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Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note from the Editor</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intellectuals: Public, Private and Platonic</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazrul Islam</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India’s “Domestic Violence Act 2005”: A Critical Analysis</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gulafoz Jan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curbing the Surge of Female Genital Mutilation</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kola O Odeku</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextualising Intergenerational Mobility of Women ‘Techies’ of Kolkata</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asmita Bhattacharya and Bhola Nath Ghosh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Plights of the Aged Inmates in Nigerian Prison System: A Survey of Two Prisons in Ogun State, Nigeria.</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathias Olufemi Dada Ojo and Rashidi Akanji Okunola</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biliteracy Development: Problems and Prospects – an Ethnographic Case Study in South Africa</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molatelo Prudence Lebese and Oliver Mtapuri</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childhood Disabilities and Child Protection in Rajshahi City, Bangladesh</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness of Korea’s Development Cooperation to Enhance the Vocational Training Capacity of the BKTTC: Need for Building Absorptive Capacity for Effective Development Cooperation in Bangladesh</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Md. Roknuzzaman Siddiky</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Authors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Participation and Lay Knowledge in Environmental Governance: A Case Study of Community Based Adaptation in Bangladesh</td>
<td>Shahadat Hossain Shakil, Md. Musfiqur Rahman Bhuiya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Note from the Editor

Over the past few months many, like me, in Bangladesh, and, perhaps, some Bangladeshis abroad, have been facing an onslaught of “chatter” by a few dozen “intellectuals” over a score of television channels literally round the clock, often by the same individual, through the magic of media technology, simultaneously on two or more channels, trying to educate the public about the political acumen of the feuding political parties during the “bloody” run up to the general elections this January. Much of the “chatter” on the various “chat shows”, called the “talk shows” which, on any given presentation, always had the potential and almost inevitably turned into a cacophony of meaningless gibber-jabber, which if the “host” was not shrewd enough or lacked the capacity to control, could at anytime turn into fist fights, upgrading from a senseless war of words. Well, all wars are senseless, but none, ever, more so than ones fought daily on the Bangladesh television screens, with each participant trying to outdo others in their naked aggression, with possibly the ulterior motive of becoming a “celebrity”, in the end merely adding a few more feathers in the cap of “notoriety”. How much of the gibber-jabber, which nobody remembers since, succeeded in the avowed aim of taming the political storm is well documented by the total lack of influence on the subsequent events which ended in a questionable general elections, without any end in sight of the feud among the political parties and the eventual killings of scores of innocent civilians and not-so-innocent party-men from all sides.

This abortive and unwarranted onslaught of the intellectuals on the newly instituted mass media got me to question my own understanding of the intellectuals. Being one among them, I have always had a personal interest on the psyche of the intellectuals. I am aware of the role they play/played, for better or worse, on the world stage and have done some works previously on this largely lacklustre group of people. But I had, thus far, refrained from dealing with the so called “public” intellectuals. I always had a tremendous admiration for the intellectuals who brave the authority and jump into the fray for the sake of the public good, sacrificing their own lives if and when warranted. I have always believed that this went with the territory. It was the responsibility of the intellectual to be the “public” voice and that intellectuals, by definition, are public intellectuals. They by their thoughts and actions, through their learnings and creations lead the public towards freedom and dignity, towards humanity and civilization. When they speak, they speak with a thousand voices, a thousand voices echo what they speak and that is what influences politics and brings down dictators.

But what occurred on the television screen, as an onlooker, I could not accept. Let alone lending a voice to the public, all that this band of “public intellectuals” ended up doing was to dilute the issues into worthless babble, confuse the audience to a state of negation, arm both sides of the political divide with greater legitimacy, while Bangladesh burnt! The “public”, merely, could do without such intellectuals. It was wanton cruelty perpetrated on the unsuspecting public, who needed guidance, directions, a firm voice of sanity, one or more of the intellectuals to “stand up” and “be counted”, “be heeded to” by the feuding marauders, be able to stop the madness. But the failure was utter and complete. They brought down the house with them as I looked on in my own impotency.
Abstract: Intellectuals all over the world have been a breed of people different from the rest of the society. Different not simply because they follow a different form of occupation from the rest of the society but mostly because the life associated with that occupation translates into a role and functions which determine what a society thinks and how it acts. They have been the creator of the economic, political and cultural life of a society, so much so that the modern society may be seen as largely the result of their creation. Yet, and in spite of, the dominant role they play in society, they remain difficult to understand and to analyze or even to classify them into any coherent category. I have discussed many of these issues elsewhere. Here an attempt is made to locate this rather amorphous group of people into a typological construct. “Public Intellectuals, Private Intellectuals and Platonic Intellectuals” are the classifications proposed for such a typology, the rationale for which is offered therein.

Keywords: intellectuals, intelligentsia, public Intellectuals, private intellectuals, Platonic intellectuals, classification of intellectuals

The day man found a way to dodge manual work and was yet able to convince the society of his importance, the intellectual was born. The excuses for not working were translated into all kinds of mumbo-jumbo, like witchcraft and magic. Gradually however, they had to prove their real worth as in terms of medicine-men and keepers and teachers of knowledge. But the basic distinction of the intellectuals as anti-manual workers remains till today and one way or the other they keep dodging manual work but they also continue to contribute to the society in ways that other strata of the population do not. They not only continue to affect the knowledge content of the society, they also influence the economy and politics and are the prime builders of civilization and culture. They are the creators of all that is beautiful in human society like art, literature, music and philosophy. They have been the most vicious opponents of dictators all over the world but they have themselves ruled societies with iron-clad authority.

It is this enigmatic group of people, who have been the locus of every society for millennia past, is the focus of this paper. Their role and position in society in the recent times have become even more unfathomable with the fall of the Soviet Russia and the rise of the global system. We shall, thus, in this paper try to understand these, rather, baffling group of people and their role in society today, a task made further difficult since I too consider myself as being one of them.

First, However, it must be noted that the term intellectual does not mean the same thing to all those who work with the intellectuals or even to the intellectuals themselves. Nor must we assume that the

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By and large, these two terms refer to the group of people whose primary occupation is based on acquiring and disseminating knowledge. For the present purpose we shall use the term intellectual in a very broad and general sense so that we may accommodate the different meanings used by different authors over the years. We shall, of course, look at the deviations from the basic definitions as and when deemed necessary to fully appreciate the meaning of the concept as well as to examine the various roles the intellectuals play in the world, particularly in the global society today. Thus, for the present we shall refer to the intellectuals as the creators of ideas (Brym, 1980) and producers of culture (Brym, 2001). They are a small minority, a breed apart (Benda as quoted in Kimball, 1982), found in every society who provide an interpretation of the world for the society; they create the “world view” for the society (Mannheim, 1936; 1956).

This is the much-used view of the intellectuals, who are seen as emerging with the advent of Enlightenment and modernity. In most cases the term refers to the secular intellectuals, as opposed to the clergy based in the church, and attempts are often made to show the distinctness of the two. Thus, during the Middle Ages in Europe the term laicus or layman was used to indicate those without the knowledge of Latin. Until the later Middle Ages intellectuals not connected with the church were treated as laicus. A study of the Italian history shows that much of the intellectual work during the middle ages, including those at the court, were performed by the clergy. The secular intellectuals mainly worked as teachers. Writing of literature was not even considered as a profession. In countries like Italy writing in vernacular language soon gained recognition and the entire society became the audience for the intellectuals and they also began to play a role in the life of the court and politics in the towns.

The French essayist Julien Benda in his 1927 publication, The Treason of the Intellectuals, uses the medieval term “cleric” meaning “scribe” to identify the intellectuals. The term would today include “academics and journalists, pundits, moralists, and pontificators of all varieties”. Benda feels that from the pre-Socratic times the intellectuals have been a breed apart. They are “all those whose activity essentially is not the pursuit of practical aims, all those who seek their joy in the practice of an art or a
science or a metaphysical speculation, in short in the possession of non-material advantages.” It is because of these men, Benda felt, that civilization came into being (Kimball, 1982).

Brym (2001), who sees the intellectuals as those “whose main activities involve producing, evaluating and distributing culture”, shows that although there have always been intellectuals of some sort in every society in the past, the Renaissance humanists between circa 1300 and 1600 were the first who would fit the “current usage” of the term. They promoted the study of poetry, grammar, rhetoric, history, and moral philosophy and helped bring about the Reformation, the Age of Reason and the scientific revolutions of the later days. However, he is quick to point out that it was only after the 1600 that the intellectuals became a “large, moderately well-defined and occasionally self conscious group”.

Dennis Smith (2001) similarly shows that the intellectuals in Europe and America belong to a tradition that goes back to the 17th century when the church began to lose its credibility in “defining who we are, how the world is constituted and what rules you should follow in life”. He, thus, goes on to define the intellectuals as the “people who use their minds - their power of reason and their power of imagination - as a way of getting knowledge and insight into the ways things are: the way we are, the way the world is.” He feels that the intellectuals are the people who ask, and sometimes answer, “awkward and fundamental questions in an interesting way”. It involves “attacking or breaking down your own or other people’s common-sense assumptions and looking for explanations of the world that are better or more reliable or more interesting or just different.” Thus, intellectual activity is driven by curiosity and inspired by the search for “unexpected links, connections and possibilities that transform the way we see the world”.

The intellectuals, according to Smith (2001), are not satisfied by conventional wisdom and may try to “reduce its influence or change its character”. The intellectuals appealed to “reason rather than faith”. They were “highly critical of what they saw as the ignorance and superstition perpetuated by religion”. Smith argues that all through the Middle Ages the world was explained away by tradition and custom, (“they always happened that way”) and by religion (“it is God’s Will”). Thus religion and custom were the two ideas that dominated thinking and, indeed, were all that was necessary to explain the world of nature or of man. Smith then goes on to show that these two ideas were soon replaced by another set of two ideas, namely that of science and technology and that of the market.

As early as the first decades of the 20th century Julien Benda felt the need to differentiate the intellectuals who seek practical ends from those who build ideologies. He identified as intellectuals “all those whose activity essentially is not the pursuit of practical aims, all those who seek their joy in the practice of an art or a science or a metaphysical speculation, in short in the possession of non-material advantages.” Some like Kimball (2001) uses the term intelligentsia to identify the same
group. Bookchin (1991) also uses the term intelligentsia, as opposed to intellectual, to identify this group of “true intellectuals” but excludes the academics from consideration. The intellectuals are the ones who are in the market as commodities and are absorbed by the academia as much as by the government and the corporations. “Their public arena is the classroom and they work according to a syllabus.” Because of this absorption into the universities and into corporations and the state machinery “they end up getting trapped in the institutions so that they can’t get out of them anymore.” The intellectuals are, thus, the institutionalized thinkers and institutionalized people who train others, rather than impart wisdom. Thus, the intelligentsia, for him, are the “true intellectuals”

However, defining the intellectuals thus is not enough to understand the role they play in any society. Many have argued in favour of looking at the political ideology the intellectuals adhere to, to fully understand the role they may play in society. The intellectuals have been seen as the organic, traditional, modern, conservative, progressive, revolutionaries, the left and the right etc. and a role befitting each ideological stand has been attributed to them or to a group of them. I have discussed these issues elsewhere (Islam, 2005) and shall not go into any details here. Suffice it to note that in ideological terms, the left, who played a crucial role in the world polity, had a major setback after the fall of the Soviet System and that the number and the influence of the right are on the rise all over the world. This has been particularly heralded by the unfettered growth of the market economy and globalization.

Of greater importance today is the fact that the gradual involvement of the intellectuals in various occupations in the global system as well as the opportunity to work outside the native land, have had a tremendous impact on the ideological position of the intellectuals. The need to cling to any political ideology or even having an opinion that may affect his or her society and polity in any manner has lost its significance almost completely. Thus, although there has been a phenomenal rise in the number of intellectuals, or at least those who would be treated as intellectuals because of their involvement in what are considered as intellectual professions, the number of intellectuals following any particular political ideology, as is shown below, has become an insignificant minority among the vast multitude of such professionals. And in the work place holding of any ideology may actually be counterproductive for most, as a result, a vast majority have actually become apolitical.

Yet, for me, the real test of being an intellectual is to stand up for the greater needs of the society. Whether as a writer, a professor or a media personality, they participate in the major debates of the society, speak up for justice, freedom and equality, fight against oppression, prejudice and
intolerance, and stand up for humanity. They are the kind of persons Benda or Bookchin calls the “true intellectuals”. It is in search of such intellectuals that I have come up with a threefold classification of the intellectuals of today. To illustrate this classification, I propose to go back to history and use the example of three of the greatest intellectuals of all times for heuristic purpose only. These three, belonging to the ancient Greek society, namely Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, do represent three distinct types of intellectual careers and would be very relevant for our purpose here.

Socrates, if we recall, was the typical opposition demagogue, protesting the ills of the society and inevitably incurring the wrath of the establishment, jailed and eventually was forced to take his own life. He represents what is essentially the public role of an intellectual, what is actually “expected” of an intellectual. And following him, through the centuries, there have been so many such public intellectuals, who have risked their lives challenging the establishment in spite of the tragic eventualities, always expected and often perpetrated on them.

Historically, thus, the intellectuals have played an oppositional role and are, hence, expected to continue to play a similar political role. They were the critics in the Dreyfus affair; they were the critics that Benda laments about. They were the radicals and later the left in most societies. According to Sartre “the duty of the intellectual is to denounce injustice wherever it occurs” (quoted by Kellner 1998). The domain of the intellectual is “to write and speak within the public sphere, denouncing oppression and fighting for human freedom and emancipation.” (Kellner, 1998). Edward Said (2012) also found the primary role of the intellectuals as oppositional.

Indeed, for many, the real intellectual is the one who plays a political role. Bookchin (1991), though he used the word intelligentsia, to identify the “true intellectuals”, argues that intelligentsia is a concept of Russian origin where it referred to the “people who thought and still lived in a public arena, and who tried to create a public sphere.” For him Denis Diderot is an example of the intelligentsia “who wrote - virtually in poverty for much of his life - who read and was creative, who walked the streets of Paris intoxicated by the life of the people, who played chess and was involved in the discussions in the cafes, acting as a ferment, challenging authority everywhere along his way and going to prison for a period of time.” Thus for Bookchin (1991) the intelligentsia are the people who not only engaged in thinking and writing but also “engaged in confrontations with the system instead of shying away from them.” The intelligentsia (in Russia) went with others to Siberia (on exile) and created enormous social ferment, they worked outside the institutions and would rather create institutions for the masses who needed to understand the real issues of the time (Bookchin, 1991).

This role of the public intellectual was at the root of the emergence of most third world countries, in much of their leadership against colonial oppression and is at the core of all radical politics. The left everywhere, at least before the fall of the Soviet System, fulfilled this role of the public intellectual.
The term public intellectual was first used by C. Write Mills and has since been made universal by Richard Posner in his celebrated work "Public Intellectuals: A Study of Decline" (Harvard University Press, 2001). Posner is looking for this kind of intellectuals in the present day scenario as well. But unfortunately, as in Russell Jacoby’s The Last Intellectual (1989), Posner only finds that this type of public intellectual is fast vanishing from the scene.

Instead in its place, a wholly new breed of public intellectuals has emerged. They are also often called the “media intellectuals”. Due to the unimaginable explosion of the media all over the world, this new breed of “public” intellectuals has also proliferated. To be in a position to influence public opinion, the intellectuals always needed a platform. In the earlier times word of mouth and face to face dialogue, as with Socrates, were the only means of such communication. Later, the books and finally the newspapers offered this stage to the intellectuals. Yet, their power to reach the masses was limited, at the best, to the reading public. The radio and subsequently the television and finally the electronic “social media” have ended all those limitations and today the whole world is open for the intellectuals to influence, if not to manipulate.

But, unfortunately, the role of the intellectual in shaping public knowledge and influencing governmental decisions has only dwindled in real worth. The public intellectuals, or better still, the intellectuals in public forums are a pathetic lot for the simple reason that those who are intellectuals, worthy of their salt, are not in the public forum, while the ones in the public are not intellectual enough. When in public, of necessity, the intellectual discussion has to be a much diluted version of what the intellectual may actually know, so that either the intellectual has to stoop down to lower levels to reach the audience or a low level intellectual is more likely to be successful in reaching the public. Unfortunately the latter option seems to have caught on and in reality most of those who face the public today belong to this category. Of course, there are major and celebrated exceptions but, by and large, this seems to be the actual run of the public intellectuals today.

Of equal importance is the fact that the intellectual who once makes a name in the public domain from any one discipline is more likely than not is asked to deliver on subject matters that are best covered by other disciplines. So that, and this I have observed on Bangladesh TV channels, a professor of Bengali language commenting on Indian foreign policy in Central Asia, a poet, who may not have kicked a ball in his life, commenting on World Cup soccer matches and experts of international affairs commenting on everything under the sun. I have heard trash beyond comparison, for instance, a senior professor of English explaining the reason for low enrolment in English medium schools as being high tuition fees, what an intellectual discovery! The same professor (of English) is found almost every day, even live at 1 am in the morning, analyzing everything from “fatwa” to local government
elections. And the number of such public intellectuals is increasing almost exponentially along with the rise in TV channels and the unfettered access to the internet.

These public intellectuals are nowhere close to delivering what the public actually need from them and even though they may simplify a few difficult concepts for the public, unfortunately or, perhaps, fortunately, they are far from influencing the government policies and have very little impact in molding actual public opinion in any significant way. Their total failure to influence the feuding political parties, including the ruling party, an iota in the current bloody run up to the elections in Bangladesh, though dozens of them have been occupying thousands of hours over the many months in front of scores of cameras, speak volumes about their downright impotency.

Yet, there is a pressing need for the public intellectuals, particularly in the face of the global forces that are destroying the very fabric of culture and human decency. In the current absence or impotency of the left, even a few such individuals, as public intellectuals, may help raise awareness of the public against injustices all over the world that go unchallenged and bring relief from the oppression of the rulers and the market forces and, thereby, restore human dignity. The future of the world and mankind depends on them. For they are the true intellectuals!

Unfortunately, few intellectuals today can be counted as such “true intellectuals”. Not all intellectuals today are engaged in building ideas and ideologies for the public nor are they participating in politics in equal measures. There are many among the intellectuals today who do not so much as concern themselves with politics or even with the public realm.

Since the advent of universal education and the growth of universities, the number of people who would be considered as intellectuals or those who work in the intellectual professions, have increased phenomenally, definitely over the past century. As a result, there are literally hundreds of thousands, even millions, within any country, or society, who could be identified as intellectuals. Of course, it would be futile to expect that all of those hundreds of thousands of intellectuals will be involved in public life or even to have strong political opinions. But some must, for the polity and the social beliefs to endure with any dignity.

Unfortunately, and as Brian Martin (1998) feels, most intellectuals just maintain conventional views and lives. There is little inherent radicalism in being an intellectual. Therefore, only a handful of the intellectuals may be involved in shaping the public sphere and the others are simply as passive as the rest of the public, while some may even be apathetic to the public need or be truly apolitical. This explains why one may find the intellectuals of today as not meeting the ideal typical expectations. The
The number of such uninvolved ones may actually be overwhelmingly large and frustrate any attempt to discover the “true intellectual” among them.

Some see this apathy as the result of two major factors, one is the rise of the academia and the research institutions and absorption into the government bureaucracies and the second is the rise of the market; the culture of the academy and the culture of commerce (Starr, 1995). The culture of commerce turns the intellectual into a commodity while the academia kills the intellectuals. Russell Jacoby (1989) lamented the fact that most intellectuals have become professors! Pierre Bourdieu (1985) characterizes intellectuals as “a dominated fraction of the dominant class. They are dominant in so far as they hold the power and privileges conferred by the possession of cultural capital . . . but . . . dominated in their relations with those who hold political and economic power.” What this means in practice is that institutional intellectuals may profess any number of “radical” ideas but are curiously passive vis-à-vis the system itself (Marjorie Perloff, n.d.). Marjorie Perloff finds the intellectuals as a vanishing species so far as “public voice” is concerned.

These intellectuals, in the academia or in government jobs and in corporations, are just living an ordinary life like rest of the society. They live a private life away from the public spotlight. They merely eat, live and procreate like much of the rest of the society and their importance or the role in society is, perhaps, as little exiting as that of any other profession or work force. I see them as representing the life and work of Aristotle as teacher to Alexander the Great, a researcher and a philosopher, being a part of the establishment, indeed, upholding the establishment itself. Supplying its needs and being a part of it.

The role played by these intellectuals in society today is to recreate and perpetuate the society, to maintain the status quo, not to “rock the boat” or to fight against the injustices that may be happening there, to turn a blind eye to oppression and injustices and, as in the case of Aristotle, to even uphold slavery, to enjoy and protect the middle class dream and retire to a blissful life of the suburbia. With little or no ambition beyond building a career in the profession they are involved in, whatever radicalism may be there is spent on campus infighting. The most challenging thing they will ever do in their lives is to become professors and tutor a new breed of professors. This is the true life of almost all the intellectuals today.

Regrettably, these private intellectuals are by far the largest group of such professionals. They, in their hundreds of thousand, if not millions, just vegetate, rarely if ever, rising to the needs of the public. They do serve the society and its economy as in the government bureaucracies and corporations or research institutes and are definitely necessary for the survival of that society as they perform the basic needs of imparting knowledge and skills but they do not meet the criteria of being
“true intellectuals” and remain as intellectuals in their private spheres only, not bold enough to risk their middle class life style.

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Between these two above categories of intellectuals, the public and the private, they nearly cover the whole profession. Yet, I find that there are a few amongst us who may be as passive as the private intellectuals but may at the same time seek to be as active as the public intellectuals and want to change the world around them and set up a just society, whatever that may mean to them, even if in their utopian dreams. This is the category I wish to identify as the Platonic Intellectuals, following the historical personality by the name of Plato. Plato, if you remember, wanted to establish a just society, though his sense of justice may not have been much appreciated then or down the historical times. He not only dreamt of establishing a utopian society for which he set up a workable blueprint and wanted to try it out on an experimental basis in Syracuse (Sicily). Only that the king of Syracuse did not empathize with Plato’s dream nor appreciated the role of the “philosopher king” much. Plato’s friends had to rescue him from the prison two years later.

Plato’s conception of the “ideal state” has since been treated as a utopian notion but just try to ponder on the numerous attempts at building such utopias in the nearly two and half thousand years of human history since then. I am more or less certain that many, if not most, I have identified as the private intellectuals have also had the same dream at one time or the other, a dream of setting up a utopian society, becoming the “superman”. Just look at the main characters of the TV serial “Big Bang Theory”, all successful physicists engrossed in the real world of research and top notch technology, yet they each idolize a “super hero” and act out such fantasies, not only in their dreams but also whenever the opportunity permits, in the “real life” situations of the drama too. That is how intellectuals survive!

But as with Plato’s dream of establishing the “ideal state”, such dreams remain only dreams for these intellectuals for the simple reason that neither the king could become a philosopher nor would the king allow a philosopher to replace him as the king. In other words, unless the whole social structure is changed, piecemeal solutions here and there may give one some satisfaction of one’s worth in society but it will not satisfy the real needs of the society. The intellectuals with such utopian dreams and not having the capacity to realize them in the existing society are here identified as the Platonic Intellectuals. They either in an attempt to prove their own worth and the effectiveness of their dreams cook up unattainable objectives and impractical projects or get totally alienated from the society and lock themselves away from the society, lead a humdrum existence.
One group of such intellectuals is the expatriates. They live in other societies, working in universities and research or multinational corporations with high salaries and an enviable life style, yet often dream of genuinely changing their own society back home. They cook up such projects that are not only unattainable but often totally devoid of reality. Let me cite an example. Very recently a well known Bangladeshi professor, who has lived all his life since graduate school in the USA, suddenly realized that there are too many dirt roads in Bangladesh connecting some 85,000 plus villages and they take up a sizable portion of the arable land. To end this wastage of land he chalked up an elaborate plan to build one super highway covering the whole country in place of all those dirt roads. And this super highway will connect small cities of 20,000 people each to be built and placed strategically along this superhighway to replace all those villages now connected by the dirt roads. He even submitted the plan to the government. But what he failed to realize, even in his acquired Western rationality, was the simple fact that to house the total population of 150 million of the country in townships of 20,000 residents each, will require 7,500 townships. Even if one such town can be contained with an area of 4 square miles, the total area needed for all the townships will cover more than 50% of the existing total land area the country, far more than the dirt roads he is trying to save the country from. We are not even calculating the financial and other costs involved in constructing those towns and the super highway. Such is the nature of utopian “dreams” nurtured by these expatriates, undoubtedly with all their sincerity. The plan was ceremoniously presented at a seminar attended by similar intellectuals who applauded the scheme, commenting on the bright future for the country.

Bizarre as it might seem, the reasons for such foolhardiness from a very well read scholar is obvious. Living away for so long and working for another society in conditions far superior, if not richer, than what he would have had in his own country, does give rise to a feeling of guilt and the need to compensate and hence, the necessity to do something for one’s own society. As noted above, the number of such expatriate intellectuals is multiplying be the day.

Just add to these the numerous intellectuals connected with thousands of NGOs and social welfare organizations all over the world. They are all dreaming in earnest about changing the lot of the fellow citizens, to bring about justice in the world, unfortunately, without ever disturbing the status quo or changing the system of rules that has created the unjust society in the first place. They pride themselves for attempting to transform the lives of the needy but all they succeed in achieving is meeting a few needs of own their personal lives. The dream of changing the world remains a dream, often, a questionable dream, like that of Plato.
Thus, public, private and Platonic intellectuals offer a better categorization than other classifications to understand the intellectuals of today. The few remaining public intellectuals, the true intellectuals, need to be more involved and more committed to their role in society. The dwindling number of such intellectuals is alarming for any society. Unfortunately, the true intellectuals are only born during the times of social crisis and dictatorial regimes, while a prosperous society kills the true spirit of the intellectuals; they vegetate during the times of peace and prosperity. That's when they turn into private intellectuals, more committed to their own progress and preserving their privileges and comforts of life rather than fighting for the needs of the unfortunate others. Enjoying these privileges in a protected or prosperous environment, as in a foreign country or a multinational corporation, give rise to feelings of guilt and the necessity to compensate. This leads to alienation and to the dream projects of the Platonic intellectuals.

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India’s “Domestic Violence Act 2005”: A Critical Analysis
Gulafroz Jan

Abstract: The incidence of domestic violence against wives has been increasing over the years. But in India, prior to 1983, the issue of domestic violence was outside the domain of law. It was only recognised in different matrimonial laws where cruelty is valid ground for divorce but there is no provision of immediate relief to stop the violence in the family. The passing of domestic violence act may be considered as an important step in addressing the issue of domestic violence. It recognises for the first time the occurrence of continual violence within the home, which may go beyond mere physical abuse and seeks to rectify it, but domestic violence act promulgated by the Parliament of India with much fanfare and the avowed purpose of protecting the women is largely ill advised as it is structured to add to their miseries rather than providing succour. This is by no means to suggest that violence at domestic level does not exist or that there is no need for protection of women against barbarism. What needs to be emphasized is that mere creation of rights can never be the anthemia for social evils. Legal reforms are meaningless unless they are preceded by social reforms. Domestic Violence Act fails, at various fronts, the muster of an effective piece of legislation aiming at social engineering. For the starter, one may say, it is founded on the premise that domestic violence at the hands of men folk is the general rule in every next household; it creates new legal concepts that are dangerously imprecise; it promotes social norms that are in stark conflict with existing traditions, values beliefs and sense of morality; it provides a process that is lopsided as it lacks in attributes of fairness and reasonableness. In this paper an attempt is made to deal with the subject against the backdrop of, and with reference to, the concepts newly introduced in light of the meaning assigned to each of them in the overall scheme of substantive provisions of the Domestic Violence Act

Key words: domestic violence, India, Domestic Violence Act 2005, women’s rights, right to reside, shared household, right to monetary reliefs, live-in relationship

Introduction
Law is determined by the sense of justice and moral sentiments of the people governed by it and, therefore, legislation can only achieve results by staying relatively close to the prevailing social norms. The efficacy of law as an instrument of change depends upon variety of factors that include not only the prerequisite that it be free from vagueness and ambiguity, but also and most importantly, the assurance that it is reasonable, not only in sanctions used but in the protection of the right of those who stand to lose by violation of the law (Stevan Vogo, 2011). Domestic violence Act promulgated by the Parliament of India with much fanfare and the avowed purpose of protecting the women is largely ill advised as it is structured to add to their miseries rather than providing succor. This is by no means to negate that violence at domestic level does not exist or that there is no need for protection of women against barbarism. What needs to be emphasized is that mere creation of rights can never be the cure for social evils. Legal reforms are meaningless unless they are preceded by social reforms. Gross abuse of Sec. 498 (A) by unscrupulous lot has been well known to be lost sight of and perhaps the cry of real victims gets ignored. In relation to cases registered by victims under Section 498-A the conviction rate is very low. Lessons learnt from experiment needed to be born in mind by lawmakers before they introduced yet another piece of legislation without built-in checks against misuse.

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**Domestic Violence Act 2005**

The Domestic Violence Act 2005 is a piece of legislation meant to provide more effective protection to the right of women guaranteed under the constitution who are victims of violence of any kind occurring within the family. The very nomenclature of the Act indicates that it is not restricted to violence perpetrated against women by her husband or in-laws. It includes under its protective umbrella every women living in a domestic relationship as a member of family with the person indulging in violence (Kaur Kuljit 2007). Thus the law protects women who are victims of violence occurring within family or in domestic relationship. Moreover the Act has been designed to create certain civil rights, some declaratory (e.g., right to protection against Domestic Violence) and some substantive (e.g., right to maintenance, right to compensation, right to shared household). But the law essentially falls under the criminal jurisprudence not merely because it is enforced by magistrate under CPC 1973 but also and mainly because the consequences of breach of certain orders passed by criminal court for affording to the aggrieved women the due protection of law has been made a new penal offence.

It is imperative for the study of this kind to find out as to what was the legal position in domestic violence cases prior to the introduction of this new law, so that it can be examined as to what is new about this additional measure.

**Brief Analysis of Legal Position in Domestic Violence Cases Prior to Introduction of the New Law:**

The main penal law in India is provided in Indian Penal Code 1860 (IPC), initially introduced by the British rulers but adopted for continuation upon independence. Chapter XVI of IPC relates to offence affecting the human body which include not merely culpable homicide (including or amounting to
murder) but also hurt and involves within its sweep cases of wrongful restrain, wrongful confinement, use of criminal force assault, kidnapping or abduction, trafficking in human beings and sexual offences including rape. The offence of dowry death was added in 1986, along with the offence of cruelty by the husband or relatives of the husband in the wake of outrage felt by the civil society due to increased incidents of cases where women had been subjected to harassment, soon after marriage mainly with a view to coerce them or their relatives to meet unlawful demands for dowry or on account of failure to do so.

Chapter XX of IPC provides for offences relating to marriage that include not merely bigamy and adultery but also cohabitation caused by a man deceitfully inducing a belief in women of lawful marriage offence of criminal intimation or intentional insult are penal clauses that can also be invoked, should the need arise, by wife against husband or vice versa. Offering insult to the modesty, or intrusion upon the privacy of women by words, gestures etc are an offence, which provision makes no exception in favor of husband.

All these offences generally do not provide for an exception in favour of a husband or male relatives, so long as the victim woman is able to pin down the offender with dishonest or fraudulent intention. Ever since the concept of entrustment of dowry in favour of the husband or his near relative at the time of marriage came to be accepted by the courts in India, the offence under Sec. 406 IPC has been regularly and flagrantly used by women victims for demanding penal consequences for conduct leading to marital discord.

**Protection under Domestic Violence Act**

Domestic Violence Act defines, “domestic violence” to include “any act omission or commission or conduct” of the man in question in relation to the aggrieved woman in case it attracts any of the four clauses:

a) Harms or injures or endangers the health, safety, life, limb or well-being, whether mental or physical, of the aggrieved person or tends to do so and includes causing physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal and emotional abuse and economic abuse.

b) Harasses, harms injures or endangers the aggrieved person with a view to coerce her or any other person related to her to meet any unlawful demand for any dowry or other property or valuable security.

c) Has the effect of threatening the aggrieved person or any person related to her by any conduct mentioned in clause a, b or

d) Otherwise injures or causes harm, whether physical or mental, to the scope and width of the new offence relating to Domestic Violence.
Domestic Violence Act fails, at various fronts, the muster of an effective piece of legislation aiming social engineering (Seema, S. 2006). For the starter, one may say, it is founded on the premise that domestic violence at the hands of men folk is the general rule in every next household; It creates new legal concepts that are dangerously imprecise; It promotes social norms that are in stark conflict with existing traditions, values beliefs and sense of morality; It provides a process that is lopsided as it lacks in attributes of fairness and reasonableness. So if we talk in detail the following provisions need to be looked into again.

a) Protection Orders in Favour of Women – No Additional Remedy, a Camouflage

After coming in force of the Domestic Violence Act the general perception among the public seems to be that domestic violence is an offence but contrary to this, reality is that domestic violence per-se is not an offence under Domestic Violence Act. What has been made criminal is the conduct of the male offender vis-à-vis the women in the domestic environment amounting to breach of protection order obtained by the women from the Magistrate (Gauba, R.K, 2007).

In order to understand the true meaning of this, it is very important to know how and what kind of protection order can be obtained by the woman whose breach amount to offence under Domestic Violence Act. As per Sec. 18 of Domestic Violence Act magistrate is empowered to issue protection order upon prima facie satisfaction that domestic violence has taken place or is likely to take place i.e., woman can approach magistrate not only when she is actually subjected to violence but even if she is apprehending such violence. Now, this protection order is actually a prohibiting relief calling upon respondent to refrain from certain acts against the complainant.

The jurisdiction vested in magistrate to pass these prohibiting orders goes against the legal principles that are applicable to law of injunction e.g., injunction cannot be granted when equally efficacious relief can be obtained by other usual mode of proceeding. Since all the acts which have been treated as unlawful under Domestic Violence Act, have been the part and parcel of criminal law of the country and therefore every person is expected, even without a prohibiting order (in the form of protection order) to refrain from causing any harm or injury to mental or physical health of women. The question arises: is that husband against whom no protection order has been passed free to cause harm to his wife? If the answer is obviously “no”, then it is beyond comprehension that how the issuance of protection order would add to her protection against the repetition of violence in the future. Hence, it is submitted that the remedy in the name of protection order is a camouflage.

Moreover, the order which may be passed by the magistrate to protect the aggrieved women from possible domestic violence includes an injunction asking the respondent from being in the vicinity of any place that may be frequented by aggrieved persons or from operating a bank account enjoyed by parties, even if it were held singly by the respondent. The law makers in their anxiety to provide legal
protection to the women seem to have gone overboard. The place frequented by the aggrieved person would undoubtedly include house were both parties may have been living together before their relations turned sour. By asking the male respondent to stay away would in fact be throwing out the male respondent from his own house; similarly, by asking the male respondent to refrain from operating bank account held singly by him only because he had shared its credit assets with the aggrieved woman at some stage, the magistrate would in fact be depriving the former from his daily substance, in the name of affording protection to the woman.

Furthermore, Sec. 23 of Domestic Violence Act empowers the magistrate to pass an interim order in the course of any proceedings before him that would include under Sec. 18. Under some provision, upon prima facie satisfaction (on the basis of affidavit) interalia, that application discloses that there is likelihood of domestic violence being committed, he may grant ex parte protection order. There is nothing in the entire statue to indicate as to how long such an ex parte order would remain in force. In this view, dicta of Sec. 25 that a protection order under Sec. 18 shall be in force till the “aggrieved person applies for discharge” would operate with equal force even for an interim order. The general rule under CPC is that in case ex parte injunction has been granted, the application for injunction has to be finally decided within thirty days cannot apply to these proceedings under Domestic Violence Act, as Sec. 28 renders it subservient to CrPC. In the face of provision contained in Sec. 28 this shall be the position even if relief under Sec. 18 is claimed by virtue of Sec. 26 before civil court.

Bearing in mind the above referred provisions of law, the possibility cannot be ruled out that women should introduce some doubts about the conduct of the male respondent with whom she has lived for sometime in a shared household and in her anxiety to bind him, approach a magistrate with an application under Sec. 18 read with Sec. 23 asserting, an affidavit, that the latter is likely to subject her to some emotional abuse and seek an ex parte interim protection order prohibiting him from entering his own house or operation of his own bank cannot thereby by rendering him totally at her mercy. The incongruity of the impact hits in the face when one reads these provisions in conjunction with the penal clause under Sec. 31 that renders breach, even of interim order, a cognizable offence attracting substantive sentence. In this scenario, the concerned male respondent is likely to be deprived of all possibility of presenting his side of the story since there is nothing stopping an unscrupulous woman from following the grant of an ex parte interim order immediately with an application of that order has been passed.

b) Right to Reside

There are numberless cases whereupon the breaking up of marital bond, women have been thrown out of the matrimonial homes. In such situations the victims, in particular form orthodox background find it totally unacceptable to go back to their parental family for shelter or support. The provisions of maintenance allowance under Sec. 125 of CrPC was essentially created as a measure of protection
to such vulnerable group in as much as there is possibility to abuse, when in lurch, is a cause of concern of orderly society. The courts, in recent times, have shown innovation by binding the husband (or male relative) with responsibility to provide some residential accommodation even in the matrimonial home to save the helpless women from vagrancy. The statutory right to live in a shared household in favour of aggrieved wife or dependent women relative under Domestic Violence Act is undoubtedly a positive step. But the framers of the law, in their anxiety to cast the net wide, seem to have lost touch with reality and gone overboard. The relevant provisions that need to be examined in this context are Sec. 17 & 19 of Domestic Violence Act.

I. Shared Household
Section 17 of the Domestic Violence Act talks of right to reside in a shared household. It creates a statutory right in favour of “every woman in a domestic relationship,” an expression given the wide meaning assigned to the word “domestic relationship” includes not only the wife or women related by blood but also a female friend who has lived, even for a small period under the same roof with the male respondent without entering into a marriage. The right declared is that every such woman whether or not she has any right title of beneficial interest of her own in the premises in question, shall be entitled to reside in the shared household. The right is absolute and subject to denial only in the event of eviction or being excluded in accordance with procedure established.

But then it needs to be seen that how far this provision proves helpful in reality. It gives statutory recognition and thereby encouragement to extramarital relationships or relation between persons of opposite sex outside of, or without marriage. To put it simply adopting a modern day lingo, women involved in live-in-relationships or adulterous connections are also covered as beneficiaries to the Act. Moreover, as per Sec. 17 the beneficiary can be evicted by procedure established by the law. But then Domestic Violence Act nowhere makes a mention or makes it clear as to by what procedure an affected respondent would be able to secure an order of eviction or exclusion against such women.

Furthermore, the word ‘shared household’ may include a property of joint family of which the male respondent is merely one of the several members. By putting a restraint against alienation, disposal or enunciation of rights in such a shared household, the law seeks to virtually shake the right of even such persons who may not have any role to play in the dispute from which the controversy has arisen. Also, there is no time limit prescribed for which the said “right to reside” would operate in favour of the women. Since right to reside has been created by this special law in favour of a special class of women, it will not be controlled by the existing legal framework including Transfer of Property Act, in as much as, and particularly, because the right to reside thus brought in existence is irrespective of the “right, title or beneficial interest.” In the absence of any provision or medium to such effect within the special law, the male respondent is without a legal remedy against a woman for whose benefit the
right to reside was never intended. This is because Sec. 17 does not set out sufficient parameters as to which claim to this right is to be tested by magistrate and in this view, the availability of the forum of appeal under Sec. 29 is also of no solace.

II. Residence Orders Sec. 19
Sec. 19 of Domestic Violence Act permits an order to be passed, in the event of domestic violence to facilitate enjoyment of right to reside in the shared household against the backdrop of feud between the parties. The jurisdiction to restrain respondent from disturbing this right to reside even after souring of relation between the parties can be understood, at least to the extent of married wives declining to go back to their parental home. But, some of the possible restraint orders indicated under Sec. 19 seem wholly unjustified and unfair. Some of residence orders amongst other such nature are:

i) Direction to male respondents to remove himself from the shared household.

ii) Restraining the respondent from alienating or disposing off the shared household.

iii) Restraining the respondent from renouncing his rights in shared household except with the leave of the magistrate.

The provisions seem to be unjust and unfair to the male respondent, a person in whom right, title or interest in the property vests is not only restrained to exercise his rights but it also restricts the prospect of reconciliation between the parties. In this view, with no guidelines provided, such an order, if permitted to be passed by the magistrate would work, in the long run, against the interest of the woman herself. The husband having been thrown out by the law, it is not conceivable as to how the system expects the parties to even broach the subject of coming together through conciliation.

c) Right to Monetary Reliefs
Sec. 20(1) empowers the magistrate to grant monetary reliefs in favour of the aggrieved woman. The purpose of this clause in amelioration viz to help out the woman to meet the expenses incurred and losses suffered “as a result of Domestic Violence”. In this context, one can understand the quantum, taking into account the loss of earnings, the medical expenses or loss caused due to damage to the property etc. Inclusion of clause (d) of Sec. 20(1) however is misplaced. The jurisdiction of the magistrate to grant maintenance allowance is governed by Sec. 125 of CrPC. There was absolutely no reason why it should be mentioned amongst the monetary reliefs meant to help meeting the expenses consequent to domestic violence. This is bound to create not only utter confusion but also multiplicity of proceedings and consequences which would be grossly unfair to both parties.

In spite of secular law of maintenance available under Sec. 125 CrPC to all sections of society, now rendered not even subject to ceiling, a quantum of allowance that can be fixed (after amendment brought about to Act 50 of 2001) is made to said statutory remedy in addition to, and not as alternative to, the right to secure maintains allowance under the personal laws. Thus, even under the
existing arrangement almost every set of parties is locked in litigation over the issue of maintenance simultaneously in the civil as well as criminal courts. A need to simplify the procedure to avoid multiplicity of proceedings, particularly in family disputes has been long felt. Some hope was generated in this regard when the family courts Act was enacted. But then, the said law has not been brought in force in all parts of the country. The creation of another statutory provision permitting maintenance allowance to be claimed would undoubtedly be construed by ill-advised parties as yet another forum where opposite party could be dragged for similar relief to be agitated. This is bound to add to the multiple proceedings in which the parties may already be spending out their time, energy and resources.

Moreover the possibility of abuse of Section 20(1) is writ large when seen against the prospect of a female friend having lived with the male respondent under the same roof in what is called as live-in-relationship (i.e. without marriage) even for a month or so claiming maintenance allowance under the said provision, with no restrictions attached and so possibly for the rest of her life.

d) Live-in Relation a Boost to Immorality

Live-in-relationship is the arrangement in which a man and a woman live together without getting married (Virendra Kumar 2012). This is nowadays being taken as an alternative to marriage especially in the metropolitan cities. Currently the law is unclear about the status of such relationship though a few rights have been granted to prevent gross misuse of the relationship by the partners. The position of live-in Relationships is not very clear in the Indian context but the recent landmark judgments given by the Hon'ble Supreme Court provides some assistance when we skim through the topic of live-in and analyze the radius of the topic in Indian legal ambit. The couples tied with the knots of live-in relationships are not governed by specific laws and therefore find traces of assistance in other civil laws. The law is neither clear nor is adamant on a particular stand, the status is dwindling.

The Privy Council in A Dinohamy v. W L Blahamy laid down the principle that, “Where a man and a woman are proved to have lived together as a man and wife, the law will presume, unless the contrary be clearly proved, that they were living together in consequence of a valid marriage and not in a state of concubinage”. Furthermore the Supreme Court granted legality and validity to a marriage in which the couple cohabited together for a period of 50 years. The Supreme Court held that in such a case marriage is presumed due to a long cohabitation. Furthermore the Hon’ble Allahabad High Court stated that a live-in relationship is not illegal. J. Katju and J. Mishra stated that, “In our opinion, a man and a woman, even without getting married, can live together if they wish to. This may be regarded as immoral by society, but is not illegal. There is a difference between law and morality.” The Hon’ble Supreme Court accepted the principle that a long term of cohabitation in a live-in relationship makes it
equivalent to a valid marital relationship. The Supreme Court also held that live-in relationships cannot be considered as an offence as there is no law stating the same.

In the well talked about case of S. Khushboo v. Kanniammal, the Supreme Court gave its landmark judgment and held that there was no law which prohibits live-in relationship or pre-marital sex. The Supreme Court further stated that live-in relationship is permissible only in unmarried major persons of heterogeneous sex.

In another case the Supreme Court stated that if a man and a woman are living under the same roof and cohabiting for a number of years, there will be a presumption under section 114 of the Evidence Act, that they live as husband and wife and the children born to them will not be illegitimate. Hence the High Courts and the Hon'ble Supreme Court in a number of decisions delivered until recently have showed the positive signs of recognizing the legitimacy of the live-in relationships and have also shown the inclination for a legislation to be enacted with the objective of protecting the rights of couples in a live-in relationship.

The decisions by the Indian courts is discerning as in some cases the courts have opined that the live-in relationship should have no bondage between the couples because the sole criteria for entering into such agreements is based on the fact that there lies no obligation to be followed by the couples whereas in some instances the courts have shown opposite views holding that if a relationship cum cohabitation continues for a sufficiently and reasonably long time, the couple should be construed as a married couple infusing all the rights and liabilities as guaranteed under a marital relationship.

It also appears strange if the concept of live-in is brought within the ambit of section 125 of the Cr.PC where the husband is bound to pay maintenance and succession as the ground of getting into live-in relationship is to escape all liabilities arising out of marital relations. If the rights of a wife and a live-in partner become equivalent it would promote bigamy and there would arise a conflict between the interests of the wife and the live-in partner. Apart from lacking legal sanction the social existence of such relationships is only confined to the metros, however, when we look at the masses that define India, there exists no co-relation between live-in relationships and its acceptance by the Indian society. It receives no legal assistance and at the same time the society also evicts such relationships.

The status of the female partner remains vulnerable in a live-in relationship given the fact that she is exploited emotionally and physically during the relationship. The Domestic Violence Act provides protection to the woman if the relationship is “in the nature of marriage”. The Supreme Court in the case of D. Velusamy vs. D. Patchaiammal held that, a ‘relationship in the nature of marriage’ under
the 2005 Act must also fulfil some basic criteria. Merely spending weekends together or a one night stand would not make it a ‘domestic relationship’. It also held that if a man has a ‘keep’ whom he maintains financially and uses mainly for sexual purpose and/or as a servant it would not, in our opinion, be a relationship in the nature of marriage’.

The apex court in D. Velusamy held that, not all live-in relationships will amount to a relationship in the nature of marriage to get the benefit of the Act of 2005. To get such benefit the conditions mentioned below must be satisfied, and this has to be proved by evidence.

(a) The couple must hold themselves out to society as being akin to spouses.
(b) They must be of legal age to marry.
(c) They must be otherwise qualified to enter into a legal marriage, including being unmarried.
(d) They must have voluntarily cohabited and held themselves out to the world as being akin to spouses for a significant period of time.

In India we cannot afford to grant such alimony otherwise it will decay the family system in general and civil culture in particular. The same will give rise to many issues connected therewith such as maintenance, custody, right of inheritance, legitimacy succession etc. Hence the author is of the view that the maintenance should not be granted to female or male involved in live-in relationship. One should not get undue advantage of his/her own wrong. Now the problem is not just limited to the legality of the relationship but people are coming up about the rights of the live-in partners and the status of children born out of such relation legalizing live-in relationship means that a totally new set of laws need to be framed for governing the relations including protection in case of desertion, cheating in such relationships, maintenance, inheritance etc. Litigation would drastically increase in this case.

Conclusion:
In a society that treats issues of the welfare of women too casually, some stringent measures are necessary to keep in check the unscrupulous and unbridled male of the species. But this needed to be brought about not by adding to the statute book with-ill-advised measures but through proper enforcement of the existing legal framework. In an endeavor to strike a balance between the mutual rights and obligations of men and women the framers of the law seem to have gone overboard to load the dice totally against the former. The above mentioned facts of the Domestic Violence Act are only some of its features that leave one in a disturbed state of mind. The Act has created a framework which is leading towards anarchy and representing a paradigm shift of tectonic plates supporting civil society. The consequences are bound to be disastrous for the “wife” as the “other woman” now has equal claims over man in matters of maintenance and shelter, two issues that count the most. The law projected as welfare measure for women might boomerang destroying the life of the women who reposed trust in the sanctity of marriage as institution. One dreads at the prospect of a day when society and the polity would be picking up pieces of aftermath, may be within a decade from now.
References

Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, 1993”.


** This is an international agreement.
Curbing the Surge of Female Genital Mutilation
Kola O Odeku

Abstract: The United Nations has declared the 6th of February annually as the International Day of Zero Tolerance against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). The purpose is to raise global awareness about this issue and reaffirm the strongest commitment to eradicating this extremely harmful practice that violates the rights of girls and women to physical and mental integrity. The article highlights the need to classify FGM as torture in order to strengthen the law against FGM and bring perpetrators to justice. Classifying an act as torture has significant implications, as there are well-established international legal obligations and consequences that flow from torture. These include the obligations to criminalize acts of torture, to prosecute perpetrators and provide restitution to victims. The article highlights that these obligations derive from the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment 1984 (CAT). It is against the backdrop of these harmful and destructive tendencies specifically targeted at women and girls that there is need to bring this act within the purview of the CAT. The article emphasises that CAT is considered as the instrument that is most potent in dealing with this practice because it prohibits in entirety any act or acts of torture; it also strengthens women's claims with regard to the prevention, protection and rehabilitation of torture victims.

Keywords: female genital mutation; torture; human rights; United Nations; Amnesty International; World Health Organization

Introduction

Despite modernisation and civilisation, one of the most violent and humiliating abuses women are subjected to in the society and the world over is female genital mutilation (FGM). This practice infringes upon their physical as well as psychological integrity and presents a perception of women as beings with no rights (Touzenis, 2005). Every year, three million girls and women undergo the FGM procedure (UNICEF, 2005). It is submitted from the outset that this practice amounts to torture (Giffard, 2000) and yet it is tolerated and condoned in many countries (WHO, 1995), and sometimes is sheltered within cultural or religious beliefs and ideologies (Bay Watch, 2008). The World Health Organisation (WHO, 1998) has confirmed that FGM is a violation of internationally accepted human rights and estimates the number of women and girls who have undergone genital mutilation globally to be between 100 and 140 million, with a further 2 million girls at risk annually (WHO, 1996).

FGM is endemic in a number of countries and the rate at which the practice is growing is appalling. It is estimated that the practice features in 29 out of the 54 (Loughran, 2007) African member countries of the African Union (Crawley, 1997). Instances of FGM have also been reported worldwide (IRIN News, 2004). Curbing the scourge and bringing perpetrators to justice are the strategies of the international community. The Assistant Director-General for Family and Community Health of WHO describes FGM as a form of torture that must be stamped out, even if the procedure is performed by trained medical personnel (BBC News, 2005). She also emphasized that ‘medicalising’ FGM will

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condone the practice that is a violation of a child's body and the basic human rights of an individual (BBC News, 2006).

The extensive physical, emotional, mental and sexual traumas that accompany this procedure have resulted in the practice being labelled ‘barbaric and abhorrent’ and being equated with torture (Joseph, 1996). It inflicts severe pain on the victim with permanent scarring (DeMause, 1998). It is also a direct attack on a woman’s sexuality and reproductive organ (Jordan, 1994).

There are two different schools of thoughts on whether the practice of FGM is good or bad. On the one hand, proponents assert that it is an important cultural ritual that symbolizes a rite of passage which must be preserved in order to maintain cultural identity (Barstow, 1999). On the other hand, opponents of the practice argue vehemently that the consequences of the procedure are unbearable and the practice should be banned because it amounts to an extreme form of child abuse; it is a non-consensual torture of a woman’s body as it causes permanent physical damage and sometimes death; and it is targeted in the most gender-specific way possible at the female genitalia (Schroeder, 1994). The latter view seems to be the consensus worldwide (AWO, 2005). It is in this regard that the international community and governments around the world should strive to put the practice under international scrutiny and to have it characterized as a form of gruesome torture in order to place it within the ambit of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment 1984 (CAT) and its enforcement mechanisms. This could serve as a step towards total eradication. In the same vein, this would also enable the Committee against Torture under CAT to prosecute and punish perpetrators of the practice and the institutions that have developed around it (Knowles, 1998).

Methodology
The research methodology for this article involved massive analysis, examination and evaluation of literature relevant to the prohibition of torture. In so doing, the study indicates that, by bringing perpetrators to justice, this will be a disincentive to the would-be perpetrators and thus curb FGM. Insights on why it is very significant to classify FGM as torture was well articulated and discussed and it is submitted that the perpetrators should be brought to justice by using national, regional and international instrument and enforcement mechanisms.

Literature Review
The first historical mention of FGM was in 450 BC by the Greek historian Herodotus (Barstow, 1999). While the origins of the custom are obscure (Elizabeth and Gail, 2001), the practice of FGM is now widely practised (Mackie, 1996). There has been public outcry for the prohibition because it is considered harmful to female children and women (Hosken, 1989). For FGM to be performed successfully, it requires the cooperation of a child’s parents and sometimes the whole community
(Broussard, 2008). While, in some instances, the practice would succeed, in others, it would not (The Concoction, 2007).

According to Amnesty International, the procedure requires the use of different techniques and basic tools, which range from scalpels, pieces of broken glass, blunt knives, scissors and razor blades (Amnesty International USA, 2008). Even though the practice is considered as a form of torture (Rajali, 1994), due to the financial gain involved in the performance of FGM (Richardson, 2004), trained medical personnel, including physicians, nurses and midwives, also perform FGM (Rahman and Toubia, 2000). WHO, in its 1995 report, confirmed that there are four types of female genital mutilation discussed as follows: first type, sunna, which is the most common practice and involves the removal of the hood or prepuce of the clitoris; second type, clitoridectomy, or total removal of the clitoris; third type is referred to as excision, and signifies the removal of the prepuce, clitoris, upper labia minora and perhaps the labia majora; and the last, and most traumatic type, is called infibulation and includes the removal of the prepuce, clitoris, the labia minora, and the labia majora.

The victims are expected to go through the procedure but if death or fatalities occur, neither the operator nor the operation is ever blamed - the society has a way of shifting the burden to some sort of negative supernatural intervention or, at times, the victim is accused of promiscuity (Hosken, 1989). The victim is subjected to various inhuman and degrading treatments (Dorkenoo, 1995) because “the mutilation is usually performed on rough ground, under septic conditions, with the same unsterilized knife or tool used on all the girls in a group operation, which is still the custom among many ethnic groups in the rural areas” (Chessler, 1997). The practice is justified on the grounds of religious obligation (Hosken, 1989), family honour, enhancing men’s sexual pleasure and the aesthetic appearance of FGM scars as evidence of one having undergone the practice (Lightfoot-Klein and Shaw, 1991). According to its proponents, “FGM ensures virginity, and virginity ensures the absence of ‘loose morals’, the absence of loose morals guarantees a high bride-price, and the practice is often supported and maintained by the community’s patriarchal social structures and institutions” (Akate, 1991).

Aside from the obvious resultant pain and torture that these children and women must endure, there are several other serious and fatal effects such as pain, shock and haemorrhage, and damage to the organs surrounding the clitoris and labia can occur. The use of the same unsterilized instruments on several girls can put them at the risk of contracting and spreading infectious diseases including HIV, which, in most cases, can lead to AIDS (Hrdy, 1987). According to Amnesty International, infibulation has long-term effects, and the constant cutting and re-stitching can result in tough scar tissue (Amnesty International USA, 2008). Suffice it to mention that the vicious ripping of a child’s genitals with a dirty knife or other similar instruments constitutes torture or cruel treatment (Chessler, 1989).
FGM and International Human Rights Law

International human rights law “currently exists primarily as an ethical ideal by exposing morally inhuman practices in the world and the modern root of international human rights law, was intended to set out universal common standards or targets of achievement for all humanity” (Robinson, 2002). The most authoritative human rights instrument that characterizes FGM as a form of torture is the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, (CAT, 1984). Because the prohibition against torture is widely considered to constitute a peremptory norm of jus cogens under international law, this means that the law against torture is unequivocal; torture is absolutely prohibited in all circumstances (Banda, 2005). Article 1 of CAT can be interpreted as offering protection to women from genital mutilation. It states that:

“For the purposes of this Convention, torture means any act which causes severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person...for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity....” (CAT, 1984)

The phrase ‘any act’ is self-explanatory because it envisages and encompasses any act that will cause severe pain or discomfort in whatever manner (Wendland, 2002). The practice of FGM falls within the ambit of the phrase and it is therefore proposed that FGM should be characterised and categorised as one of the prohibited acts envisaged by CAT.

Most importantly, Article 2(2) of CAT provides that this article is without prejudice to any international instrument or national legislation that does or may contain provisions of wider application. “This paragraph broadens the scope of definition of torture and affords victims the protection which can be derived from other international instruments or from national legislation of wider application”. This presupposes that if other international instruments or national laws give better protection, individuals are entitled to the benefits thereof. But it must be pointed out that other international instruments or national law can never restrict the protection that an individual enjoys under CAT (Wendland, 2002).

Similarly, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (the UDHR, 1984) is generally accepted as customary international law, and the human rights principles referred to in the Charter of the United Nations are well articulated in the UDHR (Newman and Weissbrodt, 1996). The UDHR provides for universal standards of human rights for all peoples and all nations (Newman and Weissbrodt, 1990). Common practice by nations over the past sixty years has established these rights as customary international law. A customary norm binds all governments, including those that have not recognized it, so long as they have not persistently objected to its development (D'Amato, 2010). Article 5 of the UDHR prohibits acts of torture and inhuman treatment. “It must be stressed that violent treatment whereby perfectly healthy body parts of a girl child are cut and mutilated should be recognized and treated as torture. Therefore, the fundamental guarantees of the CAT and UDHR should protect these
infants and be utilized in the abolition of FGM”. The prohibition against torture is also echoed in the
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1966) and the International Covenant on

There are other relevant recently adopted treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of all
forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1979) and the Convention on the Rights of the
Child (CRC, 1989), which provide a sound basis for arguing for the eradication of FGM (Tempest,
1993). Except for CRC, these treaties provide for the eradication of the practice although they do not
ban it (Chessler, 1997). The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993)
recognizes that “violence against women does not only deprive them of their civil and political rights,
but also their social and economic rights. Continued practice of FGM violates several provisions of the
more recent CRC” (Toubia, 1994). The CRC contains the only ‘codified prohibition’ of FGM in human
rights law (Fitzpatrick, 1994). Article 24(3) of the CRC (1989) requires nations to abolish traditional
practices that jeopardize the health of children. The article’s scope is said by its drafters to
encompass FGM (Fitzpatrick, 1994). Although this was not specifically mentioned, the term ‘harmful
traditional’ practices is meant as a prohibition on FGM (Van Buren, 1995). Article 37(a) of the CRC
requires State parties to ensure that no child is subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or
degrading treatment or punishment. Subjected to circumcision, a child’s privacy is violated, moreover,
the child falls victim to extreme physical and mental violence.

The rights of women and girls to protection from FGM are also implicit in the African Charter on
Human and Peoples’ Rights, 1986 (the African Charter). Several articles of the treaty can be
interpreted to proscribe female circumcision, although the “African Charter recognizes the importance
of traditional practices and its purpose is to protect human rights.” Since the fundamental basis of the
African Charter is “to protect human and peoples’ rights, it is contradictory if FGM is considered a
legitimate traditional practice”, as held in the case of Shibi v Sithole; SA Human Rights Commission V
President of the RSA 2005(1) BCLR 1(CC) par 189-196. Article 29(7) clearly reiterates the aim of the
African Charter, namely: “[t]o preserve and strengthen positive African cultural values.” Shibi’s case
emphasised that it is “not culture or practices which are considered barbaric and bad and cannot
withstand international human rights scrutiny”. Many practising communities may, from a cultural
perspective, view FGM as a positive value worthy of preservation. However, considering the effect of
FGM, no worthy society would advocate for its preservation on any ground.

The African Charter, in Article 4, states that: “Human beings are inviolable and that there should be
respect for life and dignity”. Article 5 proclaims that “torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment
or treatment shall be prohibited.” Article 16 declares that all are entitled to the highest level of physical
and mental health. Article 18 calls for State assurance of non-discrimination against women as well as
“the protection of the rights of the woman and the child as stipulated in international declarations and
conventions." FGM is clearly in violation of the terms of these articles. "If women are entitled to the highest level of health maintenance, FGM must be considered a violation of this right. Women experience great physical and psychological complications as a result of the inhuman treatment inflicted upon them" (Chessler, 1997). The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC, 1990), in Article 21(1), urges State parties to eliminate harmful social and cultural practices affecting the welfare, dignity, normal growth and development of a child. Article 2(1)(b) of the ACRWC clearly proclaims against those customs and practices discriminatory to the child on the grounds of sex or other status.

The irony is that, nearly all of the African countries in which FGM is practised are parties to the African Charter and to almost all the international instruments condemning violence against women and banning torture and other related practices (Chessler, 1997). Still, the practice is prevalent and widespread (Annas, 1995). The best legal remedy to address FGM on a worldwide scale, however, may be the application of CAT in particular and, in addition, the combined application of CRC, ACRWC, African Charter, customary international law, and existing domestic laws (Chessler, 1997).

Duty to take preventive measure against FGM

Sometimes, perpetrators of FGM have deprived their victims of their liberty by forcefully coercing them to submission before the ritual is performed. A fleeing girl or woman may be ambushed and roughly handled and brought down to be mutilated, with the cooperation of the whole community being enlisted. Currently, it seems apparent that there is hope for these victims. The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT, 2006) “has come to rescue as a preventive measure against this barbaric and undignified ritual practice”. Article 1 provides that “The objective of this OPCAT is to establish a system of regular visits undertaken by independent international and national bodies to places where people are deprived of their liberty, in order to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.” The foregoing provision can be invoked in order to access the place where the victim is being held and to prevent FGM. “This approach could serve as a safeguard against perpetration and abuse, thereby achieving the preventive measure envisaged in OPCAT as opposed to merely responding to violations after they have occurred”.

It is worth mentioning that there are various human rights instruments specifically pertaining to the prohibition and eradication of FGM, but these instruments have not been able to realize their set objectives fully. In addition to the practice of FGM not being eradicated, reports indicate that the practice continues to be carried on by various perpetrators in secrecy and at an alarming rate. Article 5 of OPCAT has brought some hope for the victims of violence against women because private custodial settings, where such nefarious and outrageous traditional practices are being perpetrated,
can now be visited by domestic bodies for the purpose of preventing these practices and rescuing FGM victims.

**State responsibility to prevent and protect against FGM**

In order to give proper interpretation to CAT, the Committee Against Torture has adopted a traditional understanding of torture, as defined in Article 1 of CAT, as “an act of severe pain and suffering intentionally inflicted by or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official for the purpose of obtaining information, a confession, or for any other reason based on discrimination”. As a result of its narrow interpretation of torture, the committee has made less progress on integrating a gender perspective into its work when compared with other human rights treaty-monitoring bodies.

However, it is worth mentioning that the traditional public/private divide is a major obstacle to bringing violence against women within the consideration of the Committee. FGM sometimes takes place in a private sphere (Amnesty International, 2008), which shows significant parallels to acts of ‘classical’ torture with respect to the methods used, the trauma inflicted, the total control over the victim, which translates into a feeling of complete isolation, the centrality of the fear element, and the stages of exhaustion. The summary of this assertion is that FGM should be considered and recognized as constituting torture (UNHCHR, 2007).

In the past, a strict judicial interpretation made states responsible only for actions committed by state agents, and not those of private individuals. Today, however, the “body of international law has led to the recognition of state responsibility to address the acts of private individuals”. “The state’s unwillingness to take all possible measures to prevent FGM and to protect children and women from such violence suggests official consent or acquiescence to torture under Article 1 of CAT” (Amnesty International USA, 2008).

**Conclusion**

It has been demonstrated that FGM is a blatant violation of the rights of victims. The practice cannot be justified under any circumstances because there are no medical or scientific reasons in support of it. The practice amounts to torture therefore, the justifications tendered by proponents of the practice do not withstand any moral-legal-ethical scrutiny, neither are they worth considering. Consequently, the practice should be prohibited in its entirety. Those who practice FGM should be educated on the health danger on the victims. However, in order to curb the culture of impunity, states should bring perpetrators to justice as this will serve as deterrence to other aspiring perpetrators. States that do not have legislation banning the practice are encouraged to emulate examples of member states of international community that have put appropriate law in place to enforce the prohibition against FGM.
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Contextualising Intergenerational Mobility of Women
‘Techies’ of Kolkata

Asmita Bhattacharya¹ and Bhola Nath Ghosh²

Abstract: Women’s education and employment provide the basal framework for their emancipation and scope for social mobility. The study discusses education and occupational status of mothers with those of their daughters to understand aspects of social mobility. The observations are recorded during face-to-face interview with the professionals working in software industry in Kolkata. Data were collected using a predesigned questionnaire. The objective and subjective indices of intergenerational mobility in terms of education and occupational status of mothers’ with that of the respondents is highlighted here. The study concludes by showing positive trend of mobility among the professionals in terms access to educational and career opportunities unlike that of their mothers’. The change is well supported by shift in societal attitude that has outgrown from societal conservatism. In nutshell, the narratives introspect ‘What they have gained and what they have lost out’ compared to their mothers.

Keywords: social mobility, intergenerational mobility, social change, IT industry, career, self development, techies, empowerment, globalization.

Introduction
Bengal’s contact with the Western world was crucial during the 18th century. The wave of intellectual impact of the West was first felt by a few renowned Bengali leaders, who were attracted by the values and virtues of individual freedom. Swami Vivekananda, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, and many more were the pioneers and champions of supporting emancipation of women. The historical context justifies the ‘Bengal Society’ as the forerunner of the change as soon as the Western thought of renaissance seeded the Bengal soil. As we are celebrating the 150 years of birth centenary of these great reformers, it intrigues us to explore the extent of social mobility of women between two generations i.e. mothers and daughters today.

The study of social mobility encompasses a part of broader concept of ‘social change’. It helps us in understanding the course and direction of mobility in our society through the study of intergenerational educational and occupational status. The emergence of newer professions and white collar occupations indicate perceptible trend towards vertical social mobility. These new professionals may be regarded as the ‘reference group’ which are the sources of motivation and aspiration of the rest of the middle class in India.

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The emergence of professional classes, largely from the middle class and from ‘service groups’, offers a measure of social mobility. The professionalism requires training to acquire skills for performing specific roles e.g. doctors and other professionals who need long specialized education and training hence, they hold high social prestige. A small businessman in the service and retail trade sector needs to meet fewer requirements having less education, social grace, technical skill and hence less social prestige (Sharma 1997). To understand social mobility among women one needs to understand the emergence of women professional groups, through professional education, as indicative of positive index for studying social change.

Review of Literature
Roy (1993) made a qualitative study of Bengali middle class women across generations. She observes that in earlier generations, Bengali women remained more or less secluded within the inner house, segregated from the men’s world of the outer house. School and college education for the women were encouraged as a status symbol, which helped in marriage negotiations. Such education, however, was not expected to change the ideas and thoughts of a woman in disregarding the traditional values based on conservative Hinduism and ritualistic folk customs as part of everyday living. Over time the influence of Westernised and Americanised values of consumerism coupled with thoughts of equality and individualism propelled change in societal attitude in favour of working women among the middle class Bengali society. Boserup in 1970 observed that in the third world countries, especially in Asia and Africa, most women are involved in teaching profession but only a small portion of them were in professional and clerical jobs. The female dominated jobs excluded from male contact but not in the professional jobs, hence few women were concentrated. This confirms the rules of seclusion. If the prejudices against women get erased then only they can opt for jobs that require longer training and offer more opportunity for promotion.

With the onset of globalisation, in post 1990s, the social demand for professional education and applied courses in engineering/technology, medicine, including dental education and health sciences, management, computer and IT education etc. are on the rise. These professional courses are expensive and are beyond the reach of the poor, who lack role models and family support. Thus, the middle class and above can afford to pursue the professional education. General education, on the other hand, is inexpensive but does not assure a job. Consequently, in the context of obtaining a job, general education is nearly useless while the professional education remains largely unaffordable (Chanana 2007).

According to Upadhyay (2008) over the last two decades, fairly a large chunk of ‘Information Technology’ (IT) professionals constitute a new and socially significant segment of the ‘New middle class’ in India. Software professionals have a social and symbolic significance, as they earn higher salaries than other professional jobs, with high disposable income. They go abroad frequently and
need to communicate with foreign clients and, thus, considered to be global citizens. The economic standing of IT professionals set them sharply in contrast with that of the ‘Old middle class’, to which most of their parents belonged. Their parents had mostly secured jobs with relatively low and slowly rising income. This ‘old middle class’ was the product of the Nehruvian developmental regime of rapid expansion of higher educational system during post-independent period. It has created a contingent of professional, managerial and technical experts. This section of salaried employees of public and private enterprises constituted the bulk of the middle class in India and maintained austere lifestyles.

Theoretical framework
The societal context, in 1970, reveals a major factor in structured inequality, low women’s participation in labour-force market, a deeply entrenched ideology for female domesticity, economic dependency on male kin with a male breadwinner ideology etc. Lack of employment was, obviously, a strong condition of powerlessness. Dependency was multi-faceted. It intervened with mental (ideologies of domesticity, emotional dependence) as well as material structures (economic, legal and denied property rights). Women’s employment enhances their capacity of being autonomous (means self determination) in personal and professional sphere but may not be radical in nature. The parameters of identifying the concept of economic independence comprise choosing the marriage partner; deciding to work; taking up non-traditional form of employment and agreeing to be mobile without moving with family members (Standing 1991).

Empowering women, by increasing their agency, means calling in question the traditional practice of gender inequality of treating women as ‘subordinate’ while men as dominant. Men dominate the hierarchy of decision making etc. that supports Bourdieu’s idea of ‘doxa’. The ‘doxa’ refers to traditions and beliefs that exist beyond discourse or argumentation, which is applicable to the then prevailing culture and tradition which are so taken-for-granted that they became naturalised. Giddens coined the term ‘Duality of Structure and Agency’ that opens up the possibilities for the analysis of social change. It does not refer to just stressing on either ‘structure’ (internalised norms and values) or agency’ (decision making of actor). Thus, it pertains to the seeds of social change that leads to the questioning of ‘traditional practices’ (Kabeer 2001). Kabeer, 1999, pointed out that woman’s education and employment are the important determinants of women’s autonomy. Autonomy implies ability to make choices amongst the alternatives, hence, increases their agency. Agency, in its turn, enhances decision making capacity, control on earnings, mobility etc. These indices are, therefore, looked upon as the basic necessity for emancipation of women. Traditionally, women with general education were mainly concentrated around the feminine, non-professional, and non-market segments.

The theoretical implications points out determining path towards women’s emancipation are from dependency to autonomy by their access to professional education and employment. The social change or mobility is best captured by drawing intergenerational perspectives.
This study dwells on women software professionals in Information Technology sector as this sector recruits women software professionals substantially. The target group, undertaken professional education and has got professional jobs. Women software professionals equipped with professional qualification have ample scope for social mobility in Information Technology (‘IT’) sector. This sector demands high mobility of the workforce, be it for on-job mobility or career mobility, challenging traditional societal barriers on women’s immobility. The purpose of the study is to target women software professionals. In the IT sector, women software professionals are mostly the young engineers, who have broken up many a feminine ceilings and impediments while competing with men on equal terms to become successful in their own rights. They have gained social recognition and status in the society by overcoming various challenges. The situation of ‘New middle class’ women are poles apart from that of their parents especially the mothers, belonging to the ‘Old middle class’.

This paper studies two immediate generational perspectives of societal shift in terms of mobility, from the mothers to their daughters. It also looks into ‘dependency’ of earlier generation, giving way to ‘autonomy’ justifying social change from generational perspective.

**Objective of the study**
The objective of the study is to explore the extent to which the women professionals are socially mobile from that of their mothers by accounting intergenerational perspective.

i) To study the change in education between two generations.

ii) To study the change in occupations between the generations.

iii) To understand women’s position of empowerment or disempowerment from that of earlier generation.

**Methodology**
In correspondence with the objective of the study a suitable methodology needs to be adopted. The feminist perspective has been used as a methodological tool to draw both the quantitative data and qualitative interpretation to analyse the above objectives. The semi-structured interview schedule, having both closed ended and open ended questions, has been administered. The open-ended questions attempt to elicit information regarding respondents’ perception on inter-generational change between them and their mothers. The result of the present study is based on the parent’s educational qualifications, occupational status vis-à-vis that of the respondents was enquired and the subjective experiences of the respondents on how they feel their generation is different from that of their mothers’ in terms of education and careers are noted. It is, broadly, anthropological mode of enquiry or qualitative explorations based on the interview mode through which personal experiences of respondents are recorded by using interview method. The narratives are analysed from both emic and etic perspectives. The ‘emic’ perspective offers explanation through factors that are internal to the
system, that is, ‘actor’s perspective’ while the ‘etic’ perspective lists explanatory factors that are observable from outside the system or researcher’s perspective. Hereby, we adopt triangulation methods or mixed methodology to analyse both quantitative and qualitative data.

A total of 250 women software professionals were interviewed through face-to-face interaction technique in order to increase the response rate and also the reliability. These respondents represented different sizes of IT firms (large, medium and small sizes) drawn from the listings of IT firms maintained by Software Technology Parks (STP), Kolkata. The sample selection is made by using non-probabilistic ‘quota sampling’ method so as to reach sample professionals working in different levels of hierarchy within firms. The applicability of random probabilistic method of sample selection is difficult since, the IT industry does not share their details to the outsiders. The empirical study was carried out during March, 2011 to January, 2012 and the pseudo-names used for respondent to mask their identity. The findings of the study are discussed below.

The collected data is coded and analysed by using statistical software SPSS package to find out relationship among the variables. The level of significance between variables is established through chi-square test. To explore the intergenerational change, pattern analysis based on qualitative narration is set to explain, describe and explore the dynamics of change between the two generations using both emic and etic perspectives.

**Empirical Findings situate Educational and Occupational Mobility**

The primary field data in table 1 show the educational and professional backgrounds of the parents, husbands and respondents. The table indicates mobility aspects of the parents vis-à-vis their daughters in terms of educational and occupational status. The terminologies for educational classification in table 1 are as follows: a) Professional-Techno Education includes degree like BTech./BE., MTech./ME, C.A., LLB, MBA, MBBS, MD, MCA and Diplomas; b) General Post Graduate involves MA, MCOM, MSC and PhD; c) General Graduate degrees are BA, B.Sc. and B.Com.; d) School level education includes till class XII.

Similarly, the occupational classification is as follows: a) High salaried profession indicates high income group, include professions like doctors, engineers, legal professionals, professors and chartered accountants etc.; b) Administrative professionals consist of the personnel such as manager and officers involving in delivering administrative tasks; c) Low salaried professions embrace low income groups usually have secondary status in the society; and finally d) The self employed is the group of people in various forms of business work under self ownership.
### Table 1: Educational and occupational profile of the parents and husbands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family profile of respondent</th>
<th>Women professionals as respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. (%)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Father’s educational profile**
- Professional-techno education: 74 (29.6)
- General post graduate: 54 (21.6)
- General graduate degree: 113 (45.2)
- School level education: 9 (3.6)
**Total**: 250 (100.0)

**Mother’s educational profile**
- Professional-techno education: 5 (2.0)
- General post graduate: 50 (20.0)
- General graduate degree: 157 (62.8)
- School level education: 38 (15.2)
**Total**: 250 (100.0)

**Father’s professional profile**
- High salaried professional: 58 (23.2)
- Administrative professional: 52 (20.8)
- Low-salaried professional: 98 (39.2)
- Self-employed professional: 42 (16.8)
**Total**: 250 (100.0)

**Mother’s professional profile**
- High salaried professional: 6 (2.4)
- Home maker: 185 (74.0)
- Low-salaried professional: 50 (39.2)
- Self-employed professional: 9 (3.6)
**Total**: 250 (100.0)

**Husband’s educational profile (excludes divorcee)**
- BE/B.Tech: 66 (43.4)
- ME/M.Tech: 20 (13.2)
- MCA: 26 (17.1)
- MBA/MBBS/MD/CA: 24 (15.8)
- BA/BSc/B.Com: 5 (3.3)
- MA/MSc/M.Com: 7 (4.6)
- PhD: 4 (2.6)
**Total**: 152 (100.0)

**Husband’s professional profile (excludes divorcee)**
- IT and IT related services: 111 (73.0)

\[ ^a \text{BE/B.Tech, ME/M.Tech, MCA, MBA/MBBS/MD/CA, BA/BSc/B.Com, MA/MSc/M.Com, PhD} \]

\[ ^b \text{IT and IT related services} \]
The above Table 1 reveals heterogeneity in educational and professional profile of respondents’ and their parents. While a small number of respondents’ fathers (30 percent) are professionally educated, the majority of them i.e. 69 percent (approx.) were graduates and post graduates in the general stream. Similarly, 83 percent of their mothers are graduates and post graduates in the general stream while only 2 percent are professionally qualified. Though in minority, yet parental education up to school level were also observed. Profession wise, interestingly, 39 percent of the parents are in the low-salaried profession bracket. Around 17 percent of fathers belong to self employed group or business class. While the majority of the mothers i.e. 74 percent are housewives and confined to domesticity. The trend shows onset of occupational mobility among the women professionals most of whose mothers were home makers. They rose above the feminine seclusion to get professionally educated to grab professional technical jobs in contrast to that of their mothers. Many of the parents belong to modest class of low-salaried or small business class. Thus, the transition from old middle class (i.e. of their parent’s generation) belonging to a heterogeneous group to that of their generation of new (new) middle class software professionals forming homogeneous group (shown in Table 2). It is also evident that during the earlier generation, there was less demand for professional-technical education compared to general stream of education and jobs. Interestingly, irrespective of parents’ having general education mostly, their daughters opted for professional education. It suggests that it is the societal trend that neutralises the influence of parental education and infuses preference towards professional education.

We also observe that homogeneity in educational profile of respondent’s husband figures 74 percent of the married respondents’ husbands are technical professional graduates or post graduate degree holders (BE/B.Tech; ME/M.Tech; MCA). Table 2 below depicts comparative relation between respondents’ fathers’ and mothers’ educational profile and with that them and their husband’s.
Table 2: Educational profile of respondents, parents and husbands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father's educational profile</th>
<th>Mother's educational profile</th>
<th>Total No. (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional-techno stream</td>
<td>General stream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional-techno education</td>
<td>3 (4.1)</td>
<td>71 (95.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General stream</td>
<td>2 (1.1)</td>
<td>174 (98.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5 (2.0)</td>
<td>245 (98.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi square value: 2.263, df=1, p=.133, n.s.a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Husband’s educational profile</th>
<th>Educational profile of respondent</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional-techno stream</td>
<td>General stream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional-techno degrees</td>
<td>120 (93.8)</td>
<td>16 (66.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General degrees</td>
<td>8 (6.2)</td>
<td>8 (33.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>128 (100.0)</td>
<td>24 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi square value: 15.740, df=1, p <.001

a n.s. = Non significant.
a Includes married respondent and excludes divorcees.

The result of Table 2 shows that the relation between the educational qualifications of respondent’s father with that of the mother is non-significant while the relation between the respondents and their husbands holds significance. Again, as per Table 1, around 73 percent of respondents’ husbands work in IT or IT related services. Thus, homogeneity in educational background and profession is observed among the respondents and their spouses.

In majority of cases, the spouse-selection happens while undertaking the professional education. Those who have not selected their spouses when they were pursuing their technical education have chosen their spouse from the workplace at a later stage. Those who are left out from either of the cases, opt for conventional marriage practice or the arranged marriage system.

The above fact corroborates Chanana (2007) findings that before 1980s, science and higher education for women were not preferred as that required longer time, more resources and investments. Young women’s perceived marriage was priority to their parents. An undergraduate degree, of any kind, was considered helpful in the marriage market for raising the social status. In the post-1990s, on the other hand, parents impart the best education to their daughters and expect them to be independent and to follow careers. It can be said that parental expectations coupled with young women’s aspirations have been the push factors in the shift of disciplinary choices in the mid-1990s but was limited to big cities. The increasing demand for specific skills in the fast expanding private sectors was a boost for professionally qualified persons for embarking on a ready job market.
Intergenerational Perspective from Mother to Daughter: *Emic* and *Etic* View

To understand the perceptible change, if any, in women’s status in the society, an intergenerational perspective, is drawn from the respondents’ revelation about their mothers and themselves. The seeds of change in women’s societal status can best be perceived by comparing the social status between two present but immediate generations viz. that of the daughters from those of their mothers. Given their middle class background, inter-generational mobility remains a distinctive feature aimed at giving better lifestyles to the children.

We now attempt to analyse different directions of inter-generational changes drawn from the life of women software professionals – the way they perceive the changes as different from that of their mothers. The following Case studies highlight the rationale behind the discrepancy prevalent in education and career mobility between the previous generation and present generation.

**a) Societal Change in terms of Women’s Education and Employment:**
Respondents articulated how their mothers had experienced gender-based segregation in pursuing educational career from the entry level. Indifference actualised from childhood and between the siblings by imparting separate educational curricula based on gender. Boys were encouraged to take technical education while the girls were taught in general educational stream viz. Arts and Home Science etc. irrespective of their capability. Neither the higher education nor the technical education was imparted to girls.

Non–availability of adequate number of ‘all girls’ educational institution, disapproval of attending co-educational institutes or non-approval of undertaking education from an academy distantly located from home, have stopped a large number of mothers of the present day IT professional daughters from accomplishing professional or technical qualifications. In the case of boys, they were given the best educational opportunity keeping in mind their anticipated role of being the future bread-earner. Consequently, male dominance in professional or engineering fields was observed.

At the same time their mothers, though only a few, could choose the job of school teachers. This is a fixed time job and relaxed or less hectic in nature. Their pursuance of job was conditional based on family situation and husbands’ place of relocation. Their independent mobility was curbed, staying outside till late hours and mixing freely with the opposite sex were socially disapproved and for security reasons. The situation was worse in rural areas where preference was given for early marriage rather than women’s education and career.

The situation has changed radically during the respondents’ time in the late 20th to the early 21st centuries with the enhancement of women’s scope to participate in the job market, with the expansion of diversified career paths and opportunities for job oriented professional courses. Women’s
seriousness to undertake professional and technical courses is seeded in their childhood aspiration in building their careers. The siblings, irrespective of their sexes are, equally treated to pursue their education and careers. The sphere of women’s mobility has increased and the taboo on interaction with the opposite sex has decreased. Liberal support from the family to pursue the girl child’s own career decision is prioritised. Due to the change in societal attitude, women at large are now taking education and career seriously. For them, the inspirational icon is their mothers, who did not get parental support in their childhood to stand independently through education and career.

The spurt of jobs in the IT industry, having vagaries of long working hours, odd hour duties, night work schedules and wide mobility aspect including trips abroad on short notice, culminating in hectic nature of job etc., has broken the societal conservatism. IT jobs offer an option for flexi-time or flexi-place jobs and opportunity for relocation in their husbands’ place to enable women workforce to maintain their work-life balance. It facilitates many of them not to relinquish the job unlike their mothers. However, compromise on promotional or locational aspects may have to be made. Women now enter work field in good positions, and often prove their capabilities by taking the career seriously. Interestingly, many of them have joined the IT sector even from rural areas.

The case mentioned below unmasks the orientation of parents for their daughter’s career.

Case #1: Titli, a 28 year old lady from Orissa and due to be married shortly to a boy she has chosen. She remarks that in the earlier generation, a bulk of investment was kept reserved for a girl’s marriage rather than spending some of it on their education. Whereas investment now is made for girls’ education by their parents to enable them to get jobs which are more important. It is now thought that in the course of pursuing education and job the girls will get their grooms of choice and lesser dowry for marriage need to be paid.

Diagrammatically, the situational change for two generational perspectives:

**Earlier:** Education → Marriage.

**Now:** Education → Career → Self development → Marriage.

It is, thus, quite clear that a substantive investment previously made for daughter’s marriage is now channelised for daughters’ higher education and career building purposes. The course of investment purpose gets changed to a meaningful route towards a settled career first; nonetheless daughters’ marriage still remains a basic major concern for their parents.
b) Change in Societal Attitude:

Previously societal attitude considered home at the core, and education and job as peripheral. Earlier a girl’s marriage was prioritised and her economic dependence on her husband was ensured. Thus, a single model income was demonstrative. The women’s position was, de facto, considered to be dependent either on their fathers or on their husbands. Their dependence pushed them to a status inferior to that of men. They were confined mostly indoors since they were non-workers having a smaller social circle. They lacked independence and could not raise their voice. As a result, their concerns remained unheard. Their decision was ‘reverified’ even if they were working. For them motherhood was not selective and the spouse support in household chores was hardly available. Decision of the patriarch or the male head of the household was taken as the final decision. On the whole, the outlook was conservative. The non-working status of mothers is validated from below.

Case #2: Kim, a 30 yr. old unmarried informant working in a small firm illustrates her mother’s case. Her mother was a teacher. After marriage, she had to leave the job due to long distance from the affinal place. Apart from this, their neighbours perceived insufficient earning capability of the husband. According to them a working wife means an indication that wife’s financial support is needed to sustain the family. She further adds that in her friend’s case, her friend’s mother had to leave the job to be mobile with her husband and with no job opportunities available in the place relocation.

On the other hand, in the respondents’ generation, job and education are considered as the core while home is rated as the periphery. Moreover, societal prestige is attached to the working women. In some quarters, working status for a wife is mandatory and such working wives are much in demand. The double income model becomes demonstrative due to increase in the standard of living. The rationale is explained in the following excerpts.

Case #3: Mousumi, observes that career and high salary are intensively wanted to fulfill lifestyle choices and to fulfill their kid’s desire. In the earlier generation, women lacked career aspiration as lifestyle choices were then limited.

Globalisation providing platters for various lifestyle choices gets deciphered below:

Case #4: Shampa, a 31 year old unmarried software professional working in a big MNC observes, ‘Modernisation has touched every sphere of life which is distinctive of our generation – be it in designer dress, eating out fast food, possession of up-to-
date costly mobile technology or to navigate ourselves through social networking sites having a wide circle of global friends. Extensive use of credit cards has led to the rise in expenses to fulfill our spree of going out (travelling and shopping), eating out or to put ourselves in fitness regime (gym, beauty salon, stress release session). Hence, attitude is for outward looking not for inward ones'.

Case #5: Ankita, a 29 year old young married software professional of mid-small sized firms puts forth her view to the effect that globalisation have money driven orientation and tend to compete to achieve better lifestyles. We have now a new tendency to fulfill all our wants and we cannot afford to wait i.e. ‘desiring everything at an early age’. In contrast, people of earlier days enjoyed a contended living, had less lifestyle option and did not have money driven orientation. They had to wait for years to get those wants fulfilled. ‘Double income model’ is now highly desired and important to accomplish the luxurious way of life and for better standard of living.

Above cases indicate how the goal determines the means:

Seeking consumerist lifestyle → job is important → need to be qualified for the job.

Thereby, respondents' career and job are well supported by supportive spouse and in-laws. Gadgets, appliances, support from extended family and availability of paid services have released them from the time-consuming burden of household chores to enable them to devote more time and effort to the workplace. But, efforts to balance the family and work have become a challenge for the working women.

c) Career in IT industry has Empowering Effect

Being associated with the IT industry, their spot decision skills get enhanced and have broadened their social circle. Their employability to this professional workplace effected financial independence giving rise to individual identity, personal independence and self confidence in women. Their independent standing has enabled them to raise their voice and to take their own decisions. It has empowered them to exercise their self-choice in choosing careers and the marriage partners. The extent motherhood has also become selective. In a nutshell, they have become more independent, more vocal in their thought and action.

Moreover, financial independence has given women employees’ a greater respect in the society.

It may be represented like this:

Engineering education→IT job→raised voices in the family domain.
The following narration reflects the rationale behind the need for economic independence for a woman:

Case #6: Indu, illustrates that economic independence have given them an independent stand on decision making, which is desirable for two reasons: a) It saves them in facing the domestic violence and combating any eventuality for future risk or crisis within the family or with the husband and b) an opportunity for supporting their own parents.

**d) Backlash in the Lives of Working Women**

The two anecdotes below on intergenerational change reflect two different perceptions. The first one from a very senior level manager, who has observed two generations keenly, has made this poignant statement on generational difference as:

Case #7: Sohini observes that in the earlier generation, not everybody was a ‘self-achiever’ but everyone had the capability to achieve, and possessed high patience level. They prepared their next generation to be ‘achievers’. The present generation has become generation of ‘self achievers’ out of toil and sacrifice of their earlier generation. The struggle in achiever’s life comes with wear and tear. The achievement comes up but the tolerance level reduces considerably. They can hardly wait for anything. To them time stands for ‘immediate action’. The present generation believes in quick reaction that leads to intolerance. ‘Chalo kichu dekhi (‘Let us see something’).....is the transit used earlier. Now this has changed to....Chalo kichu kori’ (‘Let us do something').

The second anecdote comes from a young professional belonging to a small sized firm:

Case #8: Monika, a 23 year old software professional views that now-a-days the patience level happens to be too low because almost every want of a person used to get fulfilled immediately from his/her childhood itself. In the joint family system, existence of a number of siblings, led to prevalence of ‘we centric’ idea but with emergence of nuclear family, the relationship turned into ‘me-centric’.

The above statements points out that intergenerational behavioural change is attributed to intensified work pressure coupled with their upbringing within the nuclear family system.
Interpretative Analysis: Etic View

The anecdotes of new genre software techies have amply demonstrated that they can bridge the private-public dichotomy with the help of their educational and professional attainments. They have empowered themselves in building private-public continuum, in which societal attitude has relaxed the patriarchal rigidness for confining women exclusively to private domain so that they are to depend on the patriarch, the ultimate decision-maker, elucidating their mothers’ tales. The earlier genre of women had to be contended with cherished feminity imbibed in prioritising marriage over education and career, to be educated in the arts subjects in contrast to technical subjects meant to be reserved for men, immobility over mobility and restricted mixing with the opposite sex. But insurgent jobs, especially in IT industry, have challenged many of these patriarchal injunctions. Society’s reflexivity, a product of globalisation, raised the taste for higher standard of living. To satisfy the aim, double-income model prevails over single male-bread earner proposition, resulting in women’s exposure to the outside world. Furthermore, employment in the IT sector has redefined gender norms. The nature of work in this industry has pushed the empowering effect on women employees in respect of self identity, independence and capacity to raise their voice by neutralising the male dominance.

The concern over balancing work and life, however, remains. In tune with the traditional expectation of the married, family is prioritised. The traditional expectation for family remains primal responsibilities with them. It could be inferred that the relaxation of patriarchal bindings yielding to a place for new lifestyle demands, may not have liberated women in the real sense of the term.

Concluding Remarks

The concluding section comments on the objective with which we began our study, the possibility of intergenerational mobility among software professionals and their mothers’ generation. This study highlights the changing face of women in Bengal. The findings show positive trend towards occupational and educational mobility among women professionals in relation to their mothers belonging to the previous generation. Factual figures reveal influence of the changed societal attitude for women seeking professional education for seeking jobs. For conclusive evidence, to understand intergenerational change both emic view supported by the case studies articulates the rationale behind the change in educational and occupational pattern in respondent’s time with those of their mothers’ generation. Both quantitative analysis and pattern analysis of qualitative statements are adapted to attain reliable knowledge of the field situation.

Respondents’ narratives and personal histories reveal the existence of societal inequality structure that decided educational and professional course for the women in the preceding generation. The narratives further underline that, in the previous generation, there was a conscious process of segregation in place for imparting education between boys and girls in the family. Best professional education was meant for the boys only as they were the would-be bread-earner for the family. Girls’
education got lesser importance to that of boys. General education was considered sufficient for the girls. Marriage was prioritized for them. The education they received was intended to add status in searching for better grooms for them. They were, as if, destined to domesticity. As a result, they became ‘dependent’ member of the family. Even, if, women were capable of taking up technical courses, they were often refused the opportunity as they were barred from following factors a) mobility to other cities, b) participation in male dominated arenas, c) apprehensions for security and above all, d) family reasons (i.e. relocation due to marriage, kids or husband). Consequently, women were rendered powerless. They were treated in subordinate status while men were in dominant position.

Of late, there is paradigm shift in societal attitude with growing preference for working wives in the family. The perspective of changed societal attitude offers financial independence to employed women. Armed with economic independence, earning women can support their own parents financially or can combat any eventuality of future risks. Employed women, can also contribute to maintenance of higher standard of living, a by-product of globalization in the post-1990s.

Against this backdrop, the paper highlights the ordeal of working women in IT industry. Long hours of work schedule and unscheduled mobility etc. destabilizes family life and bond between child and parents diminishes because of their toggling between family management and longer time at work. Prolonged stay at work gives rise to stress which tell upon their patience and adjustment levels. The study encompasses mainly urban middle class strata and an effect of change is related to such segments only. Many women from rural areas are now taking up jobs in IT sector. The effects of this change are limited to IT women software professionals only and these are not representative of large section women in Bengal.

References


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Abstract: With some selected elderly inmates (n=93) from two prisons in Nigeria, this study critically examined the problems of the aged inmates in the Nigerian Prisons. Convenience and purposive sampling techniques were used to select the two-prisons studied and the aged inmates (n=93) that were questioned, respectively. Questionnaire was the only research instrument employed in the study and frequency and simple percentage were the methods of data analysis. The study discovered that poor bedding and clothing, inadequate food and poor diet, poor health care delivery, lack of psychological support and poor recreational facilities were the major problems which made life in prison more terrible for the elderly inmates in Nigeria. The recommendations made in this paper would go a long way in sanitizing the poor prison system in Nigeria, especially as it affected the aged inmates, provided they were judiciously implemented by the prison stakeholders in Nigeria.

Keywords: elderly inmates, prisoners, bedding, food/nutrition, health care delivery, psychological

Introduction

The prison is a formal organization which involves the interaction of people from different technical and professional skills operating to attain the organizational goals. As a formal organization, it is bureaucratic in its structure and operation, while its goals of reformation, rehabilitation and deterrence are clearly spelt out in its blue print. Its effective performance of these goals are the main criteria of determining its success or otherwise.

Indeed, the prison as the last rendezvous for the criminal is a total institution which is a formal organization and in a part a residential community. It is designed to ensure restraint and custody of convicts. The prison is a penal dust bin (Obioha, 2002). It is the primary function of the police to sweep the streets of the most readily identifiable and vulnerable offenders, then the function of the prison system is repeatedly to contain them. Obioha( 2002) expressed the opinion that prison must have three basic characteristics which are: Lack of escape routes, rigid hierarchy and extreme authoritarianism. As part of the punishment, Atere (1993) argued that the prison term represents about 80% of the whole punitive measures and gives criminals the second chance to prove they could be better people.
There are various categories of people within prison walls but age, sex, religion and social class separate these people. However, there is within the prison walls the dependent population who are the aged. The aged is the category of people who are no longer biologically capable of carrying out demanding tasks. According to submission of wheeler et al. (1995), in any normal society, the aged people require five basic types of care: Medical care (which could be done by skilled nurses through rehabilitative therapy), personal or custodial care, companion or respite care, care related to living arrangements i.e. home care and of course, the life care.

Davies (2011), posits that the elderly population has received relatively very little attention in the criminal justice system across a number of levels. This is despite a rapidly increasing elderly prison population which is contributing to an already overcrowded prison system. This poses a number of challenges for the prison service, since older people in prison experience a host of unique problems which differ from those of younger prisoners.

It is very important to mention the categories of elderly prisoners at this juncture. Neely (1997) presented three categories of aged inmates: the first time offenders, career or habitual criminals (prison recidivists) and inmates who have grown old in the prison. However, Davies (2011) identified five main sub-groups of elderly prisoners: firstly the old offenders who have been imprisoned after committing an offence for the first time (aged 55 or older), secondly, old timers who are imprisoned before the age of 55 and have served over 20 years of their prison sentence, thirdly, career criminals (recidivists), who committed their first offence before 55 and have spent their lives in and out of prison. Fourthly, young short term first offenders that were incarcerated before 55 and have served less than 20 years in prison. Finally, the fifth group might be identified in the form of an “historic offender who has committed a crime in their youth but has only been convicted in old age (due to some new admission of evidence in the case). Hence, Davies (2011) argued that, it would therefore, be naïve to assume that elderly prisoners all share the same experience in prison but many of the problems that these different types of elderly prisoners encounter do overlap.

This research work was conducted to know the problems being faced by the aged or elderly prisoners in Nigeria. The age for our study was 50 years and above. The scope of the study only covered two prisons in Ogun State, Nigeria, because of the limitation imposed on the study by time, money and other resources.

Most studies conducted on imprisonment have been on the adjustment patterns of prisoners behind the walls (Atere, 1993), the legal systems among prison inmates in Nigeria (Adeola, 1997), the plights of women inmates (Dimkpa, 2011; Ojo, 2002) etc. However, researches addressing the problems of the aged or elderly prisoners within the Nigerian context are very scarce. Little has been written on
the treatment of the aged inmates as some of the writers only mentioned them in the passing. An adequate study on the treatment of the aged inmates therefore is a necessity.

Arising from the problem stated above, the objectives of this study are:

1. To evaluate the social relationship between the aged inmates in Ogun State Prisons and young inmates and the staff.
2. To access the treatment of the aged inmates in Ogun State prisons.

This study is important because it is geared at bringing into limelight the treatment of the aged in prisons and the general welfare programmes available for them. It will add to existing knowledge in the area of penology and will also serve as a tool in the hands of social policy makers as regard the treatment of the aged in prisons.

**Literature Review**

Prisons conditions, as argued by International Bar Association (2010), throughout the world, often ranged from poor to extremely harsh and life threatening. Abuse by prison guards, poor medical care, severe overcrowding, brutal treatment of prisoners, harsh or dangerous working conditions, official negligence, poor sanitary conditions and abuse and mistreatment by guards among others are the common problems facing prisons worldwide.

Most of these problems were attributed to inadequate human and institutional capacities within the prisons and lack of cooperation among stakeholders in the justice sector (Robins, 2009) and one of the main reasons for some of these problems is lack of resources – both financial and professional (Y Care International, 2007). Corruption within the prison system also plays important role. There was extensive administrative corruption in some of the prisons in many countries of the world (Meskell, 1999) and little regards for inmates’ concerns also play important role, especially that this has been recorded as a major cause of the prison riots (Henderson, et al., 2000). Lack of data and information that are adequate on prisons also plays a significant role. The lack of both information and data production is shockingly high in sphere of the judicial and prison systems. Production of these data is fundamental for the state to be able to develop new public policies and to evaluate their results implementation (Joint submission by Relevant Stakeholders, 2011).

This study will take time to review some of the problems challenging the effectiveness and result oriented prison systems in the world, so that we can have a clear picture of the problems that this study aims to address.
[1] **Overcrowding and Congestion**
Prison overcrowding and congestion, perhaps, is the greatest challenge confronting the fruitful management of prison system in all the countries of the world. Robins (2009) on his submissions over prison policy in Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Zambia posited that the prison services continue to face major challenge of lack of accommodation. At the root of this challenge faced by all three prisons is the issue of overcrowding. Prison congestion, according to him, puts pressure not only on accommodation facilities but also on the ability to ensure appropriate nutrition, sanitation, exercise and medical care. It puts greater demands on prison staff that are often too few, poorly trained and badly paid.

In Brazil, International Bar Association (2010) observed that severe overcrowding in prisons contributes to inmate unrest and the inability of guards to effectively prevent weapons and cell phones from being brought into prisons. In comparing the population of inmates in Scandinavian countries with England, New Zealand and Australia, Pratt and Eriksson (2011) observed that England, New Zealand and Australia have two or three times as many people in prisons per head of population than the Scandinavian countries. For instance, they cited that while the rate of imprisonment in New Zealand is 203 per 100,000 of population, that of Finland is 60. Hence, managing prison systems in Scandinavian countries was a bit easier than managing prison system in England, New Zealand and Australia.

In Nigeria, most prison yards are overcrowded beyond the designed population. This manifest in most of the prisons holding more population of inmates than they were originally planned to accommodate, which in turn overstretches available infrastructure beyond their limits of function due to human pressure (Obioha, 2011). Adeola and Atere (2003) argued in the same line, that Nigerian Prisons are congested and filled to the brim. Those persons awaiting trial largely cause the overcrowding. It is not uncommon for the persons awaiting trial to wait indefinitely for periods far exceeding the periods of imprisonment, if they actually convicted of offences for which they are being held. Overcrowding, therefore, permeates the entire life of the prison population. Hence, every prison in Nigeria is a slum where men (and women too) literally live on top of each other and the available statistics indicate that the Nigerian prisons have an overcrowding rate of between 10% and 58% [Okunola et al., 2002].

From all indications, it is glaring that overcrowding and congestion is a prominent factor which makes prison management very difficult, virtually in all the countries of the world.

[2] **Bedding and Sleeping Conditions**
Very similar to the problem of overcrowding and congestion, which poses a great challenge to the good management of prison system, is bedding and sleeping conditions in most of the prisons. Robins (2009) argued, of the Zambia prisons, that there was lack of sleep as a result of overcrowding
and this has emerged the biggest problem facing prisoners, with some prisoners sleeping while standing.

Beddings, in the form of mattresses and blankets are still in short supply in most prisons. In some prisons, natural light in the cells is often insufficient. A dim light is never turned off during the night. Cells tend to be very stuffy during the dry season and very cold during the rainy season or harmattan (Human Rights Watch, 1995).

In Nigeria, Obioha (2011) argued that the rooms and cells are not good for human habitation, while the beddings are, in most cases, absent as many prison inmates in Nigeria sleep on bare floor. Okunola et al. (2002) reported that in Nigerian prisons, prisoners sleep in batches and that there are three to five batches. When it is time to sleep, every other batch makes space for the first batch. They stand at one end of the cell, or sit. Some sleep while standing, but do not lie down. Only the first batch lies down. After four hours, they get up and the next batch lies down to sleep until the shift is completed. While convicts sleep on beds without mattresses; the awaiting trials only rest on old blankets on the bare floor where the congestion allows stretching of the body, otherwise he sleeps by learning against the wall. A more horrible situation was presented by Dimkpa, (2011), who argued that in Port Harcourt, 905 inmates who were yet to face trials for their alleged crimes slept in unimaginable conditions even to the extent of sleeping amongst their own faeces, with no medical attention when ill.


It has been argued that prison congestion has led to poor and inadequate nutrition of prisoners. Food is inadequate both in quality and quantity. Prisoners, in most prisons, are undernourished and in poor health, due to inadequate food and non-availability of drinkable water in many prisons (Robins, 2009). With the explosion in the prison population, feeding the prisoners adequately has become task impossible for the prison authorities. Menu in prison is predominantly carbohydrate blend with some protein contents. The menu chart is largely dominated by starch, and this can, not by any standard, be regarded as balanced diet. The food given to the average prisoner is qualitatively inadequate for an average human being and, at best could, only be described as starvation diet (Okunola et al., 2002). Survey revealed diet and nutrition to be one of the most prevalent issues of concern among inmates. Those on special diets do encounter problems receiving their special diets. Most foods being served were unpalatable and at worst not fit for human consumption (Williams et al., 2009).


Williams et al. (2009) discovered that the majority of women and men in prisons have at least one chronic health condition and that the issue of right to health for prisoners is grossly being violated. Prisoners suffer serious illness due to lack of exercises (Robins, 2009). Obioha (2011), argued that
the problem of congestion in the Nigerian prisons is discovered to be the major cause of some killer diseases such as air borne infections. The deplorable health conditions have led to infectious diseases, such as skin scabies and bilharzias. To worsen the situation, there are no standard hospitals, drugs and qualified medical personnel to take care of the sick inmates. Even when there is a need to take a sick inmate out of prison yard for treatment in a hospital, there are no motor vehicles to do that.

According to Okunola et al. (2002), the health conditions of inmates can be a function of the prison population. They observed that most prisoners, particularly awaiting trial persons, look emaciated, skeletal with bones almost visible from the skin, curved back and often decorated (adorned with rashes all over the body).

Adelola and Atere (2003) argued that until 1971, the Nigerian prisons did not establish its own clinics and other medical facilities manned by its own staff. Up till then, it depended on the services rendered by helper – nurses from the General Hospitals. To make the matter worse, the prison clinics were opened not only to prisoners but also to staff and staff’s family dependants.

Elderly inmates face more critical problem when it comes to health provision in prisons. Davies (2011) cited a range of physiological challenges that are experienced by elderly populations in prisons, ranging from respiratory conditions through to cardiovascular and musco-skeletal issues. Davies (2011) argued further that the severe health problems experienced by many such prisoners meant that they had become dependent upon both formal and informal health care provided in prison. Furthermore, upon release, the elderly prisoner might not be so readily welcomed by the family as he brings with him not only his criminal past, but also problems with physical and mental health.

Good recreational facilities are not available in most prisons. Obioha (2011) observed that there are no good recreational facilities and other amenities in most prisons in Nigeria. The Nigerian prison environments, with regard to amenities have been characterized as ‘uncheerful’, ‘dehumanizing and’ ‘a hell’ – This lack of social amenities and recreational facilities accounts for the culture of fragility and explosive social violence that is recurrent and descriptive of Nigerian prison community over the years.

Next to problem of lack of recreational facilities are poor environmental conditions of the prisons. Okunola et al. (2002) argued that the facilities for personal hygiene are in a terrible a state as those of environmental hygiene. Adelola and Atere (2003) elaborated on the environmental hygienic conditions of most of the Nigerian prisons. They observed that the walls of the cells are coloured with faeces, scurry water and littered with holes and with cobwebs and fat spiders to complement it. Bed bugs and lice are steady companions of the prisoners and mosquitoes are not left out – they all feed fat on their
non-resisting victims who often do not have more than tattered blankets as shields against attack. Dimkpa (2011) when studying women inmates in Rivers State, Nigeria, observed that the prisoners were kept in unhealthy environment. This unhealthy environment and poor sanitation of the prisons were majorly caused by prison congestion and inadequate resources (Robbins, 2009).

Violence and Brutality of the Prison Staff and Other Inmates.
The most widespread problems in prisons have to do with the extreme rigidity of the system and with absence of the concept that prisoners have any rights at all (Human Rights Watch, 1995). Almost all the prisons have the history of chronic abuse of prisoners (Meskell, 1999). Wacquant (2012) observed that deterrence goal of prisons has turned out to be a glaring failure, hence they finally turned to retribution of “make a prisoner smell like a prisoner” that is the new slogan of correctional administrations. They humiliate, lock up to inflict pain and punish for punishment sake. Robins (2009) testified that beating and ill treatment by the prisons staff is a common occurrence in most of the prisons.

Apart from the violence and abuse from the prisons staff, there is the abuse from the older inmates too. Robins (2009) added that abuse of the young by the older inmates is also a common phenomenon in most of the prison. Viano (2008) also argued in the same direction, observing that weaker inmates and those who have committed especially heinous crimes were often victimized by other inmates who were hardened criminals and that as a result of this, policies and guidelines for handling aggressive inmates should be specific and strictly followed by all staff.

International Bar Association (2010) also noted the same problem; the association said inmate-on-inmate violence is a serious problem. In the most dangerous prisons, powerful inmates kill others with impunity, while even in relatively secure prisons, extortion and other lesser forms of mistreatment are common.

Restriction on Social Contact and Interaction.
It has been observed that prisons are in the habit of restricting contacts between prisoners and the outside world, including legal representation in some cases. Some prisoners were placed in solitary conferment to fulfill this (Human Rights Watch, 1995). No man is an Island. Every man or woman needs the company of others in the society. Such law of friendship and companionship can not be erased, even by the prisons. Human beings naturally seek the company of others in trouble situations – such as imprisonment (Davies, 2011). However, Davies (2011) argued that the opportunities to make intimate friendships are limited within the prison setting, arguably even more so for the elderly. There is limited potential for elderly prisoners to be friend other inmates. Prisoners have extremely limited contact, not only with the outside world, but with each other as well. In practice, prisoners are allowed to talk with their fellow inmates only on rare and specified occasions. Furthermore, those
living in single cells seldom have any contact with anybody other than their guards (Human Rights Watch, 1995). Communication between prisoners and the outside world is strictly controlled. Virtually, all visits were through a glass partition with a guard in attendance (Human Rights Watch, 1995). In either case no physical or intimate contact between prisoners and their visitors is allowed. All visits are carefully monitored.

All mail correspondence is read and often censored, sometimes in part through blacking out portions of letters or sometimes through refusal to deliver a letter. The letters must be written in a language understood by the censors (Human Rights Watch, 1995).

Controlling and monitoring the interactions and contacts between prisoners and the outside world, and among the prisoners living in the prisons is a gross violation of the rights of the prisoners and this makes the prisons a "hell" for the inmates. The family members who visited inmates were usually subjected to humiliating searches.

This practice extends the suspicion of criminal guilt to family members of prisoners and institutionalizes a prejudiced behaviour, according to which any prisoner relative or friend must also be considered suspicious (Joint Submission by Relevant Stakeholders, 2011).


Davies (2011) was of the opinion that prison experience is a psychologically damaging event which mirrors the ordeal of a survivor of a disaster, particularly for the life – sentenced prisoner. Prison gives a process of retrospective evaluating of the failures and achievements that have accumulated over the course of one’s life. A negative inspection can lead to fear, apprehension and depression which create serious psychological problems.

Sondenaa et al. (2010) observed that prisoners with intellectual disability may be exposed to bullying and intimidation from other prisoners. They may also be tricked out of their money by other prisoners when striving to be accepted within the prison culture and resorting to exploitative behaviour in order to fit in. prisoners with intellectual disability have no prisoner rehabilitation programmes that can help them to adjust and to receive support from the authorities. Lack of participation in such helpful programmes reduces the chances of their improvement.

Hanser (2002) observed that suicide among the inmates prison population occurs at a rate much higher than that of the civilian population. According to Hanser (2002), studies show that suicide is a leading cause of death among inmates throughout the United States. Relatives of inmates who successfully commit suicide frequently bring suit against custodian staff, administrators, doctors or government officials.
According to Viano (2008), hanging used to be the most common suicide method used in jails and prisons. Prisons have invested money and time to reduce the number of suicides. Staff members have been trained and procedures have changed in curtailing the incidences of suicides in prison. Institutions must be able to demonstrate that they followed adequate policies and procedures wisely to defend themselves against liability (Hanser, 2002).

[8] **Insensitivity to Prisoners Needs and Staff Misconduct.**

Insensitivity to the needs of the prisoners by the prisons staff is another well known problem confronting the management of the prison system. Little regards for inmate concerns has been cited as a cause for riots in prison, and of course, paying more attention to inmates concerns from the start could have prevented such riot (Henderson, 2000).

Robins (2009) argued that in most prisons in Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Zambia the needs of female prisoners are neglected. Davies (2011) protested that prison staff appeared to be inadequately equipped to deal with the specific requirements of the elderly and demonstrated unwillingness to assist them. Finally, Trulson et al. (2011) protested that assaultive institutional misconduct may be a potentially important barometer of post release outcomes. Studies have shown that some institutional misconduct by prisons staff could have relative relationship to recidivism. Therefore, the indicators of institutional misconduct should receive continued attention from the stakeholders.

All the problems explained in this review affect all the categories of the prisoners be it in age, sex, colour, literacy level, socio-economic background etc. However, this research work will apply these problems on the aged or elderly prisoners to unravel whatever problems they are encountering in the course of serving their terms of imprisonment.

**Methodology**

This was a survey research which involves the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to question (Schutt, 2004). The study areas were Abeokuta and Ijebu-Ode in Ogun State, Nigeria.

For our study population, we considered the elderly inmates from 50 years and above who have been convicted for crime and those awaiting trials. By the time this study was being conducted, Ijebu-Ode prison population was one thousand, eight hundred and thirty – three (1833) inmates, while that of Abeokuta (the state capital) was five hundred and thirty-two (532) inmates.
Convenience sampling technique was used in the selection of the two prisons. They are the ones that were readily accessible to us and therefore convenient for us (Adler and Clark, 1999). In the selection of the elderly inmates, purposive or judgmental sampling was used because they were selected with specific purpose of gathering information and data only from the aged inmates. They are unique cases that were especially informative based on the topic of our research (Neuman, 2003). For the sampling size, one hundred elderly inmates were targeted but we eventually ended up sampling ninety three (93) elderly inmates. All of them were men; we did not find any elderly women inmates in both prisons at the time of our study.

Questionnaire was the data collection instrument used. The questionnaires were distributed to obtain information about behaviour, feelings and attitudes of the elderly inmates in the two prisons selected. Those that were illiterates were asked to respond to the questions verbally. Having translated the questions to them in indigenous Yoruba language, their responses were later translated and transcribed. However, those that were literate enough to read and write were allowed to fill the questionnaires themselves. All the data used were primary data.

We painstakingly followed the ethics of research in this study. We sought the approval of the prison authorities before the research was conducted. The consents of the elderly inmates were sought before we commence the survey. The questionnaires did not carry anything that will reveal the identities of these elderly inmates. All the data collected were interpreted in aggregate and did not make reference(s) to any particular inmates. Hence, anonymity was strictly followed. The information was truly used for the purpose of this study only and we kept the confidentiality of the information supplied.

Data analysis was done using simple percentage. We converted the cell frequencies into percentages and both univariate and bivariate variables were subjected to percentage analyses (Scutt, 2004). For the interpretation, we interpreted the data within the Nigerian socio-cultural setting societal belief system of prison and prison life.

**Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion**

This section deals with the presentations and analyses of all facts and information that were gathered from the field. The analyses involve the quantitative data derived primarily from the questionnaires distributed.

Our data shows that all our respondents were men. We did not find any women who fell within our age range. All the women were young, therefore were excluded. Hence, all the 93 respondents (100%) were elderly men.
For the age distribution, 61 respondents (65.59%) were between 50-55 years and of course they were the highest. 13 respondents (13.98%) fell within the age range of 56-60 years. 61 – 65 years recorded 16 respondents (17.20% and finally, only 3 respondents (3.23%) were 66 years and above. Age distribution between 50-60 years recorded the highest, followed by 61-65 years, 56-60 years and 60 years above respectively.

Religion was another variable that was considered in our research work. After the analysis, we discovered that 51 respondents were Christians (54.8%), 33 respondents were Muslims (35.5%), 8 respondents (8.6%) were adherents of traditional religion and 1 respondent (1.1%) was a believer of other religion not specified.

Ethnic group as a variable was incorporated into our research instrument. Majority of our respondents were Yoruba, 52 of them (55.9%) came from this ethnic group. They were the highest. The reason for this was that the two prisons investigated are located in the south western part of Nigeria which is predominantly occupied by Yoruba natives. 23 respondents (24.7%) were Igbo natives and 9 respondents (9.7%) were Hausa natives and 9 (9.7%) were natives of other ethnic groups in Nigeria.

We considered the marital statuses (as a variable) of our respondents. Our data revealed that 11 of our respondents (11.8%) were single. 68 respondents (73.1%) were married, 9 of them (9.7%) were separated from their spouses, 4 of them (4.3%) were divorced and finally, 1 respondent (1.07%) was a widower.

Finally, we considered the educational qualifications of our respondent. A breakdown shows that 18 respondents (19.35%) did not attend any school whatsoever. 49 respondents (52.70%) were primary school leavers, 16 respondents (17.20%) were secondary school leavers, 8 respondents (8.60%) had post secondary school certificate. Finally, 2 respondents (2.15%) had other educational qualifications i.e. Arabic Certificates.

Running a quick analysis, we discovered that majority of our respondents were not adequately educated. A total of 72.05% of them were below secondary school qualification, while the remaining 2 respondents (2.15%) cannot be said to have acquired western education. This accounted for the reason why most of our questionnaires were translated and transcribed during the field work.

We considered the offences committed by the elderly inmates category by category, their frequencies and percentages. The analyses show that offences related to homicide were 20 offences (27.96%) of the entire offences. This category includes capital murder 7 (7.53%), attempted murder 11 (11.83%), conspiracy to commit murder 2 (2.15%) and man slaughter 6 (6.45%). For the property/person related offences; we had 26 offences (27.96%) of the total offences committed. Under this category, we had
20 cases of robbery (both armed robbery and ordinary robbery). This accounted for (21.51%) of the entire offences and attempted robbery were 6 cases (6.45%) of the whole offences.

Financial related crime also featured in our collated data. We had 20 cases of financial related offences. This accounted for 21.51% of the total percentage of all the offences. Duping (419) cases were 5 (5.38%), cheques forgery were 6 cases (6.45%), embezzlement recorded 5 cases (5.38%) and finally forceful monetary extortion were 4 cases (4.30%). Sexually related crimes reflected in our data. We had 10 cases of this, which was (10.74%) of the total percentage of all the offences. Under this, sexual assault had 7 cases (7.52%) and attempted sexual assault 3 cases (3.22%) offences. There were 11 cases of these (11.83%) of the entire offences.

Physical assault featured also. There were 5 cases (5.38%) of this offence. This was followed by aggravated assault or assault with weapons, 4 cases (4.3%) and finally kidnapping, 2 cases (2.15%).

The overall indication shows that homicide related offences and crime against property/persons were the leading categories of crime or offence. Both had 27.96% each. Homicide and crime against property/persons were not uncommon in the Nigerian society. There were cases of murder, manslaughter, and robbery, financial related crime followed them (21.51%). Duping (419) is a popular crime in Nigeria, financial crime i.e. cheque forgery, forceful monetary extortion and embezzlement are very prominent offences too. Financial related crimes were very common in Nigeria, to the extent that the government had to set up under the law, commissions to tackle the crimes related to finance and economy. There are Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practice Commission (ICPC).

Other offences followed financial related offences, 11 cases (11.83%) were recorded. These other offences included physical assaults (with weapons) and kidnapping. These were offences which come under violence. Of course, assaults were common in Nigeria and of recent, cases of kidnapping which falls under the category of violent crime. Lastly, sexual related offences recorded the least cases. We had 10 cases (10.74%). Rape, attempted rape and other forms of sexual abuse, especially child sexual abuses, are not new in Nigeria. There have been cases of child sexual abuses both in the urban and rural areas of Nigeria. There were cases of child rape, child marriage, sexual indecencies with children etc. within the Nigeria communities. Most of the offenders were the people that were far older than the victims.

We tried to find out the years in imprisonment for the offences committed and the likely ones for those standing the trials for the offences suspected of them. The findings show that 48 inmates (51.61%) were sentenced or likely to be sentenced to 0-5 years. 30 inmates (32.26%) had taken or would likely take between 6 years – 10 years. 9 inmates (9.68%) received or would likely receive imprisonment
within the range of 11 -15 years and finally, 6 inmates (6.45%) were sentenced or likely to be sentenced for 16 years and above. The imprisonment years were determined by the years written in the criminal code for the offences committed.

One of the objectives of this study was to determine the social contact and interaction between the aged inmates and the young inmates and between the aged inmates and the prison staff. From our data 72 elderly inmates interacted smoothly with the young inmates in the prison. This accounted for 77.42%. 16 elderly inmates (17.20%) did not interact with the young inmates, while 5 of the elderly inmates (5.38%) cannot determine whether they had cordial relationship or interaction with young inmates or not.

Moreover, 70 elderly inmates (75.27%) interacted regularly with the prison staff. 13 of them (13.98%) interacted occasionally, while 10 of them (10.75%) did not interact at all with the prison staff.

The results show that majority of the elderly inmates had a good social interaction or relationship with the young inmates (77.42%) and with the prison staff (75.27%). Although Davies (2011) argued that the opportunities to make inmates friendships are limited within the prison setting, even more so for the elderly, and difficulties in forming friendships might be due to the age gap that exist between the elderly prisoners and the young ones. This, according Davies (2011), is due to lack of respect for the elderly population.

However, the above assertion is applicable to the western world. In all African societies, age is respected. The aged are the custodians of wisdom, knowledge and understanding. Therefore, ‘the grey hairs’ (which is the symbol of old age) were revered among this people. The cordial interactions, the elderly enjoyed from the younger inmates and the prison staff was due to their old age. The results of our findings show that even, terrible prison conditions did not strip off the elderly inmates the respect and cordial relationships with the younger prison occupants. Therefore, age was the factor which bestowed such cordial interactions and relationships on the elderly inmates.

Our second objective was to determine the treatments being given to the aged or elderly inmates in the two selected prisons. The first treatment we considered was in area of beddings/sleeping and clothing. 79 of them (84.9%) said that their bedding and clothing were not changed regularly or when due. Just 14 of them (15.1%) said otherwise. Beddings and clothing were one of the major challenges facing prison system in Nigeria. Okunola et al. (2012) argued that prisoners in Nigeria sleep on beds without mattresses and that is obvious that there can be no suitable bedding where there are no beds, mattresses and blankets. The same thing is applicable to clothing. Okunola et al. (2002) observed that only 10% of inmates of any prison in Nigeria is fixed adequately in clean and strong clothes. Close to 80% is either always half-naked or clothed in worn and torn clothes. While they are generally
better clad than their male counterparts, female prisoners also have to make their own dresses at their own expenses.

Good beddings and clothing are prerequisites for the elderly. This will keep them warm and protect them against harsh weather. Exposing elderly inmates to bad weather (especially, during the harmattan), as a result of poor beddings and clothing, can cause a severe impairment to their health.

The next factor considered was adequate and nutritious food. 89 elderly inmates (95.7%) complained that the food being served to them was not adequate and nutritious, while only 4 elderly inmates (4.3%) affirmed the adequacy and nutritious of the foods being served. The majority who signified that the food was not adequate and nutritious clearly shows that truly the food being served to them were not adequate and nutritious. Okunola et al. (2002) affirmed that food being served to Nigerian Prisoners were not adequate and nutritious. For instance, the meal chart was heavily dominated by carbohydrates and insufficient protein.

Inmates normally eat meat or fish once a day and this is often limited to 3 days in a week. It had been reported that there were sharp practices of food contractors and the quantity and quality of food available is rendered even more inadequate by the warders who generously help themselves to prisoners’ food supplies.

Health care was another factor we considered in one of the treatments being received by the elderly inmates. 75.3% (70 inmates) were not satisfied with the health care delivery of the prison. Only 23 inmates (24.7%) concurred to the good health care delivery. However, previous studies have shown that health care delivery of the prisons in Nigeria was not good at all. Okunola et al. (2002) found that in prisons, most treatments were limited to administration of drugs such as panadol and that there are occasions when the prisoners have to procure the drugs through outside sources. Adelola and Atere (2003) observed that Nigerian prisons’ clinics did not exist until 1971 and that those clinics were overburden by the staff and staff dependants. In addition to this medical infrastructure remained a figment of imagination. The prisons were clearly poorly equipped, medically. There was, of course, shortage of medical personnel in these prisons. A significant number of elderly inmates encounter a myriad of health related issues in the prison setting (Davies, 2011). Hence, it raises questions about the ability of the prison service to cope with the abundance of health related issues amongst the elderly population. However, it has been discovered that Nigeria prisons were unable to meet the general challenges not to talk of special health challenges of the elderly inmates who were more demanding in all forms.

Running through our data, we discovered that 25 inmates (26.9%) had Typhoid fever, 18 inmates (19.4%) had Tuberculosis, 7 inmates (7.5%) had Arthritis, 30 inmates (32.3%) had hypertension and
heart related diseases, 3 inmates (3.2%) had epilepsy and 9 inmates (9.7%) had one health challenge or the other. 1 inmate (1.1%), however did not record any health challenge.

Our respondents’ psychological statuses were also questioned. 80 inmates (86.0%) complained of depression, while 13 inmates (14.0%) did not feel depressed. Depression is a critical psychological problem. Imprisonment is a traumatic event which can cause serious depression. However, from all indications, there were no concrete and reliable means of helping elderly inmates that have psychological problems. It is only some non-governmental organizations which occasionally offer counseling and religious activities to the inmates through which their hopes of the future can be raised (Dimkpa, 2011).

No officially established counseling units in all the Nigerian prisons to assist the depressed inmates.

Recreational life of the elderly inmates was also looked into. 80 inmates (86.0%) agreed that there are some recreational facilities in the prisons (though to them, were not enough and thrilling). 13 inmates (14.0%) however, said no recreational facilities.

However, an observation made showed that there were some facilities which were neither in good shapes nor adequate for the use of the inmates. We asked our elderly inmates to signify whether they make use of these recreational facilities or not. Our analyses show that 84 elderly inmates did not make use of the facilities. This accounted for 90.3% of the entire population. Only 9 inmates actively made use of the facilities, this accounted for 9.7%. From the experience, 90.3% who did not make use of the facilities might be as a result of their psychological depression or the obsolete nature of the facilities. This, of course, may have impact on their health i.e. recreation and exercise can improve their health statuses if they are made available, and functional

**Summary of the Findings**

Our findings in this study complement the previous findings on treatment of the prison inmates in Nigeria. We discovered that the problems being faced by the inmates still remain unsolved and is even getting worse. Our findings reveal that all the categories of inmates are facing the same problems, including the elderly inmates that were our primary focus in this research work. Whereas, the experience shows that older people in prison have unique problems which differ from those of younger inmates (Davies, 2011), yet those problems are not being addressed specially by the government of the country. The studies had shown that prison staff may not take special interest in working and assisting the older prisoners, because of the nature of their crimes and because working with them represents a challenge to their working status (Davies 2011).
The sum of these problems is that elderly inmates cost the prison service significantly more to manage and support than the rest of the prison population. Hence, the elderly population in the prisons are neglected, receiving little or no care. Whereas, this population of the elderly inmates needs special care and attention more than the other categories of the inmates i.e. females, our study revealed that beddings, sleeping conditions and clothing of the aged inmates were not adequate. Beddings and clothing were not regularly changed when needed. This, of course, will tell on their sleeping conditions. When the beddings are not adequate, sleeping soundly cannot be expected. From experience, this will affect the health statutes of these elderly inmates. 84.9% complained of poor beddings and clothing which clearly shows that it is a major problem.

The study also discovered that the aged inmates are being poorly fed by the prison authorities. There was no adequate and nutritious food for the elderly inmates. 95.7% told tales of inadequate and poor diet. Medically, the older population needs some special foods and nutrition to keep up with their age. It was glaring that these special food and diets were not available to these elderly inmates. When food is not adequate we cannot talk of good nutrition or special diets for any category of the prison population. Moreover, those placed on special diets as a result of their health statuses cannot have their needs satisfied.

Poor Health care delivery is another discovery we made in this study. Majority of these older inmates (75.3%) protested the poor health care delivery in the prison, and only 1 inmate (1.1%) was free from any health challenge. Elderly people need adequate and constant medical attention. With every passing year, the organs of the body become weaker, and more medical attentions are needed.

We equally made a discovery that the psychological needs of the elderly inmates were not met at all. 80 inmates out of total number of 93 inmates confessed that they were depressed. Depression is a psychological problem which needs prompt actions and assistances of specialists. We discovered that there were no counseling units in these prisons that can assist these aged inmates in getting over their problem of depression. Davies (2011) argued that the imprisonment statuses of the elderly inmates give them a pessimistic outlook which leads to traumatic events. Prison itself gives a psychological damage. Finally, we made a discovery on recreational facilities. Majority of our elderly inmates did not make use of the recreational facilities because of their conditions. Whereas, making use of recreational activities judiciously can alleviate the problem of depression. Playing games and being involved in sporting activities can be an antidote to depression. Hence, lack of good and attractive recreational facilities might be what compounded the problem of depression among these elderly inmates.
Conclusion
We conclude this study on the argument that government and non-governmental organization still have a lot to offer in solving the problems confronting the Nigerian prison. Although, the government and non-governmental organizations are trying their best, however, the best being offered is not yet visible to wipe away the torrent of problems challenging the good management of the prisons in Nigeria. We observed that elderly inmates were neglected in our prisons more than any category of the prison population. Although, the aged inmates might not be many like the female category, in all honesty, they deserve more care and attention from the authority than any other group in the population. The care and attention are what we solicit for in this study.

Recommendation
Despite the efforts of the government and the civil society towards a better prison life, much still needs to be done to satisfy the needs of the inmate population. (Linonge, 2010). It is our personal opinion too; that much still need to be done in solving the inmates’ problems, especially, the elderly inmates who were the focus of this study. Therefore we make recommendations as follows to improve the management of the aged inmates in all Nigerian prisons.

In the first place, we recommend that the elderly inmates be separated from the general population of the prison. We solicit that they should have separate prison cells. Over crowing and congestion of the prison can lead to spreading of diseases in the prisons. The medical findings that ‘with age, immune system becomes weaker and the aged are more susceptible to diseases’ is enough to justify that separating the elderly inmates from the overcrowded and congested prisons will improve their health.

Secondly, we plead with the prison authorities to provide adequate and appropriate beddings and clothing for the aged inmates. With age, the level of the body system to adapt to temperature is altered. Therefore, adequate clothing and bedding will keep the elderly inmates warm, especially during the harsh weathers. Good beddings (mattresses, blankets, bedcovers etc.) and good clothing which are changed regularly will both improve the elderly inmates sleeping conditions and protect them from harsh weather.

Like other societies in the world, African societies considered food to be indispensable to healthy living. Among the Nigerians, food and good diet is the root of life. We advocate that feeding and diets of the elderly inmates be looked into. Adequate food (balanced diets and special diets for those placed on it) must be identified and catered for. We call the federal government to set up committees that will oversee the welfare of the inmates in all Nigerian prisons to ensure the compliance to the demands of the international standards in this regard.
For the health care delivery, standard clinics must be established in all the Nigerian prisons. Furthermore, general hospitals must be equally established at the zonal headquarters of the Nigeria Prison Service. Drugs, medical facilities and medical equipment must be supplied regularly. Medical doctors, nurses and other medical personnel must be employed to work in these health clinics and hospitals. Such personnel must be placed under good working conditions. We advise that a gerontologist must be employed in at least each of the health clinics.

Moreover, the existing health facilities are required to be renovated and updated to the required standards internationally. Psychological needs of the elderly inmates must be met. Depression is one of the psychological problems confronting the elderly inmates. Therefore, we recommend the establishment of counseling unit in each of the Nigerian prisons. Adequate and competent counselors must be employed to counsel and help the depressed elderly inmates. The counselors so employed must be adequately remunerated. In conjunction with this, we advise the government to employ psychiatrists to work hand in hand with them.

Making the elderly inmates happy and lively can alleviate their problems and challenges. Recreational facilities serve as one of the ways to actualize this. Adequate and standard recreational facilities must be provided; the old ones must be renovated. Adequate leisure time must be allowed for the elderly inmates. We advise that local games be included among the recreational facilities for those who can not make use of the modern ones. Sporting activities must be encouraged and competitions should be organized to lift the depressed spirits of the inmates.

Although, the elderly inmates testified to good relationships and social interactions with the younger inmates and the prison staff, yet we advocate that such should be encouraged and supported. Younger inmates must be encouraged to interact and assist the elderly inmates. Younger inmates need to be friends of the elderly ones without considering the age gap. Younger inmates when doing this will give succor to the elderly inmates, and the same time the younger inmates will learn one or two life experiences from the elderly inmates.

Prison staff must be taught specially, how to attend to the needs of the elderly inmates. Seminars and workshops must be organized on this. The experts from Nigeria and abroad must be periodically invited to give talks that will prepare and equip the prison staff to meet the challenges of treatment of the elderly inmates. Moreover, they must be encouraged to be willing to do it.

One of the greatest problems surrounding the release of elderly prisoners is connected with the huge uncertainty that governs resettlement (Davies 2011). Hence, we recommend that a post release monitoring committee be setup to oversee and monitor the post release life of the elderly inmates. Elderly inmates are usually apprehensive about how they would cope without any support for their
health considerations after leaving prison. Therefore, support must be given to them in area of health and feeding after release.

Housing is another central concern for older prisoners which might be restricted by the terms of the sentence and the nature of the crime committed (Davies, 2011). For those who have uncertainties of post release housing, the government must be ready to assist by providing accommodation that will relief these uncertainties at least for some time.

Davies (2011) was of the opinion that elderly prisoners might not be so readily welcomed back by their families. We recommend therefore, in the spirit of love and necessity that prison service must organize a reconciliation meeting between the released elderly inmates and their families and their communities. This comes under the paradigm of restorative justice. The fundamental premise of the restorative justice paradigm is that crime is a violation of people and relationships rather than merely a violation of law. Under this justice system, those affected by crime (the victim, the offender and the community) must be given opportunity to come together to discuss the event and attempt to arrive at some type of understanding about what can be done to provide appropriate reparation (Latimer et al., 2005). We recommend restorative justice that will assist the elderly inmates in accepting them back both by the families and the communities they have wronged.

Finally, we plead with the federal government to re-visit the Nigeria Criminal Justice System (The Police, Courts and Prisons). The three arms of criminal justice system are interrelated and the operations of the one will affect the others in the system. We advocate for the continuous restructuring and repositioning of the police, courts and especially the prison which is the ‘dust bin’ of the criminal justice system, to meet the required international standards. The full implementation of the mentioned recommendations in this paper would definitely earn Nigeria a ‘pat on the back’ from the international community.

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Biliteracy Development: Problems and Prospects - an Ethnographic Case Study in South Africa

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Abstract: This paper investigated the conditions necessary for the development of literacy in two languages, that is, biliteracy in Sepedi and English, among Foundation phase learners in a rural primary school in South Africa. It is based on a qualitative study, in the form of an ethnographic case study in which one-on-one interviews with the teachers, lessons observation and classroom print environment observation were used for data collection. One of the key findings is that routinized teacher-centred and a print-impoverished environment do not bode well for biliteracy development. Different strategies and methods with respect to teaching and learning should be pursued for effective teaching and learning. Homework was found to be crucial as a tool to reinforce learning. Homework can only be successfully implemented, if the Conditions at home are conducive. The major contribution of this paper is the 3C’s framework which posits that Conditions at home, Community/Culture and Curriculum are important ingredients for effective teaching and learning. The absence of any one of them is a precursor for failure. The paper advocates a learner-centred approach to teaching and learning.

Keywords: literacy, biliteracy, community, culture, curriculum, South Africa

Introduction

The aim of this paper was to investigate the development of literacy among Foundation phase learners in a rural primary school in the Limpopo Province of South Africa and more specifically, to find out if literacy in two languages, i.e. biliteracy in Sesotho sa Leboa (Sepedi) and English, is being developed. Literacy and numeracy are regarded as the key competencies to be acquired by primary school learners. Educational achievement and progress are crucially dependent on these competencies. Yet many scholars (Hayward 1998; Taylor & Vinjevold 1999c; Pretorius & Ntuli 2005; Fleisch 2007) have asserted that primary school children in South Africa are not acquiring these competencies. An important assessment that was carried out on the literacy achievements of learners world-wide is the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS 2006). PIRLS’s summary report of South African children’s reading literacy achievement shows that the reading achievement of South African Grade 4 and 5 learners is the lowest when compared to 44 other countries. The PIRLS focused on three aspects of learners’ reading literacy, which were: processes of comprehension that involve being able to focus on and retrieve explicitly stated information, make straightforward inferences, examine and evaluate language and textual elements. The purposes for reading that

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include the examination of literary experience and the ability to acquire and use information as well as reading behaviours and attitudes towards reading were also tested.

Van Staden & Howie (2007) state that more than 30,000 Grade 4 and 5 learners were assessed using instruments translated into 11 official languages to cater for South African language populations. The South African Grade 4 and 5 learners achieved the lowest mean performance scores well below the fixed international mean of 500 points. The results of PIRLS 2006 show that learners are struggling to develop the reading and literacy competencies needed to make the transition to reading to learn in the Intermediate Phase in South African schools.

The PIRLS 2006 international report indicates that on average, internationally; teachers allocate 30% of instructional time to language instruction and 20% to reading instruction (Mullis, Martin, Kennedy & Foy 2007). On average, internationally, Grade 4 learners are taught explicit reading instruction for more than 6 hours a week. Teachers’ reports in the South African study reveal that only 10% of Grade 4 learners receive reading instruction for more than 6 hours per week, 18% for between 3 and 6 hours and 72% for less than 3 hours per week (Mullis et al. 2007). From these data, it becomes clear that South African reports fall far below the international averages in terms of time spent on reading instruction.

This is not in tune with the South African Revised National Curriculum Statement, which states that the most important task of the Foundation Phase teacher is to ensure that all learners learn to read. Forty per cent of teaching time in the Foundation Phase therefore, is allocated to literacy (DoE 2002: 23). Van Staden & Howie (2007) state that the teachers’ data presented in PIRLS (2006) indicate the need for Intermediate Phase teachers’ continuous professional development, as Grade 4 learners’ low overall achievement scores, in relation to teacher qualifications, perhaps suggests that these teachers have not been adequately prepared to teach literacy. Of concern is the high incidence of low achievement among learners who are taught by teachers aged between 30 and 59 years.

**Literature Review**

According to Trok (2005:59),

Bantu Education of apartheid South Africa has left countless black families with few reading and writing skills, particularly in rural and poor households. For them not much has changed. The school curriculum of yesteryear is still used in some schools in rural areas. Teachers who are products of Bantu Education pass their teaching on to this generation and so continue the cycle.

During the apartheid era, blacks were denied access to quality education. Teachers who are products of Bantu education are still using the methods that were used to teach them. Obviously it would be difficult for them to adapt to new curricula and unfamiliar methods of teaching and assessment. Trok
(2005:59) argues also that black children are still not introduced to libraries early enough to stimulate them to read for fun and there is little of sharing of books within the family. Pretorius & Ntuli (2005) state that pre-school children whose parents read storybooks to them have a linguistic and literacy head start over other children when they start school. It is well-known that success at school depends heavily on language and literacy skills. However a culture of family reading is not part of the experience of the majority of black learners.

Access to education is not enough. Children also required adequate textbooks, competent and prepared teachers, a curriculum that built a strong foundation, better teaching facilities and laboratories, and a safe environment. (The Children's Institute 2009:01).

Biliteracy
Reyes (2001:98) defines biliteracy as “mastery of two languages”, but she extends the concept to mean mastery of the fundamentals of speaking, reading, and writing (knowing sound/ symbol connections, conventions of print, accessing and conveying meaning through oral or print mode, etc.) in two linguistic systems. Biliteracy refers to written language development in two or more languages to some degree, either simultaneously or successively (Garcia 2000; Shin 2005). Taking a broader view, Romaine (1995) observes that biliteracy development reflects both the cognitive procedures of individuals and that of the involved family, community, and society, using two written language systems.

Links between home and school literacy
Children's early phonological awareness and familiarity with books is linked to their later reading and writing skills (Nicholson 1999; Hamer & Adams 2003). McLachlan (2006) and Tayler (2006) show that if these literacy and other practices are poorly developed or these skills are missing prior to schooling, then this is an indicator of later reading difficulties. Many scholars have asserted that emergent literacy or early literacy is very much a social practice that develops in different social contexts rather than through formal instruction. They believe that when there is a bridge between home and school literacy practices, then children can more readily (McLachlan 2006; Tayler 2006) make the transition to schooled literacy.

Proposing a model of continuity between two languages, Hornberger (2004:155) says that the “continua model of biliteracy offers a framework of interrelationships between bilingualism and literacy and the importance of the contexts in which to situate research, teaching, and language planning in linguistically diverse settings.” The continua model of biliteracy uses the notion of intersecting and nested continua to demonstrate the multiple and complex media and content through which biliteracy develops. Biliteracy, in this model, refers to “any and all instances in which communication occurs in two (or more) languages in or around writing” (Hornberger 1990:213).
The reason for quoting so extensively from Hornberger is that she offers the most highly developed model to both analyse and train teachers to promote biliteracy. Researchers indicate that being bilingual and participating in quality bilingual education programmes that include effective reading and writing instruction have positive effects on children's academic, functional, social, and linguistic development (Baker 2006; Cheatham, Santos & Ro 2007). Especially notable is the transfer of literacy skills from one language to another (Garcia 2000). Researchers emphasize the importance of social environments for bilingual children's oral language and literacy skills development (Bauer 2000; Jimenez, Garcia & Pearson 1995; Tabor & Snow 2001). Parents can purposely construct an environment to foster biliteracy and bilingualism for their children. Parent-child interactions are critical to spoken language and literacy learning. For example, parent-child conversations during meals may help develop children's language skills (Purcell-Gates 1996; Ro 2008) and can facilitate the development of literacy skills.

Learners come to school with rich oral language experiences such as rhyming, language play, informal phonemic awareness activities, and songs yet none of these activities are ever tapped and made part of the school's curriculum. Hornberger (1990) points out in her biliteracy model that there is a continuity of experiences, skills, practices, and knowledge stretching from one end of any particular continuum to the other but teachers seem to be unaware of this and do not use oral practices to develop literacy. Bloch (2002) and her colleagues have shown how multilingualism can be maintained and promoted through the rich oral tradition that learners bring from their communities. They demonstrate that the songs and language games that are such a natural part of a child's world can be transcribed into written texts and used creatively for literacy development.

Interactive storybook reading appears to be helpful, especially for bilingual learners who are exposed to two languages (Snow, Burns & Griffin 1998; Tompkins 2006). Goodman (1980) asserted more than thirty years ago that the roots of children's literacy development stem from their experience as well as the attitudes, beliefs and views they encounter as they interact within their family environment and community. She maintains that children begin from an early age to cultivate a conscious knowledge about the forms and functions of written language.

Clearly the home environment affects children's bilingualism. Morrow & Weinstein (1986) suggest that creating a visible, accessible, and attractive library corner can benefit bilingual children. Similarly, parents in bilingual families could put out books written in the child's first language. Parents' education, efforts, goals, and home environment are critical to improving children's oral bilingual and biliteracy skills. Bloch (1997:5) argued that parents are the first teachers and that becoming literate is a process, which emerges as children learn and experience reading and writing practices in a personally meaningful way. Bloch (2002) describes all the ways that learners can develop their
biliteracy skills, which include families reading, children writing, interactive writing, letters and journals. Children start reading books at home only if they are exposed to reading while they are still young.

**Quality of instruction**

According to Prinsloo (2008), the quality of literacy instruction and literacy opportunities of most Grades R - 4 learners in South Africa is limiting literacy development. Prinsloo (2008) argued that a delayed introduction to English as a first additional language to mother-tongue or home-language instruction, usually in Grade 3, followed by a switch to English medium as a language of teaching and instruction in Grade 4, means that most learners are faced with an impossible transitional hurdle. When this is accompanied by mother-tongue instruction that is too shallow and an all too abrupt and early termination of solid mother-tongue teaching and learning, more warning lights start to flash. Under such circumstances, the study showed, learners can be expected to perform very poorly and are unlikely to successfully engage with the rest of the curriculum from Grade 4 onwards (Prinsloo, 2008).

With regards to learning environment, Kadlic & Lesiak (2003) point out that a print-rich classroom is one in which children interact with many forms of print including signs, labelled centres, wall stories, word displays, labelled murals, bulletin boards, charts, poems and other printed materials. The question teachers need to ask themselves is, “Does my classroom environment promote literacy learning?” Hamer & Adams (2003:13) argue that the use by children oral, visual and written language allows expression of their individual identity and participation in a literate society.

**Role of culture**

Regarding the role of culture in biliteracy development, Aronstam (2005:24) affirms that culture is important for a child’s literacy development because it is through culture that, children acquire knowledge and content and it is culture that ‘provides children with the processes or means of their thinking.’ Vygotsky (cited in Aronstam 2005:24) called this ‘the tool of intellectual adaptation’ and states that culture teaches children both what to think and how to think.

**Research Methodology**

The research is broadly qualitative, in the form of an ethnographic case study. Shuttleworth (2008) defines a case study as an in-depth study of a particular situation, while Davis (1999) defines ethnography as a research process that is based on fieldwork using a variety of research techniques but including engagement in the lives of those being studied over a period of time. The need to spend time in the community or culture being studied is an important requirement of ethnography. The eventual written product of ethnography draws its data primarily from this fieldwork experience and usually emphasises descriptive detail. Another common method used in ethnographic research is interviewing, which may range from an informal conversation to highly structured formats in which
questions are pre-determined and involve different levels of complexity. Since ethnographic research takes place among real human beings, all ethical protocols were observed such as informed consent, use of pseudonyms in reporting and the researchers ensured that the research does not harm, physically or psychologically, or exploit in any way the subjects.

In this research, the classroom studied is treated as small-scale community in which certain ways of doing things have evolved over time. The classroom may be seen as a small-scale local culture with its own practices and beliefs. Teachers carry certain beliefs about teaching and learning, as do learners. It is the task of the ethnographer to uncover these beliefs if possible and describe them in detail. Though the research conducted in the Limpopo classrooms was not a full-fledged ethnography, it was based on ethnographic principles, and used some of the tools of ethnography, namely observation and interviews, and is therefore an ethnographically-oriented study. As such, the researcher was only an observer, rather than a participant, as getting involved in the classroom events may have altered the nature of the interaction. The researcher was aware that her very presence may affect the interaction but she tried to minimize this by being unobtrusive and not calling attention to herself in any way.

Since the research described in this article was based on one school and a limited number of classrooms, the design is that of a case study. According to Bromley (1990:302), a case study is a systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest and enables the researcher to understand the complex, real-life activities using multiple sources of evidence. The observations started on October 11th, 2010 and ended on the 02nd of November 2010. Only 20 lessons were observed.

This research targeted Grade 3 learners from the Foundation phase and the teachers who teach all the learning areas in Grade 3, namely, Literacy, Numeracy and Life Skills. Observation involved the researcher sitting in on lessons and observing the activities that were taking place in the classroom and ascertaining whether two languages (the home language, Sesotho sa Leboa/ Sepedi and English) are being used to develop biliteracy among the learners. The researcher focussed mainly on the interaction between the teacher and the learners to see what strategies are being used by teachers and learners, which languages are being used. Hancock (2002:12) argues that

> Observation is a technique that can be used when data collected through other means can be of limited value or is difficult to validate. Observation can also serve as a technique for verifying or nullifying information provided in face to face encounters.

Hancock’s argument captures well the main reasons why classroom observation was selected as the primary data collection method.
It was also important to investigate if the lessons are always teacher-fronted or if the learners are grouped for learning (one-on-one with their teachers, small groups, pairs, whole group or are they doing activities independently). It was also crucial to examine the role of the teacher during the lesson; whether the teacher is doing most of the talking by lecturing the learners, or was the teacher guiding the learners? Did the teacher ask questions? How did the teacher handle learner responses? Does the teacher carry out activities that promote literacy development? Are the learners doing sufficient reading and writing in class? How is feedback given? Are there pictures, texts, and other materials on the walls, in the corridors and in other places in the school? Is there a book corner or reading corner? Does the school have a library? Is there any evidence that reading for pleasure is encouraged in the school to provide visual evidence of the print environment of the classroom? Hence observation was adopted in this case.

One-on-one interviews were also carried out with the teachers with aim to obtain the teachers’ perceptions of what is effective or not in developing biliteracy among the learners. There are four teachers (three females and one male). Each interview lasted for about 30 to 45 minutes.

The content analysis was used for analysis focusing on the common themes that emerged from the responses of the teachers.

**Results and Discussion**

In a one-on-one interview, the principal highlighted that the school has a quintile 3 classification which means learners do not pay school fees in terms of South African Education policy. The school has a feeding scheme and learners are also provided with stationery and any school material by the government. Selected women from the community are responsible for implementing the school feeding scheme by cooking and serving meals to the learners during lunch time. The principal claimed that eighty per cent of the families from which the learners come from have no formal schooling. Low literacy rates prevail amongst the inhabitants of the area around the school. As such, most parents of the learners are unable to help their children to read and write at home. The principal also claimed that resources such as story books are unlikely to be available at their homes.

**Language policy**

The language policy of the school (2010) states that all languages are accorded equal status, with the understanding that some languages will be used as languages of instruction while some are treated as primary languages and additional languages. The language of instruction in the Foundation Phase is Sepedi (mother tongue) and this was indeed the case. However, the policy states that English would be introduced as a second language in Grade 1 but this was not the case. The school introduces English only in Grade 2. So there are some serious gaps in the way the policy is
implemented. The failure especially to introduce English in Grade 2 as an additional language means that the learners have little or no exposure to English till they reach Grade 3.

Sepedi is used in the school assembly. School communication to the parents and guardians is done in Sepedi and it is the language of communication among teachers. Sepedi is used even in the English lessons, where all instructions are given in Sepedi, and at times the teacher would translate the English questions into Sepedi. The dominant language in the classroom is Sepedi. This is in line with the language policy of the school that the first language should be used as a medium of instruction in the Foundation Phase.

Teaching and learning of English literacy
The duration of the English lessons varied. On some days it went on for one hour and on others it could go on for two and a half hours. The duration of the lesson was quite arbitrary and depended entirely on the teacher. Sometimes the lessons were so long that the learners were tired but the teacher continued with the lesson nevertheless. The teacher used both English and Sepedi when he was interacting with the learners, but sometimes, 90% of the English lesson was conducted in Sepedi, obviously because the learners did not have enough competence in English to understand him. During the period under observation, it did not seem that learners were given any home work; in other words, they did not seem to be given the opportunity to review what they learnt at school. As such, there seemed to be no reinforcement of learning. Overcrowding made matters worse as it denied struggling learners adequate attention from the teacher during lessons.

Teaching and learning of Numeracy
In most of the Numeracy lessons that were observed, not all learners would pay attention to the teacher as they constantly kept glancing out. No numeracy homework was given to the learners during the observation period. The teacher did not use the Numeracy textbook and instead wrote all the questions and problems on the chalkboard. Sepedi was used in all the lessons except for the names of the numerals, which were in English. It would be accurate to say that 95% of the time Sepedi was used in every Numeracy lesson that was observed.

Classroom routines
Although textbooks were available, they were stacked in the cupboards and learners copied their work from the chalkboard. This practice created a real challenge for learners who were sitting furthest away from the chalkboard. Teachers had the same way of teaching; they all used the same methods. They always wrote activities and other material on the chalkboard and learners were made to read aloud. Reading aloud as a whole class was the only way in which learners read as no other reading methods were used. Children hardly ever read individually or discussed their work in groups. Only on one occasion did the Sepedi teacher bring some photocopied material to class. The English literacy
teacher also showed some creativity by getting the learners to create a portfolio. Except for these two instances, the teaching in all the learning areas was highly routinized, with the same approach being followed periodically.

The classroom environment
Two of the three Grade 3 classrooms were painted but the last one was still brick-faced. None of the rooms were in good condition. The rooms were overcrowded with three learners sharing a desk meant for two. The learners’ school bags took up a lot of space and were placed between desks and along the walls. The teachers hardly had any space to move between the desks and therefore learners had no individual contact with the teachers during lessons.

It was evident that there was hardly any learning materials (charts, posters, and learners’ own work) displayed on the walls. Two of the Grade 3 classrooms had no learning materials at all. Only the third classroom had eleven examples of learning materials displayed. However, the learners could not see them as they were displayed on the back wall of the classroom. Of the eleven materials that were displayed, eight were local (made by the teacher) and the remaining three were professional charts (supplied by a publisher). Seven of the local materials were in Sepedi and one was in English. All the published charts were in English. There are no story books or materials to promote reading for pleasure.

It can be argued that learners in this school work in an extremely impoverished learning environment. Except for the few posters mentioned, the learners were not exposed to any stimulating material in their environment. Teachers seemed to be unaware of the value of an attractive and engaging environment for Foundation Phase learners. Even when textbooks and other learning materials were available, the teachers were not using them while they wasted precious time writing everything on the chalkboard. Furthermore, the teachers’ writing on the chalkboard was not always legible. Not having textbooks, denied the learners familiarity with this genre which is so central to education.

Language use in the classroom
In terms of language use in classroom, two teachers asserted that they use both English and Sepedi when they are teaching. The Numeracy teacher uses English only for the numerals and the rest of the lesson is conducted in Sepedi. The English teacher’s response was somewhat contradictory because sometimes he said he uses English with the learners but in the same breath, he also said that learners do not understand English and he is therefore forced to use Sepedi. The findings from the classroom observation revealed that only when the teacher reads the actual texts that he has written on the chalkboard or when the learners repeat after him, are they using English. In fact the English teacher said that he is using the learners’ home language to teach the second language. All
instructions and the language of classroom management in the English lessons observed were in Sepedi.

**Teacher experiences of teaching and learning**

Though there was no specific question on the language policy of the school in the schedule of interview questions, all the four teachers referred to it. The teachers blamed the language policy for the poor English proficiency of the learners. Because the school language policy states that Sepedi is the medium of instruction from Grade R to Grade 3, the learners did not take English seriously. The teachers claimed that they are forced to use Sepedi even in the English lessons as the learners do not understand anything if they are spoken to in English. The English teacher said that he is worried about giving the learners books written in English as the learners look confused. It seems that the teachers themselves are denying their learners opportunities to learn English by only using Sepedi. It is clear that the learners are not gaining biliteracy, not in their own language, Sepedi and as for English, there is no oracy development either as the learners are hardly spoken to in English.

**Teachers’ views on factors that hinder biliteracy development**

The teachers also mentioned the effect of the “Pass one, pass all” policy as it allows learners who have not yet acquired Grade-appropriate literacy and numeracy skills to progress to the next Grade. As a result, the majority of learners are still at the beginner’s level even when they progress to Grade 4. The teachers claimed that lack of resources, overcrowded classrooms and illiterate parents are also hindering literacy development. The teachers said that they could not give individual attention to learners as the classroom is overcrowded. The teachers complained that they could not move freely in class because of congestion. They claimed that because the school lacked resources such as books which made it difficult to arouse interest in books among the learners. However, they did not seem to realise that they were not using the textbooks that were in fact available. They asserted that because the school lacks a library, learners cannot develop an interest in reading. They claimed that they could not give homework as the parents are illiterate and could not help their children at home with school work.

**Teachers’ views on strategies for improving biliteracy development**

During the interview process, the teachers said that despite being in a rural school, they were eager to improve the literacy levels of their learners and highlighted the most appropriate ways in which this could be done. These include the adoption of a learner-centred approach, government support with resources, since parents from rural areas cannot afford to pay for some of the materials, needed for use in class. They also recommended devising new strategies for teaching learners how to read and write and that learners should be given homework from time to time. The provision of a conducive learning environment of a print-rich environment as well as creating a library and internet connectivity were also deemed necessary.
Towards a model for effective teaching and learning environment

We postulate a framework we consider ideal for creating a conducive environment to develop any type of literacy including biliteracy. We posit a 3Cs model comprising of Conditions in the home environment, Community and the Curriculum as key ingredients which support literacy in general and bi-literacy in particular. The framework is depicted in Figure 1. Figure 1 shows that Conditions at home are as important as the other ingredients. Conditions at home include the availability of parents or guardians who support education, their own education is also an important factor (whether they are literate or not literate), availability of facilities such as a study room, books, a print-environment, learning aides, chalk/whiteboards, desks and chairs and so forth. It is at home that learners can talk, listen, experiment, work with family as a group and learn family values and beliefs. The Community and culture are important as learners learn attitudes, community values, customs and beliefs from their culture/community. The Curriculum includes the teaching methods, learning activities, teaching philosophy which are influenced by the competences of the teachers at school. Within the context of systems thinking, any disjuncture between these components of this system cripples it with commensurate consequences.

Figure 1: 3Cs framework

Martello (2007) maintains that emergent or early literacy is very much a social practice that develops in social contexts rather than through formal instruction. Early childhood educators therefore need to consider and incorporate home and community literacy practices into their teaching and learning
programme. When home literacy practices greatly differ from primary school literacy practices, children can experience difficulties. Effective literacy practices in early childhood services can help build a bridge between early literacy practices in the home and literacy practices at school (Martello, 2007). This implies that they may need to harmonise teaching and learning practices at home, in the community and at school for effectiveness.

Conclusion

Development of biliteracy

It can be surmised that the learners in Grade 3 of this case study are not developing biliteracy. They are also not developing literacy in their home language, Sepedi. Their exposure to Sepedi is only through the writing on the chalkboard in Sepedi by the teachers. They do not read Sepedi textbooks, let al. one Sepedi story books or any other material meant to develop the learners’ reading capabilities in Sepedi. Even though the language policy of the school states that Sepedi is the medium of instruction in the Foundation Phase, the learners are only being exposed to the Sepedi of the teachers. The teacher uses a lot of Sepedi in the English lesson and learners are not getting sufficient exposure to English. Learners are being denied the chance to encounter English and learn it.

Teaching and learning materials

Books of any kind are simply not being used at all in this grade. Not only does the school not have a library, whatever material is readily available is not sufficiently being used. The learners are simply not developing print literacy or any kind of literacy. All the lessons were extremely teacher-centred. Learners were not organised into groups. They rarely had opportunities to work independently. The teachers seemed to be using the same ritualistic and routinised way of teaching. However, the teachers laid the blame for their ineffectiveness on the lack of resources, frequent changes in the curriculum and poor training. Evidently, teaching is taking place in an extremely impoverished print environment. The walls are empty of print material and there is hardly anything in the environment that could stimulate the interest of the learners. Furthermore, the teachers in this study seem unaware of the processes involved in listening, reading, speaking, and writing and interpret these crucial skills to be mechanistic and developed through repetition and reproduction. They are doing nothing to help the learners develop the wide range of emerging literacy skills that the learners are potentially able to assimilate and embrace.

Developing literacy in two languages

Gort (2004) shows that when children start writing and reading in two languages, they employ much the same strategies regardless of which language they are using. Once they develop phonological awareness (sound-symbol correspondence) they apply that awareness to whichever language they are engaging with at any particular instance. They transfer creative spelling and other strategies for decoding and encoding texts from one language to another. The processes of interpreting texts
remain essentially the same. However, the teachers in this study are unaware of these relationships. The teaching of literacy in the home language is so superficial that there is no solid foundation for the learners to build on either to develop their own language further or to transfer to skills to English.

The delayed introduction to English as a first additional language (only in Grade 3, rather than in Grade 2, as stated by the school’s policy) only makes matters worse. Teachers seem to be unaware of how to handle the introduction of a new language as they adopted the same routinised approach that they use to teach Sepedi. When learners have to make the switch to the English medium as a language of teaching and instruction in grade 4, they are faced with an impossible transitional hurdle, from which they never recover. This study confirms the findings of the extensive Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) research (Prinsloo 2008) that the quality of literacy instruction and literacy opportunities of most grades R - 4 learners is limiting literacy development.

Recommendations
Much research and many pedagogic initiatives have been carried out in many parts of the world. In South Africa itself, there are many models of biliteracy development, such as the one developed by the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA). Such models have to be made available to teachers, not in the form of theories but as demonstrations. Government needs to identify innovations that have been shown to work in South Africa and make them available to local school teachers. Therefore Government needs to set up demonstration schools where these innovations are implemented and teachers should be given time off to experience these demonstration schools in groups, in order to discuss debate and inform practice. It is only when teachers take control of their own teaching, and make decisions about what will work or not work in their own context, will their motivation and effectiveness be increased. An area for further research is the replication of this study within the context of either a secondary or tertiary institution in South Africa to unpack the effectiveness of current teaching and learning practices in order to enrich practice.

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Childhood Disabilities and Child Protection in Rajshahi City, Bangladesh


Abstract: The children with disabilities (CWDs) from low socio-economic status are always being discriminated and subjected to abuse and exploitation within the family and society. So, the main aims of the study were to identify the childhood disabilities and protections for the disabled children including those who are at-risk of sexual abuse and exploitation in Rajshahi City, Bangladesh. A total of 500 (250 males, 250 females) children at Rajshahi were assessed for identifying disabilities as well as explored the risk of abuse and protection. Thirty-three mothers of disabled children, 10 professionals, and 4 special education teachers also participated in this study. To assess the disabilities of the children, Denver Screening Questionnaire (DSQ) and Ten Questions with Plus (TQP) were used. The two sets of questionnaires were used to collect demographic and household information. Another set of questionnaire was used to explore the risk of abuse, types of abuse and identifying the abusers and whether taken action against the abusers or not. Focus group discussion (FGD) and in-depth interview were applied to collect information from the mothers of CWDs, professionals, and special education teachers. The study results revealed that 46 (9.20%) children aged (2-9 years) were identified with any type of disability. A total of 71 (14.20%) children were abused, of them 55 (77.46%) were physically, 42 (59.15) were mentally were abused. Among the abused children, almost all (78.87%) were abused by the family members, but a few guardians (35.21%) took action against the abusers.

Keywords: children with disabilities CWDs, Denver Screening Questionnaire (DSQ) and Ten Questions Plus (TQP), child abuse, child protection.

Introduction

Disability is defined by the United Nations (UN) as "long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder [a person's] full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others" (UN, 2006). With the adoption of the UN Convention on the 'Rights of Persons with Disabilities', the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has made the inclusion and development of children with disabilities (CWDs) a priority issue, and the

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World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that over 200 million children worldwide are at risk for not meeting their developmental potential (Grantham-McGregor et al., 2007). In addition, the World Bank (WB) estimated that 20% of the poorest people in the world today are somehow or the other disabled (Yeo, 2002). Few data are available, however, on the prevalence of and risk factors for CWDs in developing countries including Bangladesh. The CWDs from low socio-economic status are always being discriminated. The parents of families having CWDs are always reluctant to send their children to any program assuming their inability to contribute the family in the future. Disabled children are often targeted by abusers, who see them as easy victims (UNICEF, 2005). So, they are neglected, ignored and most of the times they are deprived from their basics (proper care, education, nutrition, and treatment). While all children are at risk of being victims of violence, disabled children find themselves at significantly increased risk because of stigma, negative traditional beliefs and ignorance. Lack of social support, limited opportunities for education, employment or participation in the community further isolates disabled children and their families.

The children with physical, sensory, intellectual or mental health impairment are at increased risk of becoming victims of violence. There is considerable global concern to reduce the prevalence of childhood disabilities and to improve health, social and educational outcomes in order to extend social protection for the disabled children (Mont, 2007). In Bangladesh, 18.8% and 21.9% of children of positive Disability Module screening are come from wealthiest and poorest family respectively (UNICEF, 2008). The prevalence of all grades of disability among children in Bangladesh may be increasing with improvements in child survival (Zaman et al., 1990). The violence against disabled children occurred at annual rates at least 1.7 times greater than that of their non-disabled peers (AAP, 2001). In this context, more targeted studies (Khan et al., 2008; Khan et al., 1990; Khan, 1998; Rabbani and Hossain, 1999; Mullick and Goodman, 2000; Mullick and Goodman, 2005; Izutsu, et al., 2005; Hamadani et al., 2006; etc) also indicated the reasons for serious concern. For example, one group of researchers reported that 90% of individuals with intellectual impairments have experienced sexual abuse at some point in their life, and a national survey of deaf adults in Norway found that 80% of all deaf individuals surveyed reported sexual abuse at some point in their childhood (Kvam, 2000). The National Centre on Child Abuse and Neglect has reported that the disabled children are sexually abused at a rate 2.2 times higher (Cross et al., 1993).

Serious concern is expressed over the growing number of children who face abuse and exploitation within the family, schools and other institutions, community and at the national level. It was found that child sexual abuse can be perpetrated on such small children that the youngest was under 2 years of age (BTS, 2003). Both boys and girls are affected by child sexual abuse. The perpetrators of child sexual abuse is someone with easy access to the child usually someone who is trusted by the family. In both groups of neighbours and friends is the biggest group of child sexual abuse. One of the features noted that sex among those who are children themselves. In terms of vulnerabilities, girls
remain vulnerable as long as they are attractive enough to arouse a desire to exert power. Poverty certainly increases vulnerability to abuse as the poor are often dependent on the powerful. To best of our knowledge, no serious study has concentrated on the disabled children or their protection in Bangladesh. Therefore, the aims of the study are to identify the childhood disabilities and child protection for CWDs including those at-risk of sexual abuse and exploitation in Rajshahi City, Bangladesh.

Data and methods
The sample survey integrated children, primary caregivers of the disabled children such as mothers or/and father, especial education teachers and Child Development Centre (CDC) professionals in Rajshahi city, Bangladesh. A total of 500 children (250 males, 250 females) of them 114 (22.80%) children aged 0-2 years and 386 (77.20%) children aged 2-9 years from Rajshahi City, Bangladesh have been taken as the study population to identify the childhood disabilities by using the screening methods, Denver Screening Questionnaire (DSQ) and Ten Questions with Plus (TQP) respectively. The 11 primary caregivers such as mothers or grandmothers of the CWDs have attended in the two focus group discussion (FGD). Most of the caregivers who attended the FGD were mothers of the children and only a few were grandmothers. The 5 CDC professionals under Rajshahi Medical College Hospital were a doctor, child psychologist, developmental therapist, office management, and supporting staff. The 4 teachers of special education schools such as Society for the Welfare of the Intellectually Disabled (SWID), Bangladesh; and Bangladesh Protibondhi Foundation (BPF) (A Foundation for the Disabled Children) attended in the survey. The data were collected from October 2011 to December 2011. The team planned to conduct the survey by using DSQ and TQP for the children. The team identified the area to survey and prepared the questionnaire for exploring the risk of abuse at family level. After finalizing the alternatives tools i.e. DSQ and TQP using to children, data collectors were trained on both techniques. Then data were collected from the selected words of this city.

Methods of data collection
For identifying children having any disability and protection issues, both primary and secondary data collection methods were applied. The quantitative tools such as assessment for disabilities of children were administered by the primary level community workers who have been trained on DSQ, TQP and other three sets of questionnaires. A structured questionnaire, Household Form (HF) was used to collect demographic data of the children and their family. The DSQ was used for identifying the developmental delay of children aged 0-2 years. The TQP is a childhood disability questionnaire was used as a screening instrument. TQP is a modified version of the Ten Questions (TQ) developed by A.M. Clarke, L. Belmont, H.S. Narayanan and Sell in 1981 which was used in the pilot study. It was a short questionnaire, in a yes/no format, consisting of TQ with plus. One each concerning the child’s vision, hearing, movement and seizures, and six concerning cognitive competence and one extra
question regarding other serious health problems. Each question was supplemented with additional one or more questions to further probe into the problem detected. The probe questions were asked only if a problem was reported in response to a main question. For each 2-9 year old child listed and still living in the household, one TQP was completed. A set of semi-structured questionnaire for parents of the children was developed to gather concise yet precise understanding of the vulnerability of the abused CWDs. The questionnaires included closed ended questions to explore risk of abuse and types of abuse at family level. The FGD were conducted with parents of the children with disabilities and special education teachers and service providers for collecting information on attitude, cognitive awareness i.e., knowledge and understanding of the issue of protection of CWDs support structure of organizations, community initiatives, dealing approaches and so on.

Ethical consideration
The investigators were trained on DSQ and TQP, disabilities, child abuse and exploitation issues. FGD with caregivers and other stakeholders have been conducted by the consultants. The confidentiality and family prestige were fully maintained through keeping their information, name and other personal data very restricted. The identified children with disabilities have been referred to the CDC and ensured the treatment process. Again, the investigators continuously followed up the cases of disabilities for better rehabilitation and quality services. The issues of psychosocial impact were taken seriously in the process of data collection.

Results
In this section, family status of the children, mother and children information and prevalence of childhood disabilities are presented. The demographic factors of the children and the parental status also indicate the risk of rights violations. The prevalence of CWDs also shows a validation of disability rate with previous studies. Abuse and types of abuse, process of action taken against perpetrators and the impact of being abused are also described in turn.

Family status of the children
This empirical study consisted of 500 children of them 250 were males and 250 were females, of them 114 were aged 0-2 years, and 386 were aged 2-9 years (Table 1). Religion of the sample is dominated by Islam (99.40%) and almost all (92.6%) of the family heads were males. Among them only 46 (23 males and 23 females) children aged 2-9 years were identified as disabled. It is seen that, more than half (52.60%) of the children did not go to school, and almost all the children were taken care of by their mothers.
Table 1: Background characteristics of the children in Rajshahi, Bangladesh (n=500)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-2 years</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-9 years</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>77.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex of children</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religion</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>99.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Having Disability</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total disabled</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Schooling Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never go to School</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>52.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now do not go to school</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irregularly go to school</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularly go to school</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Take Care by Whom</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>97.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandmother</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>500</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 describes the background characteristics of the family of the children. The results revealed that almost all (92.60%) family heads were males. The educational background of the family head is very low. It is seen that around one-third (27.60%) of heads of the family of children never went to school and one third (32.40%) of the family heads completed primary education and only 9.20% family head completed graduation and above. Table 2 also indicates that almost all of the family heads (86.40%) have own house and rest of them either live in rented house or in other's house. In terms of having land of the family, 9.80% families have no land, and 77.40% families have only small amount lands (0 to 5 decimal). The profession of a large number of the family head is unskilled labor (31.80%), other significant number of professions of the family head are small business (19.60%) and government and non-government employees (20.20%). In case of income, one third of family's
monthly income is up to Tk. 5000 and for 39.20% of the family the income ranges between Tk. 5000-10000 and more than half (56.00%) of the family take loan from the micro credit program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Background characteristics of the Family Head of the Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Characteristics</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex of the Family Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education qualification of the Family Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never go to school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class eight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class ten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.S.C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.S.C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of the House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rented House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land of the Family Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5 decimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 decimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 decimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 decimal up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of occupation of the Family Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government or non-Government Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skillful professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled labor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 shows the housing condition of the children. It is found that 17.60% of the families live in the house built by mud or mud wall and tin roof; wood wall and tin roof or tin wall and tin roof. But, more than half (62.20%) of the children live in brick walled houses with tin roofs. Rests of the families live in buildings. Surprisingly, it is found that 89.00% families have electricity connection and only 11.00% families have no electricity connection which means that though all families live in a divisional city area, these families have no capacity to have electricity in their houses. More than half (54.60%) of the families have domestic animals in their family whether they live in city areas or not and 96.80% family have used tube well as a source of drinking water. It is found that 74.80% families are using sanitary (flush) toilet and very few families are using open toilet.
Table 4: Background Characteristics of Mothers of the Children (n=500)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mothers' Educational Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class eight</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.S.C</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.S.C</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon's</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information about the mothers of the children of the survey area

Table 4 represents the background information of mothers of the children. It is seen that 13.60% mothers are illiterate, 39.80% mothers have completed primary schools, and only 9.60% mothers have completed graduate programs. In terms of the profession of the mothers, it is found that almost all (92.60%) are housewives. A few mothers (12.60%) have own income and a large number of women (87.40%) did not have any income where they depended on their husbands fully. In terms of taking loan by the mothers of the children it was found that 43.0% took microcredit loans from the different types of non-government organizations (NGOs). It was found that near about 7.4% of the parents of the children had kinship relationships among them.
Masters 26 5.2  

**Mothers’ Profession**  
Employee 14 2.8  
Skilful professional 2 0.4  
House wife 463 92.6  
Servant 12 2.4  
Unskilful labor 9 1.8  

**Mothers’ Earning Status**  
Yes 63 12.6  
No 437 87.4  

**Loan Taken by Mothers**  
Yes 215 43.0  
No 285 57.0  

**Kinship between Mother and Father**  
Yes 37 7.4  
No 463 92.6  

**Total** 500 100

Table 5 represents the information regarding child protection in Rajshahi City, Bangladesh. The caregivers have reported that children are being abused by others which are painful for them. Considering the types of abusive situation for children, it is found that a total 71 children are abused in the study area. Among the abused children, 55 (77.50%) were physically, 42 (59.20%) were mentally, 6 (8.50%) neglected, 5 (7.04%) were socially, and 8 (11.30%) sexually are abused. The study results revealed that among the abused children, most were abused by their family members (23.44%), followed by relatives (30.99), neighbours (23.44%), and others (11.27%). Most abused cases (63.38%) were reported by the friends of the children and more than one-third cases (38.03%) were reported by the neighbours. In terms of taking action against the abusers, it is seen that two-thirds (64.79%) cases no action was against to the abuser of the children.
Neglect 6 8.45
Socially 5 7.04
Sexual harassment 8 11.27

**Abused by whom**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family members</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>78.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbour</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reported by whom**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family members</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbour</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>38.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>63.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Taking any step against abuse**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>64.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a. Reported by the caregivers, b. More than one types of abuse reported for some children

**Discussion**

A total of 46 (9.20%) children have disabilities in the surveyed area between the ages 2 to 9 years. In terms of sex 23 (12.0%) male and 23 (12%) female children were assessed disabled (Table 1). It was also seen that only a very few cases of disabilities have been identified among the children aged 0-2 years. It seems that the deviation of developmental milestone would be difficult to explore before the age of 2.

It is common understanding by all respondents of the survey that each of the disabled children have gone through various types of abuse and exploitation in day to day life. However, CWDs face discrimination in the society in terms of economic support, education accessibilities, vocational training and rehabilitation. There are no participation opportunities of the CWDs within the family and society at large. The rights violation against CWDs is happening at family, society, institution and community which are: i. Physical abuse, ii. Mental abuse/psychological, iii. Sexual abuse, iv. Neglected, v. Maltreatment, and vi. Being lost or trafficking.

“In the winter session, local miscreants have thrown my child into cold water pond in front of my house”, said a father of Down syndrome boy child. “I was scared to know that a speech impaired child around my area has lost and never been found”, said a mother of disabled child.

The facts identified by CDC professionals that parents continuously challenge to have proper diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation facilities from Government heath support system. Moreover, in
many cases mothers of CWDs are rejected by husband and others members of the family members. Primary caregiver i.e., mothers are shown helpless and hopeless about the improvement of their disabled children. Caregivers’ frustration is important issue to address the protection of children with disabilities. A mother of a female disabled child said, “When my child is staying at school, I feel good because rest of the time child has been locked into room. She was 15 years old and she has been raped and it is unfortunate that my intellectual disable child was deprived to have justice form court”.

Conclusion
The objectives of the survey were to explore the childhood disabilities and their protection in Rajshahi City, Bangladesh. The sample was selected from the region of the city areas where the lower and middle class families are living. The finding shows that around one in ten children (2 to 9 years) are having disabilities in the surveyed area. Considering all the children it is seen that the caregivers have reported that their children are being abused by different modes, e.g., physically, mentally, socially, and sexually. It is surprising enough that four-fifth of the child abusers are family members and more than two-third family heads did not take any action against the abuser of the children. From FGD and others methods, it is found that parents and other caregivers have acknowledged that every disabled children is at risk of abuse, exploitation and maltreatment. To protect the children, the rights of CWDs have to be given importance. The rehabilitation and integration process, included health care, education, vocational skills, psychosocial support, social safety net, social justice and legal protection, have to be established in all divisional cities. The role of the caregivers i.e. mothers, teachers, staff of the service provider organizations, NGOs, and GOs have to be sensitized about the rights of the disabled children and protect them from the rights violations through comprehensive support and care mechanism and process.

References


Effectiveness of Korea’s Development Cooperation to Enhance the Vocational Training Capacity of the BKTTC: Need for Building Absorptive Capacity for Effective Development Cooperation in Bangladesh

Md. Roknuzzaman Siddiky

Abstract: International development cooperation involving transfer of knowledge, skills and technology can be a powerful catalyst to facilitate human and institutional capacity building of the firms or organizations of the developing countries, in particular, the least developed countries (LDCs). However, its effectiveness mostly depends on the recipient firm’s level of absorptive capacity. Unfortunately, usually the firms of the LDCs are characterized by very low level of absorptive capacity and thereby affect maximizing the benefits from external resources (e.g., knowledge, skills and tools). The present paper examines the effectiveness of Korea’s development cooperation, in particular, KOICA’s project-type cooperation in the form of transfer of skills and technology to enhance institutional and vocational training capacity of the Bangladesh-Korea Technical Training Centre (BKTTC) from the viewpoint of the relevant instructors. A total of 30 purposively selected instructors were interviewed by using semi-structured interview schedule supplemented by open-ended questions. The data were measured in terms of 5-point Likert-type scales based on median values. The empirical evidence suggests that the BKTTC has lack of absorptive capacity to utilize the external resources. Hence, building absorptive capacity has broader implications to maximize the effectiveness of development cooperation in Bangladesh. The paper puts forward a theoretical model involving HRD practices, HRM practices, and building organizational capability for building absorptive capacity in order to utilize external resources for effective development cooperation. Finally, the paper suggests some policy recommendations.

Keywords: international development cooperation, ODA, KOICA’s ODA, technical cooperation, external resources, prior-related knowledge, absorptive capacity, institutional capacity building.

Background of the Study

International development cooperation has become an important global agenda soon after the Second World War in consequence of changes in international political and economic order. International development cooperation under the name of foreign aid has received enormous attention in the world since the implementation of European Recovery Program, the Marshal Plan, following the Second World War. As such, Marshal Plan served as a keystone for international development cooperation (Degnbol-Martin and Engberg-Pedersen 2003; Stokke 2009). However, in course of time, there have been changes in the objectives and patterns of international development cooperation. Currently, it is an important area in the overall policy for global development. Today, the main objective of development cooperation is to promote economic and social development of the developing world.
While development cooperation has long been recognized as a catalyst of development, there has been a growing criticism about the effectiveness of the transfer of knowledge, skills and technology to promote human and institutional capacity building of the developing countries, specifically the LDCs (Arndt, 2000; Denning, 2002; Morgan and Baser, 1993; Morgan, 2002; Fukuda-Parr, Lopez and Malik, 2002; Malik, 2002; Browne, 2002; JICA, 2003; OECD, 2006; Moon, 2011). JICA (2003) pointed out that the effectiveness of technical cooperation has been controversial to fill up the knowledge gap in developing countries and it performed least favourably in institutional capacity building of the developing countries. As such, the effectiveness of the development cooperation in the form of transfer of skills and technology mostly depends on the level of absorptive capacity of recipient firms of the developing countries (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990; Astrid, Cristina and Ruzana, 2008; Omar, Thakim and Nawawi, 2011). That is, to maximize the benefits from external resources (e.g. knowledge, skills & tools), the recipient firms or organizations must have an adequate amount of absorptive capacity. Otherwise, the development cooperation will not be effective on the part of both developed country and its developing partners. Thus, the study was intended to examine the effectiveness of development cooperation in the light of Korea’s official development assistance provided through KOICA to Bangladesh. However, the focus was given on the examination of KOICA’s project, in particular, technical cooperation in the area of vocational training in Bangladesh.

Defining Development Cooperation
Development cooperation has been defined by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland (2005) as the practical work that is undertaken with the aim of improving the position of developing countries. According to Regeringskansliet, the Government Offices of Sweden (2008), the overall objective of international development cooperation is to help create conditions that will enable the poor to improve their lives. Thus, international development cooperation or development aid is always targeted to focus on reducing human poverty, mitigating human sufferings, facilitating human development, improving quality of lives, achieving UN MDGs and addressing the challenges of development of the developing countries and the LDCs, and thereby support them to step up their economic and social development ((Degnbol-Martin and Engberg-Pedersen, 2003; Riddel, 2007). Hence, international development cooperation may be understood as official development assistance commonly known as ODA that involves concessional loans, grants and technical cooperation aimed at promoting economic and social development of the developing countries. However, technical cooperation or TC is sometimes known as technical assistance which is commonly referred to as TA.

Framework of Korea’s Development Cooperation
The Republic of Korea provides its international development cooperation principally under the name of Korea’s official development assistance to the developing countries. Thus, Korea’s development cooperation can be understood as Korea’s ODA which is mainly aimed to promote economic and social progress and sustainable development of the developing countries and to assist them in order
to achieve Millennium Development Goals (Chang, 2005; KOICA, 2009, 2011; MOFAT, 2011). Korea’s ODA consists of three types of aid: a) bilateral grants, b) bilateral loans, and c) multilateral assistance (MOFAT and OECD 2008; KOICA, 2008). Bilateral grant aid consists of technical cooperation and various types of transfers (made in cash, goods, or services) with no obligation for repayment. Bilateral grants are mainly administered by the Korea International Cooperation Agency, namely KOICA under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT). Bilateral loans, however, are provided based on concessional terms under the name of the Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF). Bilateral loans, or soft loans which require repayment, are managed by the Export-Import Bank of Korea under the guidance of the Ministry of Strategy and Finance (MOSF). Multilateral assistance is delivered either as financial subscription or contribution to international agencies. With regard to multilateral assistance or multilateral aid, the Ministry of Strategy and Finance is responsible for subscriptions to international development banks such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT) is in charge of making contributions to international organizations such as the bodies of the United Nations (KOICA, 2006a, 2006b, 2008; MOFAT and OECD, 2008).

Korea’s ODA system can be diagrammed as follows:

![Figure-1: Korea’s ODA System](Source: KOICA (2008), p.12; MOFAT and OECD (2008), p. 10.)

Thus, the framework of Korea’s international development cooperation or the Korean aid architecture is based on two main pillars. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT) is in charge of Korea’s grant aid policy which is implemented by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). The Ministry of Strategy and Finance (MOSF) determines concessional loan policy, which is implemented by the Korea Export-import Bank’s Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF). On the multilateral side, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT) and the Ministry of Strategy and Finance (MOSF) are jointly responsible for multilateral assistance. However, as far as Korea’s development cooperation is concerned, apart from the MOFAT and the MOSF, a further 30
other ministries, agencies and municipalities are involved in providing small amounts of grant aid, mainly in the form of TC.

KOICA as an Actor of Korea’s Development Cooperation

Korea’s development cooperation reached a milestone in the early 1990s. In April, 1991, the Korean Government formed the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) to serve as the official central agency to provide Korea’s bilateral ODA to the governments of developing countries for their economic and social development. Korea’s bilateral ODA implemented by the KOICA includes: a) **grant aid**, and b) **technical cooperation**. Grant aid encompasses project aid (provision of equipment), aid in kind, disaster relief, and support to NGO while technical cooperation includes training, expertise sharing, Korea Overseas Volunteers (KOVs), and development studies (KOICA, 2001, 2006b). Since its beginning, KOICA has been increasingly taking active part to support the developing countries’ efforts with its grant aid and technical cooperation to achieve sustainable economic and social development (KOICA, 2006b, 2009).

KOICA’s development assistance focuses on seven core sectors that were selected according to Korea’s comparative advantages and developing countries’ needs for development. The seven core supporting sectors are: education, health, governance, rural development, ICT, industry & energy, environment & others (KOICA, 2009, 2011). It is noteworthy to mention that KOICA’s sectoral support strategy is closely concerned with the achievement of the MDGs (KOICA, 2011). In view of continuously changing trends in development assistance efforts and practices, the KOICA has been striving to adjust to these changes by using its limited financial resources effectively on areas where Korea has comparative advantage. Since Korea has the unique experience of economic transformation from one of the poorest countries in the world to one of the most advanced, this know-how has been at the centre of KOICA’s development cooperation efforts to facilitate sustainable socio-economic development of its partner countries (KOICA, 2006b). In 2009, USD 279.26 million was allocated for 112 cooperation partner countries including 56 priority countries and 25 multilateral organizations. By region, Asia, having the world’s highest concentration of poor, and Africa where the most LDC are located, received 40% and 19.1% respectively, or a total 59.1% of the budget (KOICA, 2009, p. 18).

Trends of KOICA’s Development Assistance in Bangladesh

Since its inception in 1991, KOICA has been striving to support the endeavours of the Government of Bangladesh to step up the economic and social development of the country through its bilateral development assistance. In consideration of the Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) of Korean Government and in line with its commitment to alleviate the global poverty and contribute to the socio-economic development of the developing countries and assist them to achieve the UN MDGs, the KOICA has provided its development assistance in Bangladesh focusing on a number of areas of development including education, ICT, health, agriculture and rural development, governance,
environment and climate change and so on (KOICA and Worlds Friends Korea, 2011). From 1991 to 2010, KOICA provided its bilateral development assistance totalled approximately USD 41.85 million (KOICA, 2011). KOICA’s development assistance to Bangladesh from 1991 to 2008 has been presented in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL #</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount of Grant Aid (Unit 10,000 USD )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>109.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>130.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>87.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>54.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>59.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>79.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>123.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>139.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>139.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>134.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>335.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>688.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>810.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>325.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>814.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Grant Aid** 4,185,000 (USD 41.85 Million)

Source: KOICA (2011), p. 128
The table and graph above show KOICA’s development assistance or ODA in Bangladesh from 1991 to 2010 expressed in terms of grant aid while KOICA’s technical cooperation is included in its grant aid. From 1991 to 2010, KOICA administered a total of USD 41,850,000 (41.85 million) grant aid in Bangladesh. As can be seen from the table and graph that KOICA’s grant aid increased gradually from 19.5 (Unit 10,000 USD) in 1991 to 134.1 (Unit 10,000 USD) in 2005 while with a fluctuation. However, from 2006 to 2008, KOICA’s grant aid increased sharply, and it dropped dramatically in 2009 due to recession in Korea’s economy. In 2010, KOICA’s grant aid rose remarkably amounting to approximately USD 8,14,0000 (USD 8.14 million). Bangladesh was classified by the KOICA as a ‘priority country for development’ in 2006 causing a dramatic increase of its grant aid to Bangladesh. Since Bangladesh has become a ‘priority country for development,’ several development projects have been carried out in Bangladesh. Most of its large development projects were concerned with education and ICT sectors where enhancing country’s vocational training capacity in order to produce skilled manpower, and developing ICT infrastructure so as to facilitate HRD in ICT were key objectives.

**KOICA’s Development Assistance in Vocational Training Capacity of Bangladesh**

Korea achieved its own economic development through the development of human resources where vocational education played a pivotal role (Lee and Jung, 2005). As such, the KOICA has concentrated its development assistance to the education sector in Bangladesh while special focus has been given on country’s vocational education and training (VET). To upgrade VET system in Bangladesh and enhance its national vocational training capacity so as to generate skilled manpower both for local and overseas market, the KOICA undertook a Project entitled “Program to Enhance the Vocational Training Capacity of Bangladesh” in 2007.
The Project\(^1\) was executed at Mirpur Technical Training Centre in Dhaka from 2007 to 2009. The training centre is now known as Bangladesh-Korea Technical Training Centre (BKTTC). As part of the implementation of the Project, Korea transferred its own technology, that is, about 4000 training equipments for different trades, developed modern course curriculum for vocational training and provided trainings to the instructors, and other necessary institutional and technical supports\(^2\). The vision of the Project was to reduce the high level of youth unemployment and alleviate poverty in Bangladesh (GOB, 2007). However, the KOICA has recently undertaken another project concerning VET to be implemented at Chittagong in Bangladesh. The project has been titled as “Project for Enhancing the Capacity of Technical Training Centre in Chittagong” for which KOICA has allocated USD 4.8 million (KOICA, 2011). Moreover, a number of Korea Overseas Volunteers (KOVs) have been working at different technical training centres across the country so as to assist vocational instructors to develop their expertise through sharing Korean skills and expertise in the field of VET. Hence, with regard to Korea’s development cooperation in the form of project-type cooperation to enhance the vocational training capacity of Bangladesh, the following important queries arise:

a) To what extent was Korea’s development cooperation relevant to enhance the vocational training capacity of Bangladesh?

b) To what extent was it efficient to enhance the institutional capacity of the BKTTC?

c) To what extent was it effective to enhance the vocational training capacity of the BKTTC?

d) To what extent was it effective to generate skilled manpower & technicians in Bangladesh?

e) To what extent was it successful to export trained workforce abroad for employment?

Methodology of the Study
The study employed mixed approaches, that is, both qualitative and quantitative techniques in order to investigate its designated research questions. The study employed multiple data sources including interviewing, direct observations and document analysis. To evaluate the effectiveness of Korea’s development cooperation to enhance the vocational training capacity of the BKTTC, KOICA’s development Project entitled “Program to Enhance the Vocational Training Capacity of Bangladesh” was evaluated\(^3\) from the viewpoint of the concerned instructors of the BKTTC. Out of 68, 30

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\(^1\) It is noteworthy that the Project was aimed to enhance national vocational training capacity of Bangladesh while it was implemented at only one technical training centre in Bangladesh. Hence, the study mainly attempts to examine the effectiveness of the Project to enhance the vocational training capacity of the BKTTC.

\(^2\) Korea’s such type of development cooperation through KOICA involves its technical cooperation. According to OECD (2008), technical cooperation involves (a) grants to national or aid recipient countries receiving training at home and abroad, (b) payments to consultants, advisers and similar personnel as well as administrators serving in recipient countries (including the cost of associated equipment).

\(^3\) The Project was evaluated in terms of five criteria as proposed by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD to evaluate a development intervention. The five evaluation criteria are: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impacts and sustainability. However, the paper mainly focused on two criteria which are efficiency and effectiveness. DANIDA (2006) suggests that efficiency is a measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time etc.) are converted into results. OECD (2010) propounds that effectiveness is a measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives.
instructors from different trades were purposively\(^1\) selected for intensive interview\(^2\) for which a semi-structured interview schedule supplemented by open-ended questions was employed. Among the total of 30 respondents, 13 were those who received invitational training in Korea and the rest 17 were those who did not receive training in Korea\(^3\). To measure the effectiveness of Korea’s development cooperation, 5-point Likert-type scales (from lowest to the highest degree of efficiency or effectiveness) were used\(^4\). Due to the ordinal nature of the data, median is the suitable measure\(^5\). Hence, the study deliberately used median rather than mean.

**Empirical Findings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL #</th>
<th>Positive Aspects</th>
<th>Negative Aspects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Korean technology is very modern or advanced. Bangladesh will benefit from Korean technology such as CNC machine. Transfer of Korean technology would help to disseminate technology in Bangladesh.</td>
<td>Korean technology is sophisticated requiring much skill and advanced training of the instructors to utilize. Therefore, to maximize the benefits from Korean technology, building absorptive capacity is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Korean technology is much helpful to enhance the capacity of the instructors, trainees and training centre as well.</td>
<td>In some cases, there is lack of application or implementation in Bangladesh such as automobile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Korean technology &amp; expertise is very helpful to fill up the knowledge gap of the instructors and to enhance their technical skills.</td>
<td>Spare parts are sometimes not available in Bangladesh and thereby affect training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Transfer of Korean technology allows the instructors and trainees to learn or be familiar with modern high technology.</td>
<td>There is lack of relevant industries in Bangladesh where the graduates could be employed after completion of the training.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows the relevance of the transfer of Korean technology & expertise to enhance the vocational training capacity of Bangladesh. It is evident that the transfer of Korean technology &

---

\(^1\) The researcher applied his personal judgment and intelligence while selecting samples. Hence, the study involves purposive sampling.

\(^2\) The interviews were held over a long period of time. The researcher held face to face interview with the respondents. However, to have a deeper understanding and investigate the fact, the researcher held frequent telephonic interview with the respondents.

\(^3\) The samples were classified into two groups on the basis of their status of receiving training in Korea. The rationale behind this grouping was to look into the effectiveness of Korea’s development cooperation in the form of transfer of skills and technology and reduce the biasness. The respondents those who received invitational training in Korea shared their ideas and knowledge about the efficiency and effectiveness of Korea’s TC in the form of invitational training. However, both types of respondents put forward their views about the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the Korea’s development cooperation.

\(^4\) San Jose State University (2011) carried out a study aiming to examine Student Opinion of Teaching Effectiveness (SOTE) by using 5-point Likert-type scale from lowest to the highest degree of effectiveness where 1= very ineffective, 2= ineffective, 3= somewhat effective, 4= effective, and 5= very effective.

\(^5\) Nachmias & Nachmias (2008) suggest that median is suitable for use with variables measured at or above the ordinal level.
expertise has both positive and negative aspects. Though Korean technology & expertise is helpful to fill up the knowledge gaps, enhance the capacity of the instructors and facilitate institutional capacity of the training centre, it would require building absorptive capacity to maximize the benefits.

Table 3: Evaluation Results Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL #</th>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>To what extent was the transfer of Korean technology &amp; expertise relevant to enhance the vocational training capacity of Bangladesh?</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>.686</td>
<td>Very relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>To what extent had the KOICA provided the equipments (technology) for the BKTTC?</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.786</td>
<td>Sufficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>To what extent had the KOICA provided invitational training for the instructors of the BKTTC?</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.851</td>
<td>Somewhat sufficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>To what extent had invitational training in Korea benefitted the instructors of the BKTTC to develop their knowledge and skills?</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.650</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>To what extent had the training provided by Korean Experts at the BKTTC benefitted the instructors to develop their knowledge and skills?</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.862</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>To what extent were the training equipments (technology) provided by the KOICA efficiently used?</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.761</td>
<td>Somewhat efficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>To what extent was Korea’s development cooperation efficient to enhance the institutional capacity of the BKTTC?</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.865</td>
<td>Efficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>To what extent was Korea’s development cooperation effective to enhance the vocational training capacity of the BKTTC?</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.865</td>
<td>Effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>To what extent was Korea’s development cooperation effective to enhance the vocational training capacity of Bangladesh?</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.759</td>
<td>Somewhat effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>To what extent was Korea’s development cooperation effective to generate skilled manpower and technicians in Bangladesh?</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.768</td>
<td>Somewhat effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>To what extent was the Project successful to export trained workforce abroad for employment?</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.308</td>
<td>Not successful</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpretation and Discussion

Table-3 shows that the transfer of Korean technology & expertise was very relevant with a median value of 5.00 on a 5-point Likert-type scale to enhance the vocational training capacity of Bangladesh. The study indentified four major reasons as to why the transfer of Korean technology & expertise is very relevant in Bangladesh. These were: first, to disseminate technology in Bangladesh; second,
to fill-up the knowledge and technological gaps; third, to get familiarity with the modern technology and new technology, and fourth, to develop technical skills of the instructors. Nonetheless, the transfer of Korean technology was criticized to some extent by some respondents. Since Korean technology is very modern, the instructors require advanced training in line with the level of technology. Hence, building absorptive capacity is needed. Moreover, there is less application of Korean technology in Bangladesh as in the case of automobile.

The study reveals that Korean government (KOICA) provided adequate volume of equipment with a median value of 4.00 to implement the Project. The study found that equipments are modern and their technical level was better as a whole. However, the volume of invitational training provided by the KOICA was somewhat adequate with a median value of 3.00. The study identified the two key reasons. These reasons were: first, training period was short compared to the needs of the trainees; and second, only 16 instructors received invitational training in Korea out of about 68 instructors in the face of intense needs. Thus, the volume of invitational training did not meet the needs of the Training Centre optimally.

They study reveals that the instructors satisfactorily benefited from invitational training to develop their skills and knowledge corresponding to their jobs with a median value of 4.00 on a 5-Point Likert-type scale. Nevertheless, invitational training was not fully efficient to develop instructors' knowledge and skills. In this regard, the study identified four key reasons. These were: first, invitational training in Korea as part of the Project has enabled the instructors to gather new knowledge and learn about new technology. However, the training period was short in comparison with the needs and expectations of the instructors; second, not so much emphasis on core courses; third, less emphasis on practical orientation; and fourth, not having proper alignment or matching or lack of consistency with the syllabus or course curriculum of vocational training.

The study found that the extent to which the instructors benefited from the training provided by the Korean Experts at the BKTTC to develop their knowledge and skills has a median value of 4.00 which suggests that the training was satisfactory while not fully efficient. The study identified two key reasons. These were: first, while the Korean Experts were very dedicated, devoted and capable of quality instruction, the training was short and not comprehensive; and second, not all instructors received training from the Korean Experts about machine tools operations and other such related matters at the Training Centre.

Table-3 reveals that the median of the extent of utilization of the equipments provided by the KOICA is 3.00. Hence, the Korean equipments were somewhat efficiently used. In this connection, the study attempted to find out the reasons as to why the equipments provided by the KOICA were somewhat efficiently used. The study indentified four key reasons. These were: first, not all equipments have
been in use due to insufficient number of students; second, lack of technical skills of the instructors to use the sophisticated equipments provided by the KOICA; third, lack of advanced training in line with the level of the equipments; fourth, not all equipments were in use due to contraction of the duration of the course. Hence, the BKTTC has lack of absorptive capacity.

Table-3 shows that Korea’s development cooperation involving transfer of skills and technology was efficient to enhance the institutional capacity of the BKTTC with a median value of 4.00. Nevertheless, Korea’s development cooperation was not very efficient to enhance the institutional capacity of the BKTTC on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The study identified four key reasons as to why Korea’s development cooperation was not so efficient to enhance the institutional capacity of the BKTTC. These were: first, not all instructors are academically qualified enough to instruct the course as designed by Korean Experts; second, lack of knowledge or skills of the instructors how to handle the equipment; third, lack of advanced and continuous training for the instructors in line with the level of equipment; and fourth, lack of proper management and supervision.

It is evident from Table-3 that the median value signifying the extent of effectiveness of Korea’s development cooperation to enhance the vocational training capacity of the BKTTC is 4.00. Hence, Korea’s development cooperation involving transfer of knowledge and skills was effective. However, Korea’s development cooperation was not very effective to enhance the vocational training capacity of the BKTTC on a Likert-type scale. In this regard, Mr. Tariqul Islam, one of the respondents, stated “The Project provided the BKTTC with modern and sophisticated machines. But, we don’t know how to operate some machines as we were not given any instructional training by the Korean Experts how to handle it. We need advance training so that we could instruct". Moreover, another respondent stated “We don’t know how to operate some equipment. We don’t have any advanced training in line with the level of equipments.” Mr. Hasan, one the respondents, said “Even though the KOICA transferred advanced equipments and introduced modern curriculum for vocational training, we have insufficient trainees and not all instructors have sufficient academic level to handle the equipment and instruct the modern vocational training course”.

The study identified five key reasons as to why Korea’s development cooperation was not very effective to enhance the vocational training capacity of the BKTTC in spite of having sophisticated training equipment and Korean modern course curriculum. These key reasons were: first, not all instructors are academically qualified enough to instruct modern course-curriculum; second, lack of sufficient knowledge, skills and expertise (or prior-related knowledge) of a significant number of instructors of the BKTTC to utilize Korean advanced equipments and skills. Hence, the BKTTC has lack of absorptive capacity to utilize external recourses in the form of knowledge, skills and tools to enhance its vocational training capacity optimally; third, lack of advanced and continuous training for the instructors in line with the level of equipment. Thus, not all equipments have been used to
generate maximum benefits; fourth, insufficient number of trainees since the vocational training could not meet their needs optimally; and fifth, some of trades of the BKTTC such as Automobile trade have lack of sufficient raw materials for the trainees that affect or interrupt organizing vocational training fruitfully.

The study revealed that Korea’s development cooperation (project-type cooperation) was moderately or somewhat effective with a median value of 3.00 to enhance the vocational training capacity of Bangladesh. As such, the vocational training capacity of the BKTTC has not enhanced optimally or largely. In this regard, the study identified that the Project was executed at only one technical training centre (TTC) in Bangladesh rather than focusing on other technical training centres. Hence, the improvement of the vocational training capacity of only one training centre does not necessarily lead to the enhancement the entire vocational training capacity of Bangladesh. The whole system of VET in Bangladesh is poor and not so consistent with global standard. It requires government’s appropriate policy focusing on both upgrading instructors’ quality and institutional capability of all technical training centres.

The study found that Korea’s development cooperation was somewhat effective to generate skilled workforce and technicians in Bangladesh with a median value of 3.00. In this connection, the study identified three key reasons as to why Korea’s development cooperation was not very effective to generate skilled workforce in Bangladesh. These were: first, difficulty of students to get through the advanced course without having prior background or insufficient prior knowledge (often known as prior-related knowledge) on vocational education; second, less emphasis on practical class due to contraction of duration of the training course. Therefore, there is less scope to use technology to develop skills; third, not all instructors are qualified enough to instruct the modern course curriculum and utilize the modern technology transferred from Korea. Hence, lack of sufficient instructional capacity or necessary skills of a significant number of instructors served as a stumbling block to generate skilled workforce and technicians in Bangladesh out of the Project.

Generating overseas employment was one of the major or core objectives of the Project. However, the median value (2.00) points out that the Project was not successful to export trained workforce abroad including Korea. In this case, the study identified that there is no quota or direct channel for overseas employment for the trainees of the BKTTC. The concerned authorities of both governments-Korea and Bangladesh have not undertaken any measure for overseas employment of the trainees in Korea as part of the vocational training under KOICA’s Project.

The Notion of Absorptive Capacity

The notion of absorptive capacity is being largely focused in the arena of organizational learning and innovation as well as international development cooperation in the form of transfer of skills and
technology to the developing countries. The notion of absorptive capacity was first used by Cohen and Levinthal (1990) to refer to the ability of a firm to recognize the value of new, external information, assimilate it, and apply it to commercial ends. Simply, absorptive capacity has been defined as the firm’s ability to deal with or utilize external knowledge (Schimidt, 2005; Astrid, Cristina and Ruzana, 2008). Omar, Takim and Nawawi (2011) suggest that absorptive capacity is the ability of a firm to assimilate external technology, that is, the imported technology (e.g. knowledge, skills and tools). Thus, absorptive capacity can be understood as the ability of a firm or an organization to assimilate and utilize external resources including knowledge, skills and technology or tools (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990; Vinding, 2000; Knudsen, Dalum and Villumsen, 2001; Astrid, Cristina and Ruzana, 2008; Omar, Thakim and Nawawi, 2011). Hence, absorptive capacity is pivotal to maximize the benefits from the external resources such as knowledge, skills, and tools.

Building Absorptive Capacity for Effective Development Cooperation in Bangladesh

Usually, the firms, institutions and organizations in the least developed countries (LDCs) are characterized by very low levels of absorptive capacity (Astrid, Cristina and Ruzana, 2008). Being a least developed country, Bangladesh is not an exception to this. Low level of absorptive capacity is a difficulty to capitalize on development cooperation, in particular, project type cooperation in the form of transfer of skills and technology. Thus, development cooperation to be effective, building absorptive capacity has broader implications in the context of Bangladesh. However, the BKTTC, the recipient organization, has failed to build on absorptive capacity to take advantage of the transfer of Korean technology and skills. The ability of an organization to utilize the external resources is principally based on its level of prior-related knowledge which is greatly related to the level of knowledge and skills of the employees of the organizations.

The prior-related knowledge involves basic skills, a shared language, positive attitudes toward learning, relevant prior experience as well as knowledge of the most recent scientific or technological developments in a given field (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990; Omar, Thakim and Nawawi, 2011). Apart from prior-related knowledge, necessary educational level and technical skills of the employees as well as managerial skills of an organization are crucial to assimilate and utilize external resources (Schimidt, 2005; Gray, 2006). Cohen and Levinthal (1990) held that the firm’s investment on research & development (R&D) and advanced technical training can be catalyst for building absorptive capacity. As Schimidt (2005) puts forward that the level of education, experience and training of the employees has a positive influence on the firm’s level of absorptive capacity. Moreover, firm’s HRM practices have a positive association with employees’ performance and innovation as it could motivate an employee for better performance (Vinding, 2000; Omar, Thakim and Nawawi, 2011). As such, employees’ necessary education and training, and motivation as well are critical to develop absorptive capacity and thereby harness the maximum benefits out of external resources (e.g. knowledge, skills and tools). Hence, the study puts forward the following model for building absorptive
capacity within an organizational structure to maximize the effectiveness of development cooperation in Bangladesh:

| Table 4: Building Absorptive Capacity for Effective Development Cooperation |
|---|---|---|
| **Means** | **Process** | **Outcomes (Achievement)** |
| 1. Enhancing Employees’ Ability: (HRD Practices) | Absorptive Capacity | • Maximizing the benefits from external resources such as knowledge, skills and tools (development cooperation); |
| • Need assessment (need analysis) | | • Enhancement of technological capability; |
| • Employee training & development; | | • Enhancement of institutional capacity; |
| • Training evaluation & feedback | | • Achieving organizational goals. |
| • Providing updated information on technology and so on. | | |
| 2. Raising Employees’ Motivation and Job Satisfaction: (HRM Practices) | | |
| • Better compensation; | | |
| • Merit-based promotion; | | |
| • Job security; | | |
| • Incentives for better performance and skills and so on. | | |
| 3. Building Organizational Capability: | | |
| • Organizational development; | | |
| • Management development; | | |
| • Supervision and monitoring; | | |
| • Advanced and continuous technical training in line with technological development; | | |
| • Research & Development (R&D); | | |

The Table 4 represents a theoretical model that shows how an organization through building absorptive capacity within an organizational structure, could utilize external resources involving transfer of knowledge, skills and tools and thereby maximize the benefits from development cooperation. The means for building absorptive capacity are: a) enhancing employees’ ability (HRD practices) which involves identifying organizational needs to determine whether training is necessary.

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1 The means are the key factors that contribute to building absorptive capacity within an organizational structure. The factors are classified into three areas such as HRD practices, HRM practices and organizational capacity development.
for the associated personnel dealing with external resources, providing training in line with needs, training evaluation and feedback, and so on; b) raising employees’ motivation and job satisfaction (HRM practices) which involves better compensation, merit-based promotion opportunity corresponding to service, incentives for better performance and skills, and so on; and finally c) developing or building organizational capacity (organizational capacity development) which involves organizational development, management development, sound supervision & monitoring, research & development, advanced and continuous technical training in line with technological development, knowledge sharing and so on. In this way, an organization can develop absorptive capacity\(^1\) and thereby maximize the effectiveness of development cooperation. The resulting absorptive capacity of the recipient organization may lead to the enhancement of technological capability and institutional capacity, and realization of organizational goals and so on alongside maximizing the effectiveness of development cooperation.

**Policy Recommendations**

To enhance the vocational training capacity of the BKTTC, it is very necessary to ensure the quality of the instructors. However, as far as the research findings are concerned, a significant number of instructors of the BKTTC are not well-educated and trained enough to instruct the modern course curriculum and deal with the sophisticated equipments or technology. Hence, the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) should undertake proper measures in building absorptive capacity of the BKTTC and thereby make best use of development cooperation in the form of transfer of knowledge, skills and tools;

While the KOICA provided adequate technology to enhance the institutional and vocational training capacity of the BKTTC, due to lack of absorptive capacity, its institutional and vocational training capacity has not enhanced optimally. Therefore, this is recommended that the Government should focus on advanced and continuous skill development trainings for vocational instructors in line with technological development and global standard so as to develop absorptive capacity.

One of the important objectives of the BKTTC is to produce highly skilled manpower. However, until and unless the BKTTC could ensure quality instructors through organizing advanced and continuous skill development training, it would be very difficult on the part of the BKTTC or the BMET to produce highly skilled manpower in Bangladesh. In this connection, the Government of Bangladesh should establish training academy or training institutions across the country especially for the capacity building of the vocational training instructors.

\(^1\) Building absorptive capacity has been treated as the process which paves the way for maximizing international development cooperation in the form of transfer of knowledge, skills and technology, and organizational effectiveness.
Recruiting very smart and well-educated instructors can be a building block to enhance the vocational training capacity of Bangladesh. The study shows that due to lack of instructors’ absorptive capacity or necessary skills, the benefits from development cooperation were not maximized. Thus, it is very necessary for the BMET to recruit very smart and well-educated vocational instructors for its technical training centres (TTCs). Hence, it is recommended that recruitment rules stating a better qualification for the instructors (e.g., at least a 2nd class university bachelor degree in engineering or technology) should be framed or modified. Accordingly, a large number of smart and well-educated or skilled instructors should be employed in various TTCs across the country to meet the demand for smart and well-educated instructors.

Before undertaking any development project or transferring skills and technology in Bangladesh corresponding to VET, the KOICA should provide sufficient technical trainings to the vocational instructors not only in Korea but also in Bangladesh focusing on the operation and maintenance of training equipments and instruction of course-curriculum in a comprehensive manner. Moreover, the KOICA has to ensure whether or not right persons are getting overseas training based on merits and dedications throughout the service.

Apart from HRD practices, it is very necessary to enhance the morale and satisfaction of the vocational instructors corresponding to their job. Hence, sound HRM practices are necessary including providing incentives for quality instructors. The level of absorptive capacity of the BKTTC can be enhanced through developing organizational capability of the BKTTC focusing on management development, sound supervision & monitoring, research and development (R&D), knowledge sharing, and so on.

Finally, to enhance the vocational training capacity of Bangladesh, all the technical training centres and vocational training institutes should be upgraded through employing skilled and smart instructors, providing sufficient equipment and training materials to the training centres, formulating standard course curriculum as well as building institutional capacities. To develop institutional capacities may require building absorptive capacities of the vocational training centres. All the vocational trainings should be connected with country’s National Technical and Vocational Qualification Framework (NTVQF) so that the trainees’ skills and standard can be recognized nationally and internationally. This may lead to a significant increase of the trainees’ participation at the TTCs and VTIS of Bangladesh.

**Conclusion**

The main objective of international development cooperation involving transfer of knowledge, skills and technology is to facilitate human and institutional capacity building of the firms and governmental organizations of the developing partner countries and thereby support them to spur their economic
and social development. However, as suggested by the empirical evidence that, all instructors of the BKTTC are not identical in terms of skills and academic qualification, nor all instructors have overseas training or advanced training in line with the level of advanced technology. As such, the BKTTC could not get optimum efficacy out of Korean technology & expertise to enhance its institutional and vocational training capacity. Hence, there is an urgent need for building absorptive capacity at the organizational structure of the BKTTC through applying the aforesaid model. Building absorptive capacity is very necessary on the part of any organization in order to benefit from external resources. Until and unless the recipient organization ensures its level of absorptive capacity sufficiently, it would not maximize the effectiveness out of development cooperation. Hence, it is the responsibility of both the partners, developed and developing, to make development cooperation effective on the basis of prioritizing developing country's needs, building absorptive capacity, stressing shared responsibility and mutual accountability, and so on.

References


Health Care Situation of Migrant Slum Women: Evidence from Sylhet City of Bangladesh

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Abstract: Women are the most neglected section and hold a disadvantageous position in society despite the fact that they represent half of the total population. Especially, among them are the slum women who lead extremely underprivileged lifestyle. This study endeavours to know the real condition of migrant women living in slums, as well as their health care situation. Findings show that, slum women have very limited access to economic and social opportunities, specifically the health care situation as well as housing and sanitation in the slum areas of Sylhet city are very miserable. No standard sanitary latrines or urinals are available here and the slum people often defecate in open and kuchcha latrines. Moreover, the women are not aware about the hygienic conditions and dump garbage here and there so that they incessantly suffer from a variety of diseases like headache, skin diseases, worm (an intestinal parasite), fever, cough and cold, gastric ulcer, blood pressure, toothache, diarrhoea, jaundice and dysentery. However, most of the women go for modern medical assistance, although some of them use traditional treatment such as Kabiraji, homeopathy etc. As they maintain a low quality of life, they are not much aware of their health seeking behaviour, particularly reproductive health seeking behaviour.

Keywords: slum women, migrated, sanitation, health care situation, hygiene, reproductive health seeking behaviour.

Introduction

In the modern world migration is a very familiar occurrence to every class of people. In need of a better life people migrate from one area to another. People migrate for various reasons. In developing countries generally poor people migrate from rural to urban areas for a better job to improve their disadvantageous position (Chowdhury et al., 2012:124). Usually these poor people stay in the slum after coming to the urban area. Nowadays rural to urban migration has increased tremendously. As a result, through out the world slum is a regular part of every city, whether big or small. That is, no country with a city can escape from this growing problem. Slum is a problem in the modern world.
because the condition of the slum is poor, congested housing, disorganized families, low literacy rate, deviant behavior, and high population density etc., however this situation vary from region to region (Das 2000).

In Bangladesh the socio-economic condition of the northeast part is totally different from the rest of the country due to diverse conditions e.g., presence of hill tracts, tea gardens, forests, and mineral resources as well as natural calamities (Islam et al.. 2006:30). Sylhet is one of the major cities of this area where a large number of low-income workers live in the slums. In rural areas of Sylhet division, landlessness and scarcity of jobs work as a push factor for the people to migrate. Also in Sylhet city job opportunities attract the poor people to resettle in that city. It has resulted in rapid rural to urban migration, the numbers and the coverage of slum area is growing enormously day by day (Hussain, 2007: 67-69). General condition of the slum areas in the world is similar. In Bangladesh, the living condition and the whole situation, particularly the sanitation and health condition in the slum areas of Sylhet city, is also severe like other big cities of the world. The sanitation system is totally exposed and no standard sanitary latrines or urinals are available here and the slum inhabitants are accustomed to defecate in open spaces, hedges, drains and bushes. Only about 16% of the slum dwellers of Sylhet city have access to sanitary latrines (Sarkar et al., 2001). As a result, many kinds of diseases spread through air, water, soil, flies, mosquitoes etc. The deteriorating sanitation situation causes severe environmental degradation in Sylhet city (Ahmed M. et al.. 2006).

All over the world women hold the disadvantageous position in the society compared to men. As a result they are more vulnerable to any kind of morbid situation. In the slum women’s health is seriously affected by the outrageous environmental deterioration. Lack of facilities is the normal scenario of slum area. Sanitation, pure drinking water, and reproductive health facilities is scarcely available for the women in that area (Nahar et al.. 2011: 3). The pregnant women are much affected by malnutrition because of the low income, uncertainty of income, insufficiency of nutritious food, bad food habit, continuous illness etc. Lack of pure water for household cleanliness also causes various diseases of women such as dysentery, cholera, eye infection including trachoma, worm infections diarrhea etc. (Rahman 2013:3; Khan 2008:255; Ahmed et al.. 2010: 265). Lack of improved sanitation is associated with intestinal worms, such as hookworms, round worms and tapeworms. Intestinal worms can also lead to anemia, which for the girls increase the risks of complication in childbirth. So, we find that the health condition of women living in slums is very pathetic and they are not even aware of their situation. Therefore, it is important to know about the health and health care situation of women living in slum areas. In this research we endeavor to investigate the health care situation of migrant women living in slum areas of Sylhet city.
Objectives of the Study
The broad objective of this study is to investigate “the health care situation of women living in the slum area. This broad objective has been split into several specific objectives. These are,

1. To know the socio-economic condition of the respondent’s household;
2. To investigate the living condition of the slum women;
3. To find out the patterns of frequent diseases of slum women
4. To identify types of treatment used by the slum women; and
5. To know the reproductive health seeking behavior of slum women.

Significance of the study
Health is one of the important human rights that strengthens the persistence of human being and help them to increase basic capabilities. It is considered the important aspect by which humans can escape premature mortality. The level of ill health reduces the amount and productivity of man. Therefore human health is to a great extent essential for human and social development. Particularly women’s health status is very important because child health is greatly dependent on mother’s health.

But in slums the common factors are poverty, poor-quality households, over-crowding, concentration of low-income people, skilled and unskilled manpower, limited health care service and unhealthy environment, awkward social structure etc. For these reasons health care situation of slum people are very poor, especially women’s situation is most vulnerable. Sufficient research papers, articles are not available about the health care facilities and health condition of the slum women in Bangladesh, especially about the women living in Sylhet slums. As a result, most of the people in our society do not known about their pitiful condition. Therefore, we think it will serve as an important document about the health condition of slum women in the field of research and policy makers could take necessary initiatives to improve the health care facilities of women living in the slum areas.

Theories and Concepts
The concept of slum
In Bangladesh, both slums and squatter settlements are known as bustees, while the squatter settlements are also known as bastuhara colonies. There is no agreed single definition of slum. It means a housing area of very low quality. Poor families typically inhabit slums. More generally, a slum is a densely populated urban area that is characterized by a generally low standard of living. UN Habitat (2005) defines slums as a wide range of low-income settlements and/or human living conditions. Most of these are one-roomed dwellings and extremely over-crowded. Centre for Urban Studies et al. (2006) defined slums as housing areas characterized by diverse conditions e.g., predominantly poor housing, very high population density and room crowding, very poor environmental services, particularly water and sanitation facilities, extremely low socioeconomic status of the majority of residents and lack of security of tenure. UN Habitat (2003) also defines Slums as a multi-dimensional term. Comprehensively, they are characterized by the following:
A lack of basic services
Substandard housing or illegal and inadequate building structures
Overcrowding and high density
Unhealthy living conditions and hazardous locations
Insecure tenure
Irregular or informal settlements
Poverty and social exclusion
Minimum settlement size

Health condition of slum women
The Ministry of Health itself admits that the health indicators for the urban poor are worse than for the rural poor, due to the unavailability of urban primary health care and poor living conditions (Asian Development Bank 2008, p. 181). S. Mookherji and D. Bishai (2006) in their Paper "The Demand for Health Care among Urban Slum Residents in Dhaka, Bangladesh", reveal that urban health systems in Bangladesh must work to improve access to care by the poor. Evidence from this study also shows that the urban poor view health care as both an investment in future productivity and as a consumption good; as such, urban health policy should view pre-paid financing schemes as a practical strategy for caring for the urban poor.

Khan M.M. H. et al., (2008) conducted a cross sectional study on “Socio-economic factors” explaining differences in public health-related variables among the women in Bangladesh. They found that a significantly higher percentage of women living in slums who came from the countryside, had a poorer status by household characteristics, had less access to mass media, and had less education than women not living in slums. A study conducted by the Divisions of Infectious Disease and Epidemiology, School of Public Health, University of California (2007) on “Slum health: Diseases of neglected populations”. The study found that constant neglect of ever-expanding urban slum populations in the world could inevitably lead to greater expenditure and diversion of health care funds for the management of end-stage complications of diseases that are preventable.

Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE), Women and Housing Rights Program (2008) are working on “Women, Slums and Urbanization” across the Americas, Asia, and Africa. COHRE interviewed women and girls living in six global cities, representing some twenty different (and indeed, diverse) slum communities. The stories shared by these women and girls elucidated the very personal struggles which women face in their day-today lives, as well as the broader connections that these struggles have to issues of gender-based violence, gender discrimination, and women's housing insecurity. In turn – as this report makes clear – for women, these issues are themselves intimately connected to the global trend towards urban growth.
Vijay M. S. (2010) conducted a research titled “Does illiteracy influence pregnancy complications among women in the slums of greater Mumbai”. In this study, he examines utilization of health services available to the women in the slums of hilly area in Mumbai and checks whether non-utilization of antenatal care (ANC) and having reproductive health problems during pregnancy create complications during child delivery vis-à-vis standard of living index constructed from household amenities, housing quality, drinking water, electricity and toilet facilities. Using cluster sampling of a sample size of 346 reproductive women who have given at least one live birth prior to the survey on the education of the study women, antenatal care indicators, antenatal check-ups and reproductive health problems during pregnancy and complications during child delivery among the slum dwellers of Ramabai Nagar was studied. The findings using logistic regression reveal unimaginably low level of utilization of health services by illiterate women in the study area. Besides these, there is evidence that these respondents did not go for ANC and faced reproductive health problems during pregnancy that created problems during child delivery, particularly to illiterate mothers. Therefore, we can conclude that women’s condition in slum area is severe.

Materials and methods

Research area and location

Sylhet is located in northeast side in Bangladesh (BB, 1992). Since the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971, the population of Sylhet has been gradually increasing. People migrate to Sylhet city from different areas of Bangladesh because of better economic opportunities (Hussain, 2007: 67-69). The research was
conducted in Sheikhghat, Bagbari and Kadamtali areas under Sylhet City Corporation. From the study areas, three slums were selected purposively. Among the slums of the study area as representative sample Ratan Miar Colony, Moinuddin Colony and Kashem Miar Colony were selected purposively.

Research design and data collection technique
To carry out the research, a descriptive research design has been followed and methodological triangulation (social survey and FGD) has been used to collect relevant data. In the case of social survey, semi-structured questionnaire and in case of FGD, guide questionnaire have been used.

Population and sampling of the study
All married women who live in Sheikhghat, Bagbari and Kadamtali area slums have been considered as population for the study. Among these slum dwellers 60 married women from each slum were selected as sample as per their availability during data collection. In case of final selection, 20 respondents have been taken from each of the slum.

Research instrument and analysis techniques
To collect quantitative primary data, a semi-structured questionnaire was designed for the social survey. Accordingly, the research instrument of this study was a questionnaire. SPSS and several statistical tools were used to analyze the data.

Results

Table 1: Socio-economic condition of slum women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family member</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9+</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below primary</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>6.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary or above</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monthly Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000-3000</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The socio-economic variables are very important to evaluate the inner situation of studied subject. In this study, respondent’s age, family members, education, monthly income and expenditure etc. are used to indicate the Socio-economic condition of slum dwellers. Table 1 shows that, half of the respondent’s (50%) age is twenty five to thirty four years old, while one fourth (25%) is fifteen to twenty and rest of them (16% and 8%) are thirty-five to forty-four years and forty-five to fifty-four years old respectively. The study also specified that, more than half (65%) of the respondents’ family members are four to six. Similarly, an insignificant (10%) number of the slum women’s families have one to three members. Likewise a little but significant number (17%) of inhabitants lived in the family of seven to nine members. Yet again, a negligible percentage (8.33%) of respondents belonged to families whose size is nine and above.

Aforementioned table illustrate that, large number of slum women (53.3%) are illiterate whereas more than one third (38%), and small number of respondents can sign or have primary and secondary level of education respectively. From the study, it is found that about seventy percent, twenty-eight percent, and two percent respondents received Tk.1000-3000, Tk. 3001-5000 and Tk. 5000 and above as income. Again Table-1 shows, that half of the respondents (50%) and more than one-third of respondents (43.33%), have monthly expenditure of Tk. 4001-7001 and Taka 1001-4000 taka respectively.

Living condition of slum women

Housing conditions and sources of water
The study demonstrates that overwhelming number of the respondents (91.67%) live in one-room houses. One the contrary, only 8.33 percent of the respondents lives in two room houses. Besides this, maximum number (80%) of the respondents’ rooms have no window and a few of the (20%) rooms have just one window. Near about all of the respondents (95%) informed that they have electricity in their houses. On the question about the roof, two-third (66.67%) said that the roof of their room is made of tin with cane and one third (33.33%) mentioned that it is made of tin only. Accordingly, 58.34 percent respondent’s floor of the rooms is made of mud. Only 41.66 percent of the floors are built with brick. The percentage of the use of tube-well water was only 19.66 and 80.33 percent used pond, river or tap water supplied by the city corporation for cooking and other purposes.

Cooking, fuel and monthly expenditure for food
As the slum is a heavily populated area and the condition of the slum dwellers is extremely poor. They have to live in the slum in great difficulty in one or two rooms, so the aspiration for a separate kitchen is far from their thoughts. More than three fourth (88.34%) respondents said that they used open place beside their house for cooking purposes. Approximately seven percent (6.67%) of them cooked inside their room. Only 4.99% used some other place for cooking. From the study, it is revealed that near half (43.33%) of the respondents use gas for cooking, 30% use husk and 23.34% use firewood for this purpose. Only 3.33% use kerosene for cooking. Besides this, more than half (65%) of the respondents said that their monthly expenditure for food is Tk. 2000-3000 and other 24.93%, 10.07% said Tk.3000* and Tk.1000-2000 respectively.

Table 2: Residential facilities in Slum area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing conditions and sources of water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Room</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>91.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>08.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Window</td>
<td>No window</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One window</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>95.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>05.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof of the Room</td>
<td>Tin and Cane</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>66.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tin</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of floor</td>
<td>Grubby</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brick built</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>41.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of water</td>
<td>Pond, river or Tap</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>83.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tube well</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking, Fuel and Monthly Expenditure for Food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place for cooking</td>
<td>Open place along with room</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>88.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In room</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>06.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>05.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel for cooking</td>
<td>Gas</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kerosene</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Husk</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Firewood</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sanitation and hygienic condition
From the study, it is revealed that near one-fourth (22%) of the respondents use sanitary and pit-latrine and about 58 percent and 20 percent used kuchcha and open latrines. More than three-fourth (78.33%) of the respondent said that they wash their hand by ash after defecating. On the other hand, 11.67% mentioned that they use soup but ten percent responded negatively in that case. Table-3 shows that, most of them responded negatively in case of practices of washing hand by soup before eating but fifteen percent responded positively. Besides this, most also negatively responded to using
sandals but 13.33% responded positively. Table-3 shows that near half (41.66%) of the respondents mentioned that they use ash to brush their teeth; following that, twenty-five percent use tooth powder and other seven percent and thirteen percent use tooth paste and charcoal respectively. Of the practice of boiling drinking water, ninety-five percent respondents said that they are not using boiled water but other five percent said they use boiled drinking water. Three quarter (75%) of the respondents dumped garbage into ditches. Rest of the respondents mentioned that they dumped garbage in drain (11.67%), dustbin (8.34%), and only 4.99% respondent dumped garbage in a specific place on the roadside.

**Table 3: Sanitation and hygienic condition of slum women**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Types of latrine</td>
<td>Sanitation and Pit</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Kuchcha</em></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials to wash hand</td>
<td>Soap</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>88.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after urinate/defecating</td>
<td>Ash</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do not wash</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practices about using Sandal</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>87.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practices of boiled water</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for drinking</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>95.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brushing Materials</td>
<td>Tooth paste</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tooth powder</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coal</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ash</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>42.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place for dumping garbage</td>
<td>Dustbin</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drain</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ditch</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In a specific place</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Patterns of common diseases and treatments used by slum women**

The common diseases suffered by the slum dwellers are headache, skin diseases, worm (an intestinal parasite), fever, cough and cold, gastric/ulcer, blood pressure, toothache, diarrhea, jaundice and dysentery. Overwhelming number of the respondents reported that they go for modern medical assistance. Some of them use traditional treatment such as such *Kabiraji*, homeopathy etc.
In this study it is found that, less than one fourth (25%) of the respondents suffered from worm. Among them one third (33%) and less than half (47%) of the respondent take homeopathic and allopathic medicines respectively. However, only a small number (13%) of the respondents do not take medicine for this disease. More than half of the (58.3%) respondents have blood pressure. To reduce the severity of disease near half (49%) of the respondents take medicine regularly. On the other hand more than one fourth (29%) and less than one fourth (22%) of the respondents take medicine irregularly and take homemade medicines (sour things).

Besides this, more than one third (42%) of the respondents suffered from skin disease. By means of treatment among them less than one third (32%) of the respondents take homeopathic medicine and similarly the same number (32%) of the respondents do not take medicine. On the other hand less than one quarter (20%) of the respondents take allopathic medicine and an insignificant number (16%) of the respondents use lime (CHUN) or others. Gastric/ulcer is also a common disease in the slum. More than half (58.3%) of the respondents are suffered from this disease. As a treatment for this disease insignificant number (14.2%) of the respondents take medicine regularly and one third (34.2%) of the respondents take medicine irregularly. But interestingly less than one fourth (22.8%) of the respondents take pantavat (soaked rice) regularly as a curative treatment. Along with less than half (42%) of the respondents suffered from fever, cough and cold and maximum number (64%) number of the respondents bring medicine from pharmacy. However insignificant numbers (12%) of the respondents go to the nearest government hospital to consult the doctor. Similarly one quarter (24%) of the respondents take twigs and tendrils.

Nearly half (45.2%) of the respondents suffered from headache. Among them less than one third (33.3%), and more than other one third (37%) of the respondents take medicine from pharmacy and take ointment correspondingly. Accordingly a small number (11.1%) of the respondents uses Tabij (amulet) and small but significant number (18.5%) of the respondents do not take medicine for relief from the headache. Near one third of the respondents suffered from diarrhea and more than half (52.6%) of them take oral rehydration saline. Besides this less than one third (31.5%) of the
respondents take medicine from the nearest pharmacy. However an insignificant number (10.5% and 5.2%) of the respondents take rice with froth and take medicine from doctor of the nearest hospital/health centre in that order.

A small but significant (20.3%) number of the respondents have jaundice and half of them take Kabiraji treatment. One fourth (25%) of the respondents take homeopathic medicine. However, small number of the respondents (8.33%) takes allopathic medicine and noticeable number (16.6%) of the respondents take Jarfuk treatment. In addition, near one fourth (23.2%) of the respondents get dysentery and among them maximum number (85.7%) of the respondents take allopathic medicine. However rest (14.2%) of the respondents takes homeopathy medicine.

Furthermore, more than one quarter (28.3%) suffered from toothache. Among them overwhelming number (35.2%) of the respondents take medicine from footpath and more than one quarter (29.4%) of the respondents take medicine from pharmacy. Conversely near one fourth (23.5%) of the respondents use mouthwash with boiled salted water and rest (11.7%) of the respondents do not take medicine or any other initiatives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worm (An intestinal parasite)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Take medicine (homeopathy)</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Take medicine (Allopathic)</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Do not take medicine</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood Pressure</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>Take medicine irregularly*</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Take medicine regularly*</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Take sour or other</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin Disease</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Take medicine (Allopathic)</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Take medicine (homeopathy)</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Use lime(CHUN) or others</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Do not take medicine</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gastric Ulcer</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>Take medicine regularly*</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Take medicine irregularly*</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Take Pantavat</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fever, Cough and cold</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Bring medicine from pharmacy*</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>64.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Take medicine from prescribed doctor of the nearest govt. hospital*</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Take Twigs and Tendril</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headache</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>Take medicine from pharmacy*</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Use ointment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Use Tabij (amulet)</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Do not take medicine</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diarrhea</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>Take Oral saline</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>52.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Take rice with froth</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reproductive health seeking behaviour of slum women

Health care centre related knowledge

From the study, it is found that the slum women are aware of the existence of health care centre. According to Figure 2 more than three quarter (78.33%) of the respondents said that there are health care centres in their area, while nearly twenty-two percent of them said there is no health care centre in the locality. Among the respondents, 63.33%, 3.33% and 33.33% know about the health care facilities of government hospital, private clinic and NGO clinic respectively.

![Percentage](image)

**Figure 2: Knowledge of healthcare centre**

Health Care in Pregnancy Period

Table-5 shows that near two-third (61.67%) of the respondents said that they take health care in their pregnancy period but others (38.33%) responded negatively. The study found that of the respondents who had taken health care services in pregnancy period, more than half (59.46%) go to government hospital for pregnancy related issues. More than one-fourth (27.03%) respondents mentioned that
they go to “Surjer Hashi” Clinic. Following this, others responded that they take services from health workers (13.51%) who visit door to door of the slum area for providing health care service.

**Vaccination and Family Planning Initiatives**

Below table show that, three fourth (75%) of the respondents mentioned that they take vaccine during pregnancy period, and 25% of the respondents does not take vaccination in pregnancy period. From the study it is found that women who take vaccine in their pregnancy period nearly three fourth (73.34%) of them take it from government hospital. Besides this, 15.56% and 11.10% take it from “SurjerHashi” clinic and other place respectively.

![Figure 3: Healthcare during pregnancy](image)

In case of the family planning initiatives, less than half (45%) of the respondents mentioned that they are conscious of Family Planning (FP) method and they practiced different FP methods for controlling childbirth. In most cases, women are the major clients of family planning initiatives. Among this group of respondents, more than three quarter (81.48%) take pill for birth control, 7.41% take injection as birth control initiatives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge about health care centre</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>78.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of health care centre from where service taken</td>
<td>Government hospital</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>63.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private clinic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NGO clinic</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response about taking health care in pregnancy period</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>61.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, mostly visited place for health care service</td>
<td>Government hospital</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>59.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Surjerhashi clinic</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health worker</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>13.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response about taking</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vaccine during pregnancy period</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of taking vaccine</td>
<td>Government hospital</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>73.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Surjerhashi clinic</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information about Family Planning Practices</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods used for FP</td>
<td>Pill</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>81.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Injection</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discussion**

Slum is an unfortunate result of rapid urbanization, where most of the poor people live with insufficient civics services. The features of slums in Sylhet city are not different from the other squatter settlements or slums in Bangladesh. The study describes that, all of the slum dwellers have indigent socio-economic condition especially their level of education and income is inadequate. Consequently, they are not conscious of as well as unable to get the health services after meeting their everyday needs. From the study it is found that near about all of the respondents live in one room houses which have no windows and most of the floors as well as roofs of the houses are made of mud and tin with cane respectively.

Besides this, the slum is a densely populated area and all of the respondents live within a congested environment where they have no separate kitchen. Therefore, majority of the respondent used open places beside their house for cooking purpose while a large number of women use gas for cooking and rest of them depend on husk or firewood for cooking.

As most of the people live hand to mouth, their living condition is not up to the standard at all. The study shows that sanitation and hygiene condition is worse as most of the women said that they use kuchcha or open latrine and do not wash their hand by ash or soap after defecating or before eating. Similarly they also informed that they are not aware of the sources of water. As a result they use pond and supply water rather than boiled drinking water. However, the condition of the place of water supply is not clean. A small slab stands in an open place, which is widely used for the purpose of bathing and daily domestic work. Both men and women use it. The slab is always slippery and covered by moss.

This research also specifies that respondents dump garbage on the roadside and drains. Therefore an unhealthy environment persists in the slum areas. Due to unhealthy situation women commonly suffered from headache, skin diseases, worm, fever, cough and cold, gastric/ ulcer, blood pressure, toothache, diarrhoea, jaundice, dysentery and gout etc. Overwhelming number of the respondents
reported that they go for modern medical assistance. Some of them use traditional medicine such as Kabiraji, homeopathy etc. In case of toothache, headache and skin disease generally they do not take medicine, while suffering from gastric, diabetes or blood pressure they take medicine irregularly. It is found from the informal discussion that most of the women are not aware about their common diseases and some of them could not take proper remedies, as they have no money to get the treatment or buy medicine. However, respondents mentioned that they took vaccine during pregnancy period. Though more than half of the respondents state that they are conscious of family planning method and they practiced different family planning initiative for controlling childbirth but the number is not significant. It also reveals that health care services are not available for the slum women as they are unable to access expensive health care.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Due to of rapid urbanization people gradually migrate from rural to urban area expecting to get better opportunities which are preconditions for better life. Typically poor citizens, migrants from others area, are the inhabitants of the slums. Among them women are the most deprived section in the slum who leads the most terrible life. This study reveals the real situation of slum women, their living condition and their health care situation. Specifically slum women of study area live in a position that they have commonly the culture of poverty and originally excluded from various basic needs like poor housing facilities, lack of spaces, inadequate facilities for cooking and fuel, scarcity of water etc. In addition, poor sanitation and hygienic situation such as dumping garbage here and there, rarely washing hand with soap or ash after defecation or before eating, used open or Kuchcha latrine, does not use sandal in the toilet etc., are also common features of the slum in Sylhet City. Major findings of the study demonstrate that overall health care situation of slum women are inhuman. They are deprived of basic capabilities and always are incapable to enjoy the good life. To improve the health care situation of slum women following recommendations may be taken by the government or other organizations. These are

1. Governmental and non-governmental organizations should take necessary initiatives to increase the knowledge of hygiene of the slum women. In favor of this intention various campaigns can be arranged in the slum area.
2. Health worker should visit the area progressively more to make the women aware about their health care need especially reproductive health and a general healthy life.
3. Government should ensure the health services of poor people especially women’s in the governmental hospital and should remove all obstacles to getting the services.
4. Relevant authorities should employ income generating activities for the people living in slum area.
5. City corporation authority should improve the sanitation facility, water supply, dumping garbage facility in the slum area to ensure a clean and healthy environment.
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Public Participation and Lay Knowledge in Environmental Governance: A Case Study of Community Based Adaptation in Bangladesh

Shahadat Hossain Shakil¹ and Md. Musfiqur Rahman Bhuiya²

Abstract: This paper analyzes the debate of public participation within environmental governance process. In doing so, significance of local knowledge in climate change adaptation process has been evaluated. An adaptation project from the coastal areas of Bangladesh has been selected to reveal more specific result and to focus the study in a very specific angle. Local knowledge has been proved as a vital factor within the adaptation planning for coastal areas in the face of threat posed by climate change. Insights from similar studies has been drawn and evaluated. Finally public participation within the broader domain of environmental governance has been found inevitable.

Keywords: environmental governance, public participation, local knowledge, climate change adaptation, Bangladesh

Introduction

Stakeholder’s participation is a recurrent theme of environmental governance since 1960s, when environmental politics became institutionalized within western developed countries. Scientists, interest groups, media and local protests had significant influence in shaping the definition and resolution of environmental issues (Bulkeley and Mol, 2003). Involving communities and the public in governance makes instrumental sense, by improving the quality of decisions. Collaborative processes enable local actors to place their knowledge in the broader context of what state actors know, and vice versa (Innes et al., 2007 cited in Taylor and de Loë, 2012). Only recognizing expert knowledge as a valid basis for decision-making excludes the knowledge and experience of people who live and work in ecosystems (Taylor and Buttel, 1992 cited in Evans, 2012). Contextualized knowledge, in turn, can lead to problem-specific responses that are more likely to be accepted and supported by the public (Lach et al., 2005; van Ast and Boot, 2003 cited in Taylor and de Loë, 2012).

In contrast with the above mentioned supportive statement in favor of public participation and local knowledge integration in environmental policy making, German social theorist Ulrich Beck (1999) argued that politics is the key driver behind this inclusion of stakeholders process in the face of risk society. He states that,

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“in the face of this ‘risk society’, the conventional political institutions of modernity are increasingly...inadequate...as decision-making power, control and legitimacy increasingly locate outside the political system...which were previously considered un-political” (cited in Bulkeley and Mol, 2003).

Additionally, exclusions can become inherent in a decision making process, as the skills and knowledge required participating in deliberations restrict who is authorized to speak, along with what and how issues are debated (Demeritt, 2001 cited in Taylor and de Loë, 2012). Moreover, it is crucial to recognize the subtleties and complexities inherent in efforts to engage the public in decision-making and to avoid simplistic assumptions about the efficacy, transparency and public reach of community involvement processes (Rydin and Pennington, 2000; Cooke and Kothari, 2001 cited in Few et al., 2007).

In light of the discussion above this paper will assess the significance of public participation within environmental governance process through focusing on the importance of local knowledge in environmental decision making. As a case study specific community based adaptation project will be used to evaluate the research question mentioned earlier. Because,

“increase public involvement in many spheres of environmental management, to tackle future climate risks has been a logical step; this is particularly so for climate change adaptation, which is likely to be organized mostly at a non-global scale”(Adger, 2001).

Adaptive actions tend to be context and place specific, with implications for relatively delimited sets of stakeholders and requiring a knowledge base tailored to local settings (Few et al., 2007). Additionally, during community based adaptation process a combination of scientific knowledge and local knowledge is used for informed decision making (Reid et al., 2009).

Case Study
Practical Action Bangladesh in association with Asian Development Bank executed a project titled “Community Based Adaptation in Vulnerable Coastal Areas of Bangladesh – Innovation to Build Resilience”. This project has been implemented in Shyamnagar and Kaliganj upazilas (lower tier of district) of Satkhira district (Figure-1) from March 2011 to April 2013. The main goal of this initiative has been to improve the resilience of vulnerable community against natural disasters (cyclones, storm surge) and its following effects (salt water intrusion and salinity), climate change, climatic variability and extreme weather events (Practical Action Bangladesh, 2012). A Number of activities has been initiated under the project in association with local community and combining their inherited knowledge (to adapt with the changing climate) with the scientific knowledge and best practices (i.e. adaptive agriculture, adaptive aquaculture, local weather forecasting board, artificial aquifer tube well and community shelter home) (adopted from Practical Action Bangladesh and ADB 2013a). In this essay only adaptive agriculture practice will be focused on to evaluate the significance of local knowledge supported by the scientific community.
Salt water intrusion has affected surface and ground waters in the study area for the last couple of decades, leading to severe scarcity of water to drink and to irrigate crop fields. Soil salinity further threatened their agricultural practices shifting from rice-based farming to shrimp-farming base (Practical Action Bangladesh and ADB, 2013a). Modifying the threats to crop production is the most practiced adaptation strategy in Bangladesh (Ahmed, 2006 cited in Pender and Alliance, 2010). Traditionally they are coping with this threat through developing salt tolerant rice variety, homestead gardening and alternative livelihood options (Miah, 2010). Recent government initiatives like developing high yield salt tolerant rice variety through research in association with the local community’s knowledge and available adaptive species fostered this process (Rabbani, 2013; Berger and Ali, 2008).

An innovative rice-based agricultural system has been adopted in this cyclone affected, saline-prone, increasingly shrimp-farm dominated Satkhira district. To overcome the problem of irrigation during cropping season mini ponds are excavated adjacent to crop field to hold the rain water (Figure-2). During the rainy season low-saline tolerant fishes (i.e. monosex tilapia or carps) are traditionally cultivated and during dry season it is being used as a source of irrigation (Practical Action Bangladesh and ADB, 2013b). Different types of salt tolerant rice varieties (i.e. BINA 8, BRRI Dhan 47, 48, 54 etc.) have been introduced and tried on a trial and error basis by the communities themselves as well as along with government research organizations (Practical Action Bangladesh and ADB, 2013b; Rabbani, 2013; Miah, 2010). Yearly cropping schedule has been also adapted with the changing
climate. Recently pulse and other vegetables are cultivated along with rice for better utilization of limited resources (Ibid.)

Saline tolerant rice varieties have been also traditionally practiced in southern coastal areas of Sri Lanka in the face of climate change but producing low yield. Recent government led innovation of more resilient species with successful field trial experiment along with the local communities led to more adaptive capacity (Berger et al., 2009). In addition, Leonard et al. (2013) discussed the role of traditional ecological knowledge of the indigenous people (at north-west Australia) in monitoring and adapting to changing environmental conditions. For instance, indigenous people observe the flowering of the Gali-Galing (Fern-leaf grevillea) signals as the beginning of the cold season and is time to undertake traditional burning practices to prevent late hot season fires that damage the landscape. Moreover, one of the major coping strategies of the indigenous women’s in the hill tracts of Bangladesh is preserving the rice varieties that are more resilient which has been in practice for the last several generations (Maleya and The Women’s Resource Network, 2011). Furthermore, Boillat and Berkes (2013) highlighted how Bolivian farmers traditionally anticipate/forecast the next season’s rainfall and making agricultural decisions accordingly through dispersing sowing in time and space, and accessing plots at different altitudes and aspects.

**Discussion**

From the above mentioned studies it can be inferred that local knowledge is playing a significant role in environmental decision making under various circumstances. In case of Satkhira the solution (pond irrigation system) has been derived by the locals based on specific needs prior to government and NGO interventions (Ahmed, 2006; Miah, 2010; Pender and Alliance, 2010). In Sri Lanka high yield rice variety has been developed based on the locally established low yield species and further research by the scientists; and has been validated by local farmers via trial and error basis (Berger et
al.., 2009). In case of the indigenous women's of Bangladesh hill tracts, preserving traditional high
yield and resilient rice varieties is the only available solution till now due to lack of alternatives and
less progress of research in this arena (Maleya and The Women’s Resource Network, 2011; Rabbani,
2013). Additionally, in case of indigenous people of north-west Australia, scientific records of
climate-related events (including extreme weather, water availability, and phenology) are limited
in number and time-scale as well as dispersion process is also not well-developed (Leonard et al..
2013, p.629). Similar scenario is also applicable for the instance of Bolivian farmers (Boillat and
Berkes 2013, p.10).

Other reasons for local knowledge’s significance over scientific knowledge are - local people's
difficulties using scientific information due to lack of accessibility and expertise; climate models
weakness in terms of spatial and temporal scale; failure of data from meteorological station to fulfill
the specific and changing demand of the farmers due to climate variability; and needs of scientific
data to be verified with local data to ensure credibility (Reid et al.. 2009, p.22; Christian Aid, 2009).

In contrast, while “local communities has less confidence on scientific data in question of reliability,
... scientists are reluctant about local data because of subjectivity and lacking in rigorous” (Gaillard
and Maceda, 2009). This conflict is termed by Petts and Brooks (2006) as “continuing gulf between
the techno-centrism of the expert and the contextual knowledge of the lay public”.

In the above mentioned cases local knowledge playing crucial role in environmental decision making,
but due to continuous climate variability it’s now facing the challenge to adapt effectively (i.e. Satkhira,
Sri Lanka). So, it can be said undoubtedly that combinations of scientific knowledge and local
knowledge can be more efficient, which is also explored in earlier case studies. Echoing the above
findings Tanner (2005) declared that,

“[t]here is clearly a need to bring the scientific expertise on future climate changes and adaptation
techniques, together with the experience, traditional knowledge and locally defined vulnerabilities
of the community, so that the best information from both sources can be combined into a strong
community based adaptation response” (cited in Pender and Alliance, 2010, p.52).

On the other hand, while combining these two streams of knowledge through public participation
intensive scrutiny about the inherent power relation of different stakeholders [mentioned earlier by
Demeritt (2001)] should be taken into account because, “often the priorities and interests of outsiders
override those of communities, and there is still a lot of ‘doing to’ communities, rather than
communities taking charge”(Reid et al.. 2009, p.23). To overcome the complexity during public
participation [introduced earlier by Rydin and Pennington (2000); Cooke and Kothari (2001)]
innovative and subject specific approach should be taken which has been illustrated by Rouse et al..
(2013) while coastal adaptation planning of New Zealand. Additionally, according to Few et al..
(2007),
“in order for the participation to be meaningful, this would require a retreat from managerialism and a preparedness among agencies to place trust in the deliberative capabilities of stakeholders to propose plans that are both effective and equitable”,

which has been concluded during their study on long term coastal management of UK.

Furthermore, to support another issue of debate (“legitimize the risk through participation”) introduced by Beck (1999) earlier, Few (2001, 2003) has described a process whereby planning agencies have (consciously or subconsciously) attempted to steer stakeholder participation toward support for predetermined goals by forging tactical alliances, blocking dissent and avoiding scope for conflict. The result may be described as ‘containment’ of participation (cited in Few et al., 2007, p.53).

Conclusion
As conclusion, local knowledge is significant equally as the scientific knowledge (in some cases surpasses) in environmental decision making and planning, in the era of complex challenge imposed by climate change, to adapt and sustain (Reid et al., 2009; Taylor and de Loë, 2012). However, public knowledge should be subject to similar levels of critical scrutiny and questioning concerning its validity and trustworthiness as is expert understanding (Petts and Brooks, 2006). But at the end question remains about the legitimation of the climate change risk through community based adaptation process; in the era of continuous GHG emission production on one side by the global elites, and call as well as funding for community based adaptation on the other side by the same entity.

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