a theoretical debate on the decision to designate as necessities those items identified as such by 50 percent--rather than some other percent--of the population.



<sup>xxv</sup> "It is to the credit of London Weekend Television (LWT) and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation that they have funded the kind of detailed study of deprivation in Britain that the government and the academic research councils have not been prepared to finance" (Gordon and Pantazis, 1997b: 1). Similar appreciation also came from Harold Frayman (1991).

<sup>xxvi</sup> Because these six items did not add to the validity to the definition of deprivation of necessities as they did not distinguish between rich and poor.

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